

**Tribhuvan University**

**Magic Realism in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor***

**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, in**

**Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the**

**Degree of Masters of Arts in English**

**Central Department of English**

**By**

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**November 2008**

**Tribhuvan University**

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**Letter of Recommendation**

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This thesis entitled “Magic Realism in Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s *The Story of Shipwrecked Sailor*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Mr. Mukunda Acharya has been accepted by the undersigned members of the thesis committee.

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## **Acknowledgement**

First of all I would like to thank Mr. Ramesh Kumar Thapa, Lecturer, Central Department of English, without whom, this thesis would not have been in this form.

I also would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Prof. Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Head, Central Department of English, who was ever helpful and encouraging. Besides, my thanks also go to respected teachers Dr. Beerendra Pandey, Dr. Sanjeev Uprety, Mr. Mahesh Poudel, Mr. Ghanshyam Bhandari, Mr. Puspa Acharya, Mr. Raju Baral, including others.

I owe my sincerest level of thankfulness to my parents, who always prompted me towards positivity of life and were ever present by me in all ups and downs of life.

I also take this moment to remember all my classmates, colleagues, and all those, without whose support this thesis would not have seen the light of the day.

November 2008

Mukunda Acharya

## **Abstract**

*The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* is based on the heroic deeds of Luis Alejandro Velasco, who endured the sharks, escaped the whales, survived the harsh sun and remained afloat for ten days, without food and water in the middle of the ocean. This real incident is no less than the magical fantasy, which glorifies the *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* beyond the imagination and capacity of a mortal being. It thereby creates pure fantasy blended with realism, and magical realism. Seemingly realistic events blended with magical. However, the irony behind this heroism is that the unexpected survival of Velasco became unbearable to the authorities. They entrapped him in such circumstances that he is forced to hide for his life. Therefore, *The Story of Shipwrecked Sailor* is a rare combination of suspense and thrill, blended with elements of courage and zeal for life; altogether and a man's struggle against the nature and its harshness for life.

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## Introduction

This present thesis is an attempt to study magic realism in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor*, first published in 1970 in Spanish language entitled as *Relate de un ndufrago*. It is a non-fiction work by Marquez, one of the most acclaimed Colombian writers. The full title indicates to hardships borne by Luis Alejandro Velasco, who drifted on a life raft for ten days without food or water and later was proclaimed a national hero, kissed by beauty queens, made rich through publicity, and then spurned by the government and forgotten for all time.

The tragedy of Velasco started on February 28, 1955 when he and the crew consisting of eight members of Caldas, a Columbian Navy, had fallen overboard and disappeared during a storm in the Caribbean Sea. The ship was travelling from Mobile, Alabama in the United States, where it had docked for repairs, to the Colombian port of Cartagena and later met with the tragedy. A search team was escorted by Columbian and United States navy but within four days, all the missing were supposed to be dead and the search operation was pulled off.

*The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* was originally published as a fourteen consecutive day series of instalments in *El Espectador* a newspaper in Bogota, in 1955; based on the interview of Garcia Marquez, who was then a reporter with the paper with Luis Alejandro Velasco, the shipwrecked valiant. It was later published as a book in 1970, and then translated into English by Randolph Hogan in 1986. The story is written in the first-person from the perspective of the sailor, 20 year-old Luis Alejandro Velasco, and was in fact signed by Velasco as author when it was first published in 1955. Not until 1970 when it was published as a book was Garcia Marquez's name first publicly associated with the story.

Commenting on his newfound technique of journalism writing, Marquez says in an interview with the national television of Columbia in 1978, he says:

This bottled piece of journalism has developed a significance of its own which adrift on the waves of the Caribbean and further more [. . .] as is shown in the manipulation of narrative for his own ends, truth can emerge only through the honest lies of fiction [. . .] a gripping tale of survival. (*Microsoft Encarta 2008*).

There are three stories dovetail in this small book. One of them involves the ordeal of Luis Alejandro Velasco, a sailor on a Colombian destroyer Caldas. He was swept overboard and into the Caribbean, along with seven other crew members, on Feb. 28, 1955, and endured ten days in a life raft before swimming ashore to what would become a hero's welcome. Once the cheering had died down, Velasco offered to sell his account to *El Espectador*, in Bogota. A young reporter named Gabriel Garcia Marquez spent some 120 hours interviewing the survivor and shaping his recollections into a first-person narrative. When this appeared in print, serialized in 14 instalments, the paper's circulation nearly doubled, and Colombia's military dictatorship grew embarrassed by some of the details, and then, finally angry. Soon the sailor was forced to leave the navy, the offending paper was shut down, and the reporter (Marquez) embarked on an exile that would lead him one day to the Nobel Prize.

However, the egoism of modern state was visible in the issue, comments Zamora, Louis Parkinson in *Garcia Marquez and Latin America*. The aristocratic regime took it as a personal insult, instead of admitting its failure and harassed the young hero. Parkinson writes, "The modern state are sceptical and their aim is to



suspect its citizen as they could not be a rebel; however it is this very essence of the government that leads to the outbreak of uprisings” (32).

*The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* is something more than another raid on a successful author's juvenilia. For Garcia Marquez, who would become world famous through his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, this early effort in realistic journalism provided a lesson in the bizarre effects that telling a tale can have on characters and author alike. His attempt to reconstruct Velasco's experiences as factually as possible assumed a life of its own; the sailor who braved exposure and sharks fell afoul of the words of his story. And it was words, paradoxically, that rescued Velasco's adventure from oblivion. When these pieces first appeared in book form, in Spanish in 1970, Garcia Marquez in an interview with the national television of Columbia in 1978, noted "I find it depressing that the publishers are not so much interested in the merit of the story as in the name of the author, which, much to my sorrow, is also that of a fashionable writer." (*Microsoft Encarta 2008*).

### **Gabriel Garcia and his Works:**

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, undoubtedly one of the greatest literary figures of Colombia, as well as of the Caribbean was born in 1928. He is widely accepted as one of the masters of magic realism, a style that weaves together realism and fantasy. He won the Nobel Prize in literature in 1982.

Marquez was born in Aracataca, Colombia. He attended the National University of Colombia but did not graduate. Instead, he became a newspaper editor, working in Cartagena in 1946, in Barranquilla from 1948 to 1952, and in Bogotá in 1952. From 1959 to 1961 he worked for the Cuban news agency La Prensa in Colombia; Havana, Cuba; and New York City. Garcia Marquez was a liberal thinker whose left-wing politics angered conservative Colombian dictator Laureano Gomez

and his successor, General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. To escape persecution, Garcia Marquez spent the 1960s and 1970s in voluntary exile in Mexico and Spain. In the early 1980s he was formally invited back to Colombia, where he mediated disputes between the Colombian government and leftist rebels.

Garcia Marquez's best-known novels include *No One Writes to the Colonel* (1958), about a retired military hero, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967), the epic story of a Colombian family, which shows the stylistic influence of American novelist William Faulkner, *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, (1976), concerning political power and corruption and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (1983) is the story of murder in a Latin American town. His *Collected Stories* was published in English translation in 1984.

His other major works are *Love in the Time of Cholera* (1985), which tells a story of romantic love; *The General in His Labyrinth* (1989) is a fictional account of the last days of South American revolutionary leader and statesman Simon Bolívar.

Garcia Marquez's storytelling abilities also enliven the first part of his planned three-volume memoir. Episodes from the author's early life, recounted in *Living to Tell the Tale*, (2002) recall the magic realism of his fiction works.

However, Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* won him the international acclaim. He was awarded with Nobel Prize largely based on this book in 1982. It is a story of Macondo, an imaginary place in the Caribbean and its founder, the Buendia clan. The novel is a saga of civil wars, intrigues, sexual explicit and magic realism scattered all over the region. The rise and fall of the Buendia is the chronicle of Columbia and it's never ending civil war and chaos, the birth place of Marquez.

Nobel laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez began his literary career as a newspaper writer. In 1955, he wrote a series of newspaper stories about a shipwrecked sailor who nearly died on account of negligence by the Colombian Navy; several of his colleagues drowned shortly before arriving at the port of Cartagena de Indias due to the existence of overweight contraband aboard the vessel. This resulted in public controversy, as it discredited the official account of the events, which had blamed the storm for the shipwreck and glorified the surviving sailor. As Garcia Marquez subsequently became a sort of persona non grata for the government of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, he then worked for several years as a foreign correspondent.

The book's theme is the possible, but not necessary, moral reversion to a primitive, instinctual existence in the face of a sea catastrophe and consequent shipwreck and solitude. This theme had been explored previously in fiction by Daniel Defoe (Robinson Crusoe and the Robinsonade genre) and Voltaire's *Candid*, and more recently by William Golding (*Lord of the Flies* and *Pincher Martin*), Umberto Eco (*The Island of the Day Before*), J.M. Coetzee (*Foe*), Jose Saramago (*The Stone Raft* and *The Tale of the Unknown Island*). A later non-fiction treatment of a similar theme can be found in *The Last Strange Voyage of Donald Crowhurst* by Ron Hall and Nicolas Tomalin.

### **Latin American Literature**

Latin American Literature, like any literature in the Americas was written in one of the Romance languages, primarily Spanish, Portuguese, and French, from the 15th century to the present. These languages were brought to North, Central, and South America by European settlers who began to arrive at the end of the 15th century. Some studies of Latin American literature also include writings in the

indigenous languages of Central and South America, dating from before the European conquest to the present.

Latin American literature is tremendously varied in its scope. It encompasses narratives by early explorers and settlers, which tell of their encounters with the land and people of the New World; satiric writings that comment on colonial society and its imitation of European trends; and works that incorporate Native American themes and imagery in an effort to express an experience that is uniquely Latin American. A continuing dilemma for writers arises from the desire to define a distinct Latin American identity while not appearing narrow or provincial in terms of European literary standards.

Latin American literature can be divided into three broad periods: first, colonial literature, from the time of European conquest to independence; second, the literature of independence, which began in the early 1800s in most of Latin America; and third, modern literature, which began in the late 1800s and was accompanied by the realization of a distinctive national voice, sometime in the 1900s. Additionally, a native tradition, which began before the European conquest, consists of literature in Native American languages.

At the time of the European conquest, some Native American literature was written down. However, most of it was transmitted from one generation to the next by professional recite's who memorized texts and narrated them. Some countries accept this expression as part of a national literary tradition, most notably Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, and Paraguay. Many literary historians view it as a "literature of resistance" to the European languages of the conqueror or as a more "authentic" expression of a country's original culture.

As in most cultures, this early literature includes creation stories that attempt to explain the origin of the universe, stories about gods and their activities that offer an explanation of the workings of the world, and histories that relate the genealogy of rulers. Creation stories were particularly prominent among the Tupí-Guarani people of what is today Paraguay, northern Argentina, and South Western Brazil, and they continue to influence writers of that region.

Poetry was also present in Native American literature. The *Flory Canto* (Flower and Song) tradition in the Nahuatl language of the Aztecs produced lyric verses associated with rituals, such as harvest ceremonies. These poems indicate that literature was appreciated for its own sake, apart from its use in religious and historical narratives.

Some native-language literature is exclusively oral, such as the Quechua-language play *Ollantay* of the Inca of Peru. Other traditional literature is both oral and written, including Aztec rituals in the Nahuatl language and sacred myths of the Maya in various Mayan languages and dialects. The *Popul Vuh*, of the Maya-Quiché of southern Mexico and Guatemala, is a collection of sacred myths that were first written down in the 16th century. Translations of these myths into Spanish in the 18th century considerably advanced the awareness of native literature in Middle America (Mexico and Central America). The oral material of the Incas was captured in writing in the 17th century, while the process of recording what survives of the oral traditions of other people of the Andes Mountains region continues today.

Native American literature played an important role for Latin American writers who sought a distinctively Latin American voice. Twentieth-century writers who incorporate Native American myth and folklore into their plots, characterizations, and social analyses include Guatemala's Miguel Angel Asturias, Peru's Jose Maria Arguedas, and Paraguay's Augusto Roa Bastos. Even writers with

an international outlook, such as Mexico's Carlos Fuentes and Chile's, draw on indigenous culture in contrasting modern urban societies with traditional rural ones.

The period of Latin American literature was a time of defining an independent national identity. It continues from the time of independence from Spain, which for most of Latin America occurred from 1810 to 1830, to the modern period, beginning in the 1880s. Although Cuba and Puerto Rico remained under Spanish rule until 1898, their cultures attained a national identity about the same time other Latin American countries established themselves as independent republics.

Following independence, Latin American literature began to take on distinct national characteristics. Such factors as geographic boundaries, the ethnic composition of the population, and differing political visions contributed to the establishment of these national characteristics. The internal political upheaval that shook most Latin American nations during the early and mid-19th century affected their literary status in one of three ways. Chile and Argentina, for example, adopted aggressive programs to establish cultural institutions that thrust them to the literary forefront, despite their earlier cultural insignificance. The thriving capitals of Mexico, Colombia, and Peru (Mexico City, Bogotá, and Lima, respectively) remained cultural centres. Other countries, including Paraguay, Bolivia, and the Central American republics, slipped into backwater status for most of the 19th century, producing little notable literature.

Many 19th-century authors attempted to give European literary trends a uniquely Latin American flavour. The European cultural movement that dominated the first half of the century was romanticism, which emphasized individual experience, the expression of emotion, and the role of the imagination in creativity. In the Americas, romanticism expressed itself in fervent nationalism and an emphasis on native themes.

## II. Theoretical Tools

### i. Magic Realism

Oxford Dictionary defines the term 'magic' as to conjure tricks and illusions that apparently make impossible things seem to happen in reality. On the other hand, 'Realism' is a practical understanding and acceptance of the actual nature of the world, rather than an idealized or romantic view of it. Realism is usually taken for entertainment and fun. Based on the given definition, we can incur 'magic realism' as an art or literature that depicts fantastic or mythological subjects in a realistic manner.

Magic Realism was first used by a German art critic Franz Roh in 1925. He used it in the sense of representing and responding to authentic and pictorially depicting the enigmas of reality. During the decade of 1940s, in Latin America magic realism became a popular way to express the realistic American mentality and create an autonomous style of literature. There is an imaginative blending of history, politics, social realism and fantasy in magic realism. These imaginative style combines realistic every day details with elements of fantasy, blurring the reader's usual distinctions between reality and magic. In this regard M. H. Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* writes, "The writers interweave, in an ever shifting pattern, sharply etched realism in representing ordinary events and descriptive details together with fantastic and dreamlike elements, as well as with materials derived from myth and tales" (196).

