



## Connecting García Márquez and Murakami

Michael L. Oliver

Associate Professor, 1292 Cherokee Drive

**Corresponding Author:** Michael L. Oliver

**E-mail:** mophotos1962@gmail.com

**Article Citation:** Oliver, M. L. (2021). Connecting García Márquez and Murakami, *Journal of English Literature and Cultural Studies*, 2(2): 31–41.

**Received Date:** September 22, 2021

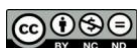
**Accepted Date:** October 1, 2021

**Online Date:** October 18, 2021

**Publisher:** Kare Publishing

© 2021 Journal of English Literature and Cultural Studies

E-ISSN: 2667-6214



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons, Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International

### ABSTRACT

For García Márquez and Murakami, the possibility of locating the female spirit through magical realism characterizes the structures of their work and confronts issues. Cultural influences embody an environmental world of magical realism where the broad range of magical realism connects García Márquez and Murakami through the empowerment of the feminist movement is an attempt not to overthrow patriarch unjust social systems but to work within the system.

To most feministic viewpoints, a feminist struggle is overcoming patriarchal societies by eliminating racial and economic divides, which oppresses women and people of non-binary genders that are a derivative caused by the patriarchal unit. Gender slavery demands acknowledgment of male privilege and a women's determination to actively be treated and considered equal in all aspects as the male species.

**Keywords:** Gabriel García Márquez; Haruki Murakami; magical realism; feminist empowerment

### Introduction

In several of Gabriel García Márquez and Haruki Murakami's novels, magical realism is used more as an embellishment of remembrance. Scott Simpkin suggests that "[m]agic realism seems plagued by a distinct dilemma, a problem arising primarily from its use of supplementation to 'improve' upon the realistic text" (145). Luis Leal indicated the central characteristic of magical realism creates an interest in the theme and unifies the works in the genre, whether the elements are popular or more elite examples (122). However, as Simpkins points out, the magical text appears to displace any shortcomings through a textual vision; yet, this appearance illustrates the representational bind, which hampers desired success and attempts to overcome textual limitations that may continuously fall short of an author's goal (146). García Márquez embellished many of the historical events used in his novels. For example, from 100 Years of Solitude (hereafter, all references to 100 Years of Solitude will appear in this thesis as Solitude), García Márquez exaggerates the United Fruit Company strike in 1928, as Eduardo Posada-Carbo recorded García Márquez when asked about the strike, who replied that only a handful of people died during the strike instead of the 3,000 given in his novel. According to Posada-Carbo, García Márquez suggested while any number of deaths would be catastrophic in a book where things are magnified, "I [García Márquez] needed to fill a whole railway with corpses and could not stick to historical reality ... so it was decided 3,000 dead because that filled the dimension of the book ... and the legend has now been adopted as history" (395-396). Embellishments included a rain of four years, eleven months and two days, an insomnia plague, and storms that sped a town away to illustrate the hardships that solitude demanded.

Likewise, Murakami embellishes the remembrance of his university life along with his sexual conquests during the turbulent 1960s. Murakami's ambiguities allow *Norwegian Wood* to represent Watanabe at the age of twenty or thirty-seven, which suggests the two states of life might as well be combined (Zuromski 76). Zuromski believes Jay Rubin is correct concerning the confusion and embellishment of the facts, which surround Murakami's character, Toru Watanabe, who throughout the novel, never dispersed ... and Murakami embellishes his romantic thoughts of days gone past upon landing in Germany hearing the Beatles' pop song, *Norwegian Wood*. Murakami's remembrance of seventeen years is a story that these flash backs are to being on the phone when suddenly realizing that as "I raised my head and turned to see ... Where was I now? I had no idea ... All that flashed into my eyes were the countless shapes of people walking by to nowhere. I called out to Midori from the dead center of this place—I called out to Midori who was the most empower woman I knew and the only one with whom I loved, deeply (Murakami 293). For García Márquez and Murakami, "the labor of writing," as Christine Buci Glucksmann believed, "the metaphor of the feminine ... rises an element ... with a certain discredited rationality based upon the idea of a historical and symbolic continuum" (Faris 170). Thus, the possibility of locating the female spirit through magical realism both in García Márquez and Murakami characterizes the structures of their work and confronts issues, regardless of the authorship that cultural influences and embodies an environmental-centered world spirit in magical realism (170).

Both authors contribute further to this supplemental discourse by examining the condition of textual magic itself in their writings and use influential women figures, which focus on the psychological shortcomings of the male characters. After all, male authors possess the similar manner as feminist authors in their ability to write using magical realism opposing fundamentalism and purity that has it odds with racism, ethnicity as well as the author's quest to tap roots to the origin and homogeneity to this mode of fiction, particularly in Latin American and Asia. Accordingly, Maggie Ann Bowers revealed, "magical realist fictions are often set in rural areas away from influence over, or influence from, the political power centers" (32). Bowers also affirms that "magical realism has become associated with fictions that tell the tales of those on the margins of political power and influential society" (33). Principally, García Márquez and Murakami are associated with the techniques of magical realism, and this exploration concerns the concept of the female identity in a patriarchal society. García Márquez and Murakami illustrate through magical realism how women become primary sources of empowerment in a patriarchal society.

García Márquez's female protagonist from *Love in the Time of Cholera* (hereafter, all references to *Love in the Time of Cholera* will appear in this thesis as *Cholera*) fits into the realm of rural and clouds the margins of political power and influential society. For example, García Márquez's recollections of events like Florentino Ariza, a 50-year hold-out, who becomes absorbed with the power of the search for emotional love from "just the right" women illustrates powerful women give off an aura that does not allow love to exist from anyone else (*Cholera*).

