

A STUDY OF TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES AND PICARESQUE FEATURES IN ISABEL ALLENDE'S SELECTED WORKS

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ABSTRACT

The flawless ideals of truth and life aimed at reformation are contributed to humanity through literature, with its exceptional artistic manifestations and aesthetic tranquility. With its wealth of talented authors, Latin American literature holds a prominent position in the world of literature. Isabel Allende is one of them, and her works serve as models for her vast understanding of everything from mystic ideas to modern politics. Another achievement in her work is how well she uses magical realism. She uses both traditional and new techniques as a contemporary picaresque writer, while also examining the undercurrent of divinity. Her main characters could be described as contemporary picaroones who experience dramatic changes throughout space and time. The now under consideration four novels by Isabel Allende: **City of the Beasts, The House of the Spirits, Forest of the Pygmies, and Kingdom of the Golden Dragon**, are the focus of the current study project, which examines the underlying ideas expressed through the picaresque features. The research's conceptual structure is centered on the physical journey, personal growth, and magical realism, which leads to the study's conclusions. The research findings are listed about individual mobility and journey motive in general. The physical excursions of Allende's heroes come to a close with a turn inward, spurred by magical realism, which is a key element in the synthesis of the physical and metaphysical. Man's life's work is completed when he stands at the flimsy border between the two when he can view the physical world in a state of spiritual rapture.

Keywords: ecstasy, magical realism, picaresque, divinity, artistic expressions

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the best female authors from Latin America is Isabel Allende. Her work has gained praise from critics around the world thanks to translation. More than 30 different languages have her books translated. In the style of magical realism, [1] she blends realistic, political fiction, and harsh with the fantastical. Her notable grasp of the magical realism writing style has led some commentators to draw comparisons between her and another Latin American exponent, Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Her writing style is excellent. She adheres to the magical realism tradition by combining surrealistic techniques with both political and realistic writing. Her writing style is greatly influenced by history and culture, which also greatly affects how she handles her personal experiences. [2] Allende demonstrates through her deft utilization of this writing style that it may be seen as a way for local people to flee the oppression of the Latin American domestic and political framework, or at the very least to establish an independent and free internal space to take refuge.

[3] The majority of critical analyses of Allende's fiction, even those that focus on her literary devices, writing styles, or postcolonial concepts, have, nonetheless, mostly focused on female issues. In other words, they fall under the category of interdisciplinary methods, looking at how a female author has handled a certain literary device or cultural idea, particularly in the way she has portrayed female characters. [4] Given this situation, the goal of my study is to examine the writing styles, stylistic choices, and thematic frameworks and techniques utilized by postcolonial writer Isabel Allende to create a hybrid entire out of the parts of her works that appear to be politically and feminine historical. Therefore, this is a region that has not been extensively studied. My criticism of her books is on how she handles her themes. [5] She appears to reverse the colonial process Edward Said refers to as the habitation of the exotic through the writing style and thematic frameworks of her novels; nevertheless,

by doing so, she does not stop at the exuberance of the domestic. Her approach and writing style reflects a hybridized negotiable creation rather than a negating model. Her literary work comes to a head in a transcultural space where diverse opposing viewpoints engage in conversation.

Latin American postcolonial author Isabel Allende has found a distinctive literary method for addressing cultural difficulties. [6] She and her fictional characters move through the stage of inversion by taking already abandoned colonial tools, and by demonstrating their active agency, they enter the world of subversion. Their methods have more in common with transculturation than either deculturation or acculturation. The three works by Allende together form a mestizaje identity. They compromise the divergent viewpoints and, after completing the initial negotiation step, move on to the next negotiation stage.

2. TURNING INWARD

The will to conquer is ingrained in man from birth and only intensifies with age. Each person has their unique perspective on quest and conquest. From a physical standpoint, it mostly depends on ability and desire.[7] In the spiritual realm, the focus is on love, an impersonal bond. Conquest in the physical world, including growing stronger via trials of travel, frequently results in the development of conceit and egotism. It is undoubtedly a significant obstacle that distorts our perception of reality and mankind.

The main character of the trilogy, which includes Kingdom of the Golden Dragon, Forest of the Pygmies, and City of the Beasts, is fifteen-year-old Alexander Cold. The physical adventures he does with his grandma Kate serve as the foundational steps that change his perspective from ignorance to seasoned wisdom. [8] He is portrayed to have total control over fate towards the end of the trilogy, not just his own but also that of others. His inner journey is sparked by a variety of external events. His metamorphosis becomes more profound as the distance grows. He is initially devastated by the sudden turn of fate that separates him from his family, just as a baby screams out at the cutting of the umbilical cord. He initially resists being illuminated by reality. His eyes gently open as they grow acclimated to the light, allowing his heart to grow. As his name suggests, he truly serves as the protector of men in both his mission and his vision.

The three significant voyages depicted in the three volumes represent Alexander's inner growth. In the City of the Beasts, his attempt to scale treacherous mountains to reach El Dorado symbolizes his effort to discover the uncharted territory of his interior, which is the true location of God's abode. The excursion into the hidden chamber in the Kingdom of the Golden Dragon, which crosses all illusions on the route, declares his propensity to listen to his inner voice without any outward pretense.

