

**“TRANSGRESSING BOUNDARIES”
IN GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ’S
ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE,
THE AUTUMN OF THE PATRIARCH
AND *COLLECTED STORIES***

ABSTRACT

Daiarisa Rumnong

**Department of English
North-Eastern Hill University
Shillong**

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Chapter I

Introduction

The term “magic realism” or “*magischer realismus*” was coined by Franz Roh, a German art critic in his book *Post-expressionism, Magic Realism: Problems of the Most Recent European Painting*, published in 1925, to describe a new form of post-expressionist painting. The new art had a “smooth photograph-like clarity” (Bowers 8). Roh says that by the word “magic” he “wished to indicate that the mystery does not descend to the represented world, but rather hides and palpitates behind it” (qtd. in Zamora and Faris 15). This new art “tried to capture the mystery of life behind the surface reality” (Bowers 2) “in an intuitive way,...the interior figure, of the exterior world” (Zamora and Faris 24). Irene Guenther explains that Roh did not define “magic realism”, but his book contains a list of characteristics of the new art. Some of the characteristics were: sober subjects, static, smooth and centripetal. (Zamora and Faris 35-36)

In 1927, Ernst Jünger, a German writer, used the term “magic realism” in an article called “Nationalism and Modern Life”. In the same year, Massimo Bontempelli, an Italian writer, used the term in his journal called *900*. In 1927, the chapters on “magic realism” from Franz Roh’s book were translated into Spanish by Fernando Vela and published by the

journal *Revista de Occidente*. Writers such as Jorge Luis Borges were influenced by these writings. Further, during the 1930's and 1940's, there was a migration of European writers and artists to the Americas who found haven in Mexico, Brazil, Cuba and Venezuela. Thus, it was in Latin America that the concept of magic realism was "primarily seized by literary criticism and was, through translation and literary appropriation transformed" (Zamora and Faris 61).

Alejo Carpentier, being influenced by Franz Roh, the post-expressionist and surrealist tradition in Europe, coined the term "*lo realismo maravilloso americano*" or "marvelous American reality" in his essay "On the Marvelous Real in America" (1949). Carpentier aimed "to describe a concept" which represented the mix of different cultural systems and experiences "that create an extraordinary atmosphere, alternative attitude and differing appreciation of reality in Latin America" (Bowers 13). Latin America thus began to assert its own literary consciousness. Echevarría says: "Carpentier's artistic enterprise in the forties became a search for origins, the recovery of history and tradition, the foundation of an autonomous American consciousness serving as the basis for a literature faithful to the New World" (qtd. in Bowers 14).

The term “magical realism” or “*realismo mágico*” was coined by Angel Flores in his essay “Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction” (1955). The term “magical realism” was used in relation to Latin American fiction “but has since been adopted as the main term to refer to all narrative fiction that includes magical happenings in a realist matter-of-fact narrative” (Bowers 2). Flores attributes European modernists like Franz Kafka and Spanish influences like Jorge Luis Borges for “magical realism”. He quotes the painter Giorgio de Chirico thus: “Thought must draw so far away from human fetters that things may appear to it under a new aspect, as though they are illuminated by a constellation now appearing for the first time” (qtd. in Zamora and Faris 114). Thus, the basis of magical realism is reality, it is a reality that appears in a new aspect, reinvented to draw a deeper appreciation of life. Thus, Flores says “The practitioners of magical realism cling to reality...as if to prevent their myth from flying off, as in fairy tales, to supernatural realms” (Zamora and Faris 115-116).

The term “magical realism” has become the current term used to refer to literature that has extraordinary events and characters rendered by an objective narrative. The term “magical realism” has thus come from “magic realism” as an art form in the 1920’s and “marvelous American

reality” in the 1940’s, to become a technique used by writers in the second half of the twentieth century. For the purpose of the present study therefore, the term “magical realism” will be used henceforth.

The strange in magical realism is assimilated as part of daily experience. Thus, reality intermingles with myth. This blending of reality and myth surrounded Gabriel García Márquez as a child. Living in the town of Aracataca in northern Colombia, the oral tradition was instilled into him by his grandmother, Tranquilina Iguarán Cotes. Her stories of ghosts and superstitions, which she told with an objective voice has strongly affected his writing. The objective voice and expression which his grandmother maintained while telling her stories were adopted by him. He combined this with the influence of Franz Kafka, Jorge Luis Borges, James Joyce, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway and Virginia Woolf. Thus, García Márquez fused the techniques of modernism with the oral tradition of his community. This led to a fresh approach to reality that was, magically real. This also allowed García Márquez to tell stories with the aim of criticizing the history, politics and society of Colombia and Latin America in particular, and the world in general.

The narrating consciousness in magical realism is, therefore, concerned with telling the story by breaking down the boundaries of

reality and thus transgresses the barriers of conventional fiction, to bring together the real and the spectacular. Zamora and Faris say:

magical realism is a mode suited to exploring—and transgressing—boundaries, whether the boundaries are ontological, political, geographical, or generic. Magical realism often facilitates the fusion, or coexistence, of possible worlds, spaces, systems that would be irreconcilable in other modes of fiction.

(5-6)

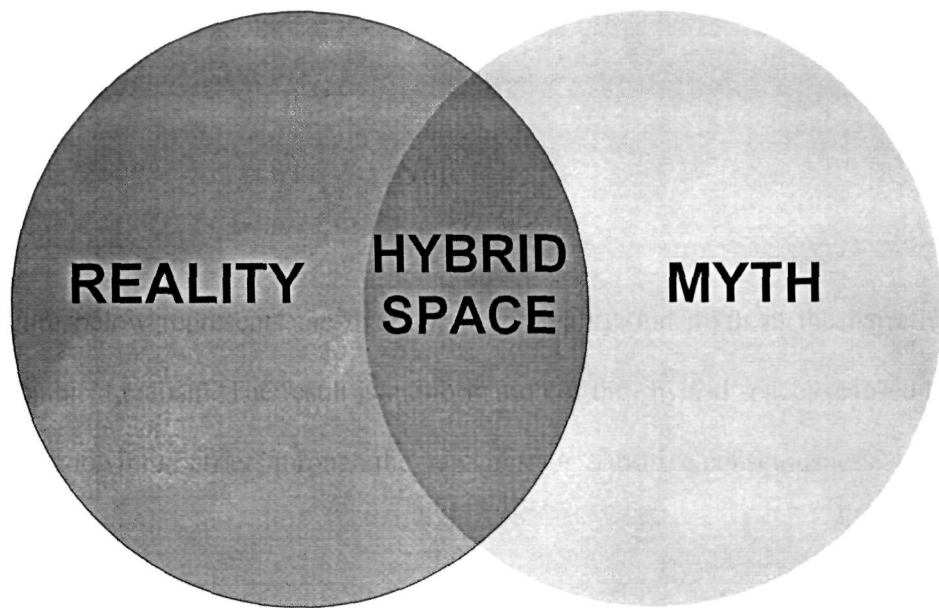
Therefore, since magical realism is a mode suited to transgress boundaries, the narrating consciousness endorses this element of magical realism by shattering the walls that separate reality and myth¹, causing them to coexist. The narrating consciousness thus enters a fictional space where reality and myth intertwine. This fictional space is a “hybrid space” (Zamora and Faris 220), produced by combining reality and myth. The narrating consciousness adapts itself to the subversive demands of the hybrid space and takes on a transgressive nature, becoming a transgressing narrative consciousness. The transgressing narrative consciousness is thus the vehicle used by García Márquez to conjure the hybrid fictional space required by magical realism.

In García Márquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) myth, history, tragedy and politics fill the kaleidoscopic hybrid space. *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (1975) dramatizes the life of a dictator, whereby

the transgressing consciousness enhances reality with a grand freedom. *Collected Stories* (1991) documents the growth of García Márquez, from the 1940's to the 1970's. The short stories also create an environment which facilitates the challenging of accepted reality. All three works share a common insight, determined by García Márquez's attempt to transgress and subvert the lived reality, in order to write the kind of fiction that would mould newer perspectives of reality.

Note

¹ The figure below represents the overlapping of reality and myth in the narrative mode of magical realism. The result is the formation of the “hybrid space”, caused by the breaking down of barriers through the transgressing narrative consciousness.



Chapter II

The Transgressing Consciousness in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*

The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka made García Márquez realize that Kafka's "voice" had the same echoes as his grandmother's, because she told "the wildest things with a completely natural tone of voice" (Ruch). He discovered that he had to tell the stories with the same "brick face" (Ruch and Kaye) expression as his grandmother. This brick faced consciousness is the narrative means that García Márquez uses to cut cross reality and to move into fictional realms that challenge the defining norms of fiction.

The narrating consciousness has an oral character that may be traced to García Márquez's grandmother. Perceiving the magical and the real as the same, the exigencies of the oral allow García Márquez to use the bizarre and exaggerated, facilitating the movement between the magical and the real. He emulates the speaking voice of the oral tradition so that the narrating consciousness transgresses boundaries, telling the

story objectively, overturns reality, and thus produces a reality coloured by myth. Consequently, the narrating consciousness facilitates the coexistence of the commonplace and incredible, significant aspects of the oral tradition.

The objective speaking voice of the oral tradition is influenced by its subjective understanding of events. Thus, memory forms an important aspect of the oral tradition, in that a story is narrated from the mind's recesses. In magical realism, memory feeds on reality, but because it moves in its own hybrid space, it must of necessity give birth to myth. Thus, memory changes its normal functioning, and as it conjures events from reality, it produces mythical elements reflecting back to the transgressive vision of the narrating consciousness. The transgressing narrative consciousness is thus aided by memory, which moves in the hybrid space and employs its own motifs and hyperboles.

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the reader witnesses the "memory that opens the novel" (Pelayo 92). The scene is Colonel Aureliano Buendía standing in front of a firing squad, which is a future event, while he remembers the day when his father took him to see ice for the first time, which is a past event. The first chapter "serves as a paradigm of the overall narrational pattern" (Sims 11). The narrating

consciousness therefore follows a circular path between the past, the present and the future. José Arcadio Buendía, the founder of Macondo, “conceived a notion of space that allowed him to navigate across unknown seas, to visit uninhabited territories, and to establish relations with splendid beings without having to leave his study” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 4). The patriarch of the Buendías thus lays the foundation for the “imagined space” (Gullon 29). The matriarch, Ursula Iguarán, fills “the fictional space with daily realities so that the marvelous may enter it smoothly... Together, José Arcadio Buendía’s imagined space and Úrsula’s familiar space embrace everything that has ever existed or exists, from nothingness to infinity” (Gullon 29).

The insomnia plague that afflicts Macondo, is an extraordinary event and the Banana massacre, is a real event in Colombian history. These events show how history and myth are made to coexist by the transgressing consciousness. “Memory, in García Márquez’s view, is synonymous with redemption: to remember is to overcome, to defeat the forces of evil” (Stavans 64). The redemptive function of memory is evident in the Banana massacre, when it is only José Arcadio Segundo who holds the truth about the massacre, while others deny the event happened. Thus, reality and history can be wiped out, to become myth,

and it is through memory that truth is found. Thus, García Márquez uses the transgressing consciousness to subvert reality and history, in order to show how powerful memory and myth can be.

Hyperbole amplifies Colonel Aureliano's portrait when one is told of the fourteen assassination attempts and the bullet that goes through his back. José Arcadio's death is equally incredible. He is mysteriously shot and immediately, a trickle of blood flows out of his house and reaches the Buendía kitchen where Úrsula is cooking. Here, the uncommon movement of the blood enters the domestic space of the kitchen. A mingling of the imagined space and the familiar space is brought about by the transgressing consciousness.

The stories in *Collected Stories* begin in *media res* (Pelayo 72) as memory again plays a role in their telling. The first sentence in "Big Mama's Funeral" emphasizes that the story is a confirmation that Big Mama is a real person. But the mention of the Pope and Macondo in the same sentence shows the merging of reality and myth. "Monologue of Isabel Watching It Rain in Macondo" is narrated in the first person and has elements of the stream of consciousness technique. The old man with wings in "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings" and the drowned man in "The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World" are placed in familiar

categories, with the old man described as a “flesh-and-blood angel” (*Collected Stories* 187), and the drowned man is given the name of “Esteban” (*Collected Stories* 214).

The narrating consciousness in *The Autumn of the Patriarch* also begins in *medias res*, with the discovery of the corpse of the dictator. All chapters begin with this and then the narrating consciousness goes in different directions into the past, present and future of the Patriarch’s life. The reader is taken on a serpentine transgression of fictional barriers by using the stream of consciousness technique, the shifting of pronouns, hyperbole and repetition. Further, the narrating consciousness is an amalgamation of the voices of the Patriarch, his officers and people, recreating “out of their memories and experiences a history of Latin American dictatorship...sometimes their sentences spill over with marvelous images that make a landscape of myths...” (Bhalla 1597-1598). Thus the Patriarch orders a “civil sainthood” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 133) of his mother and sells off the Caribbean Sea.

The transgressing narrative consciousness displaces the bricks in the wall of reality, to see beyond reality and to embrace myth. García Márquez has crafted the narrating consciousness in such a way, that it transgresses into a world where reality and magic overlap. What makes

García Márquez's narrating consciousness different, is the way in which he has incorporated the outlook of the oral tradition of his community into it. The power and reach of the narrating consciousness is therefore enhanced by its transgressive facet, given to it by the oral tradition. Finally, García Márquez's transgressing consciousness weaves a narrative that confronts the imperfection and brutality of reality and history.

Chapter III

Transgressing Characters in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*

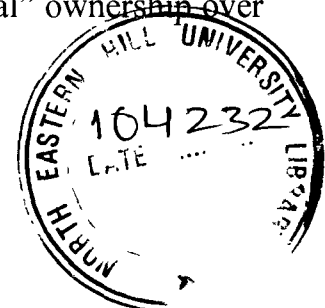
The transgressive nature of the characters springs from the transgressing consciousness that leaps beyond the restrictions of reality, thereby infusing the characters with subversive qualities. Taking root in the hybrid space, their qualities are exaggerated, which implies that their natures do not lead to truth, but to a challenging of truth. The characters are complex dimensions and extensions of the transgressing consciousness who overturn boundaries.

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, José Arcadio Buendía, “misappropriates one gypsy invention after another—trying to use the magnet to extract gold from the earth, the magnifying glass to conduct solar warfare, ice to build houses, the daguerreotype to take a picture of God...” (Tobin 43). Úrsula has strong insight and proves this when she realizes that time is moving in a circle. Úrsula herself undermines time by dying between the age of one hundred and fifteen and one hundred and

twenty-two. Úrsula then proclaims that she will die after the four years of rain.

The recurring José Arcadios and Aurelianos, who are the descendants of José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula, bear the stigma of their repeated names. They live extraordinary lives with the José Arcadios dying “as victims of murder or disease (their “tragic sign”)” while “all three Aurelianos die with their eyes open and their mental powers fully intact” (Bell-Villada 97). Amaranta is visited by death who tells her to begin making her shroud. The affair of Aureliano Segundo with Petra Cotes, causes the rapid reproduction of her animals, which brings her great wealth. Towards the end when Aureliano Babilonia deciphers the parchments, he transgresses time and space as he simultaneously reads them and brings about his family’s annihilation.

In *Collected Stories*, the man in “The Third Resignation” seems to be dead but his monologue reveals that he is still growing physically. The huge drowned man in the “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World” unsettles reality as people change their doors and ceilings, so that his “memory could go everywhere without bumping into beams” (*Collected Stories* 217-218). In a “skewed world”, (Dauster 469) the transgressing consciousness gives Big Mama in “Big Mama’s Funeral” ownership over



rain, leap years, heat waves and national sovereignty. By possessing both human and celestial qualities, the old man in “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”, is a subversive creature, performing strange miracles like giving a blind man three new teeth and making sunflowers grow from a leper’s sores.

Dense and phantasmagoric, the ambience of *The Autumn of the Patriarch* is exemplified in the character of the Patriarch. Bell-Villada says that García Márquez felt the inspiration for the book in January 1958 when the eight-year dictatorship of Venezuelan General Marcos Perez Jimenez had fallen (169). The Patriarch is a synthesis of Latin American dictators, who undo reality through power, violence and paranoia. “General of the Universe”, “the All Pure”, are titles he gives himself, evident of his indifference to what is considered normal. The Patriarch is actually dead but the transgressing consciousness conjures him repeatedly. The Patriarch has Major General Rodrigo de Aguilar killed and put on a silver tray to be served for a banquet. It is an event that exaggerates reality and transmutes into myth. The Patriarch’s ability to change time and weather; the cows that are born with his presidential brand; his ability to correct earthquakes and eclipses; his selling of the Caribbean Sea, expose his subversion of reality. Living between one

hundred and seven to two hundred and thirty-two years, the Patriarch remains absolute and draws the line between truth and lies, guilt and innocence. (Bhalla 1598)

The characters in García Márquez's fiction transgress a reality that is pockmarked by their excesses and exaggerations. García Márquez uses these characters as fictional instruments to take surface reality apart, in order to show the resilient subterranean world that overflows with the incredible passion and pathos of the characters.

Chapter IV

Transgressing Reality through Time, Solitude and Death in *One Hundred Years of Solitude, The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*

In García Márquez's fiction, the reality that time, death and solitude represent is a subverted one in which the unacceptable is an ordinary state of existence for them. The transgressing consciousness uses them as transgressive agents to challenge accepted beliefs.

García Márquez is indebted to Jorge Luis Borges, for his concept of time. Borges envisioned time as an endless repetition and in "The Garden of Forking Paths", Borges says that the strands of time bifurcate and intersect each other, thus accepting every possibility. The endless repetition of time enhances the circumstance for solitude, which brings a death in life, thus bringing the characters closer to physical death which they overthrow.¹ Time in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* moves in a circular path.

...the history of the family was a 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.

(*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 402)

These words give an image of the circularity of time. The purpose of García Márquez using the endless repetition of time is to show the futility

of successive generations to save the family from impending destruction, because “Time is not spent, but is squandered and wasted”, with no productivity, “because the past and future panels of time are collapsed into a present of eternal novelty” (Tobin 43-45). This is true when Aureliano Babilonia discovers that Melquíades had placed the events in the parchments “in the order of man’s conventional time, but had concentrated a century of daily episodes in such a way that they coexisted in one instant” (*One Hundred Years of solitude* 421).

The disadvantage of an eternal present is that the succeeding generations do not learn from the mistakes of the preceding one. The novelty is not actually novel, but the characters do not know this, so they continue to cross the same boundaries and repeat the same transgressions in some form or another. For instance, Pilar Ternera was the mistress of both José Arcadio and Colonel Aureliano. Again, José Arcadio’s great grandsons, José Arcadio Segundo and Aureliano Segundo also share a mistress. José Arcadio Segundo converses with Melquíades. This relationship is relived with Aureliano Babilonia, who talks to Melquíades. The novel ends with an alliance of incest between Amaranta Úrsula and Aureliano Babilonia who are actually aunt and nephew, repeating the incest between José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula.

The Autumn of the Patriarch is also told with the bifurcation and intersection of the strands of time. Every chapter starts with the image of the Patriarch's corpse but with new words, new emotions and new memories. Thus, the Patriarch remains ahistorical and atemporal in the hybrid space, defined by the illusion of linearity and placed in a "temporal realm like the physical realm of ice, where all is ended but all is also possible" (Faris 98). The Patriarch is thus frozen like ice but is simultaneously ready for any possibility in the ever-turning circle of time.