On the other hand, Murakami uses magical realism to enhance the actions that the author remembers during his college years in Tokyo. Stretcher indicates that "seeing or touching the fundamental core identity of the individual suggests a metaphysical process where the inner mind accesses and forms a more recognizable trademark of Murakami literature" (267). Murakami's fiction uses a realistic narrative setting; however, this realistic setting becomes disrupted either gently or violently by the embellishment of the magical. As Streicher suggests, Murakami explores "how the world, [and] our insignificant daily lives, might or might not change after introducing one tiny vibration ... that forms the basis [which] allows Murakami's literature to fall into the general category of magical realism" (267).

Claims, however, are made where magical realism belongs specifically to an idea that had its origin in a Latin American view simply because of the natural wonders expressed by the people of Latin America toward their land as a magnificent place. An argument also promotes that Murakami has written about his culture, and his literature speaks volumes of real magnificent places. The argument that one author or the other is any more responsible for the use of magical embellishments seems to be politicized since different regions of the world may specify a different definition of magical realism whose discourse may or may not reject traditional Euro-American emphasis on realism and positivism in favor of a worldview permitting "magical" to coexist with the real-magnificent place (Simpkin).

As is evident, magical realism becoming an embellishment where life events are bigger; people, places, visions, ghosts, parrots whose capacity for speech makes them seem human, historical events, and women also seem bigger than life ... blends [together] creating a world in which the mystical makes the story ordinary and ... more magical (Faris). Investigating gender becomes challenging in magical realism as it is in any literary discussions (Faris). The growth of magical realism came out of the characteristics of postmodernism and grew to acknowledge the imagines that have become the "female way" of being and knowing (Faris). The proposition, therefore, concludes that García Márquez and Murakami's literature connects through a literary analysis of magical realism and a feminist lens interpretation.

Murakami's empowerment of women exposures the writer to a world in steady decay of individual identity, the baby-boomers: the generation born immediately after the Second World War. Strecher suggests that a plausible explanation for the direction of Murakami's text, his generation remained unfailingly prevalent with readers between the ages of 20 and 30. Linking magical realism and feminism through a narratively, aesthetically, and generical hypothesis develops an original set of theoretical concepts and frameworks. These theoretical concepts combine contemporary culture and contribute to the ongoing debates within feminist studies. After all, Scott Simpkins suggested "magical text is not much more magical than reality ... [seemly] both [are] unnecessary and ineffective" (152).

Investigation of the magical realism genre and the empowerment and the constructions of the subjectivity of the female character uses such female characters as Fermina Daza from Gabriel García Márquez's *Cholera*. Naoko and Midori from Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*, and García Márquez's Úrsula Iguarán Buendía from *Solitude*. These characters demonstrate empowerment and construction of durable feminist characters and connect magical realism from Latin America and Japan. In this project, embellishment and the empowerment of the female spirit found in a patriarchal world continues to be challenge through close investigated readings through magical realism.

### Magical Realism / Embellishment Examples

Concerning gender becomes problematic with magical realist narrative as the discourse may take a modern or postmodern turn. The form centers on the character's dialogue, trends that have grown through postmodernism from modernism through the process of envisions of female ways of being and knowing. From this perspective, magical realism participates in that female component of postmodernism (Faris). Faris suggested that according to Christine Buci-Glucksmann, "in the labor of writing, the metaphor of the feminine then rises up as an element in the break with a certain discredited rationality based upon the idea of a historical and symbolic continuum. It does this by designating a new heterogeneity, a new otherness" (Faris 171). Yet, the descriptive mode of magical realism belongs to both genders. This realism locates a female spirit that exists in both genders with complicated structures of diffusions, multivocal, and attention to those active in magical realism, regardless of the gender of one's authorship.

Faris believes the answer whether a feminist thread becomes discerning or not in magical realism depends on if the author is a woman. Faris suggested that the qualified answer is a resounding yes. To further address her previous statement, she proposed that such a connection between magical realism and female sensibility is not to deny differences among women and their texts but rather to suggest that magical realism has affinities with and exemplifies certain aspects of the experience of women that have been defined by certain strains of feminist thought (Faris 172). Because of its general narrative properties, the model is hybrid, combining realism and the fantastic magic embodies feminist ideas about women reflecting women and their experience of belonging to a sex that is, according to Faris using Luce Irigaray's words, "not one," which erodes a dualistic mode of thinking illustrating clear boundaries associated when analyzing strains of female writing. This delineation becomes apparent with the literature of García Márquez and Murakami.

Magical realism defocuses the narrative between the actual and the spiritual with the symbolic kind of speech that is allied with a patriarchal society and rational thought. Beyond those formal and cultural properties, certain tropes appear in magical realism, especially in texts by women, and aligns these tropes with older ideas about female spheres of influence such as cooking, housekeeping, and raising of children. Yet, these categories and boundaries become problematic and associate more with a particular gender and not necessarily correlated with the corresponding sex of the author. Faris believes many points converge between postmodernism and postcolonialism to illustrate the advance of feminist thought: all are concerned with investigating possibilities for transgressing the boundaries and the limits of genders.

A common experience, which surrounds magical embellishment, exists that illustrates certain feminist strategies that center on women's experiences along with women's problems. While García Márquez and Murakami are not part of the feminine gender as are Isabel Allende, Toni Morrison, Laura Esquivel, and Ana Castillo, they, nevertheless, are able to support and write about legitimate feminist issues and magical realism from a much different point of view. However, feminist issues, magical realist practices, and magical realism cannot be considered a feminist only genre (Faris). As Faris continued, "while works by women authors used magical realism in novels centered on women's experience and women's problems, male authors have access to similar genres; however, a single definable feminist ideology does not join them" (172), nor is magical realism exclusive to a single-gender.