The term magic realism is used to describe the prose fiction of Jorge Louis Borges in Argentina, as well as the work of writers such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez in Columbia, Issable Allende in Chile, Gunter Grass in Germany, Italo Calvino in Italy, and John Fowels in England. In this context of magic realism, Jorge Borges writes:

The writer confronts reality and tries to reveal it by looking for what can be mysterious in life, objects, and even human actions. A magical realist narrator creates the illusion of unreality, faking the escape from the natural, and tell on action that even if appears as explainable it comes across as strange. In the strange narrations, the writer instead of presenting something as real, the reality becomes magical. (203)

The realism becomes miracle of the reality. The magic realism avoids any emotional effects or horror provided by an unbelievable event. The unbelievable stop to remain unknown and incorporate the real. During colonization, many Europeans found a land full of strange and supernatural things. Their chronicles were based on their interpretations, which lead to mystification of India. In India, writers like Salman Rushdie and Amitav Ghosh with their imaginative style combines realistic, everyday details with elements of fantasy, fairy tales, folk legends and stories of magic.

In Caribbean, it is Marquez who brings all these elements from the ancient culture of Latin America and makes them lively with the day-to-day reality. He drags the ancient folkloristic tradition, which was filled with magic and mystery and uses then as a powerful tool to rewrite the history of his native people.

Salman Rushdie adopts the similar fashion of magic realism to recollect and rewrite his past works. According to him:

It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge which gives rise to profound uncertainties that over physical alienation from India almost inevitably means the we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the



thing that was lost, that we will in short create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones imaginary homelands, India of the mind.

(10)

So, magic realism is that literature which crosses the border between two separate literary discourses, the realistic and magical. The term realism refers to a literary discourse that represents those aspects of the world open to empirical proof, whereas magic refers to a literary system that admits the existence of something, whose existence cannot be empirically proved. The supernatural however, takes culturally specific form, consisting of many different local manifestations with a variety of different laws and characteristics. By joining these contrasting literary systems, magic realism disrupts the traditional meaning of these terms and obscures the hierarchy of realism over magic, which reflects conventional western epistemologies in upsetting this hierarchy; magic realism allows for and encourages the disruption of further hierarchical binaries.

Authors like Salman Rushdie, Angela Carter, and Jeanette Winters are particularly relevant in this concept because they all write within the discursive practices of magic realism and use this discourse to complicate socio-political binaries. Angela Carters' novels use magic realism to complicate the traditional binary between male and female. In *The Passion of New Era*, Carter literally transforms her hero into a heroine through a blend of magic and science. The ambiguity between belief and disbelief allows the supposedly winged heroine to present a magical world of women to a male reporter who operates within a realist system.

Jeanette Winter's novels use magic realism to complicate the sexual binary of heterosexual and lesbian. In *Oranges are Not Only Fruits* Winter injects magic into the traditionally realistic form from the autobiography. In this novel, the protagonist's

experiences of growing up and awakening to her lesbian life are on the border between the magical and the realistic sections.

On contrary, Salman Rushdie's *Midnight Children* use magic realism to complicate the binary fusion between Indian and British identity. For Rushdie:

Indian writers in England have access to a second tradition, quite apart from their own racial history. It is the cultural and political history of the phenomenon of migration, displacement, and life in a minority group. We can quite legitimately claim as our ancestors the Huguenots, the Irish, the Jew; the past to which we belong is an English past, the history, of immigrant Great Britain. (20)

In *Midnight Children*, Rushdie presents a group of magical children born on the historical border of India's independence from Britain. The very existence of these children is thoroughly enmeshed in their country's difficult transition from colonialism to independence. *The Satanic Verses* uses magical metamorphoses to theme the difficulties of assimilation faced by two Indian immigrants to Britain.

This was the age of post modernism and post colonialism. So we can clearly say that post modernist and post colonist author used this technique. So, the border crossing methods of magic realism possesses affinities in postmodernism and post structural theory. A few theorist such as Linda Hutchen and Walter Pache, have noted the magic realism by questioning the traditional opposition between realism and fantastic, accomplishes the post modern, tasks of challenging the notion of genre and questioning the conventions of realism.

## **ii. Surrealism**

Surrealism, artistic and literary movement explored and celebrated the realm of dreams and the unconscious mind through the creation of visual art, poetry, and

motion pictures. Surrealism was officially launched in Paris, France, in 1924, when French writer André Breton wrote the first surrealist manifesto, outlining the ambitions of the new movement. Breton published two more surrealist manifestoes, in 1930 and 1942, which eventually lead to the rise of Surrealism. The movement soon spread to other parts of Europe and to North and South America. Among surrealism's most important contributions was the invention of new artistic techniques that tapped into the artist's unconscious mind.

Surrealism, in many respects, was an offshoot of an earlier art movement known as dada, which was founded during World War I. Disillusioned by the massive destruction and loss of life brought about by the war, the Dadaists' motivations were profoundly political: to ridicule culture, reason, technology, even art. They believed that any faith in humanity's ability to improve itself through art and culture, especially after the unprecedented destruction of the war, was naive and unrealistic. As a result, the Dadaists created works using accident, chance, and anything that underscored the irrationality of humanity: for example, making poems out of pieces of newspaper chosen at random, speaking nonsensical syllables out loud, and displaying everyday objects as art. The surrealist program grew out of dada, but it put a more positive spin on dada's essentially negative message.

The surrealists were heavily influenced by Sigmund Freud, the Austrian founder of psychoanalysis. They were especially receptive to his distinction between the *ego* and the *id*-- that is, between our primal instincts and desires (the *id*) and our more civilized and rational patterns of behaviour (the *ego*). Since our primal urges and desires frequently run afoul of social expectations, Freud concluded that we repress our real desires into the unconscious part of our minds. For individuals to enjoy psychological health, he felt, they must bring these desires to the awareness of the

conscious mind. Freud believed that despite the overwhelming urge to repress desires, the unconscious still reveals itself --particularly when the conscious mind relaxes its hold -- in dreams, myths, and odd patterns of behaviour, slips of the tongue, accidents, and art. In seeking to gain access to the unconscious, the surrealists invented radical new art forms and techniques.

Dreams, according to Freud, were the royal road to studying the unconscious, because it is in dreams that our unconscious, primal desires manifest themselves. The incongruities in dreams, Freud believed, result from a struggle for dominance of ego and id. In attempting to access the real workings of the mind, many surrealists sought to approximate the nonsensical quality of dreams. Chief among these artists were Salvador Dalí from Spain, and René Magritte and Paul Delvaux from Belgium.

To suggest the irrational quality of the dream state -- and at times, to shock their audience as well -- many surrealist painters used realistic representation, but juxtaposed objects and images in irrational ways. In Magritte's *Pleasure* (1927, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Dusseldorf, Germany), for example, a young girl devours living birds with her bare teeth. The work underscores the cruelty of human nature, while playing upon the incongruity between title and image. In Dalí's *Apparition of Face and Fruit Dish on a Beach* (1938, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut) a fruit dish appears as a face, a bridge as a dog's collar, and a beach as a table cloth, depending on what the spectator focuses upon.

Dalí also experimented with motion pictures, which offered the possibility of cutting, superimposing, blending, or otherwise manipulating images to create jarring juxtapositions. In films such as *Un chien Andalou* (An Adalusian Dog, 1929) and *L'age d'or* (The Golden Age, 1930), both collaborations with Spanish motion-picture

director Luis Bunuel, these devices were used in addition to irrational plot sequences and development.

