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Analysis of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) in the Light of Narratological Redefining 'Point of View' Theory by Gerard Genette

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Abstract:

Point of view has rigorously been part and parcel of interpretation of literature since the times of Plato and Aristotle. The phrase 'point of view' was firstly used by Henry James while discussing theory of novel in his prefaces later compiled as *The Art of the Novel* (1934). Nowadays, 'point of view' studies have broadened after the structuralist narratological redefining of its paradigms. Genette's book *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* is considered as the culmination of structuralist narrative theory. Here, he redefines 'point of view' and terms it as 'focalization'. While studying it under the heading of 'perspective', he comments that traditional studies on the subject were confusing as they did not differentiate between 'who speaks?' and 'who sees?' Narratology studies how a story is able to have specific form and meaning by investigating structures and devices, system of figures and conventions. One of the aspects of 'structuralist narratology' is to analyze how the 'distance' and 'perspective' set the narrative 'mood', i.e., the regulation of narrative information which plays one of the fundamental roles in the way story is narrated. This paper analyses *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) in the light of Genette's concept of 'focalization' traditionally called 'point of view'. The paper renders explicit the inner-workings of storytelling and minutely studies the 'mood' of the novel. Gabriel Garcia Marquez switches 'point of view' without worrying about the levels of narration i.e., the world in and about which a narrator tells. The novel seems a narrator's silent dialogue with oneself. It is in pure thought form –nonverbal, unreported and unheard.

Keywords: Point of View, Focalization, Perspective, Narratology, Structuralism, Mood etc.

INTRODUCTION

Point of view deals with the stance of a narrator. Henry James, for the first time, formally talked about 'point of view' making it one of the most talked about topic ever since. Henry James wrote about it in a series of prefaces to his novels which were later compiled as *The Art of the Novel* (1934). Susana Onega in his essay "Narrative theory before 1950" discusses that James distinguished between voice and point of view stressing that a novelist must not tell rather show the story to the readers. James was against the narrator stepping in the story or to make comments about it. James reiterated that showing through the third person narration is

psychologically immediate and terms it as ‘centers of consciousness’, ‘vessels of sensibility’ or ‘reflectors’, and which Genette studies as ‘focalization’. On the footsteps of Henry James, Percy Lubbock has Wayne Booth also made contribution to the area. But it was Gerard Genette’s *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* which is the most updated work on the systematic study of ‘point of view’ which he prefers to call ‘focalization’. He studied it under the heading of ‘Mood’ (161) which is modeled on its two aspects ‘distance’ and ‘perspective’. Genette differentiated between the position of the narrator (the point from which the story is told) and the position from which events of the narrative can be viewed i.e., differentiated between ‘focalization’ and ‘narration’ (189). Focalization studied ‘who is the character, whose point of view orients the narrative perspective?’ and narration analyzed ‘the other question, ‘who is the narrator?’” (186). Genette further simplified that the eyes through which we see the narrative is perspective which, he said, is the research area of ‘mood’. On the other hand ‘who speaks?’ is voice (186). It studies how narrator is implicated in the narrative. Genette, therefore, introduced the term ‘focalization’ for the analyses of narrative perspective. On the basis of the above definition of perspective he has identified three types of narrative. They are ‘non-focalized narrative’, ‘internal focalization’, ‘zero focalization’. ‘Non-focalized’ narrative or narrative with ‘zero focalization’ (189) is usually found in classical narratives where the omniscient narrator, who knows more than any other character, is employed (ibid). Secondly, in ‘internal focalization’, the vision of the narrator is equal to that of the character who speaks (ibid). The narrator tells only what the character knows. Genette has further categorized ‘internal focalization’ as ‘fixed’, ‘variable’ or ‘multiple’ (189, 190). The narrative where everything is narrated through the eyes of a single character is said to have ‘fixed internal focalization’ (189). If the character through which action is narrated or in other words if the focal character changes through the course of the novel, then it is ‘variable internal focalization’ (ibid). In such focalization different perspectives are employed for different situations and events. Genette further introduces the concept of ‘restriction’, a key word used to make the reader realize focalization. With respect to restriction Genette calls ‘internal variable focalization’ “omniscience with partial restrictions of field” (194). Moreover ‘restriction’ is the key term used to make the reader realize focalization, and to distinguish ‘variable focalization’ and ‘non-focalization’ (192). Further, ‘focalization’ is also defined as a restriction imposed on the information provided by a narrator about his characters. The narratives with ‘multiple internal focalization’ narrate the same event several times through the eyes of different characters (190). Lastly, the third type of focalization is ‘external focalization’ (ibid) where the narrator does not know much about the characters. His knowledge remains limited (189) and follows the actions of the characters but does not know their thoughts and feelings (ibid). The narratives usually regulate information ‘according to the capacities of knowledge of one or another participant in the story (a character or group of characters), with the narrative adopting or seeming to adopt one or another perspective – participant’s “vision” or “point of view”’ (ibid).

