THE PROBLEM OF LONELINESS IN THE NOVELS OF GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
1999

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **"The Problem of Loneliness in the Novels of Gabriel Garcia Marquez"**, submitted to the University of Calicut for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is a record of bona fide research carried out by the candidate, Mr. Wilson Rockey, under my supervision. No part of this thesis has been submitted earlier for the award of any degree, diploma, title or recognition.

Calicut
February 24, 1999.

Snehaprabha
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DECLARATION

I, Wilson Rockey, hereby declare that this thesis, **"The Problem of Loneliness in the Novels of Gabriel Garcia Marquez"**, is a bona fide record of research work done by me, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship, or other similar title or recognition.

9/3/99

Wilson Rockey

PREFACE

This is a study of the evolution of loneliness as a theme in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's novels. INTRODUCTION briefly discusses the general concerns of the writer. CHAPTER I analyses the theme of loneliness in the early writings. CHAPTER II is a study of loneliness in his most important novel, One Hundred Years of Solitude. CHAPTER III deals with dictatorship and loneliness. CHAPTER IV examines how the longing for love results in death, decay and loneliness. CONCLUSION evaluates Garcia Marquez's achievements as a writer of fiction.

But for the help and encouragement of Dr.M.Snehaprabha, my supervising teacher, I would not have completed this task. She went through the written drafts and helped me to mould the final shape of this thesis.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. N. Ramachandran Nair, Professor, Department of English, the University of Calicut, for his constant reassurance and friendly advice.

I am grateful to Dr. C.P. Sivadasan, Head, Institute of English & Foreign Languages, Kannur University Centre, Palayad, Tellicherry, for the interest he showed in my work.

I am deeply indebted to Prof. Terrence Jacob, Department of English, St. Joseph's College, Devagiri, Calicut-8 for his timely help and scholarly advice.

I am grateful to Ms. Sudha, Librarian , Kannur University Centre, Palayad, Tellicherry, for providing material on Gabriel Garcia Marquez. I am thankful to all the members of the Staff of Kannur University Centre, Palayad, Tellicherry for their help in different ways. I particularly thank Messrs. Kumaran, Sasidharan and Balan.

Mr. A.J. Tomson (Librarian, St. Joseph's College, Devagiri, Calicut-8), Mr. P.J. Joy (Madras), Ms.C.K. Mini (Hyderabad) and Mr. Liju Zacharias (Devagiri) helped me to collect secondary material on Garcia Marquez. I express my sincere thanks to them.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to my wife, Shini, and to Elizabeth, my daughter. I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Sri. V.O. Rockey and Smt. Aleykutty.

The MLA guidelines have been generally followed in this thesis. All references are incorporated in the body of the thesis itself. In such contexts, the name of the author, the year of publication and the page number are given in brackets. For quotations from Garcia Marquez's works, the abbreviated title and the page number are incorporated. Cited works are given in alphabetical order at the end of each chapter. Select bibliography also is furnished.

I thank Messrs. Thanveer, Babby and Azeez of 'Print O Fast', M.A. Bazar, Calicut-1 for promptly executing the final version of this thesis.

Wilson Rockey

ABBREVIATED TITLES USED

HYS	=	One Hundred Years of Solitude
AP	=	The Autumn of the Patriarch
LS	=	Leaf Storm
NWC	=	No One Writes to the Colonel
IEH	=	In Evil Hour
IES	=	Innocent Erendira and Other Stories
CDF	=	Chronicle of a Death Foretold
CIC	=	Clandestine in Chile
LTC	=	Love in the Time of Cholera
SP	=	Strange Pilgrims
OLD	=	Of Love and Other Demons
NK	=	News of a Kidnapping

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Gabriel Garcia Marquez is one of the most significant writers of this century. A Colombian writing in Spanish, he has blended myth and history in his works to emerge as one of the most notable authors of the "boom" in Latin American literature. The emergence of a group of eminent Latin American writers is a very important event in the literary history of the present century. Prominent among them are Ernesto Sabato, Julio Cortazar, Adolfo Bioy Cesares, Gabriela Mistral and Jorge Luis Borges of Argentina; Juan Carlos Onetti of Uruguay; Miguel Angel Austrias of Guatemala: Juan Rulfo, Augustine Yanez, Carlos Fuentes and Octavio Paz of Mexico; Alejo Carpentier of Cuba; Mario Vargas Llosa of Peru, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez of Colombia.

The 1960s was a period of great achievement in Latin American literature and it is popularly known as the "boom". It witnessed the publication of the great works of Garcia Marquez, Carlos Fuentes and Mario Vargas Llosa. The "boom" immediately gained international attention and it led to recognition of Latin American letters as a powerful force in modern literature.

The writers of the "boom" reacted against the traditional realism that dominated the Latin American literary scene. They employed universal themes and avant-garde techniques. Though their works were firmly rooted in the soil of Latin America, they became the spokesmen for humanity at large. As a result, they rose above the restricted barriers of regional writers to the status of universal writers. Quite deservedly, many of them were awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the Nobel Laureate of 1982, has an enviable place among Latin American writers.

Garcia Marquez's most popular novel, One Hundred Years of Solitude (HYS) (1967), has revolutionized the entire literary history of Latin America. It depicts the story of generations doomed to loneliness. His popular and critical success is based on his social realism and his narrative technique popularly known as 'magical realism'.

Garcia Marquez blurs the distinction between fantasy and reality and enriches his novels with surreal events and fantastic imagery. HYS has attained the stature of the epic of Latin America. It is the story of helpless human beings who confront nothingness

at the centre of their being. The novel depicts the history of Macondo, a small town, from its founding to its destruction. All the inhabitants of this enchanted town are prisoners of loneliness. For instance, Melquiades, a gipsy, returns to Macondo after his death, when he finds the loneliness of death unbearable.

Loneliness leads to incest in HYS. But indulgence in unrestrained sexual pleasure leads only to solitude and destruction. Melquiades had predicted the hundred years' story of the Jose Arcadio Buendia family. When Aureliano, the last living member of the family, finishes reading Melquiades's manuscripts, Macondo and its people are destroyed in a violent hurricane. The name of the town is wiped out even from the memory of mankind.

The history of Latin America in the twentieth century is the history of successive dictators. It so happens that when one dictator falls, a more terrible one takes his place. People never escape from the endless cycle of tyranny and suppression and hence fall into despair and solitude.

In some of his novels, Garcia Marquez tells the story of desperate human beings subjected to the

tyranny of rulers like Mariano Ospino Perez and Rojas Pinilla. In the period between 1948 and 1962 more than 2,00,000 people were killed in Colombia. The period witnessed the blood-chilling cruelties of the dictators who ruled the country. Superstitions intensified the feeling of frustration. The only solace for the suppressed was to dwell in a world of dreams.

Like Albert Camus, Garcia Marquez believes that "every ethic conceived in solitude implies the exercise of power" (Camus, 1968, 32). Man is extremely lonely at the apex of power. "The acquisition of power means the end of most human relationships" (Bhalla, 1987, 73) and it paves the way for the fall into the abyss of loneliness. In novels like The Autumn of the Patriarch (AP) (1975), Garcia Marquez explores the nature of dictatorship. A dictator does not trust anyone and retreats into his own self. His cruelties show his inability to communicate with people. His loneliness and his lust for power are directly proportional.

Garcia Marquez's own comment is interesting. He tells Apuleyo Mendoza in The Fragrance of Guava: "Power is a substitute for love. The inability to love is what drives (those who pursue and achieve power) to

seek consolation in power" (Mendoza, 1983, 88). Garcia Marquesian characters fulfil his belief that solitude and corruption of power originate from lovelessness. He stresses the role of power in man's essential loneliness when he tells Mendoza: "The nature of power is an underlying theme running through all my books. Absolute power is the essence of man's nobility and degradation" (Mendoza, 88). In his novels the lust for power is the outcome of the inability to love.

Being a writer with enlightened notions about the craft of the novel, Garcia Marquez believes that writing a novel "is a process of unravelling the world" (Sahni, 1983, 35). A good novel, according to him, is a poetic transcript of reality. That is why he coalesces fantasy and reality into a single entity and deftly combines myth and history. The present and the past are dove-tailed into a single unit. Thus, the strange realities of Latin America come alive in the novels of Garcia Marquez. Magic and miracles are part of daily life. The writer presents these realities through magical realism.

When Garcia Marquez won international acclaim with the publication of HYS, he had already published two more tales of loneliness: Leaf Storm (LS) (1955)

and No One writes to the Colonel (NWC) (1961). In Evil Hour (IEH) (1962) and Innocent Erendira (IES) (1972) are two other important works. AP is the study of the loneliness of a dictator. Chronicle of a Death Foretold (CDF) (1982) is a journalistic approach to guilt and responsibility. Clandestine in Chile (CIC) (1986) is again a study of dictatorship. Love in the Time of Cholera (LTC) 1988) deals with love and old age. Strange Piligrims (SP) (1992) deals with death and loneliness. Of Love and Other Demons (OLD) (1995) explores religious superstitions and helpless sexual passion. His most recent novel News of a Kidnapping (NK), (1996) deals with the activities of the Colombian narcotic mafia.

In all his novels, Garcia Marquez asks the reader to evaluate the role of loneliness in the life of a man. The reader is always fascinated by the romantic heroism of the characters who come to terms with loneliness. He assigns a positive value to loneliness. For instance, Colonel Aureliano Buendia (HYS) reconciles himself with loneliness, spending his final days making little gold fish. This is a meaningless Sisyphean act, yet it gives meaning to his existence.

Garcia Marquez's novels endeavour to explore the mythic possibilities inherent in the Latin American milieu. To a reader familiar with Latin America and its literature, the episodes in his novels are very realistic. The reader is always shocked out of his feeling of complacency with the tales of war, corruption, lust, cruelty, despair and sorrow. Through a number of nightmarish images Garcia Marquez portrays the agonies of mankind caught in a world of loneliness. This thesis proposes to trace Garcia Marquez's preoccupation with the theme of loneliness and its far reaching implications.

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CHAPTER 1

FRAGMENTS OF A MATURING VISION: LONELINESS IN THE EARLY WRITINGS

Loneliness is a major theme in Garcia Marquez's early tales like LS, NWC, IEH and IES. Frank Dauster in his essay, "The Short Stories of Gabriel Garcia Marquez", observes: "His short stories are often dismissed as fragmentary or ignored except for the information they give about people or places in the novels "(Dauster, 1973, 466). People treat his entire published work as a single unit with HYS at the centre, feeding on all others. Mary Davis comments on the setting of these stories: "As a whole, the stories create a fabulous environment, and the Caribbean becomes as prodigious a sea as the Mediterranean was for Homer" (Davis, 1979, 25).

The early stories and novels of Garcia Marquez did not receive much critical attention. Epstein considers them precursors of HYS: "They seem to be sketches, dress-rehearsals and trial runs for the great novel ahead" (Epstein, 1983, 62). Now they are studied to trace Garcia Marquez's development as a novelist.

These stories and novels are noted for subtlety of characterisation. Sometimes, they are enigmatic and fabulous. "The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship", "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings", "Blacamen the Good, Vendor of Miracles", and "The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World" are examples. The well-known critic Bell-Villada calls them stories of isolation. "Brooding and morose... they deal overwhelmingly with isolation or death, with souls or bodies trapped in graves or dreams" (Bell-Villada, 1979, 98).

The early stories and novels communicate incidents in the lives of humble townspeople who are troubled by the 'la violencia', the violent Colombian Civil Wars. In LS, NWC, IEH and IES, the story is set in a strife-torn town. It becomes the official history of Macondo, ranging from detailed realism, through surrealistic events, to political allegory. Mario Vargas Llosa, the great novelist of Peru, feels that "an atmosphere of nightmare and neurosis pervades these tales" (Vargas Llosa, 1973, 452).

In "Big Mama's Funeral", Garcia Marquez successfully fuses realism and fantasy. Macondo is the setting in most of these stories and novels. One story is linked to another by an incident or a character.

Garcia Marquez believes that everything he writes, he knew before he was eight. In the view of Harrs and Dohmann, "Things seem to come to him from nowhere, out of the haze of a past at moments withheld, at others full of missing places and people" (Harrs and Dohmann, 1967, 328).

LEAF STORM AND OTHER STORIES

According to George R. McMurray, "Leaf Storm dramatises the steady erosion of moral fortitude and human solidarity in the twentieth century" (McMurray, 1977, 20). It presents the rottenness and ruin of Macondo in a series of interior monologues. It is a "lyrical depiction of existential solitude in a disintegrating world" (McMurray, 20). It is beautiful in its "death-obsessed way" (Bailey, 1973, 168). McMurray critically analyses the tale:

> .... the repetitious phrasing, metaphoric images and adroit manipulations of the point of view... serve not only to convey physical disintegration and psychic paralysis, but also to intensify the theme of solitude (McMurray,8).

The title, Leaf Storm refers to the arrival of the banana company in Macondo. It is "formed out of the human and material dregs of other towns... and contaminated everything, sowed many catastrophes..." (LS, 1). The banana company leaves Macondo with "the rubbish of the rubbish they had brought with them. With them left the Leaf Storm, the last traces of what prosperous Macondo had been like" (LS, 29). The novel's epigraph, taken from Antigone, introduces the theme. Antigone buries the dead body of her brother Polyneices, defying the orders of the ruler of Thebes, Creon. Here, the Colonel buries the dead body of the doctor, against the wrath of the whole town. McMurray considers the doctor as an allegorical figure:

> Because the doctor's physical and moral rot and total alienation reflect the sins and weaknesses of Macondo, he emerges as a kind of allegorical figure, a sustained metaphor of the evil affecting the dying community (McMurray, 17).

The novel is in the form of a series of monologues by three characters attending a funeral. They are Isábel, a thirty-year-old lady whose husband left nine years ago, a retired Colonel, and a ten-year-

old boy, Isbel's son. The novel presents events happening in the brief span of half-an-hour, that is to say, from 2.30 to 3'0 clock on September 12, 1928. Time becomes a vehicle for solitude:

> The penetration of three psychic worlds, replete with temporal dislocations and contrapuntal compositional devices, makes time a vehicle for the poetic treatment of two major themes: decadence and solitude (McMurray, 11-12).

The novel opens with the boy's monologue. It was the first corpse he had ever seen. With his mother and grandfather that day he went to the dead man's house. He felt the mysterious presence of death in the stagnant air and in the smell of trash. The dead man's head looked like a waxen one and a hand-kerchief was tied around his jaw bone. His open mouth, bitten tongue and open eyes seemed those of "someone in a rage after a fight" (LS, 4).

He remembered that his mother was dressed up as if it was Sunday. She looked like someone far away, breathing heavily. Then the coffin was brought. The boy felt that it was too small for a dead body. He saw the dark face of the dead man. His mother was very

serious. He remembered her warning: "You have to behave yourself at the doctor's funeral" (LS, 5).

His grandfather had brought four Guajiro Indians with him. They emptied a sack of lime inside the coffin. The boy wanted to know why they did it. Then they placed the dead man inside the coffin. "In the coffin he looks more comfortable, more peaceful and his face... has taken a restful and serene look" (LS, 6). Then his grandfather put certain things inside the coffin. It was 2.30.

Isabel's monologue follows. She felt that she should not have brought the child for this spectacle. She could feel the harmful atmosphere and she wanted to leave the place. Her father was the only man who had shown any concern for the doctor. So he would not rot away inside his house. It was a longed-for death. They were going to deprive Macondo of its long desired pleasure. The town would be angry. She should not have got the child mixed up in the conspiracy. He didn't know why they had brought him. She thought of Meme who disappeared from the house of the doctor. He reached there twenty five years ago. Stayed with them and then left with Meme, the Indian woman, to live in another house. The crowd would throw all the excrement they

could get at them. The men made the preparations. Her father seemed relaxed. It was "a rebellious and anxious calm" (LS, 11).

The boy's monologue continues. He wanted to go out. A policeman and another man wearing green denim pants and a belt with a revolver (the Mayor) came to see the dead body. The Mayor refused to give the death certificate. Ten years ago, when a few wounded men were placed at his door, the doctor had refused to attend them. It provoked the entire town: "They refrained from violence but condemned him to rot in solitude behind the door he had refused to open to the men in need of medical attention" (McMurray, 9). He never drank the town water, haunted by the fear of being poisoned. He was feeding on the vegetables he cultivated in his courtyard. People decided to deny him the pity that he denied the town ten years ago. Fr. Angel refused to bury him in consecrated ground because he was a man who hanged himself after having lived sixty years without God.

Then comes the monologue of the Colonel. He brought his family because then it became a family affair, more human and less personal. The people would respect Isabel because she was a woman. He tried to

bury the doctor just to fulfil a sacred promise. The doctor had given up everything that connected him with his land and the people. The Colonel threw the doctor's things into the coffin. It was 2.30. The Mayor accepted a bribe and agreed to the funeral.

Garcia Marquez treats time "as a means of highlighting stagnation, decay and solitude" (McMurray, 13). It is quite evident when Isabel remembers her past. Meme told her about the past; Isabel's mother died after giving birth to her. Her father married Adelaida. The doctor came on the same day the priest who was nicknamed 'the Pup' arrived. It was 1903. He came to the Colonel's house. Later he left to live with Meme. The fragmentation of time, in McMurray's words, presents Macondo's stagnant atmosphere:

> The seemingly haphazard juxtaposition of past events ... fragments time and renders the illusion of a prolonged arrested present which serves to reflect Macondo's stagnant atmosphere and convey a pervasive feeling of futility (McMurray, 12).

When the banana company arrived, the doctor had no patients. People went to see the banana company's doctors. The doctor locked himself inside

his house. He did absolutely nothing, he had the look of a man defeated by circumstances. The Colonel felt sympathy for him. The Colonel "combines the eternal human values of love, charity and respect for one's fellow men that appear to be Macondo's only hope for moral regeneration" (McMurray, 17).

Isabel now remembers her marriage. Martin, her husband was a vague ungraspable figure. He came there for a wake and fell in love with her. He disappeared in a train nine years ago. "Her recollections of her unsuccessful marriage also reinforce the theme of loneliness set forth in the story of the doctor, whose tormented existence constitutes the principal plot thread" (McMurray, 11). She never knew him well. The first day after the marriage itself he left. He returned after two days.

"Isabel's solitude results at least in part from her marriage to Martin, a shadowy figure of questionable character whose four-button jacket is a symbol of the mask and thus renders him more abstract" (McMurray, 15). After her marriage Isabel felt alienated and depressed: "I felt something twisting in my heart, the stranger had begun to address me in the familiar form" (LS, 64).

The Colonel alone realized the loneliness of the doctor. He was sombre, defeated and crushed. The secret of his solitude was revealed on his last night. "The tormented indifference with which he watched the spectacle of life was shocking" (LS, 65). When the Colonel asked about taking a wife and having a daughter like Isabel he replied: "Not I Colonel, my children would not be like yours" (LS, 68). McMurray connects his solitude with that of Macondo: "The slow working out of the stranger's unfathomable life finally becomes a type of the strangeness and solitude that Macondo itself represents without knowing it" (McMurray, 29).

When Meme disappeared, the authorities had sent people to search his home and garden. But nothing was discovered. He was then "the ruin of a man..., if we scratched him with our nails his body would have fallen apart, turning into a pile of sawdust" (LS, 80). 'The Pup', the local priest, once interfered to save him from an angry mob. "He doesn't look like a man..., he looks like a corpse whose eyes still haven't died" (LS, 80).

The child resembled his father in many ways. He had the same behaviour and the same way of speech. Adelaida had refused to accompany the Colonel, saying

"I will stay collapsed here until Judgement day. If the termites haven't eaten up the chair by then..." (LS, 86).

'The Pup', the local priest, also had a lonely death. "Inside the coffin his majesty had the same depth of irremediable and disconsolate abandonment..." (LS, 87). "The Pup is the embodiment of the love and respect denied to the doctor by the community" (McMurray, 18). The influence of the past on the present is significant.

> Decadence and solitude in Leaf Storm are attributed at least in part to past events that weigh so heavily on the present that the hope and the commitment to action have been replaced by a kind of passive fatalism (McMurray, 14).

Death was gradually approaching the doctor. "The noose was not necessary. A slight breeze would have been enough to extinguish the last glow of life that remained in his hard yellow eyes" (LS, 91).

When the novel ends the Guajiro Indians take out the coffin for burial. "Now all the curlews will start out to sing" (LS, 97). It announces the end of a rotten existence.

In an interview with Rita Guibert, Garcia Marquez stated that of all his books LS was his favourite because it was his "most sincere and spontaneous" (Guibert, 1973, 326). McMurray summarises the features of the novel thus:

> As the sacrificed victim of a collective tragedy, the doctor not only typifies the lonely outsider so common in contemporary literature, but also symbolises a moribund society of bitter alienated individuals helplessly waiting their cataclysmic fate (McMurray, 20).

NO ONE WRITES TO THE COLONEL

NWC is a tale of despair and solitude. It tells the story of a retired Colonel who waits for his pension. The Colonel's existence is a precarious one. He lives in extreme poverty, but displays the qualities of perseverence and dignity. He is sustained by hope and his dreams. He is quite defiant and refuses to succumb to defeat.

The visual image that helped Garcia Marquez to write NWC was that of an old man waiting at the dockyard. The Civil Wars in Colombia left thousands of

veterans waiting for the government cheque that never came. Garcia Marquez was attracted by the plight of those humble unassuming people who were poor and crushed by life's adversities. They defended, confronted and overcame the forces ranged against them.

"The lonely unrewarded hero of NWC resembles Colonel Aureliano Buendia" (Brotherston, 1977, 123). The novel presents a brilliantly terse indictment of social injustice in Latin America. The Colonel has spent everything in order to survive. When the novel opens, he scrapes the last spoonfuls of coffee from the coffee can. What sustains him is "confident and innocent expectation" (NWC, 3). It is October, a hard month for him. He feels that "fungus and poisonous lilies were taking root in his gut" (NWC, 3).

His wife has occasional attacks of asthma. Nine months ago, the couple's only son, Augustin, was shot dead while circulating clandestine newspapers. The Colonel preserves his son's fighting cock as a souvenir. They are rotting alive after their son's death. Every Friday the Colonel goes to the post office to receive his pension. But nothing arrives. He has a circus clown's umbrella, eaten away by moths. He has become a clown in the hands of fate. They are

spending the last coins gained by selling Augustin's sewing machine. They have to feed the rooster also. He has torn clothes and a pair of torn shoes. "Everytime I put them on", the Colonel tells his wife, "I feel like a fugitive from an asylum" (NWC, 11). His wife aptly summarises their situation when she retorts: "We are the orphans of our son" (NWC, 11).

"The Colonel emerges as a tragi-comic figure, a complex composite of pathetic child-like innocence, heroic idealism and dogged determination to survive" (McMurray, 23). He displays extreme pride and dignity in spite of abject poverty and failing health. In contrast to his wife's bitter complaints he shows stoic endurance and gentle humour. There is a clash between his ideal subjective world and the sordid objective reality. Death is present as an unavoidable presence everywhere in the novel:

> The underlying atmosphere of stagnation and futility is accentuated by the ringing of bells announcing the funeral of a recently deceased musician, the description of the wake and numerous allusions to death (McMurray, 23).

The Colonel was the treasurer of the revolutionary forces in the Macondo district. He had driven a mule for two days to reach Neerlandia before the signing of the treaty. At the treaty he handed over two bags of gold and asked for the receipt. Colonel Aureliano Buendia himself wrote him the receipt. He had asked Colonel Buendia not to stop the war. From that day men waited for pension. Many died waiting for it.

"The Colonel bears a certain resemblance to the absurd hero, the protagonist whose passion for life enables him to struggle unceasingly against overwhelming odds" (McMurray, 25). With death and defeat around him, he continues to struggle against his destiny. We often find him in absurd situations. The absurd hero's attempts to impose order on chaos rarely become successful. "The Colonel's principal weapons against this absurd chaos are.... good humour and hope" (McMurray, 26). His defiant spirit and wilful optimism are obvious when he says, "Life is the best thing that's ever been invented" (NWC, 39). The fighting cock is yet another symbol of his hope. It sustains them in poverty. The rooster is a surrogate for Augustin, the rebel. It is a symbol for the community resisting oppression.

The Colonel has to ask for credit in the neighbouring stores. He still maintains the idea that he will be alive at the moment the pension arrives. "But in reality his hoping for the letter barely sustained him" (NWC, 29). When his wife asks him to sell the rooster, the Colonel has a clear reply. He tells her that he keeps it for Augustin. But his wife considers the rooster the cause of Augustin's downfall. She had warned him not to go for the cockfight on that fatal day, the third of January. They have to feed the rooster while they starve. The Colonel finally decides to sell the clock to keep themselves alive. But the plan fails, nobody is interested in it. Then Augustin's friends take over the duty of feeding the rooster. The Colonel and his wife then depend on the rooster's corn to sustain themselves.

As a contrast to the impoverished Colonel, the rich and prosperous businessman, Don Sabas, is presented. His wife is obsessed with the thought of death. "Everybody says that death is a woman", she comments (NWC, 36). "The characteristics of femininity, ugliness and monotony fuse the woman and the idea of death which obsesses the major figure of this book" (Woods, 1970, 290). That is to say, the Colonel also is obsessed with the thought of death.

"It must be terrible to be buried in October", (NWC, 4) he comments at the beginning of the novel. He considers time as an enemy. Death constantly threatens him. He speaks of November which, "monotonously returning and evoking thoughts of death, reinforces the image of a hollow life" (Woods, 88).

Richard D. Woods emphasizes the relation between waiting and death. "October, a sombre rhythm repeated frequently, represented death, the desperation of waiting and the necessity of withstanding time" (Woods, 89). Death enhances the theme of futility.

"Regardless of his disillussionment the Colonel returns each Friday to fulfil the compulsive ritual of asking for the mail" (Woods, 89). The Friday ritual affects his wife also. She goes out to see the dead man's mother. When she returns the Colonel questions her. She is not ready to tell the truth. Finally, she reveals that she has visited Father Angel asking for a loan on their wedding rings. The Colonel feels that their relationship is on the decline.

> The Colonel acknowledged that forty years of shared living, of shared hunger, of shared suffering had not been enough for him to come to know his wife. He felt that something had also grown old in their love (NWC, 41).

