

# Magic Realism as a Postcolonial Discourse in Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*

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## **Abstract**

This study analyzes and explores the concept of magic realism as a mixture of realism and fantasy made in order to serve a particular artistic fusion. The mixture is based on the fact that whatever happens, however extraordinary they may seem, they are ordinary and everyday occurrences. Anything which takes place within the boundaries of magical realism is meant to be accepted as a typical life among the characters in the stories. No matter how far-fetched or extraordinary the subjects may be, all the characters within the works give an allusion of acting naturally and casually. Instead of looking at the world as ordinary and mundane, the magical realists like Marquez and Rushdie bring in a spark of imagination to light the ordinary experiences such a way that they excite the mind of the readers. Magical realism is a fusion of dream and reality, an amalgamation of realism and fantasy, and a form of expression that is based with several fantastical elements, which are nevertheless regarded as normal by both the readers and the characters. This artistic device re-imagines the world and its reality, and presents a different viewpoint on life and the way in which people think and act. Marquez and Rushdie present the worlds where fiction blends with historical reality and in which reality incorporates magic, superstition, myth, religion and history. They use magical elements to create, rewrite and reconstruct broader commentaries on the politics, history and societies in Latin America and India. Marquez and Rushdie employ and establish an alternative reality which juxtaposes fantastical elements with equally mind boggling realities; the truth becomes fantasy and the fantasy becomes truth to disclose historical and political panorama of Latin America and India respectively.

## **Introduction**

*Midnight's Children* is set in post-partition India; *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in Colombia. They are purely biblical in their structure: they are stories dealing with cultural creation and destruction. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Marquez describes an edenic Colombia untouched by infrastructure and new technology. At the end of the story, Macondo is reclaimed by nature and destroyed. Similarly, Rushdie in *Midnight's Children* describes his own edenic setting, Kashmir, which quickly becomes too little for Dr. Aziz after he goes to Europe to become a doctor. Saleem's creation is described throughout the entire first section of the novel; however, even before his birth, his eventual disintegration and death is foretold. Angel Flores defines magic realism as the mingling of reality with nightmares, the "amalgamation of realism and fantasy" that flows from a narrative rich in

“logical precision” (112, 115). As he further states, “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” (115-16).

Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Salman Rushdie have a forte for blending the everyday with the miraculous, the historical with the fabulous, and the psychological with the surreal. They have proved themselves as experts in the art of magic realism. Both are revolutionary novels that provide a looking glass into the thoughts and beliefs of their authors, who chose to give a literary voice to Latin America and India respectively. Marquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and Rushdie’s *Midnight's Children* manipulate the genre in their own specific manner and demonstrate that magical moments in the novels, particularly those that could be construed as an escape from reality, do not in fact render the novels’ escapist or fantastical, but rather suggest instances of the deepest meaning. Using both literary analysis and close reading of the texts, I have presented in these works the working of the magical realism in providing a lens with which to view the Latin American and Indian reality in a way different from the traditional, Eurocentric means.

Post-colonialist thinkers recognized that many of the assumptions which underlay the “logic” of colonialism are still active forces today. Exposing and deconstructing the racist, imperialist nature of these assumptions, Edward Said, in his canonical book, *Orientalism* provides a clear picture of the ways social scientists, especially Orientalists, can disregard the views of those they actually study preferring instead to rely on the intellectual superiority of themselves and their peers:

To the extent that Western scholars were aware of contemporary Orientals or Oriental movements of thought and culture, these were perceived either as silent shadows to be animated by the Orientalist, brought into reality by them, or as a kind of cultural and international proletariat useful for the Orientalist’s grander interpretive activity. (Said 208)

With such a huge mass of criticism against the idea of studying others, many social scientists felt paralyzed, fatalistically accepting it as an impossibility. Spivak rejects this outright. “To refuse to represent a cultural other is salving your conscience, and allowing you not to do any home-work” (1). Spivak recognizes the project problematic, as recovery and presentation of a subaltern voice would likely essentialize its message, negating the subaltern masses’ heterogeneity. Spivak suggests “strategic essentialism” – speaking on behalf of a group while using a clear image of identity to fight

opposition – is the only solution to this problem. Applying this approach, bell hooks addresses the white academia reader on behalf of subalterns in the conclusion to her paper “Marginality as a site resistance” (152). The post-colonialist authors use this technique to raise the voice against the colonial subordination. The postcolonial voice emerges through patriotism, the preservation of human rights and dignity. Their main protest therefore, is upon the colonial subordination and subjection. The formal technique of magic realism has been singled out by many critics as one of the points of conjunction of postcolonialism and postmodernism. In this regard Hutcheon contends:

The origins of magic realism as a literary style to Latin America and third world countries is accompanied by a definition of post-modern text as signifying a charge from modernisms a historical burden of the past. It is a text that self-consciously reconstructs its relationship to what comes before. (135)

Therefore, the postmodernist and the postcolonial writers have used magic realism to rewrite and reconstruct the original history.

