



## Dream, poetry and Latin American reality in *Me alquilo para soñar*, by Gabriel García Márquez.

Sueño, poesía y realidad latinoamericana en *Me alquilo para soñar*, de Gabriel García Márquez.

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### ABSTRACT

The present article reviews the configuration of dream as the fantastic and poetry as another dimension of reality, in the short story *Me alquilo para soñar* by García Márquez. Three dimensions are highlighted in which three main characters are embodied: the life-dream, the life-poetry and the life-narrative, which share creation as a common foundation. The main objective is to demonstrate that the mechanism of creation is the same, the imaginative recreation, and to analyze the strategy of verisimilitude conjoining the perspective of the experience of the reader, in order to scrutinize the reality of Latin Americans who are presented to the reader in this short story.

**Keywords:** Recreation. Verisimilitude. Reader. Solitude. Europe.

### RESUMEN

Este artículo revisa la configuración del sueño como lo fantástico y la poesía como una más de las dimensiones de la realidad, en el cuento *Me alquilo para soñar* de García Márquez. Se destacan las dimensiones en que se mueven los tres personajes principales: la vida-sueño, la vida-poesía y la vida-narración, que comparten como base común la creación. El objetivo central es mostrar que el mecanismo de creación es el mismo, la recreación imaginativa, y



analizar la estrategia de verosimilitud en donde se añade el punto de vista de la experiencia por parte del lector, a fin de revisar la realidad de los latinoamericanos que se presenta al lector en este cuento.

**Palabras Clave:** Recreación. Verosimilitud. Lector. Soledad. Europa.

## Introduction

Gabriel García Márquez is one of the most widely read writers in Korea. In the 80s, "García Márquez's narrative that universalized the concept of magical realism significantly influenced Korean literature" (Lee, 2019, p. 180). Lee cites works by authors such as Seong-Dong Kim, Sok-Yong Hwang, and Chul-Woo Im to claim that "the Nobel Prize shook the sensibilities of writers forced to remain silent under the military authoritarianism of Doo-Hwan Chun" (Lee, 2019, p. 180). However, not only magical realism influenced but the way in which García Márquez combined reality with fiction.

In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, "The Solitude of Latin America" (2014), García Márquez expressed that the incredible reality formulated in Latin American literature was the faithful representation of the objective reality of the region (pp. 167-170). Brushwood (1985, pp. 9-14) states that García Márquez's writing incorporates the real life experienced by the author, the stories told to him and the imagination, creating the effect that the reader immerses himself in the text and at the same time contemplates reality. González Echevarría (1984, pp. 358-380), from another perspective, suggests that his literature has the ability to capture the history of Latin America through the combination of mythical components and archived history. Critics agree that, despite the richness of imagination and the appearance of the fantastic, the reality of Latin America is at the epicenter of García Márquez's works. The narration of the texts aims to create an effect by which readers focus on the truth instead of simply enjoying reading wonders.

In the prologue to *Doce cuentos peregrinos* (2002), the writer raises the question of the reality of Latin Americans. He confesses that he had a dream in which he attended his own funeral and that this dream seemed to him as "a starting point to write about the strange things that happen to Latin Americans in Europe" (García, 1992, p.14). He adds that the dream (the fantastic) is the most faithful



reflection of objective reality (the real). From the prologue, the same purpose of the writer to capture and represent the Latin American reality that is best expressed with the fantastic components is observed.

To date, there are not enough studies or analysis of *Doce cuentos peregrinos* from that point of view. Houvenaghel (1999, pp. 59-71) analyzes the strategy of verisimilitude present in the stories that makes credible the unimaginable stories that are told, synthesizing rhetorical techniques of the novel, such as distancing and everyday life. However, it does not highlight the mechanism by which the reader communicates with both the text and the theme to interpret the meaning of the story. On the other hand, studies that analyze the meaning of reality in stories do not consider stylistic components. Our objective, therefore, is to analyze the strategy of plausibility, adding the point of view of the experience on the part of the reader, in order to review the reality of Latin Americans that the author offers to the reader in these stories. We will focus on "Me alquilo para soñar", the fourth story in the collection, which incorporates the dream as the fantastic and poetry as one of the dimensions of reality. In this story, Neruda represents poetry: "The most beloved and recognized Latin American writer in the 70s in Korea [...], not only for his poetic world, but also for his revolutionary thought" (Lee, 2019, p. 180).