She tries to sell the clock. "The stopped machine encompasses almost the entire life of the Colonel" (Woods, 91). It also conveys the idea of nothingness, a symbol of the eternal waiting. Selling it shows the worthlessness of time and its end. "It is like going around with the Holy Sepulchere", she comments (NWC, 32). It is not sold but repaired. So the couple have to wait again. Waiting is a recurring theme. The Colonel waits for his letter, for the coffee, for Sabas, for the rooster's victory and for the arrival of December. His wife waits for the end of mourning to go to the movies.

His wife cannot sell the picture also. Then she becomes a nagging wife. She has to put stones on to boil so that the neighbours will not know that they are starving. The government had promised little coloured birds but what they received was a dead son. Don Sabas, who came there as a medicine man with a snake around his neck, made money that couldn't be kept in a big two-storied house. He is dying of diabetes while the Colonel is dying of hunger. "You should realize that you can't eat dignity", his wife reminds the Colonel and "it took the Colonel nearly half a century to realize that he hadn't had a moment's peace since the surrender at Neerlandia" (NWC, 45). He promises to sell the rooster.

When Sabas's wife asks him about his dreams, the Colonel says: "Almost always I dream that I'm getting tangled up in spider webs" (NWC, 43). She dreams about a dead woman. Sabas offers only 400 pesos for the rooster, gives the Colonel 60 pesos and promises to settle the deal later.

But the boys consider the rooster a common property of the town. They take it by force to the cock-fight trials. The Colonel watches his rooster defending the enemy, takes it home and decides not to sell it because it is a symbol of the town's resistance to the repression. He puts together the rest of the money. He even decides to return his new pair of shoes. Sabas will get the rest of the money when his pension arrives.

The Colonel is quite optimistic about his pension. But his wife, more realistic, tries to dissuade him. She is "naturally hard, and hardened even more by forty years of bitterness. The death of her son had not wrung a single tear out of her" (NWC, 59). The loneliness of an old couple whose only son was recently shot dead is quite pitiable. So, she accuses the Colonel of being "Wilful, stubborn and inconsiderate" (NWC, 59). It pains her to believe that

"an entire lifetime eating dirt just so that now it turns out that I deserve less consideration than a rooster" (NWC, 59). She threatens that she will die soon.

The Colonel wants to sleep fortyfour days in one stretch to wake up on the day of the cockfight. But his wife complains that they have starved forty years for others to eat. Even after the victory of the rooster, they will starve. After the Civil War and after the elections others have their future, but the Colonel alone starves. The Colonel tries to console her by promising to sell the clock or the picture. If they cannot, he can think of the twentieth of the January, the day of the cockfight. But his wife was not convinced. She asks him what they will do if it fails. It takes the Colonel every moment of his seventy-five years to give a pure explicit, invincible reply: "Shit" (NWC, 62).

The last word of the novel is quite ambiguous. Does it mean complete surrender to despair or does it mean defiance ? It is better to take it as an expression of his rebelliousness and anguish. The course of the novel is "a rite of passage during which the Colonel frees himself from the oppression and sense

of discouragement which typify him..." (Prieto, 1987, 33). The novel has a renewal theme. The action starting in October and ending at Christmas suggests the spiritual rejuvenation of the Colonel. He conquers his submissiveness and asserts his independence. As Rene Prieto comments, "No One Writes to the Colonel is, therefore, a eulogy to independence and a portrayal of the struggle required to achieve it" (Prieto, 41).

The Colonel's life is neatly marked out in measured units of loneliness. "Time like a frame around a blank sheet of paper, encloses hours, days and months in which nothing happens" (Woods, 89). The monotony of time enhances his loneliness.

IN EVIL HOUR

In 1956, Garcia Marquez started writing IEH and then abandoned it in order to focus entirely on one of his characters, the retired Colonel. NWC was the result of this attempt. The two works share many common features and characters. As Angel Rama has commented, they should be read in succession because "they are definitely one single novel" (Rama, 1972, 66). Loneliness emerges as a major theme in IEH.

The novel is about the ravages of 'la violencia' on a small unnamed town. The assassination of Jorge Eliecer Gaitan on April 9, 1948 sparked off a bloody uprising in Bogota, known as 'bogotaza'. It led to a series of Civil Wars between the Conservatives and the Liberals. When Laurenzo Gomez was deposed and Gustavo Rojas Pinilla became the President of Colombia, the entire nation was plunged into a period of repression and torture. The novel was written to denounce the bloody political persecutions prevailing in Colombia during and after the period known as 'la violencia'.

Robert Coover believes that "with this novel, Garcia Marquez moves away from the experimental fantasy and lyricism of his early stories toward his own sense of social realism" (Coover, 1979, 3).

Emmanuel Carballo, the well-known Mexican critic, calls IEH an "X-ray of Colombia" (Carballo, 1967, 14). It tells how a series of lampoons destroys the enforced peace of a town and brings in anarchy and barbarity. "Garcia Marquez transposes his tale of the lampoons into the contemporary Colombian reality" (Logan, 1979, 5). The story is based on a real event that took place in Colombia.

Mysterious lampoons with secrets and accusations appear on the doors of houses. They cause bitter conflicts and restlessness among the public. Many families leave the town. A lampoon pasted on the door of Cesar Montero's house accuses his wife of having an affair with a clarinet player, Nestor. Cesar Montero goes to the house of Nestor and kills him. The action begins on October 4 and ends after 17 days, on October 21. Within this short span, the lampoons pose a serious threat to the lives of the upper-class people. Despite the repressive measures taken by the Mayor, they proliferate, destroying the peace and harmony of the town. When Pepe Amador, a boy accused of spreading lampoons, is killed by the police, 'la violencia' returns. This occurs because "the collective unconscious of the town represses a history of violence, corruption and hatred signified by neurotic symptoms such as lampoons and the dead and rotting animals..." (Mouat, 1987, 21-2).

The mystery of the authorship of the lampoons is never solved. Cassandra asks: "Ever since the world has been the world, has anyone found out who puts up the lampoon?" (IEH, 133). As William Logan comments, "The town may be taken as a metaphor for the psyche, representing unpleasant memories to keep them from

becoming conscious, ie, public" (Logan, 5). When the repression becomes more severe it causes an equally strong protest. "The young man whose death completes the tragedy of the posters is a scape-goat, a ritual figure necessary for the cathartic discharge of the town's evil" (Logan, 5).

The lampoons bring satisfaction to the poor. "The poor people speak of lampoons with a healthy merriment" (IEH, 92). The toppling of the powerful, their disgrace, becomes a feast for them. The lampoons become a kind of festival for the poor. The circus is another symbol for the class specific nature of the lampoons. "Throughout Garcia Marquez's narrative the circus is a metaphor for the return to communal origins" (Mouat, 23). The poor are amused by the onslaught of the lampoons. Judge Arcadio points out this when he says, "It is like reading detective novels" (IEH, 104).

In his story of the lampoons, Garcia Marquez incorporates a group of characters who are permanently trapped in the labyrinths of solitude. The Mayor of the town is the most important one. "The principal drama is the solitude of the Mayor: he came to conquer the village but instead gradually sinks into it and

feels conquered by it" (Luchting, 1973, 473). He is young and agile but always sad. He accepts bribery and acquires land by illegal income. He threatens Carmichael and imprisons him when he refuses to join his conspiracy to take hold of the properties of the Widow Montiel. He joins hands with Don Sabas in an illegal cattle trade. "The Mayor emerges as a kind of solitary despot" (McMurray, 33). He suffers from a severe tooth-ache.

> His increasing pain from the abcessed tooth and his oft-repeated mechanical gesture of clutching his revolver in moments of stress underscore his dehumanising isolation from the rebellious community the central government sent him to subdue several years before (McMurray, 33-4).

He is hated by everyone. he receives verbal abuses from the poor people when he visits their houses. "May God give you indigestion" (IEH, 67), a woman curses him. At times he is arrogant. His only redeeming feature is his courage. It is quite evident when he arrests Cesar Montero who after killing Nestor threatens the people with his jaguar gun. "His sexual solitude also becomes apparent when the fortune teller,

Cassandra, is summoned to his room, ostensibly to spend the night and is only asked to tell his fortune" (McMurray, 34).

Fr. Angel is another victim of solitude. He lacks the spiritual qualities needed to instruct and guide a decaying community. At first, he refuses to take the issue of the lampoons seriously. When it leads to calamities he cannot do anything to prevent them. He lacks conviction and moral fervour. For instance, when he sees Dr. Giraldo's patient, a child seriously ill, he is horrified. He has a feeling that his mission is a fruitless one. He doubts the relevance of his vocation.

He doubts whether priesthood is a vocation that stifles human instincts. He has that feeling every night, throughout his life. He is responsible for Nora Jacob's separation from her husband. When she confesses, on the brink of death, that her husband is not the father of her daughter, the priest refuses to absolve her. He insists that she should repeat her confession in the presence of her husband. When she miraculously recovers, her husband leaves her.

The priest tries to impose morality. When he reached the parish, eleven couples were co-habiting

without marriage. He boasts that no such thing exists now. Unfortunately, he cannot see the numerous episodes of illegal affairs described in the novel. For example, Nora Jacob has an affair with Mateo Asis. Similarly, Fr. Angel's movie censorship is quite ineffective. People enter the theatre through a back door defying his orders.

"The mice trapped in the dilapidated church by Fr. Angel and his two helpers are symbols of the citizens oppressed by arbitrary authorities" (McMurray, 33). Trinidad brings the mouse she has caught, symbolising the town's people who are trapped by authorities. Mina brings no mouse symbolising the revolt of the people, as no one is trapped. Fr. Angel's solitude is implicit in his clothes and day-to-day life:

> Fr. Angel's solitude is accentuated by the precise details of the evening meal he has taken alone in his office for nineteen years and his extreme poverty by his cassock with mended edges, his badly worn shoes, and his rough hands with finger nails like singed horns (McMurray, 35).

The loneliness of Montero and his wife is another case in point. "The meaningless dialogue between Montero and his sensitive wife who is totally absorbed in the music, reveals the solitude of each other and their lack of communication" (McMurray, 40). The Widow Montiel is another solitary character who wanders through the empty rooms of her big house conversing with Big Mama, the real owner of the house, who died many decades before. "The Widow Montiel lives alone in a world inhabited by ghosts, her incipient madness more than likely a product of her isolation and feelings of solitude" (McMurray, 45).

IEH is Garcia Marquez's first novel. Michael Wood believes that it reflects his "idolatry of the cinema" (Wood, 1980, 44). It successfully depicts 'la violencia' the political oppression and the moral corruption of a typical Latin American town. "The disjointed montage structure of IEH serves to spatialize time and thus capture simultaneously the criss-crossing currents of resentment dividing the community" (McMurray, 37-38). The montage technique also helps to project the essential loneliness of the characters.

> The distant, impersonal style tends to ironize events and equate the character with inanimate objects, in this way underscoring their feelings of alienation and the lack of purpose in their lives (McMurray, 41).

INNOCENT ERENDIRA AND OTHER STORIES

Solitude, death and suffering are the important themes of the stories in IES. As Howard Fraser comments:

> Most of the tales are set in the isolation of the desert in an atmosphere of solitude. These stories develop the theme of loneliness in coastal settings where Garcia Marquez's characters contemplate the endless oceans of their barren lives (Fraser, 1973, 68).

Fantasy and surrealism are the two important features of these stories. Humour and imagination play important roles in them. "These short stories portray man's fundamental dignity and stoical determination to survive despite the forces of degradation which threaten his existence" (Fraser, 47). The writer employs magical realism and an omniscient narrator to depict "a world of lonely itinerants and haunting

desert landscapes" (Morrison, 1979, 727). "The end result is a pervasive impression of nostalgia, isolation and metaphysical emptiness in a universe devoid of order and meaning" (McMurray, 127). "Death Constant Beyond Love", "The Night of the Curlews" and "The Other Side of Death" are examples. Death is a dominant theme in these stories.

The title of the first story, "The Incredible and Sad Tale of Innocent Erendira and her Heartless Grandmother", indicates its mock-epic style. It is an inversion of the mythical fairy tale. "It is a combination of fairy tale, odyssey, novel of chivalry and historical allegory" (Fraser, 48). William Boyd believes it to be "a complex political fable about exploitation and revolution" (Boyd, 1979, 37). "Erendira is a classic portrait of youthful innocence in absolute thrall to worldly power" (Bell-Villada, 1979, 98).

Exploitation and the consequent revenge is the theme of "Innocent Erendira". Erendira, the heroine, is a fourteen-year-old girl who lives with her grandmother in an old mansion located in an isolated desert community. Her grandmother, the stout widow of a former smuggler, keeps her to do all the domestic

duties. One day while the unfortunate girl is asleep, "the wind of her misfortune" (IES, 7), blows, tips over the candle and the house is burnt down. Erendira is forced to become a prostitute to compensate the losses. The grandmother takes the girl from one desert community to another and gradually acquires her fortune. "In the metaphor of prostitution, the author describes the vast proportions of the exploitation of human liberty" (Fraser, 49).

The setting is a primitive Guajiro peninsula. The power of the Church is quite evident here. The story abounds in visual imagery and dramatic scenes. Garcia Marquez uses physical description, action and dialogue. All the great themes of HYS "- - solitude, destiny, repetition, illusion - -" are repeated here (Kaplan, 1978, 45).

Erendira meets a charming adolescent, named Ulises, whose father is a Dutch smuggler. Meanwhile, Erendira is rescued by a mission but is recaptured by her grandmother. Ulises, in love with Erendira, persuades her to run away with him. They are caught by the army and Erendira has to return to her grandmother.

Grotesque and paradoxical scenes recur in the story. When the love-stricken Ulises touches the glass

objects they turn into different colours. Erendira takes two hours to bathe her grandmother and six hours to wind the clocks in the mansion. Ulises is a "gilded adolescent with lonely maritime eyes and the look of a furtive angel" (IES, 17). The nuns struggling with the pig to kill it, is a parody of Ulises's final struggle with the grandmother.

Erendira is then chained to her bed. Her grandmother converts her wealth into gold bars. She keeps them inside the vest she wears. Finally Erendira asks Ulises to kill her grandmother. The first two attempts are futile. She eats the poisoned cake but nothing happens, the dynamite in the piano bursts, leaving her unscathed. Finally, Ulises stabs her to death. When the grandmother is killed, Erendira flees with the gold bars, leaving Ulises "weeping from solitude and fear" (IES, 45). "Throughout her captivity Erendira remains child-like and enchanting but at her release her face acquired all the maturity of an older person which her twenty years of misfortune had not given her" (Boyd, 37).

The grandmother is a diabolical character. The sea becomes a symbol for the renewal of life. In the desert Erendira is submissive but in the proximity

of the sea, she induces Ulises to kill her grandmother. She runs towards the sea grabbing the gold bars, as if symbolically indicating her passage to a world of freedom and happiness. "Her ruthless exploitation of Ulises and her subsequent display of avarice suggest the possibility that she represents the rebirth of the recently murdered 'white whale'" (McMurray, 112).

"It exhibits the raw humour of any downhome tall tale, the legendary quality and serene wisdom commonly associated with folk fable..." (Bell-Villada, 1979, 98). The story has the structure of a fairy tale, as explained by Joel Hancock in his "Gabriel Garcia Marquez's Erendira and the Brothers Grimm" (Printed in Studies in 20th Century Literature 3(1978): 45-52). The lengthy mock epic title introduces the theme. The implicit underlying problem is whether Erendira will ever be free of her grandmother's tyranny. There are various stages in the development of the story, as in a typical fairy tale: (1) The initial situation. It presents the background and suggests the course of the story. Erendira is introduced. We are given hints suggesting the misfortune she is about to confront: "Erendira was bathing her grandmother when the wind of her misfortune began to blow" (IES, 7). (2). The second stage is an

'interdiction' or a warning. Erendira is asked to check that everything is in perfect order. She sleeps wihout extinguishing the candles and the house is burnt down.

(3) Then the villain orders some extreme punishment. Erendira is subjected to prostitution by her grandmother. (4) The fourth stage is the appearance of the hero. He is a beautiful lad named Ulises, who is on a trip through the desert with his father. (5) The misfortune is made known and the hero's help is sought. Erendira calls Ulises with all the strength of her inner voice. (6) The hero plans counter-action. Ulises tries to kill her grandmother. (7) The hero confronts and defeats the villain and saves the victim. The grandmother is killed. (8) The heroine lives happily. Erendira leaves with the gold bars to live freely.

As in fairy tales, like "Cindrella", we have a tender, meek and languid damsel. Erendira is barely fourteen and she has to do all the work in the house: bathing her grandmother, dressing her, sweeping, winding the clocks and so on. She undergoes heavy exploitation. Herds of men visit her every day and she often feels that she will die. The grandmother is a

grotesque tattooed woman of Elephantine proportions. She is a monster in disguise. Ulises, the Prince Charming, is an inexperienced lover who steals money and oranges. He undergoes successive ordeals to win the hand of the lady. But at the end the heroine abandons him. In a fairy tale normally the hero marries the heroine and they live happily ever after. In this respect the story is different from a typical fairy tale.

"Innocent Erendira" is a panorama of ordinary life filled with exploitation, revenge and loneliness. It presents souls trapped in the heat of the isolated Colombian communities. "Solitude, the Catholicism of Marquez-land" (Kaplan, 46) dominates the entire story.

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CHAPTER II

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE: AN EPIC OF LONELINESS

Gabriel Garcia Marquez's masterpiece, HYS, provoked a literary earthquake in Latin America when it was first published in 1967. It depicted the true colour and nature of the sorrows of Latin America. The book was an immediate success, became a universal bestseller, and was acclaimed as a work of genius. The shock of recognition it imposed on the readers was something new in all Hispano-American literature. The Spanish speaking world recognized it as their classic. The book inspired a sense of liberation in the minds of the readers. It liberated them from dull realities into a world of magic and fantasy.

In an interview with Rita Guibert, Garcia Marquez asserts that solitude is "the only subject" he has "written about" from his"first book to the last one" (Guibert, 1973, 314). His characters are always lonely. "There is an element of anti-solidarity even among people who sleep in the same bed". (Guibert, 314). Garcia Marquez believes that the "disaster of Macondo", in HYS, "results from the lack of solidarity -- the solitude which results when everyone is acting for himself alone" (Guibert, 314).

The word 'solitude' echoes through the entire book. Ursula is the matriarch of lonely, desperate and introspective Buendias who seek out their lonely destinies and plunge themselves in solitude as if it were their only solace. Ricardo Gullon's comment is very relevant: "Solitude is a vocation imposed by birth, in accordance with a law; it is an indelible mark" (Gullon, 1971, 30).

THE MYTH, MACONDO AND MAGICAL REALISM

HYS encompasses all of man's life on earth and reduces all civilization to the family level. It is a recapitulation of our evolutionary and intellectual experience. Garcia Marquez "also makes it clear that his tale is more a dream of art than a collection of social and historical truths..." (Richardson, 1970, 3).

Macondo is a country of myth. Here a priest can levitate six inches by drinking a cup of cocoa, a girl can ascend to heaven and a banana company can conjure up a rain to wipe out all traces of a massacre. John Leonard thus comments on the mythical elements in the novel:

> We emerge from One Hundred Years of Solitude as if from a dream, the mind on fire. A dark

> ageless figure at the hearth, part historian, part haruspex, in a voice by turns angelic and maniacal, first lulls to sleep your grip on a manageable reality, then locks you into legend and myth (Leonard, 1970, 39).

The novel is not only the story of the Buendia family and of Macondo. Macondo is Latin America in microcosm. "The novel's beginning is Genesis; its end is the Apocalypse; rain is equivalent to the Flood; wars are War" (Gullon, 32).

The beginning of the novel evokes a distant Eden-like epoch, a pleasant and pristine world. Jack Richardson comments on the beginning of the novel:

> At once we know that we are not only in the memory of a character but also in a historic and mythical moment... and Garcia Marquez's characters appear as beings dreadfully mortal, if not outright ghastly (Richardson, 3).

Garcia Marquez "has extraordinary strength and firmness of imagination and writes with the calmness of a man who knows exactly what wonders he can perform" (Kazin, 1972, 14). In HYS, no single myth or mythology prevails. "Instead, the various ways in which myth

appears give the whole novel a mythical character without it being a distinct version of one given myth" (Echevarria, 1984, 358).

A pattern of Latin American history lurks behind the pattern of myth. The history and conquest of Latin America is there in the founding of Macondo by the conquistador, Jose Arcadio Buendia. The colonial period and the great Civil Wars between the Conservatives and the Liberals follow. The great dictators pave the way for the U.S. interference and 'the gringo imperialism'. The suppression of the working class and the violence perpetuated on them is reflected in the massacre of the Banana Company workers. As Echevarria comments:

> The blend of mythic elements and Latin American history in <u>One Hundred Years of Solitude</u> reveals a desire to found an American myth. Latin American history is set on the same level as mythic stories, therefore it too becomes a sort of myth (Echevarria, 359).

Myth appears in the novel in various shapes. There are stories that resemble Biblical myths. For instance, the founding of Macondo and its primal innocence evoke Genesis and Paradise. The insomnia

plague resembles the Plagues sent by God to punish the Pharaoh of Egypt. The rain that continues four years eleven months and two days echoes the Deluge in the Bible. The end of Macondo in a great hurricane is the Apocalypse. There are characters who stand as replicas for Biblical characters. Jose Arcadio Buendia is a Moses-like figure, the man who leads his people to the promised land. Remedios the Beauty, like Virgin Mary, ascends to Heaven. Supernatural elements also stress the mythical pattern of the novel. For example, Jose Arcadio's blood returns to his household when he dies. The whole novel is founded on the myth of incest and violence.

"The non-rational elements of myth also serve to expand the narrow dimensions of objective everyday reality and lend universal significance to the experience of characters" (McMurray, 1977, 74). The plot is developed in a series of circularly composed units with frequent repetitions. This helps to impose an aura of mythical time on the plot. Certain characters live out a mythical existence. Ursula who tries to ward off incest lives in a world increasingly menaced by chaos and "her quest for permanence and stability is underscored by her acute awareness of the cyclical nature of time" (McMurray, 77). When she

dies, her mythical existence is luminated by orange discs, that pass across the sky and the birds which break into the houses and die. Paul West compares Garcia Marquez to God: "Garcia Marquez is rather like an infatuated God watching a planet seethe and bubble, settle and cool and then develop forms of life that finally annihilate themselves" (West, 1970, 5).

Jack Richardson feels that the novel derives its strength from its mythical undercurrents:

> Garcia Marquez transports his characters into a literary myth, a myth which at once set them permanently beyond the common laws of life and at the same moment dissolves them forever in a deliberate artistic obliteration. His tale is more a dream of art than a collection of social and historical truths.... At the work's end when this dream takes on the force of a metaphor for all the cycles of human life that have vanished, one realizes that the excellence of the book lies in its victory over the quaint and anecdoted, in its sustained vision of the vanities and futile passions with which humanity tries to forestall its fate of being, in art and actuality, comically impermanent (Richardson,3).

Gerald Martin calls HYS "the greatest of all Latin American family histories since the story of the Buendia family is obviously a metaphor for the history of the continent since Independence, that is, for the neo-colonial period" (Martin, 1987, 97). Solitude, its central theme, derives from "their abandonment in an empty continent, a vast cultural vacuum, marooned thousands of miles away from their true home" (Martin, 104).

Time and loneliness are inseparably connected in HYS. "The repetitive patterns and rhythmic momentum generated by mythical time create a mytho-poetic atmosphere" (McMurray, 158) in which Garcia Marquez's lonely characters find asylum. It is an absurd world devoid of regular laws or events. "The Buendia house and the city of Macondo are representations of a vast universe where everything has its proper place, including time" (Gullon, 28).

Garcia Marquez does not care for dates and exact chronology. The action in HYS begins in the first half of the nineteenth century and ends in the 1930s. The Colombian Civil War which ravaged the country between 1897 and 1902 is presented with exactness. The War of the Thousand days (1889-92) is

reflected in the Treaty of Neerlandia. Col. Aureliano Buendia is modelled on General Raphael Uribe, the hero of the Civil Wars. "The novel clearly transcends physical particularizing and offers instead a parable of man's history and human nature" (Gullon, 29). In HYS, according to George McMurray:

> The lineal history of Macondo's founding, development, economic boom, decline and destruction is imbued with the mytho-poetic atmosphere of cyclical recurrences and archetypal patterns that modify temporal progression, establish a more unified interior structure and provide a background of greater thematic and stylistic richness (McMurray, 73-4).

Ricardo Gullon in his essay "Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the Lost Art of Story telling" opines thus: "The presence of a well-defined, concrete geographical space (Macondo) does not lessen its universality; it re-enforces it" (Gullon, 28).

The cyclical and mythical pattern of time in a way helps escape from the hard realities of history. The past, present and future are fused as if they exist in a single moment. The repetition of names and

characters help to create a pattern of cyclical rhythm. The recurring incidents of incest-urge again stresses the cyclical pattern. "These episodes not only help to sustain dramatic momentum but also foreshadow the apocalyptic denouement by keeping alive the myth of Original Sin" (McMurray, 77).

"A sustained synthesis, One Hundred Years of Solitude covers centuries, perhaps millenia" (Gullon, 30). Ursula, the matriarch, is the most important character who is aware of the cyclical nature of time. She feels that time is turning in a circle. Her renovations of the Buendia home at regular intervals in the novel is an attempt for permanence and stability in the flow of time. When she grows very old, everyday reality slips through her hand and she feels the disruption of time. Then she goes blind and succumbs to the forces of degeneration.

"The novel has the circular and dynamic structure of a gyrating wheel" (McMurray, 148). Pilar Ternera realises this fact. She feels that "the history of the family was a machine with unavoidable repetitions, a turning wheel that would have gone on spilling into eternity were it not for the progressive and irremediable wearing of the axle" (HYS, 320). The

gyrating wheel is a proper structural image for HYS Melquiades, the gipsy, sees time in its totality -- without past, without future and without duration. In this magical realm events happen simultaneously. In the turning of the wheel the beginning and the end are linked together. The signs of repetition multiply in the course of the novel. Aureliano Segundo returns to Petra Cotes after the flood to find her repeating the activities for the prosperous raffle. Ursuala hears Jose Arcadio II repeating the words of Colonel Aureliano Buendia, as if time had not passed. By locating one moment that happend in another, the author is able to stretch the temporal boundaries of his novel. For instance, Ursula curses the day Sir Francis Drake attacked Riohacha, an event that happened four hundred years ago, as if it were an event of her immediate past. At the end of the novel, the gipsies who brought scientific discoveries to Macondo, return with the primitive wonders like the magnet and the magnifying glass, discoveries that had produced a tremendous impact on Macondo.