The same fluidity between the past and present is found in *Collected Stories* but the short stories do not allow for the repetition of time. The rain in "Monologue of Isabel Watching It Rain in Macondo" makes Isabel lose track of time and she says: "What should have been Thursday was a physical, jellylike thing that could have been parted with the hands in order to look into Friday (*Collected Stories* 87).

Caught in the circle of time is solitude that transgresses the divisions of time and the finality of death. The Buendías are plagued by solitude that becomes an inevitable part of their spiritual inheritance. José Arcadio Buendía descends into a "solitude of madness" (Gullon 30). José Arcadio Segundo's memory of the Banana massacre draws him into a solitude that he spends in Melquíades' room. Only love can help the

Buendías “transcend this common solitude” (Gullon 31) but no character finds real love. The chalk circle that Colonel Aureliano draws around himself, stopping anyone from entering, can perhaps be enlarged to contain the whole family. A family who is condemned to know isolation and not love, is thus driven to solitude.

In an interview, García Márquez said that *The Autumn of the Patriarch* deals with the “solitude of power” (qtd. in Zamora and Faris 155). The desire for power pulls the Patriarch away from truth and reality, allowing solitude to seep into his life. His life is an endless death in life, his kingdom a “measureless realm of gloom” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 66) and his heart bears an “incapacity for love” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 227). The “stigma of his solitude” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 88) revolves around the Patriarch. The contrapuntal nature of the transgressing consciousness allows it to speak in many voices and also serves to enhance the solitude of the Patriarch.

In the fiction of García Márquez, death is not the end of life but it is life itself. The ghost of Prudencio Aguilar, who is the man José Arcadio Buendía kills, haunts him and Úrsula. When José Arcadio Buendía becomes mad, the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar becomes his daily companion. Melquíades, the elusive and wise gypsy also dies but returns

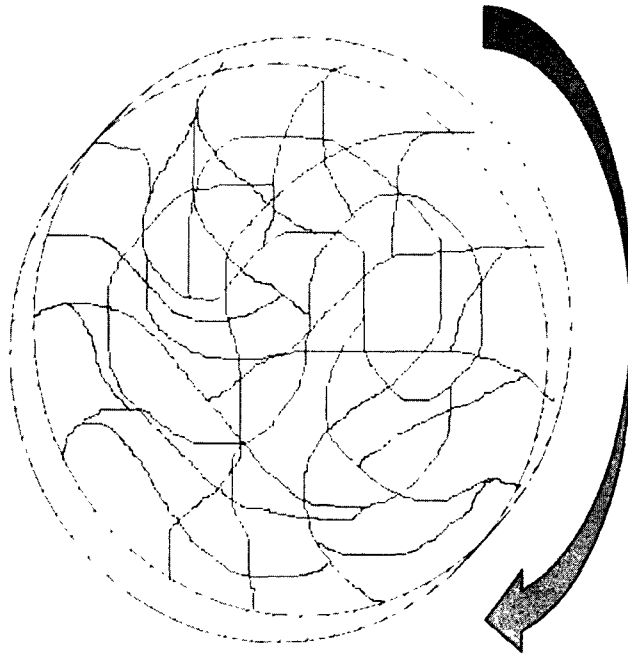
alive again. Death is transgressed since “fluid boundaries between the worlds of the living and the dead are traced only to be crossed” (Faris 22).

In some cases, death is transformed into a living experience. This is seen in the Patriarch who is above death, even though the pestilence of death surrounds him as the transgressing consciousness feeds him with superhuman resilience. The ghost ship in “The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship” carries “its own circle of silence with it, its own dead air, its halted time,” (*Collected Stories* 231). The halted time, solitude and death is borne by the ship, as it moves on a real sea.

The transgressive states of time, solitude and death bring about inevitable havoc and destruction on characters who surrender to their obsessive pattern. They transform human existence into a malleable form, surrounding the characters in an environment of flux. Time, solitude and death move together in the blending of reality and myth, to accommodate the transgressive dimension of the narrating consciousness.

Note

¹ In the eternally moving wheel of time, the strands of time intersect, bifurcate and embrace the strands of solitude and death. These three prominent themes of García Márquez's fiction circulate and repeat their effect as they are held in the ever-moving wheel.



Chapter V

Conclusion

The attempt of the study has been to examine the nature of García Márquez's fiction, a fiction that produces a magnified reality containing truths that would remain unknown. In his Nobel speech in 1982, García Márquez talks about

A reality not of paper, but one that lives within us and determines each instant of our countless daily deaths, and that nourishes a source of insatiable creativity, full of sorrow and beauty,...all creatures of that unbridled reality,...our crucial problem has been a lack of conventional means to render our lives believable.

("Gabriel García Márquez-Nobel Lecture". Nobelprize.org. 29 Nov 2010
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/marquez-lecture-e.html)

Thus, this lack of conventional means has given rise to magical realism which aims to capture the flux of life.

The transgressing narrative consciousness is the foremost tool of magical realism. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*, the transgressing narrative consciousness lays down the parameters for the storytelling that subverts all fictional criteria. The oral tradition gives to the narrating consciousness the transgressive trait that is crucial to magical realism. The objectivity of the

transgressing narrative consciousness facilitates the movement of the magical and the real in the hybrid space. Memory also preserves the truths that may be lost in history, to reality.

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the transgressing narrative consciousness describes real and mythical events such as the insomnia plague, the Banana massacre, the flying carpets of the gypsies, the four year rain, all happening in the hybrid space. In *Collected Stories*, the transgressing narrative consciousness resembles the stream of consciousness, as it records Isabel's confusion over time and finally, it places the old man with wings, the handsome drowned man and the ghost ship into a human world that accepts them. The phantasmagoric images and events of *The Autumn of the Patriarch* are rendered through the voices and thoughts of the characters. Ignoring syntax and grammar, the narrating consciousness recounts the preposterous canonization of the Patriarch's mother and his selling of the Caribbean Sea to the Americans.

The characters are created by the transgressing narrative consciousness and thereby gain transgressive qualities. They challenge reality and their exaggerations are used by García Márquez to reflect on the evils of the world. Colonel Aureliano's endless wars make him realize his pride and bring him solitude. The repeated names spell doom for the

Buendías, with their mistakes haunting their future. Death is challenged when the man in “The Third Resignation” has a physical experience of death. Blurring the truth, is the Patriarch, in whose hands reality wilts. Being around two centuries old, he treasures his power, when what he lacks is love. The Patriarch believes that he will still be alive when the comet comes again. Returning again and again after dying, the Patriarch moves within the endless revolving of time, solitude and death.

Time, solitude and death become unnatural states of existence. The strands of time in *The Autumn of the Patriarch* evoke an eternal present defying reality. Supporting the ahistorical and atemporal quality of the Patriarch is the emergence of memories and the change of pronouns. A collapse of the past and the present is found in “The Monologue of Isabel Watching it Rain in Macondo” as Isabel describes time as jelly-like. The history of the Buendía family is like a wheel that turns eternally which traps the characters in a circle of futility. The relationship that brings the end of Macondo, is the one between Aureliano Babilonia and Amaranta Úrsula, which repeats the incest of José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula.

Held in the wheel of time, solitude crosses the barriers of life. In its most extreme form, solitude drives out emotions, aptly described as death in life. Thus, Amaranta unfeelingly wipes out love and the visit of death

is not different from her daily experience. Solitude is a conscious choice of existence in the “unbridled reality” that can be symbolized by the chalk circle drawn by Colonel Aureliano. Solitude is certain if the sole aim is an amoral pursuit of power. This is the fate of the Patriarch. Thus, he and his people possess a loss of everything real. The clamour of voices ironically causes the Patriarch more isolation.

Death resurges in the wheel of time and activates another chapter of existence. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar becomes the companion of the mad José Arcadio Buendía. Death is also defied when Melquíades dies in the time of Colonel Aureliano and appears alive again to Aureliano Babilonia. Condemned to be preserved in the wheel of time, the Patriarch is resurrected repeatedly to continue his subversion of reality.

With the breaching of the boundaries of fiction, they can no longer be defined by conventional standards but have to be remade with a different perspective. The reality that is created is a porous one in which the narrating consciousness, the characters, together with time, solitude and death are moulded to suit the transgressive and subversive demands of García Márquez’s fiction. Hence, the “mind and body, spirit and

matter, life and death, real and imaginary,...are boundaries to be erased, transgressed, blurred...” (Zamora and Faris 6), in a bid to critique society.

Behind the spectacle of magical realism lies the significance of the stories. They are explorations of life: idealism and its pitfalls, the desire for power and legacy, the failure of love and the triumph of discord. Having transgressed all perceivable boundaries, it may be said that García Márquez’s vision cannot be understood in the Aristotelian sense as being an imitation of life but that the reality is mythic because it unleashes the hidden motives of his characters, as well as the dark recesses of their personality. These elemental energies generate the kind of logic that may be identified with García Márquez’s world of magical realism.

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IN GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ’S
ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE,
THE AUTUMN OF THE PATRIARCH
AND *COLLECTED STORIES***



Daiarisa Rumnong

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH**

**Department of English
North-Eastern Hill University
Shillong**

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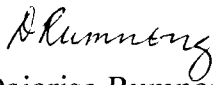
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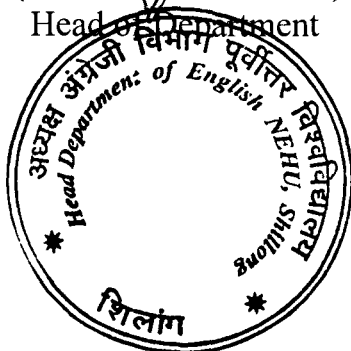
DECLARATION


I, **Daiarisa Rumnong**, hereby declare that the subject matter of this dissertation is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this dissertation did not form the basis of an award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

This is being submitted to the North-Eastern Hill University for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English.


(Daiarisa Rumnong)
Candidate


(Dr. M. M. Mazumdar)
Head of Department




(Dr. Esther Syiem)
Supervisor

**Professor in English
North Eastern Hill University
Shillong - 793022**

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Department of English
December, 2010.

Daiarisa Rumnong

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Chapter I

Introduction

The term “magic realism” or “*magischer Realismus*” was coined by Franz Roh (1890-1965), a German art critic in his book, *Nach-Expressionismus, Magischer Realismus: Probleme der neuesten europäischen Malerei* (*Post-expressionism, Magic Realism: Problems of the Most Recent European Painting*), published in 1925, to describe a new form of post-expressionist painting which “tried to capture the mystery of life behind the surface reality” (Bowers 2). In the preface to the book, Roh says, “with the word ‘magic,’ as opposed to ‘mystic’ I wished to indicate that the mystery does not descend to the represented world, but rather hides and palpitates behind it” (qtd. in Zamora and Faris 15). Further, in his essay “Magic Realism: Post-Expressionism” (1925), Roh says that for

Impressionism, that the world consisted of objects was an “obvious” fact not worth much attention;...Expressionism also considered the existence of objects to be patently “obvious” and looked for meaning in powerful and violent rhythms; vessels into which man’s spirit (that of either an artist or a man of action) could pour everything. But the most recent painting attempts to discover a more general and deeper basis,...This calm admiration of the magic of being, of the discovery that things already have their own faces, means that the ground in which the most diverse ideas in the world can take root has been reconquered—albeit in new ways.

(Zamora and Faris 19-20)

The new post-expressionist art was therefore concerned with capturing through close observation the spirit of things that pulsed inside them, “in

an intuitive way, the fact, the interior figure, of the exterior world” (Zamora and Faris 24).

Irene Guenther clarifies that Roh did not give “special value” to his term “magic realism” but only felt the need to give “an aesthetic descriptive” to the word “post-expressionism”. Guenther continues to say that Roh “never gave a concise definition of ‘magic realism’. His 1925 work, however, contains a list of characteristics and adjectives sprinkled throughout with which he formulated his conception of the new art” (Zamora and Faris 35). These twenty-two characteristics were reduced to fifteen in Roh’s later book *German Art in the Twentieth Century*, published in 1958. Some of the characteristics were to name a few, sober subjects, representational, static, cold, smooth, centripetal and external purification of the object (Zamora and Faris 35-36). The new art of Germany in the 1920’s, therefore, left behind the vibrant colour and emotional effusion of expressionism, and began to nurture an objectivity and lucidity that had as its aim, the representation of the mystery and wonder of life.

This new art form had a “smooth photograph-like clarity” (Bowers 8). The artist captured on canvas, in a moment of time, the object in a

life-like manner. This new reality confronted the muddled reality that life had become after the First World War thus:

The historical context in which magic realist painting developed was that of the unstable German Weimar Republic during the period 1919-23. This era followed the German defeat in the First World War and the abdication and flight into exile of the Kaiser in 1918. It was a period of political fragility when the vacuum of power that was created following the abdication of the Kaiser was fought over by right-wing and left-wing revolutionary groups....It was an era of political violence and extreme economic difficulty..

(Bowers 10)

There was a desire to express the pain and angst of the ravages of war.

Describing the goal of the new art Guenther says:

The goal of this post-World War I art was a new definition of the object, clinically dissected, coldly accentuated, microscopically delineated. Over-exposed, isolated, rendered from an uncustomary angle, the familiar became unusual, endowed with an *Unheimlichkeit* (uncanniness) which elicited fear and wonder. The juxtaposition of “magic” and “realism” reflected far more the monstrous and marvelous *Unheimlichkeit* within human beings and inherent in their modern technological surroundings,...

(Zamora and Faris 36)

Roh named artists whom he attributed to portraying the characteristics of magic realist art that included Giorgio de Chirico, Otto Dix, Alexander Kanoldt and George Grosz. Giorgio de Chirico’s “The Enigma of a Day” (1914) projects the isolation of man through the clear outline and shadow of forlorn buildings and a statue. Alexander Kanoldt’s “Still Life II” (1926), shows a potted plant on a side-table with a bottle and a small tray. Bowers says of the painting that “all the objects are given equal importance in the composition... The clarity of the objects

in the picture and the lack of emphasis of any one object provides the distinctive ‘magical’ aspect of this painting” (9). The “socially conscious” (Zamora and Faris 46) paintings of Otto Dix and George Grosz dramatize agony experienced in Germany. “Match Seller I” (1920) by Otto Dix portrays a big-headed man with no arms or legs, selling matches, with a dog urinating on him. Words are drawn from his mouth and passersby are painted as walking in a slanted angle. Similar caricature is found in George Grosz’s “Gray Day” (1921) with a round-headed businessman with cross eyes walking in the opposite direction of a soldier with a hunchback, a big head and no right hand. “Both painters show a disregard for traditional and realistic perspective” (Bowers 8).

At the turn of the twentieth century, in 1909, Alfred Kubin, an Austrian artist and writer, published *Die andere Seite (The Other Side)*, which was a novel with fifty-two drawings. Kubin was interested in the uncanny, monstrous and grotesque, and in the novel he delved into the

‘other side’ of the visible world—the corruption, the evil, the rot, as well as the power and mystery. The border between reality and dream remains consistently nebulous; *Unheimlichkeit* (uncanniness) pervades the novel, which takes place in the capital city of Dreamland in Asia.

(Zamora and Faris 57)

Ernst Jünger, a German essayist, novelist and poet, was influenced by Kubin’s concept of the fusion of the invisible and the visible, the interior and the exterior of life. Franz Roh’s magic and uncanny lurking behind

the objective depiction of an object also influenced Jünger and he translated it into “literary ‘stereoscopy’” (Zamora and Faris 58); the discovery of the smallest details through precise examination. In 1927, Jünger used the term “magic realism” in an article called “*Nationalismus und modernes Leben*” (Nationalism and Modern Life). A further development of magic realism in German literature is seen in Jünger’s *Das abenteuerliche Herz (The Adventurous Heart)* published in 1929. Magic realism continued to flourish in German literature, also being referred to as “*Neue Sachlichkeit*” (New Objectivity), a term coined by the German museum director, Gustav Hartlaub. In 1927, Massimo Bontempelli, an Italian writer, used the term “magic realism” in his bilingual journal called *900* and even before 1927, he used it as “a literary as well as artistic context” (Zamora and Faris 60) in the journal. Bontempelli himself was influenced by Franz Roh, fascism and surrealism.

The influence of magic realism in Latin America has had the most far-reaching consequences. Bowers says that

in 1927, the chapters specifically concerning magic realism from Franz Roh’s *Nach-Expressionismus, Magischer Realismus* were translated into Spanish by Fernando Vela and published in Madrid by *Revista de Occidente* under the title *Realismo mágico. Post-expresionismo: Problemas de la pintura europea mas reciente*.

(12)

Latin American writers such as Jorge Luis Borges and Miguel Angel Asturias were influenced by these writings and this helped to spread magic realism in Latin American literature. Further, Guenther says that during the 1930's and 1940's, there was large scale migration of people from Europe to the Americas. These included writers and artists who found haven in Mexico, Brazil, Cuba and Venezuela. Guenther says that it was in Latin America that the concept of magic realism was "primarily seized by literary criticism and was, through translation and literary appropriation transformed" (Zamora and Faris 61).

Alejo Carpentier, a French-Russian Cuban, being influenced by Franz Roh, as well as the post-expressionist and surrealist tradition in Europe, coined the term "*lo realismo maravilloso americano*" or "marvelous American reality" in the 1940's, "to describe a concept" which represented the mix of different cultural systems and experiences "that create an extraordinary atmosphere, alternative attitude and differing appreciation of reality in Latin America" (Bowers 13).

As opposed to European surrealism, a movement in which Carpentier had participated in the 1930's in France, Carpentier's "marvelous American reality" does not imply a conscious assault on conventionally depicted reality but, rather, an amplification of perceived reality required by and inherent in Latin American nature and culture.

(Zamora and Faris 75)

German “magic realism” which started in art, has now become Carpentier’s “*lo realismo maravilloso*” or “marvellous realism” (Bowers 13), which is a distinctly Latin American literary concept. In his essay “On the Marvelous Real in America” (1949), Carpentier discusses how Latin America’s history, culture and geography make it unique in the world. He says,

because of the virginity of the land, our upbringing, our ontology, the Faustian presence of the Indian and the black man, the revelation constituted by its recent discovery, its fecund racial mixing [*mestizaje*], America is far from using up its wealth of mythologies. After all, what is the entire history of America if not a chronicle of the marvelous real.

(Zamora and Faris 88)

With the Second World War and the fall of the Spanish Republic in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), many Europeans, as has been mentioned, migrated to Latin America during the 1930’s and 1940’s. This was also the time when Latin America began to assert its own distinct literary consciousness. Roberto González Echevarría says:

Carpentier’s artistic enterprise in the forties became a search for origins, the recovery of history and tradition, the foundation of an autonomous American consciousness serving as the basis for a literature faithful to the New World.

(qtd. in Bowers 14)

Emerging from the distinct forms of “magic realism” and “marvellous realism”, the term “magical realism” or “*realismo mágico*” was coined by Angel Flores in his essay “Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction”, published in 1955. The term “magical realism” was

used in relation to Latin American fiction “but has since been adopted as the main term to refer to all narrative fiction that includes magical happenings in a realist matter-of-fact narrative” (Bowers 2). Flores takes the year 1935 as the starting point of this new era of Latin American literature, with the publication of Jorge Luis Borges’ *A Universal History of Infamy* (1935).

