

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

In the era of the nineteenth century countless advances were yielded in various fields. Many influential inventions emerged in the realms of science and technology. In terms of technology, the networks of transportation and communication were established, such as the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, the invention of telephone in 1876 and the production of automobile by the 1890s. Along with the advancement in the transportation and communication fields, the scientific point of view also flourished. One of the greatest cornerstones in this era new way of thinking was Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Through the thoughts of Darwin, the previous understanding towards human life had somehow been evaluated. Thus, the appreciation upon reason was eminent rather than mere religious idea. The realists attempted to seek the truth which was associated with discernible consequences and verifiable by experience (Holman and Harmon 392). Based on this sort of thinking, the realism movement was establishing its underlying concepts. Though, since realism can be discussed in a rather broader topic, the term therefore will be confined to its influence over literature.

According to Margaret Drabble in the book entitled *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, the definition of realism is proposed through the words of Sir P. Harvey. Harvey suggests that realism is a loosely used term

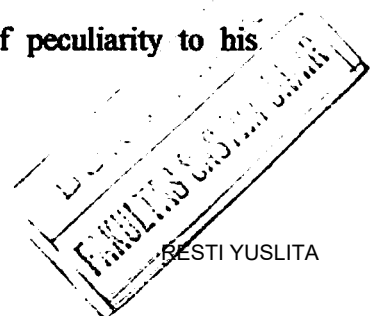
meaning truth to the observed facts of life (especially when they are gloomy) (808). The term realism is also defined as the movement that arose in the nineteenth century, at least partially in reaction against romanticism, which was centered in the novel and dominant in France, England, America from roughly mid-century to the closing decade, when it was replaced by naturalism (Holman and Harmon 412). Additionally, realism is stressed on “sincerity” as opposed to the “liberty” proclaimed by Romantics; it insists on accurate documentation, sociological insight, an accumulation of the details of material fact, an avoidance of poetic diction, idealization, exaggeration, melodrama, etc. Moreover, realism subjects are to be taken from everyday life, preferably from lower-class life (Drabble 808).

During its development, realism has been transformed into some new terms, one of them is to mention “magic realism”. The term magic realism is believed to be coined by Franz Roh to describe tendencies in the work of certain German artists of the *neue sachlichkeit* (new objectivity). This work is characterized by clear, cool, static, thinly painted, sharp-focus images, frequently portraying the imaginary, the improbable, or the fantastic in a realistic or rational manner. Magic realist novels and stories are characterized by strong narrative drive, in which the recognizably realistic mingles with the unexpected and the inexplicable, and in which elements of dream, fairy-story, or mythology combine with the everyday, often in mosaic or kaleidoscopic pattern of refraction and recurrence (603). Afterwards, the term magic realism is used to describe the works of Latin American authors such as Alejo Carpentier, Borges and Garcia

Márquez. Regarding the works of Latin American authors, a work by García Márquez entitled *Love in the Time of Cholera* will be further spotlighted in this thesis.

García Márquez or born as Gabriel José García Márquez is a Colombian novelist and journalist. His writings have been broadly recognized as the amazing combination between reality and fantasy and many of them have been translated into several languages. Thus, many literary critics define García Márquez's works as "magic realism". García Márquez was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982 due to his dedication in exposing the lives and conflicts in his continent through the works. García Márquez's most phenomenal work is believed to be *One Hundred Years of Solitude* which criticizes the existence of human beings. The fondness of evaluating the reality that overwhelms the human life is somehow evident in his work entitled *Love in the Time of Cholera*. Through the work, García Márquez is likely to reconstruct the comprehension about love. Within this work, the term love is evaluated through the appearance of its characters. Sometimes love is highly honoured whereas in other occasions it is ridiculed. What makes the lesson about love becomes even interesting is its representation through some symbolic meanings.

Among many symbols that occur in the story, the ones attributed to Florentino Ariza will be further analysed in this thesis. As a matter of fact, Florentino is not such a glaring character. Florentino is described as a rather shy lad whose appearance often makes people neglect his existence. Nevertheless, Florentino has the features which thereof draw a sense of peculiarity to his



neighborhood. Concerning his physical appearance, Florentino loves to wear kind of dark-coloured clothes. Not only this, Florentino is also fond of occupying the black suit inherited from his dead father, Don Pius V Loayza. Thus, Florentino performs a sort of dress manner which has made him older than his true age. Yet, the chronic constipation which is never completely convalescent, may add another peculiar feature over Florentino. So strange as it may be since Florentino endures the chronic constipation in the middle of cholera epidemic. Moreover, the disease remains in the same level despite Florentino's effort of treating it with enemas.

The interest concerning some symbols attributed to Florentino is even magnified by the character's real life. Richard Gill in *Mastering English Literature* believes that when an author writes about the appearance of a character, he or she is usually telling or showing the reader something about the inner world of the character's personality (100). Here, Florentino's bitter memories with Don Pius are likely to contribute an important role within Florentino's subsequent life. The lack of affection from the father seems to allow Florentino into a vast definition about love fulfilment. Therefore, Florentino demonstrates his 622 cases of liaisons in the middle of his vow of eternal fidelity and everlasting love to Fermina as something excusable. Even when Florentino finally reunites with Fermina, he proclaims about his virginity. Perhaps it will sound hypocritical, though, Florentino cannot be entirely blamed that everyone has his own reason of doing things, so has Florentino. The case will be rather difficult if Florentino does not state his reason for doing such thing explicitly in the story. Thus, some curiosities may arouse if Florentino's underlying reason has something to do with

the previous symbols. Therefore, it may be possible that Florentino's manner of dress and his health condition are the reflection of his love fulfilment. To set off from these sort of curiosities, the analysis of this thesis will be considerably determined to figure out the roles of some symbols attributed to Florentino in terms of his psychological problems.