MOOD

As has already been pointed out that *OHYS* represents narrator's dialogue with himself signifying everybody's reading of one's own self before forming perspectives about anything. The form of the narration is 'stream of consciousness' neither told nor addressed. Genette takes it for granted that there is always someone off the side as an addressee even if the narrator does not refer to anyone. Such is the case with *OHYS* where the anonymous narrator does not address anyone rather the story is told for the sole purpose of telling. The line between one's self and the self of a community is blurred to the extent that characters in the novel inherit not only the physical traits of their ancestors but also their memories, aims, dreams and daily concerns. The definition and concept of self goes beyond the way it is understood normally. Narratologically speaking, it is the 'distance' and 'perspective', which set the mood of any narrative. The story of the novel *OHYS* is narrated primarily in 'free indirect style', along with 'imitated speech'. The story is told by an omniscient and anonymous narrator, though there are some scholars who claim that the narrator of the story is Melquiades, a character in the novel. According to Raymond Williams, "it is revealed in reality that the narrator of the entire story was Melquiades" (qtd. in Waddington 32). Melquiades is also the author of a book whose 'story' and the 'text' is what *One Hundred Years of Solitude* tells about. Garcia, while telling the story of the book of Melquiades, makes Melquiades one of the characters in the novel giving importance to him as an author, narrator, guide who helps in decoding the true meaning of the scripts he had written. So, the novel, *OHYS* is a story of the manuscript written by Melquiades, a second hand version, not the real one. The story is narrated in 'free indirect style' truly representing it in its original version as was really experienced by characters. But Genette considers that 'free indirect style', is closer to 'immediate speech' as it guarantees faithfulness to the thoughts, perceptions, and voices of the characters. In the light of this argument it is observed that the novel employs oral storytelling as one of the techniques revealing that the story of the novel is being carried from generation to generation since time immemorial when "even thing did not have names" (*OHYS* 1). The novel itself offers information about its theory of reality through its 'mood' and 'voice'. There is also no distance between the time in which 'telling' of the story and the narrative action takes place.

The concept of time in the novel makes past and future as contained in the present moment. The novel purports us into a different world which is simultaneously real and magical. We are made to see and feel abstract things as if they are tangible. In this way, the novel redefines parameters of reality. The narrator, by his friendly and matter-of-fact tone, takes the reader into intimate confidence, and represents the events of the story which seem very much real within the world of the novel. They also seem imaginable and possible in the real life of the reader. In terms of that very world experience the novel is the most mimetic picture where space and time are not as they are in real life. Genette has further said that the 'distance' of the story from the reader is firstly determined by the kind of narrative speech used by the author or the narrator.

The skilful use of free indirect style in the novel makes it appear as ‘imitated speech’ which dissolves the distance between the narrator and the narratee while imitating the thought, perception and speech of the characters in its tone and tenor. This type telling has been called by Genette as ‘pure narrative’ (Genette 163).

Teasing the structures of understanding based on binaries, the narrator simultaneously remains present in and outside of the minds of the characters defying logic. “It”, Genette says, “transgresses a “law of the spirit” requiring that one cannot be inside and outside at the same time” (210). This scarcely conceivable coexistence serves as an emblem of the whole of Garcia’s narrative practice. We see that the ‘mood’ of the narrative is tied to the activity of the narrator, his presence as “the disturbing intervention of the narrative source—of the narrating in the narrative” (Genette 211). In free indirect narration, the narrator does not imitate the speeches of the characters as such; he rather reports the perspectives, voices, ideas and feels of the characters. As an objective, anonymous and omniscient narrator, he maintains quite an objective distance from the story he narrates. The narrative, in this sense, seems steeped in mimetic effect. In other words, there is minimum possible presence/interference of the narrator in the story. The effective use of narrative style makes us feel that we are witnessing the narrative action ourselves with no mediation raising the effect of mimetic illusion to its extreme. Beyond being objective and subjective in the telling of the story, the narrator makes us see with our own eyes the reality as it actually is. Henry James favoured this style of telling where narrator shows the action of the story to the readers and remains outside it at the same time. In the way the narrator furnishes us with the narrative information through lesser distance from the story it tells. The use of past tense and the third person pronouns merely look like tools to narrate the personal and first hand impression which are not of the narrator.