A native of Argentina, Borges, is considered to be the father of modern Latin American writing and the precursor of magical realism, who was later to become an important influence on Gabriel García Márquez. “Naming Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) as the first magical realist, Flores recounts both European modernist and specifically Spanish influences for this version of magic(al) realism” (Bowers 15). Flores does not acknowledge that Carpentier brought “Roh’s magic realism to Latin America and instead argues that magical realism is a continuation of the romantic realist tradition of Spanish language literature and its European counterparts” (Bowers 15). To support this, Flores names the sixteenth century Spanish writer, Miguel de Saavedra Cervantes, together with Franz Kafka and Giorgio de Chirico.

Along with Jorge Luis Borges, Flores mentions other writers which include María Luisa Bombal, Silvina Ocampo, Luis Albamonte, Adolfo

Bioy Casares and others. A common quality of these writers is a desire to see reality in a new light, just as the magic realist painters similarly aspired. Flores quotes Chirico thus:

What is most of all necessary is to rid art of everything of the known which it has held until now: every subject, idea, thought and symbol must be put aside...Thought must draw so far away from human fetters that things may appear to it under a new aspect, as though they are illuminated by a constellation now appearing for the first time.

(qtd. in Zamora and Faris 114)

Therefore, from Chirico's words it may be concluded that the basis of magical realism is reality; it is a reality that has been reinvented and renewed to draw a deep and profound appreciation of life. Thus, Flores says: "The practitioners of magical realism cling to reality as if to prevent 'literature' from getting in their way, as if to prevent their myth from flying off, as in fairy tales, to supernatural realms" (Zamora and Faris 115-116).

The term "magical realism" coined by Angel Flores, has now become the term that is currently used to refer to literature that has magical and extraordinary events and characters rendered by an objective narrative. The term "magical realism" is thus derived from "magic realism" as an art form in the 1920's; from Latin American literature as "marvellous realism" in the 1940's and 1950's, to attain a global status in the second half of the twentieth century, as a style and technique of

writing used by many writers. For the purpose of the present study therefore, the term “magical realism” will be used henceforth.

“Magical realism” is commonly confused with surrealism and fantasy. The basic difference between them is magical realism’s reliance on reality. The narrative is created in such a way that even though it possesses extraordinary characters and events, it elementally draws from reality, in order not to lose its relevance to society. Bowers explains that the similarity that magical realism shares with surrealism is their bringing together of paradoxes. However, when carefully studied, the differences between surrealism and magical realism are substantial. Firstly, surrealism probes aspects of “the imagination and the mind, and in particular it attempts to express the ‘inner life’ and psychology of humans through art.” Magical realism, on the other hand, probes aspects of “material reality”, with the bizarre

rarely presented in the form of a dream or a psychological experience because to do so takes the magic out of recognizable material reality and places it into the little understood world of the imagination. The ordinariness of magical realism’s magic relies on its accepted and unquestioned position in tangible and material reality.

(Bowers 22)

Secondly, surrealism is “an artistic movement that lasted from 1919 to 1939 and that was defined by its practitioners through a manifesto” written by French writer André Breton in 1924. Magical realism “has

been discussed and nuanced by many critics and writers but has never been ultimately defined in this way” (Bowers 22-23). Fantasy or the fantastic is also easily confused with magical realism. Amaryll Chanady, gives a comprehensive distinction between the two:

In contrast to the fantastic, the supernatural in magical realism does not disconcert the reader, and this is the fundamental difference between the two modes. The same phenomena that are portrayed as problematical by the author of a fantastic narrative are presented in a manner-of-fact manner by the magical realist.

(qtd. in Bowers 25)

Doubt, fear of the unknown, fear of the supernatural, are alien to a magical realist story because everything is taken to be an inherent part of reality. The supernatural and strange is perceived as part of everyday experience. It does not encourage disbelief, but is instead felt and assimilated into the culture of the people. Thus, the history and reality of the community intermingle with myth. This brings about an enrichment of reality and history because of the natural absorption of myth and legend into the life of men.

The blend of reality and myth surrounded Gabriel García Márquez while he was growing up. Living in the coastal town of Aracataca, in northern Colombia, he came from a story telling community. The oral tradition was deeply ingrained in him by his grandmother, Tranquilina Iguarán Cotes. Her stories of ghosts, omens and superstitions, which she

told with an objective voice, strongly affected his way of thinking as a child, and also his way of writing as an adult. In his memoir *Living to Tell the Tale* he says:

Those who knew me when I was four say that I was pale and introverted, and spoke only to recount absurdities, but for the most part my stories were simple episodes from daily life that I made more attractive with fantastic details so that the adults would notice me.

(García Márquez 91)

Later he goes on to say, “Now I believe these were not a child’s mean tricks...but a budding narrator’s rudimentary techniques to make reality more entertaining and comprehensible” (García Márquez 92). Unconsciously, García Márquez learned this technique from his grandmother, which later as a writer he realized, was the way he wanted to tell his stories. The objective, natural tone of voice and expression which his grandmother maintained while telling stories of wonder and fear were adopted by him. This is what makes his fiction capture the atmosphere of magical realism.

As an aspiring writer, in the 1940’s, García Márquez was notably influenced by Franz Kafka, Jorge Luis Borges, James Joyce, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway and Virginia Woolf. Thus, what García Márquez did was to fuse the techniques of modernism with the oral tradition of his community. The result was a new and fresh approach to reality that was magically real. This innovation allowed García Márquez

to tell stories for the important purpose of criticizing the history, politics and society of his country Colombia in particular, and Latin America in general. Pelayo says that in magical realism

the mythical elements of oral tradition are incorporated into an otherwise realistic fiction. The social and economic problems that García Márquez disguises with a touch of magic realism are both past and present problems facing the individual and the community. If the reader fails to see through the disguise, it is because the narrative's emphasis is placed, not on the story, but rather on how the story is told.

(20)

Thus, with the publication of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in 1967, one finds García Márquez telling his story only in the way his grandmother would, which was an impersonal way of telling the most magical story as a common part of daily life.

Consequently, the narrating consciousness of the story becomes a crucial part of the story telling process. It is concerned about telling its story by moving beyond reality, into the realms of the supernatural and extraordinary. It does this by breaking down the boundaries of reality which limited fiction writing in the past. The narrating consciousness therefore, transgresses the barriers of conventional fiction, to bring together the real and the spectacular. As the noted exponents of magical realism, Zamora and Faris say: “..the supernatural is not a simple or obvious matter, but it is an ordinary matter, an everyday occurrence–

admitted, accepted, and integrated into the rationality and materiality of literary realism” (3). They go on to say that

magical realism is a mode suited to exploring—and transgressing—boundaries, whether the boundaries are ontological, political, geographical, or generic. Magical realism often facilitates the fusion, or coexistence, of possible worlds, spaces, systems that would be irreconcilable in other modes of fiction.

(5-6)

Thus, since magical realism is a mode that is suited to transgress boundaries, the narrating consciousness endorses this vital element of magical realism by shattering the walls that separate reality and myth¹, causing them to coexist and become indispensable parts of the created story. It thus opens and enters a new space of fiction where reality and myth intertwine, the “hybrid space” that Rawdon Wilson describes (Zamora and Faris 220), which is a combination of reality and myth. This operating consciousness navigates through the hybrid space and takes on a transgressive nature. It begins to adapt and acclimatize itself to the transgressive and subversive demands of the hybrid space. Thus, it becomes transgressive in nature as it manoeuvres in the hybrid space, where reality has been reordered because of the overlapping of reality and myth. With the frontiers of fiction expanded, the transgressing narrative consciousness is the vehicle used by García Márquez to conjure the hybrid fictional space required by magical realism.

The transgressing narrative consciousness therefore, is the creative resource that García Márquez uses to interpret the mode of magical realism. It is the same narrative method used by his grandmother. He has, however, modified it by using other modernist techniques, like the stream of consciousness technique and drawing from history, politics and society. While telling its story, all accepted norms of fiction are overturned and subverted. The transgressing narrative consciousness makes magical realist texts “subversive”, attaining an “in-betweenness” and an “all-at-onceness” because of its all-encompassing embrace. (Zamora and Faris 6) Bowers elucidates by saying that the “root of this transgressive and subversive aspect lies in the fact that, once the category of truth has been brought into question and the category of the real broken down or overturned, the boundaries of other categories become vulnerable” (64). Thus, if the truth and what is real is broken down, a chain reaction will set in, in which all that is understood as absolute will become relative, reminding one of the varied ways in which legend and myth can become complementary to reality and history, providing a different way of looking at human experience. The transgressing narrative consciousness has unlimited dynamism; it freely transmutes reality and



myth to evoke a necessary contemporary relevance. Relevance is evoked by the sources of García Márquez's fiction which

are factual...The literary context of García Márquez can be found in the history of Colombia, his private life, and that of his parents and grandparents. Aracataca, the place where he was born, appears either as Macondo or a nameless town close by a river...The images of power, religion, and celebrations all seem to have an origin in the oral traditions or the social and historical culture of Colombia.

(Pelayo 22)

García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) is the quintessential magical realist novel and displays the transgressive mode of fiction associated with him. This mode arose out of a need to challenge fixed boundaries, making itself a new craft of fiction writing. The raw materials for *One Hundred Years of Solitude* were mainly provided by García Márquez's childhood with his grandparents and extended family in the town of Aracataca. In his memoir *Living to Tell the Tale*, he recounts:

I cannot imagine a family environment more favorable to my vocation than that lunatic house, in particular because of the character of the numerous women who reared me. My grandfather and I were the only males, and he initiated me into the sad reality of adults with tales of bloody battles...

(García Márquez 90-91)

Bell-Villada says:

Two sets of memories in particular would stay with him—the adult women, and his grandfather, the soldier. The women ran the house and took good care of little Gabito, encouraging his curiosity and his story-telling bent. Being somewhat superstitious, they were given to saying or doing certain things he would later memorialize.

(42)

Thus, it may be said that the seeds of the transgressive mode of magical realism were sown in the formative years of García Márquez's childhood. Myth, history, tragedy, politics, family and more fill the kaleidoscopic hybrid space of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

The Autumn of the Patriarch (1975) which comes eight years after *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, dramatizes the life and power of a desolate dictator, who transcribes reality in terms other than what has already been done in fiction before. The novel is based in an unknown Caribbean town, with the intermittent beam of the lighthouse and the crumbling palace of the Patriarch. The reality that is perceived by the senses is enhanced to possess a grand exuberance and freedom. *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, however, is usually neglected because it is difficult and tedious to read, consisting "of six unnumbered chapters, each a single paragraph, with syntax growing ever more sinuous and serpentine as the book progresses" (Bell-Villada 168).

The first chapter of the novel is made up of thirty-one sentences, the third chapter, nineteen, the fifth, fifteen, and finally the sixth is made up of a single sentence. There are no quotation marks, colons, semicolons or dashes, except full stops and commas. There is the change of pronouns, causing a sea of voices to speak. Besides this, there is also the

stream of consciousness of the Patriarch himself, which is a maze of memory marked by his incapacity for love and happiness, violence, disease, torture, murder and instability. Thus, García Márquez has subverted not only the barriers of fiction, but those of conventional grammar. The Patriarch is a synthesis of political dictators who have lived through history and his need for power brings about the complete destruction not only of himself, but of his nation. *The Autumn of the Patriarch* is significant due to the fact that “Latin dictators have achieved the status of a kind of world myth, as García Márquez himself likes to remark, and his novel beautifully sums up the historical roots, the felt qualities, and the ‘spiritual’ essence of that myth” (Bell-Villada 192).

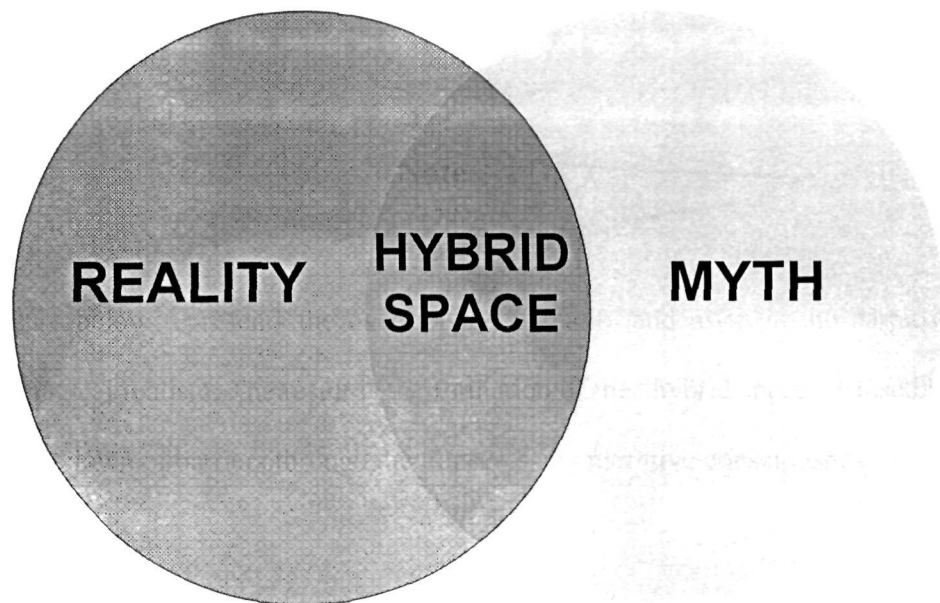
Collected Stories (1991) documents the growth and maturation of García Márquez, from the 1940’s, to the full flowering of the 1970’s. The collection contains three volumes of short stories, placed in the collection as they appeared in the original Spanish: *Eyes of a Blue Dog*, *Big Mama’s Funeral* and *The Incredible and Sad Tale of Innocent Eréndira and Her Heartless Grandmother*. Beginning as a short story writer, García Márquez’s first published short story was “The Third Resignation” (1947). It was published in a liberal newspaper in Bogota, the capital of Colombia, called *El Espectador* (The Spectator). “The Third

Resignation” deals with the theme of death which would become a prominent theme of García Márquez’s fiction. The short stories while kindling “the subtle, small-scale, mostly interpersonal upsets and triumphs of common village folk—the sleepy priests, pool-hall souses, provincial wheeler-dealers, troubled but stouthearted women, and the abandoned, the mismatched, or the bereaved” (Bell-Villada 120), create and possess an environment which facilitates the challenging of accepted reality.

All three works, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories* share a common insight and consciousness, determined by García Márquez’s attempt to transgress and subvert the lived reality in order to write fiction that would dismantle the rigidity of the known reality.

Note

¹ The figure below represents the overlapping of reality and myth in the narrative mode of magical realism. The result is the formation of the “hybrid space”, caused by the breaking down of barriers through the transgressing narrative consciousness.



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Chapter II

The Transgressing Consciousness in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*

The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka made García Márquez realize that Kafka's "voice" had the same echoes as his grandmother's: "that's how my grandmother used to tell stories, the wildest things with a completely natural tone of voice" (Ruch). He goes on to say that in "previous attempts to write, I tried to tell the story without believing in it. I discovered that what I had to do was believe in them myself and write them with the same expression with which my grandmother told them: with a brick face" (Ruch and Kaye). This brick faced consciousness is the narrative means that García Márquez uses to cut cross accepted reality and to move into fictional realms that challenge the defining norms of fiction.

This narrating consciousness has an oral character, as García Márquez points out, that may be traced to his grandparents and more specifically, his grandmother. The oral tradition perceives the magical and real in the same way. Thus, the exigencies of the oral allow García Márquez to use the bizarre and exaggerated, facilitating the movement between the real and the magical. He emulates the speaking voice of the

oral tradition so successfully, that in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*, the narrating consciousness is able to transgress boundaries in a neutral and detached tone, telling the story from an objective perspective, treating magical and real as the same. A “tonal unity” (Gullon 28) is achieved by the calm and composed narration, making the narrating consciousness, the “center of consciousness” (Gullon 28).

The narrating consciousness in the fiction discussed, has a “stance” that “is often characterized as childlike or naïve because magical events are accepted...as children seem to accept such events in stories, without questioning reality” (Faris 94). Subsequently, the narrating consciousness functions like a centrifugal force generating different methods of subverting fictional thresholds. As the oral tradition demands that the narrating consciousness accept the exaggerated and extraordinary as normal and ordinary, it informs, enlightens and communicates to the narrating consciousness its ability to overturn and transform reality and history, and thus, to produce a reality and history coloured by myth. It is in this new and unpredictable reality that the transgressing narrative consciousness thrives. Conventional ideas for instance, of time, life and death in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Collected Stories* are

replaced by radical and innovative ones; while in *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, the narrating consciousness magnifies reality to become more complex. Nothing can be taken for granted as the narrating consciousness gains momentum, directing the events and characters to fantastic and unimaginable lengths. Consequently, it facilitates the intersection of the commonplace and incredible, significant aspects of the charismatic, self-sufficient and transgressing consciousness of the oral tradition that was familiar to Márquez:

...they saw a youthful Melquíades, recovered, unwrinkled, with a new and flashing set of teeth. Those who remembered his gums that had been destroyed by scurvy, his flaccid cheeks, and his withered lips trembled with fear at the final proof of the gypsy's supernatural power. The fear turned into panic when Melquíades took out his teeth, intact, encased in their gums, and showed them to the audience for an instant—a fleeting instant in which he went back to being the same decrepit man of years past—and put them back again and smiled once more with the full control of his restored youth.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 8)

The objective speaking voice of the oral tradition is influenced by its subjective understanding of events. Thus memory forms an important aspect of the oral tradition, in the sense that a story is narrated from the mind's recesses. In magical realism, memory feeds on reality, but because it moves in its own hybrid space, it must of necessity give birth to myth. Thus, memory changes its normal functioning, and as it conjures events from reality, it produces mythical elements reflecting back to the transgressive vision of the narrating consciousness. Memory, in the

hybrid space moves not only between the past and the present, but also between the conscious and the subconscious, as well as between reality and myth. As García Márquez says: “I realized that reality is also the myths of the common people, it is the beliefs, their legends; they are their everyday life and they affect their triumphs and failures” (qtd. in Bowers 38). The narration of events by the transgressing consciousness is thus aided by memory, which creates a space that embraces the magical and real, and employs its own motifs and hyperboles thus:

...he locked himself up until death in the run-down palace from whose highest windows we were now watching with tight hearts the same gloomy sunset that he must have seen so many times from his throne of illusions, we saw the intermittent beacon of the lighthouse as it flooded the ruined salons with its green and languid waters,...we saw below the scattered, steamy city, the instantaneous horizon of pale lightning flashes in the crater of ashes of the sea that had been sold...Not only had we ended up really believing that he had been conceived to survive the third comet but that conviction had infused us with a security and a restful feeling that we tried to hide with all manner of jokes about old age,..

(*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 107)

One Hundred Years of Solitude, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories* represent the ways in which the narrating consciousness has transgressed the familiar to defamiliarize it, for the purpose of commenting on the individual, as well as the society.

“*One Hundred Years of Solitude* begins in *medias res* (in the middle of the events)” and in the first chapter the reader “goes back in time” to witness the “memory that opens the novel” (Pelayo 92). Thus,

one finds memory establishing its role as a transgressive vehicle, as Colonel Aureliano Buendía standing in front of a firing squad, which is a future event, remembers the day when his father, José Arcadio Buendía took him to see ice for the first time, which is a past event: “Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 1). The first chapter “serves as a paradigm of the overall narrational pattern” (Sims 11). The pattern that the narrating consciousness follows is therefore circular, a constant moving between the past, the present and the future. Thus, it remembers “the excesses of gluttony, cruelty, virility, sexual potency, violence, death, longevity, and solitude” of the characters, (Pelayo 97) talking in the “brickface” tone that García Márquez borrowed from his grandmother.