Similarly, magical realism does not always produce "magical" as realism: Murakami's story spins a plot of magical memories around the seeking of one's identity. Magical realism produces the resolution of conflicts between traditional Japanese beliefs versus modern perspectives. Traditional Japanese beliefs allow the function of misogyny to appear as an ideology belief system (Needham). Jessica Needham continues explaining that eroticization, similar to what Toru Watanabe perceives allows the strong women characters to move from

sexual object to empowered woman. Midori is blatantly sexual and can be contrasted to other characters in Murakami's text who are timid young women. Magical realism as embellishment broadens Florentino Ariza's life of debauchery. The use of debauchery "promotes a life that instead of forming a permanent union, of the kind his mother dreamed, both [Florentino Ariza and the Widow Nazaret] have an opportunity to embark on a profligate way of life" (*Cholera* 151). As a much-adored Florentino Ariza, the Widow Nazaret indicated: "it was you who made me a whore... but the power is with me now" (*Cholera* 152). In *Solitude*, readers are asked to believe the magical embellishment of married cousins. Relatives were afraid that the product of two healthy individuals of the same family would produce through interbreeding a baby with a tail. From the marriage of Úrsula's aunt to the uncle of José Arcadio Buendía, a son was born. The result was Jose Arcadio Buendía, who was Úrsula's son, had a son bleed to death at forty-two years in the purest state of virginity as his loose baggy trousers concealed a cartilaginous tail shaped like a corkscrew complete with a small tuft of hair on its tip (*Solitude* 20). Another magic embellishment was the purchase of a "flying carpet": "they brought a flying carpet ... they did not offer it as a fundamental contribution to the development of transport ... an object of recreation ... (yet) the world was so recent that many things lacked names, and to indicate them it was necessary to point" (*Solitude* 31/1).

In *Cholera*, magical realism again leads to an example of embellishment; Florentino Ariza kisses Fermina Daza for the first time and becomes disgusted by the smell of her old, decaying flesh (*Cholera* 329/335). At the close of the novel, Florentino Ariza concludes that women's empowerment became extraordinary (*Cholera* 334). Reacting to the conclusion, Fermina Daza "busts into laughter, a deep laugh like a young dove; [as] she thought again about the old couple on the boat" (*Cholera* 334). The image of one who is weak for putting off for fifty years, nine months, and four days a powerful woman who loved him; she thought—[did] he maintained his virginity for her (*Cholera* 339). Magical embellishment through remembrance can only be conjured in the mind. Waiting fifty years, nine months, and four days for a powerful woman is truly magical, and she continues to believe that he maintained his virginity for fifty years, nine months, and four days is truly an embellishment. All this time, the reader is asked to believe that Florentino Ariza indicated he never said anything that he did not mean from the moment he was born. The Captain observed Fermina Daza's eyelashes resembling the wintry frost of death tremble (*Cholera*, 348).

### **Gabriel García Márquez: Women Empowerment**

Úrsula Iguarán Buendía, the matriarch of Macondo, is an excellent example of how a woman gains influence and empowerment while enduring the building of a new town, Macondo, the closest in one's imagination to Eden. The fantastic story of Macondo seemed a revelation for José Arcadio Segundo, who auctioned off his roosters, recruited men, bought tools, which allowed him to set about breaking stones, digging canals, and harnessing waterfalls (*Solitude* 193). Úrsula Iguarán Buendía, who lived to be well over 100-years old, represents a pioneer, a co-founder (along with her husband) of Macondo, and one who survives the struggles to obtain a secure homestead while raising and caring for a family. Úrsula Iguarán Buendía empowerment is plentiful, hardworking, ingenious, and a constitution on the "inside made of flint" (*Solitude* 196). Jose Arcadio confronted forcefully about leaving, resulting in forcefully engaging Jose Arcadio, resulting in Úrsula Iguarán keeping her family in Macondo. The sole responsibility of raising her family after Jose Arcadio Buendía's demise represents the feminist responsible side of love and devotion. Abiding love and care resonate as a testimony to Úrsula Iguarán's strength and compassion as the family's matriarch withstood the test of time and life. The strongest and empowered person in Macondo [Úrsula Iguarán] confronted her renowned son, Colonel Aureliano Buendía. Úrsula Iguarán was the only one brave enough to stand up to her legendary son, Colonel Aureliano Buendía, confronting him about escalating the level of violence which had invaded Macondo. One account remembers Úrsula Iguarán acting as one of the founders of Macondo addressing the full revolutionary court on account of the revolt and warring being waged outside of their homes (Hayes). The description of that address is:

Úrsula Iguarán gloomy dignity, the weight of her name, the convincing vehemence of her declaration made the scale of justice hesitate for a moment. "You have taken this horrible game very seriously and you have done well because you are doing your duty," she told the members of the court. "But don't forget that as long as God gives us life we will still be mothers and no matter how revolutionary you may be, we have the right to pull down your pants and give you a whipping at the first sign of disrespect." (*Solitude*, 172-3)

But, of course, Úrsula Iguarán endured immense suffering from repeated ancestral mistakes. Regardless of the position of women in Latin America's society, Úrsula Iguarán Buendía used her empowerment in an attempt to control the patriarchal society of Macondo: "I know all of this by heart," Úrsula Iguarán Buendía would shout. "It's as if time had turned around, and we were back at the beginning" (*Solitude* 193).



This combination, Úrsula's practicality and understanding became the driving force behind the Buendía family and whose death symbolizes the downfall of Macondo and complete demise of her family. The family she nurtured and the village she established follow her to the grave. It was the forces of General Victorio Medina who left Macondo in Úrsula's son's [Arcadio] care complete with a message of a very special clarification: "We leave it [Macondo] to you in good shape, try to have it in better shape when we return ... he [Arcadio] invented a uniform with the braid and epaulets of a marshal ... and around his waist he buckled the saber with gold tassels that had belonged to the executed captain (*Solitude* 104). In addition to his military dictatorship, Arcadio set up two artillery pieces at the entrance to town, put uniforms on his former pupils ... revealed his predilection for decrees and would read as many as four a day in order to decree and institute everything that came into his head [while imposing] obligatory military service for men over eighteen [and] declared any animals walking the streets after six in the evening to be public property (*Solitude* 104). Finally, Father Nicanor became sequestered in the parish house under pain of execution and prohibited him from saying mass or ringing the bells (*Solitude* 104). The last straw was the ordering of a firing squad to be organized in the square" (*Solitude* 104).