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The metamorphosis of one object into another, popular with surrealist painters and filmmakers, was a device also used by surrealist sculptors. Swiss artist Meret

Oppenheim lined a teacup, saucer, and spoon with fur in *Object (Breakfast in Fur)* (1936, Museum of Modern Art, New York City), leading the spectator to imagine the disconcerting sensation of drinking from such a cup.

Many surrealists became fascinated with mythology. According to Freud, myths revealed psychological fixations and desires that were latent in every human being. Swiss psychologist Carl Jung went on to argue that myths, regardless of their time period or geographic origin, displayed remarkable similarities. He explained these similarities through the existence of what he called *the collective unconscious*, a layer of the psyche that all of humanity somehow shares. Just as dreams displayed irrational images that revealed the psychology of the dreamer, myths revealed the psychology of all humanity.

In Dalí's painting *Metamorphosis of Narcissus* (1934, Tate Gallery, London, England), the artist refers to the ancient Greek myth of Narcissus, in which a young man fell in love with his own reflection and was transformed into a beautiful flower. Greek myths interested the surrealists because *metamorphosis* (changing from one form into another) is their most recurrent theme. Similarly, in Dalí's painting, what at first looks like the body of a man can, seen another way, become an image of a hand holding an egg.

Myth also appealed to the surrealists because of its importance to non-Western cultures. In the Freudian view, Western civilization was in danger of divorcing humanity from its primal nature. It was widely believed that non-Western cultures were more in tune with nature and primal forces—forces that were expressed through these cultures' myths and art. One surrealist who borrowed from African art was Swiss sculptor Alberto Giacometti. In *Creating Spoon Woman* (1926, Museum of Modern Art, New York City), in which a spoon also resembles a rounded female

form, Giacometti was influenced by the Dan people of Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, whose spoons and ladles also played on similarities to the human form.

One strategy the surrealists used to elicit imagery from the unconscious is called the "Exquisite Corpse." In this collaborative art form, a piece of paper was folded in four, and four different artists contributed to the representation of a figure without seeing the other artists' contributions. The first drew the head, folded the paper over and passed it on to the next, who drew the torso; the third drew the legs, and the fourth, the feet. The artists then unfolded the paper to study and interpret the combined figure.

Max Ernst, a German surrealist, invented another technique that used chance and accident: *frottage* (French for "rubbing"). By placing pieces of rough wood or metal underneath a canvas and then painting or penciling over the top, the artist transferred the textures of the underlying surfaces onto the finished work. In *Laocoön, Father and Sons* (1926, Menil Collection, Houston, Texas), Ernst incorporated chance textures through frottage, while also referring to the Greek myth of Laocoon, a Trojan priest who struggled with giant pythons.

Perhaps the most important technique used by the surrealists to elicit the unconscious is automatism. In painting, automatism consisted of allowing the hand to wander across the canvas surface without any interference from the conscious mind. The resulting marks, it was thought, would not be random or meaningless, but would be guided at every point by the functioning of the artist's unconscious mind, and not by rational thought or artistic training. In *The Kill* (1944, Museum of Modern Art, New York City), French painter André Masson implemented this technique, but he then used the improvised marks as a basis for elaboration. Whatever bore a resemblance to an actual object (in this case, a face or body part), he refined to make

the connection more apparent. Because Masson had not determined the subject matter of the painting beforehand, the surrealists claimed that his later elaborations were motivated purely by his emotional state during the act of creation

Another artist who employed automatism was Spanish painter Joan Miro. In *Birth of the World* (1925, Museum of Modern Art, New York City), for example, he applied pigment randomly to the canvas and allowed the paint to run across the surface by means of gravity, creating a host of effects that he could not have predicted in advance. As with Masson, the second stage of the painting was more deliberate and calculated. The artist may have contemplated the stains on the canvas for a time and, inspired by the forms or meanings they suggested, added a number of curving, abstract shapes that evoke living beings. The title *Birth of the World* suggests a world created from nothing but also represents the birth of consciousness through the act of painting.

Some surrealists, including Ernst, Yves Tanguy from France, and Roberto Matta from Chile, used a combination of techniques to suggest a dream state or to produce an abstract vocabulary of forms. They are therefore difficult to pigeonhole in a single category. In Matta's *The Unknowing* (1951, Museum of Modern Art, Vienna, Austria) for example, the artist has created a three-dimensional space and objects that look solid. The objects, however, are so ambiguous that viewers can view them in any number of ways and impose their own interpretations on the painting.

### **iii. Magic Realism and Surrealism**

Surrealism also helped many Latin American artists to realize the unique aspect of Latin American culture. During the 1920s and 30s many Latin American artists went to Europe to incorporate into the surrealist movement. They tried to look for supernatural elements to create a sense of reality based on the dream and the



subconscious. However, many went back to Latin America, when they realized that they don't need to look for these strange realities in Europe because it was present everywhere in their own environment and culture. The magic realism in Latin America is referred to a single characteristic, which is denoted by "Lo real Maravilloso."

In general term, the concept of the Maravilloso implies to a sense of wonder produced by unusual, unexpected or improbable phenomena. It may occur naturally, may be the result of deliberate manipulation of reality or its perception by the artist or supernatural intentions. In any case magic realism is a tool that provokes the presence of something different from the normal to mysticism.

Hybridist of magical realism and surrealism incorporates many techniques that have been linked to post colonization, with hybrid being a primary feature. Magical realism is illustrated in the inharmonious area like urban and rural, and western and indigenous. Abrams writes, "The hybridization of colonial languages and cultures, in which imperialist importations are superimposed on indigenous traditions; it also included a Euro centric version of colonial history" (237).

The postcolonial literature in India raised the voice against the colonial subordination. The postcolonial voice emerges through patriotism, the preservation of human rights and dignity. The post colonists emphasize upon equality and humanity by creating protest against the colonial voices, especially against the Indian domination on the assumption that the colonialists always violated the rights of the colonized people. Leela Gandhi in *Post Colonial Studies: A Critical Introduction* has following opinion:

The emergence of anti colonial independent' nation states after colonialism is frequently accompanied by the drive to forget the

colonial past. This 'will to forget' takes number of historical forms, and is impelled by a variety of cultural and political motivations.

Principally, postcolonial amnesia is symptomatic of the urge for historical self-invention or the need to make new start to erase painful memories of colonial subordination. (4)

Their main protest, therefore, is upon the colonial sub-ordination and subjection. The formal technique of magic realism has been singled out by many critics as one of the points of conjunction of post modernism and post colonialism. In this regard Raymond Williams writes:

The origin of magic realism as a literary style to Latin America and the third world countries is accompanied by a definition of postmodern text is signifying a charge from modernism, a historical burden of the past. It is text that self-consciously constructs its relationship to what come before the memories. (135)

Therefore, the post modernist and the postcolonial writes have used magic realism to rewrite and reconstruct the original history of the existing mystic culture. Through this technique they want to erase the painful memories of the colonial subordination, imposed to them during the era. Magic realism is an artistic genre in which magical elements or illogical scenarios appear in an otherwise realistic or even "normal" setting. As used today the term is broadly descriptive rather than critically rigorous. The term was initially used by German art critic Franz Roh to describe painting which demonstrated an altered reality, but was later used by Venezuelan Arturo Uslar-Pietri to describe the work of certain Latin American writers. The Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier used the term "lo real maravilloso" (roughly "marvelous reality") in the prologue to his novel *The Kingdom of this World* (1949). Carpentier's

conception was of a kind of heightened reality in which elements of the miraculous could appear while seeming natural and unforced. Carpentier's work was a key influence on the writers of the Latin American "boom" that emerged in the 1960s.