### **Marquezean Magic Realism**

Gabriel Garcia Marquez has used magic realism to reconstruct and rewrite the original history of Colombia. Marquez, with his imaginative style, combines realistic, everyday details with elements of fantasy, fairy tales, folk legends and stories of magic. In his masterpiece *One Hundred Years of Solitude* he brings all these elements from the ancient culture of Latin America in order to make it lively with the everyday details. He drags the ancient folkloristic tradition in this novel and uses it as a powerful weapon to rewrite the history of Colombia. When Gabriel Garcia Marquez insists that everything in his novel is “based on reality,” he seems in practice to mean two things. First, that the most fantastic things have actually been believed or asserted by living people somewhere, and often in Latin America. “This doesn’t mean these things are true but it may make them real” (Wood 56). Garcia Marquez, to describe incidents like the yellow butterflies trailing after one of his characters and Remedios, the beauty, taking off into the sky and getting vanished, borrows some dizzying pretext as his fictional reality and then puts the literal truth into his novel as an idle, misplaced speculation. The quite ordinary thus becomes fantastic.

Secondly, ‘based on reality’ means genuinely in touch with some fact of feeling, however hyperbolically and metaphorically expressed. When Jose Arcadio Buendia dies, a rain of tiny yellow flowers falls on Macondo, a ‘silent storm’ which covers the roofs, carpets, the streets and suffocates the animals. This is a miracle even in “Macondo”—“the bits and pieces of legend for the end of a legendary character” (Marquez 144). But the miracle affords the truth of a fitting image, the appropriateness of the imagination’s rising to the grand occasion, as we feel nature ought to, but usually does not. The case of thousands of tiny yellow flowers that almost bury the whole village also

defies the common sense. Going to such extremes is a typical feature of Marquez's style:

They fell on the town all through the night in a silent storm, and they covered the roofs and blocked the doors and smothered the animals who slept outdoors. So many flowers fell from the sky that in the morning the streets were carpeted with a compact cushion and they had to clear them away with shovels and rakes so that the funeral procession could pass by. (144)

The ordinary phenomenon that is commonly associated with snow is being distorted here by mere exchange of snow for yellow flowers. This process of slight distortion of reality then invites the feeling of magical, supernatural experience. Thus yellow butterflies preceding Mauricio Babilonia's presence are another example of an ordinary thing taken to extreme. The butterflies, as well as yellow flowers, appear in extraordinary quantity that is only hard to believe.

Marquez is hugely indebted to the socio-political history of Colombia for his magnificent samples of magic realism in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. For example, the civil war between the Liberals and the Conservatives in the story directly echoes events similar to the historical events of Colombia. Michael Wood in his book *Gabriel Garcia Marquez: One Hundred Years of Solitude* says,

Colombia has a long tradition of democracy. The Liberals and the Conservatives, who dominated nineteenth and most of twentieth century politics, stood for quite different things – reform or reaction, free trade or protection, separation or conjunction of church and state; and slowly turned into a rather narrow band of class interests. (8)

Based on this tragic historical event, a magnificent passage of magic realism is created by Garcia Marquez in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*:

It was as if the machine guns had been loaded with caps, because their panting rattle could be heard and their incandescent spitting could be seen, . . . the panic became a dragon's tail as one compact wave ran against another which was moving in the opposite direction, toward the other dragon's tail in the street across the way, where the machine guns were also firing without cease. 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. (311)

Colombia in the novel becomes a generic and celebrated Latin America, a place of innocence, isolation and magic, of high mountains, rainy tropics and ash-coloured sea. However, internal wars, bureaucrats, booms, strikes, North American interventions and military rulers are also there. It is a sub-continent presented as carefully suspended between myth and history, and it proves how extensively Garcia Marquez mingled his real life

experience with his fictions to mold the effects of magic realism. "At that time Macondo was a village of twenty adobe houses, built on the bank of a river of clear water that ran along a bed of polished stones, which were white and enormous, like prehistoric eggs. The world . . . lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point" (1). But it comes to be learned that Ursula's great-great grandmother was alive when Sir Frances Drake attacked Rohacha, an actual event that took place in 1568. In real life, this perception of time would be impossible. Obviously Sir Frances Drake lived long after the world grew old enough for every object to have a name.

