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A comparative analysis of two writing  
styles: Latin American magical realism  
represented by García Márquez's One  
Hundred Years of Solitude and Chinese  
hallucinatory realism represented by  
Mo Yan's Life and Death Are Wearing  
Me Out

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## DECLARATION

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## ABSTRACT

A comparative analysis of two writing styles: Latin American magical realism represented by García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and Chinese hallucinatory realism represented by Mo Yan's *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*

Yuan Yuan

In 2012, Chinese writer Mo Yan was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. His work differs from traditional socialist realism but draws on the writing techniques of many world literature, including Latin American magical realism. Therefore, his professions are considered to blossom Latin American magical realism in China. However, this article argues that he studied not only Latin American literature but also the writing styles of many other foreign literary works and formed his unique style based on the inheritance of his native culture. It would be inaccurate to describe Mo Yan's work style solely in Latin American magical realism. This article argues that Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is strongly characterized by indigenous Chinese literature and its characteristics and that his *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* is a beautiful flower in the garden of world literature, along with García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. This dissertation uses comparative research to study the differences between Latin American magical realism and Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism. Through the comparative research method between *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, we understand the differences between Latin American magical realism and Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism between the two places. At the same time, this study uses a comparative approach to understand that Mo Yan and García Márquez, despite being in two different places, both use many of the same writing techniques, and of course both present different literary landscapes in their respective continents. This is rich in significance for future literary comparisons between China and the rest of the world.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is often assumed that Mo Yan benefited greatly from foreign writers, especially his esteem for *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. After the 1980s, contemporary Chinese literature witnessed a relaxed political environment. On the one hand, writers such as Mo Yan, Yu Hua<sup>1</sup>, and Han Shaogong<sup>2</sup> eagerly studied foreign literary works, theories, and writing techniques. On the other hand, they combined their experiences to write and produce many new-looking works. When talking about his writing career, Mo Yan said that he received a lot from American writer William Faulkner, Colombian writer García Márquez and Japanese writers such as Yukio Mishima and Kenzaburo Oe: 'Without them, I would have written this way; without them, I would have gone down this path. But their creative practice has taught me useful lessons that have saved me from taking many detours.' (Mo2020, 5). This shows how much foreign literature has influenced him. In China, many people attribute Mo Yan's success to his study of Latin American magical realism literature, particularly due to his borrowing and integration of the works of Colombian writer García Márquez. It is undeniable that Mo Yan did take a lot of inspiration from García Márquez, for example, the concept of the literary geography of the northeastern township of Gaomi that he portrayed in his works. One often cannot help but think of the small town of Macondo in García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is easy to identify similarities in the writing of the two authors, and this is the view that many people have come to after reading both works. But this presupposes putting Mo Yan in the position of a student; after all, García Márquez was his literary predecessor. Regarding winning the Nobel Prize for Literature, García

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<sup>1</sup> Yu Hua, born on April 3, 1960 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, is a contemporary Chinese writer who won the Grinzana Carver Prize for Literature in 1998 for his novel *Alive*.

<sup>2</sup> Han Shaogong, born in 1953 in Changsha, Hunan Province, was awarded the "Chevalier de France" medal by the French Ministry of Culture in 2002; he once translated Milan Kundera's "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" into Chinese. He is the author of the novel "Bababa" and "A Dictionary of Maqiao".

Márquez predates Mo Yan. Mo Yan was a latecomer. However, it seems that such a view is unfair to them, that they cannot be evaluated on an equal footing. Such a view is rather one-sided and prevents us from seeing the soul of Mo Yan's writing, ignoring the holistic nature of his work while deifying García Márquez and his other masterpieces. This is not conducive to the interpretation of their respective works, nor is it conducive to a deeper understanding of the writers' creative ideas and artistic aims.

Comparing the two authors is not unusual in Chinese literature, but it is relatively rare in English. The reasons for this are manifold. There is the factor of translation and cultural and historical background; after all, there are many differences between the Chinese and English worlds. But thanks to the increasing globalization, human communication across geographical boundaries is growing, and so is the field of literature. There are several problems in the current field of comparative literary studies on the two authors. Firstly, most of the papers are generalized essays on the characteristics of both their writing, and there is a lack of comparisons between the more representative works of the two authors. That is to say, there are generalizations, but there is a lack of research on specific examples. Secondly, the views relating to this feature of Mo Yan's study of foreign literature are incredibly sketchy. Many papers emphasize that Western literature influenced Mo Yan without realizing that Western or European and American literature is a vast concept and that Latin American magical realism is different from traditional Western literature. And as far as Latin American literature is concerned, each country's authors have many different characteristics. Therefore, to attribute Latin American magical realism simply to Western literature would be to ignore its uniqueness and not see the regional characteristics of this magical continent. Thirdly, many people are confused between Latin American magical realism and social realism, fantasy literature, and surrealism concepts. This undoubtedly affects the further understanding of the term Latin American magical realism. This is one of the

issues that this paper aims to clarify. Fourthly, Mo Yan did not only benefit from foreign literature but was also profoundly influenced and enlightened by classical Chinese literature or local Chinese culture. The form of *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* even draws directly from books such as the classical Chinese novel *Liaozhai Zhiyi*<sup>3</sup>. This essay further attempts to understand the Nobel Prize defining his work as hallucinatory realism. The Nobel Committee apparently recognized Mo Yan's literary achievement and tried to distinguish him from García Márquez. And they are indeed different. In conclusion, this essay aims to fill in the above gaps and respond to the above four questions.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Latin American literature went from Europe to the world. After the reform and opening up in 1978, Chinese writers re-engaged with foreign literature, including Latin American literature. In 1982 García Márquez was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, the prize motivated given by the Nobel Committee 'for his novels and short stories, in which the fantastic and the realistic are combined in a richly composed world of imagination, reflecting a continent's life and conflicts.' Since then, Latin American magical realism, a combination of the unreal and the real, has become a continental symbol known to the Chinese. Thirty years later, Mo Yan was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2012, which gave this prize motivation 'who with hallucinatory realism merges folk tales, history and the contemporary.' What is hallucinatory realism? Many people have wondered about this. Some people even think Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is Latin American magic realism. What is the connection, and what is the difference between the Nobel Prize's assessment of these two writers? This dissertation will use *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* as examples to analyze the similarities and differences between the Latin American magical realism represented by García Márquez and the Chinese

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<sup>3</sup> *Liaozhai Zhiyi* is a collection of literary short stories written by the Chinese novelist Pu Songling in the Qing Dynasty, some of which express the author's ideal love through the romance between flower demons and foxes and humans.



hallucinatory realism represented by Mo Yan, to conclude that the writing styles of the two authors are distinctive. Meanwhile, it is also argued that Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is not simply the result of learning from Latin American magical realism literature; indeed, it learns from the former, but it has a richer connotation; its hallucinatory elements come from Chinese culture, and its roots are Chinese. The Nobel Prize Committee defined hallucinatory realism rather than magical realism, which emphasizes the originality of hallucinatory realism and the Chinese element. The outline of this paper is in five parts. The first part will elaborate on the concepts of surrealism, social realism, and fantasy literature and explain how they differ from Latin American magical realism literature. The second part will focus on two terms, Latin American magical realism represented by García Márquez and Chinese Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism, and will sort out the origins and development of Latin American magical realism, the spread of Latin American magical realism in China, and its influence on Chinese literature and the concept of Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism respectively. The third part will focus on the similarities and differences between the two writing style. The fourth part will conclude the above and briefly summarize the significance of comparing the two works.

## 2. A FEW LITERARY CONCEPTS HOVERING AROUND LATIN AMERICAN MAGICAL REALISM

There have been several literary concepts hovering next to the literary theory of Latin American magical realism. These concepts are either literally similar or not easily distinguishable. Therefore, clarifying these literary concepts will not only illustrate their relationship with Latin American magical realism but will also help to understand the term Latin American magical realism more deeply, and thus the characteristics of García Márquez's

magical realism and Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism. Surrealism is the first concept that needs to be clarified. As a literary and artistic trend, Surrealism not only sharply innovated in fiction, poetry, and drama but also played a role in a wide range of artistic theories and creations, and its significant influence can still be felt today.

## 2.1 Surrealism

### 2.1.1 The Origin of Surrealism, Definition

Surrealism is a literary genre that emerged in France in the 1920s. From 1919, when André Breton and Fester Soubaud co-authored their first work of "subconscious writing," *Magnetic Fields*, to 1969, when Jean Schuster published the group's last manifesto, Chapter IV, in *Le Monde*, Surrealism grew from a Parisian group of a dozen members to an international movement that influenced dozens of countries in Europe, America, Asia, and Africa. The official formation of the Surrealist group was in France in 1924, marked by the publication of the *Surrealist Manifesto*. The Surrealists placed the pursuit of spiritual liberation and freedom of thought at the top of their list. Breton advocated absolute freedom of imagination, so under the influence of Freud's doctrine, he found a realm of natural human mental activity free from outside interference - the dream world. To reflect on this unimpaired mental activity, he strongly advocated a method of "subconscious writing," which excludes any rules, conventions, and the need for reflection and is an utterly spontaneous creation that does not rely on human reason. Zhang and Jin(1995,10) analyzed that in this kind of subconscious writing, time and space no longer become limitations, everything depends on the unconscious activity of the author, and all kinds of bizarre and unbelievable, even crazy, associations emerge. The author's

imagination is completely liberated. In the later period, Surrealism gradually entered the circle of the extraordinarily closed and narrow personal subconscious, eventually declining. However, the focus on the desire for human consciousness, the pursuit of fantasy effects, the breakthrough of the limits of time and space, and the eager expectation of the liberation of imagination that it advocated gave a great impetus to the later literary development and had a direct impact on the formation of Latin American magical realism.

### 2.1. 2 The Influence of Surrealism on Latin American Magical Realism

The formation of Latin American magical realism was influenced by surrealist literature. In 1938, Breton was sent on a cultural mission to Mexico, where he discovered that what European surrealist writers strenuously sought through various means was common in the natural and social reality of Latin America, thus making him realize the significant limitations of the surrealist theory he had founded. Breton's visit contributed to the development of Surrealism in Latin America. The Guatemalan writer Miguel Angel Asturias<sup>4</sup> and the Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier<sup>5</sup> both lived in Europe and joined the French Surrealist literary group during their stay in Paris. However, what distinguishes them from the Surrealists is that they never stopped looking for the national identity of Latin America (ibid,10). On the one hand, Alejo Carpentier credits Surrealism with teaching him to observe the structure and detail of the realities of life in the Americas that he had not previously noticed. After returning to his homeland, he wrote the magical reality of the Caribbean, based on Indian and African cultures, putting social and historical realities into

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<sup>4</sup> Miguel Angel Asturias (1899-1974) was a Guatemalan novelist and poet, whose most famous work is "Monsieur President". In 1967, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for "his outstanding literary achievements" and for "his work, which is deeply rooted in the Latin American ethos and Indian traditions".

<sup>5</sup> Alejo Carpentier (1904-1980) was a famous Cuban novelist, essayist, literary critic, journalist, and music theorist. He is respected as the pioneer of Latin American literary fiction. The kingdom of this world is one of his masterpieces.

an environment and atmosphere with a strong sense of mystery, a method he called "Marvellous Real." This was a new path inspired by his pursuit of surrealist literature's 'magical' effect. This approach became the prototype of Latin American magical realism. What's more, Miguel Angel Asturias laid the foundation for Latin American magical realism. He drew inspiration from Indian narrative literature and combined it with the aesthetics and methods of realism, thus forming a style that integrates ancient Indian mythological traditions with real life, giving his works a magical and fantastic color. Asturias's explorations in this area inspired later writers such as García Márquez. They led to the development of Latin American magical realism, which often uses ancient Indigenous myths to allude to realistic symbolism and allegory. For example, the folklore and myths of the "pig's tail" and the "ascended lady" in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* are not new in Colombia, as they are well known. The relationship between Carpentier and Asturias to Surrealism can be said to have contributed directly to the gradual formation of Latin American magical realism as a literary theory.

### 2.1. 3 Characteristics of Surrealism

In fiction writing, subconscious writing, exploration of the subconscious, and emphasis on imagination are the three main characteristics of Surrealism. First, subconscious writing is a tool for the surrealists to carry out a literary revolution and oppose traditional conceptions of literature. They believed this kind of writing was done in an uncontrolled state of mind, with the subconscious mind directing the writer's pen. Although the words written by the "subconscious" lacked organization and were loosely structured, they were considered the most natural and direct expression of reality, not compromised by the writer's deliberate conception. They maintained the original nature of the spiritual activity. Second, they explore the subconscious. Surrealist writers took human dreams and desires

as the main objects of fictional descriptions. Yu (2002,51) investigated that in their view, modern capitalist society suppresses the human spirit and destroys the human will, and the powerful, real-world drives all-natural human emotions into the dream and subconscious. Man's life in the real world is only to adapt to the powerful forces and maintain survival. All the external manifestations of man are only pretentious illusions. Third, Surrealist writers believe that imagination is the last power the external world cannot take away. It is also the driving force behind the development and perfection of the world and should occupy a primary position in fiction. Their creations fully engage all forms of imaginative elements, such as free association and subconscious thinking. The aim is to approach the nature of the world from various aspects. These three main characteristics are the most significant difference between Surrealism and Latin American magical realism.

