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Roslan Jomel's Experimental Short Stories and the Influences of Marquez and Murakami

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ABSTRACT

In the 1970s, experimental Malay short stories underwent a profound change. Different factors such as writers' exposure to other part of the world literature reading materials, including such schools of thought and international authors' works, result in changes of writing techniques. Recent decade has witnessed the continued growth of experimental short stories and the emergence of numerous new authors with innovative styles and techniques. Roslan Jomel is one of the few experimental short story writers with a penchant for experimenting with new techniques and styles, to the point where critics have praised his originality and freshness. Considering this innovation, the purpose of this article is to describe the styles and techniques utilised by Roslan Jomel in his short stories. Through interviews with the writer and textual analysis of his short stories, it is evident that the short story writer demonstrates a proclivity for new narrative styles and techniques that contradict the conventions of previous experimental short story writing. His exposure to the works of international literary figures such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Haruki Murakami impacted his new techniques and styles. The influences of both authors in Roslan Jomel's short stories is seen from the perspective of experimental fiction by Julie Armstrong

Keywords: Experimental; Gabriel Garcia Marquez; Haruki Murakami; Malay Short Stories; Roslan Jomel

Introduction

Various causes have contributed to the creation of radical experimental streams in Malay literature. Political and economic volatility in the 1970s contributed to the inclination of local authors to discover new ways to express their uneasiness and concern about the country's condition at the time (Siti Aisah Murad, 2010). In addition, these authors had extensive exposure to foreign literary resources, including sociological and psychological theories and sciences, as well as access to translated literary works. This exposure allows authors to traverse the limits of thinking and region to extract innovation and aesthetic effects from the literature of other nations, which are subsequently assimilated and reworked in accordance with the perspective of Malay literature.

Existentialism, absurdism, surrealism, abstract, symbolism and magical realism are a few of the labels that have been used to experimental literature (Othman Puteh & Ramli Isin, 2003). In this second decade of the new millennium, the emergence of experimental Malay short stories produced by several authors, bold enough to experiment with new styles and approaches. Roslan Jomel is one of the authors of the current decade whose short stories have a propensity toward experimentalism. This tendency began with the 2010 publication of his debut collection of short stories, *Namaku Epal Kuning* (My Name is Yellow Apple) (2010), then followed by others such as *Selamat Datang ke Malaywood* (Welcome to Malaywood) (2012), *Insects in the Head* (2013), *Di dalam Mulutnya Ada Kota* (In His Mouth There is a City) (2014) and *Roden yang Cenderung Terjun dari Atas Bangunan* (Roden that Tend to Jump from the Top of Buildings) (2017).

Roslan Jomel's penchant to use experimental forms in his collection of short stories has been criticised by several local writers, including Shahnon Ahmad (2010), SM Zakir (2013), Wan Nor Azriq (2014), Zainal Rashid Ahmad (2020) and others. Based on a review of previous research, the average critic highlighted the variations that Roslan Jomel's short stories. The panels assessment for the Malaysian Premier Literary Prize

(Hadiah Sastera Perdana Malaysia, HSPM) in 2014, stated: "*Selamat Datang ke Malaywood* has the audacity to disregard the principles of logic and deviate from the conventional form and structure of fiction. The concerns discussed in these short stories are presented in an unconventional manner, as the author dares to express his emotions using a variety of interesting and creative narrative approaches." (HSPM Report, 2014).

During an interview with Roslan Jomel (Nur Farhana Rusli, 2021), he described the distinction between his short stories models as follows:

> "Every contemporary author seeks to discover fresh viewpoints in their creative works. Due to the subjective nature of art, rules associated with the principles of logic, cause, and effect do not interest me. Perspectives of human beings vary considerably. We live in a creative universe. There is no control system in place. Innovations and modifications in creative writing should not be made haphazardly. You must have a solid basis in creative writing so that a trial that goes against traditional streams or breaks the standards of standard literature is not viewed as amateurish and superficial."

As a writer who likes to experiment with different forms or structures, Roslan Jomel believes that becoming a writer requires more than simply desire and aptitude. Writers who lack supplementary information and the ambition to investigate innovation may become obsolete. Consequently, he shows his passion for the investigation of new facets of man, such as his peculiarity, philosophy, sociocultural background, personality, the complexity of mental stream, and nature, as well as the greatest of all creatures, Allah SWT. (A. Wahab Ali, 2009; Mohd Fadhli Shah Khaidzir, Ruzy Suliza Hashim & Noraini Md. Yusof, 2021). This persistent willingness to push creative boundaries is one of his accomplishments.