As García Márquez revealed, Arcadio at first was not taken seriously. The embellishment of the event he remembered had schoolchildren playing grown-up, complete with wonderful colorful uniforms marching around playing adult. Yet the problem came to a head when "Arcadio went into Catarino's store" (*Solitude* 104) and was greeted by a trumpeter who made the customers laugh: out of disrespect for the authoritarian of the military, Arcadio had the trumpeter shot. Protesters were put on bread and water with their ankles in a set of stocks that he had set up in a schoolroom. Once again Úrsula Iguarán Buendía used her empowerment to control the military patriarchal society of Macondo, "You murderer!" Úrsula shouted at him every time she learned of some new indiscriminate act. "When Aureliano finds out he's going to shoot you, and I'll be the first one to be glad." (*Solitude* 105). But it was of no use. Arcadio continued tightening the tourniquet with unnecessary rigor until he became the cruelest ruler that Macondo had ever known. These military men make "This ... the Liberal paradise." When Arcadio found out about the conversations behind his back, he headed up a patrol, and Arcadio assaulted the house, destroyed the furniture, flogged the daughters, and dragged out those left alive out to the street (*Solitude* 105). Once again, the empowerment of the feminist protagonist, Úrsula Iguarán Buendía, burst into the courtyard of headquarters. "Úrsula had gone through the town shouting shame and brandishing with rage a pitch-covered whip" (*Solitude* 104).

"I dare you to, bastard!" Úrsula Iguarán shouted. [And] Before Arcadio had time to read, she let go with the first blow of the lash. "I dare you to, murderer!" she shouted. "And kill me too, son of an evil mother. That way, I will not have eyes to weep for the shame of having raised a monster." [Úrsula Iguarán] whipped him without mercy and chased him to the back of the courtyard, where Arcadio curled up like a snail in its shell ... [these young costumed pretend soldiers] cut the scarecrow to pieces by shots fired in fun ... when finished the firing squad scattered, fearful that Úrsula might go after them as well ... instead, she left Arcadio with his uniform torn, roaring with pain and rage, ... and released the prisoners from the stocks. (*Solitude* 104).

However, the problem is not that Úrsula Iguarán's conduct is worthy of renunciation, since female rogues have always existed, but rather that the author presents her as a pillar of virtue. Is it a virtue for Úrsula Iguarán to violate the private correspondence between Rebeca and Pietro Crespi? (*Solitude* 70). Is it a virtue for her to undermine the idealistic effort of her son, Aureliano, who, according to Deveny, symbolizes the Don Quixote of Latin American desire to create a more modern and more human society? In effect, Deveny concludes Úrsula Iguarán ridicules the authority of Macondo's liberal commandant during the revolution by revoking his orders and reestablished Sunday masses, suspended the use of red armbands, and abolished harebrained decrees (*Solitude* 104-05). It was part of the incorporation of both the female and male otherworldly spirits, which this text signals as the replenishment and integration of narrative powers. The ideological values issued from the character of Úrsula Iguarán present a paradigm of the noblest feminine virtues and are patently patriarchal. Úrsula Iguarán believes that arranging children's marriages is "men's affairs" (*Solitude* 74); the duty of every good wife consists essentially of cooking, sweeping, and stoically withstanding wifely sufferings (*Solitude* 221); and a good mother should give the example of "a century of conformity" without even permitting herself to say a bad word (*Solitude* 236).

In *Cholera*, Fermina Daza suspects her husband, Dr. Juvenal Urbino, of having an affair, which takes a Latin American woman's courage and empowerment to removes him from her household. Her husband dies, and she re-creates her life according to her desire for life. García Márquez embellishes a love story that took fifty years, nine months, and four days for Fermina Daza and Florentino Ariza to find each other finally. As lovers so commonly do, they lose themselves; yet, these lovers, fortunately, lose themselves within a calamity –a cholera epidemic, which alludes to two plagues that ravaged the countryside: the violence of civil wars and the massacres of plantation workers. Florentino Ariza relates to his septuagenarian lover: "love becomes greater and nobler in calamity" than love "in the time of cholera" (*Cholera*). This love is an act worthy of sainthood. Of course, *Cholera* is not a typical romantic comedy as the main characters do not share in a life or death situation. However, while the specter of death is everywhere, most plots of tragedies are reserved for a romantic comedy

death. Only in this novel do the lovers' journey aboard the New Fidelity (*Cholera* 325) sail down a river of floating corpses (*Cholera* 336). Fermina Ariza becomes freaked out by the story she learned about an elderly couple, just like them, of secret lovers who are murdered on vacation by their boatman (*Cholera* 318). *Cholera* is an idea of female fluidity and receptivity as advocated by Luce Irigaray (Faris 212), who believed that any sense arrived through a "*sensible transcendentale*" forthcoming and channeled through the feminist empowerment became an equivalent way to interpret many magical realist texts and moderate that which bridges different worlds and discourses creating to orchestrate a presence of spirit within any such concrete reality (Faris).

### **Murakami: Women Empowerment**

The focus of Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* and García Marquès's *Solitude* and *Cholera* discusses the universal human condition rather than the writer's culture. Gitte Marianne Hansen believes "literary analyses of Murakami's gender representation are one-sided, illustrating patriarchy and positions female characters traditionally as objects for male subjectivities" (229). This criticism, Hansen believes, ignores his works where "main characters, protagonists, and narrators are females who act as subjects within their worlds" (229). Murakami's references to the popular culture of the 1960s youth: references to music, literature, and films, which are familiar to American culture and become a bridge between the reader who shares with others worldwide and the author. This bridge of culture becomes a connection allowing a reader to gaze inside another culture through its embellishment of characters. Toru Watanabe's struggle consists of various events found in Japan's history of the late Sixties. Toru Watanabe, a quiet, introverted Japanese college student, begins a "coming of age" experience living away from home with groups of new peers, falling in love, and, finally, losing a friend to suicide. These encounters represent an embellishment of remembrance of college. Every year, Tsurumi wrote, by the mid-1969, approximately a million and a half students enrolled in Japanese colleges. Thousands were political activists, and many claimed some affiliation with the Communist Party (Tsurumi 195).