The fresh ground that the transgressing consciousness unlocks is a “hybrid space” where “eruptions occur normally and sudden folds crease the seemingly predictable...” (Zamora and Faris 222); a space that traverses unlimited possibilities, where reality and myth merge. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the space occupied by Macondo is marked by a boundary which is new, flexible and porous because “the world was so

recent that many things lacked names,...” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 1). Becoming an expert in the use of the instruments that the gypsy Melquíades gives him, José Arcadio Buendía, the founder of Macondo, retreats into his laboratory and conceives “a notion of space that allowed him to navigate across unknown seas, to visit uninhabited territories, and to establish relations with splendid beings without having to leave his study” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 4). The patriarch of the Buendía family lays the foundation for the mingling of the magical and the real in his “imagined space” (Gullon 29). The matriarch, Ursula Iguarán, who is the embodiment of practicality and strength, impregnates

the fictional space with everyday realities so that the marvelous may enter it smoothly. Thus stabilized and “normalized” the novelistic space assimilates prodigious things and converts them into acceptable phenomena which the reader can easily admit...Together, José Arcadio Buendía’s imagined space and Úrsula’s familiar space embrace everything that has ever existed or exists, from nothingness to infinity.

(Gullon 28)

The imagined and the familiar is experienced in the fictional space and expressed by the transgressing consciousness in a tone that succeeds in instilling “confidence in the listener and succeeds in making itself heard and accepted without objections” (Gullon 28). Thus, memory and space, together with motif and hyperbole work to garner command over the nostalgic and meandering pattern of García Márquez’s transgressive fictional craft.

The first large scale extraordinary event that involves all of the Macondites is the insomnia plague, which is first mentioned with the arrival of Visitación. Visitación is a Guajiro Indian woman who arrives with her brother in Macondo. One is told that she and her brother were “in flight from a plague of insomnia that had been scourging their tribe for several years” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 38). Nothing more is mentioned about the insomnia plague till the mysterious arrival of the child Rebeca, who is adopted by the Buendías. One night Rebeca is found on a rocker sucking her finger with her eyes lighted up like those of a cat. Immediately, Visitación recognized the eyes which were symptoms of the insomnia plague. José Arcadio Buendía thinks nothing of it at first, until the family realizes that they had not slept for fifty hours. Extraordinary things begin to happen: “In that state of hallucinated lucidity, not only did they see the images of their own dreams, but saw the images dreamed by others” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 46). The reaction of the people to the insomnia plague is equally interesting:

No one was alarmed at first. On the contrary, they were happy at not sleeping because there was so much to do...They worked so hard that soon they had nothing else to do and they could be found at three o'clock in the morning with their arms crossed, counting the notes in the waltz of the clock.

(*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 46)

The narrating consciousness communicates the lack of alarm and fear of the people and the reader realizes that this is yet another of the incredible

episodes that will mark the novel. The people do not attribute any supernatural or magical explanation to the plague, for they come to a matter-of-fact discovery that the plague was spreading through food and drink. Together with this, the loss of memory is an effect of the insomnia plague. Aureliano ingeniously comes up with the plan to label everything with its name so that nothing is forgotten. The insomnia plague however brings a succumbing to “an imaginary reality” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 49) which was not practical, but comforting for the people who “went on living in a reality that was slipping away, momentarily captured by words, but which would escape irremediably when they forgot the values of the written letters” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 49). Words too, would lose their meaning and significance in the imaginary reality that makes the Macondites lose their memory and isolate them from daily life. This isolation and memory loss is destructive and initiates the decline of the Buendía family and Macondo itself.

“Memory, in García Márquez’s view, is synonymous with redemption: to remember is to overcome, to defeat the forces of evil” (Stavans 64). Thus, memory saves one from the plague of forgetting and the truth from being annihilated. The redemptive function of memory is evident in the Banana massacre which is a real event that happened in

Ciénaga, in the year 1928. What should be noticed is the fact that the transgressing consciousness brings together the insomnia plague, which is an extraordinary event, and the Banana massacre which is a real event in Colombian history. The mythical and historical events are blended together to emphasize the importance of memory.

The Banana massacre was caused when the workers of the United Fruit Company protested against the injustice suffered by them. After many days of striking, the men and women were told to gather at the train station for a negotiation with an official from the government who would listen to their grievances. As it turns out, the government had no intention of solving the problems of the workers. The train never arrived but a Lieutenant went on the roof of the station and read out an order signed by the general and his secretary authorizing the army to shoot if the workers did not surrender within five minutes. The men and women did not surrender and what followed is related by the narrating consciousness in horrifying images:

They were penned in, swirling about in a gigantic whirlwind that little by little was being reduced to its epicenter as the edges were systematically being cut off all around like an onion being peeled by the insatiable and methodical shears of the machine guns.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 311)

José Arcadio Segundo, the great grandson of José Arcadio Buendía and the leader of the strike was not killed, but this is the searing memory he has to live with:

He realized that he was riding on an endless and silent train and that his head was caked with dry blood...Prepared to sleep for many hours, safe from the terror and the horror, he made himself comfortable on the side that pained him less, and only then did he discover that he was lying against dead people...in the flashes of light...he saw the man corpses, woman corpses, child corpses who would be thrown into the sea like rejected bananas.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 312)

García Márquez recalls the massacre in *Living to Tell the Tale*, which he writes about in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*:

My mother's version had such meager numbers and a setting so abject for the imposing drama I had imagined that it caused a sense of frustration in me. Later, I spoke with survivors and witnesses and searched through newspaper archives and official documents, and I realized that the truth did not lie anywhere. 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. And so my version was lost forever at some improbable point between the two extremes. But it was so persistent that in one of my novels I referred to the massacre with all the precision and horror that I had brought for years to its incubation in my imagination. This was why I kept the number of the dead at three thousand, in order to preserve the epic proportions of the drama,...

(Living to Tell the Tale 69)

García Márquez goes on to say that as a confirmation of the number of dead, on one of the anniversaries of the massacre, the speaker of the Senate asked for a minute of silence in memory of the three thousand people who died. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, when José

Arcadio Segundo manages to get out of the train and reaches Macondo, he asks people about the massacre. To his shock, he finds that the women he talks to say that there have been no deaths in Macondo since the time of his Uncle, Colonel Aureliano Buendía. No one believes that there was a train full of dead bodies. His twin brother Aureliano Segundo tells him that he had read a proclamation saying that the workers had gone home peacefully. The account of the Banana massacre serves to show that reality and history can be wiped out, to become myth, and it is only through memory that any semblance of truth can be revealed. Thus, García Márquez uses the transgressing consciousness to subvert reality and history in order to show how persistently powerful memory and myth can be. After the Banana massacre, Macondo sinks deep into desolation. The rain that occurs after it ceases only after four years, eleven months and two days, leaving Macondo in a state of damp, speeding decay.

Macondo, it can be said, embodies the hybrid space of reality and myth, by which García Márquez brings in both the common and incredible to comment on society. The unending wars of Colonel Aureliano serve as a critique of war and political violence. With superhuman energy he “organized thirty-two armed uprisings and he lost

them all.” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 106) Hyperbole serves to amplify his portrait:

He had seventeen male children by seventeen different women and they were exterminated one after the other on a single night before the oldest one had reached the age of thirty-five. He survived fourteen attempts on his life, seventy-three ambushes, and a firing squad. He lived through a dose of strychnine in his coffee that was enough to kill a horse. He refused the Order of Merit, which the President of the Republic awarded him...the only wound that he received was the one he gave himself in the chest with a pistol and the bullet came out through his back without damaging any vital organ.

(*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 106-107)

This is told by the narrating consciousness in Chapter Six¹ before the events take place in later chapters. Colonel Aureliano shooting himself in the chest for example, is mentioned here but actually takes place later in Chapter Nine. The extraordinary lives of the two sons of José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula, José Arcadio and Colonel Aureliano, reflect the subversive nature of this reality that is further exposed by other episodes. José Arcadio is kidnapped by the gypsies who come to Macondo. When he returns he tells his family that

Under a bright noonday sun in the Gulf of Bengal his ship had killed a sea dragon, in the stomach of which they found the helmet, the buckles, and the weapons of a Crusader. In the Caribbean he had seen the ghost of the pirate ship of Victor Hugues, with its sails torn by the winds of death, the masts chewed by sea worms, and still looking for the course to Guadeloupe.

(*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 94)

José Arcadio has lived the extraordinary life of a sailor and his death is equally incredible:

As soon as José Arcadio closed the bedroom door the sound of a pistol shot echoed through the house. A trickle of blood came out under the door, crossed

the living room, went out into the street, continued on in a straight line across the uneven terraces, went down steps and climbed over curbs, passed along the Street of the Turks,...made a right angle at the Buendía house, went in under the closed door, crossed through the parlor, hugging the walls so as not to stain the rugs... and passed without being seen under Amaranta's chair...through the pantry and came out in the kitchen, where Úrsula was getting ready to crack thirty-six eggs to make bread.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 135)

Here the uncommon movement of José Arcadio's blood enters the domestic space of Úrsula's kitchen to tell her about José Arcadio's death. Thus, a mingling of the imagined space with the familiar space is brought about by the transgressing consciousness.

Wendy B. Faris says that it is the "two-way street phenomenon" (Faris 115) that enables the transgressing consciousness to move in and out of reality and myth to enter the hybrid space. She also says that "the narrative is anchored in this world but ventures out of it and back in; the magical elements gnaw at its flesh, as it were, partially detaching it from concrete reality, but always inserting it back in" (Faris 96). Other incidents that occur in the hybrid space include Remedios's ascension, death's visit to Amaranta and consequent prediction that she will die when she finishes her shroud, the rain of yellow flowers when José Arcadio Buendía dies and the levitation of Father Nicanor Reyna after drinking chocolate, among others.

Besides the subversion of everyday reality, the confusing repetition of the names of characters also proves to be another way in which the narrating consciousness treads beyond the normal. The recurrence of names becomes a motif that possesses much significance. The intention behind the repetition is to reinforce the feeling of circularity (Gullon 31) and more importantly, futility. This becomes clear when the narrating consciousness reveals Úrsula's doubts about naming Aureliano Segundo's son José Arcadio:

Throughout the long history of the family the insistent repetition of names had made her draw some conclusions that seemed to be certain. While the Aurelianos were withdrawn, but with lucid minds, the José Arcadios were impulsive and enterprising, but they were marked with a tragic sign.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 186-187)

Úrsula's observation turns out to be true. The repetition of names from one generation to another is reason enough for the descendant to inherit the same qualities as the ancestor. For example, José Arcadio, the son of José Arcadio Buendía is good humoured but dies mysteriously; José Arcadio Segundo, the great grandson leads the Banana strike and then is fated to live with the traumatic memory of the massacre. Again, Colonel Aureliano fights many wars but ends up disillusioned making gold fishes; and finally, there is Aureliano Babilonia, who unknowingly commits incest with his aunt Amaranta Úrsula, and who deciphers the manuscript, which while he reads, simultaneously brings about the extermination of

Macondo. The process of name-giving therefore, runs counter to itself, turning back to the same mistakes, fears and failures as the ancestor. This truth is exclaimed by Úrsula: “I know all of this by heart,...It’s as if time had turned around and we were back at the beginning” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 199).

Looking over the shoulder and turning back is what the transgressing consciousness also does in *Collected Stories*. The stories begin in *media res* (Pelayo 72) as memory plays an important role in the telling of the stories:

On the third day of rain they had killed so many crabs inside the house that Pelayo had to cross his drenched courtyard and throw them into the sea, because the newborn child had a temperature all night and they thought it was due to the stench. The world had been sad since Tuesday.

(“A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”, *Collected Stories* 186)

The three collections in *Collected Stories* show “the development of García Márquez’s mythical world” (Dauster 467). They highlight the world view that is magnified in his novels. Bell-Villada says that García Márquez was influenced by Hemingway’s “iceberg” theory of the short story, “whereby the author makes visible only one-seventh of what is to be communicated, the other six-sevenths lying implicitly beneath the narrative’s surface” (120). The range of the narrating consciousness is sometimes subdued as in “Tuesday Siesta”, savouring the suspense, and sometimes it gets carried away to become panoramic as in “Big Mama’s

Funeral”. All in all, the short stories provide small doses of what the reader experiences in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *The Autumn of the Patriarch*.

“Tuesday Siesta” begins with a train emerging from a tunnel and then being flanked by banana plantations, immediately bringing to mind the banana plantations of Macondo. A woman tells another person to close the window and the reader comes to know that the other person is a girl. The narrating consciousness describes them thus:

They were the only passengers in the lone third-class car. Since the smoke of the locomotive kept coming through the window, the girl left her seat and put down the only things they had with them: a plastic sack with some things to eat and a bouquet of flowers wrapped in newspaper. She sat on the opposite seat, away from the window, facing her mother. They were both in severe and poor mourning clothes.

(Collected Stories 90)

Now that the narrating consciousness has revealed the relation between these two people, the purpose of their journey however, is still unknown. Time is recorded and it is eleven o’clock in the morning when the train reaches the banana plantations. The heat is “stifling”, the surroundings are “dusty” and there is a “mysterious silence”. The woman and her daughter reach on a “bright August Tuesday” and it is almost two o’clock when they reach the town during siesta time. They go to the parish house where the woman asks for the priest. When the priest finally comes to meet her, it is revealed that the woman is the mother of Carlos

Centeno, a thief who was killed the previous week. At this point, the narrating consciousness moves into the previous week and tells of Rebeca, a widow who had lived in an old house for twenty-eight years. This might be a reference to Rebeca from *One Hundred Years of Solitude* who was the widow of José Arcadio. Colonel Aureliano is also mentioned when we are told that Rebeca used an ancient revolver that had not been fired since the days of Colonel Aureliano. Rebeca had heard something outside her door and took the revolver and shot straight at the lock. In the morning it was discovered that she had killed a man out of self-defense. The man was the woman's only son. The ending of the story is open ended with the woman and her daughter leaving for the cemetery while the whole town watches them. The transgressing consciousness

presents the reader with numerous possibilities of what the story may be about; most of those possibilities appear to be eliminated after a reading of the flashback; but then the end of the story leaves the reader, as the opening did, with numerous possibilities of interpretation.

(Pelayo 74)

In "Big Mama's Funeral", the narrating consciousness starts with the death of Big Mama and then goes back to describing her life. The first sentence of the story emphasizes that the story is a confirmation that Big Mama is a real person:

This is, for all the world's unbelievers, the true account of Big Mama, absolute sovereign of the Kingdom of Macondo, who lived for ninety-two years, and

died in the odor of sanctity one Tuesday last September, and whose funeral was attended by the Pope.

(Collected Stories 170)

The mention of the Pope and Macondo in the same sentence however, shows the merging of reality and myth. Bell-Villada says: “The piece is told in the highly oral style of a public storyteller or carnival barker, who leans on his ‘stool against the front door,’ intent on preempting ‘the historians’” (127). Reality and history therefore take a back seat as the transgressing consciousness focusses the spotlight on myth.

Big Mama’s ancestors had ruled the district of Macondo with “a dominance which covered two centuries” (*Collected Stories* 172) and now that she was dying, she wanted to express her last wishes. Big Mama had never married and she was surrounded by her nieces and nephews.

The transgressing consciousness uses hyperbole to describe her power:

No one knew the origin, or the limits or the real value of her estate, but everyone was used to believing that Big Mama was the owner of the waters, running and still, of rain and drought, and of the district’s roads, telegraph poles, leap years, and heat waves, and that she had furthermore a hereditary right over life and property.

(Collected Stories 172)

Added to this, is the absurdity of her doctor’s treatment of her:

...for three weeks he besmeared the dying woman inside and out with all sorts of academic salves, magnificent stimulants, and masterful suppositories. Then he applied bloated toads to the site of her pain, and leeches to her kidneys...

(Collected Stories 173)

The death and funeral of Big Mama becomes a spectacle, with a carnival and hawkers, lottery stalls and men who sold a balm that was supposed to cure erysipelas and give eternal life. This atmosphere triggers off a recollection of Big Mama celebrating her birthdays. The celebrations would begin two days before and end on her birthday. But now, that she was dying she lists her material possessions and then her “immaterial possessions”:

The wealth of the subsoil, the territorial waters, the colors of the flag, national sovereignty, the traditional parties, the rights of man, civil rights, the nation’s leadership, the right of appeal, Congressional hearings, letters of recommendation, historical records, free elections, beauty queens, transcendental speeches,..the Supreme Court,..the purity of language,..public opinion, the lessons of democracy, Christian morality,..the Communist menace,..the high cost of living, statements of political support.
(Collected Stories 178)

The Pope, the President of the Republic and his ministers, the Council of State, the clergy, representatives of banking, commerce and industry and many others come to the funeral, while Big Mama in her “formaldehyde eternity” does not see any of it.

“Monologue of Isabel Watching It Rain in Macondo” is narrated in the first person and has elements of the stream of consciousness technique. “The story is a portrait of a woman whose incipient emotional depression is exacerbated by the rain and, extension, by the ever-present and overpowering tropic” (Dauster 467). The rain in the story lasts only

for four days, starting on Sunday and ending on Wednesday, but to Isabel it seems as if it had lasted for weeks and months. Quickly, the rain turns from welcome respite into resented blessing. “But without our noticing it, the rain was penetrating too deeply into our senses...our senses had been filled with rain. And on Monday morning they had overflowed” (*Collected Stories* 83). When the rain starts, Isabel and her family had just come from Sunday Mass. It then increases, growing “like an immense tree over the other trees” (*Collected Stories* 83). Here the rain falls on the familiar space only to seep through the walls and then to turn it into a dream-like space of “immense emptiness” (*Collected Stories* 88). This rain is similar to the rain that fell on Macondo for four years that stopped daily life and made reality stagnant. In the story, the transgressing consciousness uses the rain to blur the passage of time and the human senses, taking Isabel into the “labyrinth of the rain” (83). This labyrinth obscures Isabel’s mind. It becomes a mush of distant voices and memories. As in the insomnia plague in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Isabel and her family succumb to an impractical reality: “We were paralyzed, drugged by the rain, given over to the collapse of nature with a peaceful and resigned attitude” (*Collected Stories* 85).

“A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” and “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World” involve a “rupture with objective reality as we know it; they deal with a world in which the most extraordinary fantasy is accepted without question or surprise” (Dauster 470). Pelayo, a character in the story, discovers the old man who

was dressed like a ragpicker. There were only a few faded hairs left on his bald skull and very few teeth in his mouth,...His huge buzzard wings, dirty and half-plucked, were forever entangled in the mud.

(Collected Stories 186)

Similarly, the drowned man is first discovered by children who play with him and bury him in the sand. It is only when the men see him that “alarm” (*Collected Stories 212*) spreads in the village. They notice that he is heavier than any other dead man and attribute it to the water that has entered his bones. It is only later that they realize that the man is taller than usual. The alarm easily subsides and they reason “that maybe the ability to keep on growing after death was part of the nature of certain drowned men” (*Collected Stories 212*). The old man with wings speaks in “a strong sailor’s voice” and the people “skipped over the inconvenience of the wings” and conclude that he is a shipwrecked sailor. Finally, the old man is called an angel by a wise neighbour woman, who was knocked down by the rain. Soon everyone comes to see the “flesh-and-blood angel” (*Collected Stories 187*). Father Gonzaga notices that the angel

was much too human: he had an unbearable smell of the outdoors, the back side of his wings was strewn with parasites and his main feathers had been mistreated by terrestrial winds, and nothing about him measured up to the proud dignity of angels.