His journey to the village of the ancestors in the Forest of the Pygmies, as the name implies, exposes his discovery of the true nature of inner reality—calmness, a wordless nothingness. Without Nadia's accompaniment, who stands in for nature, Alexander could not have been able to accomplish this. Nadia, as was previously said, is a representation of nature and a symbol of the interdependence of humans and the natural world. Her unique ability to communicate with birds and other animals, as well as her innocence, simplicity, inner spiritual core, and wisdom, energize Alexander's spirit and help him discover himself. She is the one who determines Alexander's totem animal and instructs him on the power of the animal spirit that follows him like a second soul. She imparts to him the main points of their spiritual discussion with Walimai, the shaman. It is clear from Walimai's note that neither Nadia belongs anywhere nor has any kind of unique identity.

"Walimai claims that I am not a foreigner or an Indian, a spirit, or a woman and that I do not belong anywhere." Jaguar questioned, "What are you then?" "I just am," the child said in response.

His internal self, from his sense of beauty down to the essence of truth, is altered by external forces. His idea of beauty alters after a few days in the Amazon as he observes three people swimming in a river: his elderly grandmother, the young doctor Torres, and Nadia with her innocent graces.[9] His outer eyes see how his body has changed over time, but his inner eye wonders whether they aren't all equally stunning in their unique ways. Nature's and life's seasons are not relevant to beauty. His journey inward begins with this broad perspective. He is profoundly affected by Kate's assertion that the senses are arbitrary in her description of the smell of the beast.

3. TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES

A journey is a significant and necessary part of life that fosters the personality features of the person taking it and ensures a developed, mature attitude toward the outside world. The positive impact of it can even alter national and personal histories.[10] The act of moving has always been a privilege, and any kind of mobility has implications for bringing out the hidden, untapped qualities of people, which can have a positive or negative impact depending on the situation and the people involved. It is acknowledged as one of the fundamental elements of understanding the supernatural and has been the topic of numerous literary genres. Even if it has many benefits, in a nutshell, it can be said that travel is the central component of any worthwhile object, whether animated or not.

Regardless of their birth and parentage, the journey motive might connect the main characters of the novels under consideration. An examination of them in the context of *Picaroon* exposes the author's largely traditional but modernist portrayal technique. Allende has given the protagonists a range of feelings and ideas that are appropriate for the setting they are in. The protagonists of the books being studied are Esteban Treuba in *The House of the Spirits* and Alexander Cold in the trilogy *Kingdom of the Golden Dragon*, *Forest of the Pygmies*, and *City of the Beasts*.

As witnesses to the tumultuous environment of their homes, the main characters all go through mental agony. As the family's sole source of income, Esteban begins his journey north. Additionally, he is no longer able to put up with his sister Ferula's criticizing actions and attitudes. Sometimes she can make him feel guilty for trying to indulge his minor whims and fancies. He feels that she becomes domineering by stifling his originality. He develops along with his principles, ultimately becoming an irritable guy who has no affection for anything. His words and movements reflect his unstable psyche. He has a negative outlook on life and the world because of his poor upbringing. Numerous episodes in his life show his struggle with his inner self and the outside world. The response is bodily in boys and mental in men. Alba wonderfully depicts his conflict with the environment in the *House of the Spirits* as follows:

His most noticeable characteristics were his moodiness and propensity to lose his temper, which he had since he was a little child and used to fling himself on the ground foaming at the mouth and so enraged that he could hardly breathe. He eventually developed the ability to control these outbursts, but he was left with a quick temper that only required a small amount of irritation to escalate into terrible attacks.

When time permits, Alexander's grandma Kate Cold badgers him. She does not openly express her admiration for her grandson despite it. She has unbreakable resolve. Alexander doesn't have a decreased sense of humor. It is demonstrated by his subsequent daring expeditions, and after the book *City of the Beasts*, he counsels his grandmother to spare the Beasts by omitting their name and focusing instead on the People of Mist, who are actually in need of help.

4. ADVENTUROUS JOURNEYS

With the picturesque influence of the chill of the snow-capped Himalayan Ranges and the scorching sun of the exhausting tropical forests, Allende's trilogy, *Kingdom of the Golden Dragon*, *Forest of the Pygmies*, and *City of the Beasts* depict the daring journeys of Alexander Cold and Nadia in the three different continents of Asia, Africa, and South America, respectively. In addition to the picaresque principles that also interact with the forces and cycles of life and nature, awareness of the natural world is hammered into the readers' heads in all of these 3rd-person tales. The author vividly depicts the protagonists' physical adventures, while the audience can identify with their emotional ones.

The author takes the audience to a paradoxical metropolis that is both modern in the scene and ancient in the metropolis of the Beasts, despite the reader's initial assumption that it refers to the contemporary picture of city life. From a little village on the California coast to the Eye of the World, El Dorado in the Amazon forest, the story's plot develops methodically. The following lines from Neil L. Whitehead's article "Amazonia or South America: the Forest of Marvels" show how Allende's description of the Amazonian geography parallels the structure of the European fantasy based on early trip narratives.

the enormous size and complexity of the riverscapes and land, the mysterious, if not resentful, existence of native peoples who jeopardize death and disintegration by toxins arrow on cannibal feasts, and the allure of amazing discoveries, whether they

be of indigenous female empires, hidden fluvial relationships, gold towns, or natural wonders.