Murakami's female characters represent parts of Toru Watanabe's life: his strength, his present time frame, his future, and his ability to love. This representation may be very similar to the second wave of feminism, which attracted women of varying social classes and ethnicity: those seeking solidarity. Naoko, not a particularly strong woman, represents Watanabe's past and strongly influences the protagonist's life. Naoko represents present time frame, whereas her mental instability becomes a reminder of adolescence and suicidal death. Another female character, Hatsumi, the girlfriend of the protagonist's profitable roommate, represents Watanabe's mental strength since Watanabe believes she emulates adulthood. Hatsumi's power stems from the allowance of choices made as she becomes disillusioned with men and their frivolous behavior. Finally, another female character, Reiko, represents the image of the future of what Toru Watanabe is capable. Reiko proves if one acquires the strength and empowerment, success gained by accepting one's failures and losses becomes possible.

Midori represents female empowerment and is the strongest of the women characters. Midori becomes the love of Watanabe's life. Her strength shapes his transition from adolescence to adulthood. Through Midori empowerment, Watanabe learns how to cut ties with his past and look to success in the future. For the most part, the feminist views consume Murakami's female narrative-works; however, in most cases are not positive narrations of feminist empowered women who stand up for themselves and demand freedom from their subjected female roles. On the contrary, females look at the women in *Norwegian Wood* as a combination of empowered women and less (Hansen). Midori works diligently to emerge from a group of primarily ignored females. Murakami exposes the raw realities of feminist's lives. These strong female characters demonstrate an intense frustration over women's refusal to be trapped by gender roles that confined them to live in the shadow of men (Hansen). The pattern of sexual empowerment takes place on a purely unconscious level, but Murakami's writing does not seem to follow any kind of clear-cut scheme. Naoko and Midori are respectively grappling with their subconscious and conscious existences; yet these characters are propelled along by the sheer empowerment and will of the female characters. Murakami's women characters are always stuck playing the supporting role of sexual oracles. Midori, like Reiko, Naoko, and Hatsumi, is not just a novelistic instrument but an individual who control her own circumstances:

Watanabe felt as if the world was pulsating now and then. He signed profoundly and closed his eyes. As regards the happenings that day, Watanabe felt not the slightest regret; he knew for sure that if he had to do it all over again, he would live this day in precisely the same way: wrapped in the power of Midori's sex. He would hold Midori tight on the roof in the rain and feel her empowerment in his remembrance, becoming soaking wet and allowing her fingers to bring him to a climax in her bed. Where there ever a doubt that he loved Midori and was happy that she had come back to him? Finally, the two of them could make it. As Midori had said, she was a real, live girl with blood in her veins, and she

was putting her warm body in his arms. It had been all he could do to suppress the intense power she had over him that he wanted to strip her naked, throw open her body, and sink himself in her warmth. (Murakami 325)

Midori's background begins as a free-spirited, talkative, adventurous student who excels in drama and has acquired a love interest in Watanabe. As a bright, adventurous student at Waseda University, yet Midori's education was not as bright and adventurous in her upper-middle school. As a free-spirited drama major, Midori complements Naoko as her opposite, voices whatever is on her mind most of the time and is grateful to study at a public university where she can be around those as radical thinking. Her feminist empowerment is dramatic, provocative, and opinionated. Midori explores an easygoing friendship with Watanabe. He is taken by her charismatic personality and emotional openness. Watanabe realized that Midori possesses the ability to speak freely about traumatic events, and in her easygoing nature adds humor. Midori reveals that she assists in running her family's business, the Kobayashi Bookstore, and confides in Watanabe that her father has been living in Uruguay for years since her mother's death from a brain tumor. Midori eventually tells Watanabe that her father lies dying in a local hospital from the same malignancy that took her mother. Despite all the loss she's faced, Watanabe allows Midori to open her inner feelings and seek a full life's enjoyment. Through Midori's resulting struggles, Watanabe learns that aloofness and disconnection in the face of suffered losses equip him to resign to grave ponderings about death. Everything Midori suggests, radically commit him to live a "day at a time" while able. An abstruse question concludes the novel concerning whether Watanabe ever lets Midori mentor him or whether the relationship is worth pursuing. Midori's frustration is evident by Watanabe's constant prioritization of Naoko. Yet, by the novel's end, Watanabe is so bewildered and isolated by everything he's been through that his ability to recognize how vibrant Midori has become is unrecognizable. As Watanabe thought: "to illustrate her power and self-assurance, she exposed her nakedness to me [Watanabe] for five minutes until, at last, she wrapped herself in her gown once more and buttoned it from top to bottom. As soon as the previous button was in place, she rose and glided toward the bedroom, opened the door silently, and disappeared within" (Murakami 132). Murakami continues throughout the novel allowing Watanabe many times to explore his own sexuality while finding himself torn between his desire for two women: Naoko and Midori. Communication of the characters coming of age is important to Murakami's novel. Watanabe explores the ways in which each of the women displays their empowerment based on their coming of age. Silence and secrets are the foundation of Watanabe and Naoko's relationship, while Midori is an open book. Frank and funny, Midori has no problem speaking regardless of if the thoughts are provocative, sexual, or uncanny. In another moment of revolution, Naoko reveals her naked body to Watanabe, which becomes a representation of another method of feminist control. Through the attempt of nakedness [wordless and silent], Naoko discovered a sharing of herself with the inner strength of desire for a relationship, however, on her terms.

The manipulation to keep Midori's ailing father in good spirits, was a control method using Watanabe to address her father on the history of the drama course both were taking at the university. The discussion became more personal than required. As Watanabe explained the many flaws of a Greek tragedy, he did not understand the application of these flaws to his life. This aggrandizement illustrates the novel's nuances of Murakami's work through Watanabe's learning both in and out of the classroom. Moreover, it demonstrates Watanabe's failure to communicate the truths at the root of his embellishment of emotional entanglements.