### **The plausible text and the participation of the reader**

García Márquez writes in the prologue of the collection that after revisiting some European cities that make up the spaces of the twelve stories, he realized that his memory of cities had no resemblance to today. This experience made him think that life and imagination are not distinguished in writing. Therefore, it could be said that the reality that García Márquez materializes in *Doce cuentos peregrinos* mixes the real and the imagined represented by the dream, in order to capture the real life that is expressed ironically better with the imagination.

The relationship between objective reality and imagination is at the epicenter of both the style and theme of the twelve stories that are based on probable facts from the point of view of the real and that, at the same time, relate the strange that objectively could not happen in the real world.



Especially, in "Me alquilo para soñar" the distinction between the real and the fantastic is obscured, and the focus shifts to the central theme: the true meaning of the life of Frau Frida, the protagonist who dreamed and interpreted dreams to survive in the Austrian city where Freud wrote *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Although the prophet-dreamer represents the fantastic, the reader stops wondering about the credibility of the fantasy that is presented within the text and goes on to contemplate how the protagonist lived and what would be the true meaning of living.

In addition to real life and imagination, the dimension of poetry is added. With the appearance of Pablo Neruda in the narrative, dream and poetry are compared. It is at this point that the text offers the reader one more space to reflect on the dreamlike and creative nature of life, when it juxtaposes life, dream and poetry, inviting the reader to contemplate that relationship. Consequently, readers experience that these three dimensions are intersvened and that the boundaries between them begin to be diluted. These three dimensions eventually dissolve forming an autonomous world within the text. Thus, a sense of weirdness is not caused despite the mixture of objective reality with the supposedly incredible components. The narrative reaches verisimilitude and establishes a world within the text that is not interfered with by the laws of the real world and that remains to the interpretation and contemplation of the reader.

### The strategies of plausibility

In light of the theories of Aristotle, Genette, and Matamoro, Houvenaghel defines literary verisimilitude as "a historical variable determined by the ideal image that the reader has forged of reality" (p. 60), upon which he determines the *strategies* that contribute to verisimilitude in *Doce cuentos peregrinos*. Among others, these two that we will take for our story: the taking of distance and the use of history as a document.

Distance taking is done in two ways. First, the distance between the narrator and the protagonist. The narrator of "Me alquilo para soñar" is a narrator-character and tells the story of Frau Frida's life in the first person. Like just another character, the narrator is a witness. He is also the sole



focus of the story, following Mieke Bal's term.<sup>1</sup> This type of narrator has a limited degree of knowledge. He tells from his experience and his own knowledge about women, which leaves the reader without fully understanding what kind of person Frau Frida was or what exactly happened during the time when the two had no contact, because the narrator-character can only tell what he saw or heard. Another particular characteristic of the narrator is that in one of the jumps to the past he almost becomes an external narrator, telling from the third person the past of the protagonist. During the second round to the past, the first person is not used, but all sentences are in the third person:

At the age of seven he dreamed [Frau Frida] that one of his brothers was swept away by a torrent. The mother, out of pure religious superstition, forbade the child what she liked most, which was to bathe in the ravine. But Frau Frida already had her own system of predictors.

What that dream means, he said, is not that he is going to drown, but that he should not eat sweets. (Garcia, 1992, pp. 95-96)

In that part of the story, the only protagonist is Frida and other characters are her family and the Austrian families. The narrator-character disappears and is left out of the narrative, behaving or transforming into an omniscient narrator, although he is only telling what he would have heard from the woman. This has to do with the notion of reality as a recreation. The narrator-character is remembering what he heard, but if we take into account the poetics of García Márquez made explicit in the prologue about how time obscures the boundaries between real memories and imagination, it could be said that the reality that is narrated in this part is a recreation of real life. The structure of the narrative thus converts objective reality into a reality composed of objectivity and subjectivity.