Roslan Jomel, who has been inspired to write since he was in elementary school, noted that reading is a practice he continues to luxuriate in since, in his opinion, it is hard to gain inspiration and ideas if the mind is not unfettered. From elementary school to the present, he has liked reading translated works from many nations and using them as a point of reference and comparison. During the interview, he also said, "If you want to be an informed writer, regardless of whether you like it or not, broaden the breadth of your reading to include things that stimulate thought." He reads translated works by authors like Jorge Luis Borges, Anthony N. Fragola, Paul Auster, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Haruki Murakami, and Etgar Keret (Nur Farhana Rusli, 2021). These authors' works provide new insights into various writing approaches and the unique universes inhabited by each author. Roslan Jomel leaves his comfort zone in the Malay world to gain new perspectives on familiar things.

Literature Review

Muhammad Haji Salleh (2018) in the *Proceedings of the International Conference on Language, Literature, and Education (ICLLE 2018)* entitled "Comparing Literature and the World". Among the viewpoints he presented include his thoughts on the linguistic aspects in Roslan Jomel's works. The paper compared the uniqueness, similarities and differences found in literary works from various countries in terms of form, motifs, plot, language, genre and function of each published work. The countries under comparison in the study were the Malay Archipelago, specifically Malaysia and Indonesia, in comparison with Europe. He found that poetry as a genre often places significant importance on metaphor as a symbol of sophistication. Traditional poetry frequently drew metaphors from nature such as forests, hills and animals. At present, metaphors incorporated more urban, economic and cyber-space elements. This demonstrates how writers experiment with language while adapting to the changing times. In the Western countries, there are prolific writers such as Finnegan's Wake, James Joyce and TS Elliot who promote experimental consciousness streams. Similarly, readers from

the Malay Archipelago are often impacted by the sophisticated language in works by Chairil Anwar, Baha Zain and Roslan Jomel. This indicates that writers from the Malay Archipelago have transcended language and regional boundaries to bring the beauty of literature from other countries and offered new perspectives. Based on Muhammad Haji Salleh's research, it can be concluded that, from one perspective, this study has discussed new discoveries brought by the author Roslan Jomel. Muhammad Haji Salleh's focus leans towards the linguistic sophistication in Roslan Jomel's poetry.

In Hani Salwah Yaakup's (2013) article "Membaca Satira dalam Humor Karya Penulis Muda Malaysia" (Reading Satire in the Humor of Young Malaysian Writers), she explores the relationship between humor style and satire in Roslan Jomel's short stories. Jomel employs humor, drawing from the perspectives of S. Othman Kelantan and Panuti Sujiman, to convey his messages effectively. One of the methods he uses is cynicism, exemplified in his short story "Namaku Epal Kuning". The story addresses capitalism, contemporary social issues, and society, all while maintaining a casual and whimsical writing style that frequently elicits laughter from readers.

Teo Kok Seong (2013) wrote "Kumpulan Cerpen Selamat Datang ke Malaywood: Satu Ulasan Keintelektualan Persuratan" (*Selamat Datang ke Malaywood*: A Literary Intellectual Review). The research question addressed in this study is whether the collection of short stories *Selamat Datang ke Malaywood* (SDKM) meets the criteria of linguistic and literary intellectualism. Teo suggests that some of the short stories in SDKM struggle to effectively convey literary messages and are not easily comprehensible to the general readership.

Although, from a linguistic perspective, most of the short story titles adhere to the language guidelines set by the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP) Roslan Jomel's work is noted for being challenging to follow logically. It leans more towards fantasy and is rich in the author's imagination. Literary intellectualism underscores the principle of logic in narrative

structure. Several titles in SDKM are somewhat complex to understand, leading to ambiguity in Roslan Jomel's plots.

Teo Kok Seong suggests that the SDKM short story collection should be evaluated as an abstract work that showcases elements of absurdism, existentialism, and magical realism. This recommendation demonstrates that Roslan Jomel's work does not fit into conventional writing styles. Therefore, this writing discusses the element of non-logic using the concept of experimentation.