The term was first revived and applied to the realm of fiction as a combination of the realistic and the fantastic in the 1960s by a Venezuelan essayist and critic Arturo Uslar-Pietri, who applied it to a very specific South American genre, influenced by the blend of realism and fantasy in Mario de Andrade's influential novel *Macunaíma*. However, the term itself came in vogue only after Nobel Prize winner Miguel Ángel Asturias used the expression to define the style of his novels. The term gained popularity with the rise of the boom in Latin American Literature, most notably in works of Alejo Carpentier, Jorge Luis Borges, Jacques Stephen Alexis, Juan Rulfo, Carlos Fuentes, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. In this context, Martin Gerald in *On Magical and Social Realism in Garcia Marquez Writings* writes, "My most important problem was destroying the lines of demarcation that separates what seems real from what seems fantastic" (32). More recent Latin American authors in this vein include Isabel Allende and Laura Esquivel.

Subsequently, the term has been applied both to earlier writers such as Jorge Luis Borges, Mikhail Bulgakov, Ernst Junger and to postcolonial and other contemporary writers, from Salman Rushdie and Günter Grass to Janet Frame and Angela Carter.

In literature, magic realism often combines the external factors of human existence with the internal ones.

They accepted the term as a fusion between scientific physical reality and psychological human reality. It incorporates aspects of human existence such as thoughts, emotions, dreams, cultural mythologies and imagination. Through this

amalgamation, magic realism can be more exact in depicting human reality.

Nonetheless, a certain person's or group's perception of reality may differ from another's: to the insider, a given magical-realist text can be a relatively accurate depiction of his reality; the same text, however, may appear rather unreal to the outsider, whose perception of reality may differ greatly from the insider's.

Despite this, the reader (often the outsider) can bridge the gap by momentarily suppressing his perception of reality and adopting the reality presented in the text. This, in turn, equips the reader with the necessary tools required to decode the text. This can be described as the 'evolved duties' of the reader. In their works, magical-realists describe a specific concept of reality: to them, culture, history and geography are thus of great concern. In fact, magical realism can be considered as one of the literary manifestations of 'the other great tradition'. In the twentieth century, the ideal of homogenisation caused societal dissonances within the world's communities and social groups and between them to reach fever pitch: thus the blood-stained history of the twentieth century. In the aftermath of conflict, some have tried to assimilate history in order to aid the healing process of a particular community or social group and to re-define their identity. In literature, this manifested itself as magic realism, a dissident and dialectical discourse strategy which can provide a more accurate representation of human reality as a whole. Indeed, magic realism can also be seen as the story of the 'other'.

Magic realism is a worldwide phenomenon. Its geographical, historical and cultural contexts in which it has evolved are extremely diverse. This has given rise to abundance in discourse strategies. Nevertheless, six features of the many that have been associated with magic realism tend to be found in all magical-realist texts: 1) the perspective is that of 'the Other; 2) the duties of the readers, in decoding the texts,

have 'evolved'; 3) the setting has a relatively specific historical, geographical and cultural context; 4) reality is presented as the human experience of the universe, and elements such as dream and imagination are consequently present; 5) a free post-structuralist style of writing; and, finally, 6) the inexplicable, in its many shapes and forms, plays a major role in all magical-realist texts. Although 'magical realist' literature varies in its structure and presentation, one universal theme is the use of the fantastical to highlight and challenge the setting's paradigm, rather than merely as a plot device or setting.

Magical-realist writers use many devices, or 'special effects' to accommodate a particular discourse strategy. Although many of these tend to recur in the writings of authors with very different backgrounds, it is possible to isolate the ones which most magical-realist texts tend to have in common. In spite of this, many of these are also found in novels which could fall under other genres as well.

It is common in some fantasy stories to include a frame story, in which the central, fantastic story is explained as a dream. Because the main story works equally well with or without the frame story, and since either way the reader feels no ambiguity about choosing between the magical and the real interpretation, these are usually not included in the category of magical realism.

As regards the author-text-reader relationships the following is commonplace: the author's perspective is that of 'the other'; the narrator(s) is (are) idiosyncratic; the 'evolved duties' of the reader require him to put their perception of reality on hold in order to decode the text. Common themes are: family history, relationships and family life; life, death and the afterlife, spiritism; multiple realities; social catastrophes. The characters are often idiosyncratic, possess unusual, historic or symbolic names and are heavily characterised. The plot often is nonlinear, labyrinthine, circular or spiral-like,

intertwined, anachronism or sporadically chaotic; sometimes parallel, double, co-existing or multiple plots or subplots occur. The setting usually refers to a rather specific historical, geographical and cultural context. There often is a peculiar representation of time and space: time-shifts between co-existing plots, flash-backs and flash-forwards; the creation of a 'mythical' place, such as the archetypal Macondo, in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Macondo, an imaginary island situated somewhere in the Caribbean, was founded by Jose Arcadio Buendia and eventually the small and isolated town in the swamp, became the centre of civil war and more than seventeen uprisings, led Aureliano Buendia. In the context, William L. Raymonds in *Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Magic Realism* writes, “The epic *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the bible to the Caribbean literature” (31).

*One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez is vivid depiction of many of the Latin American issues; its infinite civil wars, uprisings, faiths and beliefs, culture, tradition and apathy of the Caribbean denizens. Marquez in this work is fiction is less fictive and more autobiographic.

The novel is the depiction of one hundred years of intrigues, chaotic social and political history of the Latin America, as a whole. Like many, the character of Colonel Aureliano Buendia depicts the famous war lord and rebel leader General Rafael Uribe Uribe of Columbia and the massacre of United Banana Plantation, is more than true. Besides, the people of Macondo are aloof from the rest of world, so were the people of Caribbean until late 1960s.

History is a repetition of happenings, since time immemorial but its face and picture varies. At least, when it comes to *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, it is a pure repetition, destined to doom. The dooms of the Buendias; the family patriarch of

Macondo, pseudo Caribbean, is predestined to meet their doom, making a complete notion of circularity.

There is a miscellaneous use of myths, legends, fairy-tales, the oral tradition of storytelling, folkloric customs, magic, the obscure, astrology, mythology, spirituality and, naturally, religion. Elements of the human experience of reality are often emphasised: dream, imagination, sentience, feelings and emotions, the subconscious and the spiritual.

The free, post-structuralist style of magical-realist writing characterises itself by unconventional spelling, punctuation and collocation, a use of regionalisms, surrealist and expressionist descriptions, and a variety of genres and registers. Some of the most commonly used rhetorical devices are synaesthesia and descriptions involving the five senses; an isolation or meticulous detailed description of objects; original metaphors and similes, frequent juxtaposition; hyperbole and litotes; repetition; symbolism; sardonic irony, oxymoron's and paradoxes; and anthropomorphism.

Of course, what is most striking to the reader often is the 'inexplicable': coincidences, serendipity, consequentialism, and poetic justice or divine justice; supernatural or wondrous powers, abilities, beings or events; prophecies, omens and premonitions.

The characters' reactions to the inexplicable are keys to the definition of Magic-Realism: inexplicable phenomena occur in extremely mundane circumstances and the character(s) tend to not respond adequately (or at all) to the supernatural or magic nature of the event. On the contrary, they often treat the magical event as an annoyance, a setback, or an unwanted obligation. An example from Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is Remedios the Beautiful. Remedios ascends into heaven

while removing laundry from the clothes line. This provokes the disproportionate reaction from her aunt, who, simply annoyed, prays to God for the return of the bed linens and not her niece.