The second form of distancing is the structure of the times. The narrator-character is in Cuba and the chronological time of the text is the 70s. It begins in the present where the narrating character witnesses the death of Frau Frida whom he had met 34 years ago, and begins to remember the past

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<sup>1</sup> "Targeting is the relationship between 'vision', the agent who sees and what is seen. [...] The subject of the focus, the focuser, is the point from which the elements are contemplated." (Bal, 1990, p. 110). Italics are from the text.



shared with the mysterious woman. After the retrospection, at the end of the story, the narrative returns to the present. This temporal structure that begins and ends in the present with most of the central content in the past serves to emphasize the temporal distance that exists between the time of the narrator-character's memories and the present. As the events of the past are told by a character within the text, the narrative gains a kind of indulgence to justify failures or absurdity as a result of the unfaithful transmission of memory. The temporal distance thus deepens the probability of distortion of the facts. As García Márquez says in the prologue:

[...] I wanted to check the fidelity of my memories almost twenty years later, and I under embarked on a quick reconnaissance journey to Barcelona, Geneva, Rome and Paris. [...] All of them, like all of Europe today, were rarefied by an astonishing inversion: the real memories seemed to me to be ghosts of memory, while the false memories were so convincing that they had supplanted reality. (1992, p. 18).

The reader, who well understands the possibility of temporal illusion, does not doubt the plausibility of the text. What the narrator tells might be false, but in the world of text it is not seen as such for the reader. However, the fantastic and the unspeadicated about the protagonist and her life still exists. In this structure nothing is known about Frau Frida but through what the narrator-character tells. This makes the interpretation of the dreams, life and death of the protagonist remain as a partial and mysterious truth. If the narrator-character told only his memories objectively, he would lose plausibility. This problem is solved by the second strategy: history as a document. The distance gained gives the narrator-character a free space to execute his own comments and his examination on the life of Frau Frida, as Houvenaghel states:

Indeed, history is amplified with logical and critical procedures. It breaks the evidence of a unique narrative line by inserting comments and doubts about the plausibility of the facts, clarifications about the writing process and other precisions. Thanks to these comments, the reader comes to consider the story as a document that



was studied and criticized and whose authenticity has already been questioned. (1999, p. 69).

The narrator-character not only tells the story, but also adds his thoughts and judgments about what Frida and Neruda would have thought and done. For example, the narrator-character expresses his doubts about the power of the protagonist: "he had always thought that his dreams were nothing more than a ruse to live" (p. 99). This act of the narrator turns what he narrates into a document and the reader can trust that the story being told was contemplated and verified.

The temporal distance allows the narrative to obtain verisimilitude despite its lack of fidelity, such plausibility in this tale, therefore, differs from the 'true' objective reality. It is rather an effect or a condition that the author achieves as a sign that the subjective or the unreliable can also be plausible thanks to the structure of distant time and history as a document.

### **The reader's experience**

The contexts allow the reader of the story, instead of just immersing himself in the text, to conceive the feeling of having a more direct communication with what is written. Thus, the reader goes through the experience of interpreting and imagining what the text means. As García Márquez proposes, the deep reading of the story takes the reader on a journey through his thoughts on the meaning of living, through the relationship between the dream, poetry and the reality of Latin Americans in Europe represented by the Colombian dreamer. This active and autonomous experience of the reader is an extratextual space.

The component that allows the interaction between the closed world of the text and the real world of the reader requires considering the relationships between subjects inside and outside the text. According to Seymour Chatman, the narrative and communication structure is composed as the following scheme:



Hypotheses	Narrative Text	Hypotheses
Author →	[ Implicit Author - Narrator - Narrator <sup>2</sup> - Implicit Reader] →	Reader

The entities in square brackets compose the narrative text and a closed and independent world within the text which, in its self-determination, alludes to the fact that neither the author nor the reader can intervene in the existence of the textual world, as Chatman states (1978, pp. 146-151). This does not mean that communication between text and the real world is impossible. Kim, Seung-Hwan (2017, p. 36) underlines the existence of an invisible line that divides both worlds. Ironically, according to the critic, the same line is what allows communication between the two. The more plausible and realistic the reality of the text world, the deeper the reader enters the text.