(Collected Stories 188)

The doctor too is surprised by “the logic of his wings. They seemed so natural on that completely human organism that he couldn’t understand why other men didn’t have them too” (*Collected Stories 192*). The drowned man is “never treated as a cadaver, but as a man” (Frosch 498). The people imagine his name is “Esteban” (*Collected Stories 214*), they imagine that he had a wife and think of the usual problems that a tall man would have. The people are thus keen to fit the old man with wings and the enormous drowned man into familiar categories (Frosch 497), even though they belong to a mythical world.

“The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship” moves between the voice of the first person narrator who is the boy and the narrating consciousness. It intersects the voice of the boy and the voice of his mother, at certain points in the telling. The boy becomes an orphan later in the narration, an outcast in society, with the secret determination to prove the reality of a ghost ship that he sees. Another unique feature besides the intersection of voices is that the story is made up of one long sentence that transgresses conventional grammatical rules:

I fell asleep counting the stars and I dreamed about that huge ship, of course, he was so convinced that he didn't tell anyone nor did he remember the vision again until the same night in the following March...he ran to tell his mother and she spent three weeks moaning with disappointment, because your brain's rotting away from doing so many things backward, sleeping during the day and going out at night like a criminal,...

(*Collected Stories* 229)

The story begins in the present with the boy saying "Now they're going to see who I am", and then moves into the past when the boy first sees the "illusory liner" by the intermittent light of the beacon and ending in the present, when he finally guides the ship into the town where everyone can see it. The intersection of voices and the moving from the past to the present in "The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship", prepares one for the bolder transgressions of the narrating consciousness in *The Autumn of the Patriarch*.

The narrating consciousness in *The Autumn of the Patriarch* is brought to life by the memory of the people who discover the corpse of the dictator in his crumbling palace:

...there we saw him, in his denim uniform without insignia, boots, the gold spur on his left heel, older than all old men...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.

(*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 3-4)

All the chapters of the novel begin with this discovery, and then the narrating consciousness goes in different directions into the past, present and future, to reveal varied events from the Patriarch's life and aspects of

his personality. The qualities of the Patriarch and events in his life emerge in each chapter like new sand dunes constantly being formed in the desert. The reader is taken on a dense and serpentine transgression of fictional barriers by the use of the stream of consciousness technique, the shifting of pronouns, hyperbole and repetition. It may be seen that the narrating consciousness is an amalgamation of the voice of the Patriarch, the voices of his officers and people, speaking

slowly, at times incomprehendingly, often unconsciously and puzzlingly, they recreate out of their memories and experiences a history of Latin American dictatorship. Sometimes their sentences coil around shared memories or crumble into fragments in incomprehension, sometimes their sentences spill over with marvelous images that make a landscape of myths or corrode with bitterness and rage; sometimes they speak as victims, at other times, as collaborators.

(Bhalla 1597-1598)

The hybrid space of the story is filled with the extraordinary life of the Patriarch and functions like a sponge absorbing the waters of the real and mythical worlds:

there was no other nation except the one that had been made by him in his own image and likeness where space was changed and time corrected by the designs of his absolute will, reconstituted by him ever since the most uncertain origins of his memory...

(*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 143)

Bell-Villada says: "As he prepared to anatomize a phenomenon so grotesque as Caribbean dictatorship, García Márquez found himself faced with a daunting problem of narrative voice, with serious limits inhering in

any of the traditional approaches.” Bell-Villada goes on to say that García Márquez had to think about the options that were available to him. Firstly, if the story was narrated by the dictator’s enemies and victims there would be “much suffering and gore-but few real tensions and surprises”. Secondly, if the story was narrated as a monologue by the dictator “the apparent effect would be one of tacit endorsement or obvious caricature, and in either case a narrow range of experience and emotions.” Thirdly, if the story had a narrator “more or less loyal to the dictator, there would have been the familiar difficulty in perceiving and being fair to the varied response of the larger population.” Fourthly, if it was narrated by an objective and “omniscient onlooker, the tone of evenhanded objectivity toward both dictator and oppositionists would have produced an unconvincing and stillborn text” (176-177).

What García Márquez finally did was

to compose a polyphonic text featuring the extensive solo arias of the dictator, accompanied in turn by the briefer recitatives and ariettas of his intimates and subordinates, contenders and followers, these ever-shifting ensembles further backed by a vast chorus of anonymous supernumeraries, who have their own once-in-a-lifetime stage entrances as observers, admirers, and sufferers of the patriarch, everything from ambassadors to concubines.

(Bell-Villada 177)

This all-encompassing transgressing consciousness made up of myriad voices, stirs repulsion and pity simultaneously. “The net effect of this approach is that García Márquez deals with all sides equally objectively

but also equally sympathetically” (Bell-Villada 177), since each voice expresses purely its own experience. The monologues of the dictator, for instance, take the reader through his rise as the ideal leader who becomes a terror, to his decline into an isolated decrepit man, incapable of ever knowing happiness or love.

...no one except him knew that all he had left in the pockets of his memory were a few odd scraps of the vestiges of the past, that he was alone in the world, deaf as a post, dragging his thick decrepit feet through dark offices...His only contacts with the reality of this world were by then a few scattered scraps of his largest memories, only they kept him alive after he had been despoiled of the affairs of state and stayed swimming in a state of innocence in the limbo of power,...

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 108-109)

This limbo of power reflects the space of limbo, an in-betweenness, into which the narrating consciousness enters.

The Patriarch is the son of Bendición Alvarado, a former prostitute, whose origin is as obscure as his. In her youth, she sold “chicks painted as nightingales, golden toucans, goatsuckers disguised as peacocks” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 125). The Patriarch’s indifference to convention and order is seen in his mother’s canonization. She is canonized by the Patriarch after her death, based on the imprint her body leaves on her shroud. When the nuncio confirms that the “body printed on the linen was not an act of Divine Providence”, (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 120) the Patriarch only listens quietly. A group of hired fanatics then destroy the

palace of the Apostolic Nunciature. The nuncio is paraded on a donkey and with orders from the Patriarch, he is kept half dead on a life raft with provisions for three days, on the same route taken by the European cruise ships, so that

the whole world will know what happens to foreigners who lift their hands against the majesty of the nation, and the Pope will learn now and forever that he may be Pope in Rome with his ring on his finger sitting on his golden throne, but here I am what I am, God damn it,...

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 121)

What follows is a throng of miracles allegedly performed by the dead Bendición Alvarado: the curing of lepers, consumption and impotency; lost relatives and friends found, lost drowned people found. But later, the narrating consciousness reveals that the government had paid the false dropsy victims, the dead man who rose from the grave and the gypsy woman who gave birth to a two-headed monster. Inevitably, Bendición Alvarado is given a “civil sainthood” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch 133*) based on four articles as follows: the proclamation of her civil sainthood by the supreme will of the people, making her the patroness of the nation; the declaration of a war between the nation and the Holy See; the expulsion of the archbishop, bishops, priests and nuns from the nation; and lastly, the expropriation of all the goods and property of the church, which were to be used for the “posthumous patrimony of Saint Bendición Alvarado” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch 133*).

A deliberate indifference to conventional grammar allows for the polyphonic character of the narrating consciousness to express the sordid and shocking life of the Patriarch in the most intricate ways. The Patriarch is the archetypal dictator who undergoes “a process of mythification” (Luna 26), not only through his own words and actions, but through the words and actions of his people, forming a collective body of words, voices and emotion:

and there was a great permanent rally on the main square with shouts of eternal support and large signs saying God Save the Magnificent who arose from the dead on the third day,...he alone was the government, and no one bothered the aims of his will whether by word or deed, because he was so alone in his glory that he no longer had any enemies left,...large banners saying God Save the All Pure who watches over the cleanliness of the nation,..opening a way among the lepers and blind men and cripples who begged the salt of health from his hands, baptizing with his name at the font in the courtyard the children of his godchildren among persistent adulators who proclaimed him the one and only...

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 29-31)

García Márquez, creates in the Patriarch, a character who is master of his realm. The narrating consciousness constantly affirms the inconceivable reach of his power, proclaims him “the corrector of earthquakes, eclipses, leap years and other errors of God,...” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 7) because he can “seize history”, “deny people a common purpose and a recognisable set of moral or political reasons for united action” (Bhalla 1598). This is proven in a vision he has of his mother resurrected from death where she returns

free forever of the risks of the world because he had them tear the pages about the viceroys out of school primers so that they would not exist in history, he had forbidden the statues that disturbed your sleep, mother,..

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 117)

The most outrageous and bizarre subversion of reality is the sale of the Caribbean Sea by the Patriarch to the Americans:

This country isn't worth a plug nickel, except for the sea, of course,...so think about it, your excellency, we'll accept it on account for the interest of that debt which is in arrears and which won't be paid off even with a hundred generations of leaders as diligent as your excellency,..

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 204)

The Patriarch is actually left with two options. Either the marines come to the city or the Americans take the sea. In the end, the sea is bartered for the city:

there was no other way, mother, so they took away the Caribbean in April, Ambassador Ewing's nautical engineers carried it off in numbered pieces to plant it far from the hurricanes in the blood-red dawns of Arizona, they took it away with everything it had inside general sir, with the reflection of our cities, our timid drowned people, our demented dragons,..

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 208)

The nation that was made in the image and likeness of the Patriarch inherits the eccentricities, crimes, trauma and violence of its father. The Patriarch and his nation inhabit the hybrid space, produced by the disruption of the walls of reality and myth by the transgressing consciousness.

“The multivocal nature of the narrative and the cultural hybridity that characterize magical realism extends to its characters, which tend

toward a radical multiplicity” (Faris 25). The narrative consciousness lends itself to a multiplicity of utterances, therefore, that tell the story to suit each character. Throughout the novel, García Márquez uses an array of pronouns to give a panoramic view of “despotism and its both systematic and arbitrary network of relationships” (Bell-Villada 179). The “I”, is usually but not always the dictator; “thou” is addressed to the beauty queen Manuela Sanchez and Leticia Nazareno; “he” refers to the dictator or any other male character; a “you” informs the dictator or the reader of important knowledge; the broad “we” represents the people; a plural “you” by which the dictator gives orders and “they” is also used when the dictator refers to the people who love him and also, the people who find the body of Patricio Aragones, the dictator’s double. (Bell-Villada 178)

Nearing the end, the transgressing consciousness retraces its path to close the circle, by an echo of the memory that began the narrative. The body of the Patriarch now lies unfeeling,

alien to the clamor of the frantic crowds who took to the streets singing hymns of joy at the jubilant news of his death and alien forevermore to the music of liberation and the rockets of jubilation and the bells of glory that announced to the world the good news that the uncountable time of eternity had come to an end.

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 229)

The transgressing narrative consciousness displaces the bricks in the wall of reality, to see beyond reality and to embrace magic and myth. García Márquez has crafted the narrating consciousness in such a way, that it transgresses into a world where reality and magic overlap: the world of his grandmother that converges with the world of modern fiction. What makes García Márquez's narrating consciousness different is the way in which he has incorporated the outlook of the oral tradition of his community into it. He gives to the narrating consciousness knowledge and understanding of the two worlds. The power and reach of the narrating consciousness is therefore enhanced by its transgressive facet, given to it by the oral tradition. Finally, García Márquez's transgressing consciousness weaves a narrative that is a juxtaposition of the imperfection, weakness and brutality of reality and history.

Note

¹ In *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, Gabriel García Márquez does not number the chapters. The numbering of the chapters has been done for the purpose of explanation.

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Chapter III

Transgressing Characters in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*

The transgressive nature of the characters springs from a transgressing consciousness that leaps beyond the tight restrictions of reality, thereby infusing the characters with subversive qualities. They take root in the hybrid space of García Márquez's fiction, which is a world where reality is disrupted, in order to make place for magic and myth. The characters possess their own peculiarities; they are abnormal or sub-normal. They are exaggerations, which suggest that their natures do not lead to truth, but to a challenging of truth. The characters form complex dimensions and extensions of the transgressing consciousness; they are the subversive dynamic that contributes to overturning established boundaries.

José Arcadio Buendía is the eccentric patriarch who sets the precedent for his descendants in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula Iguarán are actually cousins and their families were against their marriage. Ignoring their protests, they marry each other. Úrsula, is afraid of consummating the marriage because of the fear produced in her by her mother of their child being born with a pig's

tail. One tragic night, José Arcadio Buendía kills a man named Prudencio Aguilar, who loses to him in a cockfight. The reason was because Prudencio insulted him by saying that the rooster might do Úrsula some good because there was a rumour that José Arcadio Buendía was impotent. Furious, José Arcadio Buendía kills him with a spear. The ghost of Prudencio Aguilar then starts to haunt them and José Arcadio Buendía decides that he and Úrsula would leave their village. Along with some young men and their families, José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula set out on their journey of several months. One night, José Arcadio Buendía dreamed that

a noisy city with houses having mirror walls rose up. He asked what city it was and they answered him with a name that he had never heard, that had no meaning at all, but that had a supernatural echo in his dream: Macondo. On the following day he convinced his men that they would never find the sea. He ordered them to cut down the trees to make a clearing beside the river, at the coolest spot on the bank, and there they founded the village.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 24-25)

Being an enterprising man, José Arcadio Buendía helps in the setting up of Macondo and very soon it becomes a prosperous village. José Arcadio Buendía is also impulsive with a wild imagination and an obsession for science. The things the gypsies bring to Macondo, in particular Melquíades, satisfy his hunger. He “misappropriates one gypsy invention after another-trying to use the magnet to extract gold from the

earth, the magnifying glass to conduct solar warfare, ice to build houses, the daguerreotype to take a picture of God...” (Tobin 43). Thus, José Arcadio Buendía possesses the adventurous nature that challenges the limits of reality. His “imagined space” as Gullon puts it, triggers the quaint and bewildering legacy of the Buendías.

Úrsula, is the tenacious matriarch who holds the family together. She is its centre and lives for more than a century. While Úrsula fills the fictional space with domesticity, she also possesses an insightfulness and strength that sees through her troubled family. This enables her to be “redeemed from joyless drudgery by her moral strength and her sheer energy” (Bell-Villada 103). It is she who realizes that time is moving in a circle as she says many times in the novel. After Úrsula scolds José Arcadio Segundo, who after the Banana massacre confines himself to Melquíades’ room, José Arcadio Segundo says to her:

“What do you expect?” he murmured. “Time passes.” “That’s how it goes,” Úrsula said, “but not so much.” When she said it she realized that she was giving the same reply that Colonel Aureliano Buendía had given in his death cell, and once again she shuddered with the evidence that time was not passing, as she had just admitted, but that it was turning in a circle.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 341)

Úrsula herself, undermines time by dying between the age of one hundred and fifteen and one hundred and twenty-two. She takes care of even her great great grandchildren Renata Remedios (Meme), José Arcadio and

Amaranta Úrsula. She also takes care of Meme's bastard son, Aureliano Babilonia, who unknowingly commits incest with his aunt, Amaranta Úrsula and ultimately deciphers Melquíades' parchments. Úrsula then proclaims that she will die after the four years of rain. With the end of the rain, she begins to lose her reason.

She finally mixed up the past with the present...Little by little she was shrinking, turning into a fetus, becoming mummified in life to the point that in her last months she was a cherry raisin lost inside of her nightgown...

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 347-348)

Úrsula finally dies on Good Friday, having been an integral part of the peculiarities and trauma of her incredible family.

The José Arcadios and Aurelianos, who are the descendants of José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula, bear most importantly, the stigma of their inherited names. As was mentioned in Chapter Two, the names “present a clearcut system of personality types that is to remain consistent throughout the narrative (Bell-Villada 97). The José Arcadios are the physical and sensualist type, while the Aurelianos are the sober, rational, slightly cold yet inspired thinking type, whose

ways of death are as telling as their paths of life: whereas the José Arcadios all die suffering as victims of murder or disease (their “tragic sign”), all three Aurelianos die with their eyes open and their mental powers fully intact.

(Bell-Villada 97)

When José Arcadio, the first born of José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula, returns from his life as a sailor, he is described thus:

A huge man had arrived. His square shoulders barely fitted through the doorways. He was wearing a medal of Our Lady of Help around his bison neck, his arms and chest were completely covered with cryptic tattooing...his jaws were of iron, and he wore a sad smile. He had a belt on that was twice as thick as the cinch of a horse, boots with leggings and spurs and iron on the heels, and his presence gave the quaking impression of a seismic tremor.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 92)

This description of José Arcadio gives him an animalistic quality. Reality and myth come together again when he tells his family about killing a dragon and finding the helmet and weapons of a Crusader inside its stomach and seeing the ghost ship of Victor Hugues. José Arcadio's "tragic sign" takes over after he marries Rebeca when he is mysteriously killed by a gun shot, whose origin is unknown. The subversion of reality is complete when his blood flows out of his house to the Buendía family house and into Úrsula's kitchen.

"The character of Colonel Aureliano Buendía is closely modeled after General Rafael Uribe Uribe, a legendary figure of Liberal politics and of the Thousand Days' War under whose command the novelist's grandfather Márquez fought" (Bell-Villada 105). Fighting on the Liberal side, Colonel Aureliano Buendía engages in a long drawn war that proves to be futile. The thirty-two failed uprisings, fourteen assassination attempts, seventy-three ambushes and seventeen sons who died before the age of thirty-five, take their toll on him. Disillusionment follows, when Colonel Aureliano realizes that he was in the war solely because of his

pride and not because of the Liberal party. (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 139) The war makes him numb to emotion and “he made one last effort to search in his heart for the place where his affection had rotted away and he could not find it” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 177-178).

On the day of the signing of the treaty of Neerlandia, Colonel Aureliano tries to shoot himself, but as an example of “the literally extraordinary though nonetheless possible” (Bell-Villada 110), the bullet “followed such a neat path that the doctor was able to put a cord soaked in iodine in through the chest and withdraw it from the back” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 183). By fluke, Colonel Aureliano defies death and continues to live, making little gold fishes. He finally dies on a bright evening while urinating against the chestnut tree, where his father was tied till he died.

Amaranta, José Arcadio and Colonel Aureliano’s only sister, remains a spinster. She is visited by death that appears as a woman in blue with long hair. The encounter does not disturb Amaranta’s daily life:

Death did not tell her when she was going to die or whether her hour was assigned...but ordered her to begin sewing her own shroud on the next sixth of April. She was authorized to make it as complicated and as fine as she wanted,...and she was told that she would die without pain, fear, or bitterness at dusk on the day that she finished it.

(*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 284)

Generation after generation, the characters challenge reality, as they draw their sustenance from the hybrid space. Remedios the Beauty, Amaranta's grandniece, in turn, overturns reality because she does not die, but ascends to the sky.

Amaranta felt a mysterious trembling in the lace on her petticoats and she tried to grasp the sheet so that she would not fall down at the instant in which Remedios the Beauty began to rise. Úrsula, almost blind at the time,...left the sheets to the mercy of the light as she watched Remedios the Beauty waving good-bye in the midst of the flapping sheets that rose up with her...

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 242-243)

However, before Remedios ascends to the sky, strange events occur as a result of her fatal effect on men.

What no member of the family ever knew was that the strangers did not take long to realize that Remedios the Beauty gave off a breath of perturbation, a tormenting breeze that was still perceptible several hours after she had passed by. Men expert in the disturbances of love, experienced all over the world, stated that they had never suffered an anxiety similar to the one produced by the natural smell of Remedios the Beauty.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 237)

One day while Remedios the Beauty is taking a bath, a man climbed on the roof and removed the tiles so that he could come down to the bathroom. At that moment, the roof collapsed and the man died. When the body was removed, there was the strong odour of Remedios on the man's skin.