Conceptual Framework and Methodology

Armstrong (2014) proposed the concept of experimental in her book, *Experimental Fiction: An Introduction for Readers and Writers.* According to Armstrong, the uncertainty presented by 21st-century authors is also attributable to technical advancements. Currently, technical advancements are viewed as fostering the development of a digital culture and virtual reality. The trend toward virtual reality may be observed on social media platforms such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter and others. Despite the fact that this platform is used to exchange experiences, artwork, and knowledge, it is "vague" in comparison to the actual world. Individuals and civilizations get confused about what is true and what is false within the confines of reality, culture, art, and knowledge, among others.

The impact of digital culture and virtual reality on literature in this new era is evident, as experimental writing incorporates ambiguous meanings designed to lead the reader astray in terms of reality. This is achieved through the authors' manipulation of truth and reality. When the idea of experimentation is linked to fictional works such as short stories, Armstrong stated that "experimental fiction is more like real life, in that real life is tangled, non-linear and complex; it refuses to be packaged into simplistic plots". In relation to this, this paper will apply the experimental framework with close reference to several characteristics of what an experimental work should embody, as listed by Julie Armstrong. The characteristics are as follows:

- Real-world instability
- Disregard for logical laws
- Presenting a different worldview
- Freedom of expression
- Engaging in the play of signs and symbols that construct endless cycles of meaning
- Text invasion by the author
- Experimentation with typography
- Expanding new ways of seeing
- Applying various discourses
- Blending and altering genres
- Persuading readers to consider presented ideas and concepts
- Use of metaphors
- Involving readers at a philosophical and intellectual level
- Rejecting story closure

The experimental concepts proposed by Julie Armstrong in the analysis of this collection of short stories will demonstrate whether Roslan Jomel adheres to the characteristics of experimentation, as observed in the works of experimental writers from the 1970s, through his creations, or if he brings about new discoveries, as stated by most critics and scholars. These new discoveries imply a form or writing structure that attempts to defy or counter the narrative and writing conventions of previous experimental movements.

Analysis and Discussion

This article examines the relation between the influences of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Haruki Murakami, on Roslan Jomel's short stories. This research also employs Armstrong's experimental notion to investigate Roslan Jomel's development of a new sort of experimentation in his short stories, which incorporates a twist, a technique he discerns from their works.

Influence of Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Gabriel Garcia Marquez was born in Aracataca, Colombia, as a journalist and author. Born in 1927, he attended the National University of Colombia in Bogota before beginning his career as a journalist in Colombia, Rome, Paris, Barcelona, Caracas, and New York. Among his works include *Eyes of a Blue Dog* (1947), *Leaf Storm* (1955), *No One Writes to the Colonel* (1958), *In Evil Hour* (1962), *Big Mama's Funeral* (1962), *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967), *Innocent Erendira and Other Stories* (1972), *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (1975), *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (1981), *Love in the Time of Cholera* (1985), *The General in His Labyrinth* (1989), *Strange Pilgrims* (1992), *Of Love and Other Demons* (1994), and *Memories of My Melancholy Whores* (2005). He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982 and died in 2014.

Marquez was renowned as the father of magical realism in Latin America for his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. "Incognito", a short story written by Roslan Jomel shows the influence of metaphors in its imagery of setting and mood, a technique that Marquez often employed in his writings. Marquez inspired Roslan Jomel's own declaration of the non-linearity of plots:

> "I was lost and had no idea how to engage with the plot. The pieces appeared identical. Whether via the beginning, conclusion, or middle section, since when I began writing the beginning section, a comparable moment in One Hundred Years of Solitude was a million times more amazing. Therefore, the notion of how to utilise it to make the tale appear to be a fabrication came from Me?"
>
> (Roslan Jomel, 2012: 129)

In another interview, Roslan Jomel elaborates on the effect of Marquez in his work:

> "If you asked me about Gabriel Garcia Marquez, I would tell you that I was attracted by his ability to deceive readers with his journalistic narrative

> abilities. He is able to describe little details with care and incorporate mystical aspects so that the reader is more captivated by the description. Since then, my favourite novel by Gabriel Garcia Marquez has been One Hundred Years of Solitude. Also, Gabriel Garcia Marquez's narrative ability in short stories is comparable to that in his novels."