#### 2.1.4 Latin American Magical Realism Inherits or Learns From Surrealism

From the above characteristics of Surrealism, it can be seen that Surrealism tends to explore human consciousness in-depth, while Latin American magical realism focuses more on reality. The inheritance and development of Latin American magical realism to Surrealism are mainly manifested in the following three aspects. First, Latin American magical realism pays more attention to exploring and expressing the national subconscious to express the national cultural identity. The formation of this national subconscious has a strong cultural and religious dimension, concentrated in the use of myths and legends and the bizarre view of ordinary things among the people of various nationalities. Mu(1997,35) further explained that the origin of magical realism is the ancient literature of Latin America, the source of magical realism is the magical Latin American reality, magical realism reflects the reality and history of Latin America, and magical realism is the original Latin American realism genre. To describe it as a genre

of Western modernism not only confuses realism and modernism but also erases its national character. Second, the deliberate pursuit of absurd, bizarre, and other fantasy plots and imagery by Latin American magical realist writers is in line with the aesthetics of surrealist writers. They combine reality and illusion, use eccentric imagery, grotesque descriptions, and novel metaphors to pursue magical artistic effects, enhance the representation of reality, and profoundly reproduce national and cultural identities. Third, in the narrative structure of novels, Latin American magical realist writers break the boundaries of time and space. They put the events of different times and places and different characters in the same picture. Nevertheless, the significant difference between Surrealism and Latin American magical realism is that in Latin American magical realism novels, the author's fundamental purpose is to use magic to express reality, rather than treating magic as reality. Surrealism rejects real life and seeks only "purely spiritual automatic reaction." At the same time, Latin American magical realism elevates real life to fantasy through the writer's imagination, reflecting the essence of real life more profoundly.

## 2.2 Social Realism

### 2.2.1 Definition of Social realism

In general, Social realism is a broader form of art. It truly reflects or criticizes the social issues of concern to the people. James G (2003) explains that the concept of social realism usually involves the work of artists. These works tend to be more concerned with the routine lives of working groups and provide a critique of the social structures that sustain the situations which lead to it. Simultaneously, Social Realism represents a democratic tradition of artists inspired by independent socialization, generally from the left and the liberal wing. Regarding its artistic style, social realism varied from country to

country, and it utilized forms of descriptive or critical realism. Furthermore, social realism is most easily confused with socialist realism. Kang and Mao(2014) analyze social realism as a much broader art form. It truly reflects the social issues that people care about and criticize. What's different is socialist realism is the political Soviet art institutionalized by Stalin in 1934, which aims to celebrate the heroic struggle of the working class to achieve freedom and liberation. Nonetheless, both adopt a realistic style and learn or follow elements of 19th-century European realism.

### 2.2.2 Origins of Social Realism

Historically, social realism can be dated from European realism. The Industrial Revolution in 19th century England drew the attention of many artists to the urban poor. Throughout the 1870s, this tendency was expressed in the work of British artists such as Luke Fildes, William Small, and later influenced Van Gogh's early paintings. In Germany, the work of Kathe Kollwitz and others expressed the concerns of victimized women. During the first decade of the 20th century in the United States, Ashcan school's paintings depicted the repulsive urban reality and work life. This later influenced the art of the Great Depression. James G (2003) further analyzes that the scale of these works was also inspired by the mural art that was active in the Mexican Revolution after 1910. And these murals in Mexico were later propagated on a large scale and emphasized the spirit of the revolution and the pride in the indigenous Mexican tradition. The Mexican example also encouraged the development of social realism in other Latin American countries. It can also be said that social realism had already spread across the American continent starting in the early 20th century.

### 2.2.3 The Difference Between Social Realism and Latin American Magical Realism

Social realism and Latin American magical realism are both related and different. First, both were influenced by European realism. Latin American magical realism even draws its nutrients directly from social realism. Li (1988) analyzes that these writers were deeply influenced by European and American literature, especially the French writers Balzac and Zola, who mostly took the task of criticizing the current problems and exposing social pathologies. They gradually formed the school of social realism in Spanish literature by intervening in life and reflecting on it. Latin American magical realism and Spanish social realism share the same language, so there is the possibility of learning and learning from them. Second, social realism began around 1955, except after World War II, when its social-critical function was absorbed by Eastern European socialist realism and eclipsed in Western Europe and the United States with the rise of the abstract art movement. While Latin American magical realism began after the 1930s, culminating in the Latin American literary explosion of the 1960s and 1970s and then spread widely throughout the world. In addition, Li (1988) also analyzed that some writers of social realism followed the creative principle of sociality over art and created social novels to evoke people's awakening. Although these works are simple and lucid in structure, they lack a solid artistic impact. This is the reason why it has received less and less attention. Nevertheless, Latin American magical realism fully draws on the role of social realism in depicting and critiquing the reality of social reality while adopting magical techniques that are more flexible and mature in terms of technique, achieving a balance between artistry and sociality.



## 2.3 Fantasy Literature

### 2.3.1 Origins of Fantasy Literature

Fantasy literature the central elaboration here is the context the recent British and American fantasy literature, as a literary category whose stories do not appear in the real world, usually involving witchcraft and magic on an unexplored planet in an unknown world. Fu (2017) argues that fantasy literature's overall themes and settings incorporate technology, architecture, and language similar to those of the medieval period in Europe. The most exciting aspect of fantasy literature is that the stories involve witches, wizards, magicians, and animals that speak like humans, which would never happen in real life. For example, the narrative background of modern British fantasy literature, represented by *The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*, is often accompanied by these elements. Fantasy shapes strange and grotesque images, compile unbelievable storylines and outline a world that does not exist in everyday life.

Fantasy literature has an intimate relationship with myth and legend. Hounsom (2017) investigates that fantasy literature has deep roots, sprouting from the Icelandic epic poem *Eddur*<sup>6</sup> and similar Old English poetry, *Beowulf*. It draws on the works of Shakespeare, 18th-century adventure stories, the Gothic movement, Romanticism, the Pre-Raphaelite medieval spirit, and the overall atmosphere of the late 19th century. However, Shippey (2003) suggests that the origins of fantasy literature may be traced back as far as the second century AD to the Greeks, Lucian of Samosata. Whether the source is ancient Greek or ancient Norse, it can be seen that fantasy literature has taken some inspiration from myths and legends and given the appropriate elements in its stories.

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<sup>6</sup> The Icelandic epics, the most important classics of Norse literature handed down from the Middle Ages, are also one of the sources of Western mythology outside of ancient Greece and Rome.

Fantasy and Science fiction seem to belong to the same genre, but they are actually quite different. Pei (2017) identifies that the significant difference between fantasy and science fiction lies in the basis of their creation; science fiction is often based on modern high technology and tends to predict the future, while the fantasy is based on legends and finds its background basis in history. The stories of fantasy literature either take place in a magical world that aligns with the real world, such as *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *Harry Potter*, or in a second world above and beyond the real world, such as Norse mythology. Aichele (1993) analyzes that fantasy and science fiction literature is a means of escapism and subversion, and both derive from the modernist understanding of language, God, and the human world. However, it must be accepted that both fantasy and science fiction is grounded in imagination.

### 2.3.2 Characteristics of Fantasy Literature

Fantasy literature's narrative setting often occurs in the "second world." The term second world originated from a lecture by English writer and linguist John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892-1973) at the University of St. Andrews. It gradually became a term of art in fantasy literature. The opposite concept of the second world is the first world. He believed that the first world is this real world, which exists objectively, while the second world is a fantasy world, a spiritual world created by man as the Creator, that is, an imaginary world. He believes that although the two are different, the second world must have some commonality with the first world. Meanwhile, the second world has three different types. The first type is an alien world completely isolated from the real world, such as the world of Middle-earth created by *The Lord of the Rings*. The second type is the exotic world, and the natural world has an inconspicuous or invisible, uncertain demarcation line; such as in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, there is an entrance between the first and second

worlds, and the reality of the people can enter into this exotic world. The third category is the exotic world, and the natural world is mutually inclusive and interdependent, as in Harry Potter.

In fantasy literature, if the second world is regarded as the "real world," then the world that exists outside the second world, the real world, and out of the normal state of time and space can be called "different space and time." In this supernatural world, time and space are independent of the natural world and are separated from the normal state of space and time, which can be intertwined, distorted, and traversed. For example, in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the natural world of World War II has only passed a few seconds, while in the Kingdom of Narnia, the time has already flown by for decades. Wu (2010) concludes that the protagonist's travel to other times and spaces is a physical existence and a superb psychological experience that can even rise to a philosophical perspective, a peculiar dialogue of the soul that transcends time and space.

Fantasy literature also created many impressive alien life forms, and these characters indirectly conveyed the idea that all things are equal. Writers of fantasy literature created all kinds of strange and weird life forms, elves, dwarves, gnomes, centaurs, unicorns, and dragons, and gave them magic, thus giving rise to a series of exciting stories. For example, the elves and tree people in *The Lord of the Rings* are intelligent, kind, and have their language and race. They are man's link to the distant past and help save the world. Through them, the writer indirectly conveys the meaning of equality of all things, revealing that human beings should not take themselves as the supreme rulers of the earth but treat other living and non-living things well and live in peace with them.

### 2.3.3 The Differences Between Fantasy Literature and Latin American Magical Realism Literature

It is seen from the definition and characteristics of fantasy literature, where it is based on fantasy, and its content is detached from reality, even escapist. This distinguishes it from Latin American magical realism works. Hounsom (2017) emphasizes that fantasy literature has a hint of escapism, and while it is not the only genre that allows us to transcend our daily lives for a brief period, it does deserve to be in this regard. She also cites World of Warcraft as an example of people's eagerness to create alter egos. At the same time, they are willing to invest real time and money to become their fictional selves. However, Latin American magical realism literature uses magic or fantasy more as a tool to achieve its purpose of reflecting and exposing reality. Its stories and characters are all in the mold of the natural world, and the characters in the novels neither have the characteristics of otherworldly beings, live in a second world, nor travel in a different time and space. In Latin American magical realism literature, magic is its modifier, and realism literature is its central word. One escapes reality, and the other reflects and exposes it, which is its most significant difference. Meng (2016) argues that Latin American magical realism works do not contain magic and miracles but reflect reality exaggeratedly, showing more attention to reality. In contrast, Fantasy literature does not focus on the concern for reality but on constructing a second world in fantasy. Nevertheless, to some extent, even though fantasy literature is not about the real world, its storyline and content are invariably marked by the writer's personal experience. Fantasy literature also does reflect on history. For example, although Tolkien's Middle-earth seems far from the human world, the war and other propositions still have the shadow of the real world.

### 3. LATIN AMERICAN MAGICAL REALISM REPRESENTED BY GARCIA MARQUEZ AND CHINESE HALLUCINATORY REALISM REPRESENTED BY MO YAN

#### 3.1 The Origin, Characteristics and Two Understandings of Magical Realism

The term magical realism was initially a concept for studying late European expressionist painting, but it slowly became the name of a literary genre. In 1925, Franz Roh published his monograph *Nach Expressionismus: Magischer Realismus: Probleme der Neusten Europaischen Malerei*, in which he described some of the unique painting methods of the 1920s and introduced the concept of "magical realism." In 1927, the famous Spanish literary critic Jose Ortega y Gasset translated the book into Spanish and published it in *Revista de Occidente*. The first person to introduce the concept of "magical realism" to Latin American literature was Venezuelan writer Arturo Uslar Pietri. In 1948, he published *Letras y Hombres de Venezuela*, and in *El Cuento Venezolano*, he argued that magical realism was poetic speculation or a denial of the poetry of reality. In 1949, Alejo Carpentier introduced the concept of "Marvellous real" in the preface to his novel *El Reino de este Mundo*, in which he argued that magic is based on reality. In 1955, Costa Rican scholar Angel Flores analyzed that magical realism should include all Latin American literature with fantasy. He argued that Borges' short story collection *Historia universal de la infamia* was the first work of magical realism in Latin America, published in 1935. However, in 1967, the Mexican literary critic Luis Leal released *Magic Realism in Spanish American Literature*,

emphasizing that magical realism aims not to create fantasy creatures but to reveal the mysterious relationship between people and their surroundings. By 1975, the discussion of magical realism was again at its height. The 16th International Symposium on Ibero-American Literature, held in the United States, was the largest polemic of its kind. This conference attempted to distinguish the similarities and differences between fantasy literature and magical realism from a scholarly perspective. Although, as Leal admits, it is challenging to define magical realism precisely. But this discussion has led to a more concrete and precise definition of magical realism.