Moreover, ‘tense’ and ‘voice’ also have their implications on the ‘mood’ of the narrative (Genette 66). ‘Speed’ as an aspect of ‘tense’ interferes with the ‘mood’ in the sense that if the narrative speed is greater, then the distance between the reader and the story will also be great and vice versa. Similarly if ‘voice’, i.e., the narrator, is present in the story it will lessen the mimetic effect and the absence of the narrator from the story of the novel increases the illusion of mimesis. Here, in the narrative of *OHYS* the narrator is objectively invisible and the narrative speed is minimum leading to the narrative being the most mimetic. The text is exuberantly dense where several stories, simultaneously and seamlessly, run into the novel. Sometimes, the story times stops as two minutes of ‘story time’ takes up a full page of dialogue, and sometimes time moves faster as ten years of story time pass “in a blank line between paragraphs — we tend to assume that, to the characters, everything feels like it’s happening in order, and that those two minutes feel like two minutes and those ten years feel like ten years” (Cadre). The repetitive references to the same events create a condition of the “maximum of the information and minimum of the informer” (Genette 166), which enriches the mimetic effect of the narrative by providing the reader with detailed information. This minimizes the narrative speed to virtual

zero. Though there is a narrator in the novel yet we observe that the reader is in one to one relation with the text with no or minimum of mediation, thereby, lessening the distance between the story and the reader to the minimum. As we have already noted that the achronic and montagic passages of the novel are like different chunks of memory devoid of order and spacio-temporal limitations, it becomes a mimesis of memory in its nascent form. The narrator remains objective as there are a number of instances where narrator does not share the views of the characters. While telling us about the character of Melquiades, for instance, we are informed: “That prodigious creature, said to possess the keys of Nostradamus, was a gloomy man, enveloped in a sad aura, with an Asiatic look that seemed to know what there was on the other side of things” (*OHYS 10*). For the natives the gypsy was a supernatural creature possessing the ‘keys of Nostradamus’ and who knew ‘what there was on the other side of things’. But the use of ‘said to possess’ and ‘seemed’ in the first and the second part of the sentence distances the narrator from any such belief. The use of the word ‘seemed’ has been made a number of times thereby absolving the narrator from the charge of being unreliable. There are several such instances of narrator’s maintaining an ethical distance giving overtones of ‘external focalization’. At the same time the narrator is present as source, guarantor, organizer of the narrative, “as stylist ... and particularly—as we well know—as producer of “metaphors” (Genette 167) Garcia, then, is at the extreme of mimesis and so faithful to the deepest eddies of life both real and imagined that we start believing the unbelievable, seeing the unseen and experience the unexperienced. The novel is a textual form of memory where comes across not the story as such but the story’s “image,” its “trace” (Genette 168). Genette has called this mediation of memory “a paradox which, quite obviously, is such only according to the norms of mimetic theory; a decisive transgression, a rejection pure and simple—as we watch—of the millennial opposition between diegesis and mimesis” (Genette 168). This is so because in omniscient and ‘free indirect style’ narrative, there is a transgression of the boundaries of what is called mimesis and diegesis as the narrator reports something which cannot be seen, touched such as thoughts and perceptions. But the magic of third person omniscience is such that we hardly doubt its authenticity. The following passage from the novel illustrates the statements made above;

MANY YEARS LATER as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendia was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice. 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 was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point. (*OHYS 1*)

In this passage the presence of the narrator is not visible as he reports from the inside of the character’s memory. In the second sentence the narrator switches over to the perspective of someone from the town. This is how the narrator remains both inside and outside the story and the memory of the characters. the reader of the novel “perceives the action as it filters through the consciousness of one of the characters involved, yet perceives it *directly* as it impinges upon

that consciousness, thus avoiding that removal to a distance necessitated by retrospective ... narration” (Genette 168). The ‘temporal distance’ between the story and the narrating instance involves no ‘modal distance’ between the story and the narrative: no loss, no weakening of the mimetic illusion. There is a sense of immediacy which is constantly maintained. The narrating instance is maintained in the background partially while seemingly giving the floor to the character right away. Since the narrator cannot show what he/characters see in the manner of drama, he engages in narrative activity that is most detailed and alive. According to Kortenaar and Waddington:

The Circular structure, an extreme form of flashback and a device extensively employed in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* does indeed also have precedence in *The Odyssey*, which systematically resorts to flashback; and here Marquez brings it to specific and cunning effect, providing the whole memory/oral based structure of the novel. The reliance upon flashback and circularity then is a powerful means of re-establishing traditional and even pre-literate narrative style in a post-modern text” (18).

These critics further reiterate that “Such emphasis upon the oral tradition also creates a diffuse critique upon modernity’s economic empires and emphasis upon book learning” (18). For him, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as a “new” literature delineates an old sense of disaster demanding a radical change in the social and political disorder. Garcia’s subversive adoption of traditional epic structure is the literary equivalent of a new world order (*ibid*).

While analyzing the narrative ‘mood’ of the novel it can also be said that the free indirect narration takes the form of interior monologue which Genette has designated as ‘immediate speech’. Then, the narrative is the most mimetic representation of characters’ memory, conscious, subconscious and the unconscious. The ‘free indirect style’ suits, more than any other style, to the novel’s oral style of telling. The narrative appears like a mental “hodgepodge” (Genette 180) guaranteeing the mimetic representation of the world inside and outside. There are random repetitions and shifts not on the part of the narrator but they refer to the characters’ process of memory. One of the ‘moods’ of the novel is to retell the history of the town Macondo in a style which is oral and native. The mimetic quality of the novel is further exemplified by Waddington’s study that “The orality of the community is much like the orality of the narrative: an aspect of style and character more than a literal truth” (10).

The narrator reports the story as realistically/mimetically as we witness it without his intervention whatsoever. It is as if we watch the story action ourselves. Let us study the following extract from the novel:

“Just a moment,” he said. “Now we shall witness an undeniable proof of the infinite power of God.”

. . . he wiped his lips with a handkerchief that he drew from his sleeve, extended his arms, and closed his eyes. Thereupon Father Nicanor rose six inches above the level of the ground. It was a convincing measure. He went among the houses for several days repeating the demonstration of levitation by means of chocolate while the acolyte collected so much money in a bag that in less than a month he began the construction of the church. No one doubted the divine origin of the demonstration except José Arcadio Buendia . . . (*OHYS* 86).

The quotation tells about a strange narrative situation in which “the fabulous does not meet unanimous credulity--though it does seem to have entirely convinced critics who perhaps again were too spell-bound to notice the real goings-on” (Kortenaar and Waddington 10). Further the narrator report that the authenticity of the event cannot be questioned. The use of a phrase, “a convincing measure,” by the narrator, does seem to offer a hint of the narrator’s shared suspicions. Moreover, the mention of ‘handkerchief that he drew from his sleeve, extended his arms, and closed his eyes’ are physical exaggerations smacking of “magical theatrics, showing that indeed Jose Arcadio Buendia has good reason to suspect. In addition, the successive commercial exploitation undermines authenticity, not just for the skeptical atheist but the sincerely pious. Importantly, it is not so much the levitation itself that is questioned, but the “undeniable proof of the infinite power of God” to which it lays “claim” (Kortenaar and Waddington 11). In this quote there is a tacit sympathy between narrator and character both in ‘imitated speech’ and in ‘free indirect style’ omnipresent mode, “where the fantastic and the mundane are each told as simple matter of fact, with belief shared, and with no discrepancy between narrated and the ‘narrating’. The sense of orality is constantly maintained throughout the novel. The presence of orality in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* “is such a given that we need not give further proof” (Kortenaar and Waddington 13). The sense of orality further strengthens the parameters creating mimetic effect- the mood of the narrative.