The relation between Roslan Jomel's short story "Incognito" and the novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* seems to lie in the deceptive metaphorical setting of the nation of Tanjung Ketam or Tanjung Sepit Ketam. Roslan's use of the term "incognito" suggests a hidden identity, paralleling the theme of concealment in the story. Mirroring the use of metaphors in place and mood between Marquez and Roslan, "Incognito" sheds light on themes present in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Roslan's work, while exploring issues reflective of the modern era, addresses problems within the Malay community, such as betrayal, theft, illegal activities, and societal tendencies. Muhammad Haji Salleh previously recognized Jomel for his complex language, emphasizing the significance of metaphor in sophisticated allusions to contemporary life.

In "Incognito", the narrative unfolds with the discovery of a foreign man in Tanjung Ketam, ultimately leading to his assumption of various high positions due to the belief that he is divine and descends from heaven. Roslan's depiction of Tanjung Ketam serves to highlight the issue of hegemony. According to SM Zakir (2013), from a Marxist perspective, false consciousness can establish hegemony based on mystical beliefs, akin to a market force. This short story condemns the Malaysian community's tendency to excessively praise things.

Comparing *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and "Incognito", it becomes clear that Roslan Jomel aimed to modernize the story by incorporating magical realism and metaphors, addressing contemporary issues within the Malay community such as trust betrayal, theft, illegal racing, piracy, and illegal abortions.

Prior research by Muhammad Haji Salleh identified Roslan Jomel as a writer known for the complexity of his language. According to Muhammad Haji Salleh (2018), the most crucial aspect of writing lies in the use of metaphors, as they symbolize beauty through sophisticated allusions to various aspects of contemporary life, including city life, economics, and the digital world."

In addition to the short story "Incognito", "Selamat Datang ke Malaywood" also demonstrates the influence of Marquez. Roslan Jomel compared the Malaywood country setting to his magical realism sketch of the Macondo neighbourhood in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* to demonstrate the relation between Marquez's influence and this short story.

In conclusion, analogies are shown between the short story "Incognito" and Armstrong's experimental idea of 21st-century reflection. Although Roslan Jomel's entrance of the text is based on Marquez's work *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, he was evaluated for attempting to innovate by modernising the story's theme to reflect contemporary issues. This innovation demonstrates its own originality.

Influence of Haruki Murakami

Haruki Murakami was born in Kyoto, Japan, and is a novelist and short-story writer. He was born in 1949 and married at the age of 23. Before his first novel was released, he and his wife oversaw the Peter Cat jazz club in Tokyo. (Mawar Safei & Nur Farhana Rusli, 2021). He is now based in Tokyo and has produced many books including *Norwegian Wood* (1987), *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1994), *Kafka on the Shore* (2002), *1Q84* (2009), *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running* (2007), *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage* (2013) (2015), *The Strange Library* (1983), and *Wind/Pinball* (2015) are works have been translated into over 50 languages. In his career as a writer, he garnered several honours, including the Jerusalem Prize and the Hans Christian Andersen Literary Award.

According to Roslan Jomel, he was introduced to Murakami through an essay written on the Japanese writer. He claimed that Murakami is an outstanding Japanese author whose work he really admires. As a result, he began to study the works of Murakami, including *Men Without Women* (2014), *Blind Willow Sleeping Woman* (2006), *The Elephant Vanishes* (1993), and *After the Quake* (2000). Roslan Jomel acknowledges that Murakami's works has taught him a great deal about how to create and deliver tales in an organic manner.

In addition to quoting Murakami's in the collection of short stories, *Di dalam Mulutnya Ada Kota*, Roslan Jomel said that this short story is influenced by the Japanese author as mentioned below:

> "The "Kasut" (Shoes) is from the Di dalam Mulutnya Ada Kota. The Malaysian Premier Literary Prize has recognised this short work. I simply need to discover a specific topic to use in the text and ensure that it does not excessively reflect the style features of the world's most renowned author (Haruki Murakami) so that I may continue to exist as the author. There is only one Franz Kafka and one Jorge Luis Borges in the universe. Those that are enthused by their writing will unquestionably need to add new material to showcase their creative efforts."

In an interview with John Wray (2004), Murakami remarked that he prefers writing in a surrealistic manner to a realistic one. According to Strecher (2014), "this was my way of exploring characters in Murakami's novels that simply could not be real." According to Strecher, Murakami's characters and personas consist of human beings with no name or background, odd creatures or half-animals, and talking robots. Apparently, the new addition made by Roslan Jomel is by giving the character and human character an extraordinary nature, and this is seen to be different from the character and characterization of Haruki Murakami's creation, as stated by Strecher.