In short, magical realism is a genre that naturally implants magical elements in real life, mostly in literature but also in film and television from time to time. These literary works aim to reflect and expose life's dark and rocky realities in Latin America, turning reality into fantasy without losing its reality. Generally, it has the following characteristics:

1. It breaks the boundary between life and death, human and ghost, like in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, there are ghosts mixed with the world of the living, resulting in a magical world where humans and spirits are indistinguishable.
2. The boundaries of time and space are broken. The accurate chronology and space are broken and fragmented, a unique technique of modernist novels, and Latin America draws on this technique.
3. The combination of classical mythology and allusion, the indigenous Indian mythology, and the addition of classical myths from the East and West.
4. The mysterious events are treated as usual.

To be precise, there are two understandings of magical realism in the narrow and broad sense. In 1967, with the publication of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the Latin American "literary explosion" of the 1960s and 1970s. Since then, magical realism has been pushed from a relatively economically underdeveloped region to the whole world overnight. Magic realism became

synonymous with Latin American literature and became famous worldwide, influencing local literature. Yu(2017) investigates that there are two interpretations of magical realism by modern Western scholars.

Firstly ,as a regional cultural trend, it is mainly produced by a group of writers in the Latin American region, reflecting the lives and struggles of the peoples of Latin America. It is a reflection of the social reality of Latin American countries.Secondly, since the rise of post-colonialism in the West, the magical realism model in Latin American literature began to expand to the vast regions of former colonies, such as Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe and was regarded as the national fable of the Third World countries. For example, Mo Yan and others have created their works with the characteristics of magical realism by combining the cultural reality of their lands, respectively.

## 3.2 The Spread of Latin American Magical Realism in China and Its Influence On Contemporary Chinese Literature

### 3.2.1 The Spread of Latin American Magical Realism in China

The spread of Latin American magical realism in China has not been smooth; it has gone through three stages. These three stages are the process of contemporary Chinese literature, from recognizing it to studying and imitating it to integrating and starting its originality. The first stage was from 1975 to 1982, which can be described as the initial dissemination of Latin American magical realism in China. During this period, its evaluation by contemporary Chinese literary critics began to transition from negative to positive, and it gradually became known to some young contemporary Chinese writers. Teng (2006) investigates that the Chinese government's internal publication Foreign Literature Situation published a section of Latin American literature in January 1975, introducing a new genre of Colombian novels called One Hundred Years of Solitude. The article analyzes it as a new

genre of so-called fantasy literature or magical realism novel. Although it also introduces the sensation that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* has caused in world literature, it gives severe criticism. The criticism is not directed at the novel itself. Still, it mainly exposes the despicable means used by Soviet revisionism to draw in Latin American writers. The Soviet revisionist government followed closely behind the West in touting the novel as one full of true humanism. After the Cultural Revolution<sup>7</sup>, Chen Guangfu also mentioned this new genre, magical realism, and García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in his 1979 book *Glimpses of Contemporary Latin American Fiction*. However, the tone of the evaluation tends to moderate and emphasizes that the themes of magical realism fiction reflect reality. Soon after, another magazine called *Foreign Literary Dynamics* published two more articles on contemporary Latin American fiction in the same issue: *Colombian Magical Realism Writer García Márquez and His New Work The Autumn of the Patriarch* by Lin Yi'an and *Mexican Writer Juan Rulfo<sup>8</sup> and His Magical Realism Novel Pedro Páramo* by Duan Ruochuan. This was roughly the first time *realismo magico* was translated as magical realism in mainland China. At the same time, a group of writers such as Carpentier and Borges<sup>9</sup> became familiar with Chinese writers. The two essays analyze the artistic features of magical realism fiction in terms of the works themselves rather than the previous political-ideological approach to commenting on Latin American literature. In 1980, Chen Guangfu published another article, emphasizing that magical realism is based on the inheritance of Indigenous classical literature, incorporating certain creative techniques of classical mythology from both East and West and using the Western modernist techniques of alienation,

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<sup>7</sup> The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, commonly known as the Cultural Revolution, was a national political movement that took place in mainland China between 16 May 1966 and 6 October 1976.

<sup>8</sup> Juan Rulfo was born on 16 May 1917 in Jalisco, Mexico. 1953, his works include *The Burning Plain* and *Pedro Páramo*.

<sup>9</sup> Jorge Luis Borges (August 24, 1899 - June 14, 1986) was an Argentine poet, novelist, essayist, and translator. He was born in Buenos Aires. His best-known books, *Fictions*, and *The Aleph* were published in the 1940s. His works have influenced the magical realism movement in 20th-century Latin American literature.



absurdity, and nightmare to reflect or map the reality of Latin America and achieve the purpose of critique on social reality. This interpretation gave magical realism a quality close to critical realism, making it a deepened realism that catered to the call for critical realism in mainland China at the time. During this period, some writers began to understand this foreign literary style, but the overall evaluation of this literary genre remained complex and contradictory. The second stage was from 1982 to the end of the 1980s. During this period, Latin American magical realism was positively evaluated and began to be introduced in a large number of translations. Contemporary Chinese literature studied and borrowed its writing mode and began to explore its model, but it was still imitative. In 1982, when García Márquez won the Nobel Prize for Literature, China's overall assessment of Latin American magical realism began to become positive. His award made Chinese literature feel fresh as never before, inspired Chinese writers to study magical realism, and convinced them that literary works embodying the national spirit could stand in the world. According to García Márquez Research Materials, edited by Zhang Guopei in 1984, nearly forty articles on García Márquez published between 1982 and 1983 almost invariably talk about magical realism. In 1983, the Chinese Academic Society for the Study of Spanish-Portuguese Latin American Literature held a grand meeting in Xi'an. The theme of the meeting was García Márquez and Latin American magical realism, and the meeting regarded magical realism as a new stage or a new strand in the development of Latin American realism. Yu (2020) analyzes that many translations of Latin American magical realism literature appeared in China during this period, which led to a widespread imitation and borrowing of the creative style and expression of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Many writers who later became famous in China, such as Jia Pingwa<sup>10</sup>, Chen Zhongshi<sup>11</sup>, and Mo Yan, also

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<sup>10</sup> Jia Pingwa, born in 1952, is a contemporary Chinese writer whose novel *Shaanxi Opera* was awarded the Seventh Mao Dun Literature Prize.

<sup>11</sup> Chen Zhongshi, (1942 - 2016), born in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, was a contemporary Chinese writer who won the Mao Dun Literature Award in 1997 for *White Deer Plain*.

had elements of magical realism in their works. These writers combined their own national and regional cultural traditions with the expression of magical realism, resulting in one of the most famous literary genres in China in the 20th century, "Root-seeking Literature" or Xungen Movement. However, Gao (2017) argues that although root-seeking literature inherits traditional Chinese culture while absorbing the expressive techniques of foreign literature, including Latin American magical realism, some Chinese writers have a one-sided understanding of the roots of culture, and they fail to dissect the roots in traditional Chinese culture deeply. This has led to their ambiguous attitude toward traditional culture. In addition, their attitude toward foreign literature is ambivalent. Finally, although they borrowed writing methods and techniques from Latin American magical realism, they ignored logical issues such as cause-and-effect relationships, which led to their novels depicting things that often did not match reality. In the late 1980s, as the literature on Root-seeking tended to fall silent, the "fanatical worship" of Latin American magical realism in contemporary Chinese literature also gradually cooled. The third stage was from the 1990s to the beginning of the 21st century, when Latin American magical realism entered the late dissemination stage in China. It began to be considered part of a foreign literary genre. Writers began to look at it more rationally. They fused the advantages of foreign literature, including Latin American magical realism, and began to take their original path. Fang (2017) analyzes that in the 1990s, some Chinese writers such as Chenzhongshi began to shift from formal transplantation to focus on national origin and vernacular cultural features, such as issues related to the collective unconsciousness of the Latin American nation, the impact of modern civilization on primitive civilization, and the meaning of human solitude. After the second phase, under the influence of Latin American magical realism, Chinese writers such as Mo Yan opened their horizons and changed the direction of their writing. Contemporary Chinese literature has broken through the shackles of traditional realism or modernist creative concepts, resulting in

a Chineseized magical realism, of which Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is particularly noteworthy. During this period, novels such as Chen Zhongshi's *White Deer Plain* and Han Shaogong's *Bababa* are considered original works that blend Latin American magical realism writing techniques with traditional Chinese cultural features. Wu (2021) argues that magical realism has taken an innovative and unique path in China, with its basic principles of mystical reality, where supernatural elements coexist without contradiction with realistic parody patterns and where mythological atmosphere and symbolic meaning are maintained. In 2006, Mo Yan published his novel *Life, and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, considered the most mature fruit of Latin American magical realism in Chinese land. It represents a perfect fusion of Latin American magical realism and Chinese literature. In his book *The Smell of Fiction*, Mo Yan also said that any writer who can represent an era in the development of national literature should possess these characteristics: the sudden expression of local color and the self-referential universal meaning of his works (Mo 2004,377). However, writers such as Mo Yan and Han Shaogong believe that the influence of Latin American magical realism on Chinese literature should not be overemphasized, as it is incomplete and it is easy to overlook the learning of Chinese writers from other foreign literature and the nutrients drawn from their own traditional culture. In his analysis of magical realism and new-era Chinese literature, Gao (2016) quotes Mo Yan as saying:

In 1987, I realized that I could not follow others' lead, that I must write my things, things that come from my own heart, things that are closely related to my own life, and then I tried to work in that direction step by step. I've been fighting with García Márquez for the past 20 years, and I'm leaving that book.

Teng (2006) further points out that they are not rejecting modernity but rejecting single modernity based on the West. At this point, contemporary Chinese literature gradually broke away from its spiritual dependence on

magical realism and entered a unique path of exploring the modernization of Chinese literature.

### 3.2.2 The Reasons for the Spread of Latin American Magical Realism to China

There are many reasons why Latin American magical realism has spread to China and had a large impact on contemporary Chinese literature. According to American comparative literary scholar Joseph. T. Shaw's explanation, seeds of all influences may land, yet only those that fall on land where the conditions are right can germinate, and each seed will, in turn, be influenced by the soil and climate in which it takes root(Wu2021,21). In other words, there are two main reasons for the spread and acceptance of Latin American magical realism represented by García Márquez in modern China. On the one hand, there are the seeds of the landing influence, that is, the "explosive" influence of Latin American magical realism represented by García Márquez in the world since the late 20th century, and on the other hand, there is the conditioned land, that is, contemporary Chinese literature as the subject of acceptance has very similar historical and cultural contexts and real cultural situations with Latin American magical realism literature. The Latin American literature boom effect of García Márquez's Nobel Prize in Literature quickly drew the attention of the Chinese translation and academic and creative communities to the mysterious continent of Latin America. The enthusiastic recognition, mutual echoes, and joint efforts of colleagues from the three communities have continued to push the dissemination and acceptance of Latin American magical realism literature represented by García Márquez to a climax in China. First, the translation community took the lead in translating Garcia Márquez's works. After the publication of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (selected translations) in World Literature Section No. 6 in 1982, a magazine called *October* soon released some translations

and introductory articles of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, and Taiwan's Visionary Publishing Company published the full translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* translated by Song Biyun in a relatively short time. In 1984, two more versions were released in mainland China, translated by Gao Changrong and Huang Jinyan. During this period, almost all of García Márquez's works, including a series of dialogues, were translated into Chinese. Second, the academic community also extensively studied García Márquez's works. During this period, Chinese researchers began to go beyond the limitations of the previous general introduction of García Márquez, showed their unique thinking about García Márquez based on foreign achievements, and published several treatises of high academic level. Third, the writers' community began to pay active attention to García Márquez, and there was a strong literary trend of imitating and borrowing from his magical realism. 'A novel can be written like this!' These words, which García Márquez had an epiphany about while reading Kafka in Paris, had become the consensus of Chinese writers who knew García Márquez by this time. And it was their study of Latin American magical realism that directly triggered the literary trend of the mid-1980s Root-seeking literature and many enlightened writers such as Hanshaogong. China and Latin America share many historical and cultural similarities reflected in their shared magical and rich natural and cultural heritage. First of all, the magical natural landscapes, mysterious myths and legends, and long cultural traditions of Latin America, which provided rich spiritual resources for García Márquez's magical realism literature, also exist in the land of China. Secondly, from the Zhi-guai novels of the Wei, Jin, and South and North Dynasties to the legendary novels of the Tang dynasty to the classical Chinese novels of the Ming and Qing dynasties, there has never been a lack of mystical elements in traditional Chinese literature. This mystical literary tradition gave many Chinese writers, such as Mo Yan in the late 20th century, a sense of *déjà vu* when they studied magical realism literature. They were confident that they, too, could create a Chinese

style of magical realism literature. Again, regarding the social reality, the cultural desolation caused by the Cultural Revolution has prompted the urgent need for contemporary Chinese literature to understand foreign literature. Latin American magical realism literature has given contemporary Chinese literature confidence in this regard. Yu (2020) studies that, on the one hand, in the 1980s, Chinese literature urgently needed to find inspiration from Western or foreign literature to fill the gap caused by the decade of turmoil. While Latin American countries and China are both Third World developing countries, Latin American literature can easily resonate with contemporary Chinese literature regarding creative emotions. Latin American magical realism's focus on ancient indigenous culture evoked a psychological search for Chinese national culture and vernacular culture among Chinese writers, which led to a literary root-seeking movement to memorialize and reflect on Chinese national culture and history in the light of world cultural development. On the other hand, after a decade of cultural blankness, the people awakened and felt bewildered by the impact of modern culture. Their traditional aesthetic sense was revived through the literature on Root-seeking. Young Chinese writers such as Mo Yan saw hope in the success of García Márquez and the possibility of developing countries' literary creations being accepted by the world. They are thus actively exploring the ethnic culture in literature, searching for the cultural consciousness, folk concepts, and spiritual aspirations in the soil of the national culture, hoping to gain acceptance and recognition from the world. In general, apart from the driving force of a particular period's political and socio-cultural environment, it stems more from the commonality of human actions and thoughts.