Though the plot has a cause and effect pattern, the narrative accommodates the past and the future. Phrases like 'many years later', 'actually' and 'that distant afternoon' shift the narrative

backward and forward. They take us to a timeless world where everything is possible. "Garcia Marquez owes this technique to his vision of the mad repetitiousness of history in his country" (Kazin, 16). He always "writes backwards, from the end of the historical cycle and all his prophecies are acerbic without being gloomy" (Kazin,14). Alfred Kazin summarizes his views thus:

> In every Garcia Marquez work, a whole historical cycle is lived through, by character after character. And each cycle is like a miniature history of the world from creation to the final holocaust. Garcia Marquez is writing that history line by line ... (Kazin, 16).

The mythical time "blurs sordid reality and thrusts the readers into a kind of temporal void where the laws of cause and effect tend to become meaningless" (McMurray, 158).

Actually, 'Macondo' was the name of a small plantation near Aracataca in Colombia's Caribbean coast. Aracataca, Garcia Marquez's home town, is the basis for Macondo. Nearly all his works explore this remote swampy town. Macondo may be a metaphor for Colombia, Latin America or even the Universe.

"Macondo is everywhere and nowhere" (Harss and Dohmann, 1967, 310). According to Kiely, "Macondo is no never never land" (Kiely, 1970, 24). It is widely presented as a framework for the novel from its beginning to the end. At the beginning, it is a Paradise with its primal innocence. It is a lonely town totally isolated from the rest of the world. Here, Nature exists in its primordial purity. The polished stones on the bed of the river look like pre-historic eggs. The inhabitants also have the innocence and purity of Nature. Many things lack names. The village becomes a town within a few years. Permanent settlers arrive and set up stores and workshops. The gipsies arrive with modern discoveries. The people welcome them, though later they are considered as harbingers of perversion and concupiscence.

"A harsh mysteriously arid peasant village like Macondo experiences everything...over and over again like those characters in One Hundred years of Solitude who promptly reappear after dying" (Kazin, 16). Macondo is a self-sufficient and self-reliant village. When it becomes a town, the state imposes rules and restrictions. A magistrate is sent to mete out justice and peace. The inhabitants resist his order to paint the houses blue. He brings the

machinery of suppression, the police. Politics turns the peaceful town to a burning one. When elections are announced, there emerge the Liberals and the Conservatives. The Liberals go to war. Many of the inhabitants are involved; some are killed, others have to leave the town. After an armistice the opposing parties unite to share power and glory.

Alfred Kazin comments: "What makes his subject 'New World' is the hallucinatory chaos and stoniness of the Colombian village, Macondo, through which all history will pass" (Kazin, 16). The coming of the banana company is another important event in Macondo. Corruption and exploitation precipitate the resentment of the employees. They demand better living conditions and end up in a big strike. Decrees and proclamations are issued to suppress the revolt. The authorities then resort to violent methods to wipe out the leaders of the strike. It is carried out so systematically that it appears as a hallucination.

"Macondo oozes, reeks and burns even when it is most tantalizing and entertaining. It is a place flooded with lies and yet it spills over with reality" (Kiely, 5). Life becomes sedentary. All are confined to their private lives. It is a process of regression

which leads to solitude. The Buendia family is the nucleus around which everything turns in Macondo. The town is geographically isolated from other parts of the world. There is an impenetrable mountain chain in the east, and swamps to the south and west. The only possibility of contact with civilization lies along the northern route which itself is an adventurous course. "God damn it", Jose Arcadio Buendia, the founder shouts, "Macondo is surrounded by water on all sides .. We'll never get anywhere", (HYS, 18) he prophecies the sinister predicament of the town. All the characters act out their roles diverging from or converging upon Macondo. "BY converting a family heritage into the narrative device of geneology, chronicle and myth he (Garcia Marquez) made Macondo's boundaries historically and geographically elastic" (Brotherston, 1977, 133). Melquiades, the gipsy, is the greatest benefactor of Macondo. He brings to this secluded village things which will change day to day life. In Macondo, the magnet, the magnifying glass and the daguerrotype are accepted as wonders of the world. Macondo is born of Garcia Marquez's "nostalgia for the life he lived as a young boy more than twenty years ago in a vanished Colombia..." (Mead, 1968, 26).

Selden Rodman in his article "The Triuph of the Artist" comments: "In much of his work, Garcia Marquez has turned his home town into a dream kingdom of shattered expectations built on nostalgia" (Rodman, 1983, 16). So Jose Arcadio Buendia searches to find a path to get out of this enclosed village. The drive for the unknown does not take him anywhere. His fantasy leads him to the unexplored regions of memory. His imagination goes astray and he turns mad.

"Solitude the novel's central theme, knits personal destinies closely" (Gullon, 30). Ursula, the guardian angel of the Buendia family, is bound to Macondo. Pilar Ternera, its sooth-sayer, witnesses its growth and decay. Melquiades leaves and returns; repudiated by his tribe, he settles down in this corner of the earth that has not yet been discovered by death. Jose Arcadio leaves it in a state of seraphic inspiration with a gipsy girl, but returns. Rebeca reaches here with her vice of eating the earth. Don Apolinar Moscote and his family come to settle down here. Pietro Crespi, the Italian, comes to repair the pianola but lives and dies here. Fernanda comes as the Queen in a beauty contest and becomes the wife of Aureliano Segundo. Col. Aureliano Buendia leaves it but returns to spend his final days. Meme leaves in

unfortunate circumstances. Amaranta Ursula leaves but returns to the Buendia family. "Each particular character's life and vital concerns are interrelated with the collective life of the town from the beginning..." (Gullon, 30). According to Ronald Christ:

> Reality -- the one Garcia Marquez deals with -- is nothing less than the ethos of Latin America, and in order to make his discovery, in order to say the truth about the world he lives in ... he has had to invent a territory -- Macondo -- to conceive a people -- the Buendias -- and to inform his geography and population with a mythology -- a Borgesian Eternal Return (Christ, 1970, 622).

In a word, the story of Macondo and the Buendias is a resume of the Ages of man. Ronald Christ comments:

> Garcia Marquez has single-handedly mythologized a whole continent in telling the mutiple story of the Buendias, a story, first of guilt and innocence in a prototypical endeavour to found a community, then of subsequent generations confronting forces

> from the outside world and eventually of the family's deterioration from within and final obliteration (Christ, 622).

"As in Borges's story, the book contains the world and the world contains the book, in a mirror like way" (Monegal, 1973, 489). D.P. Gallagher analyses the loneliness of Macondo:

> Every single character in the novel is a victim of appalling loneliness and many of its characters end their lives in total isolation: locked for years in a room, tied for years to a tree or long forgotten in a deserted house. What is the cause of this loneliness ? Not to forget the obvious, one reason can be found for it in the isolation of Macondo itself, in the isolation of a forgotten Colombian backwater (Gallagher, 1973, 161).

Fantasy is one of the central ingredients of contemporary Latin American fiction. There is no barrier between the real and the fantastic in the fiction of Garcia Marquez. The levelling of between reality and unreality is a characteristic of HYS. Ricardo Gullon writes on the uniqueness of Garcia Marquez thus:

> The difference between Garcia Marquez and other novelists is that the latter may dispose themselves in a welter of ways, but he does not. His need to tell a story is so strong that it transcends the device he uses to satisfy the need (Gullon, 32).

In an interview with Claudia Dreifus published in Playboy in 1983 Garcia Marquez speaks of Latin American environment's "openmindedness to look beyond reality" (Dreifus, 1983). He knows how to present a strange event with an aura of magic. He makes "the fantastic seem real, and the real fantastic, thus eliminating the barrier between objective and imaginary realities" (McMurray, 90). The real and the fantastic are fused in Garcia Marquez's fictional world. The death of Jose Arcadio is an example. Though unrealistic this event is made credible by:

> The meticulous stylistic precision, down to earth language and numerous everyday details surrounding the occurrence....Thus reality becomes relative, elusive and even contradictory. Its authenticity depends on the eye of the viewer (McMurray, 89-90).

Williamson defines magical realism thus: "...magical realism is a narrative style which consistently blurs the traditional realist distinction between fantasy and reality" (Williamson, 1987, 45). Unheard-of-events and miracles mingle with household events. Phantoms and ghosts live side by side and they communicate quite naturally. "The contrast between tone and rhythm...is one more reason why this novel attracts, convinces and seduces the reader" (Gullon, 29).

Fantasy is an escape from loneliness; unreality is an escape from the drudgery of loneliness. So the Assumption of Remedios the Beauty is presented as an ordinary event. A priest (by drinking a cup of chocolate) can levitate and a rain of yellow flowers crams the streets when a patriarch dies. "Reality, by logical contrast, is delirious" (Gullon, 29).

"One's distinction between fantasy and reality depends a great deal on one's cultural assumptions" (Gallagher, 148). To the people of Latin America, reality is something one can fabricate at one's own expense. We cannot blame them if they believe in the assumption of a local girl, Remedios the Beauty. D.P. Gallagher justifies the author thus:

> And who can blame Garcia Marquez, for choosing to liberate himself from official lies by telling his own lies or otherwise for choosing to exaggerate the government lies ad absurdum. Many of the fantasies of One Hundred Years of Solitude are indeed absurd but logical exaggerations of real situations (Gallagher, 148-9).

Salman Rushdie is of the view that " 'El Realismo magical', magical realism'...is a development of surrealism that expresses a genuinely 'Third World' consciousness" (Rushdie, 1982, 4). Garcia Marquez, according to Vilhjalmsson, "marries realism and objectivity" (1973, 10-11). In Ciplijauskaite's view:

> The realm of the fantastic lies between the real-explicable and the supernatural, with a continuous fluctuation of boundaries and an uncertainty intensified by the total absence of the narrator's guiding point of view (1973, 479).

Garcia Marquez causes the whole story to 'float' by disrupting the natural temporal sequence. The fantastic becomes the ordinary, it is everyday life. When the distinction between reality and fantasy

is blurred, a tragi-comic reality emerges. So, we hear the cloc-cloc sound of Rebeca's parents' bones, Melquiades returns from the dead, Petra Cotes's animals proliferate when she copulates with Aureliano Segundo.

"The narrator destroys the very idea of a possible barrier between the real and the imaginary" (Gullon, 32). The ascension of Remedios the Beauty is the culmination of fantasy. Garcia Marquez tells incredible things as if they are real everyday happenings.

He successfully fuses social issues and magical realism. Macondo rises to the level of a universal existence. Earlier, Jose Luis Borges has demonstrated that all writing is fictive. His poem, "El Otro Tigre" is an example. A tiger evoked in a poem is very different from the beast that paces the jungles of Bengal. Then, why not, Borges argues, write about a tiger with three legs that reads Sanskrit and plays hockey ? "The narrative is a magician's trick in which memory and prophecy, illusion and reality are mixed and often made to look the same" (Kiely, 5).

Gallagher accounts for the charm of the novel thus: "Much of the novel's appeal lies in the sense of liberation it inspires in one: liberation from a

humdrum real world into a magical one that also happens to he funny" (Gallagher, 1973, 145).

The local myths of his home town and the superstitions of its people helped Garcia Marquez to shape his imagination. In this novel "he used fantasy to underscore the reality and the historical veracity that were the basis of his fiction" (Frosch, 1973, 498). His reading of William Faulkner and a pilgrimage through the Yoknapatawpha county helped him to mould "his protean imagination" (Duffy, 1972, 85).

Garcia Marquez succeeds in "trivializing wonder"; he makes them "quite ordinary and accountable" (Frosch, 501). In George R. McMurray's view:

> The amazing totality of his fictional world is achieved through the contra-puntal juxtaposition of objective reality and poetic fantasy that captures simultaneously the essence of both Latin American and universal man (McMurray, 6).

The banana plague and the great deluge blend myth, history and imagination. Garcia Marquez's use of magical realism is very much evident here. He presents fantastic events in an objective style. "In all, it is

a panoramaic socio-political sub-plot constructed with utmost craftmanship and imagination" (Bell-Villada, 1987, 391).

The banana strike and the great flood accelerate the decline of Macondo. It prepares us for the final whirlwind that destroys the city. The banana plague and the mass execution of the workers are based on real events which took place in Colombia. Pablo Neruda had written about the events in his poem, "La United Fruit Co". Bell-Villada observes:

> The episode of the banana strike and military repression in <u>One Hundred Years of Solitude</u> constitue the highest point in Garcia Marquez's exclusive chronicle of Macondo. It is a vivid and dramatic scene packed with socio-political suspense with sanguinary horror and followed by uncanny official silence and a fantastical rain (Bell-Villada, 391).

The critic is also of the view that "the Banana strike and military repression are to the history and literature of Colombia what the Napoleonic invasion and retreat were to the history and literature of Russia" (Bell-Villada, 403). The description is

"history carefully reconstructed, and then artfully exaggerated" (Bell-Villada, 392).

The great banana strike "is the last occasion in which the Macondoites and their Buendia leaders will collectively resist the meddlings of a high-handed central government (Bell-Villada, 391).

The extermination of the workers " is executed in such a novel way that even those upon whom it is perpetrated think of it as an hallucination" (Gill, 1987, 148).

More than three thousand people, Jose Arcadio Segundo among them, gathered around the station. They waited till three o' clock. The officer didn't turn up. Then an army lieutenant read out Decree No.4 of the civil and military ruler, General Carlos Cortes Vargas, authorising the army to shoot the workers. The army gave them five minutes to withdraw. The crowd protested. "Intoxicated by the tension...and held tight in a fascination with death the crowd remained on a kind of hallucination" (HYS, 248). The Captain gave the order and the machine guns started firing. The reader never finds fault with Garcia Marquez's sub-tale of exploitation, resistance and slaughter.

The description of the massacre is very famous:

> At first it seemed that the machine guns were loaded with caps... No reaction was perceived...the compact crowd seemed petrified by an instantaneous invulnerability. Then a cry of death tore open the enchantment: 'Aaaagh mother'. A seismic voice, a volcanic breath, the roar of a cataclysm broke out in the centre of the crowd with a great potential of expression.
>
> The people in front of Jose Aracadio Buendia... had been swept down by the wave of bullets. The survivors tried to get back to the small square and the panic became a dragon's tail as one compact wave rose against another which was moving in the opposite direction, towards the other dragon's tail in the street across the way where the machine guns were also firing without cease. They were penned in swirling about in a gigantic whirlwind that little by little was being reduced to its epicentre as the edges were systematically being cut off all round like an onion being peeled by the insatiable and methodoical shears of the machine guns (HYS, 247-8).

Jose Arcadio Segundo fell unconscious. When he again opened his eyes, he was in a moving train packed with dead bodies. It was a two hundred-car train heading to the sea. The corpses would be thrown into the sea like rejected bananas. He jumped into the darkness and walked in the other direction. After three hours he saw the first house. The woman in the house nursed him but refused to accept his version of the story that there must have been three thousand corpses in the train. "There haven't been any dead here", she said (HYS, 251).

Garcia Marquez's description of the banana strike is "a symbiosis between history and fiction..." (Bell-Villada, 400). The government made a proclamation that the workers left in peace and that there was no casualty. Mr. Brown the owner of the banana company announced that the conflict was over. He ordered a torrential rain over the whole banana region. The company suspended all its activities. The army continued to hunt the workers. They took them out of their houses and nothing more was heard of them. They declared that nothing was happening. Thus they wiped out the union leaders. Jose Arcadio Segundo miraculously survived. Hidden in Melquiades's room he became invisible. Though the soldiers searched the room, they couldn't find him.

It rained for four years eleven months and two days. Macondo was in ruins. The streets were covered with the corpses of animals. The new-comers left Macondo. The houses built during the banana fever were abandoned, the banana company tore down its installations, the wired-in city was ruined. The only memento was a glove belonging to Patricia Brown found in an abandoned automobile. The region of the banana plantation became a bog of rotting roots.

The Biblical flood becomes instrumental for a temporary spiritual purification. It eradicates the corruption of materialism and revives innocence. Love and mutual understanding are regenerated. Thus, Aureliano Segundo learns of true love. Listening to Fernanda's monotonous sing-song of complaint he destroys the vessels in the house. Gradually he learns the lesson of a harmonious relationship. The invasion of imperialism had converted Macondo, the village, into a town. But the final chapters of the novel describe its deterioration and disappearance. With the deluge, things take the disastrous turn towards the cataclysmic end. "It is a bitter-sweet and melancholy denouement..." (Bell-Villada, 391).

In an interview with Gene H. Bell-Villada, conducted in 1983, Garcia Marquez revealed that the sequence of events in the novel sticks closely to the facts of the United Fruit Strike of 1928. The novelist was born the same year. "The only exaggeration is in the number of dead", Garcia Marquez commented, "though it does fit the proportions of the novel. So, instead of the hundreds dead, I upped it to thousands" (Bell-Villada, 1983, 26).

Tonny Tanner analyses the balancing of fantasy and reality thus: "In One Hundred Years of Solitude, Garcia Marquez carefully balanced reality and fantasy to make the improbable occurrences in the town of Macondo appear quite natural and common place" (Tanner, 1970, 393). His famous account of the insomnia plague is an example. We believe the funny events associated with the insomnia plague because they happen in such an earthly, human and real world.

Rebeca brings the insomnia plague to Macondo. Visitacion, the Indian woman of the Buendia household, is the first to notice its invasion. One night, while she sleeps with the children, she wakes up by chance and hears a strange sound. She mistakes it for the sound of the footsteps of an animal. She finds Rebeca

in the rocking chair "sucking her finger and with her eyes lighted up in the darkness like those of a cat" (HYS, 43). Visitacion recognises in Rebeca's eyes the symptoms of the very sickness to escape from which she has fled from her kingdom with her brother, Cataure.

Cataure, the Indian, leaves the house the next morning. Visitacion does not leave because she knows that the lethal sickness will follow her "even to the farthest corner of the earth" (HYS, 43). The most fearsome part of the sickness is not the impossibility of sleeping but a loss of memory. When such a person becomes used to insomnia, the recollection of his childhood is erased from his memory. He will forget the name and notion of things, the identity of people and even the awareness of his own being. Finally, he will sink to a kind of idiocy that has no past. Jose Arcadio Buendia considers it as an Indian superstition but Ursula takes the precaution of isolating Rebeca from the other children.

Jose Arcadio Buendia himself is the next victim of the insomnia plague; Ursula and Aureliano are the next victims. All the members of the family, including the children, remain awake at night: "Once it gets into a house no one can escape the plague" (HYS, 44).

As a remedy to total forgetfulness, Ursula prepares and makes them drink a brew of monkshood. But the victims spend the whole day dreaming. "In that state of hallucinated lucidity they saw not only the images of their own dreams but also of others. It was as if the house was full of visitors" (HYS, 44). Rebeca dreams of her parents who once brought her a bouquet of roses.

The insomnia plague is spread in the town through the candy animals made in the house.

> Children and adults sucked with delight on the delicious little green roosters of insomnia, the exquisite pink fish of insomnia and the tender yellow ponies of insomnia. So, that dawn Monday found the whole town awake (HYS, 44).

No one is troubled because so much is to be done in Macondo in the free time. They work so hard that soon there is nothing else to do. They will be seen sitting idle at 3'o clock:

> With their arms crossed, counting the notes in the waltz of the clock. Those who wanted sleep, not because of fatigue but because of their nostalgia for dreams, tried all kinds of methods of exhausting themselves (HYS, 44).

They converse endlessly, repeat the jokes again and again and play endlessly the game of the story about the capon. By these meaningless repetitive actions they try to get rid of boredom. Later, Aureliano Buendia will do the same, moulding and melting gold fish, in order to escape from his terrible boredom.

Jose Arcadio Buendia summons the heads of the families to discuss the problem. They take measures to prevent it from spreading to other towns. They place bells at the gates of the town. All strangers who visit the town have to ring the bell so that the sick will recognize the healthy. They are not allowed to drink or eat because the insomnia spreads through contamined food and drink. Thus the plague is restricted to Macondo. The quarrantine is so effective that people accept it as a natural event. They forget the useless habit of sleeping.

It is Aureliano Buendia who conceived a formula to protect them against the loss of memory. He forgets the name of the anvil and pastes a paper on it with the name. Then he forgets the names of all the objects in his house. Jose Aacadio Buendia imposes the new scheme invented by Aureliano Buendia on the whole

village. They mark everything with an inked brush: 'table', 'chair', 'clock', 'door', 'wall', 'bed' and so on. The animals also are marked: 'cow', 'goat', 'pig' and 'hen'. When Jose Arcadio Buendia realizes that the use of the things will be forgotten, he becomes more elaborate in inscriptions. The sign that hung from the neck of a cow is an example:

> This is the cow. She must be milked every morning so that she will produce milk, and the milk must be boiled in order to be mixed with coffee to make coffee and milk... Thus they went on living in a reality that was slipping away, momentarily captured by words...(HYS, 46).

At the entrance of the town, they place a sign board that said 'Macondo'. Another board is placed on the main street that said 'God exists'. In all the houses keys to memorizing objects and feelings have been written. But many fall victims to an imaginary reality. Pilar Ternera contributes to the mystification by "reading the past in cards as she had read the future before" (HYS, 46). By means of that recourse:

> The insomniacs began to live in a world built on the uncertain alternatives of the cards, where a father was remembered faintly as the dark man who had arrived at the beginning of April and a mother was remembered only as the dark woman who wore a gold ring on her left hand, and where a birth date was reduced to the last Tuesday on which a lark sang in the laurel tree (HYS, 46).

Jose Arcadio Buendia now tries to build a memory machine. (It anticipates the invention of the computer). It could review every morning the totality of knowledge acquired during one's life. It was a spinning dictionary with a lever. By turning it, one could have all the information needed. Jose Arcadio Buendia has entered fourteen thousand entries in his machine. While the town was "sinking irrevocably into the quicksands of forgetfulness" (HYS, 47), Melquiades returns with his magic potion that cures the insomnia plague. Jose Arcadio Buendia drinks it to get rid of the "forgetfulness of death" (HYS, 47). He recovers his memory. The entire townspeople soon recover from the insomnia plague.

In HYS, Garcia Marquez forces upon us at every page the wonder and extravagance of life. Jack Richardson remarks:

> When the book ends with its sudden self-knowledge and its intimations of holocaust, we are left with the pleasant exhaustion which only very great novels seem to provide... They allow us...to hold a vision...of the beginning and ends of all the enterprises of living (Richardson, 4).

LOVE INCEST AND SOLITUDE

The most interesting parts of HYS are those which describe "the various aspects of love -- as communion, as frustration, as a breaking away from accepted patterns" (Hall, 1973, 256).

From Jose Arcadio Buendia to the last Aureliano, most of the characters crave love and sexual relief. Jose Arcadio, the eldest son of Jose Arcadio Buendia, approaches Pilar Ternera, the country whore, in a "bewildered anxiety" to flee from his state of "exasperated silence and that fearful solitude" (HYS, 30). When he reveals his secrets to his brother, Aureliano, the latter feels the same anxiety and both

take refuge in solitude. "Anxious for solitude and bitten by a virulent rancour against the world" (HYS, 33), Aureliano visits the gipsy camp. With a desperate anxiety he finds sexual pleasure which "lifted him up into the air towards a state of seraphic inspiration" (HYS, 35).

Linda B. Hall comments on the devastating nature of love: "The love which furnishes a release from solitude is always a love which defies society and leads to ultimate destruction and the return of solitude" (Hall, 225). The young Buendia girls, Rebeca and Amaranta turn towards Pietro Crespi in a desperate attempt to get rid of their solitude. This ends in death and disaster. Hall further observes thus:

> In One Hundred Years of Solitude, loves which are forbidden between members of the same family, between individuals of varying ages, between people of different social classes are endowed with universal mythic qualities (Hall, 256).

Arcadio is attracted towards his own mother, Pilar Ternera, unknowingly. As a substitute, Pilar arranges a mistress, Santa Sofia de la Piedad, for him. Their sons, the twins, Aureliano Segundo and Jose

Arcadio Segundo make love with Petra Cotes. Aureliano Segundo later marries Fernanda, the beauty queen. Their daughter Meme loves Mauricio Babilonia and gives birth to Aureliano Babilonia. Aureliano Babilonia and Meme's sister Amaranta Ursula fall into an incestuous affair. "The novel is characterised, in general terms, with a movement away from the repression or restraint of desire, to a greater release of desire" (Kennedy, 1987, 56).

Garcia Marquez believes that only through love man can transcend his solitude. But in HYS love itself ends in catastrophe. The lives of Amaranta, Rebeca, Meme and Mauricio Babilonia are examples. Amaranta Ursula and Aureliano Babilonia try to conquer their solitude through frantic love and wild erotic deeds. A child is born with a pig's tail; and fulfilling the prophecies, it is eaten by ants. Jorge Luis Borges, another great Latin American writer, also has explored the connection between solitude and the labyrinth. In Borges's short stories the deciphering of the labyrinth is a metaphor for the search for remedies to get rid of loneliness. The characters trapped at the centre of the labyrinth are locked in solitude also. The only solution is to penetrate into the centre and rescue the victim. But it often leads to the destruction of the

person who penetrates and the one who is locked in solitude. D.J. Enright, in his journal article "Longer than Death", comments on the importance of the theme of loneliness:

> What each one has suffered, whether a recluse like Rebeca, or a man of action like the Colonel, is solitude, a word which echoes through the novel: they are all marked with the pox of solitude (Enright, 1970, 252).

Catarino's store, like Pilar Ternera's house, is an asylum for the solitary characters of HYS. It also serves as a public place where people gather now and then. It is here that Francisco the Man, a vagabond, tells in great detail the things that have happened in the towns along his route. Members of the Buendia family haunt this place seeking friendship and love. In HYS, "instances of sexual desire are almost always characterised by the word 'anxiety' that men seek relief for their stomachs by a visit to Catarino's" (Kennedy, 57).

Here Colonel Aureliano Buendia finds a beautiful Mulatto girl who is subjected to prostitution for accidentally burning out her grandmother's house. (This is the theme of "Innocent Erendira)". But in her

presence, he feels terribly alone. When he is tormented by thoughts of little Remedios, he visits Catarino's store again. By then the establishment is expanded with a gallery of wooden rooms where women sell themselves for a few cents. A group, to the accompaniment of an accordian and drums, plays the songs of Francisco the Man. Aureliano and his friends drink fermented cane juice. One of the women caresses him, but he rejects her. He gets drunk to forget Remedios. Then he goes to Pilar Ternera's house to unburden his problems.