A week passes without a word from Midori. No calls, no sign of her in the classroom. I kept hoping for a message from her whenever I went back to the dorm, but there were never any. One night, I tried to keep my promise by thinking of her when I masturbated, but it didn't work. I tried switching over to Naoko, but not even Naoko's image was any help at that time. [...] I wrote a letter to Naoko on Sunday morning (Murakami 190).

Watanabe elaborates that his feelings were "trapped" in "this situations and reasons and excuses" (Murakami 225). "What marks his plays is the way things get so mixed up, the characters are trapped. Many different people appear, and they've all got their own situations, reasons, and excuses, and each is pursuing their brand of justice or happiness. As a result, nobody can do anything" (Murakami 132).

Murakami illuminates Watanabe's attempt to engage in one of the significant patterns repeated throughout the novel, struggling to choose between Naoko and Midori and wrestling with his feelings for both women. This struggle illustrates the empowerment of the second feminist movement. Midori's empowerment continually keeps Watanabe in a man's place as she realizes and plays her emotions asking him to focus on her sexually, which made him self-conscious and conflicted. Yet, Watanabe is unable to receive the attention from Midori that he demands. As Toru Watanabe flip-flops between his profound sexual adventures, Murakami displays how Midori's control has taken over the powerful emotions of sex and love.

Midori's empowerment of the female spirit, the female body, must be recognized. Back in her apartment after a long night on the town, Midori reveals a Buddhist altar where she and her sister place a picture of their recently deceased father and light incense to honor his memory. The stripping naked and showing off her body to her father illustrates Midori's way of cleansing the soul and gaining the empowerment



of equality and honesty that allows for the ability to become unafraid when speaking one's mind. The frank speech from Midori is an act of empowerment and an act of remembrance that paints an inner power. The embellished of memory seems to distract Midori's constant communication away from the normality of university life as she becomes more convinced with sex and the distraction offered. Murakami depicts sex coupled with grief as a combination of a powerful force based on one's remembrance and embellishment using magical realism:

"Let me just tell you this, Watanabe," said Midori, pressing her cheek against my neck. "I'm a real, live girl, with real, live blood gushing through my veins... I may be a little bit mad, but I'm a good girl, and honest, and I work hard ... [this is chance], if you don't take me, I'll end up going somewhere else." (Murakami 347).

Midori Kobayashi occupies an interesting and pivotal position in this context of embellishment of female magically real bodies. In portraying Midori Kobayashi as sexually powerful and able to literally possess Toru Watanabe because of her honesty, the two shared an intimate movement in their friendship, which confirms the idea that the female body magic are allied that also perpetuates the tradition of male fantasies and fears regarding female sexuality (Faris). Because Murakami propagates the tradition of male fantasies coupled with the anxieties concerning female sexuality, the author's magical realism illustrates how Midori's sexual power destroys rather than nourishes. Perhaps, in portraying Midori as sexual free, Murakami infused her with a cosmically mysterious dimension that belonged to a "lunar woman" (Faris 203) who in Midori's conjugal relations acts "like the moon with the sun" (Faris 203) and attempts to secure honest thoughts from Watanabe. Such forced statements of understanding Midori thoughts, Watanabe believes he counters and explains that he is not ready to commit to a woman so empowered with honesty within a very complicated situation. Such inner personal statements become commodify and revered in one gesture as Midori's knowledge of Toru Watanabe's other relationships is very sparse; Midori relates to Watanabe that no one can take advantage of the "real, live" girl in front of him. Naoko has, for Watanabe, always represented death, while Midori has described life. Midori now begs Watanabe to accept the vibrance, love, and vitality she's offering him, her words tying in thematically with the novel's suggestion that sex and love have the power to transform a life while also highlighting just how deeply grief, existentialism, and fear pull people apart (263). Gripping the receiver, I raised my head and turned to see what lay beyond the telephone booth. Where was I now? I had no idea. No idea at all. Where was this place? All that flashed into my eyes were the countless shapes of people walking by to nowhere. Again and again, I called out for Midori from the dead center of this place that was no place.

"Know what I did the other day?" Midori asked. "I got all naked in front of my father's picture. Took off every' stitch of clothing and let him have a good, long look. Kind of in a yoga position. Like, 'Here, Daddy, these are my tits, and this is my cunt.'"

"Why in the hell would you do something like that?" I [Watanabe] asked.

"I don't know, I just wanted to show him [my feminist empowerment]." (Murakami 302)

Finally, Watanabe attempts an emotional goodbye, even Reiko can be endangered to the power of Midori, but Watanabe realizes that escaping from the power of Midori, even with the urging of Reiko, is not possible. Murakami portrayal of Midori despite the stereotypical of a powerful female sexuality forces Midori the realization that any connection to Watanabe or any man may be doomed to failure. Yet, women's empowerment in *Norwegian Wood*, leaves Watanabe with a continuing feeling of loyalty and responsibility towards Naoko, toward Reiko's mothering instinct, and toward the powerful sexuality found within Midori. This sexual magic embellishment becomes all processed within Midori as Watanabe calls, begs to see her; I have "no idea." Shapes of mysterious dimensions swarm around him leaving a profound sense of disorientation and existentially lost. Watanabe's struggle for any self-control has ended. While processing the complicated emotional patterns is difficult for Watanabe during his time at the university, this pattern of feminist guidance within his life has created a "no place" where young adult seems to enter an in-between state where endless terrifying possibilities exist (Murakami 293). Murakami does not present a rejection female figure of Midori or Reiko or Naoko but does present a psychological destruction. Despite the cruel debauchery, new lives in the endless cycle of magic realism are left to be created. Magical embellishment, the magical aura associated with the female body coupled with a break in the patriarchal society tends to unit them. Murakami reminds the reader that not all of the fantastic literature written since Japan's opening to the West fall with the term "magical realism;" however, enough of it plays on the intersection between the magic and the embellishment of the real to make magical realism a meaningful category (Napier).