In "Me alquilo para soñar," the plausible text enlists the reader to leave the real world virtually during reading and feel as if they are in the world of text. The effect of this process of crossing the invisible line by the reader is the rather passive participation of the reading in the interpretation of the text, so that the reader accompanies the implicit reader and the narrator-character (the supposed interlocutor of the narrator's dialogue) and interprets the stories and comments he tells about Frau Frida.

However, this trip to the world of text does not manage to create a type of active and autonomous experience for the reader nor can it explain how the Latin American reality forms the thematic core of the story. The reader needs a space distant from the text where he can exercise his own faculties of judgment and imagination. Bertolt Brecht uses the technique of distancing "to demystify what is in front of him, questioning the way of being and being of things at a given moment [in order to] provide the viewer with sufficient closeness, in terms of reasoning and pleasure" (Rodríguez, 2018, p. 75). For this reason, the reader needs to keep his distance to realize that the story is in another world. This amplification of the reader's experience is conditioned to the space

<sup>2</sup> The translation of the narratee technicality, used by Seymour Chatman, is "narrated": "narrated. From the French narrataire, built from narrateur. (fr. narrataire, ing. narratee, it. narratario". (Garrido, 2015).





outside the text. The sense of distance, or alienation, allows "the free play of faculties",<sup>3</sup> following the Kantian term that Kim, Seung-Hwan (2017, pp. 42-49) uses to explain such an experience of reading and, from there, aesthetic and meaningful interpretation.

Now, if someone who reads "Me alquilo para soñar" reaches the state of 'contemplation' from his own space, what is the reason for that expansion? What component of the speech makes the reader aware of distance and contemplate critically? The narrator-character, again, contributes to this process. The same strategy that conditions the plausibility opens a space outside the text for the reader to intervene in its interpretation. The comments that the narrator makes about the events in the story increase the reliability of the text, because the reader feels that the story was carefully criticized and considered by the narrator-character.

On the other hand, whether the reader agrees with or opposes the narrator's comments is a different matter. Although the text itself is plausible, the testimony remains as an unverified opinion that the reader has the option to judge. The narrator-character who creates the distance between Frau Frida's life and the reader cannot be completely reliable and, as a result, the reader evaluates the subjectivity of the story to confirm or oppose. In this case, the narrator's comments cause alienation from the reader.

Just because the text is plausible does not mean that Frau Frida's power is impossible and false in history. On the contrary, the fantastic power of the protagonist gains the opportunity to submit to the judgment of the reader without being considered impossible. There is no single answer to this judgment, the important thing is that everything is likely in the plausible text and that the fantastic does not belong to the realm of the impossible. The narrator's comments, then, are also pending verification. When the narrator comments that he did not believe in the power of Frau Frida, a reader who doubts the argument may believe that the supernatural predictions were true. This is a starting

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<sup>3</sup> On Kant's "Free Play of Faculties", it is stated: "In the Critique of Judgment we do not find an explicit definition of play, but the term, used on many occasions, indicates mostly a free concordance of the different, which, as free, does not obey any need, but is originally produced by the subjective faculties." (Gabás, 1990, p. 43).



point for interpretation beyond the world of text. From there, the reader can begin to look at the life of the protagonist from a new perspective.

Pablo Neruda is another character within the text who warns the reader about the world outside the text. He is a character who symbolizes the poet in the real world and his poetry is expressed in his opinions and dialogues in the story:

We invited her [Frau Frida] to have coffee at our table, and I induced her to talk about her dreams to surprise the poet. He did not listen to her, because he stated from the beginning that he did not believe in dream divinations.

"Only poetry is clairvoyant," he said. (Garcia, 1992, p. 99)

As the narrator-character, Neruda rejects Frida's power to predict the future by interpreting her dreams. The character's plot is consistent with that of the poet in reality. This strengthens the power and authority of the commentary. However, his claim that "only poetry" is capable of producing predictions of life is challenged by his own dream he has during the siesta, where he appears with Frau Frida: "I dreamed that she was dreaming of me, he [Neruda] said" (p. 100). The reader distances himself from Neruda's comment and wonders if the poet is right, and if not, what would be the meaning that this unexpected union brings. As a result, the reader again maintains distance from the text and goes through a reflective and interpretive process, mobilizing his reason and understanding of the world.