5. MAGICAL REALISM

This term, which is related to literary realism but differs from it in that it presents the fusion of two opposing aspects—the magical and the real—to create an entirely novel viewpoint, is used to indicate all narrative deceptions that present magical events in a realistic tone of the narrative. Since the narrative mode aims to blur the lines between the opposing components, this novel approach is seen as one of its defining characteristics.

Although not all of his books do, Allende is one of the successful imitators whose writings have a distinct whiff of magical realism. Her first book, *The House of the Spirits*, popularised Gabriel Garcia Marquez's magical realism genre. It is the ideal magical realist book, representing both personal inspirations and a tragic national event. Allende uses the magical realist approach as a contemporary picaresque author to reflect many cultural viewpoints and personal inspirations.

All of the Allende books we're discussing are heavily influenced by magical realism. She used a technique that complemented the novel's themes and aided the plot's progression. She frequently uses magical realism in her debut book, *The House of the Spirits*. The use of magical realism identifies Clara and Alba's character development. Feminist elements add to magical realism's dimension. Additionally, it is used to emphasize empathy to improve comprehension. The trilogies extend this style by highlighting our dedication to and involvement in ecology. It goes on to describe the technology that is invisible to humans. Native indigenous customs and values are evenly dispersed throughout each of these works, outside of the main emphasis, to strengthen the illusion of magical realism.

The three books in the trilogy—*Kingdom of the Golden Dragon*, *Forest of the Pygmies*, and *City of the Beasts*—prove to be a good setting for the magical realism extravaganza. The stories travel on a parallel rail of magic and reality since they are based on native Indian traditions and supernatural aspects. The mental abilities are displayed in such a way that the results seem magical yet are genuine events. The novels' titles are incredibly appropriate and disclose the magically realistic locations, including the city where the Beasts live, the kingdom where the Golden Dragon is held, and the woodland where the Pygmies dwell. The Golden Dragon is a representation of myth and culture, while the City of the Beasts eloquently illustrates the principle of evolution using magical realism. The opposing energies of virtue and sorcery find a home in the Pygmies' woodland.

The totemic creatures play a vital and unavoidable role in the story's development. If the identification of the totemic animals' power, which serves as the foundation for the overflowing power to carry out desired and necessary actions, can be relied upon for an individual's inner development, then magical realism is to be given credit for the transformation of an individual into the tangible appearance of his or her totemic animal. Alexander Cold, the main character of the trilogy, and his partner Nadia are forced to adopt their totemic animal, the jaguar, on both the physical and energetic levels through many events in the book that center on the theme's development. While the jaguar's physical form is projected upon Alexander's absence, Nadia can project her totem animal in a way that fully alienates both physical forms with their unique characteristics.

"Isabel Allende's Three Magical Realist Children's Novels" as:

Magical invasions use totemic identification to establish personal authority; Alexander is identified as a Jaguar, and Nadia as an Eagle. This magical ability to morph, which is established in the first book, is triggered and plays a key role in saving indigenous individuals over the entire series.

In Allende's treatment, magical realism is crucial since its overt force emphasizes the protagonists' progress toward understanding themselves and contributing to society while eradicating fear. The meaning of this phrase is practically always put into practice at pivotal occasions that simultaneously serve as fertile ground for Allende's inventive experimentation and the protagonists' equiangular viewpoint. Allende uses this well-known tactic to not only introduce her aggressive framework for bringing together the opposites but also to sharpen the reader's perception of cultural norms around the world. Magical realism manipulates Allende's numerous exposes with its nature of transgression, integrating feminism and history into its fold. Environmental problems are also taken into account, inspiring a widespread desire to protect the ecological web. Due to its breadth, magical realism is

recognized as one of the most popular story genres that effectively uses a variety of cultural and social factors.

6. CONCLUSION

Every individual should know oneself and assist others in doing the same, according to Allende. The line of development suggested by Allende through the picaresque factors of her novels is as follows: persistence raises one's level of perception by absorbing cues from nature and experiences, which leads to increased resilience and consciousness even during a period of loss; and with a fearless mindset, understanding that the world is an arena for an amalgamation of opposites, one must maintain the precarious line between the spiritual and the material. One of Allende's intended themes is the synthesis of the opposites - belonging everywhere and belonging nowhere. She frequently emphasizes that she is not tied to any literary genre as a declaration of her position in the world in general and the world of literature in particular. If this broader perspective is restricted to her writings, it is astounding to see how they, too, exhibit Allende's skill at fusing contradictory elements by weaving the strands of fiction and reality, which, after obfuscating overlaps, form a vibrant cloak into which a lot of readers effortlessly fit and feel at ease. Allende's writing has the magical ability to enchant readers while also exposing them to the brilliant ideas that enliven the world, inspiring her audience to have a radical viewpoint for bringing about change in society.

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