### 3.2.3 The Influence of Latin American Magical Realism on Contemporary Chinese Literature

The spread of Latin American magical realism literature in China has enabled Chinese writers to see new literary concepts and mysterious literary works and to learn and borrow the unique writing skills of Latin American writers. While Root-seeking literature is a literary trend with clear theoretical propositions that emerged in China in the 1980s under the influence of Latin American magical realism literature. In 1985, Han Shaogong pointed out in his article "The Roots of Literature" that literature has roots, and the roots of literature should be deeply rooted in the cultural soil of national traditions. He verified this proposition with his writing. Based on this background, Chinese writers such as Mo Yan began to explore cultural traditions and roots in their writing, and theoretical researchers have called these writers the root-seekers (Han, 1985). Gao (2017) emphasizes that Latin American magical realism is a literary genre with outstanding creative achievements built on the substrate of vernacular society and fused with traditional Indigenous culture. Chinese writers are influenced by Latin American magical realism; when they think about history, they also focus on digging into the root causes of national suffering. Although Root-seeking literature has made some achievements in the history of Chinese literature, it has not fully used traditional cultural and literary resources such as Taoism<sup>12</sup> and Confucianism<sup>13</sup>. This is one of the reasons for its late decline. Imitation is the most important characteristic of contemporary Chinese literature in the new period. The writers of the root-seeking school have borrowed from Western literary trends to varying degrees in terms of writing style and conception, of which Latin American

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<sup>12</sup> Taoism, is a Chinese school of philosophical thought. The most famous initiators are Laozi and Zhuangzi. The Tao Te Ching and the Zhuangzi are its main works.

<sup>13</sup> Confucianism, with its focus on the "great ethics of humanity", aspires to the derivation of "love and respect". Confucianism is a school of thought founded by Confucius, developed by Mencius, and brought to fruition by Xunzi, and has continued to be respected by Confucian scholars throughout the ages.

magical realism literature is the most important part. Han Shaogong and Mo Yan's novels embody the magical realism writing technique.

On the whole, Chinese root-seeking literature spawned by Latin American magical realism literature has the following characteristics. These characteristics have made the root-seeking writers successful but also constrained them in some aspects, thus leading to the decline of root-seeking literature. First, Chinese writers have changed their practice of focusing only on formal imitation and have begun to search for their cultural roots. They have developed the concept of root-seeking literature in their creative works. They explore the roots of Chinese literature from traditional culture, examine people's values from the traditional cultural background, and create many excellent works with national traditions and characteristics. For instance, Acheng<sup>14</sup>'s *The King of Chess* and Wang Anyi<sup>15</sup>'s *Xiao Bao Zhuang* affirm the modern value of traditional culture, intentionally place the storyline in the space of traditional culture, and advocate the construction of a nationally oriented modern culture. Second, Latin American magical realism has also greatly influenced the writing methods of writers of root-seeking literature. Chinese root-seeking literature has embraced the Latin American magical realism approach to the idea of time. Root-seeking literature often portrays less realistic scenarios in a very realistic way, making unlikely scenarios possible, blending shocking reality with seeming illusion, thus achieving a unique effect. This is a technique often used by Latin American writers of magical realism. Third, writers of root-seeking literature learned how to depict the relationship between humans and nature from the pantheistic elements of magical realism literature. Latin American magical realism literature contains pantheism elements and deals with the relationship between man and nature.

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<sup>14</sup> Acheng, formerly known as Zhong Acheng, was born in Beijing in 1949 and is an author and screenwriter from Jiangjin District, Chongqing, China. In 1984, he published his first short story "King of Chess".

<sup>15</sup> Wang Anyi, born in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province on March 6, 1954, is a contemporary Chinese writer. In 1985, she published the novel *Xiao Bao Zhuang*, which won the National Award for Outstanding Chinese Novel, and in 1996, she published the novel *The Long Hate Song*, which later won the Fifth Mao Dun Literature Award.



In the novels of root-seeking literature, the mutual constraints of life and nature are fully expressed, and the characters all have a close relationship with natural ecology. *The Right Bank of the Erguna River*, written by Chi Zijian<sup>16</sup>, depicts the relationship between ethnic minority tribes in northeastern China and their coexistence with nature. It also shows the intimate relationship between women and nature (ibid, 093). There is no need to doubt that the writers of Root-seeking literature try to tap the literature resources from their own culture, which is their advantage. However, their definition of roots is ambiguous, and their understanding is one-sided. They study foreign literature and emphasize the national self, which leads to the root-seeking writers' inability to completely and thoroughly express traditional and foreign cultures. This contradictory mentality eventually led to the decline of Root-seeking literature in the late 1980s.

### 3.3 The Formation of Mo Yan's Hallucinatory Realism

The earliest hallucinatory realism was used in German poetry criticism in the 1970s, and it preceded Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism. In 1971, the German literary critic Clemens Heselhaus pointed out in his monograph *The Work and Life of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff* that the contradictory combination of the words illusion and reality is regarded as an oxymoron. He notes that the poetry of the German nineteenth-century poetess Annette von Droste-Hülshoff deals with a dying or religious theme of visions and dreams. He sees her poetry as combining detailed observation and realistic portrayal with a rich imagination, transitioning from romanticism to realism, but not either, thus calling it hallucinatory realism (Larry D1975, 101-103). The *Oxford Companion to Twentieth-Century Art* of 1981 included it as a surrealist style, defined as finely and correctly detailed depictions. Still, this realism does not depict external reality but rather dreams

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<sup>16</sup> Chi Zi Jian was born on February 27, 1964 in Heilongjiang Province, China. Her works include *The Right Bank of the Erguna River*. In 2009, she won the Seventh Mao Dun Literature Award.

and fantasies in a realistic manner (Osborne1981,528-529). In 1983 the German scholar Professor Burkhardt Lindner published the article *Hallucinatory Realism: Peter Weiss' Aesthetics of Resistance, Notebooks, and the Death Zones of Art* . He argues that hallucinatory realism highlights the individual, subjective nature of reality, taking into account the use of the many dream forms derived from the psyche (Lindner1983,127-156). In 2001, the American Professor Elisabeth Krimmer, studying the poems of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, considered that the transition to the dream world was made more compelling by the specific description of the natural environment and confirmed the aesthetic value of this paradoxical modification (Krimmer 2001,121-140). In addition, the term is more commonly found in film and television criticism, where it is revered for its emphasis on the use of dreamlike montages of film and television to document reality in a way that allows the audience to have a fresh experience of objective reality. Thirty years later, the Nobel Prize used this term to name Mo Yan's writing style. Although there are some differences between the concept itself and Mo Yan's writing, it must be acknowledged that the literary characterization given to Mo Yan by the Nobel Prize not only helps to create a clear distinction from Latin American magical realism but also helps to understand the connotations and extensions of the concept in the context of Mo Yan's literary world.

The definition of Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism in the Nobel Prize for Literature award speech is a relatively accurate reflection of Mo Yan's style. In other words, hallucinations are used to depict reality, and the actual depiction of the work is still the reality. The hallucination becomes a tool to expose reality in its entirety. Before Mo Yan won the Nobel Prize in 2012, many considered his writing style Chinese magical realism, as Mo Yan and his contemporaries, including Chen Zhongshi, had significantly benefited from Latin American magical realism literature. In 1982, the fourth year after China's reform and opening up in 1978, García Márquez received the Nobel Prize for Literature. This was a time of political relaxation in China, and

Chinese literature was full of interest in foreign literature. A mania for publishing, translating, and reading foreign literary works could be said to have developed. Soon the Latin American magical realism literature he represented began to gain popularity in China. However, before 1978, Chinese writers had drawn more from Soviet literature. The emergence of Latin American magical realism opened their eyes to an unbelievable and exciting side of literature outside the realm of socialist realism with which they were familiar. It was a common mindset among writers at the time that literature could be written this way. Since then, Chinese literature has given birth to some works imitating Latin American magical realism. Even for a long time afterward, Chinese writers' works had that little magic in them. For example, Mo Yan's early *White Dog and the Swing* and *Red Sorghum* (Qi2017,203). So, when Mo Yan's work became widely known to Chinese readers, many saw it as the result of imitating foreign literature. Thus, it is not surprising that it has been called Chinese magical realism. Yet it seems that the Nobel Prize for Literature, awarded to the Chinese writer Mo Yan in 2012 and gave him the definition of hallucinatory realism, is a more accurate reflection of Mo Yan's style. On the one hand, the Nobel Prize has at least recognized Mo Yan's experience of learning from writers such as García Márquez and William Faulkner. On the other hand, they also believe that Mo Yan has deeply integrated into the local Chinese culture and developed his unique writing style, which is meaningful.

The inheritance of Chinese indigenous culture, as well as the learning and borrowing from foreign literature, including Latin American magical realist literature, led to the formation of Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism style. Professor Kjell Espmark, who chaired the Nobel Prize for Literature jury, explains that he does not deny that Mo Yan's writing was indeed influenced by García Márquez but that Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is mainly derived from the ancient Chinese art of narrative (Wu2012). Also, Zhang analyses that the magic in Mo Yan's novels is intrinsically linked to the folk culture and folk

way of thinking in the area of Shandong province where he lived(Zhang2012). Qi Jinghua's study goes even further to illustrate the difference between Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism and Western hallucinatory realism. She argues that the core of Western hallucinatory realism is "illusion" and that realism is an artistic technique. The core of Mo Yan's work is "reality", which he describes in the context of dreams and fantasy, which are the artistic techniques he uses to represent reality. What is more remarkable is that Mo Yan incorporates artistic expressions with ethnic characteristics into "dreams" and "fantasies", giving hallucinatory realism a more realistic pattern, a richer expression, and a more Chinese tone(Qi2017,202). Mo Yan's heritage of local culture is a prerequisite for his hallucinatory realism, which means that while grafting on foreign literature, he is deeply dependent on the local Chinese culture. For this reason, he incorporates foreign literature, including Latin American magical realism, into his novels. In discussing García Márquez's inspiration for Mo Yan, Qi further points out that there are two main aspects: one is to bring Mo Yan back to his homeland, and the other is to seek "wonder" in the narrative (Ibid, 203). But the scholar M. Thomas Inge stresses that for the concept of literary geography, one should not forget Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County, in addition to García Márquez's Macondo (Inge 2000, 502). It was from these two predecessors that Mo Yan placed the geography of his literary writing in his northeastern township of Gaomi. In response to the "wonder" of the narrative, Mo Yan once said that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* offered him the philosophical ideas of García Márquez and his unique way of understanding the world and human beings (Mo 2014, 5-7). And this approach draws Mo Yan into launching a modernization of indigenous traditional literature and the construction of localized foreign literature. Ancient Chinese mythology, folklore, and post-1949 history are incorporated into his dreams and fantasies. He develops his style of critique of reality through imagery, language, and

narrative art forms with a more exaggerated imagination and a more magical absurdity.