Indeed, this unconcerned response to the supernatural is what distinguishes magic realism from other more traditional representations of magical phenomena in narrative fiction. It is also what gives magic-realism its characteristically ironic and humorous quality. More examples in Marquez can be found in his two short stories *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* and *The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World*. In the above two stories we find, the old man and the handsomest man possess character of unrealistic and unnatural calibre. They are capable to lure people towards them by their unearthly traits; the old man with his wings and the handsomest man with his charm, a stark reality of humour and irony blended together.

Imitators of Marquez, such as the early Isabel Allende and Laura Esquivel, also share this trait; use of irony and humour in writings.

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### III Textual Analysis

#### 1. Magic realism in *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor*

Magical realism is often regarded as a regional trend, restricted to the Latin American writers who popularized it as a literary form. But after the publication and worldwide acceptance of many of Marquez's works, including *One Hundred Years of Solitude* Magic Realism has earned an international acclamation in literary discourse.

*The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* is a nonfiction story; however, it is difficult to avoid the abundance of magic intermingled with realism. Recollection of the heroics of gallant Luis Alejandro Velasco's ten days of ordeal in the ocean is the central story of *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor*.

The story unfolds, when after eight months of repairs in Mobile, Alabama in the United States, the destroyer Caldas prepares to sail home to Cartagena in Columbia. The sailors bid farewell to onshore companions. "Our girlfriends wept," Velasco remembers, "and drank whiskey at a dollar and a half a bottle" (6).

The misfortune of Velasco needs no enhancing; it is the interest commandeered by catastrophe at sea is at least, as old as the *Odyssey*. The tale of odyssey starts with sailors in a way or other strangely being haunted by the feelings of the approaching dooms. Velasco, as getting prepared for aboard with his friends gets the first of the major predictions of the coming misfortune. As he would later recall to Marquez:

[. . .] He bent over the port side. At that moment the ship tilted frightfully; he was gone. I stopped breathing. A huge wave crashed over us and we were drenched, as though we had just come out of the sea. Very slowly, the ship laboured to right it. Luis Rengifo was ashen.

Nervously he said, “What a luck? The ship is going down and doesn’t want to come up.” (15)

The first of its attack of the cruel wave and the words by Luis Rengifo, a fellow in the crew was beginning of the misfortune which was to ruin them all, forever. Prediction of the tragedy and its aftermath was in the eyes of Velasco; however, he was unable to avoid it. The ship wrecks and all its crew succumb to the cruelty of the vast water mass.

However, when the tragedy befalls, Velasco doesn’t find himself shocked by terror. It is interesting to know that humans can grow an internal insight to fight the tragedy. He recalls:

One thing astounded me: I felt a little weak, but not exhausted. I had endured nearly forty hours without water or food and more than two days and two nights without sleep, and I had been awake the entire night before the accident. Nonetheless, I felt capable of rowing. The power within was surprisingly new and unknown. I never believed I could resist all these. (38)

It is no magic to overcome all sorts of hardships at the face of death. But the tragedy of Velasco was, he was fighting a battle, whose sense of coming he had vision in previous. Earlier, when the Caldas was at rest, he and his girlfriend, Mary had together seen a movie *The Caine Mutiny*, where more than mutiny, he was disturbed by the storm scene. He reminisces:

The best part of the movie, however, wasn’t the minesweeper but the storm. [. . .] But none of us had ever been in a storm like that one, so nothing in the movie impressed us as much as the storm did. When we returned to the ship that night, one of the sailors, Diego Velazquez,

who was very impressed by the movie, figured that in just a few days we would be at sea and wondered, "What if something like that happened to us?" (4)

His suspicion was soon going to be in real, at least, Velasco thought so. Partly, he was impressed by the movie, and partly he was engulfed by an unknown fear. He says:

I confess that the movie also made an impression on me. In the past eight months, I had grown unaccustomed to the sea. I wasn't afraid, for an instructor had shown us how to fend for ourselves in the event of a shipwreck. Nonetheless, the uneasiness I felt the night we saw *The Caine Mutiny* wasn't normal. (4)

And they board the ship, only to encounter the pre-destined fate. It is the fate of many such unlucky sailors, who are to face such tragedy each day.

There in the middle of the Caribbean ocean, the ship gets three jolt and shatters to pieces, taking eight crew members with it. Velasco recalls his falling in to the ocean, thus;

I swam upward for one, two, three seconds. I tried to reach the surface. I needed air. I was suffocating. I tried to grab hold of the cargo, but the cargo wasn't there anymore. Now there was nothing around me. When I got to the surface, I couldn't make out anything in the sea. A second later, about a hundred meters away, the ship surged up between the waves, gushing water from all sides like a submarine. It was only then that I realized I had fallen abroad. (17)

He reaches a raft and decides, Crusoe-like, "to make an inventory of my belongings" (37). These include a wristwatch, some keys, and three business cards

from a store in Mobile and no food or water. He guesses that he is some 50 miles from his home port and will be rescued in two or three hours, but still worries, "It seemed an extraordinarily long time to be alone at sea" (68). Ten days later, having swallowed seawater and a few pickings of raw fish, he lands with a cargo of extraordinary impressions.

As his world begins turning upside down, Velasco expects to hear the order to cut loose the cargo. It never comes. Instead, a wave takes him overboard. He reaches a raft and decides, Crusoe-like, "to make an inventory of my belongings." These include a wristwatch, some keys, and three business cards from a store in Mobile and no food or water. He guesses that he is some 50 miles from his home port and will be rescued in two or three hours, but still worries, "It seemed an extraordinarily long time to be alone at sea. (67)" Ten days later, having swallowed seawater and a few picking of a raw fish, he lands with a cargo of extraordinary impressions.

His first awareness of the presence of sharks alarms him hardly at all. As for him, "Nothing appears more innocuous than a shark fin. It doesn't look like part of an animal, even less part of a savage beast; it's green and rough, like the bark of a tree" (43). The only thing he recalls fondly about sharks is; "The Sharks arrive at five" (37).

His encounter with sharks is more fantasy than realism. As, for him the ferocious animals were less threatening and malicious than 'human' animals. He says:

It doesn't look like part of an animal, even less part of a savage beast. It's green and rough, like the bark of a tree. As I watched it edge past the side of the raft, I imagined it might have a fresh flavour, somewhere bitter, like the skin of a vegetable. It was after five. [. . .]

More sharks approached the raft, patiently marauding until darkness fell. (38)

The coming of the sharks was less alarming than the planes that were flying above the sky. In pretext, to have their attention to him, he opened his shirt and risking against the fall in the ocean and being prey to the sharks, he moved his shirt above him, but with no success. His own people were being a magical fantasy to him and the ferocious sharks were more than reality; a stark reality of humour and irony of modern man.

But as days, passed and the plane above him still did not notice him, he turned more and more near to the sharks. They arrived sharp at five in the morning, circled his raft and slowly moved to a farther distance.

Another reality hitting hard on him was -- hunger. However, the fact was his hunger was always killed by the presence of sharks, every morning. Velasco, starving manages to capture a small gull: "It's easy to say that after five days of hunger you can eat anything" (44). He cannot stomach the sight of the dead, bleeding bird, torn apart by his own hands. He experiences alternating highs and lows, sometimes throbbing with the will to survive, and then praying for an end to his punishment. His "days of solitude" convince him "that it would be harder for me to die than to go on" (43).