It was so deep in his body that the cracks in his skull did not give off blood but an amber-colored oil that was impregnated with that secret perfume, and then they understood that the smell of Remedios the Beauty kept on torturing men beyond death, right down to the dust of their bones.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 239)

Remedios the Beauty, thus overturns reality with her natural but fatal body odour.

The twins, José Arcadio Segundo and Aureliano Segundo who are Remedios the Beauty's brothers also overturn reality by their eccentricities. In them, there is a reversal of the usual qualities inherited by the José Arcadios and the Aurelianos. This is perhaps the outcome of them mischievously mixing up their names while they were little boys, with the result that their names are changed forever. Like their ancestors, they live extraordinary lives that magnify reality, which is tragic nonetheless. Aureliano Segundo inherits the sexual prowess of José Arcadio. He makes Petra Cotes his mistress and it is Aureliano Segundo's relationship with her that causes

the supernatural proliferation of his animals. His mares would bear triplets, his hens laid twice a day, and his hogs fattened with such speed that no one could explain such disorderly fecundity except through the use of black magic...All he had to do was to take Petra Cotes to his breeding grounds and have her ride across his land in order to have every animal marked with his brand succumb to the irremediable plague of proliferation.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 195)

José Arcadio Segundo on the other hand, is solitary and pensive like the Aurelianos. Having no real relationship with anyone in the family, he shuts himself in the workshop to talk to Colonel Aureliano Buendía. He then takes the job of a foreman in the banana plantation. With the trouble

from the Banana strike, José Arcadio Segundo, along with other leaders is imprisoned.

The memory that José Arcadio Segundo has of the Banana massacre enables him to challenge the history that is imposed on the people of Macondo. He is the sole survivor and the only one who is not secretly killed by the government in its effort to exterminate all the unionists, arsonists, and rebels. (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 315) After the massacre, José Arcadio Segundo takes refuge in Melquíades' room, trying to decipher Melquíades' parchments and to preserve his memory of the massacre. When the soldiers come to the Buendía house they search the rooms and finally reach Melquíades' room. Aureliano Segundo and their mother Santa Sofía de la Piedad open the room knowing that José Arcadio Segundo would be killed, but to their shock, the officer does not see José Arcadio Segundo. "Here the aura of magic left by the old gypsy renders the fugitive invisible to his pursuers, and since he becomes a recluse from this moment on, the memory of his existence fades into mythical oblivion along with that of the strike and its aftermath" (McMurray 179). José Arcadio Segundo found in Melquíades' room "the repose that he had not had for one single instant during his previous life" (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 318).

Thus, José Arcadio Segundo living in Melquíades' room, disrupts reality by being invisible to the soldiers who look at the room "with the same eyes as Colonel Aureliano Buendía" (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 318). These eyes are the eyes that see only war; these eyes perpetuate the hopelessness and purposelessness of war. José Arcadio Segundo, in contrast to Colonel Aureliano Buendía, has a concrete purpose to fight for and a traumatizing memory to keep his humanity alive. Another fact that is crucial to the novel is José Arcadio Segundo teaching his nephew, Aureliano Babilonia, Meme's son, to decipher Melquíades' parchments. Without Aureliano Babilonia, the parchments would not be unravelled and the story would not reach its apocalyptic end.

Aureliano Babilonia, who is Aureliano Segundo and Fernanda del Carpio's grandson, is the illegitimate son of Renata Remedios (Meme) and Mauricio Babilonia. He is born in the convent where Fernanda sends Renata Remedios. Fernanda reluctantly takes Aureliano Babilonia when he is brought by a nun and keeps his origin secret. Looking very similar to Colonel Aureliano, Aureliano stays in Melquíades' room and reads endlessly. He talks to the ghost of Melquíades who guides him.

Aureliano had finished classifying the alphabet of the parchments, so that when Melquíades asked him if he had discovered the language in which they had been written he did not hesitate to answer. "Sanskrit," he said.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 362)

Melquíades also tells Aureliano that he would have time to learn Sanskrit because the parchments would be deciphered only after they were a hundred years old.

Amaranta Úrsula, Aureliano Segundo and Fernanda's daughter-about the same age as Aureliano Babilonia-is sent to study in Belgium. When she comes back, the only person living in the dilapidated house is Aureliano Babilonia. Amaranta Úrsula brings her husband, who is a Flemish man named Gaston. Gaston has a plan to establish an airmail service in Macondo and so leaves for Belgium to make arrangements. In the meantime, Aureliano Babilonia and Amaranta Úrsula fall in love.

It was a mad passion, unhinging, which made Fernanda's bones tremble with horror in her grave and which kept them in a state of perpetual excitement...In the bewilderment of passion she watched the ants devastating the garden, sating their prehistoric hunger with the beams of the house, and she watched the torrents of living lava take over the porch again, but she bothered to fight them only when she found them in her bedroom. Aureliano abandoned the parchments, did not leave the house again,..They lost their sense of reality, the notion of time, the rhythm of daily habits.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 410)

The exact relation between Amaranta Úrsula and Aureliano Babilonia remains unknown to them, but they have a strong suspicion that they are related. Amaranta Úrsula then dies while giving birth to their son. Aureliano is devastated by the death of Amaranta Úrsula. What is worse, the baby is born with a pig's tail, which confirms that Amaranta Úrsula

and Aureliano are related. Leaving the house in sorrow, Aureliano returns to find that his son is being eaten by the ants. Horrified, Aureliano remembers the epigraph of the parchments: “The first of the line is tied to a tree and the last is being eaten by the ants” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 420). Realizing that the truth about his fate lay in the parchments, he found and read them aloud. Thus, he finds out that Amaranta Úrsula is actually his aunt. Reading the parchments to the end, Aureliano Babilonia then completes the destruction of Macondo. The parchments allow Aureliano Babilonia to transgress time and space as he simultaneously reads and brings his family’s end. Unknowingly, Aureliano Babilonia and Amaranta Úrsula repeat the incest that was first committed by José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula and by so doing, seal the fate of the Buendías.

García Márquez systematically unsettles discrete, stable identity with his familial repetitions and self-reflections and his integrations of the living and the dead. The repeating José Arcadios and Aurelianos are the successive generations of a family, but not in any realistic sense. Rather, we may think of them, paradoxically, as a simultaneous series, an on-going progression of ahistorical archetypes...It is, then, as if the José Arcadios and Aurelianos are their own dead precursors, their own ghosts.

(Zamora and Faris 502)

Thus, the characters embody the past, present and future of their family.

Their identities are not fixed but flexible and constantly in flux. The

ancestor returns in the descendant to perform new transgressions of reality and history.

In *Collected Stories*, the focus is upon the unnatural nature of the overriding narrating consciousness that marks García Márquez's fiction, as his characters travel into a realm where paradox is truth. The unnamed man in "The Third Resignation" seems to be dead as he is lying in a coffin, but what one discovers from reading his monologue is that he is still growing physically. His mother denies that he has died and takes great care of him in his coffin:

It was with great satisfaction that she examined the metric tape in those days, when after measuring him she would ascertain that he had grown several centimeters. She had the maternal satisfaction of seeing him alive. Still, she took care to avoid the presence of strangers in the house. After all, the existence of a corpse in family quarters over long years was disagreeable and mysterious.

(Collected Stories 5)

In the beginning the man copes with his condition, but when he realizes his arms and legs will fall off, he becomes tortured by the fear of being buried alive. He knows he is finally dead because of the smell of his decomposing body. Unable to articulate his fear, he succumbs to being buried alive. Paradoxical as it is, the story confronts the reality of death through the man, in a way that subverts ordinary understandings of death. Thus, the unnamed man embodies a psychological and a physical

exploration of the experience of being dead and a challenge of death itself.

“The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World” also deals with a man growing in death but, with the difference that he is not conscious of his condition as the man in “The Third Resignation”. The man in this story overturns reality by being monumental in size and then receiving a proper sea burial from the people who find his corpse. The women are fascinated by him and attribute to him supernatural powers:

They thought that he would have had so much authority that he could have drawn fish out of the sea simply by calling their names and that he would have put so much work into his land that springs would have burst forth from among the rocks so that he would have been able to plant flowers on the cliffs.

(Collected Stories 214)

The women imagine him when he was alive as someone named “Esteban”, who is called the “handsome fool”, becoming increasingly real to them as they weep for him. The men however, grow tired of this hysteria-causing giant. “The shifting points of view in the story correspond to the general cycle of mystery, discovery, knowledge, and finally, emergence of a legend” (Bell-Villada 137). The men are finally convinced when their pity is aroused by the “truth” in Esteban’s manner. The drowned man transgresses death, as he unsettles the perception of what is real:

...their houses would have wider doors, higher ceilings, and stronger floors so that Esteban's memory could go everywhere without bumping into beams...because they were going to paint their house fronts gay colors to make Esteban's memory eternal...

(Collected Stories 217-218)

Big Mama in "Big Mama's Funeral" also attains myth status with her grand funeral and the legacy she leaves behind. The narrating consciousness creates a character who is deemed immortal by the people she rules over.

When she sat on her balcony in the cool afternoon air, with all the weight of her belly and authority squeezed into her old rattan rocker, she seemed, in truth, infinitely rich and powerful, the richest and most powerful matron in the world. It had not occurred to anyone to think that Big Mama was mortal,...

(Collected Stories 172)

Maria del Rosario Castañeda y Montero, who became Big Mama after her father's death, inhabits the space where reality and myth merge. The "skewed world" (Dauster 469) of García Márquez's characters gives Big Mama ownership over rain, leap years, heat waves, national sovereignty, lessons of democracy, the Communist menace, and other incredible things. The exaggeration and absurdity of the life and death of Big Mama only make her "more indistinct and remote,...melting into her own legend" (*Collected Stories* 174). Clearly, she is a mortal who although, loses her earthly dominion, gains mythical presence in the memories of men.

The old man in “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”, by possessing both human, as well as celestial qualities, is a subversive creature borne from the repository of the transgressing consciousness. His arrival, however, hardly has any trace of heavenly origins. Pelayo, a character in the story, hears something moving and groaning. “He had to go very close to see that it was an old man, lying face down in the mud, who, in spite of his tremendous efforts, couldn’t get up, impeded by his enormous wings” (*Collected Stories* 186). The appearance of the old man with wings “contradicts our standard, mythified, Western image of God’s angels. Rather than stereotypically young, heroic-looking, and blond, with sumptuous garments and wings all white” (Bell-Villada 137), the angel is decrepit without any appearance of nobility. The narrating consciousness never says that the man is an angel, but it is the conclusion of the village folk. Father Gonzaga assumes that the angel can speak Latin which is supposed to be the “language of God”, while in Rome they argued if the language he spoke was Aramaic. The angel performs strange miracles like giving a blind man three new teeth and making sunflowers grow from a leper’s sores. One day the old angel flies away revealing the fact that what is real and accepted can become weird and mythical.

Isabel in “Monologue of Isabel Watching It Rain in Macondo”, through the rain experiences life as one undivided whole. The monotonous drag of the rain blurs her track of time, daily routine and surroundings. In this way, she moves into the hybrid space. The essence of life in the space seems to be summed up in these words: “The temperature was neither cold nor hot; it was the temperature of a fever chill” (*Collected Stories* 84). The fever chill occupies an uncertain, in-between space; a hybrid space, where Isabel’s consciousness easily enters to experience the limits of life subverted to a non-existent boundary.

The temperature of a fever chill is exactly what pervades the fictional space of *The Autumn of the Patriarch*. Dense and phantasmatic the ambience of the novel is exemplified in the character of the Patriarch. Bell-Villada says that García Márquez “first felt the inspiration for this book one night in Caracas in January 1958. It was 4:00 A. M., and the eight-year dictatorship of General Marcos Perez Jimenez had just fallen” (169). He goes on to say that “When asked about the sources for *Patriarch*, García Márquez commonly cites biographers of Roman emperors—Suetonius, Plutarch—and hundreds of books about Latin American dictatorship” (187). Having witnessed several dictatorships, García Márquez creates the character of the General in *The Autumn of the*

Patriarch, who rises to become a looming myth, distorting truth into a wreck of deceit and morbidity. The General is a synthesis of many Latin American dictators, who undo reality through the manipulation of power, violence and paranoia. “General of the Universe”, “the Magnificent”, “the All Pure” are titles he gives himself; evident of his indifference to what is considered normal. The Patriarch is actually dead from the beginning but the transgressing consciousness conjures his character to recall and relive the terror of his reign.

García Márquez thereby reproduces the nonlinear ways in which we come to understand a dictatorial situation, inasmuch as the social and psychological quirks that motivate such a person’s transgressions are generally learned about by victims and onlookers only when the process is well under way and even complete.

(Bell-Villada 173)

At the bottom of the Patriarch’s hunger for power, lies an intense need for love. The Patriarch is actually insecure and constantly needs reassurance that he is loved. So, when Patricio Aragonés, his double dies (which people take for his own death) he captures the men who vandalized the presidential palace and assaulted the corpse. Before killing them he wanted to confirm that it was only “an infamous mercenary deal” and not because the people did not love him. The Patriarch orders horrible killings in order to get his confession.

he had one thrown into the moat of the courtyard and the others saw him quartered and devoured by the crocodiles, but he could not manage it, he chose one out of the main group and had him skinned alive in the presence of all...and then they confessed what he wanted that they had been paid four hundred gold pesos to drag the corpse to the dung heap in the marketplace,...

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 30)

The Patriarch constantly reassures himself: “these people love me”, but at the same time he unleashes terrible violence on them. He even gets his trusted comrade, Major General Rodrigo de Aguilar killed because he discovers of his plan to send him to an asylum for exiled dictators. This act is not a simple murder, but a well planned event that exaggerates reality and transmutes into myth.

...and then the curtains parted and the distinguished Major General Rodrigo de Aguilar entered on a silver tray stretched out full length on a garnish of cauliflower and laurel leaves, steeped with spices,...fourteen pounds of medals on his chest and a sprig of parsley in his mouth, ready to be served at a banquet of comrades...and when every plate held an equal portion of minister of defense stuffed with pine nuts and aromatic herbs, he gave the order to begin, eat hearty gentlemen.

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 105)

The miracles the Patriarch performs by his “hand of truth”, his ability to change time and weather; the cows that are born with his presidential brand; the two thousand children he uses for winning the lottery and whom he bombs in the sea; his imposed “civil canonization” of his mother; his expulsion of the archbishop, bishops, priests and nuns; his selling of the Caribbean Sea, expose his strength to subvert and disrupt the boundaries of reality. Under the Patriarch’s totalitarian

regime, the people have no freedom, but they are paradoxically dependant on him, as he is on them, for the illusion of their love for him: “we had ended up not understanding what would become of us without him, what would become of our lives after him” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 186). The people, however, still have each other. The Patriarch, on the other hand, is entirely alone.

...and I'm more than enough all alone to keep on ruling until the comet comes by again, and not just once but ten times, because the way I am I don't intend to die again, God damn it, let other people die, he said, talking without any pauses to think,...he alone was the government, and no one bothered the aims of his will whether by word or deed,...

(*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 28-29)

Living between one hundred and seven and two hundred and thirty-two years and siring five thousand children, the Patriarch alone remains absolute and draws the line between truth and lies, fact and fiction, guilt and innocence. (Bhalla 1598) The Patriarch therefore, brainwashes his people, bestowing on them a different history and memory, thereby, embedding them in his empire of deception. When he canonizes his mother, for instance, “the artifices of national history which had entangled the threads of reality”, (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 126) are created and perfected by him.

He picked up the reins of reality again...he took charge of the formal ceremonies of expropriation so that there would be no chink between his will and the accomplished acts, he checked the facts on paper against the tricky facts of real life,...

(*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 134)

With the killing of his wife Leticia Nazareno and his son Emanuel by a pack of vicious dogs, the Patriarch enters a phase of bitter and withering survival. He is bogged down by senility, dragging his elephant feet, becoming a shadow in his mansion, where lepers and beggars take shelter. He says to himself: “all I am now is a fright painted on the wall of this horror show where it was impossible for him to give an order that hadn’t been carried out long before...” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 198). The Patriarch finds himself spinning in a circle, which is an overturning of time, to discover that he says the same words and commits the same actions he did before. But the image that continues to not only repeat itself, but grows as well, are the ghosts he sees around him.

and he saw the dead, the dead, the dead, there were so many everywhere that it was impossible to count them in the clay pits, piled up in the sun on terraces, stretched out over the vegetables in the market, flesh and blood dead people...he would be awakened by the fright that the dead of the nation were standing up in their tombs asking him for an accounting of the sea, he felt their scratching on the walls, he heard their unburied voices,...

(*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 207-210)

The dead continue to haunt the Patriarch because he dies only to live again. *The Autumn of the Patriarch* says Zamora “cycles and recycles a character, a nameless dictator who dies and returns from death to impose an endlessly repeating series of political abuses. His status as archetype

depends upon this sense of eternal return, as surely as does Melquiades' and the Buendias" (Zamora and Faris 503).

The characters in García Márquez's fiction transgress a reality that is pockmarked by their excesses and exaggerations. García Márquez uses these characters as fictional instruments to take surface reality apart, in order to show the resilient subterranean world that overflows with the incredible passion and pathos of the characters.

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Chapter IV

Transgressing Reality through Time, Solitude and Death in *One Hundred Years of Solitude, The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*

Time, solitude and death constitute the fictional metaphors that recur in García Márquez's writing. The reality that they represent is a subverted one that accepts the strange and the unacceptable as ordinary states of existence for them. The transgressing consciousness uses them as transgressive agents to challenge accepted beliefs about the human condition and human experience. Time, solitude and death are the strands by which "individual and collective destinies are meshed" (Gullon 30). By their recurrence they manifest the cycle of birth and rebirth, the transformation of reality into myth, the blessing or curse of ancestors.

García Márquez is indebted to Jorge Luis Borges, the Argentinean writer, for his concept of time. Borges envisioned time as an endless repetition and García Márquez adopted this in his fiction. In "The Garden of Forking Paths" Borges says, "This web of time—the strands of which approach one another, bifurcate, intersect or ignore each other through the centuries—embrace every possibility" (qtd. in Ruch). The limitless possibility of the meandering of time, enhances the circumstance for

solitude, which causes the characters to live a death-in-life, thus bringing them closer to real physical death which they overthrow.¹

Time in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*, moves, as Borges says, with innumerable possibilities, with the help of the transgressing consciousness and the transgressing characters. As Rawdon Wilson says of “The Garden of Forking Paths”,

all directions are bifurcated, all spatial arrangements labyrinthine, not simply because the narrative concerns a mysterious labyrinth...but because the central narrative concept is that time bifurcates, that time is labyrinthine, not directly linear, and that fictional space mirrors what is true of time.

(Zamora and Faris 219)

The narrating consciousness therefore, inhabiting the fictional space, functions transgressively by mirroring the nature of time. It tells the story with an understanding that time is a wheel with many strands, which in turn, bifurcate and intersect other strands. The transgressing consciousness mirrors the multiplicity of time in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and treads many strands to tell the story of the Buendía family.

...the history of the family was a 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.

(*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 402)

These words, concluded upon by Pilar Ternera, an outsider to the Buendía family, who outlives Úrsula, and who also bears the illegitimate sons of Colonel Aureliano and José Arcadio, gives an image of the

circularity of time in the novel. Time, thus perpetually repeats, bifurcates and intersects in an irremediable circle.