Murakami's influence may also be noticed in his surrealistic writing style, and Roslan Jomel seems to recount the life story of Murakami and his wife through his portayals of the Husband and Wife. Through the husband's work as an independent musician and author, this image becomes obvious. In this short story, the husband-and-wife love jazz music in their leisure time, and their lack of children is not an issue on a national scale. Towards the close of the story, Murakami reappears when Roslan Jomel describes the success of the Husband, who becomes a globally known author whose works have been published and translated into almost 40 languages. This context is reminiscent to Murakami's own realities. Murakami, who is renowned for his explorations of human psyche, is also present in Roslan Jomel's short story "Kasut". Roslan Jomel originally emphasised the psychological weight of contemporary humans by describing the tension that arises between a husband and wife following the birth of twins in a pair of shoes. This psychological angle is suggestive of a person who views himself as flawed or aberrant in comparison to others. When modern individuals or groups believe they have these defects, they begin to feel repulsive about themselves, which can lead to psychological issues.

This analysis also uncovered a novel of human psychology by Roslan Jomel in his short story "Perkahwinan di Hujung Runcing Bumbung Zink" (Marriage at the Edge of the Zinc Roof) according to its findings. This investigation of the psychological viewpoint, which is his favourite topic, is reminiscent of Murakami's writing style. In an interview on Murakami, Roslan Jomel reportedly stated:

> "He (Haruki Murakami) is able to write stories about marginalised individuals in such a way that the reader is drawn into their inner lives. The most of Murakami's stories are essentially straightforward. Infrequently treated in works of literature, he explores the psychological issues common people face. However, he is not a literary

> trailblazer in these areas. This is the benefit of a work that is written in-depth, and it does not rely just on skills."

The echoes of the psychological load suffered by the husband character in "Perkahwinan di Hujung Runcing Bumbung Zink" are resonance with the character Toru Okada from Murakami's novel *The Wind-Up-Bird Chronicle* (2003). According to the Japanese author interviewed by John Wray in *The Paris Review,* agreed that *The Wind-Up-Bird Chronicle* almost demands to be read as variations on a theme: a man has been abandoned by or otherwise lost the object of his desire, and is drawn by his inability to forget her into a parallel world that seems to offer the possibility of regaining what he has lost, a possibility that life as he (and the reader) know it can never offer.

According to Roslan Jomel, this variant on a recurring topic in the works of Murakami is quite unusual. In addition, the Japanese author have the ability to blend his stories so that they are no longer homogeneous. This may be seen as an example in *The Wind-Up-Bird Chronicle*, which features stories of investigations, the disappearance of cats, and mystery ladies making phone calls at night as if they were living organically on the text of Murakami's work. This advantage can indirectly sustain the story's momentum, characters, and storyline right up until the story's conclusion.

In addition to its non-uniform tales, *The Wind Up-Bird Chronicle* is replete with human psychological circumstances and symbols. The human psychological state is reflected in Toru Okada's character. Toru is the spouse of the character Komiko in this novel. Toru, who is unemployed and unsure of what he wants to accomplish with his life, is one day tasked by his wife with locating their lost cat. The loss of the cat, which is viewed as a symbol of Toru and his wife's love, imposes a psychological strain on the main character when his wife is reported missing and suspected to be with another man. Toru desires to locate his wife in the dream realm to determine why she has been abandoned and what is wrong with her. At this level

of subconscious, Toru begins his search for his wife in a hotel lobby shrouded by darkness.

Toru's quest at a hotel filled with gloomy, lightless rooms appears to be the signal and message that Murakami conveys about darkness. This is evident in Matthew Strecher's (2002) work as a result of his discussion with Murakami. Here are the interview responses:

> "The darkness, for Haruki Murakami, is always the place where the unconscious mind reigns supreme, where the conscious visitor feels unnerved, even unwelcome, and wrestles with an alter ego, an inner self struggling with the outer consciousness for dominance over the whole identity."

It turns out that Murakami uses darkness as a technique to creep into the minds of people who are battling with psychological issues as a result of the stress they endure in the modern day. He believes that dark space is a place to seek enlightenment, as he remarked in the same interview in which he described his attraction to *Yin* and *Yang*. It is a common motif involving two realms, notably light and darkness.