Alberto Manguel commenting in *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* writes about this trend in *History of Readings* writes:

There is a short but telling portrait of the novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez, who every morning reads a couple of pages of a dictionary any dictionary except the pompous *Diccionario de la Real Academia Espanola* - a habit our author compares to that of Stendhal, who

perused the Napoleonic Code so as to learn to write in a terse and exact style. (32)

Latin America, the land of endurance, was yet to witness the gallantry of Velasco. As this simple and straight forward line of story results in an enduring account of tale of bravery and endurance. This normal like incident everybody believed, as the land of Caribbean is a land of gallantry of brave heroes. It is a land of frequent civil wars and internal chaos for Power; however the people are surprisingly near and dear to each other. Such society took the incident wholeheartedly, of course, not the dictators of Columbia.

The dictatorship countered the blow with a series of drastic reprisals that would result, months later, in the shutdown of the newspaper. Despite the pressure, the threats, and the most seductive attempts of bribery, Velasco did not recant a word of his story. He had to leave the Navy, the only career he had, and disappeared into the oblivion of everyday life. After two years the dictatorship collapsed and Colombia fell to the mercy of other regimes that were better dressed but not much more just.

Velasco, by now who was tired of narrating his ordeals, remembers his ordeal of narration as;

I have told my story on television and on a radio programme. I've also told it to my friends. I told it to an elderly widow with a huge photograph album, who invited me to her home. Some people tell me this story is fantasy. And so does the Government. And I ask them: if it is so, then what did I do during my ten days at sea? (106)

This attention to specific serves him well during what is to follow and gets him into trouble later on. Caldas does not run into a storm, as the official Colombian version of the incident will assert? The ship begins listing dangerously in

high winds and water; its decks are stacked with washing machines and other appliances from the U.S. that are being illegally ferried to Colombia.

Raymond Williams opines that such hallucinations are common in sailors. In *Writings of Gabriel Garcia Marquez*, he opines:

The story of Velasco on his raft, his battle with sharks over a succulent fish, his hallucinations, his capture of seagull which he was unable to eat, his subsequent droll rescue, has all the grip of archetypal myth [. . .] reads like an epic, lit from within by Velasco's great heartedness [. . .] an example of the survival instinct in full flame. It was only the government, who found it hard to believe and took it as a sheer myth.

(43)

Story of Velasco, itself became a myth. People were ready to believe it but their sense did not allow them to do so. And on the part of the government, it did not want to disclose its recklessness and emphasized on the incident being a fake story. Velasco became a perfect blend of magic and realism. He had only one answer to his disbelievers, "Then what did I do during my ten days at sea" (106).

When Velasco showed up of his own accord to ask how much they (the Government) would pay him for his story, they took it for granted. He was mentally tired of being confiscated for several weeks in a naval hospital, and he had been allowed to talk only with reporters favourable to the regime. He was restricted to speak more than the state had permitted. He recalls, "Only my father, the guards, and the doctors and nurses at the naval hospital were permitted in my room" (102).

Harsh reality fell on the gallant hero. He wanted the world to know what his ordeals were during the ten days in the ocean but to no avail. However, one opposition journalist, Garcia Marquez doze the security, in disguise of a doctor; the



real story came to the public. He managed to get the real story in fragments, in many attempts. His story had been told piece meal many times, had been pawed over and perverted, and readers seemed fed up with a hero who had rented himself out to advertise watches, because his watch during the ordeal had not slowed down; in shoe advertisement as his shoes so sturdy, that Velasco hadn't been able to tear them to eat.

However, when the real story appeared in the newspapers, Velasco and the reporter, Marquez had to pay a huge price for it; Velasco lost his job and Marquez was forced into a self-exile by the regime.

The government was against disclosing the reality of the incident, as there had been no storm to shipwreck the Caldas in reality. Velasco narrates Marquez:

There was no storm. It was true. The weather bureau confirmed that it had been another clear and mild February in the Caribbean. The truth, never published until then, was that the ship, tossed violently by the wind in heavy seas, had spilled its ill-secured cargo and the eight sailors overboard. This revelation meant that three serious offenses had been committed: first it was illegal to transport cargo on a destroyer, secondly the overweight prevented the ship from manoeuvring to rescue sailors; and third, the cargo was contraband – refrigerators, television sets, and washing machines. (Preface VIII)

The overshadowing of the factual happenings of the catastrophe is swallowed by the state authority in direct impact of the drug kingpins. The drug lords who feared being extradited to the United States, where they were likely to face life sentences, if the inquiry was held upon the incident, decided to dramatically pressure the Colombian government to silence the story of Velasco.

The government, who was determined not to spill the beans, even kidnapped and held hostages ten prominent Colombians, some of whom were well-known television personalities, so that the story would not spread. Some of the survivors of the ordeal asked Garcia Marquez to tell the story, and the novelist does a masterfully understated job. The various characters, from the hostages kept in makeshift dungeons to the despairing government officials to the notorious drug lord Pablo Escobar are portrayed brilliantly in this real-life tale of suspense and thrill.

However, the magical fantasy was on the mouth of every Columbian, when along with the complete story appeared in a special supplement illustrated with the sailors' photographs. Behind the groups of friends on the high seas one could see the boxes of contraband merchandise and even, unmistakably, the factory labels. The dictatorship countered the blow with a series of drastic reprisals that would result, months later, in the shutdown of the newspaper. Despite, repeated threat, pressure and most seductive attempts to bribery, Velasco did not recant a word of his story.

There was nothing for the man who had defied death to recant for. He, who was declared dead by the state and if there would have been another repetition, and if he was to die again; it would have been magic turning into reality and nothing more. His trauma in the sea and now was similar. He recounts:

I don't remember the dawn of the next day. I have a vague idea that during the entire morning I lay prostrate, between life and death, in the bottom of the raft. I thought about my family and imagined them doing precisely what they later told me they had done during my disappearance. I wasn't surprised when they said they had held a wake for me. (53)

All that had happened to him in the sea and now it was coming again, the only difference he found was; and then he was in a magical state of toxicities and now wake up to face the reality. He recalls his torment in ocean to that of land as:

All of that was so, up to a point. Yet I tried to take care of myself every moment. I kept finding ways to survive, something to prop myself up with – insignificant thought it might have been – some reason to sustain hope. But on the sixth day, I no longer hoped for anything. I was a dead man in the raft. (54)

And, there was no point for a dead man to take back his own words. Velasco's realism was now the mingling of fantasy to fiction.

*The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* is a linger somewhere between the fact and fiction. The deserted hero pretends he is a dead man. He tries to eat his shoes, drink the salty water and catches fishes to dine with. Furthermore, he chews the cards, which he had in his pocket. Surprisingly, all these, though were normal like act but became the source of living and inspiration. He remembers:

The relief I felt while chewing the cards spurred my imagination to look for things to eat. If I had a knife, I would have cut up my shoes and chewed slices of the rubber soles. [ . . . ] Desperately I gnawed at my belt until my teeth hurt. I couldn't even tear off a mouthful. I must have looked like a find then, trying to rip off pieces of my shoes, belt and shirt with my teeth. They were the closest thing at hand. I tried to pry off the clean, white soles with my keys. But I couldn't pull of a piece of the sole; it was glued so tightly to the fabric. (55)

This was life. Life at its cruellest form, one could ever think of. Soles to eat for and cards to chew was the greatest reality of Velasco, for the moment. But only,

he could know that the bitter reality was yet to come, even harder to digest. When found after ten days in ocean, no one first of all took his story, when they understood, that he was; he was taken into custody. It was the pain of being a modern man.