Úrsula, as has been noted, realizes the circularity of time when she speaks and lives with her children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and great great grandchildren. The main purpose for García Márquez is to show the futility of successive generations to save the family and Macondo from impending destruction. As Patricia Tobin says: “Time is not spent, but is squandered and wasted”, with no productivity or knowledge, “because the past and future panels of time are collapsed into a present of eternal novelty.” She goes on to say that García Márquez has chosen the “mythical consciousness, which apprehends time as a turning and returning cycle, with all experiences being equivalent, unique, and unclassifiable in their concrete immediacy” (43-45). Every character, every event, every revelation and every struggle open new facets of eccentricity, pathos, violence and morbidity. This is true when Aureliano Babilonia discovers at the end, that Melquíades had placed the events in the parchments “in the order of man’s conventional time, but had concentrated a century of daily episodes in such a way that they coexisted in one instant” (*One Hundred Years of solitude* 421).

Yet, the disadvantage of living in an eternal present is that the succeeding generations do not learn from the mistakes of the preceding one. The novelty is actually not novel, but the characters do not know this, so they continue to cross the same boundaries and repeat the same transgressions in some form or another. For instance, besides the well-known characteristics inherited by the series of José Arcadios and the Aurelianos, other characters also repeat the qualities of their ancestors. Remedios the Beauty never marries and causes the death of her suitors, like her grandaunt Amaranta, who rejected her two suitors, Pietro Crespi, leading to his suicide and General Gerineldo Márquez, leading to his death in war. Pilar Ternera was the mistress of both José Arcadio and Colonel Aureliano. Again, José Arcadio's great grandsons, José Arcadio Segundo and Aureliano Segundo also share the same mistress, who is Petra Cotes. Both pairs of siblings have extra marital affairs with one woman. José Arcadio Segundo converses with Melquíades and is fascinated by his parchments like José Arcadio Buendía was fascinated with the gypsy's magnets and magnifying glass. This relationship between the Buendías and Melquíades is again relived with Aureliano Babilonia, the last of the Buendías, when after all of his family has been annihilated, finally deciphers Melquíades' parchments. The novel ends

with another alliance of incest between Amaranta Úrsula and Aureliano Babilonia and the death of their son, who is born with a pig's tail.

The story of the Patriarch in *The Autumn of the Patriarch* is also told with the bifurcation and intersection of the strands of time. Every chapter starts when the Patriarch's corpse is found, which then moves as the transgressing consciousness traverses the strands of the wheel of time. Thus, the transgressing consciousness begins in the eternal present which is always novel, with new words, new emotions and new memories, illuminating the dark nooks and crannies of the Patriarch's life. The echoes of the Patriarch's killing, his vengeance and senility, his lost loves, his power and his vulnerability return again and again. The transgressing consciousness, at the end comes back to the beginning, which is the death of the Patriarch. The movement of the transgressing consciousness is enhanced by the shifting of pronouns, from "he" to "I" or from "we" to they"; the change of tenses from past to present, further supporting the atemporal and ahistorical status of the patriarch.

...eternal life to the magnificent one who is more ancient than his age, but he learned to live with those and all the miseries of glory as he discovered in the course of his uncountable years that a lie is more comfortable than doubt, more useful than love, more lasting than truth,...he became convinced in the trail of yellow leaves of his autumn that he had never been master of all his power, that he was condemned not to know life except in reverse,...general sir, where you yourself were only an uncertain vision of pitiful eyes...with no destiny with our never knowing who he was,...or even if he was only a figment of the imagination...

(*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 228)

Thus, the Patriarch remains timeless in the hybrid space, being defined by the illusion of linearity and placed in a “temporal realm like the physical realm of ice, where all is ended but all is also possible” (Faris 98). The Patriarch is thus frozen like ice but is simultaneously ready for any possibility in the ever-turning circle of time.

The second time he was found, chewed away by vultures in the same office, wearing the same clothes and in the same position, none of us was old enough to remember what had happened the first time, but we knew that no evidence of his death was final, because there was always another truth behind the truth...but the more certain the rumors of his death seemed, he would appear even more alive and authoritarian at the least expected moment to impose other unforeseen directions to our destiny.

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 37-38)

Then, in the last chapter before the Patriarch dies, he is given the title “General of the Universe...to give him a rank higher than that of death” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 184). A soldier announces that the day is a national holiday and when asked why, he says

just imagine girl we don't know ourselves either, the dead man must have come back to life, he said, dying with laughter, because nobody dared think such an earthshaking event could have happened, rather, on the contrary, we thought that after so many years of negligence he had picked up the reins of his authority again and was more alive than ever, once more dragging his great feet of an illusory monarch...

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 185)

The Patriarch remains caught in the repetitiveness and replication of the wheel of time.

The same fluidity of venturing into the past and present is also maintained in *Collected Stories* but there is no repetition of events and

characters in the short stories. The stories do not allow for the wide ranging circular movement of time. The rain in “Monologue of Isabel Watching It Rain in Macondo” that “grew like an immense tree over the other trees” (*Collected Stories* 83) makes Isabel lose track of time and she says:

The notion of time, upset since the day before, disappeared completely. Then there was no Thursday. What should have been Thursday was a physical, jellylike thing that could have been parted with the hands in order to look into Friday.

(*Collected Stories* 87)

This looking into the past or future brings a collapse of both into the present, and thus echoes what Tobin calls an “eternal novelty”. The narrating consciousness and the characters cut across the limits of time, transgressing into a constant newness of the present. The old man with wings appears out of nowhere in “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”, as if belonging to a prehistoric past and the ship that the boy sees in “The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship” is made concrete by the alternating light of the lighthouse. Both the old man and the ship manage to break the walls of time in order to be seen by human eyes.

three hundred thousand tons of shark smell passing so close to the boat that he could see the seams of the steel precipice, without a single light in the infinite portholes, without a sigh from the engines, without a soul,...its errant sea in which a whole world of drowned animals floated, and suddenly it all disappeared with the flash of the beacon and for an instant it was the diaphanous Caribbean once more,...

(*Collected Stories* 231)

Caught in the circle of time, is solitude, an aspect of the fiction of García Márquez that cannot be escaped. Here, solitude possesses physical, metaphysical and emotional facets. It assumes an omnipresence that transgresses the divisions of time and the finality of death. Physically, solitude afflicts Úrsula, Amaranta her daughter, José Arcadio Segundo her great grandson, and Aureliano Babilonia her great great grandson. The Buendías are a family who ultimately drift apart because of solitude. The immobilization of the dead man in “The Third Resignation” too, is a clear confrontation of the physical isolation caused by solitude. Metaphysically, solitude condemns the Patriarch to a loss of love and happiness, maiming him into a deformed and sordid human being with no morals. Solitude alone prevails in his life and seems to resurrect him continually in order to feed his hankering for power. In the same way, solitude becomes an overwhelming emotional state for Big Mama and Colonel Aureliano. It overflows to the point that it is the only emotion the characters are able to feel.

In an interview with Plinio A. Mendoza, García Márquez describes *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as a story about the “solitude of everyday life” (qtd. in Zamora and Faris 155). It is ironic that a big family like the Buendías is plagued by a solitude that becomes an inevitable part of their

spiritual inheritance, “which they brought on themselves for their inability to fall in love, their strongly held superstitious beliefs, and the foundation of the family from an incestuous marriage” (Pelayo 101). All the characters suffer from varied transmutations of solitude, which brings about the corrosion of the circle’s axle as Pilar Ternera says.

José Arcadio Buendía with his fascination for new inventions and experimentation descends into the “solitude of madness” (Gullon 30), when he tries to burn down the house and starts to speak in Latin. No one can understand him and he is tied to the chestnut tree till the end of his days. Úrsula too, bears the solitude of holding the family together with a husband who has become incapable of doing it. She is alone, striving to go against the destructive repetition of time. José Arcadio, the first born, leaves Macondo to wander as a sailor. When he comes back he marries Rebeca “although he is not in love” (Pelayo 102). Amaranta bears her loneliness by rejecting Pietro Crespi and Colonel Gerineldo Márquez and dying a spinster. Her solitude “is that of rancor and death in life. She lives alone with her hate and solely for it. Her communication with Death is normal and no different from that which she has with people around her” (Gullon 31). José Arcadio Segundo’s memory of the Banana massacre draws him into a solitude that he spends in Melquíades’ room. Aureliano

Segundo on the other hand, surrenders to the solitude of his eating and drunken sprees. Aureliano Babilonia treated by Fernanda as non-existent, strikes a relationship with José Arcadio Segundo when he ventures into Melquíades' room, where everyone forgets about his existence till the arrival of Amaranta Úrsula.

“There is only one way for mortal beings to transcend this common solitude: through love. But love during these hundred years (or centuries) is precarious and always in danger of ending in a catastrophe..” (Gullon 31). No character finds real love. Aureliano Babilonia is a “hermetic man with a cloud of mystery that time was making denser” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 388). He and Amaranta Úrsula find love in the house that has started to show signs of death: “...both of them remained floating in an empty universe where the only every day and eternal reality was love” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 412). They discover love but it enshrouds them in its solitude, where they remain oblivious to the storm that will destroy them. Úrsula, years before had realized this incapacity for love when she pondered over her son, Colonel Aureliano.

She realized that Colonel Aureliano Buendía had not lost his love for the family because he had been hardened by the war, as she had thought before, but that he had never loved anyone, not even his wife Remedios or the countless one-night women who had passed through his life, and much less his sons. She sensed that he had fought so many wars not out of idealism,...but that he had won and lost for the same reason, pure and sinful pride. She reached the conclusion that the son for whom she would have given her life

was simply a man incapable of love. One night when she was carrying him in her belly she heard him weeping...an unmistakable sign of an incapacity for love.

(One Hundred Years of Solitude 254)

This observation of Úrsula confirms that Colonel Aureliano is a victim of solitude. The chalk circle that he draws around himself, obstructing any person from entering, can perhaps be enlarged to contain the whole family. A family that is condemned to know isolation and not love, is thus driven to solitude.

The Patriarch in *The Autumn of the Patriarch* sinks into an abyss of solitude, in which he spends his days. In an interview with Plinio A. Mendoza, García Márquez said that the novel deals with the “solitude of power” (qtd. in Zamora and Faris 155). The desire for power pulls the Patriarch away from truth and reality, thus allowing solitude to seep gradually into his life. When he was young

power was still not the shoreless bog of the fullness of his autumn but a feverish torrent that we saw gush out of its spring before our very eyes so that all he had to do was point at trees for them to bear fruit and at animals for them to grow and at men for them to prosper, and he had ordered them to take the rain away from places where it disturbed the harvest and take it to drought-stricken lands, and that was the way it had been, sir, I saw it, because his legend had begun much earlier than he believed himself master of all his power,...

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 76)

The frenzy of the spring of his power has turned into the apathy of the autumn of his power. The word “autumn” in the title of the novel

signifies the “timeless autumn of his dying” (Luna 26). His life therefore, has become an endless death in life, his kingdom a “measureless realm of gloom” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 66) and his heart bears an “incapacity for love” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 227). Seen from the eyes of Manuela Sanchez, the young beauty queen whom he desires, the Patriarch has become a walking relic:

I pitilessly scrutinized the bat lips, the mute eyes that seemed to be looking at me from the bottom of a pool, the hairless skin like clods of earth tamped down with gall oil...and the ring with the presidential seal exhausted on his knee, his baggy linen suit as if there were nobody inside, his enormous dead man’s shoes, his invincible thought, his occult powers, the oldest ancient on earth, the most fearsome, the most hated, and the least pitied in the nation...
(*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 63)

Manuela Sanchez’s view of the Patriarch as the most hated and the least pitied man in the nation, contradicts the Patriarch’s reassurances to himself that his people love him. He alone deludes himself and is ruined by the “stigma of his solitude” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 88).

The circling of time forges a pattern in which solitude revolves tirelessly around the Patriarch. He cannot form lasting relationships with anyone because of the predestined path of his rise to the “solitude of power”. His body double, Patricio Aragonés, dies; he has Major General Rodrigo de Aguilar, whom he calls his “comrade” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 98) killed and served on a plate; Manuela Sánchez disappears; his mother Bendición Alvarado remains an “indestructible memory” (*The*

Autumn of the Patriarch 110) and cannot save him from sinking into solitude; his only legitimate wife, Leticia Nazareno and their son, Emanuel are killed by dogs; and finally, the Patriarch has José Ignacio Saenz de la Barra, the man employed by him to find the people responsible for the killing of Leticia Nazareno and Emanuel, gruesomely executed. These are characters who come into contact with the Patriarch, but as it is “a vocation imposed by birth”, (Gullon 30) the relationships he has with them never help to cure his solitude.

The transgressing consciousness which speaks in many voices, serves to enlarge the shadow of solitude and isolation of the Patriarch. Through the polyphony of voices, as Bell-Villada says, the transgressing consciousness shifts from one person to another to draw out the misery, desolation and desperation of the soul of the Patriarch. The kingdom of the Patriarch disintegrates bit by bit as he dreams of the sea that is coming back (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 73). The crater caused by the absent sea reflects the growing emptiness of the Patriarch’s soul because “he knew himself to be hated by those that loved him most...he felt his memory exalted by the same ones who cursed his mother” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 226). It is the people themselves, who are his subjects and who live under his rule, who bear an undercurrent of hate, which only

increases his solitude. Like Colonel Aureliano, the Patriarch has an incapacity for love and so he

tried to compensate for that infamous fate with the burning cultivation of the solitary vice of power, he had made himself victim of his own sect to be immolated on the flames of that infinite holocaust, he had fed on fallacy and crime, he had flourished in impiety and dishonor...he learned to live with those and all the miseries of glory as he discovered in the course of his uncountable years that a lie is more comfortable than doubt, more useful than love, more lasting than truth, he had arrived without surprise at the ignominious fiction of commanding without power,...that he was condemned not to know life except in reverse,...

(*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 227-228)

To make up for the lack of love therefore, the Patriarch immerses himself in the pursuit of power, which is inevitably a solitary pursuit. The transgressing consciousness successfully transforms solitude into the air that fills every voice in *The Autumn of the Patriarch*. The hopelessness and desolation of solitude engulfs the story. As Lois Simpson says, death can also seek the characters in the form of solitude which “separates them physically, psychologically, and emotionally from those around them” (qtd. in Ruch).

The death in life that solitude brings is literally captured in “The Third Resignation” from *Collected Stories*. Solitude immobilizes the man like death does. The doctor in the story tells the man’s mother:

‘Madam, your child has a grave illness: he is dead. Nevertheless,’ he went on, ‘we shall do everything possible to keep him alive beyond death. We will succeed in making his organic functions continue through a complex system of autonutrition. Only the motor functions will be different, his spontaneous

movements. We shall watch his life through growth, which too, shall continue on in a normal fashion. It is simply “a living death.”

(Collected Stories 3)

What the doctor says is contradictory to the usual understanding of death.

The words “living death” is an oxymoron that treats death like an illness.

Perhaps, what can be drawn from this is that it is a spiritual death caused by solitude.

...something that had functioned normally ‘at other times’ and now was hammering at his head from within with dry and hard blows made by the bones of a fleshless, skeletal hand, and it made him remember all the bitter sensations of life.

(Collected Stories 1)

Solitude is a part of his life which functioned normally, but now has become more intense, evoking harsh memories where “a kind of emptiness” had “begun.” *(Collected Stories 3)* The man says that he had heard the noise in his head when he died for the first time. It was the time when he saw a corpse and realized it was his own corpse. The image of the corpse brings to mind the recurring corpse of the Patriarch. The man debates whether he really heard the doctor say “living death”, or whether it was because of his fever. Delirium causes him to doubt himself, but the fact remains that he has been lying in a coffin for eighteen years. “The Third Resignation” is perhaps, a literalizing of the fever of solitude: the hammering in the head, the emptiness, the hallucination and delirium. All this is felt with the strong presence of his mother and his family. As

Pelayo says of solitude: “.it is a natural condition for humankind. Ironically, to be alone, in solitude, the individual needs the presence of others. Only when the individual is aware of others can he or she experience solitude” (83). Thus, the transgressing consciousness opens unusual curves to the experience of solitude.

The solitude of Big Mama in “Big Mama’s Funeral” is the same solitude that Pelayo talks about, because even though she is surrounded by her subjects and her nieces and nephews, she is alone. Big Mama seems to experience the solitude of power like the Patriarch. When her nieces try to take off her rings made of precious stones before she dies, Big Mama clenches her fists and calls them “highway robbers” (*Collected Stories* 173). She suffers from an incapacity to love like the Patriarch and Colonel Aureliano. Her power has made her alone and suspicious of her heirs. The narrating consciousness undermines her grand funeral by using satire.

In her coffin draped in purple, separated from reality by eight copper turnbuckles, Big Mama was at that moment too absorbed in her formaldehyde eternity to realize the magnitude of her grandeur..The Supreme Pontiff himself,..conquered the heat with a plaited palm fan, and honored with his Supreme Dignity the greatest funeral in the world.

(*Collected Stories* 184)

The pomp and splendour that Big Mama dreamed of could not be experienced by her. Indeed, satire is implicit in her name. The word

“Big” highlights the massive solitude Big Mama is sinking into. Pelayo says: “She is indeed the epitome of solitude, alone in the forgotten town of Macondo, where, according to the narrative voice in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, none of its inhabitants will have a second opportunity on earth” (84).

In the fiction of García Márquez, death is not the end of life but it is life itself. The transgressive mode he employs allows characters to continue living as ghosts or resurrects them back to life. The certainty of death is swept away and is replaced by the certainty of an alternative existence. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the reason that José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula leave their village is because the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar, the man whom José Arcadio Buendía killed, starts to haunt them. But the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar follows them to Macondo. When José Arcadio Buendía breaks down mentally and is tied to the chestnut tree, Prudencio Aguilar becomes his companion.

Úrsula took care of him, fed him, brought him news of Aureliano. But actually, the only person with whom he was able to have contact for a long time was Prudencio Aguilar. Almost pulverized at that time by the decrepitude of death, Prudencio Aguilar would come twice a day to chat with him. They talked about fighting cocks. They promised each other to set up a breeding farm for magnificent birds, not so much to enjoy their victories, which they would not need then, as to have something to do on the tedious Sundays of death. It was Prudencio Aguilar who cleaned him, fed him,...But one night, two weeks after they took him to his bed, Prudencio Aguilar touched his shoulder in an intermediate room and he stayed there forever, thinking that it was the real room.

(*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 143)

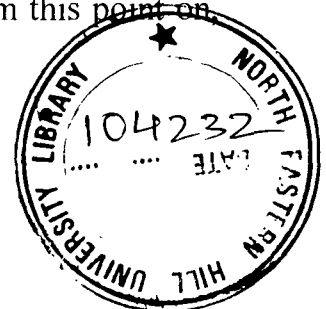
In the “imagined space” (Gullon 29) of José Arcadio Buendía, boundaries collapse and death is subverted. Being used to the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar, José Arcadio Buendía in his dementia, converses with him and gradually slips into an intermediate space of reality and dream. This is the “intermediate room” the narrating consciousness mentions, into which José Arcadio Buendía enters.

Melquíades, the elusive and wise gypsy who brings magic to Macondo also dies but returns alive again. He becomes old, difficult to communicate with and solitary. He is engrossed in the parchments that nobody can understand. One day he tells Arcadio that he has found immortality and on another day, Colonel Aureliano hears him say “I have died of fever on the dunes of Singapore” (*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 75). Melquíades then dies on the same day, drowning in a river where he takes his bath. It is when Aureliano Segundo tries to decipher the documents in Melquíades’ room, that Melquíades appears to him.