### **The multidimensional character of reality**

Although the reader is responsible for his reading and is free to interpret the literary text, it cannot be denied that the author leads to the understanding of certain ideas in the text. The implicit author creates a balance between the author's intent and the reader's freedom, as Booth points out:

As he [author] writes, he creates not simply an ideal, impersonal "man in general" but an implied version of "himself" [...], it is clear that the picture the reader gets of this presence is



one of the author's most important effects. However impersonal he may try to be, his reader will inevitably construct a picture of the official scribe who writes in this manner.

[As [the author] writes, it does not simply create an ideal and impersonal "man in general", but an implicit version of "himself" [...], it is clear that the image that the reader obtains from this presence, is one of the most important effects. As impersonal as you try to be, your reader will inevitably construct an image of the official scribe who writes this way. (1983, pp. 70-71).

García Márquez's intention to be found in the story *Me alquilo para soñar* would be explicit in the prologue of the collection. The central theme of the twelve texts of the volume, as he affirms, is linked to "the strange things that happen to Latin Americans in Europe" (García, 1992, p. 14), and the key to that strangeness would be the reality that resembles the dream and poetry.

### Life as a dreamlike and poetic creation

Each of the three characters in the story symbolizes a different view of the world. Pablo Neruda represents poetry, as in the real world. Frida is the character who embodies the dream. Skilled in dream interpretation, it is his only interest and life purpose. His character is linked to sleep. The narrator-character brings a vision embedded in real life. He does not believe in the premonitory power of sleep or in Frida's interpretation of dreams; for this character, rational rules prevail. Thus, the relationships and dynamics between the three characters not only form the central axis of the discourse, but also tend a triangle between the meanings around life.

The dimensions of sleep and poetry are arranged in a certain kind of confrontation. Neruda's claim that poetry is the only clairvoyant thing is an act that depreciates Frida's activity. Neruda believes in the strong distinction between poetry and dream and enunciates it in an authoritarian way. According to the poet, the essence of poetry is clairvoyance, while sleep does not possess that virtue. Neruda's rejection, however, is soon denied when the poet and Frida dream of each other:

I dreamed of that woman who dreams, said [Neruda].

Matilde wanted her to tell her about the dream.



I dreamed that she was dreaming of me, he said.

[...]

I dreamed of the poet," [Frau Frida] told us.

Amazed, I asked him to tell me about the dream.

I dreamed that he was dreaming of me, she said. (Garcia, 1992, pp. 100-101)

Poetry interacts with sleep, finally. At the climax of the tale, it is suggested that poetry and sleep might be closely related. The dreamlike encounter of Frida and Neruda would symbolize the conciliation between these elements originally confronted in the story, while highlighting the irony of the similarity between poetry and dream.

What is the common shared by sleep and poetry? Poetry creates a new meaning in ordinary things. Poetry liberates reality and grants it the arbitrariness that creates something new. Poetic clairvoyance is not limited to a passive and diagnostic role, but advances to fulfill transformative acts: to give a new life to its materials. Shelley (1998, pp. 944-956), English poet of the eighteenth century, claimed that poetry controls the creative faculty of the human thanks to the power of language, and that it reveals the hidden beauty of the world by reproducing everything it represents. This is just what Frida does with her dreams. He interprets the dream and assigns it an interpretation, creating a meaning about life from the dream. The predictions of the protagonist configure a set that adds objectivity and arbitrariness, truth and imagination. In this sense, the act of dreaming would be poetry par excellence.<sup>4</sup> The reconciliation between sleep and poetry would be a metaphor for the power of creation that sustains the two characters, the poet and the dreamer. Frida creates realities with her dreams and Neruda with her poetry. The two dreaming together is a statement that, deep down, dream and poetry share the creative essence.