## 4.A COMPARISON OF TWO WRITING STYLES: LATIN AMERICAN MAGICAL REALISM REPRESENTED BY GARCIA MARQUEZ AND CHINESE HALLUCINATORY REALISM REPRESENTED BY MO YAN

### 4.1 Similarities Between the Two

#### 4.1.1 The Structure of Narration

Comparing the similarities in the two works provides greater insight into the writing techniques and characteristics used in constructing magical realism and hallucinatory realism, respectively. Firstly, both works are characterized by a family-generational narrative structure. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the authors begin with the Buendía family of Macondo and tell the story of seven generations in all. Teng(2016,228) analyzes that this is the story of a family coming of age, and the story indeed revolves around this family. One could also say that the characters of this family are the main characters, while the other characters who come and go with each other belong to the secondary characters. Teng(2016,228-229) also points out that the family is like a big tree, and the children and grandchildren are its branches and vines. On the other hand, *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* tells the story of the landlord Ximen Nao's reincarnation. After the establishment of New China, he was executed by a firing squad and then reincarnated as a donkey, cow, pig, dog, monkey and a big head doll. Although his body in the human world changes in the process, the

chronological line of the narrative still follows the structure of generations(ibid,228). After the death of the landlord Ximen Nao, his first wife, Bai, does not remarry. The second wife, Yingchun, takes one son, Ximen Jinlong, and one daughter, Ximen Baofeng, whom she had with Ximen Nao, and remarries the long-time servant Lan Lian, who later gives birth to Lan Jiefang. In contrast, the third wife, Wu Qiuxiang, remarries Huang Tong, the captain of the production team, and gives birth to two daughters, Huang Huzhu and Huang Hezuo. The story revolves around the development of this series of characters after the death of Ximen Nao, who bears witness to the story of his children and the offspring of his own second and third wives in animal bodies. The generational family structure accounts for the primary character relationships of the novel and makes the central storyline clearer.

Secondly, both works are characterized by a linear narrative structure, which contains an inversion of the temporal and spatial order. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* follows the life trajectory of the Buendía family of Macondo from the first to the seventh generation. The ending of the novel is the conclusion of the story. Aureliano and his aunt Amaranta get married and have a child, and Amaranta dies of a bloodbath. This brings the story of the Macondo Buendía family to a close state. *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* opens with 'My story, which began on 1 January 1950, after two years of unimaginable human torture in the underworld.' (Mo 2012,6). It ends with 'On his fifth birthday, he called my friend in front of him and, setting up to read a long story aloud, he said to my friend: "My story, from 1 January 1950 .....". '(ibid,411). Teng (2016,228) explains that this is a "narrative trap" type of narrative structure, because the novel echoes back and forth, starting and ending in time, forming a cyclical structure and reversing the temporal order. However, Tu(2015,15) investigates that the overall thread of the novel still runs from the murder of Ximen Nao in 1950 to the birth of Lan Qiansui in 2000, through the occurrence, development, climax, and conclusion of a family story, following a time-based structure. This is still the case in *One*

Hundred Years of Solitude, where the protagonists begin with the first generation and end with the fall of the seventh, and where the story takes place in Macondo through its founding to its prosperity and then its decline. However, the novel is constantly structured in an inverted temporal order, interspersing flashbacks and pre-narratives. For example, 'Many years later, whenever he saw the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía would recall the distant afternoon when his father had taken him to see the ice.'(Garcia 2011,6). The pre-narrative allows the storyline to unfold circularly, giving the novel a fuller fatalistic, magical dimension(Teng2016,228).

#### 4.1.2 The Literary Expressing Techniques Used In the Work

In terms of literary expressing techniques, García Márquez and Mo Yan coincidentally use absurdity and exaggeration to embody the plot of the novels, attracting the reader's eyes and adding to the magic and expressiveness of the novels. In One Hundred Years of Solitude, the author depicts rabbits, which he describes as having a superb ability to reproduce, and a loud bang in the night, and the ground in the yard is covered with rabbits. Aureliano II Sex with a lover makes livestock flourish. Qi(2014,42) identifies that such an absurd and bizarre plot is shown with exaggerated effect and mystery. In the second chapter of Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out, the author describes Ximen Nao's injustice for his murder by saying about his good deeds:

Only a year before, a naked man had frozen to death in front of the Earth God Temple. His was red from head to toe, his pecker sticking out straight like a spear, drawing peals of laughter. That outlandish friend of yours, Mo Yan, wrote about that in his story 'The Man Died, His Dick lived On.' Thanks to my generosity, this man's corpse, the one who died by the roadside but whose dick lived on, was buried in the old graveyard west of town. Good deeds like that have wide-ranging influence and are more consequential than memorials or biographies.

(Mo 2012,12) .

Such a plot is hilarious and exaggeratedly absurd(Teng2016, 229). There are even more absurd to the realm of the magical, such as the Cultural Revolution scene in *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*: 'The propaganda truck drove by, ..... (the truck's) loudspeaker emitted an earth-shaking sound, causing a young peasant woman to suffer a miscarriage, causing a pig to faint from the shock of hitting its head against a dirt wall,.....' ' That girl shouted into the microphone that ..... Chen Guangdi was not only reactionary in his thinking but also morally corrupt, repeatedly committing adultery with a female donkey, causing that female donkey to become pregnant, .....' Such the discourse on irrational reality under the view of the modernist concept pushes people to go beyond the absurdity and humor of the text and to think deeply about the dangers behind the absurdity in a light-hearted and enjoyable reading. Moreover, Li (2016,60) clarifies that Ximen Nao turns from a human into an animal and enjoys being an animal. This in itself is a very exaggerated and absurd behavior.

Furthermore, both works also incorporate mythological elements. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Marquez uses Indian legends and allusions to Eastern mythology to enhance the mystery of the work. The first generation of the Buendía family was of Spanish descent, growing up in an Indian village. Because they were inbred, they were terrified of having children. For this reason, Ursula made chastity trousers to keep Buendía from touching her and never had children. The people of the village then mock Buendía, thinking he is barren. At the height of the mockery, José Alcátio Buendía kills the man who called him the most vicious names, cockfighting rival Prudencio Aguilar, and then forces Ursula to have sex with him. And the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar constantly harasses them. To escape this harassment, they leave the Indian village and go to remote Macondo. Tu(2015,15) justifies that the ghosts that haunt José Alcátio Buendía day and night are based on the Indian legend that the spirits are not at peace and do not let their enemies be at peace. As



analyzed by Li, Wang, and Sun(2015), the story of the flying carpet and the beauty of Remedios seizing it and ascending to heaven is based on a derivation of the Arabian myth of the Night of the Sky. The mythological dimension is added to the portrayal of the mysterious character Melquíades. This character can be born dead and die alive, write sacred books in Sanskrit, foretell the world to come, and draw maps in the underworld after death. These episodes make the work devoid of clear boundaries between life and death and significantly add to its artistic appeal. By contrast, the traditional Chinese mythology of "the underworld" is incorporated into Mo Yan's novel. Tu(2015) examines that the beginning of *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* is similar to the beginning of *The Story of the Stone*<sup>17</sup>. Even though *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* does not begin with mythology like *The Story of the Stone*, this similar plotting has similarities. While the reader is led to believe that the novel is magical, the author sets it in a substantial period of Chinese history, which is sometimes fantastical and sometimes real, making it fascinating.

Meanwhile, both works integrate the traditional folk tales and cultures of their respective lands into their novels. The most apparent traditional Indian folk concept in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is that of fatalism. To the Indians, fate is predetermined, and everything is destined to happen. Marquez embodies this traditional idea in the "baby with the pig's tail." The first generation of Buendía and Ursula were most afraid of giving birth to a baby with a pig's tail. A baby with a pig's tail is finally born in the seventh generation. This ending is decided from the beginning. The pig-tailed baby that is born is eventually eaten by ants, leading to the demise of the entire Buendía family, which is also predetermined from the beginning(ibid,2015). This is the fatalism embodied in the novel. A particular kind of folk culture, the traditional Chinese geomantic culture, is also included

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<sup>17</sup> *The Story of the Stone*, a Chinese novel of the Qing Dynasty by Cao Xueqin and Gao E, known as one of the Four Great Classical Masterpieces of China, along with *Journey to the West*, *All men are brothers* and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

in Mo Yan's work. For example, when the geomantic master says to Ma Zhi Bo, 'If there is a woman giving birth in the family, you must not break the wall or move the earth, and you must not dig a well with dung because it will be bad for the baby,' he runs away in a hurry(Mo 2012,13). The work gives a valid and magical account of the fact that geomantic culture has a profound influence in rural China and is deeply rooted in the minds of peasants. Moreover, in the first chapter of the novel, 'Finally, he came out of the tunnel, then mounted a high platform ..... to scoop up a spoonful of black liquid overflowing with rancid odor and poured it into a large bowl coated with red glaze.'(Mo 2012,8) It is then that the representations of the Nai He Bridge, Meng Po, and Meng Po soup<sup>18</sup> are full of traditional Chinese folk concepts and imagery. Two folk tales, concepts, and ideas reflect Latin America and China's ethnic and regional characteristics.

Finally, to varying degrees, both works use surrealist techniques such as dreams and hallucinations, intersecting real life with fantasy to present the storyline and express the ideological content of the work. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Teng(216,228) points out that the author writes several times about the living seeing the dead in real life, such as in the second chapter of the novel, when Alcá dio Buendía stabs Prudencio Aguilar in the throat with his grandfather's spear during a duel. Afterward, Ursula and Alcá dio Buendía can see the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar at every turn. 'One sleepless night, when Ursula went out into the courtyard to drink water, she saw Prudencio Aguilar staying by the big water jar. He was bruised and sad and tried to plug the hollow in his throat with reed grass.' (Garcia 2011,25). This description of human and ghostly visions and dreams makes the article

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<sup>18</sup> In ancient Chinese legend, there is a road between Yin and Yang called the Yellow Spring Road, a river called the River of Forgetfulness, and a bridge over the river called the Nahe Bridge. On the edge of the river of forgetfulness is a stone called the Stone of Three Lives, on which are written all the events of each person's past and present lives. After the bridge, there is an earthen platform called the Lookout Terrace, by which there is an old woman called Old lady Meng. Every soul who crosses this place has to drink a beverage made by Meng Po, which resembles tea and wine, called Meng Po Soup. Only after drinking the soup can they go to the tenth level of hell to receive the King of Hell's verdict and start a new reincarnation.

even better. What's more, in the description of the events of the banana workers' strike, the rulers and the government massacre over three thousand workers, and the leader of the strike escapes from death and is mistakenly thought to have returned from the dead upon his return to Macondo. Believing the government's deception, the people unanimously reply that no one ever died here, thus leaving the strike leader confused and unsure whether it was a dream or reality(Teng216,228). In Chapter 9 of Part I of *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, the donkey into which Ximen Nao has been reincarnated dreams that he is stimulated by his desire to mate and travels through the earthen blast furnaces of the great iron and steel refinery, expecting to be attracted to a female donkey, but instead it is Bai, his first wife in the human world. Little did he know that Bai would instantly recognize him ,Ximen Nao , and not a donkey. In the dream world, Bai pours out her heart to the donkey. The latter is the soul of Ximen Nao and tells him all about the care she has seen in real life, while Ximen Nao only hates himself for being a donkey's body and falls into memories of his newlywed days(Mo 2012,60). This mingling of dream and reality, both fantastical and authentic, makes it difficult to honestly tell the difference and truly experience the magic through this detail.

#### 4.1.3 The Narrative Background In the Work

##### 4.1.3.1 A Particular Historical Period : When China And Latin America Were In Social Transition In The 20th Century Together

Both works present a background of history, which is reflected in the narrative settings in the novels. The former is the history of Latin America; the latter is the history of China. With its rich historical content, both authors give the particular historical period a magical realism style. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Márquez turns his creative attention to the dozens of civil wars that broke out in Colombia over the seventy years from 1830 to the end of the nineteenth century, describing this aspect of history at great length and

focusing on it through the legendary career of the book's protagonists. Tu(2015,15) claims that the lives of seven generations of the Buendía family follow the same path as the history of the war in Colombia, with politicians, rulers, and civilians living in their forms in the small town of Macondo. Besides, the novel often features real historical characters, such as Sir Francis Drake<sup>19</sup>, Sir Raleigh<sup>20</sup>, and Alexander von Humboldt<sup>21</sup>, giving the reader the illusion that history and fiction are fused. Similarly, Mo Yan's book's historical narrative features are even more pronounced. The work covers contemporary Chinese history from 1949 to the end of the last century. From the land reform movement before and after the founding of New China, the rural mutual aid cooperative movement and the Great Leap Forward movement in the 1950s, the Cultural Revolution, and the reform and opening up after 1978 to the present day. Each stage of history is included in the narrative. Mo Yan sets the story in the northeastern township of Gaomi County, which was established after the founding of New China, and places the fictional landlord Ximen Nao and other characters in the author's mind in the land he knows best(Tu2015,15). Both works' natural side of history also gives an insight into the magical realism genre, which tends to represent the real-life side.

#### 4.1.3.2 Space In Fiction: A Literary Concept, Not A Geographical One

It has to be acknowledged that good novelists can find not only a temporal setting for their creations in reality but also a suitable spatial setting for their works, such as the Tara estate in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* or the Polish-German border town of Danzig in Günter Wilhelm Grass's *The Tin Drum*. Undoubtedly, the narrative space in a novel can be taken from a real place name, but it is never an actual geographical place

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<sup>19</sup> Sir Francis Drake was born in 1540 and died in 1596, an English privateer captain, explorer and navigator who is known to have been the second explorer to complete the voyage around the world after Magellan.