The symbol of darkness that is a battleground between body and mind in Murakami's work is present in Roslan Jomel's work, and it can be examined when the Malay author uses darkness to highlight the inner struggle of the husband, who faces life stress as a result of his wife's rebellion and desire for luxury. This is evident via the husband's internal monologue in the text of "Perkahwinan di Hujung Runcing Bumbung Zink":

> "He appeared to be at ease taking refuge in another darkness within his own home. He leaned back tiredly and wanted to drift inside himself at that moment, but the rays of a pair of eyes struggled."
>
> …

> "The man was back on the steps of the kitchen and stared deep into the night's concentration. His mind had drifted away and he had thought nonsense. He did not want his fate to be like that. No, no! The man screamed inwardly on the kitchen steps of the house."
>
> (Roslan Jomel, 2010: 132–146)

Psychological scenarios may be observed in Murakami's works such as the finding of the out-of-school girl May Kasahara. Lieutenant Mamiya is a former military officer who is still influenced by the Japanese conquest of Manchukuo. He meets Cretan Kano, a prostitute who was previously raped, and Cinnamon Akasaka, a child who has not spoken since he was six years old. These stories are seen as a representation of Japan's modern social difficulties.

Roslan Jomel depicts additional psychological scenarios in his short stories, which are seen as a reflection of the conflict between modernity and rural and urban communal life. The tales of the characters reveal a number of issues, such as the dissolution of marital connections owing to disregard of obligations and the social life of urban youth.

In conclusion, it is observed that the works of Roslan Jomel and Murakami have the experimental features of Julie Armstrong in their use of signs and symbols to create an infinite cycle of meaning. Murakami's motivation and thoughts regarding studying the psychological conditions of the marginalised in writing indirectly allowed Roslan Jomel to explore a new perspective in Malay literature that is about psychology which reflects contemporary Malaysian culture.

Further scrutiny shows Roslan Jomel's "Lelaki di dalam Tin" (Man in a Tin) exhibits his foray into psychological conflicts, namely bringing the character of alienation owing to emotional struggle with an urban context to life. The expression of the characters and personalities studied has relevance to the reflection of contemporary society. According to Julie Armstrong (2014), a 21st-century author who is fond of bringing alienated

characters who wish to flee the city to a fantasy and fiction world filled with sketches of the author's imagination. Julie Armstrong's assessment of the behaviour of this solitary individual is validated by Roslan Jomel's admission in the following interview:

> "Perhaps I am more interested in tales of human isolation… The intricacy of the human spirit fascinates me the most. Especially to individuals who believe they lack the same advantages as others. Every day, they shoulder a substantial load. This is what puts people in a bind in life. Crises and dilemmas occupy their thoughts, which are concealed from the surrounding community. Things that occur in such a soul are my absolute favourites to transform into art."

Roslan Jomel said in his interview:

> "I simply use the literary skills of other authors to portray my own story. Coincidentally, Murakami's rather odd and isolated approach is more conducive to the development of the stories I wish to compose."

Murakami is a well-known solitary author. Therefore, the picture of loneliness is depicted in the pattern of character and portrayal of his job as a person who is either isolated from his family or from his community. Examples of stories of this character's alienation can be seen through his works titled *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World, Dance Dance Dance, The Wind Up-Birds Chronicle* and *Sputnik Sweetheart* (John Wray, 2004).

Conclusion

Roslan Jomel's experimental short stories were influenced by Marquez, and Murakami. The influence is most apparent in the images of persons and settings that clash with the newest style's magical realism. Texts such as *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* and *After the Quake* significantly influence the magical realism of Roslan Jomel's works through their odd, mystical, and enigmatic characters and settings. The influence of Marquez on the

backdrop sketch and mood is attributed to Roslan Jomel's use of a comparative language of metaphors and symbols in his short stories. This Colombian author's impact can be seen in the manner in which the Malay author modernises the story's theme, which represents the societal challenges he experiences in his current society.

Particularly, the influence of Murakami is considered as indirectly allowing Roslan Jomel to study the perspective of human psychology, which he subsequently incorporates into Malay literature. Moreover, the subject of character alienation is a source of inspiration in the works of Murakami and a reflection of modern society. Most of Roslan Jomel's short stories illustrate how Murakami's work is reflected in the often-lonely struggle between individuals in urban settings.

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