Later, Arcadio, the civil and military ruler of the town, visits Catarino's store. The trumpeteer in the group greets him with a fanfare that makes the customers laugh. Arcadio orders him shot for showing disrespect to the authorities.

When a commission is sent to discuss with him the situation after the war, Colonel Aureliano Buendia orders his men to take them to the whores. They spend their days in conference and their nights in Catarino's store, accompanied by an escort and accordian players.

Jose Arcadio Segundo also is seen at Catarino's. He brings French matrons with gaudy parasols, silk hand-kerchiefs and coloured creams on

their faces. They bring a breath of renovation. Their magnificent arts transfigure traditional methods of love and their sense of social well-being abolishes Catarino's antiquated place.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez is "a writer with very intimate knowledge of street life and plebian ways" (Bell-Villada, 1983, 27). When Bell-Villada asked him how he could write so well on this topic, the writer gave an interesting reply: "It is in my origins, it is a vocation too. It is the life I know best and I have deliberately cultivated it" (Bell-Villada, 27).

The threat of incest looms over the Buendia family throughout the hundred years of its solitude. Incest is a recurring concern of the novel. Many of the characters are tempted to commit incest despite its terrible consequences. "The self-reflexiveness of the novel is implicitly compared to incest, the self-knowledge that somehow lies beyond knowledge" (Echevarria, 1984, 377).

The incest taboo exists in primitive societies because it prevents communication between various groups of kin. It has a social basis as it is a hindrance to social cohesion. If women are kept in the same family with incestuous relationships it is not

possible to form bonds with other families. So women are offered as wives to other families. The increasing temptation for incest in HYS shows the failure of the Buendias to communicate with other families.

As Edwin Williamson says, "the fundamental impetus of One Hundred Years of Solitude springs from the wish to avoid incest" (Williamson, 48). Garcia Marquez himself asserts the importance of this theme in his interview with Rita Guibert when he says that he wanted to "tell the story of a family who for a hundred years did everything to avoid having a son with a pig's tail and because of their very effort to avoid having one, they end up having one" (Guibert, 314). "For over a hundred years the family struggles through births, dreams, wars and deaths to avoid ending in aberration, but at last it ends with a monstrosity" (Richardson, 4).

The curse hanging over the Buendia family that the offspring born out of an incestuous relationship will have a pig's tail has its origin in the founding of the family itself. The founder Jose Arcadio Buendia and his wife Ursula Iguaran are cousins. "Actually they were joined till death by a bond that was more solid than love: a common prick of conscience" (HYS, 23).

Their own relatives have tried to prevent their marriage as they fear that the inbreeding of the two races will breed iguanas. There is a precedent also. An aunt of Ursula who married an uncle of Jose Arcadio Buendia had given birth to a child with a pig's tail. Ursula's mother "terrified her with all manner of sinister predictions about their offspring" (HYS, 24). Ursula, frightened, refuses to consummate the marriage and wears a rudimentary kind of drawers to protect her chastity. She remains a virgin and people doubt the virility of Jose Arcadio Buendia. When Prudencio Aguilar insinuates it, after losing a cock fight, Jose Arcadio Buendia kills him. That night their marriage is consummated. But the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar haunts them with "a livid expression on his face, trying to cover the hole in his throat with a plug made of esparato glass" (HYS, 25). Jose Arcadio Buendia threatens the ghost, but feels pity for the deadman who is terribly lonely:

> He was tormented by the immense desolation with which the dead man had looked at him through the rain, his deep nostalgia as he yearned for living people, the anxiety with which he searched through the house looking for some water with which to soak his esparato plug (HYS, 26).

When Ursula finds the ghost uncovering the pots on the stove for water, she places water jugs all about the house. When Jose Arcadio Buendia finds Prudencio Aguilar in his room, he decides to leave the town. After an adventurous expedition he discovers Macondo. His rebellious drive against incest taboo results in his departure to build a new village.

As Alan Kennedy observes, "The incest theme is part of the characterisation of the way in which a disconnected society suffers both from displaced desire and a lack of place in human history" (Kennedy, 57-8). Garcia Marquez himself has commented in his Nobel Acceptance Speech that more atrocities flourish in countries disconnected from the history of the rest of the world. "Indulgence in unrestrained sexual license is not a road to the future and more life, but a road to solitude and destruction" (Kennedy, 57).

The theme of incest is further explored in Amaranta's relationship with her nephew, Aureliano Jose. She has brought him up ever since he was a child. She undresses in front of him in the bathroom. The child asks some innocent questions about her breasts. As he grows up, he feels a strange trembling at the sight of her nakedness. "He kept on examining

her, discovering the miracle of her intimacy inch by inch, and he felt his skin tingle as he contemplated the way her skin tingled when it touched the water" (HYS, 121). From his childhood onwards he sleeps with Amaranta. Even after attaining manhood he sleeps with her.

> He felt Amaranta's fingers searching across his stomach like warm and anxious little caterpillars.... Although they seemed to ignore what both of them knew and what each one knew that the other knew, from that night on they were yoked together in an inviolable complicity (HYS, 122).

He becomes "a palliative for her solitude" (HYS, 122). Garcia Marquez describes their relationship thus:

> They not only slept together, naked, exchanging exhausting caresses, but they would also chase each other into the corners of the house and shut themselves up in the bedrooms at any hour of the day in a permanent state of unrelieved excitement (HYS, 122).

One afternoon, Ursula discovers them kissing in the granary and she asks Aureliano Jose about his love for his aunt. This becomes an eye-opener to

Amaranta and she comes out of her delirium. She realizes that she is "floundering about in an autumnal passion, one that was dangerous and had no future, and she cut it off with one stroke" (HYS, 122). "The result of her action is that both of them are cast into a new solitude.... Her rebellion had led to a double solitude and a desire for murder and suicide" (Kennedy, 61-62).

Later in the novel, Aureliano Jose returns from the war with a secret determination to marry Amaranta. She avoids him. He goes to her bedroom and "starting with that night the dull inconsequential battles began again and went on until dawn" (HYS, 126). "The phrase 'inconsequential battles' is only one of the many markers alerting us to the way that sexuality and politics are interwoven in Marquez's text" (Kennedy, 61). Aureliano Jose proposes to go to Rome to get a special dispensation from the Pope to marry his aunt. Amaranta rejects him telling him that "any children will be born with the tail of a pig" (HYS, 129). Gerald Martin is of the view that "the morbid fear of the birth of a child cursed with a pig's tail is a condensed metaphor for the combined ideologies of Original Sin and biological determinism" (Martin, 1987, 105).

Every relationship in the family is under the threat of incest. Marriage does not result in procreation, but the family moves through surrogate lovers. A thwarted desire always leads to an illicit affair which leads to the birth of a child. Later the child is added to the family line. Jose Arcadio and Col. Aureliano Buendia had illicit sons by Pilar Ternera. They are grudgingly admitted to the Buendia family. Marriages fail because often the legitimate wife is a substitute for a desired mistress. For instance, Arcadio desires his mother but has children by Santa Sofia de la Piedad. Marriage is often barren but illegal mistresses and casual lovers produce children. Genuine desire does not lead to legitimate children. Instead, surrogates produce children. As a result, the legitimacy of the Buendia line is destroyed. The line becomes mixed by bastards and illicit relationships. This results in a confusing situation which sometimes makes characters commit incest without knowing their real kinship.

When Ursula dies her taboo regime breaks down. All the forces she has set against incest fall to pieces. It tempts the last Buendias to indulge in incestuous desires.

The prophecy is fulfilled in the violent incestuous relationship between Amaranta Ursula and Aureliano Babilonia. In order to hide Meme's shame, Aureliano is reported as found in a basket. He searches through the parish register to unravel the mystery of his parentage. Amaranta Ursula believes that he is the son of Petra Cotes. Aureliano is shocked to think that he is his wife's half-brother. "They accepted the story of the basket because it spared them their terror.... They became more and more integrated into the solitude of the house" (HYS, 330).

Sexual freedom blinds them to the inherent flow of incest. Amaranta's provocative behaviour burns the latent passion of Aureliano Babilonia. Ursula's barriers are broken. Sexual indulgence is given free play.

Decay creeps into the house as degeneration in human relationship leads to incest. The decay is enhanced by ants as they devastate the entire house. The house which Ursula looked after so carefully is forgotten in the orgy of sexual pleasure. Amaranta Ursula gives birth to a male child;

> ...one of those great Buendias, strong and wilful like the Jose Arcadios, with the open

> and clairvoyant eyes of the Aurelianos, and predisposed to begin the race again from the beginning and cleanse it of its pernicious vices and solitary calling, for he was the only one in a century who had been engendered with love (HYS, 312).

He has the tail of a pig. They are not alarmed because they are not aware of the family precedent. Amaranta Ursula dies and the child is eaten by the ants. Incest is a metaphor for regression. It is a reversal and denial of history, and it leads to destruction and solitude.

Thus, Ursula's taboo-regime fails to prevent incest. She succeeds in suppressing or displacing the passions but is helpless before the potent incest urge lurking in her grand-children and great-grand-children. "Since the Buendias cannot fulfil themselves they become unhappy with their actual condition and tend to withdraw into a frustrated solitude..." (Williamson, 51). When the incest urge is thwarted or displaced they become apathetic to their world and regress to nostalgia. They often indulge in pointless and meaningless repetitive activity.

In HYS, incest is a part of the characterisation. For instance, Jose Arcadio's incestuous feelings for his mother find an outlet in his relationship with Pilar Ternera. This woman is a surrogate-mother/lover. She becomes the object of desire for her own son. Pilar's son, Aureliano Jose, has an urge for Amaranta. Her great-nephew Jose Arcadio also experiences similar feelings for Amaranta. Rebeca marries her step-brother Jose Arcadio. Petra Cotes is mother-surrogate/lover for Jose Arcadio Segundo and Aureliano Segundo. Williamson has studied in detail the theme of incest in his journal article "Magical Realism and the Theme of Incest in One Hundred Years of Solitude":

> In spite of Ursula's taboo ridden anxieties, we find the spectre of incest stalking the family, criss-crossing the generations to form a web of endogamous passion lurking beneath the surface of legal kinship (Williamson, 51).

Normal marriage is not at all successful in HYS. Free-love seems to be more enduring. The relationship between Aureliano Jose and Petra Cotes is an instance. Whenever they copulate the number of their live-stock miraculously multiplies. So, free-

love seems to pave the way for prosperity. When the family imposes taboos, it leads to incest. The other incestuous relationships produce no issue. But Amaranta Ursula's and Aureliano's union produces the formidable male child with a pig's tail. If Aureliano was not kept in isolation he would have contacted other females and formed other relationships. Similarly, if he had known that Amaranta was his aunt, he would have stayed apart.

Incest shows the failure of the Buendias to communicate. It is a self-centred family, introspective and self-contained. The autarchic nature of the family hinders all communication with the outside world. It is further evident in the bond that keeps the family intact. All the characters who leave it return to it. The seventeen illegitimate sons of Col. Aureliano Buendia reach there on the same occasion without knowing each other. Jose Arcadio's blood returns to the family.

To Garcia Marquez, incest is analogous to Original Sin. The fear of incest reminds us of Oedipus Rex and the theme of guilt and inescapable fate. Here the children multiply the father in illegitimate relationships. Later they are incorporated into the

family. The hand is not raised against the father. In contrast to the story of Oedipus, HYS deals with erratic paternity. "Nobody is truly legitimate", Julio Ortega quotes Rene Girard, "there is no real father" (Ortega, 1988, 8). As Ricardo Gullon comments:

> The birth of Aureliano V is the end of the novel; in him the prophecies of destruction are fulfilled, and Macondo, reduced to dust, disappears forever and with it the memory of those who made and inhabited it (Gullon, 32).

George R. McMurray summarises the features of the novel thus:

> One Hundred Years of Solitude impresses readers not only as a commentary of profound concern for the terrible realities of the human condition but also as a haunting premonition of disaster.... Ultimately, however it is a monumental tour de force by a non-pareil spinner of yarns whose sombre vision of a disintegrating world is surpassed only by his sense of humour and artistic excellence (McMurray, 107).

THE CHARACTERS

Garcia Marquez's characters have lives of their own. "They may fulfil their tragic destiny, but they behave with so much spontaneity and good humour that we remember them as the better parts of ourselves and accept their world of irrational 'happenings' as the real one" (Rodman, 1983, 17). Jose Arcadio Buendia is a conquistador, one who longs for new experiences and knowledge. Robert Kiely has commented thus:

> In a sense, Jose Arcadio Buendia and Ursula are the only two characters in the story, and all their children, grand-children and great-grand-children are variations in their strength and weakness (Kiely, 24).

The fear of incest, the belief that the sexual union between people who are relatives, will lead to engendering a monster with a pig's tail, plays an important role in the married life of Jose Arcadio Buendia and Ursula. They, in a way, re-enact the Oedipus myth. Jose Arcadio Buendia's story is the story of guilt and repentance.

Throughout HYS ghosts regularly mingle with the living. Their presence is accepted as a normal

event in day-to-day life. Nobody is shocked, nobody tries to drive them away. People always welcome them. Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "characters appear, even at their most rambunctious, as beings dreadfully mortal if not outright ghastly" (Richardson, 3).

The family moves to the wilderness to escape from the torments of Prudencio Aguilar's ghost. Jose Arcadio Buendia, another Moses, leads a small group of men to the promised land. In Macondo, another arcadia, he tries to escape the forces of retribution and Original Sin.

After establishing the foundations of the village Jose Arcadio Buendia plunges into a search for knowledge. He searches for gold with the help of two magnets supplied by a wandering gipsy named Melquiades. The gipsy brings the modern inventions to this far-off place where death is still unknown.

Jose Arcadio Buendia's dream of a city with mirror walls is a creation myth. His relationship with Melquiades reminds us of the liason between Faust and Mephistopheles. Jose Arcadio Buendia uses the daguerrotype to discover the existence of God. HYS "expresses a vision full of lunges, spurts, mild or maniacal hallucinations, preternatural heavings and bulging gargoyles" (West, 4).

But, Prudencio Aguilar returns to talk with him. Jose Arcadio Buendia's talks with the ghost lead him to the absurd realms of reality. Frustrated by the chaos he encounters, he goes mad. It is the punishment for going beyond the realms of knowledge permitted to man. He is tied to a chestnut tree where he remains for years babbling in Latin incoherent words. "At the moment of his death, he envisions himself lost in a labyrinth of identical rooms resembling 'a gallery of parallel mirrors'" (McMurray, 83).

When he dies a rain of tiny yellow flowers crams the streets as if Nature itself were mourning the death of the patriarch. He is a Promethean hero, one who transcends the physical universe to unravel the mysteries of the universe. He finds comfort in the solitude of madness. His "solitude of madness is accompanied by the failure of language" (Gullon, 20).

When we read HYS, we feel "magnified" and "anthropologically enlarged" (West, 4). It is "a Techni-colour tableau of fools which got up as a family saga, stretches the mind by cramming it and re-enacts Paradise found and lost as a version of Latin America's own history..." (West, 5).

George McMurray analyses the features of Garcia Marquez's characters:

> The disproportion between the characters' intentions and the adverse reality they face illuminates the futility of their struggles for self-fulfilment and lays the groundwork for the absurdities and baffling inconsistencies that occupy a central position in their lives (McMurray, 105-6).

Ursula is the linchpin, the axis upon which the entire story turns in HYS. As Susanne Kappeler opines"...Ursula is more like the stem which runs down that entire tree, supporting all its branches" (Kappeler, 1983, 155). This great matriarch keeps the family line going till her death. No other character dares to inherit her name or characteristics till the end of the novel. When her role as the matriarch fades, degeneration falls on the family.

Ursula is an embodiment of loneliness. "The solitude of the title derives not just from Macondo's physical isolation but from the solitary destiny of the family itself which she (Ursula) embodies more fully than anyone else" (Brotherston, 127).

Ursula is an "active, small, severe woman of unbreakable nerves who at no moment in her life had been heard to sing" (HYS, 15). She has an immense capacity for work. She keeps the house free of dust. She is, thus, the personification of endurance and will-power.

"The contrast between his (Garcia Marquez's) male and female characters provides an important source of dramatic tension and irony" (McMurray, 182). The most obvious example is the contrast between Jose Arcadio Buendia and Ursula in HYS. Jose Arcadio Buendia is a rudderless dreamer while Ursula is against her husband's hare-brained schemes and holds the clan together for many generations.

Garcia Marquez believes that "it is the power of women in the home and society...that enables men to launch out into every sort of chimerical and strange adventures..." (Guibert, 316). When he tries to shift from that locality after a failed exploration, she objects with all her might. She feels an affinity for the place and refuses to leave because she has a son (Aureliano) there. Her husband has a witty reply:" A person does not belong to a place until there is someone dead under the ground" (HYS, 19). Ursula is

even prepared to die if it is essential for the rest of them to stay there. Neither her husband's charm, nor the promise of a prodigious world, can change her mind.

HYS has no single clearly defined protagonist. Ursula fulfils that role to an extent. She is the clan's mainstay. Her stability stands in contrast with her husband's wavering temper. She goes in search of Jose Arcadio when he leaves Macondo with a gipsy girl. She returns after six months, rejuvenated and exalted. She grudgingly admits Jose Arcadio's illegitimate child (by Pilar Ternera) to her household. She keeps a prosperous business in small candy animals. When the family becomes large with children, she undertakes the enlargement of the house. She knows "that her children were on the point of marriage and having children and that they would be obliged to scatter for the lack of space" (HYS, 51).

In HYS, "Ursula is both a mother and The Mother" (Gullon, 28). Her normal everyday domestic activities create a centre where decisive events take place.

Thus, she supervises the dancing lessons of Pietro Crespi. When both Amaranta and Rebeca fall in love with him, Ursula takes care of the sick girls.

Her tenderness is nowhere more obvious than when she weeps with rage and curses the day it had occured to her to buy the pianola. She fixes Rebeca's marriage with Pietro Crespi and takes Amaranta on a trip to the capital to alleviate her disappointment. She agrees to Aureliano's choice to marry Remedios though Jose Arcadio Buendia objects to his son's decision to marry the daughter of his enemy, Don Apolinar Moscote.

"Ursula is the female custodian of the Buendia house" (Gill, 153). She imposes a strict mourning for the death of Remedios and lights a lamp before her daguerrotype. When Jose Arcadio returns, Ursula welcomes him thus: "And there was so much of a home for you, my son, and so much food thrown to the hogs" (HYS, 81). She does not allow Jose Arcadio and Rebeca to enter her house when they get married. She flogs Arcadio when he becomes a cruel dictator. When Arcadio tries to shoot Don Apolinar Moscote, Ursula displays all her strength and vitality. Rushing to the barracks she whips him and chases him to the back of the courtyard. Ursula releases the magistrate and the prisoners.

Ursula is virtually the ruler of the town from that day onwards. She restores peace and many of the

good old customs. She re-establishes the Sunday mass and cancels Arcadio's decrees. "But in spite of her strength, she still wept over her unfortunate fate. She felt so much alone that she sought the useless company of her husband who had been tied to the chestnut tree" (HYS 93). Their children have grown up and they are alone. She tells her husband the important details of the family as if to get rid of her sorrows. She even tells her husband lies, to console herself. But he is beyond the reach of any sorrow.

The spirit and will of Ursula give structure to HYS. She strives hard to live, to keep the family moving with honour, sanity and respect. Richardson reviews the admirable qualities of ursula:

> Through generation after generation of her family she lives on, overcoming grand and petty calamities, growing blind and wizened, finally dwindling to nothing but a bent little toy for her great-grand-children's amusement, yet never giving up her sensible notion that there must be some decent goal to be reached after all the frenzy and passions she has witnessed (Richardson, 4).

Ursula visits her condemned son Colonel Aureliano Buendia, in jail when he is brought back to Macondo to carry out the death sentence. She finds him "pale, taller and more solitary then ever" (HYS, 107). She feels troubled by the aura of command and "the glow of maturity that radiated from his skin" (HYS, 107). She has secretly brought a revolver. But Aureliano rejects it.

In HYS, "Ursula's function is to impregnate the fictional space with everyday realities so that the marvellous may enter it smoothly" (Gullon, 28).

Ursula accepts Arcadio's children to her house but refuses to baptize his daughter by her name: "We won't call her Ursula because a person suffers too much with the name" (HYS, 112). When her son Jose Arcadio dies, his blood comes in search of her:

> A trickle of blood came out under the door, crossed the living-room, went out into the street, continued on in a straight line across the uneven terraces, went down steps and climbed over curbs, passed along the street of the Turks, turned a corner to the right and another to the left, made a right angle at the Buendia house, went in under the closed door,

> crossed through the parlour, hugging the walls so as not to stain the rugs, went on to the other living room, made a curve to avoid the dining room table, went along the porch with the begonias, and passed without being seen under Amaranta's chair as she gave an arithmetic lesson to Aureliano Jose and went through the pantry and came out in the kitchen where Ursula was getting ready to crack the thirty six eggs to make bread (HYS, 113-4).

She follows the route and finds the dead body of her son. She has another premonition when the soldiers bring Colonel Aureliano Buendia to Macondo. When he is poisoned Ursula fights against death to save him. She cleans his stomach with emetics, wraps his body in hot blankets, feeds him egg whites until he regains his health.

"As against the imaginative demiurge of her husband, Ursula embodies the feelings of autochthon in all its complexity" (Gill, 150). She takes good care of Jose Arcadio Buendia when Colonel Aureliano informs her of his imminent death. Again, Ursula warns Aureliano Jose when his relation with Amaranta leads towards incest. Ursula keeps the family intact in evil

times: "In spite of time, of the superimposed period of mourning and her accumulated affections, Ursula resisted growing old" (HYS, 125). She continues her pastry business and earns enough coins to run the family. She saves a big amount for the future. With all the tenderness of a grandmother she baptizes the seventeen illegitimate sons of Col. Aureliano. She is helpless; she brings up her grandchildren only to lose them when they become mature. She laments: "They are all alike....At first they behave very well, they are obedient and prompt and they don't seem capable of killing a fly but as soon as their beards appear they go to ruin" (HYS, 129).

Ursula fights against the cruelties of her son Col. Aureliano when he turns dictator. She brings the mothers of the revolutionary officers to testify for General Moncada. She tries in vain to save his life. "Her gloomy dignity, the weight of her name and the vehemence of her arguments made the scale of justice hesitate for a moment" (HYS, 154). When Colonel Aureliano sentences his closest friend Col. Gerineldo Marquez to death she declares she will kill her son if the order is carried out. Col. Aureliano has to withdraw his order.

Ursula has another premonition when Col. Aureliano signs the Treaty of Neerlandia. He shoots himself. At that moment, in Macondo, when she takes the cover off the pot of milk on the stove, she finds it full of worms and exclaims: "They have killed Aureliano" (HYS, 149). But he is out of danger. "At dusk through her tears she saw the swift and luminous discs that crossed the sky like an exhalation and she thought it was a signal of death" (HYS, 149).

When Col. Aureliano confines himself to the house, Ursula rejuvenates it with a vitality that seemed impossible at her age: "There won't be a better, more open house in all the world than this mad house" (HYS, 151).

She feels that she will go mad when her grandchildren acquire the defects of the family and none of its virtues. She is then a hundred years old and almost blind from cataract but still has her physical dynamism, her integrity of character and her mental balance intact. She hopes that Jose Arcadio will become a priest to restore the prestige of the family. She realizes that the four calamities that led to the downfall of her family are war, women, cockfights and wild undertakings. She warns her great grandchildren against these evils.

Against atavistic tendencies she stands as a citadel. "As a result, she provides a reference point for measuring the imbalances, inadequacy and perversion imminent in other characters" (Gill, 154).

Ursula advises Fernanda to change the strange customs of the latter's ancestors. As long as ursula has full control of her faculities, many of the old customs of her family survive. But when she loses her sight, Fernanda controls the family. She stops the pastry business of candy animals. The doors of the house, wide open from morn to night, are closed. Ursula tries to bring up Remedios the Beauty as a useful woman. She advises her: "Men demand much more than you think. There is a lot of cooking, a lot of sweeping, a lot of suffering over little things beyond what you think" (HYS, 194).

She is blind in her final years but none discovers it. She does not reveal it as it will render her useless. By depending on other people's voices and odours she manages to survive. She learns the movements of the members of the family and behaves as if she has normal eyesight. Quite diligent even in those days, she makes fresh conclusions about the behaviour of the members of the family: Col. Aureliano

is incapable of loving anyone; it is sinful pride that led him to wars; Amaranta is a victim of immeasurable love.

She is throughly disillusioned with the acts of her great-grandson Aureliano Segundo. She "tried to get rid of the shadows that were beginning to wrap her in a strait jacket of cobwebs" (HYS, 206). She now prefers death and asks God if people are made of iron to bear so many troubles and mortifications. She wants to shout words of abuse at the world that she finds so degenerated. She witnesses the death of Amaranta. She pleads for Amaranta's final reconciliation with Fernanda. She collapses with the mourning for Amaranta. Totally blind, she realizes the inner tribulations of Meme. She wants the rain to stop in order that she may die.

In her final days, Ursula becomes a plaything in her great-great-grandchildren's hands:

> They looked upon her as a big broken down doll that they carried back and forth from one corner to another wrapped in coloured cloth and with her face painted with soot and annatto, and once they were on the point of plucking out her eyes with the pruning shears as they had done with the frogs (HYS, 266).

She loses her sense of reality and confuses present time with remote periods in her life. She weeps for Petronila Iguaran who was buried a century ago. Even in that labyrinth of madness she keeps a margin of lucidity. When the rain stops, she regains her lucidity and rejoins the life of the family. She weeps when she learns what her great-great-grandchildren have done to her. She washes her painted face and removes the lizards and frogs from her body.

Then she realizes that her house has fallen into a state of ruin, she again tries to restore it. She loses her sense of reality once again and mixes up the past with the present:

> Little by little she was shrinking, turning into a foetus, becoming mummified in life to the point that in her last months she was a cherry raisin lost inside of her night gown, and the arm that she always kept raised looked like the paw of a marmonda monkey (HYS, 277).