### **Analysis: García Márquez and Murakami: women characters**

When García Márquez introduced magical realism to Latin America and Murakami in Asia, few predicted that the firm, dominant female characters would connect different cultures so elegantly. The connection between mind and body in García Márquez and Murakami literature characterizes magic realism that, according



to Joyce Wexler, is a form whose roots interconnect with modernism. Franz Roh, in 1925, coined the term "magic realism" for a new movement in European art with Latin American text in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and, finally, Murakami in 1974 (Wexler 25) that defined magic realism as a juxtaposition of different forms of the spirit and the solidity of objects (Wexler 25). Magic is opposed to mystic and indicated that the mystery did not represent the real world. Instead, the embellishment of remembrance hid and palpitated as did the feminist characters of Úrsula Iguarán Buendía, Fermina Daza, and Midori Kobayashi. Magic realism and feminism emphasize a secular foundation that specifies the source of the embellishment. It appears that objects have no significance with ideas no importance. The process of joining exaggeration and recollection produces meaning. The empowerment of feminism controls the patriarchal society through the magic of sex:

Confident that the power directly from the wisdom of God ... Fermina Daza's happy marriage lasted as long as the honeymoon ... the only person who could prevent its final wreckage ... was the mother-in-law, [who] Fermina Daza blamed for the power which held her in a patriarchy world ... the man Fermina Daza married was a hopeless weakling: a poor devil made [insignificant] by the social weight [of the] family names ... Fermina Daza held her husband [within] her power [and] a son she had raised with propriety ... [all this] made it clear that her husband could never possess Fermina Daza as entirely as he had on their honeymoon ... the part of love he wanted was what her empowerment would not allow to be given again ... she did not blame him: she blamed life ... she was the implacable protagonist in that life. (*Cholera* 206-21)

The process of joining embellishment and remembrance produces meaning. The empowerment of feminism controls the patriarchal society through deliverance, fortitude, and the mere fear of the supernatural. Posada-Carbo wrote that G.M. Trevelyan pointed out "that the poetry of history does not consist of imagination roaming at large, but of imagination pursuing the fact and fastening upon it ... the poetry of *Solitude* rests on the imagination and exaggeration of the facts" (414):

When she [Úrsula Iguarán] realized that she was giving the same reply that Colonel Aureliano Buendía had given in his death cell ... she shuddered with the evidence that time ... was turning in a circle. [without resignation] [s]he scolded José Arcadio Segundo as if he were a child and insisted that he take a bath and shave and lend a hand in fixing up the house ... terrified, José Arcadio Segundo shouted that there was no human power capable of making him go out because he did not want to see the train with two hundred cars loaded with dead people which left Macondo every day. "They were all of those who were at the station ... Three thousand four hundred eight" (*Solitude* 335). Finally, Úrsula realized he journeyed in a world of shadows, more mysterious than hers ... un-reachable and solitary as that of his great-grandfather. (*Solitude*)

As Úrsula Iguarán left the room, she removed the padlock, throw the chamber pots away, and attempted to keep José Arcadio Segundo as clean and presentable as his great-grandfather had been during his long captivity under the chestnut tree (*Solitude*). Fernanda (José Arcadio Segundo's wife) interpreted that bustle as an attack of senile madness, which was difficult to suppress within her exasperation. But about that time José Arcadio notified her he planned to come to Macondo from Rome. This good news filled her with such enthusiasm that from morning to night, the daily activities included watering the flowers four times a day; speed up her correspondence with the invisible doctors, and replace the pots of ferns, oregano, and begonias on the porch. Later, she sold the silver service and bought ceramic dishes, pewter bowls and soup spoons, and alpaca tablecloths, and with them brought poverty to the cupboards that had been accustomed to India Company chinaware and Bohemian crystal. Úrsula Iguarán always tried to go a step beyond (*Solitude*). In a voice so forceful and with power that only a female could muster:

"Open the windows and the doors," she [Úrsula Iguarán] shouted. "let strangers come and spread their mats in the corners and urinate in the rose bushes and sit down to eat as many times as they want and belch and rant and muddy everything with their boots, and let them do whatever they want to us, because that's the only way to drive off rain." (*Solitude* 335).

Magical realism and a hint of embellishment appears in a figure of a ghost. "She [Úrsula Iguarán] was too old and living on borrowed time, and none of her descendants had inherited her strength (*Solitude* 335). In a life and death struggle she cried to unhearing ears "I'm alive ... You can see ... she's not even breathing" claimed Amaranta Úrsula. "I'm talking!" The ghost of Úrsula Iguarán shouted. "She can't even talk," Aureliano said. Úrsula Iguarán was like a "died little cricket" (*Solitude* 342). Úrsula Iguarán gave in to the evidence]. "My God" "So this is what it's like to be dead" (*Solitude* 342).

A deep rumbling, stumbling, prayer that lasted more than two days began and by Tuesday had degenerated into a hodgepodge of requests to God and bits of practical advice to stop the red ants from bringing the house down, to keep the lamp burning by Remedios' daguerreotype, and never to let any Buendía marry a person of the same blood because their children would be born with the tail of a pig. Aureliano Segundo tried to take advantage of her delirium to get her to tell him where the gold was buried, but his entreaties were useless once more "When the owner appears," Úrsula Iguarán indicated God will illuminate the

treasure so it will be found. Santa Sofía de la Piedad had the certainty she would find her dead because she noticed during those days an inevitable confusion in nature: the roses smelled like goosefoot, a pod of chickpeas fell and the beans lay on the ground in a perfect geometrical pattern in the shape of a starfish and one night she saw a row of luminous orange disks pass across the sky. (*Solitude*)

## Conclusion

García Márquez and Murakami literature through magical realism exemplifies a mixture of fantasy and realism about how women become primary sources of empowerment in a patriarchal society. Magical realism belongs specifically because of the natural wonders expressed by the people of Latin America toward their land as a magnificent place (Bowers; Zamora; Faris). Murakami combats this argument by writing about his culture and embellishes his remembrances which stems from magical realism. From this study, magical realism may be a genre. Still, it is also an embellishment of bigger than life actions, society, and places: ideas, specters, university life, copycat birds whose capacity for speech makes them seem human; momentous events, and feminists who create a world in which the mystical makes the story more magical (Faris).