The title *Me alquilo para soñar* is more likely to be the statement that Frida herself says in the story: "—Me alquilo para soñar" (García, 1992, p. 95). But in that context it is not fully understood

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<sup>4</sup> Bernardo Ortiz de Montellano (1990, p. 128), of the group "Contemporaries", says: "and once again I confirm that in dreams as in poetry – related psychic states, images of an essential reality – events to come can be anticipated".



what it means. Throughout the stories told by the narrator, it is revealed that it has double meaning. One is that the act of dreaming was the trade and source of income that allowed the protagonist to survive in Vienna, replacing the payment of the rent of her home with her prediction services. Another, although dreaming is his trade all his life revolves around the dream and even his life purpose is to dream. As Rodríguez Vergara (1994, pp. 345-359) points out, the credibility of Frida's profession increases with her predictions turned into reality and her craft of dreaming becomes a stable activity. His power gives him a certain authority and he manages to "seize the fortune of his ineffable patrons of Vienna" (García, 1992, p. 99). However, despite having earned a fortune, the woman continues to dream. The dream is not mere profession but your life *per se*. At the end of the story this statement of ours gains even more clarity:

And he continued [the Portuguese ambassador] in the same tone, with surprising details [about Frau Frida's life], but without a clue that would allow me a final conclusion. Specifically, I finally told him: what was he doing? Nothing, he said, with a certain disenchantment. Dreamed. (p. 101).

The details that the ambassador tells are the stories of the life of the protagonist, so that the protagonist not only dreamed to live: Frau Frida lived to dream. Now, it would be possible to establish the equation dream = make poetry = live. But from the point of view of the narrator-character, who questions the power of sleep and at the same time distances himself from the poet, the equation is unacceptable. The narrator comments that Frida's conviction "was so real" that he did as she ordered him to do:

I've come just to tell you that last night I had a dream with you, he said. You must leave immediately and not return to Vienna for the next five years.

His conviction was so real, that that same night he embarked me on the last train to Rome. I, for one, was so suggestive that I have since considered myself a survivor of a disaster I never knew. I haven't been back to Vienna yet. (Garcia, 1992, p. 97)



Although the narrator-character does not accept the dream as a component of real life, he admits to dreamlike creation. Frida's life creates a reality, it does not tell whether or not the narrator-character trusts the correlation between the event and his prediction. What matters is that it actualizes that reality created by it.

The narrator-character is also a writer, as revealed in the final conversation with the Portuguese ambassador during a diplomatic reception: "You would not have resisted the temptation to write a story about her [Frida]." (García, 1992, p. 101). Probably, *Me alquilo para soñar* would be the story that the narrator-writer writes about Frau Frida after that conversation. So why would the narrator-character have written this tale? The prologue of the collection, again, offers a hint. García Márquez's purpose was to write short stories "based on journalistic facts but redeemed from their mortal condition by the cunning of poetry" (p. 14). Rodríguez Vergara (1994, pp. 348-349) insists that the *Doce cuentos peregrinos* constitute a metaphor for the act of writing. For the writing of the story, the narrator-character uses his memories as a basis, instead of the dream. He interprets them and creates a new version of memories, which would not quite match what was or really happened. Imaginative creation would be the mechanism common to the three creative characters, by which the multidimensional reality of the story is created.

### The Latin American reality

Throughout the narrated times, the space varies: Havana, Vienna, Quindío, Barcelona and again Havana. The Cuban capital is where the narrator is located in the present of the text. It is also where Frau Frida dies. Quindío, the dreamer's hometown, only appears in the *flashback* to the farthest past. The protagonist left the Colombian village "between the two wars" (García, 1992, p. 95) when she was little and lived almost all her life in Europe until she died in an accident back to Latin American land. Although most of the stories told by the narrator-character take place in European cities, Latin America is always present both for the characters and for the contrast with Europe that highlights the brutal condition for Latin Americans burdened by loneliness and nostalgia.