Santa Sofia feeds her like a baby. The children take her in and out of the bed room and lay her in the altar and hide her in a closet. On Palm Sunday they carry Ursula out by neck and ankles. They consider her dead. In a final prayer, Ursula requests

God to keep her house, keep the light burning before Remedios's daguerrotype and prevent incestuous relationships. She dies on Good Friday. As if to indicate the importance of the event, strange things happen: the roses smell like goosefoot, a pad of cheekpeas falls down and the beans lie on the ground in a perfect geometrical pattern of a star-fish and a row of luminous orange discs passes across the sky.

"When Colonel Buendia dies one feels the poignancy in the death of a single being, but when Ursula is buried one understands that life itself can be worn down to nothing" (Richardson, 4). After her death all disasters against which her life has been a bulwark, descend upon the Buendia family.

To critics like Edwin Williamson, Ursula represents an order of taboo mentality. Her taboo regime is repressive and inefficient. Ursulas's order fails to eradicate the urge to incest as it is based on fear rather than understanding. Her taboo-regime represses instinct and will. The characters cannot, as a result, realize a distinctive personality. When they are unable to attain independent characteristics, they become victims to generic traits and hereditary vices. "This subservience to an impersonal family typology is

evidenced by the almost bewildering recurrence of names --the Arcadios, Aurelianos, Amarantas, Ursulas and combinations thereof" (Williamson, 52). The names symbolically represent the psychological characteristic of the type. For instance, "the Aurelianos are clairvoyant while the Jose Arcadios are sexually voracious" (Williamson, 52). To every name is attached a group of analogies and parallels. When a child is named Aureliano or Arcadio "a bunch of stock patterns repeat themselves" (Williamson, 52).

The gipsy, Melquiades, is a combination of mythical and human elements. He is without a beginning or an end. He appears after his spurious deaths when he could not bear the solitude. In HYS he plays the role of a prophet and the scribe. The novel is "Melquiades's version of the history of Macondo" (Echevarria, 376).

Melquiades is "a heavy gipsy with an untamed beard and sparrow hands" (HYS, 9). He brings modern discoveries like the magnet and the magnifying glass to Macondo. He believes that things have a life of their own and wants to wake up their souls. "Melquiades is successively and simultaneously alchemist, adventurer, experimenter, scientist, encyclopedic sage, he is

mortal and immortal, a resurrected being" (Gullon, 28). Gullon observes the relevance of Melquiades thus:

> Melquiades is the wanderer who circulates freely through the space of the novel and beyond, crossing without effort the boundaries between one world and another. He serves as a link and messenger between the living and the dead (Gullon, 28).

When he again reaches Macondo, he appears to have aged with surprising rapidity and is worn down by some tenacious illness. It is the result of multiple and rare diseases contracted on his trips around the world. "Death followed him everywhere, sniffing at the cuffs on his pants, but never deciding to give him the final clutch of its claws" (HYS, 12). A fugitive from all the plagues and catastrophes, he has survived "pellegra in Persia, scurvy in the Malayan archipelago, leprosy in Alexandria, beriber in Japan, a bubonic plague in Madagasker, an earthquake in Sicily and a disasterous shipwreck in the Straits of Magellan" (HYS, 12). "Melquiades and his gipsies.... burst into the solitude of Macondo as men wiser and older than its founding family" (Brotherston, 123).

This gloomy man who knows the predictions of Nostradamus is enveloped in a sad aura and has an Asiatic look. He wears a large black hat that looks like a raven with widespread wings. He wears a violet vest across which "the patina of the centuries had skated" (HYS, 12). "One Hundred Years of Solitude is built upon predictions of what will happen to characters in the future..." (Griffin, 1987, 91). In spite of his immense wisdom, he is involved in the small problems of daily life. He suffers from ailments of old age and economic difficulties. He has stopped laughing long before because scurvy has made his teeth drop out. He tells strange stories to the children. He teaches Jose Arcadio Buendia alchemy.

When Melquiades appears again he is youthful and unwrinkled. He disappears again. He is reported to be dead. When Macondo plunges into an insomnia plague, Melquiades reappears with a daguerrotype laboratory. "He really had been through death but he had returned because he could not bear the solitude" (HYS, 47). He decides to stay with the Buendias. He spends time interpreting the predictions of Nostradamus. One night, he predicts the future of Macondo, a city of glass walls, where there is no trace of a Buendia. Garcia Marquez's characters live "in the

heart of an immense gallery of prophecy so that we feel things have to be because they were written before a story was written about them" (Blakeston, 1973, 73).

In HYS the events are narrated twice: first in Sanskrit by Melquiades and then in Spanish by the narrator. There is no discrepancy between Melquiades's version and the narrator's. Melquiades becomes an old man again and is neglected by the Buendias. They abandon him to solitude because communication with him is difficult. He loses his sight and hearing. He confuses people and speaks in a strange language. He gropes in the air without his false teeth. He scribbles in an enigmatic language on the parchments he has brought with him. No one understands his broken language. His reading aloud from his parchments resembles encyclicals being chanted. He advised Arcadio to burn mercury for three days to make him immortal. One day he is drowned. Jose Arcaido Buendia tries in vain to resurrect him by burning mercury. He is buried as Macondo's greatest benefactor. On the tomb, they write the only thing they know about him: 'Melquiades'. In the novel, "prodigious events and miracles mingle with reference to household events" (Gullon, 27). Phantoms and ghosts live side by side with the living. "In the novel's space, proven and fabulous events are equally true..." (Gullon, 27).

Loneliness is so unbearable that the gipsy again returns during the time of Aureliano Segundo. The latter tries to decipher Melquiades's manuscripts which look like clothes hung out to dry on a line. They resemble musical notations. Aureliano Segundo feels the presence of a stranger in the laboratory. It is Melquiades, who was under forty years of age. His hereditary memory helps Aureliano Segundo to recognise the gipsy. Melquiades refuses to translate the manuscript. No one shall read them, he believes, until Macondo has reached one hundred years of age. They talk, but no one else sees or hears Melquiades.

Then Jose Arcadio tries to read the parchments. He becomes unaware of everything and everyone leaves him to his solitude. After Jose Arcadio Segundo's death, Aureliano Babilonia tries to decipher the parchments. He finds that they are written in Sanskrit. Melquiades asks him to buy a Sanskrit primer from the Catalonian's store. He tells Aurelino that he has enough time to read them. Melquiades gradually vanishes into the elements. His room "is that timeless space of memory, the domain of history and literature...marked by the diaphanous purity of its air, its immunity against dust and destruction..." (Martin, 1987, 109).

As long as he haunts the room it is invulnerable to dust and ants. It remains as fresh as the day it is built. When he leaves, it becomes "vulnerable to dust, heat, termites, red ants and moths who would turn the wisdom of the parchments into saw dust" (HYS, 298). Finally, when Aureliano reads the manuscript, he finds the story of the hundred years of solitude of Macondo. A that moment, the city and its people are destroyed in a violent hurricane, as Melquiades has predicted in his parchments. When Melquiades dies, time pursues its work in his room. There "it is always Monday and March for some characters..." (Echevarria, 370).

The gipsy holds the past, present and future of Macondo in a single moment of thought. He tells the story of Macondo in a magical way. When the magic is discovered the city fades away. "Reading itself becomes an act of creation and as such it changes reality" (Luchting, 471).

As Aureliano finishes reading Melquiades's manuscript, everything is obliterated. "In a final stroke of magic and of art, Melquiades (Marquez) not only ends the story of the Buendias, he eradicates it forever in one luminous moment" (Richardson, 4). When

Macondo is destroyed, the time and space of the narrator's world, and the time and space of the world he narrates, become one and the same. "Our own anagnorisis as readers is saved for the last page, when the novel concludes and we close the book to cease as readers..." (Echevarria, 378).

HYS is the story of characters like Jose Arcadio Buendia, Ursula Iguaran and Pilar Ternera who are marooned on the remote, swampy village. In Michael Wood's view:

> The solitude is that of most people in the book, but especially that of Colonel Aureliano Buendia, Ursula's sad revolutionary son, fighting vague lost battles, and ultimately betraying his dimly understood cause to return to the loneliness of Macondo (Wood, 163).

Garcia Marquez presents the theme of loneliness through the life and actions of a few memorable characters. Among them Colonel Aureliano Buendia has a prominent place. In his interview with Rita Guibert, Garcia Marquez says: "The story of Colonel Aureliano Buendia -- the wars he fought and his progress to power -- is a progress towards solitude" (Guibert, 315). The first sentence of the novel itself

introduces Colonel Buendia: "Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendia was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice" (HYS, 1). Many of the readers believe that Garcia Marquez's grandfather is the model for Colonel Aureliano Buendia. The author is of the opinion that Col. Aureliano Buendia resembles his grandfather's friend and hero in the Civil War, General Raphael Uribe. A reader finds resemblances to Simon Bolivar also. Edwin Wiiliamson aptly summarises the features of this character in his article, "Magical Realism and the theme of incest in One Hundred Years of Solitude"

> Colonel Aureliano Buendia becomes the most highly individualised member of the family, he remains an isolated, eccentric figure who offers an alternative to the stock Buendia response to the impotence of failure (Williamson, 54).

He is the first human being to be born in Macondo. He is silent and withdrawn. He has wept in his mother's womb and is born with his eyes open. Then he examines the people and things in the room with fearless curiosity.

He has an infallible intuition from an early age. At three, he warns Ursula that a pot of boiling soup on the stove is going to spill. The pot falls and is broken. When his brother, Jose Arcadio, visits Pilar Ternera, Aureliano lies awake in his solitary bed, sharing his brother's suffering and enjoyment. When Pilar Ternera offers to do the chores, Aureliano dismisses her. He predicts the coming of Rebeca.

As he grows up, Aureliano has a langorous and clairvoyant look. He is an expert silver-smith and spends his time in the laboratory unaware of time and space. He seems to be taking refuge in some other time. He remains a womanless man all his life.

He falls in love with Don Apolinar Moscote's nine-year-old daughter, Remedios. Pilar Ternera helps him and Ursula supports his choice. When the girl reaches puberty he marries her. She takes care of him. She has a sense of responsibility, natural grace and calm control. Her merry vitality changes the entire house. Aureliano finds in her the justification he needed to live. It seems that he is settled for a comfortable family life. He suffers from loneliness even then:

> But his sedentary life, which accentuated his cheekbones and concentrated the sparkle of his eyes did not increase his weight or alter the parsimony of his character, but on the contrary, it hardened on his lips the straight line of solitary meditation and implacable decision (HYS, 78).

Remedios's death in an accident does not produce the despair he has feared. It vanishes as a feeling of frustration and solitary rage.

Aureliano's life takes another course when martial law is imposed and all weapons are confiscated. He witnesses the rigging of the elections. He acquires a passive sympathy for the Liberals, but is opposed to bloody assassinations. When the soldiers with their rifle butts kill a lady who is bitten by a mad dog, Aureliano organises his friends, captures the garrison, seizes the weapons and kills the soldiers. After declaring Arcadio as the civil and military ruler of the town he and his comrades leave the town to join the revolutionary forces. Williamson examines his motives:

> His rebellions are a bid to establish the differences (between Conservatives and Liberals) to assert his independence from an

order of things which exacts unthinking conformity to a hereditary set of values (Williamson, 53).

He becomes a great General. He organises thirty-two armed uprisings and loses them all. He has seventeen sons by seventeen different women. They are all killed one night. He survives many attempts on his life. He refuses the Order of Merit. He rises to be the Commander-in-Chief of the revolutionary forces. He refuses pension and lives in old age by manufacturing little gold fish.

Colonel Aureliano Buendia's political struggles echo the great Colombian Civil Wars, the terrible conflict between the Conservatives and the Liberals. Aureliano Buendia an apolitical and solitary dreamer, leads the country into a labyrinth of Civil Wars. But he is gradually trapped in a maze from which he couldn't come out. He finally admits defeat after a number of bloody revolutions. He feels as if he has gone through these trials before. He hands over his poems to be burnt and refuses to accept a revolver brought secretly by his mother. He waits for premonitions but no signal comes. He is certain that his death will be announced to him with a definite unequivocal signal.

He has other similar premonitions. Once a beautiful woman comes to kill him. (The story is repeated in GIL). Before she turns with the weapon, he feels that she is there to shoot him. On another occasion his friend, Colonel Magnifico Visbal who lies in Aureliano's bed is killed. The premonitions will come suddenly in a wave of supernatural lucidity. When he is condemned to death, he demands that the order is to be carried out in Macondo. His brother Jose Arcadio saves him.

Aureliano leaves Macondo to begin another war. He does not gain anything and is not happy. He realises the futility of his wars. He even suspects that he is fighting because of pride. Yet he continues war and does not agree for talks. His death is announced many times. He becomes the most feared enemy of the government. A court-martial sentences him to death in absentia. "His Odyssey through the Caribbean also represents a metaphoric, internalized journey to disillusion and solitude..." (McMurray, 80). When he returns to Macondo he has become a lonely despot, protected by guards. No one is allowed to approach him closer than ten feet. He places his hand always on his pistol. His face becomes hard and he looks like a man capable of anything. He organises a court-martial and

his enemies are shot. His mother's pleading has no say in his authoritarian rule. He himself is startled to see how much he has aged, how his hands shook and how indifferent he was to death. He feels disgusted at himself. General Moncada, his enemy, reminds him of his degeneration. Fighting against the corrupt military and the politicians, he has ended up as bad as they are. He ends up as the most bloody dictator the country has ever seen. He may even shoot Ursula to pacify his conscience.

Aureliano never allows anyone to enter his realm of confidence. As the war continues his memories fade into a universe of unreality. War becomes nothing but an emptiness. The politicians repudiate him as an adventurer but he is not bothered and sits giving orders. He destroys the house of Gen. Moncada when his wife asks him to get out of the house. "You are rotting alive", Col. Gerineldo Marquez warns him. (HYS, 139). When a rebel commander Gen. Teofilo Vargas becomes a threat to his position, he is murdered. The corruption of power has reached his inner core. "An inner coldness shattered his bones...and the intoxications of power began to break apart under waves of discomfort" (HYS, 140). He felt more lonely than ever. He does not believe his own officers. His position is very pitiable:

> He was weary of the uncertainty of the vicious circle of that eternal war that always found him in the same place, but always older, wearier, even more in the position of not knowing why or how or even when. Alone, abandoned by his premonitions, fleeing the chill that was to accompany him until death, he sought a last refuge in Macondo in the warmth of his oldest memories (HYS, 140).

Alan Kennedy in his essay, "Marquez: Resistance, Rebellion and Reading" finds it as the fate of every dictator: "Buendia's fate seems to be an allegory of the fate of the rebellious: they are transformed into what they oppose and threaten to become dictators in their turn" (Kennedy 52).

When he signs a pact with the Liberals, all oppose it. He condemns his closest friend Col. Gerineldo Marquez to death. He spends "many hours trying to break the hard shell of solitude" (HYS, 140). He feels the worthlessness of the wars. "He had to start thirty-two wars and had to violate all of his pacts with death and wallow like a hog in the dung-heap of glory..." (HYS, 140). Then he tries to put an end to the war. It takes one year to force the government

to propose conditions of peace favourable to the rebels. It takes one more year to convince his own soldiers. It becomes more difficult to stop a war than begin one. He has to kill his own officers. In a way he is fighting for his own liberation. He returns to his house as a stranger, alien to everything.

Ursula understands his misery. His affection for her has rotten away. No one can put a lasting impression on his mind. "The countless women he had known on the desert of love and who had spread his seed all along the coast had left no trace in his feelings" (HYS, 145). Like an absurd hero Col. Aureliano Buendia realizes the disproportion between his intentions and reality.

During the following days he destroys all traces of his passage through the world. He destroys his clothes, his poetry and his weapons. He keeps one pistol with one bullet. On the day of the armistice he is more taciturn and solitary. At Neerlandia he is tormented by the failure of his dreams. After signing the treaty he shoots himself but doesn't die, and this helps him regain his lost prestige. But he hesitates to begin another war.

Leaving all contacts with the reality of the nation he encloses himself in the workshop making little gold fish. He sells them and converts the gold coins to gold fish. It is a vicious circle. The concentration he needs to link scales, fit minute rubies into the eyes etc. make him forget the disillusionment of the war. It provides him the peace of spirit. He learns the secrets of solitude.

> Taciturn, silent, insensible to the new breath of vitality that was shaking the house, Colonel Aureliano Buendia could understand only that the secret of a good old age is simply an honorable pact with solitude (HYS, 166).

He works all day in his workshop and allows nothing to disturb his solitude. He has to "cast and recast tiny golden fish, in a stultifying re-enactment of his military campaigns" (Richardson, 4). Edwin Williamson delves deep into the Colonel's mind:

> Defeat may have forced the Colonel into a fruitless solitude, but his attitude is the very opposite of resignation. He keeps alive his bitterness at historical failure in a rancorous disaffection from the established

> order of things...unwilling to escape from history into some magical sphere where the problems of his actual situation can be dissolved (Williamson, 53-4).

He does not take part in the jubilee and refuses the Order of Merit. He begs them to leave him alone to spend his final days as an old man manufacturing little golden fish. When his seventeen sons are assassinated he thinks of organising another rebellion. These are bad days for him. He feels anger and rage. he abandons his work and wanders through the house. He tries to rouse the omens that have guided him through the desolate paths of glory. He is lost in that mad house.

Nothing can take him out of his self-imposed imprisonment. He does not care for food. He stops selling his gold fish when he learns that people are buying them as relics. He makes two gold fish everyday and when the number reaches twentyfive, melts them down and starts all over again.

"On the last day of his life, his alienation is expressed symbolically when he falls asleep in his hammock and dreams of entering an empty house with white walls" (McMurray, 81). The Colonel dies utterly

alone. The absurdity of his life is conveyed by the passing circus. When the procession passes by his house "he finds himself contemplating his miserable solitude mirrored in the expanse of the street where a few onlookers are still peering over the precipice of uncertainty" (McMurray, 82).

George R.McMurray in his remarkable critical study, Gabrial Garcia Marquez, sums up the character of the Colonel: "Colonel Aureliano Buendia is the patriarch who gives glory to the town as well as its denouement.... His heroic feats have been soon erased from the collective memory of Macondo" (McMurray, 82).

Pilar Ternera is a surrogate mother/lover, forune-teller and initiatress. She acts as "the deputy matriarch who is annexed to the House of Buendia like the stables or the granary" (Kappeler, 159). Pilar Ternera is a merry, foul-mouthed and provocative woman who comes to the Buendia family to help with the chores. Ursula seeks her help to know the future of her son, Jose Arcadio. "As against Ursula, Pilar Ternera is the female version of a traveller" (Gill, 151). In a voice that resounds like a spray of broken glass she tells the future of the boy. It arouses in him immense desire for her. She initiates the boy into the world of sexual pleasure.

"Pilar is the village whore who populates Macondo with bastards fathered by the young men of three generations while waiting for the perfect man promised by her Tarot Pack" (Richardson, 4). She has a tragic past; she is dragged to the unknown place by her family to separate her from the man who raped her at fourteen. He continues to love her but never marries her. Jose Arcadio, in terrible loneliness, finds pleasure in this woman whose explosive laughter frightens off the doves.

Jose Arcadio and Pilar Ternera become lovers, "...they even came to suspect that love could be a feeling that was more relaxing and deep than the happines, wild but momentary, of their secret nights" (HYS, 32). But when she becomes pregnant Jose Arcadio is shocked. Pilar Ternera's son is brought to the Buendia family and is given the name 'Arcadio'. She has a son by Aureliano too. "She had become tired of waiting for the man who would stay, of the men who left, of the countless men who missed the road to her house confused by the uncertainty of the cards" (HYS, 62). She realises Aureliano's craving for love and understanding. She offers to help him marry Remedios. She predicts Rebeca's future. Rebeca, Pilar Ternera announces, will not be happy as long as her parents'

bones remain unburied. She also predicts that Aureliano will become a great soldier.

Pilar Ternera is in a pitiable state when her son Arcadio, who never knows his parentage, is attracted towards her. She has lost her charm, but her smell still haunts men. She resists his attempts. Finally she sacrifices her savings and sends a virgin, Santa Sofia de la Piedad, to his room. Pilar is capable of motherly tenderness also. She quarrels with a woman when her son Arcadio is ridiculed.

Pilar accepts Aureliano Jose as her son. "More than mother and son, they were accomplices in solitude" (HYS, 30). Her laughter changes to the tone of an organ. Her heart grows old without bitterness. Renouncing the illusions of her cards she finds consolation in other people's love. She gives her room to the girls from the neighbourhood to receive their lovers.

She never charged for the service. She never refused the favour, "just as she never refused the countless men who sought her out, even in the twilight of her maternity without giving her money or love and only occasionally pleasure" (HYS, 130).

Aureliano Jose is the tall dark man promised by her cards, but he is stamped with the mark of death and is killed soon.

She warns Col. Aureliano Buendia to watch out for his mouth. When he is given poison this prophecy becomes true. She does not require the cards to tell the future of a Buendia. She gives Meme and Mauricio Babilonia her bed for their trysts. The last Buendia, Aureliano also seeks relief in her lap when he is in hopeless love with his own aunt, Amaranta Ursula. Pilar knows the secrets of the family.

> There was no mystery in the heart of a Buendia that was impenetrable for her because a century of cards and experience had taught her that the history of the family was a machine with unavoidable repetitions, a turning wheel that would have gone on into spilling into eternity were it not for the progressive and irremediable wearing of the axle (HYS, 320).

Pilar is a very old woman by then. She runs a zoological brothel in her final days. When the last Aureliano comes in search of her, she recognises him immediately because "he was marked for ever and from the beginning of the world with the pox of solitude"

(HYS, 319). She is reminded of Col. Buendia. When she is one hundred and forty five,

> she had given up the pernicious custom of keeping track of her age and she went on living in the static and marginal time of memories in a future perfectly revealed and established, beyond the futures, disturbed by the insidious snares and suppositions of the cards (HYS, 319).

"It is no wonder that Garcia Marquez gives his women long lives, for they seem far more able to make a pact with life than men" (Richardson, 4). Pilar soon dies in her wicker chair. She is not buried in a coffin, but sitting in her rocker chair which eight men lower by ropes into a huge hole dug in the centre of the dance floor. The mulatto girls observe a number of shadowy rites. They throw into the pit their earrings brooches and rings. Her tomb bears neither name nor dates. "In Pilar's tomb among the psalms and cheap whore jewellery, the ruins of the past would rot" (HYS, 322). Amaranta's story repeats the same tale of solitude. Ricardo Gullon in his "Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the Lost Art of Story telling" comments:

> Amaranta's solitude is that of rancour and death in life. She lives along with her hate and solely for it. Her communication with death is normal and no different from that which she has with people around her (Gullon, 137).

'Amar' means love, the eternal passion, in Spanish but Amaranta nurtures solitude instead of love. Tejwant S. Gill is of the view that "Amaranta and Rebeca are the isolated facets of Ursula's integrated wifehood" (Gill, 153). As a child Amaranta is "light and watery like a newt" (HYS, 32). Both the girls are brought up under the strict vigilance of Ursula. When Ursula orders for a pianola, it leads to many important events in the lives of these girls. Both fall in love with Pietro Crespi, the young Italian sent by the company to assemble it. The Italian is not prepared to accept Amaranta's love. He considers her as a capricious little girl and ridicules her by offering to send his younger brother for her. Amaranta feels humiliated and she takes a pledge to stop her sister's marriage at any cost. She threatens to kill her to stop the marriage. Rebeca knows her sister's character, the haughtiness of her spirit and the virulence of her anger. When the marriage is fixed,

Amaranta sends a false letter announcing Pietro Crespi's mother's imminent death. The wedding is postponed and Pietro returns home. It is never discovered who did the mischief. Amaranta weeps with indignation and swears her innocence in front of the altar. The day is again fixed with the inauguration of the new church. It takes three more years. Amaranta then undertakes another subterfuge. She removes the moth-balls from Rebeca's wedding dress. Moths perforate it. But her plan fails because Amparo Moscote offers to sew a new dress within a week. Amaranta's response is quite shocking:

> Amaranta felt faint that rainy noontime when Amparo came to the house wrapped in the froth of needlework for Rebeca to have the final fittings of the dress. She lost her voice and a thread of cold sweat ran down the path of her spine... (HYS, 77).

She trembles at the thought that she has to poison Rebeca. She poisons Rebeca's coffee with laudanum, By a mistake, Remedios dies. The marriage is again postponed.

Amaranta suffers a crisis of conscience. She has never expected this sort of an obstacle.

Remedios's merry vitality has sent a whirlwind of good health in the entire house. When she has announced that she is going to have a baby, Amaranta and Rebeca have declared a truce to knit blue and red clothes for the baby. As a penance for killing Remedios, she adopts Aureliano Jose whom Remedios is bringing up as her son.

Rebeca marries Jose Arcadio. But Amaranta continues her rancour against her. This is an opportunity she has never dreamt of. Pietro Crespi turns his affection towards Amaranta. She looks after him with a loving diligence, knows his needs and keeps him happy company. But she repeatedly rejects his proposals. Every day he comes and spends his evenings with her. There is no obstacle. Nobody supervises their meetings. Crespi becomes quite desperate and neglects his business. Finally, he commits suicide on All Soul's Day. Amaranta feels sorry for his death. She burns her hand as repentance. The burns heal gradually and she overcomes her sense of guilt. But she keeps a bandage of black gauze on her hand until her death. "Amaranta, because of a bad moment of love as a girl, spins out the rest of her long existence doing embroidery, held to life only by the desire to outlive the woman she hates" (Richardson, 4).

Col. Gerineldo Marquez courts her. But she rejects his proposals. She brings up Aureliano Jose in order to alleviate her solitude. But soon the relationship moves to the plane of an incestuous affair. It turns into a dangerous one. She puts an end to that dangerous autumnal passion, by which, the mature maiden has been trying to let loose her repressed feelings.

Yet, she does not bar the door of her bedroom when Aureliano Jose returns from the war. When he enters her bed, completely naked, instead of fleeing, instead of shouting, she lets herself be saturated with a soft feeling of relaxation. He promises to get a special permission to marry his aunt. But, finally Amaranta rejects him also.

Col. Marques again courts her "unaware of the secret designs of that indecipherable heart" (HYS, 136). Though Amaranta is upset by the perseverence, loyalty and submissiveness of this officer, she rejects him even after four years of his courtship. She herself cannot bear the weight of her obstinancy and she weeps over her solitude.