<sup>20</sup> Sir Walter Raleigh (1552 - 1618) was an English statesman, soldier, writer, explorer and favourite of the English Regent Elizabeth I.

<sup>21</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Heinrich Alexander von Humboldt ( 1769 – 1859) was a German geographer, explorer, and proponent of Romantic philosophy and science.

name. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Márquez focuses his narrative on Macondo's location, but this place does not actually exist. It could have been in Colombia. It could have been in Peru and Chile, and it encompasses the geographical features of almost all Latin American countries, rather than just taking place in one place in one country. Although in *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, Mo Yan borrows his birthplace, the northeastern township of Gaomi County in Shandong Province, as the space for his narrative, here again, the northeastern township of Gaomi County is not exactly the author's actual hometown. As Mo Yan said in a speech,

I think my Gaomi Northeast Township should be an open concept, not a closed one; it should be a literary concept, not a geographical one. In the novel, I have brought mountains, hills, swamps, and deserts to the northeastern township of Gaomi, which are not found in the real Gaomi.

(Mo1999, 34).

On the whole, it can be seen that the two authors have shaped a fictional space with distinctive regional characteristics from the land beneath their feet and the environment in which they grew up.

#### 4.1.3.3 The Main Characters In The Novel: The View From Family To Nation

The narrative time and space in the novel set the stage for the appearance of the novel's characters. Unexceptionally, both works create a group of typical characters with their characteristics. Still, these typical characters are, in turn, deeply symbolic of the close connection between the family and the nation's lifeblood. Li, Wang, and Sun(2015) study that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* has the Buendía family as the main characters and Macondo as the narrative space, with the secondary characters in the novel essentially revolving around these two central points. By comparison, *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* unfolds with the descendants and servants of the Simon Haunts as the main characters and the people of Ximen village in the

northeastern township of Gaomi as secondary characters. Both novels tell the story of their respective families but simultaneously provide a sweeping view of the history of a country and even a continent. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the family system is complex. The relationships are complicated throughout the development of the family history. Still, even so, the author uses a masterful technique to weave the historical development of the whole family through the historical development of the war in the whole country. The development and changes touch the destiny and the way back of the human race. In *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, the tragic story of nearly half a century of life and death for the landlord Ximen Nao's family and his servant, the Lan Lian's family, deepens the reader's sympathy for the peasants in context. The change from rural production cooperatives to the family contract responsibility system touches the whole family's heart. Both works simultaneously embody the series of changes in people's thinking and behavior brought about by the changes in the country's history and use the family's history to reflect the changes in the development of the whole society and the whole country (ibid,158).

#### 4.1.4 Themes In Two Works: Solitude, Hustle And Bustle

Both works present the twin themes of solitude and the hustle and bustle. As two different atmospheres, the clamor of the human world and the loneliness of humanity, the inner clamor of man and the extreme loneliness, become the melody in both works. Qi(2015,89) explains that the focus of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is projected from the family to the course of Latin American history. The author attaches the family story to Macondo, a place of imagination that merges with reality. Each member of the Buendía family, their bombastic or quiet and calm, overflows with the same solitude and different opportunities in Macondo's noisy and changing world. All the Aurelianos, full of reason, whose sensuality was like a little starburst, turned on a dime and

then fell into a bewildering night of solitude. At the same time, all the Joses followed the desires that overwhelmed reason and carried on the family line died. Although the exceptions were José the Second and Aureliano the Second, that was the result of their childhoods having changed their markings. Except for two generations of Ursulines, the family never pursued and fought for love, and between the pursuit of love and solitude, they all subjectively chose solitude. Pan(2019,160) argues that Mo Yan's work emphasizes the noisy group and the solitary individual. The first generation, Lan Lian, moves from being lonely to being consciously lonely, confronting, embracing, and giving birth to heartfelt love with loneliness. The second generation, Ximen Jinlong, and Lan Jiefang, are the representatives of the boisterous group. In their ignorance, they witness the hardships of their fathers, sensibly conforming to the times and consuming their various inflated desires in the high tide of change; they succeed in their pursuit of desire and perish in their pursuit of desire. In the third generation, Pang Fenghuang and Lan Kaifang grew up in a materialistic environment, lost in a life of extravagance and pride, suffering the consequences of their father's desires. And the birth of the fourth generation, Lan Qiansui, ended that era. The hustle and bustle and solitude here are chosen by history, and the individual bears the price of perseverance and loss in the choice. In both works, there is a brilliant presentation of the common humanity behind the submissiveness and resistance, the stoicism and struggle, the escape, and the confrontation people show when facing the stream of history.

#### 4.1.5 The Influence Of Religion

The solid religious elements also add to the two works' magic. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Li, Wang, and Sun (2015) investigate that the continuous rain that fell in Macondo for four years, eleven months, and two days is a transposition of the story of the Flood and Noah's Ark from the

Bible's Book of Genesis. Moreover, Father Nicanor, who drinks a cup of chocolate, can stand 12 centimeters off the ground, a typical mark of religious culture. The ancient folk-cultural concept of the six paths of reincarnation<sup>22</sup>, which originates from Buddhism, refers to the never-ending process of life fully accepting birth and death and experiencing suffering in the six paths of heaven, asura, human, livestock, hungry ghosts, and hell. The ultimate meaning of Buddha's proclamation of suffering is to preach compassion and liberation. In Buddhist scriptures and classical Chinese novels, reincarnation is often used to realize certain moral and ethical precepts, encouraging people to do good in this world to transcend in the next. In *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, a preface sentence from the Buddhist scriptures, 'Transmigration wearies owing to mundane desires, few desires and inaction bring peace to mind.'(Mo2012,6). In Buddhism, the highest state is to become a Buddha, and only by becoming a Buddha can one escape the pain of the six paths of reincarnation, and it is difficult for people to fight against their fate because of their greed. Li (2009,234) stresses that in Mo Yan's novel, the protagonist's six paths of reincarnation are described in terms of the six creatures of reincarnation: the donkey, the cow, the pig, the dog, the monkey, and the big-headed baby, to illustrate the root of Buddhist reincarnation. Although reincarnation is bitter and brutal to break free from, it shows the eternity of life and the equality of all beings; However, disillusionment often makes people depressed and can make them generous and reach the highest state. This is the ultimate value of the salvation of Buddhahood from the perspective of reincarnation. The religious overtones of the two works are the product of Christianity in Latin American civilization and Buddhism in Asian civilization, respectively.

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<sup>22</sup> According to the birth of karma will naturally enter a different path. The six paths are divided into three good paths and three evil paths. The three good paths: the heavenly god path, the earthly path, and the shura path; the three evil paths: the hell path, the hungry ghost path, and the animal path. Reincarnation is continuously carried out in the six paths between the heavenly path and the hellish path, depending purely on the good and evil in life.



## 4.2 Differences Between the Two

### 4.2.1 Latin American magical realism represented by García Márquez : One Hundred Years of Solitude as an example

The successful portrayal of women is one of the most praised aspects of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. In *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, whether it is Ximen Bai, Bai Yingchun and Wu Qiuxiang, Huang Huzhu and Huang Hezuo, as well as Pang Chunmiao and Pang Fenghuang, the overall female characters give a rather single and flat impression. As secondary characters in the novel, they are the accompaniment of the main characters, and the author portrays them more to facilitate the main characters and the overall storyline. Ye (2016, 103) clarifies that apart from Hua Hua Donkey, who once complained to Ximen Donkey about the difficulties of having a young donkey, there is no independent female narrative voice to be found in the text. The female figures in the novel are pale and flat and even pandering. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, on the other hand, women not only have distinctive character traits but also play a crucial role, which is one of the bright spots of the work. Xing (2015,74) identified that throughout the Buendía family, Ursula is the first generation of women whose lives have been similar in length to the entire history of the Buendía family and even said to have had a great deal to do with the rise and fall of the entire Buendía family over the centuries. She was diligent and always in charge of the whole family. Moreover, she could be said to be the soul of the family. When her son disappeared, she did not hesitate to embark on a search for him, undaunted by the difficulties ahead. After five months of difficult searching, Ursula returned to Macondo, a return that opened the door to the outside world and it was this initiative gradually made Macondo prosperous. She has always expected family harmony, but the opposite has always happened. She has done what she has to do for her family, the family, and

even Macondo, yet she has not received her fair share of rewards. Remedios is the purest figure in the whole Buendía family. She was like an angel. She didn't seem to belong in the Macondo world. She had not learned to read or write by age twenty, could not use cutlery, and often walked around the house naked. She was born to reject all conventions. However, her transcendence was not understood. Instead, they thought she was stupid and mentally disabled. Only Colonel Aureliano could see that she had a keen insight and could see through all appearances to the essence of things. Gao and Zhang analyze (2014, 336) that the portrayal of such a beautiful girl who is transcendent and naturally rejects all conventions aptly reflects the germination of García Márquez's depiction of feminine consciousness in the novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and the development of feminine consciousness in Latin American society. Rebecca and Amaranta are two of the novel's defiant female characters. When they both fall in love with the exotic gentleman Pietro Crespi, they turn against each other. When Rebecca leaves José Alcáδιο, people begin to think that Amaranta will marry Pietro Crespi. Instead, she refused Pietro Crespi. When Pietro Crespi died, she instead put her hand in the coals and has since worn a black veil that she has never taken off for the rest of her life. Rebecca and Amaranta are daring and defiant, uncompromising of fate. García Márquez once said that women could sustain entire worlds before they are destroyed, while men only know how to push back history (Lu 2015, 49). The women of Macondo, with their very different personalities, whether hard-working or skillful and innocent or daring to love and hate, display unique individuality.

The use of yellow imagery is a feature of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and has an important symbolic role. The meaning given to color varies from region to region, depending on cultural background and aesthetic awareness. Colour is associated with a specific bearer and forms unique color imagery. Jin (2018, 71) asserts that the color imagery of yellow has always been seen as a bad omen, a symbol of death, decay, and misfortune, among

indigenous people and up to the present day Latin American peoples, as an expression of the nation's aesthetic and cultural psychology. Further, Tu (2004, 38) explains that color is the novel's focus in terms of symbolism. Indigenous traditional ideas about color are similar to those of some European peoples. In contrast to the Eastern practice of Buddhism, they see yellow as a bad omen and an unlucky color. Many references to imagery are associated with the color yellow, such as yellow flowers, small goldfish, yellow butterflies, and gold and bananas. These yellow images not only have a tragic connotation but also accentuate the origin and character of the long loneliness that lasts for a century, confirming the novel's theme. The yellow flowers, as if they were an elegy for death. After Ursula's passing, several small yellow and red flowers bloom in the corner of the backyard. While Shi (1989, 80) analyses the small yellow flower as a symbol of irrevocable defeat, yellow always symbolizes disaster. After the death of Ursula, the Buendía family and the town of Macondo also declined and eventually disappeared. The small goldfish is a symbol of endless loneliness. Wherever Colonel Aureliano's life took him, he never gave up making little goldfish. It was a way of fighting loneliness. He gave the little goldfish to his 17 illegitimate sons, who were killed off almost overnight. This becomes the final force that destroys him, his hair goes all white, and he spends his days pacing around the house like a sleepwalker (Jin2018, 72). The yellow butterfly represents the disillusionment of love. For example, Meme and Mauricio Babilonia both have yellow butterflies on their dates, tragically sprayed with insecticide by their mother, Fernanda. The two young people in love end up in tragedy. Gold symbolizes greed and sin. When the four boys adopted by José Arcadio accidentally discover the gold coins, there is no more warmth between them and their adoptive father. In return, they plan to drown José Arcadio. To earn gold coins the same color as the yellow and orange bananas, the people of Macondo flock to work as workers for the banana company. However, they reap brutal oppression, exploitation, and even machine gun fire from the

colonists. This shows the content carried by yellow imagery, which includes ominous signs and disasters and the imprint of the evils of money in the capitalist era. This unique yellow imagery gives the novel a distinctly Latin American character.