Velasco, when arrived in the deserted island after ten days in ocean, requested the first person he saw for help. But, for people he was a miracle and no one ready to believe in sensation of fantasy. Man becomes different in the face of miracle. He recounts:

“Senor, help me,” I said.

He didn’t answer right away. He continued to look at me enigmatically, without even blinking, his rifle stuck in the ground. All I needed now from him to shoot me. I thought dispassionately. The dog licked my face, but I didn’t have the strength to move away.

“Help me,” I repeated desperately, worried that the man hadn’t understood me. (92)

He left the sharks behind but the real sharks were still to come in his life. His bravery, now at the face of humans was to no avail, as humans not only were declining him, but hostile. The reality of sharks and the ocean had turned into fantasy. He was not able to difference the humans to that of animals. “I saw the dog, coming nearby. It was watching me closely. Slowly it licked my face and body. For sure, the dog understood my sufferings but tragically, the man was still with his rifle at a safer distance” (93).

The shocking reality he was yet to overcome was, he was forgotten before he could narrate his torments. Despite several attempts to narrate his sufferings, no one was initially ready to listen and when they listened, either they were in dismay or took

it as a narration of superficial. “The bitterness of the reality was more shocking than the fear of sharks, all around,” (96) narrated Velasco to Marquez.

Similarly, when he was expecting the whole world would be more than eager to listen to his woes, he found that most people either did not care, and others were not ready to accept the happenings. He says:

No one knew about the accident. I tried to explain to give the whole story so they'd know how I'd been saved. I'd had the idea that in whatever part of the world I turned up, everyone would already know about the catastrophe. It was disillusioning to realize, as the woman spoon-fed me cinnamon water like a sick child, that I had been mistaken. (95)

During the long days and night in the raft, he had not even had have the slightest idea that such a day that he would be spoon fed and there will be no one hear his courageous deeds. He was not ready to digest the fact.

He was seeing his act of realism was turned into some acts like that of a fakir. A fakir also could practice staying without food for days and his (Velasco) works also seemed another of the type. Still more, when the officials decline his reality to come to the public, he found no difference between a fakir and himself. He laments:

The only difference between the fakir and me was that the fakir was in a glass box. He hadn't eaten for nine days; I had been ten days at sea and one day in bed in a room in Mulatos. I watched the faces parade before me – black faces, white faces – in an endless line. The heat was terrible. Then the appropriate response came to me – a sense of humour about it all – and I guessed that someone might even be selling tickets to see the shipwrecked sailor. (99)

When the state turns hostile, even the pragmatism turns into as if like dream. Velasco's tragedy was he fought a dream like daring work and now he was being treated as someone out of the world; a fictional creature.

"The reality of mine was fast turning in to magic fantasy," (103) he narrated in the course of interview with Garcia. It was painful being a showcase of fantasy; a medium of debate for the locals as well as to the government. It was a painful feeling to be at, yet another confinement, after the hectic life saving feat. "They took me to San Juan de Uraba in the same hammock, in which they carried me to Mulatos. And it was the same Mulatos to carry zoo animals" (99) he recounts to Garcia. This act, finally made him believe that his feat was to be taken as an act against the state welfare.

These intertwined circumstances make *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* something more than another raid on a successful author's juvenilia. For Garcia Marquez, who would become world famous through his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, this early effort in journalism provided a lesson in the bizarre effects that telling a tale can have on characters and author alike. His attempt to reconstruct Velasco's experiences as factually as possible assumed a life of its own; the sailor who braved exposure and sharks fell afoul of the words of his story. And it were words, paradoxically, rescued Velasco's adventure from being oblivion. When these pieces first appeared in book form, in Spanish in 1970, Garcia Marquez noted, "I find it depressing that the publishers are not so much interested in the merit of the story as in the name of the author, which much to my sorrow, is also that of a fashionable writer" (Preface vii).

#### IV. Conclusion

The aim of the present thesis is to analyse the intermingling of reality into fantasy. In doing so, *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* not only shows the ordeal of a gallant sailor who braved hunger and sharks for ten days, all alone in vast sea but also how the heroics of a normal man become nightmare for the rulers.

It's based on a true story, the account of the *Caldas*, a Colombian ship which was swamped at sea, due to negligence of storing contraband in 1955, spilling several men overboard. One sailor, Luis Alejandro Velasco, miraculously survived 10 days at sea, becoming something of a national hero. He told his story to Garcia Marquez, then a journalist at the newspaper *El Espectador* in Bogota, and Marquez put shaped it in words and serialized it as if it were directly written by Velasco.

In 1970, when Gabriel Garcia Marquez was something of a name, he was asked to publish the articles as a novella, and thus, *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* was born. A simple but powerful tale, it shows a strong voice, gifted at both telling a story and capturing human emotions.

Originally appearing as in 14 consecutive articles in the newspaper with the title of *The Truth about My Adventure*, this work was first published as a book in 1970 with the title *Relato de un naufrago*.

The novella was the story of ship *Caldas* and its crew. They were travelling from Mobile in Atlanta to the Caribbean but due to the overweight of the illegal goods, it got drowned, killing all crew except, of course, Velasco. Then his ordeal started, all in the sea with no food and water. There were sharks everywhere and there were also planes in the sky, but no rescue. After giving all hope for life and wish to meet his homeland and family again, he kept the raft moving on, not to survive but in a mechanical way. But luck had some other things in store for him; he not only came

alive but challenged the whole system. His coming alive was challenge to the dictator regime, which had made public that the Caldas had drowned due to bad weather.

However, when the story got published, it became oblivion to the dictator rulers of Columbia. Firstly, because there was no so called storm in the ocean that have been claimed to cause the shipwreck; and secondly the ship was carrying illegal materials on permission by the government, ferried to the pirates, a shame to the dictators.

Ironically enough, Velasco's desire to tell the truth about the accident -- the negligence, the contraband, etc. -- was at odds with the government, and it eventually ended with Velasco's downfall and the closing of the *El Espectador*, the newspaper that dared to publish the heroics. Velasco's heroic was forgotten by the State and was expelled from his naval post; on the other hand, Marquez was forced to go on a self claimed exile, to Paris. However, Marquez's exile bore fruits to him in the form of literary creations, landing him on Noble Prize for literature in 1982.

Velasco's character is real. His sufferings were real. However, the state and the degree of risk, he bore to save his life are, too fanciful to be termed as reality. They are above normal act of a common man, so they are magical pragmatism; a blend of magic and realism making his ordeals – magic realism.

However, the subject of this novel Velasco is removed from the mythic glass of prison of history and places into the magical alembic of his transforming prose. This fantasy comes into life through the words of Marquez. Velasco comes alive to narrate an overwhelming story of endurance and suffering. His courageous deed, though eradicated from the realm of fantasy, remains to be a magical fantasy. It is simply because it is too, superficial for a man to be left alone in the Caribbean ocean and comes out alive after ten days of adrift in the sea. It was hardly expected by the



then rulers, as well, and also by any normal man. However, the unbelievable came to be true and that was because of the bravery and fortitude of Velasco, truly a man of enchantment.

Although, perhaps one of his most accessible and straight forward novels, it has truly a very sad work, the product of research into the life of Velasco. Marquez's exposition of the lost hero and his deeds, in turn had a sympathetic outcome. The invincible fighter won over the ferocious animals in the sea but got defeated by his own people, so called human, who made his life miserable to live by.

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