Amaranta spends her days doing household duties. She acts as a guardian to Remedios the Beauty.

She has a deep compassion for her brother, Aureliano. She takes his children, the seventeen Aurelianos to church on Ash Wednesday. Fr. Antony Isabel makes the sign of the cross in ash on their foreheads. The mark becomes indelible. They are all killed by unknown criminals.

Even in her old age Amaranta continues her rivalry with Rebeca. she remembers every minute that her "rival was alive and rotting in her wormhole" (HYS, 181). She thinks of her when she awakens from her solitary bed, when she soaps her withered breasts and lean stomach, and when she wears the corsets of an old woman. She thinks about Rebeca because solitude has purified all other feelings except her hatred for her rival. She even tries to inculcate hatred in the mind of Remedios the Beauty towards Rebeca by narrating unpleasant events. She thus longs to prolong her hatred beyond her death.

In her extreme old age Ursula analyses Amaranta's hardness of heart and bitterness. She considers her as a tender woman who possesses immeasurable love and an invincible cowardice. This has led to her rejection of Pietro Crespi and Col Gerineldo Marquez.

Amaranta grows old, isolated from everyone. Still she looks firm, upright and healthy. No one knows her feelings. She never expresses her sorrow. Memories are quite painful to her. She becomes angry and pricks her fingers with the needle. Her sense of loss and approaching death make her bitter.

She thinks of Rebeca whose memory is scalding to her. She prays to God not to send her the punishment of dying before Rebeca. She waits for the funeral procession of Rebeca to pass by. "She would pull off buttons to sew them on again so that inactivity would not make the wait longer and more anxious" (HYS, 227). She prepares a shroud for Rebeca. She imagines decorating the corpse and throwing it to the worms after elaborate funeral rites.

Her plans fail because she dies before Rebeca. She is not frustrated because death has awarded the privilege of announcing itself several years ahead of time. "She saw it on one burning afternoon sewing with her on the porch a short time after Meme had left for school. She saw it because it was a woman dressed in blue with long hair, with a sort of antiquated look..." (HYS, 227).

Death on one occasion asks her the favour of threading a needle. Death orders her to begin sewing her own shroud. Amaranta is asked to make it as complicated as possible because she will die without pain, fear or bitterness when it is finished.

According to Ricardo Gullon, "Amaranta sews and unsews buttons and alternatively weaves and unweaves her shround to retard the coming of death. These are solitary games, designed to regain lost time" (Gullon, 32). To prolong the activity Amaranta spins the thread out of rough flax. It alone takes four years and then she starts sewing the shroud. She realizes that she will die before Rebeca. But she accepts the idea without frustration. Only then she realises the vicious circle of Col. Aureliano Buendia's golden fish. Only then she understands the misery of solitude.

She even wants to rescue Rebeca from her impenetrable solitude. With this realisation, she speeds up the work. She finishes the work on the fifth of February and then announces to the world that she is going to die at dusk. She intends to make up for a lifetime of meanness with one last favour to the world: she will take letters to the dead.

She receives a carton full of letters besides verbal messages to be delivered to the dead. She calls a carpenter to make her measurements for the coffin. Ursula alone takes her action seriously because she knows that the Buendias die without any illness. Amaranta divides her things among the poor and wears a simple cloth and slippers. She receives mock farewells also. When Fr. Antonio Isabel asks her to have confession, she replies that her conscience is clean and she does not need any spiritual help. When Fernanda blames her preference for an impious death, she asks Ursula to give public testimony as to her virginity. "Let no one have any illusions", she shouts, "Amaranta Buendia is leaving this world just as she came into it" (HYS, 230). She lies on the cushion and sees her face in a mirror for the first time in more than forty years. She is surprised at the resemblance with the image she has of herself. Ursula asks her to get reconciled to Fernanda but she refuses. She dies with the black bandage on her hand.

George R. McMurray is of the view that "the solitude shared by all the Buendias is directly related to their egocentricity, i.e., a tendency to turn inward on themselves rather than towards others" (McMurray, 69). The story of Rebeca illustrates this fact.

Rebeca is eleven years old when she comes to Macondo with some cattle dealers from Manaure along with a letter to Jose Arcadio Buendia. She carries a rocking chair and a bag containing her parents' bones. She is Ursula's cousin and is the daughter of Niconor Ulloa and Rebeca Montiel. Neither Jose Arcadio Buendia nor Ursula can remember her parents or the person who sent the letter.

Rebeca does not speak till the Guajiro Indians ask her to in their language. They call her Rebeca. She does not eat anything for several days. She secretly eats the damp earth of the courtyard and the cake of whitewash from the walls. They try various means to stop this practice. Finally Ursula gives her a medicine and uses various punishments. Gradually she joins the life of the family. She can dance and sing. She loves Ursula better than her own children. She brings the insomnia plague to Macondo.

"Although she seemed expansive and cordial she had a solitary character and impenetrable heart" (HYS, 58). When she falls in love with Pietro Crespi, she again eats earth. It is an expression of agony and an earnest desire. She eats handfuls of earth in a suicidal drive and falls unconscious.

She consults Pilar Ternera who predicts that she will not be happy as long as her parents' bones remain unburied. Jose Arcadio Buendia buries them. Her marriage is postponed due to her long-lasting rivalry with Amaranta. When little Remedios is killed the marriage is again postponed. Rebeca "seemed to be bleeding to death inside the black dress with sleeves down to her wrist" (HYS, 79). When Jose Arcadio returns, she is easily impressed by his manliness. She marries him. Ursula does not allow them to enter her house. They rent a house and spend a scandalous honeymoon:

> The neighbours were startled by the cries that woke up the whole district as many as eight time in a single night and three times during siesta and they prayed that such wild passion would not disturb the peace of the dead (HYS, 83).

Rebeca can change the ways of her husband's life:

> They led a happy married life. Rebaca's firm character, the voracity of her stomach, her tenacious ambition absorbed the tremendous energy of her husband who had been changed from a lazy woman-chasing man into an enormous work animal (HYS, 99).

Rebeca is a good housewife. She has forgotten everything about her past. Her husband is a good hunter. After Arcadio's death they live in his house. But, soon he is shot dead in mysterious circumstances. Garcia Marquez's comment is interesting: "That was perhaps the only mystery that was never cleared up in Macondo" (HYS, 113).

After her husband's death, "Rebeca closed the doors of her house and buried herself alive, covered with a thick crust of disdain that no earthly temptation was ever able to break" (HYS, 114). She goes out to the street only once in the rest of her life. She kills a thief with one shot when he is trying to break into her house. Except for Argenida, her servant, no one ever had any contact with her.

When she becomes very old Ursula remembers Rebeca with repentance and admiration: "Rebeca, the one with an impatient heart, the one with a fierce womb, was the only one who had the unbridled courage that Ursula had wanted for her line" (HYS, 204).

Aureliano Triste tries to renovate Rebeca's house with the help of the Aurelianos. But she does not allow them to enter her house. Then she pays them in coins that are no more in use. She lives as a secluded widow till her death.

Aureliano Segundo decides to bring her to the Buendia house and take care of her. But Rebeca refuses. She "had needed many years of suffering and misery in order to attain the privileges of solitude and she was not disposed to renounce them in exchange for an old age disturbed by false attractions of charity" (HYS, 182). Rebeca's life and death bears out George R. McMurray's view that in HYS Garcia Marquez creates "a fragmentary and chaotic world in which loneliness and pain appear to be the only constants" (McMurray, 90).

Gregory Rabassa opines in his essay "Beyond Magic Realism: Thoughts on the Art of Gabriel Garcia Marquez" thus: "With death and destruction all around Garcia Marquez's tropical people, his positive characters, always seem to keep on running, until they drop" (Rabassa, 1973, 50). Pietro Crespi's tragedy is an instance. His story is one of the most memorable incidents in the novel. Crespi is young and blond, the most handsome and well-mannered man who had ever been seen in Macondo. Well-dressed and quite patient in work, he is liked by all. He teaches Amaranta and Rebeca how to dance. Both fall in love with him, he prefers Rebeca.

When Jose Arcadio returns Rebeca is impressed by his manliness and marries him, neglecting Pietro Crespi, whom she considers a sugary dandy. Pietro Crespi rises above his defeat with severe dignity. Now Amaranta nurses him and keeps good company. Soon he proposes marriage, but Amaranta refuses his offer. Their friendship deepens and they are good lovers. But he is again rejected.

Pietro loses his control and weeps miserably. He exhausts all manner of pleas and goes through incredible extremes of humiliation. He prowls near her bedroom "like a tormented emperor" (HYS, 97). He spends days writing wild notes and sends a valuable gift which she rejects. One night he sings and Macondo wakes up hearing that angelic stupor. Amaranta is dumb to all pleas. His death is described in a startling manner:

> On November second, All Soul's day, his brother opened his store and found all the lamps lighted, all the music boxes opened, and all the clocks striking an interminable hour and in the midst of that mad concert he found Pietro Crespi at the desk in the rear with his wrists cut by a razor and his hands thrust into a basin of benzoin (HYS, 96).

Ursula buries him in the cemetery against the wishes of Fr. Nicanor. "In a way that neither you nor I can understand that man was a saint", she says (HYS, 96). The whole town supports her. Amaranta alone keeps aloof.

When we read HYS we "have the sense of living along with the Buendias (and the rest), in them, through them, and in spite of them, in all their loves, madnesses, and wars, their alliances dreams and deaths" (West, 4). The John Leonard comments on the pattern of solitude in his article "The Myth is alive in Latin America":

> The Buendias (inventors, artisans, soldiers, lovers, mystics) seem doomed to ride a biological tragi-cycle in circles from solitude to magic to poetry to science to politics to violence back again to solitude (Leonard, 39).

The life of Arcadio, Pilar Ternera's illegitimate son by Jose Arcadio, is an example. He has an unfortunate childhood. He never knows his true identity. Ursula grudgingly admits him to her household. Visitacion, a Guajiro Indian woman, takes care of him. As he grows up he inherits the physical

drive of his father. Aureliano teaches him to read and write.

When the magistrate founded a new school Arcadio is given the charge of it. The Liberal fever spreads and the school becomes the centre of political activities. Arcadio even blames Aureliano for his lack of interest in politics. Arcadio becomes the civil and military ruler of the town when Aureliano and his friends kill the soldiers and capture the town. He turns a dictator; he wears a uniform with ornaments; arms his former pupils and gives fiery proclamations.

He imposes compulsory military training, prohibits the Mass and organises a firing squad. He mercilessly kills those who oppose him. He assaults the magistrate's house, flogs his daughters and tortures Don Apolinar Moscote, the magistrate. Ursula interferes to rescue him. She bursts into the headquarters (formerly the school), whips him and releases the prisoners. The dictator is helpless.

Arcadio collaborates with Jose Arcadio, his father, in usurping public property and public funds. He imposes tax even for burying the dead. He builds a big house, squandering public funds. When Aureliano loses the war, he sends a messenger to Arcadio with

instructions to surrender. Arcadio puts the messenger in the stocks and fights bravely. He is defeated and captured by the soldiers.

After a summary court-martial Arcadio is shot against the wall of the cemetery. He faces death bravely. "He thought about his people without sentimentality, with a strict closing of his accounts with life, beginning to understand how much he really loved the people he hated most" (HYS, 103). He is not shocked when he is condemned to death. He feels the formality of death quite ridiculous. Death does not matter to him but life does, and he feels no fear but nostalgia. As his last wish, he gives instructions regarding the names of his children. He does not repent and embraces death.

Arcadio's story illustrates the loneliness of power. His repressed childhood is responsible for his future behaviour. He grows up as a frightened child in the midst of the insomnia plague. He suffers from his old shoes, patched pants and female buttocks. He succeeds in communicating only with Visitacion and Cataure in their language. Melquiades is the only person who cares for him. Arcadio weeps and tries to resurrect him. The school, where they pay attention to him and respect him, and then power, free him from his loneliness.

In this context, the opinion of Michael Wood is quite apt:

> Loneliness in Macondo and among the Buendias is not an accidental condition, something that could be alleviated by better communication or more friends.... It is a particular vocation, a shape of character that is inherited, certainly, but also chosen, a doom that looks inevitable but is freely endorsed (Wood, 165).

Remedios the Beauty is a femme fatale, a fatal woman who brings danger to men. She lives in a world of imagination unaffected by the great events of her time like the banana plague. "She was becalmed in a magnificent adolescence, more and more impenetrable to formality, more and more indifferent to malice and suspicion, happy in her own world of simple realities" (HYS, 190). When the members of the family pester her to keep her hair clean, she shaves her head. She does not wear corsets and petticots. She wears a cassock "without taking away the feeling of being naked" (HYS, 190). She is a woman whose beauty tortures men.

> The startling thing about her simplifying instinct was that the more she did away with fashion in search for comfort and the more she passed over conventions as she obeyed

> spontaneity, the more disturbing her incredible beauty became and the more provocative she became to men (HYS, 190).

Ursula feels that Remedios's provocative presence may lead to an incestuous affair. She warns her to keep away from the sons of Col. Aureliano Buendia because any children born out of a relationship will have a pig's tail. She is such a provocative presence that the sons of Col. Aureliano Buendia do not sleep at the house. Remedios is least bothered about such precautions. She never learns of her fate as a disturbing woman. When she appears in the dining room it causes a panic of exasperation among the outsiders. It is quite evident that she is completely naked under her night shirt. Everyone misunderstands her ways of behaviour as a provocation to men. The strangers soon realize that "she gave off a breath of perturbation, a tormenting breeze that was still perceptible several hours after she had passed by" (HYS, 191). The natural smell of Remedios the Beauty produces an anxiety not experienced before by men.

It is possible to find out the exact place where she has been. Only the strangers distinguish her odour. A young commander dies of love and another gentleman goes crazy. But she is unaware of her charm. She is indifferent to the rules of the house.

Sometimes she wakes up at three and sometimes she sleeps all day long. Sometimes she gets up at eleven o' clock and shut herself up in the bathroom till 2 o' clock. Bathing is a ritualistic ceremony to her, 'a solitary rite' that helps her to pass time.

"The smell of Remedios the Beauty kept on torturing men beyond death, right down to the dust of their bones" (HYS, 193). She does not give off a breath of love, but a fatal emanation. The man who tries to attack her is killed by a horse the same day. She is believed to possess the powers of death.

Ursula expects that a miracle will happen and take Remedios away. Fernanda considers her as an idiot. Col. Aureliano Buendia considers her as the 'most lucid being'. But,

> Remedios the Beauty stayed there wandering through the deserts of solitude, bearing no cross on her back, maturing in her dreams without nightmares, her interminable baths, her unscheduled meals, her deep and prolonged silences that had no memory... (HYS, 195).

One day, while she is folding Fernanda's bed-sheet, a wind begins to blow and she ascends to heaven. The outsiders believe that she must have eloped with a man. But most people believe in the miracle and even light candles and celebrate novenas.

Fernanda, "an outsider" and "foreigner" to Macondo, "acts as a stern wife" and "attempts to force the chain of isolation on the Buendia home" (Gullon, 30). As a result Aureliano Segundo, her husband, falls desperately into solitude. He takes shelter in this to escape his wife's solitude. Fernanda likes to live entombed, faithful to the paternal decree to be buried alive. Her father has done so and she imposes the same punishment on her daughter and grandson.

Fernanda remains as an outsider; nothing can incorporate her into the family. Her behaviour and speech are strange to the members of the family. She quarrels with Amaranta and imposes the customs of her ancestors. She puts an end to the custom of eating in the kitchen. Prayer is recited before dinner. The business in candy animals is stopped, the doors of the house are closed, the aloe branch and loaf of bread are removed from the door. Thus she makes the isolation of the Buendias more intense.

Fernanda is responsible for the tragedy of Meme. Her rigidity and narrow-mindedness spoil Meme who knows that her father lives with his concubine. When she gets freedom, she makes full use of it. The girl turns to gossips and parties. She finds pleasure

in drunken revelries. Aureliano Segundo cannot save the girl from the rigidity of Fernanda. Any other woman will have realised that the girl is in danger. Ursula, though blind, realises that Meme spends sleepless nights. Only much later does Fernanda realise that the girl is in love with a mechanic. She locks her up in her house. But the lovers meet in the bathroom. The lover is shot by the guard and Meme is taken to a far-off convent. Meme withdraws into an unbreakable silence. She gives birth to a child. Fernanda has to bring him up.

Fernanda seeks refuge in an illusory world. She keeps a touching correspondence with the invisible physicians. She writes regularly to her son, but the letters are full of lies. Her husband is away with his concubine. She thinks that she has a serious ailment and prepares herself for a telepathic operation.

Fernanda is immune to the uncertainty of the outside world. She quarrels with her husband who objects to her decision in Meme's fate. She shows her husband the papers which indicate that she joined the convent on her own account. Fernanda's only consolation is her correspondence with her invisible doctors.

After her husband's death she leads a lonely life. She has to depend on her daughter's illegitimate son to prepare food because she never knew how to light a stove. She has to depend on her husband's concubine, Petra Cotes, who sends rice and other necessaries. Her correspondence with the invisible doctors fails. They operate on her but do not find anything wrong. They advise her to use a pessary. Fernanda gradually sinks into a world of illusions. She thinks that the house is full of elves. She believes that someone misplaces things to confuse her. She wears the dress of the queen in her final days. One day Aureliano finds her dead in her room. When her son comes four months later, she is still intact.

Fernanda's loneliness results from her illusions of dignity and grandeur. George R.McMurray's words are quite relevant here:

> Man's loss of innocence in a universe from which God has withdrawn has brought about his detachment from nature as well as the severance of his intimate relations with his fellow men. The result is the kind of cosmic homelessness reflected in the character's solitude... (McMurray, 105).

Meme is very active and awakens the house with her dancing steps. She seems unaware of the solitary fate of the family. She likes the house and enjoys her holidays. But she is close to the festive mood of her father and enjoys the excesses of revelry. On her third vacation she brings to her house four nuns and sixty eight classmates to spend a week.

Meme has to suffer from the rigidity of her mother, Fernanda and the bitterness of Amaranta. Her father spends his time in the house of his concubine. He is a "genial orgiast, someone always in need of company" (Richardson, 4). She is a frivolous girl but shows extreme maturity at the clavichord. She learns this instrument not to irritate Fernanda. Thus she earns her freedom. Fernanda allows her to go to the movies and welcomes her friends. Her tastes lie at the other end of discipline, in noisy parties, smoking and even in drunken debauchery. She hates Fernanda and Amaranta and wants to show her contempt for them. She wants to shatter their illusions of grandeur and good manners.

Aureliano Segundo spends more time for her daughter. It frees him from the bitter solitude of his revels. Meme falls in love with Mauricio Babilonia, a mechanic in the banana company.

Ursula realises Meme's tribulations and questions her. Meme avoids the queries of the poor old woman. She spends sleepless nights. Fernanda fails to notice the deep silences, the sudden outbursts, the changes in mood and the contradictions of her daughter.

Yellow butterflies precede the appearance of Mauricio Babilonia. "Meme could not sleep and she lost her appetite and sank so deeply into solitude that even her father became an annoyance" (HYS, 236). They meet at the movies often. She wants to be with him leaving all other engagements. She wants to sink into his stupefying odour of grease washed off by lye. Her future is uncertain. So she visits Pilar Ternera who advises her to go to bed with him. She offers her own bed. She tells her of methods to avoid an unwanted conception. Meme goes to Pilar Ternera's house and surrenders willingly to Mauricio Babilonia.

One day Fernanda finds Meme kissing a man in the theatre. She locks her up in her house. Mauricio Babilonia and Meme make love in the bathroom. Later, Fernanda is shocked to find mustard plasters in Meme's room. She invites the new Mayor to her house and asks him to station a guard at the backyard because the hens are stolen. The next day the guard shoots down

Mauricio Babilonia as he is lifting up the tiles to get into the bathroom where Meme is waiting for him. He dies of old age, bed-ridden for the rest of his life due to a bullet lodged in his spinal column, in total solitude, ostracized as a chicken thief.

Fernanda packs Meme's clothes and takes her in the train to a far-off convent where she has been brought up many years ago. Meme does not open her mouth again. She dies in old age in utter loneliness, closed up inside the four walls of the convent. But as a nasty trick of fate, Fernanda has to bring up her daughter's child, "like the return of a shame that she had thought exiled by her from the house" (HYS, 239). "The solitude of silence is a prison and a refuge. In the case of Meme, solitude is a form of desperation..." (Gullon, 30).

Aureliano Babilonia is a surrogate for the reader. He is born in a convent as the illegitimate child of Meme and Mauricio Babilonia.

Aureliano Babilonia spends his time in Melquides's room. He reads the books, talks to himself and resembles Col. Aureliano Buendia. He buys a Sanskrit Primer to read Melquiades's prophecies. When Santa Sofia leaves the house he takes over the kitchen

duties. He prepared food for Fernanda which she ate alone on the dining table. Even under these circumstances Aureliano and Fernanda do not share their solitude. They live in their own rooms.

When Fernanda dies and Jose Arcadio returns, Aureliano Babilonia withdraws into his solitary room. Though he has the freedom now, he rarely goes out. He remains shut up, in the parchments. Gradually, Jose Arcadio and Aureliano Babilonia become good friends. It gives them hope:

> That drawing closer together of two solitary people of the same blood was far from friendship, but it did allow them both to bear up better under the unfathomable solitude that separated and united them at the same time (HYS, 302).

But soon Jose Arcadio is killed. Only then does Aureliano Babilonia realize that he has begun to love him.

When Amaranta Ursula returns with her husband, Gaston, to live in the house, she gives Aureliano new clothes and teaches him to dance. They wish to incorporate him into the family but he is a hermetic

man. He spends most of his time reading the parchments. The return of Amaranta Ursula changes his life. He watches the men and the scenes in the town. He wanders through the solitary streets, nostalgic about its lost glory. He finds a Negro girl, Nigromanta, and befriends her.

Amaranta Ursula's movements make him crazy. To quench the torment, he sinks deep into the parchments. He visits the book store of the Catalonian and becomes friendly with four youngsters. They are the only friends he ever had. They visit brothels and find pleasure in revels. He abandons the parchments for a while, but returns to them with a new vigour to find out the keys.

When Amaranta pricks her hands trying to open a can of peaches, Aureliano dashes out to suck the blood. Then he reveals his passion for her. He tells her how he spends sleepless nights thinking about her. Amaranta Ursula is irritated. She tells him that she will leave Macondo in the first ship. Aureliano visits Pilar Ternera to unburden himself in her lap.

Pilar consoles him and advises him to approach the girl. He finds her when she comes out of her bath. Amaranta defends herself sincerely but finally succumbs to him.

The Catalonian returns to his Mediterranean village. Aureliano's friends also leave Macondo. Gaston has already left it. Aureliano and Amaranta are the happiest people on the face of the earth, "...secluded by solitude and love and by the solitude of love" (HYS, 326). They make mad love. "It was a mad passion... which made Fernanda's bones tremble with horror in her grave and which kept them in a state of perpetual excitement" (HYS, 326).

Aureliano abandons the parchments. They destroy the furniture and ruin the house with their violent love-making. "Both of them remained floating in an empty universe where the only every day and eternal reality was love" (HYS, 328). When the news of Gaston's return comes, they are shocked. Amaranta writes a letter informing him that she cannot live without Aureliano. Gaston leaves them to their fate. They live happily.

When Amaranta Ursula becomes pregnant, they try to know about the identity of Aureliano. He checks the baptismal register but finds nothing. They believe the version of the child found in a basket. Both are frightened by the fear that they may be brother and sister. Soon they are more and more integrated into

the solitude of the house. They leave the house to the tenacious assault of destruction. Amaranta gives birth to a male child. He has the tail of a pig, fulfilling the premonitions. The mother bleeds profusely and the midwife tries all the means -- spiderwebs, balls of ash and a cauterizing prayer -- to save her. But she dies, smiling.

John Leonard has noted that solitude is "one's admission of one's own mortality and one's discovery that the terrible apprehension itself is mortal..." (Leonard, 39). Only then Aureliano realises the horror of solitude. He leaves the house, leaving the child in a basket and covering the face of the corpse with a blanket. He wanders aimlessly through the streets. He goes to the Catalonian's store and weeps. He goes to the bar and shares his sorrow with the bar-tender. He shouts at his friends: "Friends are a bunch of bastards" (HYS, 333). Nigromanta rescues him from total desolation. She takes him to her room. Then he remembers the child and returns to his house. He cannot find the child anywhere. He thinks that the midwife may have taken care of him.

Then he finds the child. It has become a bloated and dry bag of skin that the ants are dragging towards their hole. The keys of Melquiades are revealed to him at that instant. He remembers the epigraph of

the parchments: "The first of the line is tied to a tree and the last is being eaten by the ants" (HYS, 334).

Gordon Brotherston in his essay, "An End to Secular Solitude "comments that "The final chapter of One Hundred Years of Solitude, announces itself as a finale..."(Brotherston, 134). He starts reading the parchments. It is the history of the Buendia family from its origin to its end. It is written in Sanskrit with minute attention to the detail. First he reads about the past. He skips the pages to know about his fate. Then a wind begins to blow. He reads about his grandfather, his mother and his own origin in a bathroom. The cyclone blows again and tears the windows and doors off the hinges, pulls off the roof of the eastern wing and uproots the foudations. He discovers that Amaranta Ursula is not his sister, but his aunt. He skips again to find out his end. A fearful whirlwind is then destroying the entire town. He realizes that he will never go out of the room. "Aureliano is like Scheherazade who tells her stories on the verge of death" (Echevarria, 370). The moment he finishes reading the parchments the city will be wiped out by the wind even from the memory of mankind. "Everything written on them were unrepeatable since time immemorial and for ever more because races

condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth" (HYS, 336).

The ending of the novel is very famous. "When manuscript and novel become the same text, character and narrative become the same entity, engaged in reading the same retrospective prophecy of their socio-historical experience" (Foster, 1979, 51). "In a final stroke of magic and of art, Melquiades -- Marquez -- not only ends the story of Buendias, he eradicates it for ever in one luminous moment" (Richardson, 4)". "By means of an unreading, the text has reduced us, like Aureliano, to a ground zero, where death and birth are joined together as correlative moments of incommunicable plenitude" (Echevarria, 378).