The perfect combination of rich imagination and indigenous culture is another important feature of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Ancient indigenous cultures had rich and developed literature. Still, due to the extensive destruction by the colonizers, not much of it has survived, with only a few written works such as the *Popol Vuh*. However, what has survived in large numbers is oral literature, which is still being transmitted among the inhabitants of some Latin American countries. Miguel Ángel Asturias credits his earliest literary influences to the indigenous myths told by his grandmother. He said indigenous narrative literature consists of two aspects, the fantastic and the real. Indigenous literature portrays perceptible everyday realities and also conveys another fantastic, magical, and imaginary reality, and portrays both in equal detail (CSSSPLAL 1989). His passage shows that long ago, indigenous literature was characterized by the simultaneous representation of the fantastic and the real. The bridge from reality to fantasy is imagination. Imagination is used significantly in fiction as a tool to represent the magical reality of Latin America. García Márquez has also said that this influence came from the myths, legends, and ghost stories his grandmother told him in his early years. He once said that the problem he had in writing *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was getting others to believe it because he believed it himself. But how could he write it so the reader would believe it too? The solution was for him to adopt his grandmother's style of storytelling (Marquez 1984, 50). All sorts of strange legends, outlandish stories, and unbelievable narratives can be found in his novels—a seamless combination of imagination and history, truth in the absurd, and allegory in the real. For example, Rebecca got amnesia, and the whole village got it. People with this disease start to have trouble sleeping. Still, it gradually turns into amnesia, where the

sufferer loses the memory of his childhood, subsequently forgets many things and names, and eventually does not even recognize familiar people, and in severe cases, does not even know his existence. The whole person is in a comatose, blurred state (Huang2014,35). According to Du's research(2008, 583), in the Caribbean, which the writer himself has explained, the African Negro was combined with the rich imagination of the pre-colonial Native Americans, later mixed with the whims of the Andalusians and the Galician cult of the supernatural. This talent for magically depicting reality comes from the Caribbean and Brazil. It is this Caribbean world that provides him with a source of creativity. This fantasy and imagination are the product of the magical nature of Latin America. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the author uses a rich imagination that perfectly combines diverse cultures, including indigenous ones, making the work deeply marked by Latin America's magic.

The narrative structure of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* includes pre-narratives, flashbacks, and repetition. A pre-narrative is a description of something that has not yet happened but is about to happen and is usually hinted at and marked by words such as "a month from now" and "several years from now." In Chapter 6, the author begins the text with a brief description of Aureliano Buendía's life after he joins the Civil War, which makes it easier for the reader to read the story with a clearer idea of how it will end and to focus on the actual course of events. In the first chapter, for example, Arcadio Buendía discovers the ship covered by flowers. This episode hints at the development of the place into a stagecoach route some years later, while the ship discovered long ago has long since become a charred keel. Wei (2021, 40) points out that this method of portrayal gives the impression that one has read the fragment before in the course of reading, thus making the story's plot more memorable. Flashbacks refer to the representation of various events that have previously occurred to the reader through supplementary narratives, which produce a similar effect to

pre-narratives and can enhance the amount of density of the story narrative to a great extent. For example, the author has described the gypsies at the novel's beginning, and this description appears at the novel's end. At the same time, there is the fact that 'some years later, when he was dying on his deathbed, Aureliano II would surely remember the episode of a rainy June afternoon when he stepped into the room to see his son.' Du (2008, 582) explains that the novel maintains a general style of flashback, in which the writer tells the reader the story of what has passed as an omniscient narrator overlooking the fate of the entire Buendía family. However, the logical starting point for unfolding the novel's plot is still the "present." When it comes to repetition, the author employs repetition in many places in the novel. There is a certain similarity between the names of different characters in the storyline, which is a visual representation of the author's application of repetition in the narrative. Wang (2018, 12) emphasizes that the main characters' names, for example, have been recurring for seven generations, with the men's names being Aureliano or Arcadio and the women's names being Remedios and Amaranta. The repetition of the names implies a similar character: loneliness, greed, obsession, and a near-repetitive destiny. All Aureliano is withdrawn and aloof but has a keen mind. All Arcadio had guts and backbone, but most died of impulse or greed. Each family member bears the deep stigma of loneliness, like a lingering nightmare that clings and cannot be shaken off. The narrative structure, which combines pre-narratives, flashbacks, and repetition, makes the novel's chronology seem cloudy and adds a touch of magic.

One Hundred Years of Solitude blends modernity and postmodernity, but it is based on Latin American reality. The author says of his feelings when he read Kafka's *Metamorphoses*:

Reading *Metamorphoses*, I thought at the time that I was going to be a writer. I saw that the main character, Gregor Samsa, actually wakes up one morning and turns into a giant beetle, so I thought, 'So that's how it can be written, and if I could write like that, I'd have a hobby.'

(Marquez 1987, 39).

Zhang (2017, 50) stresses that Kafka takes the form of metaphor to show the struggle of modern people's flesh and spirit in the whole society. And the town of Macondo, created by García Márquez in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, is like the castle in Kafka's novel *The Castle*, which is full of symbolic meaning. Both García Márquez and Kafka's works convey the spiritual anxiety of modern man in real life and the ambivalence of the struggle for confidence to escape from it, implicitly expressing a tendency to reject industrial society and scientific progress. Tang (2015,167) investigates the author's confession in a lecture in Bogotá that he learned to 'write in a different way' after reading Juan Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo*. This means writing in the postmodern style of Juan Rulfo, in which the world of man and ghost is indistinguishable. Under the influence of modernity and postmodernity, García Márquez writes about absurd realities like sheets letting the wind blow away, gypsy magnets, Colonel Aureliano's little goldfish, the blood that reports murderous letters to his mother, and the carpets of priests flying up into the air. However, García Márquez believed that his novels were still based on reality. He did not think that literature and reality were the same things. He saw fiction as reality written in code, as speculation on reality. The reality of fiction is different from the reality of life, although the former is based on the latter. He was convinced that all good fiction should be an artistic reproduction of reality, showing the writer's realistic approach to creation. It is the same as a dream. He repeatedly states that he does not take his material directly from reality but is inspired by it (Marquez 1987,46). Mu (1997, 32) clarifies that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* reflects the historical changes in Colombia and Latin America for nearly a century after independence through the rise and fall of the Buendía family and Macondo. The novel's depiction of the rule of military dictators, electoral fraud, the long war between the liberal and conservative parties for power, the emergence of the banana companies with the expansion of the United States, and the capitalist civilization and

disasters brought about by it, the workers' strike struggles, the bloody repression by the government are all written based on facts. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* incorporates literary elements from outside Latin America, modern and postmodern, finding inspiration from Latin American reality and then creating the art that forms the novel's thematic ideas and demonstrates García Márquez's style of writing fiction.

#### 4.2.2 The Creative Characteristics Of Mo Yan's Hallucinatory Realism : An Example from *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*

Apart from some similarities with *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism, represented by *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, has the following unique characteristics. The multi-perspective narrative, including the animal perspective, creates a polyphonic effect, which is the first characteristic of Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism. Pijin summarizes Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan 's thesis on narrative, arguing that Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan distinguishes between the "I" in first-person retrospective narratives as the "narrative self" and the "experiential self." The narrative self refers to the present "I" as being outside the recalled history, telling the story as the collector, the narrator not being present in the story scene. The experiential self, meaning that the narrator "I" is in the midst of the recalled history, telling the story as a party, the narrator narrates the story in the story scene (Pi2014,123). *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* chooses the particular model of the " Six Realms of Samsara<sup>23</sup>. " The protagonist is split into multiple narratives from a single narrative subject, transcending the limits of one's own position and thoughts, as well as the limits of objective time and space, which allows for broader narrative space. Lan Qiansui is the novel's first narrator; he is the "narrative self" throughout the text. In his general narration of the whole story, each reincarnation is again accompanied by a narrator who has

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<sup>23</sup> Buddhist cosmology typically identifies six realms of rebirth and existence: gods, demi-gods, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and hells.



witnessed the scene. This narrator, the reincarnated animal, is the experiential self. As the experiential self shifts as the experiencer changes, the original identity of these animals, the Lan Qiansui, always maintains its narrative self-identity. Ximen Nao is reincarnated again and again, and the narrative self incarnates into the experiential self again and again, until finally, Ximen Nao's soul merges with Lan Qiansui's body. Finally, the narrative self is combined with experiential selves. Throughout the novel, Lan Qiansui acts as the narrative self, giving the whole story a unified "general perspective" while at the same time holding the "sub-perspectives" of his own reincarnated animal and others in the story. The animal perspectives of each life tell what they have personally experienced, and they present a parallel relationship with each other. Yu emphasized that the splitting and blending reincarnation perspectives allows the narrative to achieve multiple focuses on historical experiences. The two states of Lan Qiansui and the animals give the novel the effect of a polyphonic narrative(Yu2019,123). Based on the experience of multiple reincarnations, Lan Qiansui's narrative composes and complements the whole story, making the six reincarnations a continuous and layered entirety. The text of *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* is a story from Lan Qiansui to Lan Jiefang. The novel's text originates from a conversation between the two, but there are more than two narrators. In the last part of the novel, the character "writer Mo Yan" comes to the fore and tells the reader the end of the story. Compared to the eyewitness perspective of Lan Qiansui and Lan Jiefang, "writer Mo Yan" tells the story of the reincarnation in the third person as an observer, and his perspective is more calm and restrained. The repeated appearance of "all readers" in the novel emphasizes the identity of the "writer Mo Yan" as a narrator, which also strengthens the effect of dissociation; the identities of the narrator in the story and the writer outside the story are the same, making the whole story float between reality and unreal world. Mo Yan once said in an interview that a novel with only one narrator is bound to be monotonous and will inevitably have many problems.

Different narrators are adopted to tell different or familiar stories to make the narrative come alive. Lan Qiansui's unique narrative self and multiple experiential selves complement each other, while the different perspectives of narrative interspersed by Lan Jiefang and writer Mo Yan work together with Lan Qiansui's narrative to create a natural and harmonious polyphonic effect. The multiple narrative perspectives of the peculiar animals not only present history but also describe the transformation of the relationship between man and the land, the countryside and the city. The author gives the animal's human characters an unlikely occurrence in real life, which also adds to the hallucinatory quality of the story.

One of *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*'s second main features of Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is the study and use of Chinese folklore, folk customs, and folk language. First of all, Mo Yan admits that his novel draws its nutrients from Chinese folklore. He even once said that *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* was inspired by the influence of Pu Songling's *Liaozhai Zhiyi*: 'When you write about a person who dies; he turns into a pig, a dog, a cow, and a donkey when you think about it, you know that this is the story of Pu Songling.' (Mo2012,261 ). The classical Chinese novels represented by *Liaozhai Zhiyi* inspired Mo Yan's content and provided him with the structural form of the 'Zhanghuiti.' Meanwhile, the images portrayed by the writer, such as the Hall of Hell, the King of Hell, the Ghost Pawns, the Judges, the Ox-Headed Horse-Face, and the Meng Po, are not at all unfamiliar to Chinese readers. The plot of the main character Ximen Nao being tortured in the frying pan of the Hall of Hell, being escorted by the Bull Head and Horse Face, and being reincarnated after drinking the soup of Meng Po is vivid and graphic, and the fundamental reason for this is that the writer draws on Chinese folklore. In addition, many other folk legends are borrowed in *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, such as the legend of Ximen Jinlong biting off the ear of the bull in which Ximen Nao was reincarnated, which is borrowed from the legend of King Wen of the Zhou Dynasty being forced to eat the flesh of his

son in Fengsheng Yanyi <sup>24</sup>(Yue2014,19). Mo Yan introduces these legends and tales into the novel, which on the one hand, enriches the plot and adds to the legendary and readable nature of the text; on the other hand, it also provides an alternative perspective on the changes in historical development. In addition, the numerous folk songs in the novel, including allegros, children's rhymes, and jingles, are also an important part of folk literature. Secondly, Mo Yan also describes in detail many traditional customs in the northeastern countryside of Gaomi, such as some agricultural production customs and funeral customs in life, so that readers can feel the local life in all aspects. For example, in the second chapter, Ximen Nao gives an account of the fact that he is busy working all year round:

In the third month, I plowed the fields, in the fourth I planted seeds, in the fifth I brought in the wheat, in the sixth I planted melons, in the seventh I hoed beans, in the eighth I collected sesame, in the ninth I harvested grain, and in the tenth I turned the soil. Even in the cold twelfth month, a warm bed could not tempt me. I'd be out with my basket to collect dog dung when the sun was barely up.

(Mo2008,11)

In these descriptions of farming, the reader gains a specific understanding of the seasons and customs of agricultural production. The Chinese have permanently attached importance to funeral rituals, and funeral customs have become an essential part of national culture. Zhao Lili analyzed that after Bai Yingchun died in the novel, the family organized a grand funeral ceremony led by Ximen Jinlong. All the arrangements and the formations follow the folk funeral customs, and the detailed descriptions even give the reader a sense of being there (Zhao2015,110). This portrayal of folk customs creates a unique literary world for the reader that belongs to the northeastern

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<sup>24</sup> The entire book is written in one hundred rounds, which is the story of King Wu's conquest of Zhou. The novel, with historical and political concepts as the ideological framework supporting the whole book, is mixed with a lot of grand imagination, showing the author's support and praise for the benevolent and virtuous ruler as well as his dissatisfaction and rebellion against the immoral and faint ruler.

township of Gaomi and provides a glimpse into the unique spiritual world of the local people. Thirdly, the integration of folk language into Mo Yan's novels makes the language of the works vivid and lively but also makes the texts exude an intense folk atmosphere, enabling readers to see a real and vivid folk society. Take chapter 27 of the novel, for example, 'Mo Yan slipped out of the room like a slippery mouse'[莫言像只油滑的耗子一样溜走了] (Mo2008,284). Also, the author uses idioms, such as 'Like an old toad used to hold up a table, I struggled to bear the weight for thirty years'[蛤蟆垫桌腿——硬撑] (Mo2008,351), to describe the complex process of the Lan Lian's insistence on working alone and suffering. These expressions preserve the original style of folk discourse, presenting the reader with a slightly vulgar but realistic folk world and satisfying the aesthetic need for figurative artistic language, which is one of the characteristics of Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism, the reality depicted in his hallucinatory realism is deeply based in the Chinese land. Zhao further summarized that folk culture provided Mo Yan with great inspiration and material for his works and expanded the writer's imagination, injecting fresh blood and vitality into his works and highlighting his individuality (Zhao2015,111). Mo Yan's concept of hallucinatory realism also deepens the weight of the reality he portrays.