In this context of narrative ‘mood’, Garcia remembers that his grandmother “did not change her expression at all when telling her stories and everyone was surprised. In previous attempts to write, I tried to tell the story without believing in it. I discovered that that I had to do was believe in them myself and write them with the same expression with which my grandmother told them with a brick face” (qtd in. Darraj 78). The ‘brick face’ of Garcia’s grandmother is symbolic of her matter of fact tone, something that accepts both magical and the real as an accepted reality that transcends both. The reality which the novel represents, ruptures, the normal sense of reality, and brings it down to the level of magical and the uncanny. Talking about the unique concept of reality in *OHYS* Ariel Dorfman observes that the “dynamic creativity has been recognized by intellectuals and artists as the basis for an alternative cultural (and political) vision” and he also states that “vanguard and modernist culture in Europe and the United States . . . rejecting the rationalist perspective both in subject matter and in form, has come to see in mythic thinking, in the “primitive mentality” or its equivalent in the unconscious of each of us, the suppressed substratum from which a different story can be told” (204). The

normal sense of reality is based on scientific logic whereas magical reality follows the rules of fantasy. Garcia's text lies between these two and transcends both at the same time. *OHYS* problematizes the common perception as Melquiades possesses an epicenter magical reasoning in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. "It is Melquiades who possess the keys of Nostradamus and so possesses the keys of prophesy" (Kortenaar and Waddington 30). Robinett's provides a concise assessment of Melquiades' importance with which magic and science are regarded as parallel methods for acquiring knowledge about the natural world.

Along with science, Melquiades brings two kinds of technology (technique and apparatus) to Macondo in the form of an alchemist's laboratory. The importance of this laboratory, which he presents as a gift to Jose Arcadio, is underscored by the observation that it had a profound influence on the future of the Macondo. Jane Robinett admitted that the link of the novel to the time of the alchemists, "when magic and science were scarcely differentiated from each other, underscore the connection between the two methods of gaining knowledge" (qtd. in Waddington, 31). Melquiades has supernatural understanding of the nature's secrets and the paraphernalia he introduces to Macondo poses no threat. These same secrets are used by Jose Arcadio Buendia to gain wealth and power, which, according to Waddington, becomes threatening revealing European patrimony. Moreover, the irrevocable logic of power, the struggle for justice, the military law, violence in all its forms, etc. isolate even the most decent human beings from reality. Garcia presents the two logics (intelligible and unintelligible) interconnected not subverting rather complementing each other. Therefore, in Garcia the reality is never of 'alogical depth' (Genette 181) as it tacitly represents the gulf between the two logics which overlap and deny separation. The narrative legitimizes both the logical and the ontological as equally reliable, legal and real. In an interview with Miguel Farnandez-Braso in 1969, Garcia said, "My important problem was to destroy the line of demarcation that separates what seems real from what seems fantastic. Because in this world I was trying to evoke, that barrier did not exist" (qtd. in Beyer, n. pag). The inhabitants of Macondo are unfazed by things that seem plainly supernatural in the Western World, such as flying carpets or levitation by means of chocolate, but when they encounter buses, movies, and telephone they can no longer recognize the boundary of reality. It is quite the opposite with the West. The narrator reports such things as gypsies on flying carpets, the insomnia plague, the ascension of Remedios the Beauty, and the levitation of Father Nicanor ordinary incidents. Instead, the residents of Macondo respond to items such as magnets and ice with great wonder, as if these were the stuff of fantasy. Garcia Marquez himself argues that the reality of South America is more fantastic than anything "magical" in his writing. Further, as he writes in his Nobel acceptance speech, "The Solitude of Latin America" Garcia speaks that "Poets and beggars, musicians and prophets, warriors and scoundrels, all creatures of that unbridled reality, we have had to ask but little of imaginations, for our crucial problem have been a lack of conventional means to render our lives believable. That is the crux of our solitude" (n.pag).

Perspective is the second aspect constituting the ‘mood’ of the narrative. From this point of view the mood of the narrative is ‘zero focalization’. The narrator is omniscient reporting the world view of the characters while telling the story. Keeping an ethical distance from the nature of the story world, the narrator remains purely objective. The narrator is also not one of the characters or participants in the story but narrator’s position vis-à-vis story keeps shifting. Since the narrator does not make personal comments, the narrative perspective gets oriented by the point of views of the characters themselves. Minus the third person narration and the narrative seems like an ‘immediate speech’ or interior monologue conducted in the third person. And it would not be an over statement to say that the characters themselves are the silent narrators. The story is focalized through the characters themselves giving it native colour in telling and in the perception of reality as well.