### **B. Statements of the Problem**

There are some points that are about to be disclosed within the analysis as followed:

1. What are the symbols attributed to Florentino which may express his psychological problems?
2. Why do the symbols become significant within Florentino's life?
3. How do the symbols represent Florentino's love fulfilment?

### **C. Objective of the Study**

Regarding the statements of the problem, the aims of the thesis analysis will be:

1. To figure out the symbols attributed to Florentino which may express his psychological problems
2. To spotlight the significance of the symbols within Florentino's life
3. To scrutinize the way the symbols represent Florentino's love fulfilment

#### **D. Significance of the Study**

The significance of making this sort of study may be categorized into two points, i.e. intrinsically and extrinsically. Concerning the intrinsic point, the study is expected to contribute valuable insight towards both character and symbol analyses. Whereas for the extrinsic point, some values in psychological studies are likely to be worthwhile particularly in having a broader point of view towards human life. From the study, the importance of having a strong determination in life is constantly encouraged. Despite the fact that the form of the work is a mere fiction, yet the ideas it transforms shall not be ignored. In general scope, this thesis is also dedicated to any other studies regarding García Márquez and his works. The opportunity to recognize the development of Latin American literature may be reckoned as another significance suggested by the study.

#### **E. Scope and Limitation**

In order to gain a comprehensive analysis, a scope and limitation shall be applied. Hence, there are some limitations in contriving the thesis analysis. The first thing to be noticed is the work that is going to be analysed. Here, the intended work will be a novel by García Márquez entitled *Love in the Time of Cholera* and the object of analysis will be focused on the character of Florentino Ariza. Specifically, the analysis will be focused on some symbols that are attributed to Florentino.

The intrinsic elements such as characterization, setting and plot seem to play an important role in figuring out as much information as possible regarding the appearance of some symbols attributed to Florentino.

## **F. Theoretical Background**

Some theories and approaches will support the analysis of this thesis. As an addition to this, related studies will be attached to provide useful information concerning the analysis. The theories that are about to be applied in this thesis analysis are Jonathan Culler's "semiotics of reading" and George Kelly's "personal construct". The first theory, as the name indicates, is concerned with the discussion about semiotics whereas the latter may explain certain idea regarding human motivation. Nevertheless, in the application, Culler's "semiotics of reading" will be considerably utilized as an approach in order to draw a decent interpretation towards some symbols attributed to Florentino.

Talking about Jonathan Culler's semiotics of reading seems to be hardly separated from the notion developed in structuralism era. Though, Culler is likely to make a new construction about interpreting certain work of literature. According Culler, the interpretation of text shall be relied on the concepts of "sense" and "making sense" rather than the concept of "meaning" (Newton 175). Culler furthermore is reluctant to use the term "meaning" that he perceives it as a kind of property to of a text. If "meaning" is translated as a mere property, it is quite worrying that a reader may distinguish the intrinsic meaning from the interpretation he gets.

The “personal construct” theory by George Kelly has something to do with the development of human motivation. Kelly believes that individuals are responsible (i.e. able to respond) for their own future, thus nature does not dictate an individual’s life (Weiner 225). The application of Kelly’s theory is formulated in terms of a fundamental postulate and several corollaries. It is apparent that Kelly’s theory is strongly knitted with the field of psychology, thus, the psychological approach is an appropriate means for this matter.

Since the analysis of this thesis will be emphasized on the representation of some symbols in a character, the studies about symbols may be ideal to be added as the related studies. Though, the specific discussion shall be done otherwise symbols may be vastly interpreted. Hence, this thesis will be supplied by related studies about the influence of one’s dress manner and health condition towards personality. The sort of studies are taken due to the symbols which are going to be revealed regarding Florentino’s dress manner, his chronic disease as well as the treatment with enemas.

### **G. Method of the Study**

In order to gain a valid data, an analysis requires reliable and accurate information. Based on this assumption, there are some sources that will establish the foundation of this thesis analysis. The library research is deemed to be a reliable method since many of its sources are accomplished through elaborate studies, such as compilations of literary theories or criticisms and scientific researches. The information concerning the recent data about García Márquez and



his works are supplied from some sites in the Internet as well as other related written materials.

In terms of the method of making this analysis, the descriptive analysis will be applied in the effort of figuring out the statements of the problems. Using certain character as the focus of analysis has made a character analysis as something inevitable in this thesis. Thus, any important information, which may enrich the information towards the character, will be added. In the application, both descriptive and character analyses are somehow complementary from one to another.

#### **H. Definition of Key Terms**

- Symbol** : a word, phrase, or other expression having a complex of associated meanings; in this sense, as symbol is viewed as having values different from those of whatever is being symbolized (Shaw 367).
- Love** : an act of full attention and giving that accepts and attaches to someone as he or she is, thereby enhancing the potential of what that person can become (Harre 359).
- Cholera** : an infectious disease caused by a bacterium which attacks especially the stomach and bowels causing severe diarrhea, sickness, etc. and often leads to death (Longman 170).

**Constipation** : a condition of the bowels in which the emptying of waste matter from the bowels is infrequent and difficult (McKechnie 391).

**Enema** : a liquid injected into the *rectum* either as a purgative or a medicine (McKechnie 601).

# **CHAPTER II**

## **THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND RELATED STUDIES**