The narrator-character met Frida in a tavern of Latin American students who shared "the narrowness" (p. 97). By that time, Vienna had become "a paradise for the black market and global espionage" (p. 95). He describes the city as a "world so distant and distinct" (p. 95). Frau Frida lived in Porto after retiring, in a house from which "the whole ocean to the Americas could be seen" (p. 99). This condition affects the way of life of the protagonist. Frida discovers her ability to forecast the future in Colombia. There, the dream was an everyday thing and its power, easily accepted and believed:

[...] and since he learned to speak he established in the house the good habit of counting dreams on an empty stomach, which is the time when his premonitory virtues are preserved.  
[...] The mother, already convinced of the daughter's divinatory virtues, enforced the warning with a heavy hand. (pp. 95-96)

This act of dreaming and forecasting becomes a trade because of the harsh reality she faces in Europe: "Frau Frida had not thought that this faculty could be a trade, until life grabbed her by the neck in the cruel winters of Vienna." (p. 96). Before, in his land he lived to dream. but in Europe he had to dream to live. If we place that life change in the context of the polarity of Europe/civilization/rationalism and Latin America/barbarism/intuition, the creative power of the protagonist "becomes the only possible means of survival for the other in a different environment," according to Sanabria Sing (2001, p. 59). The dreamlike and the imaginative are attributed to Latin American identity, while the contrast between Europe and Latin Americans gives them an inevitable condition of loneliness and nostalgia. The difference does not necessarily cause loneliness, but it is the contrast that conditions it. In the context where both identities are confronted, the Latin American one is lost and the European one is imposed by force. Thus, the loss of identity lies at the core of the loneliness and nostalgia of Latin Americans.

Among the three dimensions of life that have been identified, everyone can choose their own way of living. However, the selection is preconditioned for Frida. She had to dream to live, instead of living to dream. This would be the lonely reality that happens to Latin Americans in a world distant from their origin. In this sense, loneliness originates both from physical distance and from



psychological and cultural isolation. Their own way of life is denied by the rationalism of Europeans. As a result, the dream, instead of creating a new life, should be used to stay in life.

The tale, however, is not pessimistic. Through the reconciliation between dream and poetry, the creative value of the dream is vindicated and life as a dream creation is given validity. Although the Latin American reality is condemned to loneliness and eternal nostalgia in the foreign context, it becomes a valid form of life. While poetry is clairvoyant, dream life is also worthy of appropriating reality by itself. The act of the narrator-character of writing the story about Frida's life then functions as a testimony that there has been a solitary and at the same time creative life. In this way, the Latin American reality does not end in a predetermined condition, but opens a possibility of sublimating into a legitimate life.

## Conclusion

The lives represented by the dimensions in which the three characters of *Me alquilo para soñar* move, life as a dream, the life of poetry and the life it narrates, share as a common basis creation. The mechanism of creation is the same: imaginative recreation. Therefore, one of the important senses of the story is, as García Márquez clarifies in the prologue, that the dream inspires creation. Dreamlike creation, poetics and storytelling begin with the selection of objective materials and end with the imagination that frees them from their 'mortal' condition, giving them a new imperishable life.

Frau Frida's life, however, is denied and decays in the European environment where she must survive. Their way of life loses the creative essence and is exploited to sustain life. Thus, the dream becomes a mere object of life devoid of the power of creation. This is the lonely reality to which Latin Americans would be conditioned in Europe. Even if life was given legitimacy as a dream creation, in Europe you cannot exercise that power or live as you live in the land of its origin. This isolation (or degradation) would be the reality that García Márquez *reflects* in the *Doce cuentos peregrinos*.

The structure of the plausible text that invites the reader to contemplate the reality of Latin Americans is found throughout the stories of the book. In "La santa", the second, the corpse of Margarito Duarte's daughter unearthed after eleven years is intact smelling of roses, but the reader





does not question the veracity of the narrated fact, but looks at the life of the father who "had already been fighting in life for twenty-two years" (García, 1992, p. 77) so that they recognized his daughter as a saint. The story invites the reader to the experience of submersion and contemplation, in which the belief and way of life denied in the European context are found. This interpretation could also be applied in "Tramontana", "El verano feliz de la Señora Forbes" and "La luz es como el agua", among others. *Doce cuentos peregrinos* (2002) share the critical consciousness of García Márquez present in his other works where, as in *Cien años de soledad*, he *denounces* the loneliness of Latin America in the face of the European worldview.

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