Whatever comments the narrator makes, they are in close concurrence with the tone and the perspectives of the characters. The narrator’s objective and factual tone results in an extremely reduced distance between the reader and the characters. The world of the story is ontologically complex but the narrator sustains the matter of fact tone. No single character is given privilege to hijack the focalization of the narration. The narrator knows more than the characters do as he can see into their minds and report them. So the narrator merely becomes an instrument in the hands of the author to reports the events the way and the manner he feels like. That is why Frantz Stanzel says that an omniscient narrator is always ‘authorial’ (Melville Logan, George, et al 557) in nature. Therefore, on one hand, the ‘focalization’, is ‘zero’, i.e., through the omniscient narrator and on the other it is ‘internal’ i.e., through the characters.

Garcia problematizes focalization by unifying the two contrary perspectives. The focalization keeps shifting constantly along with the variations in “point of view”. The narrator’s omniscience does not overshadow the characters but leaves them to unravel themselves by exposing their interior. Thus, narrator stays outside dealing in ‘external focalization’. But this can also be considered as ‘internal focalization’ as the narrative is focalized through the characters themselves. In this context Genette emphasizes that “External focalization with respect to one character could sometimes just as well be defined as internal focalization through another” (Genette 191). In this context, let us examine the following passage about Rebeca:

She remembered a bald gentleman dressed in linen and with his collar closed by a gold button, who had nothing to do with the king of hearts. She remembered a very young and beautiful woman with warm and perfumed hands, who had nothing in common with the jack of diamonds and his rheumatic hands, and who used to put flowers in her hair and take her out walking in the afternoon through a town with green streets (*OHYS* 77).

This passage is focalized through the omniscient narrator and Rebeca herself as well. Here, narrator seemingly being external, does not mean that he does not know about the thoughts and

the feelings of the characters as actually happens in the third type of ‘focalization’ i.e., ‘external focalization’ (Genette 190) where the knowledge of the narrator is limited (Genette 189). This way the narrator employs different perspectives for different situations and events. Genette’s typology of focalizations consisting of three parts is based on a diminishing degree of access to the psychology of characters.

After beginning the narration with “MANY YEARS later ...” the reader constantly feels curious as to what happened that ‘many years later’ and why Colonel Aureliano Buendia was to face the firing squad. The narrator sits back and does not let the reader know the reason. This holding back of narrative information is as an instance of ‘paralipsis’ giving less ‘information than is necessary in principle’ (Genette 195). However this drives the reader forward towards the ‘many years later’ scene. While the narrator holds back the narrative information he unfolds, through random shifts among many stories having same ‘paralytic’ effect thereby at once meeting and frustrating the expectations of the reader. For instance, before we reached the point of firing squad in the narrative, we are informed that Colonel Aureliano Buendia died of old age years later against our supposed presumption that he might have been killed by the firing squad. We feel, after long tantalizing reading experience, cheated. Even more, some characters still participate in the story after they have died. The reader is taken for granted and is supposed to believe and trust what is told with any shred of doubt. However, there are repetitive shifts to the same day, same experience and same characters something Genette defines as excess of information which he also calls ‘paralepsis’. It gives us information should be left aside (Genette 195). We are given information in access, a feeling created by the numerous shifts to the narrative itself. The representation of ontologically distinct worlds without any change in the tone of narration tickles the readers’ normal sense of worldliness. It tacitly calls on the reader to give his own “interpretation” (Genette 97) of it (or that he gives without being invited to). The magical realist event, the suppression of the natives’ voices by the capitalists with no comment on the part of the narrator creates spontaneous verisimilitude of the society. The narrator’s abstention from interpretation, in no way, prevents the reader from interpreting the text in conformity or non conformity with the author’s intentions. For instance, telling about Remedios Moscote, the narrator says, when narrator tells that Remedios Moscote, “In spite of the fact that her mother had taught her about the changes of adolescence, one February afternoon she burst shouting into the living room, where her sisters were chatting with Aureliano, and showed them her panties, smeared with a chocolate-colored paste.” When the novelist writes “smeared with a chocolate-colored paste” (*OHYS* 82) we unhesitatingly construe that it was dried menstrual blood, a sign of puberty. “Narrative always says less than it knows, but it often makes known more than it says (Genette 198). The mood of the narrative remains in a state of constant change and flux and is tied to the subjective activity of the characters’ memory and psyche.

Abbreviations

OHYS: *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

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