The concern for the vernacular society, especially the peasants and the land, is the third characteristic of *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* and Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism. Firstly, the thematic ideas of his novels have a vernacular sensibility. Using the northeastern township of Gaomi as the locale for his writing, *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* presents the relationship between peasants and the land by taking the changes in the countryside from 1950 to 2000 as a microcosm representing the changes in rural China. By revealing the relationship between the peasants and the land, the novel reminds those who have fled or are preparing to flee the land not to forget their roots (Yang2009,267). This is the thematic idea of the novel. The land is

the root of the peasant, and the peasant cannot live without it. And every reincarnation of Ximen Nao is a return to the land and a search for the roots of existence. The novel reveals the hardships and tragedies of life in the underclass and presents a relatively realistic world of the countryside. However, the author's real intention is to reveal the relationship between the peasants and the land, which is the foundation of the peasants' life and which they can never leave at any time. Secondly, the author has portrayed persistent rustic characters. Lan Lian and Hong Taiyue are two of the most typical characters. During the People's Commune Movement and all the movements that followed, Lan Lian was the only peasant who insisted on working alone. Although he was not proven wrong later on, this in no way indicates that he had a vision, nor does it speak of his convictions or pursuits, but rather the conservatism, narrow-mindedness, and indifference inherent in him. Hong Taiyue forms a clear contrast to Lan Lian. He was a beggar before the founding of New China but later became a leader. He was always an enthusiastic participant in various political movements. After the reform and opening in 1978, he was still obsessed with the People's Commune period and could not accept Ximen Jinlong's encouragement to develop the tourism business. Ultimately, he was highly conflicted and could not adapt to the social changes and chose to die with Ximen Jinlong. Xu Bingquan examined that Lan Lian and Hong Taiyue are inevitably attached to the land, yet social changes and harsh realities force them to find a way out. Whether they are waiting in hopeless expectation or struggling to find a way out, they refuse to let go quickly, retaining the conservatism and paranoia of the peasants (Xu2014,24). Finally, the language in *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* has a vernacular quality. In narrative language, Mo Yan writes about the countryside and peasants, quoting directly from everyday language. For example, Hong Taiyue's folk rap is very rhythmic:

The sun emerges and lights up the western wall,

The western edge of the eastern wall is chilly as fall.  
Flames from the oven heat the bed and the hall,  
Sleeping on the back keeps the spine in its thrall.  
Blowing on hot porridge reduces the pall,  
Shunning evil and doing good makes a man stand tall.  
If what I am saying you heed not at all,  
Go ask your mother who will respond to my call.

(Mo2008,23).

The language is unadorned and is the ordinary language of rural life. In terms of character language features, there is always the defiance of Lan Lian, who insists on working alone, to Hong Taiyue, who urges him to join the people's commune: 'Go ahead, Hang me from the apricot tree!' (Mo2008,207). 'I'm going to live and live well. China's going to have to get used to this black spot!' (Mo2008,205). Ruan (2018,21) affirmed that the words spoken by the Lan Lian are straightforward and come from the mouth of a traditional and old-fashioned peasant. Neither the language of the narrator nor the characters are free from a strong vernacular character. Mo Yan embraces a sense of the countryside, focusing on its characters and using rural language to show the relationship between peasants and the land in the context of historical change, revealing the importance of the land to the peasants.

The night has the following functions, providing a narrative setting for the animal perspective and complementing the narrative process. Its more critical value lies in the fact that the night is rich in symbolic and metaphorical meaning. This provides Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism with the possibility of hallucination. This is the fourth major characteristic of Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism. Firstly, the night is one of the most written narrative scenes in the novel. A night not only witnesses the sorrows and joys of the animals and humans but also participates in the evolution of the story. It is a presence that

cannot be ignored. During the day, the animals try to move about according to their respective attributes, plowing the fields when they should, eating when they should, and sending their young master to school when they should, but at night, when the earth falls into a deep sleep, the human nature in the animals prevails; the pigs jump out of their pens to parade the village on moonlit nights, and the dogs hold a complete moon assembly. Lin claimed that the darkness provides cover for the animals' activities, allowing them to roam freely around the village, presenting the ridiculousness and absurdity of the human world more objectively through these animals' eyes and driving the story forward (Lin2020,60). The night becomes the scene for the wildlife force that resides within the animals and complements the daytime stories. The novel suggests the advance of reincarnation through the development of the animals' stories at night. As the reincarnation time progresses, the animal nature in the animals gradually grows, and the hatred harbored within the animals slowly disappears. By the time of the dog Xiao Si, the relationship between the dog and the human being has become looser, unlike the relationship between Ximen the Donkey, Ximen the Ox, and Ximen the Pig and the human being. This also hints at the sinful relationship that tends to peter out as the reincarnation fades away. Secondly, the moon in the night has a symbolic meaning. According to Lin's (2020,62) survey, the imagery of the moon appears many times, up to eighty times. Such a high density of depictions makes the vital moon imagery, implying a critical reflection on history and reality and the use of moonlight to connect the peasants to the land. On the night of Chairman Mao's death, Ximen the Pig fled into the wilderness after killing Xu Bao, an authority in the animal world. When Ximen the Pig returns to Ximen Tun five years later, the moon 'is not lowering its height, changing color to keep me company and chase me' but 'is high above me, looking a little distracted.' The Ximen compound was a scene of bustle, and the Lan Lian could say he could have planted in the sun in the moonlight. It symbolized a vacuum after the fall of authority, a state of disorder for the

nation, and the end of an era waiting for a new force to gather and rise (ibid,62). Finally, the night reveals humanity. At night, the animals become dancing spirits. During the day, they have to follow the rules of man and animals, but at night the earth regains its spirituality, and each animal is set free. The pack of dogs sang, danced, and frolicked happily at the moonlight assembly. Ximen the Bull ran, walked upright, and stood upside down in front of a group of children in red bellies, winning cheers. In contrast to the beauty of the animals, the man in the moonlight shows an ugly side. Ximen Jinlong makes love to Huang Huzhu and Huang Hezuo in the moonlit apricot tree, leading directly to the madness of Lan Jiefang (ibid,64). There is a stark contrast between human and animal behavior in the moonlight. But the night encompasses everything, is a metaphor for the simultaneous existence of beauty and ugliness and reveals the endlessness of human desire. On the whole, Mo Yan adopts a multi-perspective narrative that includes the animal perspective, draws from Chinese folk literature, folk customs, and folk language, pays close attention to vernacular society, and uses the nocturnal narrative writing technique, making his hallucinatory realism distinct from the Latin American magical realism represented by García Márquez, with its imprint and exclusivity.

## 5. Conclusion

To study the similarities and differences between Latin American magical realism and Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism, this dissertation analyses two books, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out*, to conclude that the hallucinatory realism represented by Mo Yan was not only influenced by Latin American magical realism represented by García Márquez but it was also influenced by other foreign literature. Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is not merely the flowering of magical realism in



China in the broad sense of the word. Although it learns from the former, it is realistic with Chinese characteristics, based on the fusion of local Chinese culture with other foreign cultures. Putting the label of magical realism on it would make people fail to see its originality. In contrast to the Latin American magical realism represented by García Márquez, Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is equally brilliant. Firstly, the paper explains the concepts of Surrealism, social realism, and fantasy literature surrounding Latin American magical realism. The paper finds that Surrealism has had an important influence on Latin American magical realism. Still, the greatest difference between Surrealism and Latin American magical realism is the attitude toward reality. Whereas Surrealism rejected real life, Latin American magical realism elevated reality to fantasy through the writer's imagination, reflecting it more deeply. Fantasy literature is primarily concerned with sorcery and magic on an unexplored planet in an unknown world, for its stories do not appear in the real world. By this definition, fantasy literature is based on fantasy; its content is divorced from reality, even escaping it. This is different from Latin American magical realism. Social realism and Latin American magical realism seem concerned with reality. Still, the former tends to be more concerned with working people and the poor daily and attacks the social structures that lead to this situation. It follows more of a more social and relatively less artistic approach. While drawing on its role of depicting and critiquing the realities of social reality, Latin American magical realism takes a magical approach and is more flexible. Secondly, the paper traces the origins of the concepts of magical realism and hallucinatory realism, suggesting that magical realism refers to a genre in which magical elements are naturally embedded in real life. It has been the national allegory of Third World countries, while in a narrower sense, it focuses on Latin American literature. Under the influence of Latin American magical realism, contemporary Chinese literature gave rise to the literature of the search for roots. After the root-seeking literature, Chinese writers like Mo Yan drew on the experience and began exploring their own

literary writing paths. Although hallucinatory realism is a long-standing concept, Mo Yan has given it Chinese characteristics and a self-soul. This paper argues that the reason for the emergence of hallucinatory realism is Mo Yan's heritage of Chinese indigenous culture, which also benefited from his study of foreign literature, including Latin American magical realism. Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is more about integrating expressions rich in national characteristics into dreams and fantasies, giving them a uniquely Chinese flavor. Again, the paper focuses on comparing the similarities and differences between the two novels. In terms of similarities, the paper argues that their narrative structures are characterized by a family-generational structure and a linear narrative structure, accompanied by a reversal of time and space. They are also embedded with mythological elements and folk tales from their respective lands. They also use surrealist techniques such as dreams and hallucinations. The narratives are set in a particular period when China and Latin America were in social transition in the 20th century. Macondo and the northeastern countryside of Gaomi are two characteristic literary geographical concepts. The characters portrayed in the novels are both homely and national. In addition, both present works with scenes of solitude and the hustle and bustle and are influenced by religion. Finally, in terms of differences, the writing of *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* is characterized by a multi-perspective narrative that includes the animal perspective, references to local culture, a focus on vernacular society, and a night narrative. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is characterized by its rich portrayal of women, its use of yellow imagery, its combination of imagination and local culture, and its narrative structure of pre-narrative, flashback, and repetition, as well as its blend of modernity and post-modernity. Through research and analysis, this paper argues that although Latin America and China are separated by many miles, both have been subjected to colonial invasions and have had various social problems for a long time, even up to the present. Perhaps, for this reason, realism had to be integrated into new ways of

reflecting, exposing, and criticizing reality. During the writing of this article, a debate arose on the Chinese social media Douyin about whether literature should be praised or criticized. It started when Mo Yan wrote an article praising Hokkaido, Japan, and many netizens thought he was betraying history because Japan had invaded China. One hundred and fifty years ago, a Chinese official called Lin Zexu<sup>25</sup> advocated that Chinese people should open their eyes to the world. And today, it seems that history has progressed and not progressed. This convinced me even more of the need for me to study this subject. The author of this article remember asking Professor Peter Arnds a question in class: Why are you Germans not afraid to expose your past? He told that this was the only way to provoke reflection. Comparing the two novels, the rewards are enormous. On the one hand, this article argues that literature has no borders and that literature is universal. The author of this article was often surprised by both authors' subtle writing styles and details, which stimulated me to want to read more of them in the future and related research. On the other hand, The author of this article believe that literary nature ultimately comes back to human nature; whether it is magical realism or hallucinatory realism, they are all ultimately a form of realism in nature. Moreover, the literary geography depicted in Mo Yan's hallucinatory realism is more characteristic of eastern China. In terms of the influence of Latin American magical realism on contemporary Chinese literature, The author of this article believe that another characteristic of esoteric literature can also be found in the future when he explores the works of Chen Zhongshi in western China and A Lai<sup>26</sup> in the Tibetan region. This would be yet another meaningful area.

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<sup>25</sup> Lin Zexu, 1785-1850, was a Chinese politician of the late Qing Dynasty. In 1839, when he went to Guangdong as minister of the imperial government to combat opium, he sent an inspector to force foreign opium traders to hand over their opium and destroy the confiscated opium in Humen. This incident is considered to be the trigger for the First Opium War. Although Lin Zexu fought against the Western invasion in the two provinces, he was open to Western culture, technology and trade, and advocated learning from its strengths and using them.

<sup>26</sup> A Lai, born in 1959 in Sichuan Province, is a contemporary Chinese writer who won the Fifth Mao Dun Literary Award in 2000 for his book *The Dust Settles*.

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