Loneliness, the novel's central theme weds together the individual destinies of characters. All the characters are born condemned to suffer it. It is a universal law and no one can avoid it. Gullon thus sums up his views:

> Whoever lives his solitude as these people do, incapable of communication with the alive-dead souls, is at the same distance from the other people as he is from the dead-alive, or the dead. Solitude is a common denominator that tinges them with a common sadness (Gullon, 30).

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CHAPTER III

DICTATORSHIP: THE ROAD TO LONELINESS

No writer who lives in Latin America can avoid the political reality of his country. It is central to his life and dominates every aspect of his writing. All great Latin American writers have dealt with dictatorship in their works. Jose Donoso's Casa de Campo (about the coup in Chile), Edmundo Desnoe's Memoirs of Under-development (about the revolution in Cuba), Jose Asis's Los Reventados (about Peron's return to Argentina) and Alejo Carpentier's Reasons of State (about dictatorship in general) are examples.

As a writer Garcia Marquez is deeply interested in the desolation caused by dictators and the unspeakable horrors inflicted on their victims. The protagonist of AP shows the traits of a typical Latin American dictator. CIC is an attempt to assess the impacts of dictatorship on the people of a country. GIL deals with the final days of a dictator.

These novels speak of Garcia Marquez's concern at the cruelties of the Latin American dictators. The continent witnessed the rule of a large number of dictators in the twentieth century. A political crisis often led to the rise of a dictator to power. He

easily assumed unlimited power "to transform men into corpses and the world around them into a graveyard..." (Bhalla, 1987, 30). Garcia Marquez's dictators are an amalgam of Latin America's notorious dictators like Juan Vicente Gomez, Trujillo, Batista, Peron, Hernandez and Martinez.

Garcia Marquez believes that it is insecure politicians who become despots. Their incapacity for love leads to the lust for power. Lovelessness leads to power and loneliness. This is evident in novels like AP, CIC and GIL

THE AUTUMN OF THE PATRIARCH

AP is a very complex novel, with a highly complicated plot and a unique narrative style. The patriarch is a dictator who shocks our sense of complacency.

"His Autumn is the personal decay that precedes his death" (McElroy, 1977, 3). His long rule is a nightmare that startles us with its terrible loathsomeness. He threatens us "with ceremonies of blood and cruelty, sterile eroticism and torment, brutal violation and surrender" (Bhalla, 31). His cruelties remind us of the Nazi concentration camps and

torture chambers. The victims are electrocuted, beaten in unconsciousness, thrown alive to crocodiles, raped, or skinned alive. Those who survive live under constant threat from the dictator and his aides. He refuses to admit even God to his presence. "Let no one into the house come what may, he ordered... not even God, if he turns up" (AP, 264). He knows "that omnipotence depends on absence. Only if the speaker is absent do his words attain the status of scripture "(Labanyi, 1987, 139).

Harley D. Oberhelman calls AP "a meditation on the solitude of absolute power" (Oberhelman, 1987, 77). The visual image in Garcia Marquez's mind when he envisioned the novel was that of an incredibly old man walking through the huge abandoned rooms of a palace full of animals. "Garcia Marquez has repeatedly created characters who live, to varying degrees, in a state of solitude" (Feo, 1977, 620). From his earliest work to the last we find people existing not only in physical isolation but in spiritual isolation as well. Ronald De Feo is of the view that "The Autumn of the Patriarch is Garcia Marquez's most extreme and intense vision of isolation" Feo, 620). He connects solitude and absolute power when he comments: "In this fabulous, dream-like account of the reign of a nameless dictator

of a fantastic Caribbean realm solitude is linked with the possession of absolute power" (Feo, 620).

The novel is not a psychological portrait of a dictator. "It is rather a rendering in fantastic and exaggerated terms of a particular condition of might and isolation" (Feo, 620). When a group of people breaks into the palace and discovers the rotten body of the patriarch, a flood of memories of his incredible reign is released. These memories, both collective and individual, flowing in free association form an entire novel.

The long life of an unnamed Latin American dictator is the plot of the novel. The exact setting is never told, it may stand for any Latin American nation. The story begins in the 19th century and stretches to the 20th century.

> The patriarch embodies all the classical evils of despotism. Even more significant, however, is his extreme solitude, which becomes increasingly evident with advancing age and emerges as the principal theme (McMurray, 1977, 129).

John Sturrock is of the view that "The Autumn of the Patriarch is a novelist's revenge for the political objection of his native continent". (Sturrock 1977, 451).

When the novel opens the patriarch is already dead. A large crowd breaks into the palace to find the decaying body of the dictator who ruled over them for nearly 250 years. There is a sense of joy and relief among the people who speak spontaneously after centuries of tyrannical silence and suspicion. From their speech the history of the dictator gradually unfolds.

> Sometimes their sentences coil around shared memories or crumble into fragments in incomprehension; sometimes their sentences spill over with marvellous images which make a landscape of myths or corrode with bitterness and rage; sometimes they speak as victims, at other times, as collaborators (Bhalla, 32).

When the dictator dies they get an opportunity to discover what constitutes a human being in a free and good society. People feel the freedom which was denied to them under a totalitarian ruler.

"There is nothing to celebrate in the General's long and tortured life" (Kennedy, 1976, 16). Life was quite terrible under the patriarch. He had put away all other chronologies but his own. "He makes it seem as if time had begun with him and would endure only because of him till people forget that they had another past and refuse to believe that another future is open to them" (Bhalla, 33). It is he who corrects "earthquakes, eclipses, leap-years and other errors of God" (AP, 8). It was he who made the nation in his own image and likeness. His views are propagated by the media and his aides. Those who doubt their validity are tortured to submission. "His main contribution to life, finally, is fear, but fear such as thunder, cancer or madness may provoke, fear based on irrational possibility, on the oblique ravages of a diabolical deity" (Kennedy, 16).

The patriarch shows obvious schizophrenic nature. "His split personality is illustrated metaphorically by the appearance of his double, Patricio Aragones who represents both his mirror image and his alter-ego" (McMurray, 130). Patricio Aragones suffers tortures to make his feet flat, like the patriarch's and one of his testicles enlarged. The double is used as a decoy against assassination

attempts. It is an attempt to cast off the burden of his fragmented self. It shows the patriarch's "struggle to overcome his fear of self-annihilation through self-duplication and the projection of his fragmented self onto another" (McMurray 131). The patriarch's mirror-image also indicates his narcissistic involvement with himself and his resultant inability to love others, "characteristics that are likewise suggested by his life-long infantile attachment to his mother" (McMurray, 131). George R. McMurray feels that his "monstrous testicle which he carries about in an orthopoedic cart perhaps represents a metaphoric defense mechanism against castration anxiety" (McMurray, 131). His schizophrenia is a "self-assertion, resulting from his overwhelming desire for love and power and paranoic withdrawal; submission and death wish, a reaction to his obsessive fear of the hostile world" (McMurray, 136).

Those who express joy at his false death are hung topsy-turvy, thrown to crocodiles and skinned alive. They are forced to confess that there was a conspiracy. He again emerges as the winner believing that his people love him. His rule totally demoralises the people. They withdraw into their secluded worlds. They feel suspicious of each other and get isolated.

"Men disappear and the only creature who remains is the dictator and he alone can make distinctions between truth and falsehood, fact and fiction, guilt and innocence" (Bhalla, 34).

The people lose their sense of freedom. The patriarch achieves absolute supremacy over their lives. He can do whatever he wants. He is the lord of everything: the livestock, vehicles, the mail, the telegraph service and the waters of the nation. He has the right to mete out death and life among his subjects. To sustain his power, he inflicts constant terror and people are constantly reminded of their powerlessness to resist him. Whenever there is an uprising against him, he suppresses it with an iron-hand, and corpses proliferate in the land.

The patriarch is the owner of a large portion of the land. He rules the realm with the help of the army, the police and the Church. He rose to power as a result of a succession of Civil Wars and bloody revolts. In such a period of uncertainty he rose as the strongest man capable of exercising power and command. He exterminated his rivals and dissenters. He formed a private army to secure his position as the only centre of power. He appointed his trusted

lieutenants in key positions to support him in all acts of cruelty. He shares the loot with them and permits their acts of corruption, rape and torture.

The patriarch rules with the help of the U.S. marine officers. They arrive to crush internal unrests. These so called sophisticated people introduce the aspects of their culture to educate the public. The patriarch learns the secrets of a democratic civilization and uses them to sustain himself in power. (The U.S. has helped many Latin American dictators with loan and in return exploited their natural resources). When a revolt against the foreigners arises, the patriarch crushes it. "He behaves like a murderous, autistic child and gets no pleasure from his authority beyond the easy, instant satisfaction of his elementary lusts" (Sturrock, 451).

To assume total power, the patriarch has to obliterate ethics and traditions. Yet there are people who resist his atrocities at the cost of their lives. There are "fierce young men who had challenged the suns of the red summer, the snows and the winds of the icy winter night... for the eternal splendour of an ideal nation" (AP, 192). There are people like Manuela Sanchez, the beauty queen of the dogfight district, who

reject the favours of the patriarch. Such people rekindle our optimism about a world corroded by corruption and solitude.

The novel is divided into six units; each unit consists of a single long sentence. The rambling sentence stretches through page after page, presenting a shifting point of view. It varies from first person singular to first person plural and often ends in the third person. Instead of presenting a series of nightmarish scenes, Garcia Marquez lifts the novel to the level of an epic with its long-winding sentences and chanting tone. All these narrative techniques "in their totality project a unified, all encompassing portrait of the solitude and decadence resulting from excessive power" (McMurray, 132).

The novel has six circular configurations. Each begins with the death of the patriarch and then evolves a chain of episodes from the past, and ends with a major episode in his life. The first person plural narrative resembles the chorus in the Greek tragedy. Its rhythmic momentum takes each unit to a future point. In the final section the various threads of the story are combined to a single unit. The first unit presents the double (Patricio Aragones) and

describes the arrival of the Spaniards. The second unit describes the patriarch's rise to power and his relationship with Manuela Sanchez. The third unit presents the rebellion against dictatorship and the tragi-comic death of Rodrigo de Aguilar. The fourth unit describes the death of patriarch's mother and his meeting with Leticia Nazareno, his future wife. the fifth unit presents the patriarch's marriage, the death of his wife and child, and the cruelties of de Barra, an assassin. "The last unit depicts the patriarch's extreme loneliness, physical decay and death "(McMurray, 134).

Garcia Marquez uses Biblical myths to raise the novel to the level of an epic. The patriarch, thus, is said to be born without male co-operation. His messianic destiny is revealed to his mother in a dream. (Allusions to the birth of Christ and the visit of the angel to Virgin Mary). The patriarch is born without lines in his hand. He is said to be invulnerable to bullets. He is believed to be a man of gigantic size. At 150 he cut his third set of teeth. He fathered 5000 children. He could converse with animals, predict the future and cure all kinds of illnesses. But actually his life is an inversion of the legends. His mother was a prostitute. She was not

sure who the patriarch's father was. His palace is surrounded with lepers, cripples, blind people, cobwebs, moths and buzzards. It is a mass of ruins,"... the patriarch is a lonely tyrant living in terror of an assassin's bullet" (McMurray 135).

The spiral structure of the novel conveys a sense of endless renewal. It presents a kind of static timelessness, a continuum. In his younger days the patriarch was popular. He would appear unarmed. He would call people by their names. When he asserts his authority he becomes lonely. The image of the machete-armed Guajiro Indian "becomes a leitmotif symbolizing the patriarch's omnipotence and solitude"(McMurray,137).

"The lengthy rambling sentences weave a tightly knit fabric of motifs intended to illuminate momentary states of mind rather than to develop characters in the traditional sense" (McMurray, 154). The novel's mytho-poetic atmosphere stems from its spiral design. "Mythical patterns are often grotesque absurdities..." (McMurray, 154). Thus AP "is a fluid montage of illuminated moments" (McMurray, 154).

Power, as a theme, has always attracted Garcia Marquez. He explores the theme of power and dictatorship by presenting the cruel deeds of the

patriarch. In Garcia Marquez's novels "power hysteria is located in disease, death, violent existential nature, erotic passions, twinship and the double..." (Mottram, 1987, 12). Solitude emerges as a major theme which is established "as a resistance within the predications of power and the moves possible between minimal association and maximum domination" (Mottram, 11).

The spiral structure of the novel helps the writer to compress time and include many more aspects of the story in an encapsulated form. The narrator creates the impression that the patriarch is omnipotent enough to control time itself. With the images of grandeur are mingled images of the grotesque and the farce. The serving up of General Aguilar as food on a silver platter is an example.

The life and actions of a dictator provide ample material for a writer to deal with, because a dictator controls the destinies of millions. The patriarch is a megalomaniac who controls time and space and declares his mother a saint. The mythology, longevity and the atrocities make him an archetypal figure. Garcia Marquez uses mythical imagery also. Thus, people see the Babilonian willows and rose bushes

of the patriarch's palace covered with lunar dust. The patriarch's rule begins with the first appearance of the comet and ends when it appears again. As Keki N. Daruwalla comments,"... Garcia Marquez is interested in depicting a coiled eternity under a tyrant, a sort of never-ending purgatorial agony for the people" (Daruwalla, 1987, 71).

The writer stretches time to mythical dimensions. No mortal can rule a nation for two hundred and fifty years. It is an attempt to show the endlessness of the tyranny which goes on unbridled. It shows the tragic burden people have to bear for an apparently endless span of time. As people enter his palace, they notice the slow passage of time. The final words of the novel emphasize the same idea: "... the uncountable time of eternity had come to an end" (AP, 206). The ending of the novel, according to John Sturrock, is strongly optimistic. "The General may have kept reality out for all these years but he never killed it ..." (Sturrock, 451).

When Patricio Aragones dies the patriarch becomes the most solitary man on earth. He wanders in his measureless realm of gloom. As Camus points out; "Every ethic based on solitude implies the exercise of

power. At the pinnacle of power you cannot but be solitary. The acquisition of power itself means the end of most human relationships "(Camus, 1962, 9). In order to get rid of his terrible loneliness, the patriarch courts Manuela Sanchez, a whore, who cannot be won over even with all his gifts and favour. An eclipse takes away Manuela Sanchez, and thus vanishes the only hope from his life. This is another tragedy of power. Loneliness and power are inseparable. "Love which is after all a relationship between equals of sorts cannot come to someone perched almost forever on the high steeple of power" (Daruwalla, 74). All dictators are condemned to die without love.

As Keki N.Daruwalla points out, "Two currents, viz, mythologizing the General and the demythologizing him alternate antiphonally through the book" (Daruwalla, 75). As an attempt to mythicize him, his ability to control and command is narrated realistically. When there are uprisings he appears in barracks unarmed to discipline the soldiers. The rebels kneel before him for mercy. At the San Jeronimo base when a revolt begins he goes to the rebel command without escort and without any arms to suppress the mutiny. The rebels surrender before him. The leper who tries to shoot him hesitates for a crucial moment

and goes knocked down by him. As Joseph Epstein comments, "His is the greatest solitude of all: that of the unloved dictator perpetuating his unearned power" (Epstein, 1983, 64).

As a part of the attempt to debunk him, he is presented as an ordinary mortal stripped of any superhuman quality. The crowd find him dead on the floor in his denim uniform without insignia, boots, and gold spur, and with his right arm under his head as a pillow. He had slept that way every night during his long rule as a solitary despot. Tiny lichens sprout out of his body. He lived in fear of death. In the end of his career he learns that everything is illusory. He had reached the stage of commanding without power, glory and authority:

> He is not pitiable, he is a spectacle, the embodiment of ego-centric evil unleased, maniacally violent, comically worthless, and despite pretentions to eternity, as devoid of meaning as anything else in an absurd world (Kennedy, 16).

Daruwalla summarises his views thus:

> The Autumn of the Patriarch is a brooding rumination on the solitariness of power, its corrupting influence, the way it holds even

> the wielder of power captive and the myths that gather around an essentially common person (Daruwalla, 79).

It is rich in insights into the workings of tyrants who control the destiny of the millions. As Salman Rushdie comments:

> The notion of dictatorship is so oppressive that all change, all possibility of development, is stifled: the power of the patriarch stops time, and the text is thereby enabled to swirl, to eddy around the stories of his reign, creating by its non-linear form an exact analogy for the feeling of endless stasis (Rushdie, 1982, 4).

The patriarch's loneliness and the obsession with death are quite evident when he locks his door with three cross bars, three bolts and three latches before stretching out on the floor face down, his right arm serving as a pillow. His tight grip on the glass ball is a metaphor for his lust for power.

> His solitude and air of submission find expression through the image of his feminine-appearing hands, often encased in satin

gloves, languidly waving a white handkerchief from behind the window of his limousine (McMurray, 150).

His fear of death compels him to seek fortune-tellers. When they predict a gloomy future, they are strangled. "The flute-like whistle of his enlarged testicle is an absurd recurring motif representing a barometer of his anxiety" (McMurray, 138).

His elephant feet is another metaphor for his unlimited power. The massacre of the two thousand children who were used to rig the national lottery shows that there are no limits to the cruelties of a dictator. They are hidden to keep the secrets and finally they are taken in a few boats to be blasted off at sea. By employing a similar trick the patriarch suppresses the revolt by General Bonivento Barboza. He sends a few milk caskets packed with dynamite. When the explosives explode inside the enemy headquarters the entire group of officers is destroyed. Equally frightful is the assassination of his wife and child. A pack of skilfully trained ferocious dogs devours them alive while they do the regular shopping. Saenz de la Barra (Nacho) is appointed to punish the assassins. He sends the heads of the enemies to the

patriarch. His sinister presence becomes a threat to the power of the patriarch. So Nacho meets a violent death. His mutilated body is hung for public display, with the genital organs thrust into his mouth.

As William Kennedy comments, "the book... is mystical, surrealistic, Rebelaisian in its excesses..." (Kennedy, 16). "The novel's numerous absurd incidents negate the tenets of reason and convey a lack of meaning and purpose in human existence" (McMurray, 193). The patriarch's attempts to canonize his mother, Benedicion Alvarado, who was a bird-vendor and prostitute, is an absurd event. His palace is crowded with hens and milch cows. When the patriarch seduces a school girl, hired prostitutes are sent as uniformed school girls, to appease his hunger. The patriarch establishes free-schools to teach the art of sweeping. The apprentices sweep the trash from one province to another. The patriarch's marriage is another grotesque event. In the midst of the ceremony, the pregnant bride, Leticio Nazareno gives birth to a child. When Leticio Nazareno touches the vegetables in the market, they wilt and die.

It is his incapacity for love that drives the patriarch in his lust for power. This compels him to

do any crime to sustain his power. He has, at times, a secret desire to leave the capital and seek shelter in an obscure refuge. But the attraction of power is so tempting that he clings on to it till the last moment of his life. He never experiences love or happiness. He is destined to live and die in hermetic isolation. The novel's "principal theme of solitude emerges from the protagonist's life-long inability to achieve meaningful communication with his fellow men due to his alternating impulses for sadistic domination and masochistic submission" (McMurray,153). George R. McMurray concludes his views thus: "As suggested in Garcia Marquez's earlier works, the lack of brotherly love and human solidarity leads inevitably to social decay..."(McMurray, 153).

Stephen Koch comments that AP "is a companion volume to One Hundred Years of Solitude, a companion in contrast..." (Koch, 1976, 68). Paul West calls it "a bulging elegy for the unseen, the not experienced" (West, 1976, 77). Power, loneliness and the fear of death are the recurring themes of the novel. Stephen Koch's observations are relevant here:

> In a Joycean delirium of language and associations, the novel proceeds to swirl

around and through the megalomania of power, strategies, the brutalities, the myths and the hysteria of his endless, his timeless reign of gloom (Koch, 68).

Julio Ortega calls the novel "the deconstruction of the mythology of absolute power" (Ortega, 1984, 119). Michael Palencea-Roth has studied the classical subtexts of AP. He believes that the novel has gained literary and symbolic weight and density by drawing substances from its classical subtexts of Julius Caesar, Christopher Columbus and Ruben Dario, because "they enrich our experience of the novel profoundly and deepen our understanding of the patriarch" (Palencea-Roth, 1988,57).

Jo Labnyi believes that AP "is inevitably concerned with the expression of power via language, and particularly via the written word... He is a dictator in the literal sense of the word, some one who dictates words to others" (Labanyi, 1987, 135-6). The patriarch finds consolation in Ruben Dario's poem 'Marcha triunfal' because "it reveals to the patriarch a verbal power which transcends that of any mortal ruler and whose authority is absolute" (Labanyi, 138). Ruben Dario is chosen "not only because of his

reputation as the doyen of Spanish American letters but also because a major theme of his later poetry is the fear of death" (Labanyi, 138).

Garcia Marquez stressed the role of power and loneliness in his writings when he told Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza:

> I think it was Henry Kissinger who said that power is an aphrodisiac. History demonstrates that powerful people are often affected by a kind of sexual frenzy, but I'd say my idea in The Autumn of the Patriarch is more complex than this. Power is a substitute for love... the inability to love is what drives (those who pursue and achieve power) to seek consolation in power... The nature of power... is an underlying theme running through all my books... . Absolute power is the highest and most complex of human achievements and therefore it is the essence of man's nobility and his degradation (Mendoza, 1983, 88).

The patriarch is an insecure politician. So he becomes a despot. Lovelessness leads him to power and the resultant loneliness. Eric Mottram studies the issue in his essay "Existential and Political controls in the Fiction of Gabrial Garcia Marquez":

> The Autumn of the Patriarch concerns an apotheosis of the theme of solitude. Of absolute power, which he (Garcia Marquez) considers total solitude, the progress to power is really a progress towards solitude (Mottram, 23).

Paul West believes that the most interesting feature of AP is "Garcia Marquez's modus operandi" (West, 1976, 76). The remarks of Schwartz are quite comprehensive and apt:

> Garcia Marquez's vision of the lonely old dictator who dreams, sweats and recalls serves him as a kind of exorcism.... Combining erotic fantasies, mystery and nightmare visions, both real and imagined, he uses the oneiric, symbolic, temporal and atemporal to obfuscate his 'reality' (Schwartz, 1976, 557).

CLANDESTINE IN CHILE

CIC is a study of the impacts of dictatorship on a country and its people. Garcia Marquez wrote this novel based on an adventurous event in the life of Miguel Littin, the renowned film director. Littin had risked his life to discover the true state of affairs

in Chile under the rule of Pinochet, the mighty autocrat of that country.

Littin had fled from Chile in 1973, immediately after the violent military coup. His name was on a list of five thousand exiles who were forbidden to return. Twelve years later he returned to Chile with a false name and a false passport. He shot one lakh feet of film about the state of his country after twelve years of military dictatorship.

Garcia Marquez's texts "constitute a field of memories of narratives..." (Mottram,6). CIC is based on his taped interview with Miguel Littin. It is the "emotional reconstruction of an adventure" (Marquez, Introduction to CIC). Littin's intention was to make a film that made fun of the dangers of absolute power. Garcia Marquez wrote the novel in the form of reporting because he believes that "journalism keeps one in contact with reality" (Bell-Villada, 1983, 27).

"In Latin America ...political reality often becomes central to life and overshadows most other things..." (Daruwalla,68). Littin has to assume the guise of another person to experience it. He has to shave off his beard, change his hair style, and his eye-brows are plucked. He has to wear lenses and

speaks in a strange accent. He has to learn to laugh differently. His gestures also are changed. His personality resists such changes. It symbolically indicates the changes an individual undergoes in the rule of a dictator. His personality changes rapidly and he loses his individuality. The circumstances force him to wear a mask. These adaptations are necessary for his survival. Otherwise he is tortured to submission and death.

"Every new dictator is like the monstrous carnivores who take over our dreams, surprising us when our reason sleeps and when memory upon awakening startles us in the same way as any loathsomeness does" (Bhalla, 30). As he landed, Littin cannot see any evidence of militarization and poverty. The modern Pudahuel airport is entirely different from the gloomy Los Cerrilos airport. There is no armed presence of guards. The airport is clean and neatly lit. The taxis are modern Japanese models.

Littin wants to present the failure of dictatorship. But Santiago, the capital, appears as a radiant city, spotlessly clean and orderly. The Moneda Palace looks like a dream palace. Littin is surprised but not deceived by these appearances. He realises

that the dictatorship has sought to cover the blood of tens of thousands killed or disappeared or exiled, with an immense material splendour. The things he wants to see are "the horrors dictators inflict upon individuals or the mercilessness with which they control their societies" (Bhalla, 30).

He notices the people and "each of them seemed to be alone in a strange city" (CIC, 15). He feels that "the faces were blank, revealing nothing, not even fear" (CIC, 15). People speak "in low tones inaudible to the prying ears of the dictatorship" (CIC, 15).

Alok Bhalla observes that the "totalitarian dictatorships in Latin America and other places of the world have become a part of our historical reality and their ruthlessness and their cruelty a part of our daily purgatory" (Bhalla, 30). Littin asks the people about Salvador Allende, the democratic President of Chile who was killed in the coup. It is a point of reference for eliciting an opinion on the existing situation. 'The Vicariate of Solidarty' headed by Cardinal Silva Herniquez has fought fervently against the dictatorship. Its officers, Jose Manuel Parada, Manuel Guerrero and Santiago Nattino are abducted and brutally killed by the police. The protest against this event is so strong that the police chief, General Cesar Mendoza Duran has to resign.

People seem much less communicative than they used to be. They speak about the lack of freedom and the tragedy of unemployment in Chile. Musicians, doctors, engineers, clowns, transvestites -- all are out of work. The country is hungry. He finds a lady trying to sell her wardrobe from better days, children peddling stolen goods, and housewives offering homemade bread. "Most of these once successful professionals have lost everything but their dignity" (CIC, 27).

Littin observes the Carabineros stationed in various places of duty as symbols of torture and suppression. He felt terribly alone amidst his own people. He films the important monuments in the country. General Augusto Pinochet has tried to get legitimacy for his rule by naming his headquarters after Don Diego Portales, one of Chile's liberal forefathers. The Moneda Palace is rebuilt with "an underground fortress", with "armour plated bunkers" and "secret passageways", "escape latches", and "emergency access to a parking garage under the boulevard" (CIC, 34-5). This shows the dictator's feeling of insecurity and his endeavours to escape from an attempt on his life.