The arrival of Melquades and his gypsy band, with their navigational instruments, magnifying glass, and so forth is a metaphor for the beginning of technical and scientific awareness in the town of Macondo. Here in this context Marquez writes:

In March the gypsies returned. This time they brought a telescope and magnifying glass the size of a drum, which they exhibited as the latest discovery of the Jews of Amsterdam . . . man will be able to see what is happening in any place in the world without leaving his own house. (3)

Meanwhile, Americans arrive in the prospering town of Macondo to farm bananas and the official governmental account of the event is accepted. In real history, this is the period of the world-wide economic depression that began in 1929 and lasted a decade until the beginning of World War II. Within a short span of time Macondo is transformed from a crude rusticity to a wonderful modern town through the influences of technology, economic exploitation and foreign invasion. But the arrival of new machines and farming techniques do not make Macondo a better place to live. In fact, things only get worse instead of providing prosperity and order to the inhabitants of Macondo. The banana company has planted the ruin and devastation to the people:

The banana company tore down its installations. All that remained of the former wired-in city were the ruins. The wooden houses, the cool terraces for breezy card-playing afternoons, seemed to have been blown away in an anticipation of the prophetic wind that years later would wipe Macondo off the face of the earth (315).

Jose Arcadio Segundo has given up his job as the banana plantations foreman in order to give recognition to the workers. He draws public attention to the brutal working conditions of the plantation. The workers strike and Macondo is placed under martial law. The army, who favors the plantation owners, has started terrorizing the town. War, in fact, had broken out three months before. Martial law was in effect in the whole country. The only one who knew it immediately was Don Apolinar Moscote, but he did not give the news even to his wife while the army platoon that was to occupy the town by surprise was on its way: "They entered noiselessly before dawn, with two pieces of light artillery drawn by mules, and they set up their headquarters in the school . . . dragged out Dr. Noguera, tied him to a tree in

the square, and shot him without any due process of law” (102). Jose Arcadio Segundo is taken for dead and wakes up on a train filled with corpses, which is headed for the ocean as Marquez clears this point in the novel:

Those fickle tricks of memory were even critical when the killing of the workers was brought up. Every time that Aureliano mentioned the matter, not only the proprietress but some people older than she would repudiate the myth of the workers hemmed in at the station and the train with two hundred cars loaded with dead people, and they would even insist that, after all everything had been set forth in judicial documents and in primary school textbooks: that the banana company had never existed. (396)

Here in this context Marquez is retelling and rewriting the major episode of the massacre of the banana workers which was a real event in the history of Columbia. Commenting on the theme and episode of the banana plantation massacre Sandra Rouchel Paquet remarks:

The omniscient narrator’s tacit support for the unofficial versions of the massacre represented in the stories told by Jose Arcadio Segundo and the unnamed child makes the question of oral history unproblematic in outline, though often unreliable in specific detail for example in the discrepancy about the number of dead carried by the hallucinatory train. Curiously, Garcia Marquez’s fictional account has historically served as a reinserted into the official history of Colombia. (619)

There is a certain amount of irony in Garcia Marquez’s proposal that modern technology and the pace of modern change confuse the villager’s sense of reality. There is also a real political and historical message behind this reversal of expectations. Garcia Marquez is attempting to convey the extent of confusion that western industrial technology created in the lives of Latin Americans, whose minds were comfortable with the mythic and the supernatural, but for whom an adjustment to modern culture was extremely difficult.

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the fusion of fantasy and reality is patent in different aspects. As a diverting illustration, "this time, along with many other artifices, they brought a flying carpet. But they did not offer it as a fundamental contribution to the development of transport, rather as an object of recreation" (31). For many years, the town of Macondo accepts the fantastic as an integral part of life without showing any signs of disbelief or amazement at such remarkable phenomena. This is a circumstance that the author purposely invents to achieve his ultimate purpose. Although this existence of a flying carpet is obviously a fictional element of the novel, Garcia Marquez does not make it appear unreal. Rather he places it side by side with the familiar realities as equally true events, so that they are connected with one another inseparably.