In reflecting on García Márquez female characters, the stereotypically submissive, undervalued women who lives in a macho society, a realization presents itself that this individual women-type is not at all what one anticipates them to be. With the assumption that a woman's primary role would be caregivers and homemakers, Fermina Daza and the Buendía's women break molds and stereotypes, portraying a solid feminist side that was practically nonexistent in fictional female characterizations before García Márquez novels. In contrast, a woman's thought processes, and way of thinking are reactionary to the atypical surroundings of a woman living in similar societies. In actuality, the portrayal of a woman concerns the feminist attitudes and intellectual approach to situations that model a more advanced female dominant position based on home and culture. The empowerment of female characters found in García Márquez and Murakami writes how magical realism assists in connecting the two outstanding authors. Primarily, García Márquez is associated with the techniques of magical realism, but this exploration concerns the concept of the female identity in a patriarchal society.

Many argue that Murakami wrote his exposure to the steady decay of individual identity because of the generational boom immediately after World War II. Therefore, Strecher suggests that a plausible explanation why Murakami's text attempted a connection toward his generation was to remain consistently popular with readers between 20 and 30. Linking García Márquez and Murakami's sense of magical realism and feminism through a narratively, aesthetically, and generic hypothesis develops an original set of theoretical concepts and frameworks, which joins contemporary culture and contributes to the ongoing debates within feminist studies. As indicated, Simpkins signified "magical text is not much more magical than reality ... natural perimeters seem both unnecessary and ineffective" (Strecher 152).

In closing, magical realism, in García Márquez and Murakami novels, enhances an embellishment of remembrance and uses realism to examine feminist empowerment found in García Márquez and Murakami characters. For García Márquez, his characters become more significant than life, and his recollection of events is embellished to fit his characters and stories. Murakami, on the other hand, uses magical realism to enhance the circumstances that the author remembers. Finally, García Márquez and Murakami's literature joins magical realism with the cultures of Latin America and Asia uniting feminist empowerment of firm, dominant female characters.

## References

- Bowers, Maggie Ann. *Magic(al) Realism*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2004.
- Deveny, John J. Jr, and Juan M. Marcos. "Women and Society in One Hundred Years of Solitude." *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 22, no. 1, 1988, pp. 83. ProQuest.
- Faris, Wendy B., "Women and Women and Women A Feminism Element in Magical Realism," *Ordinary Enchantments: Magical Realism and the Demystification of Narrative*, Vanderbilt University Press, 2004, pp. 170-220, doi: org.ezproxy.snhu.edu/10.2307/j.ctv7vf68f.
- Hansen, Gitte Marianne. "Murakami Haruki's Female Narratives: Ignored Works Show Awareness of Women's Issues." *Japan Studies Association Journal*, vol. 8, Jan. 2010, pp. 229-238. EBSCOhost.
- Haruki, Murakami. *Norwegian Wood*. Translated by Jay Rubin, Vintage Books, 1986. [primary source]
- Hayes, Karen Orene. *The Structure of the Female Characters in "One Hundred Years of Solitude" by Gabriel García Márquez*. Southern Connecticut State University. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2006. 1433078
- Leal, Luis. "Magical Realism in Spanish American Literature." *Magical Realism Theory, History, Community*, edited by Lois Parkinson Zamora Lois Parkinson, and Wendy B. Faris, Duke University Press, 2005, pp. 119-24.
- Márquez, Gabriel García. *Cholera*. Translated by Edith Grossman, Penguin Books, 1988. [primary source]
- Márquez, Gabriel García. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Translated by Gregory Rabassa, Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 1967. [primary source]

- Napier, Susan. "The Magic of Identity: Magic Realism in Modern Japanese Fiction." *Magical Realism Theory, History, Community*, edited by Lois Parkinson Zamora Lois Parkinson, and Wendy B. Faris, Duke University Press, 2005, pp. 451-75.
- Needham, Jessica Kathryn. "Visual Misogyny: An Analysis of Female Sexual Objectification in Game of Thrones." *FEMSPEC: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Journal Dedicated to Critical and Creative Work in the Realms of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Magical Realism, Surrealism, Myth, Folklore, and Other Supernatural Genres*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2017, pp. 3–19. EBSCOhost.
- Posada-Carbo, Eduardo. "Fiction as History: The Bananas and Gabriel Garcia Marquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude." *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 30, no. 2, May 1998, pp. 395–414. EBSCOhost.
- Simpkins, Scott. "Sources of Magic Realism / Supplements to Realism in Contemporary Latin American Literature," *Magical Realism Theory, History, Community*, edited by Lois Parkinson Zamora Lois Parkinson, and Wendy B. Faris, Duke University Press, 2005, pp. 145-59.
- Strecher, Matthew C. "Magical Realism and the Search for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki." *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1999, pp. 263-98. doi:10.2307/133313.
- Tsurumi, Kazuko. "Student Movements in 1960 and 1969: Continuity and Change." *Postwar Trends in Japan: Studies in Commemoration of Rev. Aloysius Miller*. Ed. Shunichi Takayanagi and Kimitada Miwa. Tokyo: U of Tokyo P, 1975. 195-228.
- Wexler, Joyce. "Beyond the Body in the Rainbow and One Hundred Years of Solitude." *D.H.Lawrence Review*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2003, pp. 25-41. ProQuest.
- Zamora, Lois Parkinson and Wendy B. Faris, editors. *Magical Realism Theory, History, Community*. Duke University Press, 1995.
- Zuromski, Jacquelyn, "Getting To The Pulp Of Haruki Murakami's Norwegian Wood: Translatability and the Role of Popular Culture" (2004). Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019. 270.