One hot noontime, while he was poring over the manuscripts, he sensed that he was not alone in the room. Against the light from the window, sitting with his hands on his knees, was Melquíades. He was under forty years of age. He was wearing the same old-fashioned vest and the hat that looked like a raven’s wings...

(*One Hundred Years of Solitude* 189)

Aureliano Segundo, immediately recognizes him because of the hereditary memory transmitted from his grandfather. From this point on,



Melquíades and Aureliano Segundo meet for many years. Melquíades, however, refuses to translate the parchments and tells Aureliano Segundo that no one can know the meaning of the parchments until they reach a hundred years. Thus, the reality of death is transgressed since “fluid boundaries between the worlds of the living and the dead are traced only to be crossed” (Faris 22). Úrsula, the matriarch, exhibits what Zamora calls the “simultaneity of selves” (503). This is most apparent when Amaranta Úrsula and Aureliano Babilonia find her dead but she has not realized it yet, and yells that she is alive. A moment later, she says to herself that she really is dead.

The circle of repetition takes with it death, time and solitude in a resurgent movement that emerges with every turn of events. The limits of death are overturned and its finality shattered. In some cases, its hold on the body disappears and is transformed into a living experience. This is seen in the Patriarch’s repeated defiance of death: “...a solemn message was made public in which he had expressed my unique and sovereign decision to be in my post of service to the nation when the comet passes again,...” (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 69). He defies death, supplanting its reality with an existence that endures through treason, insecurity, violence and lovelessness. When the Patriarch appears after the death of

Patricio Aragones, his double, he is believed to be immortal. The title of “General of the Universe” clearly equates his power with the power of God.

The truth about the Patriarch’s reign is revealed to him by the dying Patricio Aragones. Aragones tells the Patriarch that he never loved him and that he had been praying for the Patriarch to be killed as payback for his ruined life.

...look truth in the face general, so you can know that no one has ever told you what he really thinks but that everyone tells you what he knows you want to hear while he bows to your face and thumbs his nose at you from behind...I’m serious general, take advantage of the fact that I’m dying now and die with me, no one has more right than I to tell you this because I never had any intention of looking like anyone much less a national hero but only a sad little glassblower making bottles like my father.

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 21-22)

Patricio Aragones is the only person in the novel who tells the Patriarch the truth. When Patricio Aragones dies, the Patriarch becomes even more determined to escape the clutches of death and to eliminate his enemies. What is also revealed in Patricio Aragones’s words is the ambivalent nature of the Patriarch’s relationship with his people. They are jubilant when they hear the news of the Patriarch’s death, but they are unsure of how they would survive without him.

for the only thing that gave us security on earth was the certainty that he was there, invulnerable to plague and hurricane,... invulnerable to time, dedicated to the messianic happiness of thinking for us, knowing that we knew that he would not take any decision for us that did not have our measure, for he had not survived everything because of his inconceivable courage or his infinite

prudence but because he was the only one among us who knew the real size of our destiny,...

(The Autumn of the Patriarch 87)

The people feel that their survival will be ensured if the Patriarch's survival is ensured. The Patriarch therefore, will not die. He is above death, even though the pestilence of death surrounds him. The people around him die: Patricio Aragones, General Major Rodrigo de la Aguilar, the two thousand children who win the lottery for him, his mother Bendición Alvarado, his wife Leticia Nazareno, his son Emanuel and José Ignacio Saenz de la Barra who tells the Patriarch that what he has is "the only power possible in the lethargy of death" (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 181). The transgressing consciousness now leaps over death, feeding the Patriarch with superhuman resilience, while compelling the Patriarch to wade in the sluggish solitude of death in life. The infinite conflation of time, solitude and death in the Patriarch's life is motivated by his pursuit of power. Power has maimed the body and soul of the Patriarch and he is "condemned, along with his people, to the frozen eternity that is power...Power is the only thing he has ever wanted, and it has ossified him in his spectral world" (Luna 31).

The ghost ship in "The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship" appears every year in the month of March. The ship challenges the boy's notion of reality and repeats its journey and he sees it moving

toward the shoals, ran aground, broke up, and sank without a single sound, even though a collision against the reefs like that should have produced a crash of metal and the explosion of engines that would have frozen with fright the soundest-sleeping dragons in the prehistoric jungle...

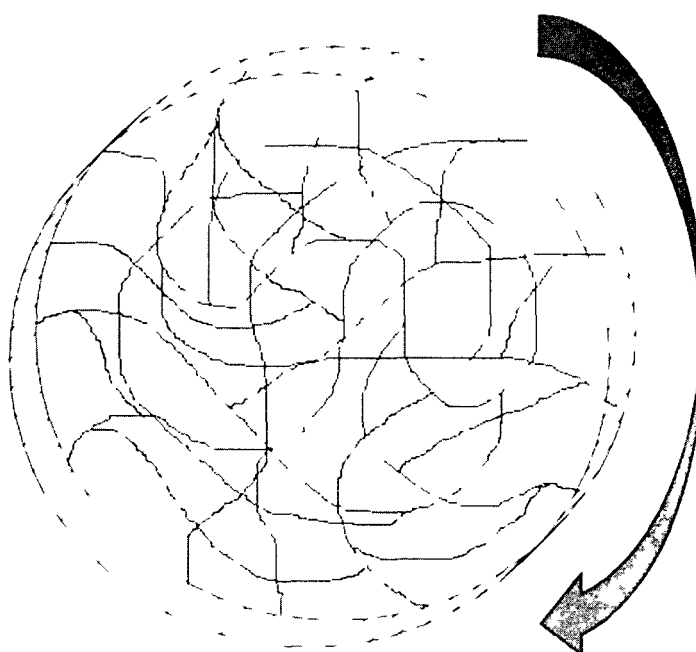
(*Collected Stories* 228)

The ship exists as a ghost “carrying its own circle of silence with it, its own dead air, its halted time,” (*Collected Stories* 231) The endless breath of time, solitude and death is borne by the ship as it treads the reality of the sea. The ship’s name is *Halálcsillag*, which aptly means “Star of Death” in Hungarian. (Bell-Villada 135) By equating death with a star, which is a part of the infinite universe, García Márquez implies that the infinite nature of the star is reflected in death.

The transgressive states of time, solitude and death seem to bring about inevitable havoc and destruction on characters who surrender to their obsessive pattern. They radically transform human existence into a fluid and malleable form and surround the characters in an environment of flux which revolves around them. Time, solitude and death constantly move, rotate and expand, in the blending of history and myth, to accommodate the transgressive dimension of the narrating consciousness.

Note

¹ In the eternally moving wheel of time, the strands of time intersect, bifurcate and embrace the strands of solitude and death. These three prominent themes of García Márquez's fiction circulate and repeat their effect as they are held in the ever-moving wheel.



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Chapter V

Conclusion

The attempt of the study has been to examine the nature of García Márquez's fiction, a fiction that produces a reality that is immensely magnified, containing truths that would otherwise be unknown. In his Nobel speech in 1982, García Márquez talks about this reality:

A reality not of paper, but one that lives within us and determines each instant of our countless daily deaths, and that nourishes a source of insatiable creativity, full of sorrow and beauty, of which this roving and nostalgic Colombian is but one cipher more, singled out by fortune. Poets and beggars, musicians and prophets, warriors and scoundrels, all creatures of that unbridled reality, we have had to ask but little of imagination, for our crucial problem has been a lack of conventional means to render our lives believable.

("Gabriel García Márquez-Nobel Lecture". Nobelprize.org. 29 Nov 2010 http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/marquez-lecture-e.html)

Thus, this lack of conventional means has given rise to magical realism which aims to capture the flux of life. What magical realism is accountable to are not strict rules of fiction, but the constant wavering of life. García Márquez goes on to say that "to oppression, plundering and abandonment, we respond with life. Neither floods nor plagues, famines nor cataclysms, nor even the eternal wars of century upon century, have been able to subdue the persistent advantage of life over death." This in García Márquez's fiction is the indomitable advantage of magical realism over the limits of fiction, and more importantly, the limits of life. *One*

Hundred Years of Solitude, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories* are evidence of the advantage that magical realism has, which arises from the fact that it has no boundaries to restrict it. The boundaries of the fictional space of magical realism allow all elements of life to pass through it. The boundaries are porous, fluid and ever-shifting in which life becomes an unpredictable experience where anything is possible.

The transgressing narrative consciousness is the foremost tool of magical realism. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Collected Stories*, it is the transgressing narrative consciousness which lays down the parameters for the storytelling that subverts all fictional criteria. The oral tradition gives to the narrating consciousness the special transgressive trait that is crucial to magical realism. The objectivity and naivety of the transgressing narrative consciousness also play a tremendous part in enhancing the movement of the magical and the real in the hybrid space. In the three works discussed, memory, which is another important part of the oral tradition, triggers the narrating consciousness to transgress into the past from the present or from the conscious and subconscious, or from reality to myth. Memory also functions as the preserver of truths that may be lost in history to reality.

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the transgressing narrative consciousness describes real and mythical events such as the insomnia plague, the banana massacre, the flying carpets of the gypsies, the four year rain, the unending wars, all taking place in Macondo, which can be called the hybrid space where reality and myth converge. In *Collected Stories*, the transgressing narrative consciousness again moves between past and present, history and legend. It impersonally portrays the isolation that the material and immaterial wealth of Big Mama bring her. It resembles the stream of consciousness, as it records Isabel's confusion over the mush that time had become, and finally it places the old man with wings, the handsome drowned man and the ghost ship into a human world that accepts them.

The phantasmagoric images and events of *The Autumn of the Patriarch* are rendered by the transgressing narrative consciousness through the voices and thoughts of the many characters which populate the hybrid space of the novel. Ignoring conventional syntax and grammar it traverses the complex and painful story of the emotionally and spiritually barren. This skilful manoeuvring of the narrating consciousness from one character's mind to another provides an extremely detailed mosaic of the life of the Patriarch. Every chapter

opens up new windows to the anguish, self-delusion and horrors of the Patriarch. Memory leaves nothing to be forgotten. Honest and cutting, the narrating consciousness remembers the murder of the two thousand children who were used to win the lottery, the preposterous canonization of the Patriarch's mother and his selling of the Caribbean Sea to the Americans. The transgressing consciousness suspends the Patriarch in the hybrid space which is its domain, while he swims in the "limbo of power" (*The Autumn of the Patriarch* 109) which is his fate.

The transgressing characters of García Márquez are products of the "unbridled reality" that he talks about in his Nobel speech. They are created by the transgressing narrative consciousness and thereby gain transgressive qualities. The characters feel the same emotions and do the same things like other persons, but what makes them unique is the fact that some of their qualities are exaggerated. Thus, they challenge reality and normality as they move in a hybrid space. The defects or exaggerations of the characters are actually used as indirect attacks by García Márquez to highlight upon the evident corruption in the contemporary society.

The wild imagination of José Arcadio Buendía and the persuasive practicality of Úrsula allow for the easy blend of reality and magic. Their

descendants grow up in this atmosphere and exhibit a characteristic overturning of the laws of life. Remedios the Beauty's mysterious body odour causes the death of several men. Úrsula, living between the ages of one hundred and fifteen and one hundred and twenty-two, tries to hold the family together but in vain. Colonel Aureliano's thirty-two uprisings and seventeen sons make him realize his pride and bring him only solitude. In another instance, José Arcadio Segundo moves away from the myth that there were no protestors killed in the negotiation, repeating to himself the true number of the dead in the Banana massacre. The compulsive repetition of the names of ancestors in their descendants spells doom for the Buendias, with their past weaknesses and mistakes haunting their future. The power of death is challenged when the man in "The Third Resignation" from *Collected Stories* has a physical experience of death. The handsome drowned man and Big Mama are not forgotten as they achieve a myth status. Isabel too, is able to experience time as a continuous flow without its divisions. All these characters reflect the ability of the transgressing narrative consciousness to break the boundaries of reality and myth. Blurring the clarity of truth is the Patriarch ruling over his nation. History swelters and wilts in the decrepit hands of the Patriarch as he indifferently crushes it in his need for power.

Being more or less two centuries old, he jealously treasures his power like a greedy child, when what he actually does not have is love. The Patriarch believes that he will still be alive when the comet comes again, cows are born with his presidential brand, he can change time and weather and has pages of history books torn away. In the character of the Patriarch, García Márquez epitomizes the elimination of humanity and the deadening effect of power as the Patriarch perpetually saves himself from becoming mortal and real. Returning again and again after dying, the Patriarch moves within the constant revolving of time, solitude and death.

Time, solitude and death are prominent themes in the fiction of García Márquez and in magical realism, they become alternative states of existence. Taking the image of the web of endlessly repeating time from Jorge Luis Borges, the wheel of time in *The Autumn of the Patriarch* contains solitude and death also moving endlessly within the wheel. The strands of time that bifurcate and intersect evoke an eternal present, with each chapter beginning in the present, with the Patriarch's corpse being discovered. Thus, there are new episodes from the life of the Patriarch with new memories and new characters, but what surely remains is the triumphant defiance against reality. Supporting the ahistorical and a

temporal quality of the Patriarch is the confusing change of pronouns and the memories of the past disturbing the present. A similar collapse of the past and the present is found in “The Monologue of Isabel Watching it Rain in Macondo” as Isabel describes time as something jelly-like that could be parted with the hands. Pilar Ternera from *One Hundred Years of Solitude* says that the history of the Buendia family is like a wheel that turns eternally, with the turning causing inevitable destruction. The endless turning of the wheel always brings back the present. This tragically traps the characters in a repetitive circle of futility. The later generations do not learn anything from their forefathers. Remedios the Beauty rejects her suitors like Amaranta, Aureliano Segundo and José Arcadio Segundo also have a mistress like Colonel Aureliano and José Arcadio. Finally, the last relationship that brings the apocalyptic end of Macondo, is the one between Aureliano Babilonia and Amaranta Úrsula. Unknowingly, they destructively repeat the incest of the patriarch José Arcadio Buendía and matriarch, Úrsula.

Solitude pervades each generation of the Buendía family and becomes an unavoidable part of their heritage. Held in the wheel of time, solitude emerges again and again to cross all barriers of life. José Arcadio Buendía becomes solitary and mad with his outrageous experimentation.

Úrsula endures trouble and pain but she is alone as the only one who thinks practically, fighting against the impending destruction to her family. Solitude, in its most extreme form drives out real emotions and this can be described most aptly as a death in life. Thus, Amaranta unfeelingly wipes out love from her life and the visit of death is not different from her daily experience. Solitude pulls José Arcadio Segundo deeper and deeper because of the trauma he experiences in the Banana massacre. As Gullon says, only love can save the Buendía family (31), but unfortunately real love does not exist in a world where everything exists to an unreal and exaggerated degree. It is important to realize that pure and wholesome love or any other genuine human sentiment cannot exist in this “outsized reality” (“Gabriel García Márquez-Nobel Lecture”. Nobelprize.org. 29 Nov 2010 http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/marquez-lecture-e.html). Solitude is a conscious choice of existence made by the characters that can be symbolized by the chalk circle that Colonel Aureliano draws around himself, to stop anyone from coming into contact with him.

Solitude is certain if the sole aim in life is an amoral pursuit of power. This is the fate of the Patriarch that drags him into an endless death in life. Thus, his people and nation possess a loss of reality and he

too, possesses a loss of everything real in his life. His wife Leticia Nazareno and their son Emanuel, do not bring him love but instead bring him more bitterness and solitude. Death is the result of his friendship with General Major Rodrigo de Aguilar and his mother, Bendición Alvarado becomes a haunting memory. The clamour of voices which surround the Patriarch ironically cause him to become more alone. The image that rises is that of the man in "The Third Resignation" whose immobility is what can be imagined to be the physical manifestation of death, as well as that of solitude. The man whose death is diagnosed as an illness by the doctor experiences the feverish grip of solitude that outgrows into an unceasing hammering in his head.

In García Márquez's fiction, death activates another chapter of existence. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar continues to haunt José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula in Macondo. The ghost becomes the constant companion of the mad José Arcadio Buendía, having conversations with him and finally taking José Arcadio Buendía into an intermediate existence. Death is also defied when Melquíades dies in the time of Colonel Aureliano and then appears alive again to Aureliano Segundo in his room, when Aureliano Segundo tries to decipher the parchments. The Patriarch living between the ages of one

hundred and seven, and two hundred and thirty-two years, defies death with a determination that is borne out of the insecurity and paranoia of his reign. His immortality is cemented by the fact that he emerges after the death of his double Patricio Aragonés. The corpse of the Patriarch that appears at the beginning of the chapters of the novel is resurrected repeatedly, and thus the Patriarch is revived from death to repeat his subversion of reality and history. The Patriarch is condemned to be preserved in the eternally moving wheel of time, lying dead in his denim uniform, only to open his eyes and live inexhaustibly.

With the breaching and abolition of the boundaries of fiction, they can no longer be defined by conventional standards and have to be remade and reinvented with a different perspective. The reality that is necessarily created is a porous one in which the narrating consciousness, the characters, together with time, solitude and death become flexible, allowing themselves to be moulded in such a way as to suit the transgressive and subversive demands of García Márquez's fiction. Hence, the "mind and body, spirit and matter, life and death, real and imaginary, self and other...are boundaries to be erased, transgressed, blurred..." (Zamora and Faris 6), in a bid to critique society. What is important to understand, is that behind the spectacle of magical realism

lies the ingenious significance with which the stories are embodied. They are ultimately vivid explorations of human life; idealism and its pitfalls, the desire for power and legacy, the failure of love and the triumph of discord.

The transgressive character of magical realism, brought about by the merging of reality and myth, captures the potentiality of human aspiration, inspiration and imagination. It captures the essence of human life in all its overwhelming and stark complexity. This is discovered when that which is possible in reality and that which is amplified in myth is made concrete in the hybrid space of a magical realism. The transgressive technique provides insight to an aimless generation who alienate themselves without purpose, who learn that power festers when used wrongly and that the present cannot repeat the past, but make it an opportunity to create new history.

Having transgressed all perceivable boundaries, it may be said that García Márquez's vision is not to be understood in the Aristotelian sense as being an imitation of life but that the reality is mythic because it unleashes the hidden motives of his characters, as well as the dark recesses of their personality. These elemental energies generate the kind of logic that may be identified with García Márquez's world of magical

realism. It may be said that García Márquez's vision is mystical, in that, it perceives the corrupt and diseased in a manner that exposes a reality, piercing and jagged, mundane and fabulous, in its truthfulness.

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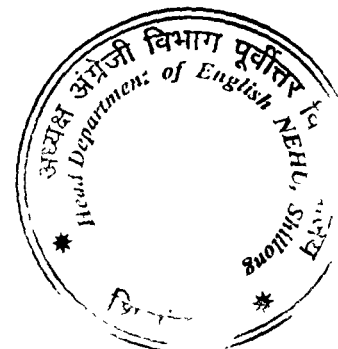
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Department : English
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2. School Board : 20th April, 2010
Registration No. & Date : 339 of 20.4.2010
Date of Submission : 21st DECEMBER, 2010
Extension (if any) :


Head of Department



Bio-Data

Name: Daiarisa Rumnong

Community: Khasi

Nationality: Indian

Academic qualification: M.A. in English, NEHU.

Present status: Lecturer in leave vacancy post in
St. Mary's College, Shillong.