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude* Gabriel Garcia Marquez uses magical elements to create broader commentaries on the politics and societies

in Latin America. He establishes an alternative reality which juxtaposes fantastical elements with equally mind-boggling realities, and even inverts them; the truth becomes fantasy, and the fantasy becomes truth. Garcia Marquez uses light, airy language in the ascension, “the environment of beetles and dahlias,” and the “mercy of the light” (255). Subsequently, the language becomes that of death and gore; the brutal deaths of several Aurelianos are described in detail. For instance, “The whole town saw the decapitated man pass by as a group of men carried him to his house, with a woman dragging the head along by its hair” (257). The people of Macondo lighting candles for the miracle of Remedios is a religious, if not superstitious image, but the slaughter of the Aurelianos is barbaric. Interestingly enough, it is this section that is also infused with the language and science of progress: the automobile, the Banana Company, and so on. The paradox is that the supposed progress and modernity that is coming to Macondo also brings death and destruction; progress, in this sense, is actually a regression.

### **Rushdian Magic Realism**

*Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie deals with India's transition from British colonialism to independence and the partition of British India and is considered an example of postcolonial literature and magical realism. He rejects the British colonial versions of India and constructs a “new” world and a new depiction of Indian citizens and history in an attempt to provide greater truth to Indian images and history. Salman Rushdie uses magic realism as an alternative way of approaching the truth. There are several instances of preternatural, surreal, or otherwise magical happenings. The incorporation of the elements of “magic” and “realism” gives beauty and meaning to the novel. Rushdie's use of magic realism as a narrative technique is very apt as he portrays postcolonial life in his novel. The magic realism can therefore be seen as a device binding Indian culture of the past to the contemporary multicultural interface. Rushdie depicts the world he comes from as a place full of mythology and legends where everything is possible.

The story is told by its chief protagonist, Saleem Sinai, and is set in the context of actual historical events as with historical fiction. The narrator opens the novel by explaining that he was born at midnight on 15th August, 1947, at the exact moment India gained its independence from British rule. He imagines that his miraculously timed birth ties him to the fate of his country when he says, “. . . I had been mysteriously handcuffed to history, my destinies indissolubly chained to those of my country” (3). He acts as a telepathic conduit, bringing hundreds of geographically disparate children into contact while also attempting to discover the meaning of their gifts. The appearance of magic realism in the novel is occasionally the

character of Tai, or more specifically, Tai's claim to being of great antiquity. Tai adamantly asserts to being so old that he has "watched the mountains being born" and "seen emperors die" (13). The reason why Rushdie had Tai seemingly exhibit impossible longevity is that he wanted Tai to represent the India of old. This theory is supported well by Tai's disdain for Adam's bag of foreign medical supplies from Europe. Tai says of the bag: "Now if a man breaks his arm that bag will not let the bone-setter bind it in leaves. Now a man must let his wife lie beside that bag and watch as knives come and cut her open" (19). Tai's use of the word "now" implies that he is making a comparison between the past which he trusts and the present which he scorns. Rushdie uses Tai for symbolically representing the traditions of pre-colonial India. Because of this, Tai claims of seemingly ancient origin.

A next instance of magic realism that sticks out is the story of "The Hummingbird" Mian Abdullah's assassination. Not only was Abdullah able to hum at such a high pitch that thousands of dogs across Agra came rushing to his aid, but he also seemed to be highly resistant to the assailants' knives. It is said of Abdullah that "His body was hard and the long curved blades had trouble killing him; one broke on a rib" (58). Rushdie uses the narrative style of magical realism in which myth and fantasy are blended with real life. His brand of magic realism is characterized by an equal acceptance of the ordinary and the extraordinary. It is a narrative technique that blurs the distinction between fantasy and reality. It fuses lyrical and, at times, fantastic writing with an examination of the character of human existence and an implicit criticism of society, particularly the elite that Rushdie borrows the technique of storytelling from Indian folk tales and the epics. But there is a deliberate subversion of the purposes of folk tales and epics. Contrary to the predominantly moral and didactic concern of the creators of folk tales and epics, Rushdie appears to be amoral. Both folk tales and epics make liberal attempt to entertain and to present a more complete and complicated vision of reality that merges out of the apparent unrealistic and unbelievable, and often chaotic happenings. The truth value of incidents and characters of a world



that blends fantasy and reality is not the primary concern of either the storyteller or the listener/reader. What becomes relevant is the underlying “truth” or “reality,” the images of which emerge from what they read or listen to. In Rushdie’s novel, what is real, or, what is unreal is often uncertain not only to the reader but also to the narrator himself. Or, the real may have so many facets as to blur reality itself. In a vast country like India, with an immense variety of life-experiences and with constant mingling of great and little traditions that have their own visions of reality, facts often get fictionalized, and truth often seems incredible.

Another element of fantasy found in Rushdie’s novel is the overt violation of what is accepted as possible or probable, true or fact. For example, like the Puranic characters, Tai the eternal boatman is ageless: “Nobody could remember when Tai had been young. He had been plying this same boat, standing in the same hunched position, across the Dal and Nageen Lakes . . . forever” (10). In his poetic language, Rushdie describes the agelessness of and something of the eternal in Tai: “His face was a sculpture of wind on water . . .” (10). At the same time, incredulity is neutralized by exaggerating what could have been partially true or factual. The boatman Tai gave up washing. “He took to drifting slowly past the Aziz household, releasing the dreadful fumes of his body across the small garden and into the house. Flowers died; birds fled from the ledge outside old Father Aziz’s window” (29).

An inversion of the elements of this world is a marked feature of fantasy. Rushdie resorts to this method in his novel very often. The midnight’s children had mysterious magical powers. There is a deliberate attempt to subvert the conventions of realistic representation throughout the novel. As Rushdie further points out:

It seems that the late summer of that year my grandfather, Doctor Aadam Aziz, contracted a highly dangerous form of optimism . . . He was by no means alone, because despite strenuous efforts by

the authorities to stamp it out, this virulent disease had been breaking out all over India that year. (45)

This is obviously a reference to a real historical event, the Quit India movement in 1942. An attempt to reconstruct reality to produce strange and unfamiliar effect is made in the novel. Mian Abdullah's hum "Could fall low enough to give you toothache" and when it rose to the highest, more feverish pitch, it had the ability of inducing erections in anyone within its vicinity" (46). When assassins came to kill hummingbird Abdullah, ". . . his humming became higher and higher, out of the range of our human ears, and was heard by the dogs of the town" (58). Through all these the unreality of the confusing, amorphous reality of our times is foregrounded. Fantasy serves as a time-tested device for doing so. In a tropical country like India, fantasy seems to be, as the narrator himself states, not an optional literary method, but an inevitable natural psychic process, of grappling with the truth and reality that seem to be forever fuzzy.

Rushdie's brand of magic realism is employed in the service of serious political reality. The author asserts that there never is a single, true reality but a multitude purported by an equal number of narrators. Every human being has his own version of truth, and an absolute, universal reality is non-existent. Rushdie, through Saleem, describes the continued struggle for identity in the polarities of the postcolonial. The children are seen as a hope of freedom for the whole nation, who, through their tremendous abilities will take the nation forward. This freedom, in the end of the text is defined as "being now forever extinguished" as most of the midnight's children are now killed or sterilized. However, Rushdie points out that such a hope exists in every generation of midnight's children, who are the children of each successive era. Hence, he gives an open-ended conclusion to the novel:

Yes, they will trample me underfoot, the numbers marching one two three, four hundred million five hundred six, reducing to specks of voiceless dust, just as, all in good time, they will trample my son who is not my son, and his son who is not his, until the thousand and first generation, until a thousand and one midnights have bestowed their terrible gifts and a thousand and one children have died, because it is the privilege and the curse of might's children to be the masters and victims of their times, to forsake privacy and be sucked into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes, and to be unable to live or die in peace. (647)

Thus, every generation of *Midnight's Children* represents a new hope for a nation to free itself from the chains of inability and create a unique identity – only by ensuring freedom to its new rays of hope.

In *Midnight's Children*, Salman Rushdie weaves the magic realist tale of a newly born nation, its expectations, failures, and ultimate downfall with the Emergency, like a master weaver. The story works in many levels. It can be read as a fantasy, a commentary on politics of the subcontinent or as an allegory of actual events. It is a bizarre mix, a cocktail of fantasy and history, where lots of actual events and people are interwoven to the narrative. Saleem who possesses several supernatural abilities is never able to use them to the help of his nation. The story unfolds like an avalanche where small incidents trigger bigger ones which in turn cause bigger impacts.

Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children* brings out the events of history, myth, legends, fable, comedy, political satire, and magic elements within an imaginative and linguistic framework. Magic and miracles are very much connected with people and folklore in general. Among the magic that fall into the local lore and the ancient system of belief are ghosts, superstitions and supernatural abilities. Ghosts are very common in magic realism since they unite the two worlds of life and death and thus they serve to "enlarge the space of intersection where magically real fictions exist" (Zamora 178). The people who have seen a ghost have usually some secret that they want to hide and the ghosts represent their guilty conscience. The tradition of the existence of ghosts is very strong in this environment and people sometimes see ghosts everywhere. They primarily have confidence in the mythology and legends and then they think logically. In this novel this occurs when the soldiers encounter smugglers but at first they think they see ghosts (336). To this powerful belief in myths, Rushdie (via Saleem's voice) says: "Sometimes legends make reality, and become more useful than the facts" (47).

In this novel, the mingling of the fantastic and ordinary, which is an aspect of magical realism, seems Indian as the characters involved in contemporary political and social upheavals also possess the power of mythic heroes. In the beginning of the novel, there is a fine passage as an example for this mingling of the real and fantastic:

Grandfather Aadam Aziz's blood solidifies and turns into rubies and his tears too turn into diamonds. Mian Abdullah's humming without a pause causes the window of the room to fall and causes one his enemy's eyes to crack and fall out. Later in the novel we

see Amina, who is Saleem's mother, having fears of getting a child with a cauliflower in its head instead of brain. (461)

*Midnight's Children* is regarded as a postcolonial text and if postcolonial literature is understood in the binary model of colonizer vs. colonized, then Rushdie's narrative fits in that model. Since postcolonialism remains part of English Studies, critics who focus on colonialism also endorse the view of Rushdie as a perfect postcolonial writer. Protagonists or narrators in postcolonial writings are often found to be pressed with the questions of identity, conflicts of living between two worlds and the forces of new cultures. Postcolonial writings take place through the process of re-writing and re-reading the past. Rushdie wants his midnight's children to question the colonial paradigms so that the constructed "Other" may give India and some such colonized countries a decolonized identity.

Salman Rushdie's narrator, Saleem Sinai asserts in a manner that whatever he is saying seems to be real at first, but he reveals the truth that it is unreal towards the end. The very first line of the story of Saleem Sinai begins with a fairy tale narration "I was born in the city of Bombay . . . once upon a time" (1), at midnight in Doctor Narlikar's Nursing Home on August 15th, 1947, on the precise moment at which India received its independence from Britain. It seems that Rushdie wishes to establish it as a true account of the nation's history and feels that he has placed chunks of historical facts in the novel. But at the same time the novel abounds in phrases like "I am flying across the city . . . I am winging towards the Old Fort" (103), "inside the basket of invisibility, I Saleem Sinai . . . Vanished... Disappeared. Dematerialised. Like a djinn" (381), which established it as a fantasy. The story of Saleem is about the interrelatedness of the personal and the public life of his own with the history of modern India. The elements of marvelous and the supernatural events help resolve the immigrant's dilemma and this strategy is used by the postcolonial migrant writer to re-create history.

### **Conclusion**

Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Salman Rushdie have a forte for blending the everyday with the miraculous, the historical with the fabulous, and the psychological with the surreal. They have proved themselves as experts in the art of magic realism. Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* are revolutionary novels that provide a looking glass into the thoughts and beliefs of their authors, who chose to give a literary voice to Latin America and India respectively. Thus, Rushdie and Garcia Marquez employ magic realism to describe the difference between the two worlds or the attitudes towards them (considering the heroes' minds). Magic and

miracle mostly belong to the mythology and tradition of the eastern world and are presented in a matter-of-fact way without any commentary. They appear in both the novels and create the atmosphere of typical magic-realist texts. The writers want to introduce the world they come from with all its components and necessities and put them in the centre of the western attention. At the same time they are not afraid of speaking their mind, even though it proves to be very dangerous. Maybe that is one reason for using magic realism – to avoid being attacked for criticizing the political and social situation, they can write with impurity in the garb of magic. Eventually, the reader does not have to believe in everything that is described in the fiction. For that reason the magic in the texts is not anyhow explained, only the author (who regularly enters the story) maintains that what happened is really true. Therefore, they use magical elements to create broader commentaries on the politics, history and societies in India and Latin America. They establish an alternative reality which juxtaposes fantastical elements with equally mind-boggling realities and even inverts them; the truth becomes fantasy, and the fantasy becomes truth.

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