Littin then probes more deeply into the life of the nation. After the coup the Mapocho river became notorious for mutilated corpses. The army patrols in the slum areas are virtually night attacks on the innocent people. The starving mob fought with dogs and vultures for left-overs thrown into the Mapocho from the markets. This tragedy is the other face of the Chilean miracle sponsored by the military rulers under the American guidance. The Pinochet regime has denationalized everything and sold off almost everything of value to private capitalists and multinational corporations. "The economic miracle made a few of the rich much richer and the rest of Chilean society much poorer" (CIC, 38). This happens because, "modern dictators are either the expected consequence of the ever deepening crisis of capitalism or the products of the inescapable dialects of history" (Bhalla, 30).

Littin finds many lovers on the terraces overlooking the river. He feels that "love blossoms in time of the plague" (CIC, 39). He then goes to Conception, an interior town. On the way he confronts empty stations, empty fields and an empty countryside. Conception is an important city. It is the cradle of the country's great social struggles. Allende got

decisive support here. On the doorway to the Cathedral, Sebastian Acevido set fire to himself two years ago, to liberate his son and daughter from the custody of the army. The public outcry was so strong that the government had to release the brother and sister. So, we find people who sacrifice their lives fighting against the corrupt regime.

"The dictator's cruelty, ennui, energy and drive are going to result in public weal or public woe" (Daruwalla, 77). This is proved in Chile. The miners are the strongest supporters of Salvador Allende who nationalized the mines. But Pinochet returned them to private owners. The slums had a culture of subversion. They created troubles for the government. They were the centres of political unrest. The young generation fought against the Pinochet regime. Allende lived as a legend in their minds. A cult had grown around him. "He knew the country, its people, its disappointments and its dreams..." (CIC, 53). People cherish the memory of their late president. His grave in Valparaiso is a place of veneration. Pablo Neruda is also worshipped likewise. People draw hearts entwined with the letters: "Allende and Neruda live. One minute of darkness will not make us blind" (CIC, 58). These

words express the people's hope for a country where there are no dictators.

Littin meets the leaders of the underground. In a well-equipped clandestine hospital, he confronts Fernando Larenas Seguel, the most wanted man in Chile. Littin tries to meet an officer nicknamed 'General Electric'. He offers to reveal information regarding the deep divisions in the army. But his attempts to contact the officer fail. Some of the officers are against the usurpation of power. They want to reach an agreement with the civilians for the restoration of democracy. Littin films the inside of Moneda Palace. Unexpectedly he meets General Pinochet who is on his way to his office. Littin again escapes from his country when the authorities become suspicious of his scheme of shooting. Yet, he succeeds in presenting to the world the sorrows of his countrymen.

Garcia Marquez is always interested in the acts of dictators. Absolute power has always attracted him as an important theme. In novels like, GIL and AP, he explores the many facets of dictatorship. CIC is yet another exploration of the same theme. In it he probes the mechanism of power and dictatorship.

THE GENERAL IN HIS LABYRINTH

The novel is a description of the final days of Simon Bolivar, the great General who drove the Spaniards out of South America. The work is also a sparkling study of the solitude of power. The General, popularly called 'The Liberator', dies in total despair, renounced by his own men. His dreams of a unified Latin America are shattered. The leader who sacrificed everything for the liberation of four nations dies as an unwanted citizen. His followers have to depend on a public collection of funds for his burial. He was an enlightened ruler. But his is the fate that awaits all dictators. Garcia Marquez explores the loneliness of power in this novel also.

As he sets out on his last journey, the General appears as a man less damaged by life. Actually he is on the verge of death. He was a brave soldier and fought all his wars in the frontline. There were many attempts on his life. But he was invulnerable. He has no disillusions about his end. He feels that he will die poor and naked without the consolation of public gratitude. There are already many charges against him. He is accused of being the instigator of the military uprisings to remain as

President for life. Slogans are scrawled on the walls against him. He often hears his nickname 'Skinny shanks' shouted by his enemies. There are wild jubilations and explosions of rockets to celebrate his departure. Yet no one believes that he will leave the country for good, (Like any other dictator, he had announced renunciations, but always returned to power).

No one pays attention to his opinions. He wants to appoint Field Marshal Sucre as his successor. But all the leaders oppose it. Once he is away from the apex of power he is treated as the person responsible for all the troubles of the nation.

He has not had enough clothes. He has to leave like an outlaw. The man who carried more glory than any other American dead or alive is leaving the city he has built in his glorious days. His effigy is shot in the streets. "The General sank into a brooding gloom and rode on, lost to the world" (GIL, 41).

The thoughts of his enemy, General Santander, haunt the General. He fears that the Congress will invite his enemy to become the President of Colombia. Bolivar has described himself as "the greatest and most solitary soldier who ever lived" (GIL, 80). He has told Myranda Lyndsay that he is "condemned to a theatrical destiny" (GIL, 81). All these prophecies come true.

When he is out of power, his enemies take revenge on him. He does not get a steamship to travel down the Magdelena river because he has ended the monopoly of a shipping company and made navigation free throughout the country. He considers himself a relic of history, "the biggest damn fool in history" (GIL, 95). He considers himself and his men as "the orphans, the wounded, the pariahs of independence" (GIL, 99).

His enemies use the press to slander his reputation. He is said to have lost many a battle because he is not where he should have been. He is said to be in a concubine's house when a great battle is fought. He is said to have passionate lovers at various places. These are lies which survived even after his death.

When they reach the sea, the General does not have enough funds for his journey. He is very generous with his former officers and their widows. His health has deteriorated very much: the bones are visible under his skin, there is a stench in his breath, and he has lost height. He weighs eighty eight pounds and loses ten before he dies. His official height is 165 centimetres but it is less by four on the autopsy table.

Manuela Sanchez, his mistress, notices that in his final battles the General "wanders without direction through the mists of solitude" (GIL, 155). The General wants to reach Cartagena and take a ship to England. Bolivar has always been concerned about the welfare of his officers. His aides -- Wilson, O'Leary, Jose Laurencio Silva, Iturbide and Fernando -- are troubled by the uncertainty of his decision to renounce power. It becomes more so along the long journey to nowhere. They feel that he is slamming the door, leaving them to the mercy of his enemies.

Then the General learns of the assassination of his closest friend and the hope of the nation, Field Marshal Sucre. He is in one of his Biblical rages. He spits blood. He shouts against Santander's policies. As President, Bolivar has ordered the death penalty to any official who misappropriates more than ten pesos. He has spent a large portion of the wealth he inherited from his parents on the wars for independence. His earnings are divided among the widows of wars. He has given his land to his emancipated slaves and his houses to friends in need. He has rejected 100000 pesos offered by the Peruian Congress. He has to sell his horses to collect enough funds for the final journey. His only remaining possession is the Aroa Copper Mines which he wants to sell, but is caught up in a legal imbroglio.

The General believes that the bells will ring in jubilation when he dies. The same thing happened. In an official proclamation it was described that "the genius of evil, the firebrand of anarchy, the oppressor of the nation has ceased to exist" (GIL, 94). The event is believed to produce untold benefits for the well-being of the country.

Meanwhile, General Urdaneta captures power in a military coup and invites the General to assume the Presidency. But, the General hesitates because he cannot take up power without any clear mandate from a legitimate source. He halts in a house at the foot of La Popa hill and controls the destiny of the nation. He allows his officers to fight for the liberation of the nation.

In his final days the General reaches Santa Marta. He dies in the country house of a Sugar Plantation attended by a handful of his supporters. The assassination of General Pier, which took place thirteen years ago, haunts him in his final dreams. It was a political necessity. He had questioned the General's authority. Then the General dictates his will. He takes special care that his officers and friends are not thrown to the mercy of his enemies. He

leaves an amount (8000 pesos) to his life-long servant, Jose Pelacios. Bolivar is so prostrate that two doctors are sent to treat him. But they cannot agree on their diagnosis. Dr. Reverend considers it a case of damaged lungs while Dr. Night considers it to be a case of chronic malaria. Dr. Reverend applies blister plasters. This is supposed to be the immediate cause of his death. The General does not believe in the last rites. He dismisses in a rage the Bishop who comes to perform the last ceremonies. The Bishop does not attend his funeral.

In his final hours the General gives expression to his anguish at his own condition. "Damn it", he sighs, "how will I ever get out of this labyrinth" (GIL, 267). He dies on Saturday 17, 1830 at 1:07 in the afternoon. Garcia Marquez presents the great soldier's death in a touching manner. It shocks us and lingers in our minds for days. It is the lonely death of a great dictator. All his glories and grandeur end in terrible isolation and total despair. He dies alone, unattended and unrewarded by his people.

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CHAPTER IV

THE PANGS OF LOVE: DEATH DECAY AND LONELINESS

Garcia Marquez's characters share the aspects of solitude which Octavio Paz has pointed out in his The Labyrinth of Solitude. In the words of Linda B. Hall, "For both Octavio Paz and Garcia Marquez the deepest form of communion and the closest antidote to solitude is sexual love" (Hall, 1973, 255). In his essay, "The Dialectic of Solitude", Paz comments that solitude is the most profound fact of the human condition. According to him, man is the only creature who is painfully aware of his state of being lonely. So he seeks out the love of others to get rid of his loneliness. The various characters in novels like CDF, LTC, OLD and SP are tortured by the feeling that they are alone. They seek the friendship and physical presence of other characters. When these attempts fail, they retreat to total loneliness.

CHRONICLE OF A DEATH FORETOLD

CDF is a powerful indictment of Latin American society. It presents a rotten, decaying civilization where people are indifferent to the destinies of each other. It is a journalistic investigation into a

murder which took place twenty seven years ago. Salman Rushdie comments in an article titled "Angel Gabriel" published in London Review of Books:

> The book and its narrator probe slowly, painfully through the mists of half accurate memories, equivocations, contradictory versions, trying to establish what happened and why; and achieve only provisional answers (Rushdie, 1982, 4).

The original title of the novel is Cronica de una muerte anunciada, ie, 'The Chronicle of an announced death'. "Aren't 'Big Mama's Funeral', One Hundred Years of Solitude and The Autumn of the Patriarch all chronicles of death foretold?", asks Anibal Gonsalez (1988, 69). Garcia Marquez employs the technique of journalistic reporting to narrate the incident. He considers "journalism's influence on his work not so much as a matter of style but as one of rhetorical strategems which he uses to give verisimilitude to his stories" (Gonsalez, 63). Journalism taught him strategies to give validity to his stories such as:

> Giving Remedios the Beautiful sheets (white sheets) in order to make her go up into

> heaven, or giving a cup of chocolate (and not another drink) to Father Nicanor Reina before he levitates ten centimetres above the ground are very useful tricks of journalism (Mendoza, 1983,44).

In 1951, when the event took place Garcia Marquez was not interested in it because if he wrote a novel it might affect the real characters who were still alive. His mother had asked him not to write about the people known to her personally. But Garcia Marquez was deeply interested in one point: that the murder could have been averted because the murderers themselves were not much interested in the bloody act. That no one tried to interrupt them was quite strange.

The novel is "an almost straight forward reconstruction of a murder that took place years earlier" (Bandhopadhyay, 1987, 92). The narrator moves backward and forward in the novel's time frame. The narrative is a re-enactment of the murder. "Indeed the destruction of the chronological order creates a jigsaw puzzle of a highly complex character" (Bandhopadhyay, 95). The text tries to constitute a kind of ritual repetition of the crime. "The novel appears to posit a homology between the way the crime takes place and the

manner in which the narrative of the crime is constructed" (Alonso, 1987, 155). The narrator is "trying to put back together the broken mirror of memory from so many scattered shreds..." (Alonso, 158). D. Keith Mano calls it "a simile for the fiction making process" (1983, 699).

The real event occured on January 22, 1951 in Sucre, Colombia. When he discovered that his wife Margarita was not a virgin, Miguel Reyes Palancia gave her back to her mother. Her brother, Victor Chica Salas, killed Cayetano Gentile Climento for deflowering his sister. It was a killing to protect the honour of the family. Miguel Reyes Palancia later married Henriqueta Obregon in Costa Rica and had twelve children. He lived as an insurance agent in Barranquilla.

In CDF, Bayardo San Roman discovers on his wedding night that his bride Angela Vicario is not a virgin. He sends her back to her house. When questioned, she reveals that it is Santiago Nazar who deflowered her. Her brothers, the Vicario twins, Pablo and Pedro announce their intention of killing Santiago Nazar and kill him in front of his house. Everyone considers it as a murder to protect the honour of the family. Many years later, the repenting husband returns and receives the girl.

"Chronicle of a Death Foretold is about honour and about its opposite -- that is to say, dishonour, shame" (Rushdie, 4). Its beginning, "On the day they were going to kill him..." (1) reminds us of the beginning of HYS. A lot of people had heard that the Vicario twins were planning to kill Santiago Nazar. The Black cook in his house, Victorio Guzman, and her daughter, Divina Flor knew it. Prudencia Cotes, the fiancee of Pablo Vicario knew that they were going to kill him. Clotilde Armenta, the shop keeper knew their intentions. But nobody tried to prevent them. Nobody gave a warning to Santiago Nazar.

The Vicario twins were reluctant to carry out the revenge. That was why they announced it to the town people. It was their duty to kill Santiago. They thought the people would prevent them from the terrible act. They were the victims of the circumstance. They were forced to kill Santiago Nazar. People probably thought that they should not interfere with the act of revenge. "All have ostensibly cast-iron excuses, loss of nerve, forgetfulness, failing to take the threat seriously, not wishing to become involved" (Hughes, 1982, 24).

"The narrator/author plays the role of investigative reporter, interviewing those who knew the victim and the murderers and those who saw the crime" (Grossman, 1981, 72). The story develops gradually from memory of officials, shopkeepers, gossips and whores. According to William H. Gass "Chronicle of a Death" does not tell but pieces together the torn apart body of a story...(Gass, 1983, 83). Grossman considers the murder as an act of fate:

> There is a chorus of onlookers who know that the Vicario brothers will disembowel the alleged lover of their sister, Angela. They know, but they do nothing to prevent the murder, to stop the brothers, to warn the victim, for how can they interfere with what has already been determined by Fate and the demanding Furies of honour and machismo ? (Grossman, 72).

Arnold M. Penuel has studied in detail the features of the novel: "In a sense the failure of the townspeople to prevent the murder when the brothers provide them every opportunity to do so transforms the twins into unwilling tools of the town's collective will" (Penuel, 1985, 755). They strictly follow the

code of honour. It results in the murder. The affairs of honour are sacred to them. In a sense, the town itself is the protagonist of the novel. "The novel's chief interest lies in exploring the town's collective psyche or communal values" (Penuel, 755).

Santiago Nazar's death is to be viewed as a communal sacrifice. He is an innocent victim, the scape-goat. His death is of public nature, it is widely announced, all wait eagerly for it and it has witnesses. Penuel considers it a ritual sacrifice:

> The atmosphere of almost orgiac excitement occasioned mainly by the wedding, but intensified by the anticipation of the Bishop's arrival, prepares the multitude psychologically for the culminating and most exciting event of all: the sacrifice of Santiago (Penuel, 762).

The sacrifice has its impacts on the community. Clotilde Armenta's husband, Don Rogelio de la Flor dies on witnessing the murder, after witnessing the autopsy Lazaro Aponte turns to vegetarianism, Hortensio Baute goes insane. Angela Vicario changes her life and sends letters to Bayardo San Roman which results in their reunion. Penuel analyses the collective behaviour of the town:

> The town's crime is principally the result of its subjugation to the collective conscience of its forbears... .Like Angela, before her awakening, the town's collective behaviour is largely determined by unconscious forces...(Penuel, 766).

Nobody prevents the murder because they are in the hands of fate. In Gregory Rabassa's words:

> What unites so much of Garcia Marquez's writings is the sense of inexorability, of fatefulness. Things often come to an end that has been there all the while, in spite of what might have been done to avoid it, and often mysteriously and unexplicably...(Rabassa, 1982, 49).

In CDF, the hand of doom is unavoidable. Fate chose Santiago Nazar as the victim for a communal sacrificial rite. "Who killed Santiago Nazar ? The Vicario brothers, to be sure; the whole town perhaps" (Diaz-Migoyo, 1988, 81).

It is not certain who deflowered Angela Vicario. The narrator, a friend of Santiago Nazar, believes that he may not be the person. He discovers

evidences also to prove the innocence of Santiago Nazar. In a town where nothing is secret, nobody has discovered an affair between Santiago Nazar and Angela Vicario. He does not know till the moment of his death why he is being killed by the Vicario twins.

That he will be killed is a certainty to many of the characters in the novel. There is a sense of foreknowledge. "The town's collective knowledge of the crime-to-be and its unbearable guilt, is built on discrete instances of individual foresight..." (Alonso, 154). For instance, Hortensia Baute sees the knives dripping blood before the actual murder. Early in the morning of the day, Divina Flor feels that Santiago Nazar's hands are those of a deadman. When reminded that Nazar usually went about armed, Pedro Vicario says, "Deadmen can't shoot" (CDF, 110), implying that he is already dead.

Bayardo San Roman is "Romantic and exotic" (Crossman, 73). He is the son of General Petronio San Roman, the Conservative hero who defeated Colonel Aureliano Buendia. His mother is Alberta Simonds, a mulatto who was once declared the most beautiful woman in the Antilles. "He is a princely figure, a cowboy, a knight and an adventurer....He is the prototypical

mysterious stranger who is wealthy and wildly attractive, whose origins are unknown" (Grossman, 63).

He goes from town to town looking for a faithful woman to marry. He has a way of speaking that hides more than it reveals. He is an engineer, telegraph operator, swimmer and has wide medical knowledge. He takes communion, he drinks but never brawls. He is a soldier of fortune, a bear-tamer and a diver after buried fortune.

His marriage to Angela Vicario is loveless, a marriage of convenience. Angela hates Bayardo San Roman. He has no regard for the feelings of the girl. He tries to negate his lack of love with a show of wealth. "In many ways, then, the novel offers itself as an icy demythologising of both romantic love and the romantic folly it inspires..." (Buford, 1982, 965).

The love of virginity leads to a disaster in CDF. "The cult of virginity is an integral part of the cult of death" (Penuel, 758). In HYS also the obsession with virginity leads to loneliness and death. "For Garcia Marquez the cult of virginity is a vestige of taboo morality and symbolizes sterility in human relations and ultimately death. Santiago's death is the end product of this cult" (Penuel, 758).

The double standard for man and woman in sexual matters is criticised in the novel. Maria Alejandrina Cervantes's house of prostitution exists as a threat to the morality of the community. The young men of the town relieve their sorrows in her apostolic lap.

"She was the one who ravaged" the narrator's "generation's virginity" (CDF, 87). Santiago Nazar is notorious as a deflowerer of virgins. He tries to seduce Divina Flor, the Black cook's daughter. Yet, nobody finds fault with men. But, when Angela Vicario is no virgin, she is abused and sent back to her parents. Garcia Marquez is against the concept of machismo. In an interview, he tells Rita Guibert that "machismo is cowardly, a lack of manliness" (Guibert, 1973, 316).

The book contains an attack on the Catholic Church. Santiago does not go to his ranch that day because of the arrival of the Bishop. The Bishop refuses to disembark and continues his journey with a hasty blessing. In refusing to disembark, the Bishop betrays the people's faith and hope. The cocks brought by the people on the dock and the cacophony of crowing indicate the decadence of the Church. The Bishop was

fond of coxcomb soup. It shows his voluptuousness and the betrayal of the principles of Christ. Fr. Amador displays the Church's attitude towards life and death when he performs the autopsy of Santiago Nazar's dead body. He pulls out the sliced up intestines, gives an angry blessing and throws them into the garbage pail. Penuel calls it an inhuman act. "Not content with killing the body, the Church feels compelled to destroy it completely until it loses its identity through dispersal" (Penuel, 760).

There are numerous Biblical and religious allusions in the novel. 'Santiago' means St. James, one of the disciples of Christ. 'Nazar' may indicate Nazarine, Jesus Christ. His father's estate is called 'The Divine Face'. The Vicario twins are named Peter (Pedro) and Paul (Pablo), two important disciples of Christ. Vicario' means vicar or deputy. The Pope is the vicar of Christ on earth. The Vicarios' father is named Poncio after Pontius Pilate. So Santiago Nazar becomes a Christ figure. "Church is presented as having stayed so far from its original teachings that it has symbolically slain its own founder" (Penuel, 760). The crowing of the cocks relates Santiago's death to that of Christ. The premature deaths of Christ and Santiago are foretold. Both are victims of the multitude's ignorance and fear of life.

"Chronicle of a Death Foretold deconstructs a version of the New Testament" (McGuirk, 1987, 188). When the Church fails to cater to the needs of the soul, Maria Alejandrina Cervantes offers solace to the disturbed hearts. The narrator himself approaches her for consolation. Her devotion and real concern for human needs is a parody of the role played by the Church. "Associated with Maria are authentic grief, human feelings, and an effort of tender consolation" (Penuel, 762).

"There is not a single line in my novels which is not based on reality", Garcia Marquez told Pliniyo Apuleyo Mendoza (Mendoza, 50). In this novel there are references to people close to him. Thus we find references to Mercedes, his wife; Margot, his sister; Luis Enrique, his brother; Luisa Santiago, his mother and Gerineldo Marquez, his grandfather. He had worked as a reporter in 'El Universal', El Heraldo' and 'El Espectador'. This experience helped him to present a horrifying murder in the form of a chronicle. The novel has a claustrophobic atmosphere. Its mood is sombre and tragic.

Joseph Epstein is of the view that Garcia Marquez "combines the two powerful traditions of Latin

American writing: the left wing 'engage tradition' of the Communist poet Pablo Neruda and the modernist 'mandarin tradition' of Jorge Luis Borges" (Epstein, 1983, 65). He believes that in CDF, the Borges tradition predominates. Anthony Burgess comments on the shortcomings of the novel: "The little novel is an honest record, cunningly contrived, but it seems to abet a complacent debasement of morality rather than to open up larger vistas" (Burgess, 1983, 36).

LOVE IN THE TIME OF CHOLERA

LTC is a brilliant exploration of the solitude of love. Garcia Marquez has blended with it themes like aging, death and decay. The story is set in a Caribbean town which is recurringly plagued by cholera. In this novel also Garcia Marquez returns to his favourite "historical period -- from independence to the first decades of the twentieth century" (Franco, 1988, 573).

It belongs to the literary genre generally known as 'folletin', a sentimental and lachrymose love story. It is a realistic novel with elements of television soap operas. Garcia Marquez "writes with impassioned control, out of a maniacal serenity" (Pynchon, 1988, 1). Pynchon calls it a "shining and heart-breaking novel" (Pynchon, 49).

Garcia Marquez is obsessed with plagues. There is a famous insomnia plague in HYS. In the same novel, birds fall dead inside houses reminding us of Camus's La Peste (The Plague). In an interview with Marlise Simons, Garcia Marquez comments: "Plagues are like imponderable dangers that surprise people. They seem to have a quality of destiny. It is the phenomenon of death on a mass scale" (Simons, 1983, 23). He believes that the great plagues have always produced terrific excesses. People are deeply affected by plagues and hence he is interested in plagues.

In LTC the setting is not a magical world like Macondo. Here no one ascends to heaven. On the contrary, ordinary events take place in a sleepy provincial capital. "The genius of Love in the Time of Cholera is the filling in of the gaps of ordinary life, the munificence of detail that can be extracted from a place where...nothing had happened for four centuries" (Gray, 1988, 77). Here "everything was known, and many things were known even before they happened" (LTC, 339).

"The time of cholera is the time of romantic love" (Wood, 1988, 9). In this novel, love is treated as a disease. "Love is like cholera, even its physical

symptoms, dizziness, nausea, fever and the rest can be the same" (Wood, 9). The love described in the novel both defies and redeems time, anger and contagion..." (Beverley, 1988, 410).

The novel tells of Florentino Ariza's passion for Fermina Daza, a wealthy beautiful girl. Though he succeeds in getting his sweetheart's love, her father does not approve of the relationship and sends her on a long journey of forgetting. When she returns, she rejects him and marries a highly esteemed young doctor. Dejected, Florentino Ariza leads a solitary life, seduces innumerable ladies and waits for the death of his rival, Dr. Juvenal Urbino. When he dies he offers her his love again. The former lovers gradually find true love and solicitude.

The novel took its origin from two sources. The first was the love affair of Garcia Marquez's parents. It closely resembles the affair between Fermina Daza and Florentino Ariza. Garcia Marquez's mother belonged to a well-to-do family and his father was a poor telegraph operator. Yet he wooed her with love letters, violin serenades, and telegraph messages. Then her father sent her on a long voyage to forget him. His messages followed her everywhere. When she

returned they got married. (In the novel, Fermina Daza rejects Florentino Ariza when she returns). The second source was the murder of an old American couple who would meet every year in Acapulco. They were in their eighties and married to other people. When they went boating, they were killed by the boatman. Garcia Marquez combined these two stories in LTC. The single visual image behind the work was that of two old people dancing a bolero on the deck of a boat.

The novel begins with the death of the Antillean refugee Jeremiah de St. Amour, followed by the death of Dr. Juvenal Urbino. Dr. Urbino, 81 years old, dies on the Pentecost Sunday falling from a ladder while trying to retrieve a pet parrot. He was one of the most distinguished citizens of the city. When the funeral is over Florentino Ariza, President of the River Company of the Caribbean, approaches the widow of the dead physician and repeats his eternal fidelity and love. Fermina Daza again rejects him. Then we have a flashback which takes us to the passionate love affair between Florentino Ariza and Fermina Daza. The middle chapters deal with Florentino Ariza's escapades and Fermina Daza's married life. The last chapter brings us back to the present. Florentino Ariza courts Fermina Daza again.

Both Fermina Daza and Florentino Ariza are half-orphans. The former had no mother while the latter had no father. Fermina Daza is described as a beautiful adolescent. She walks "with natural haughtiness" (LTC, 56). Her "doe's gait" makes her "seem immune to gravity" (LTC, 56). Their love and separation is the major theme of the novel. Fermina Daza is under the strict care of her aunt. Her father who became rich through illegal means wants to make her a great lady. She put an end to the affair when she learned that she was in love not with the unfortunate man but with the idea of love itself. Her rejection is a major setback to him. But he is prepared to wait till she is free again.

She marries Dr. Juvenal Urbino, a highly esteemed doctor, far above her station in life. Dr. Urbino fights against cholera, as his father did. He promotes measures of public health. Fermina Daza gracefully plays the role of wife, mother and household manager. She spends her time in Paris like the fashionable ladies of Latin America. Yet she always felt as if her life had been lent to her by her husband. It was a happy married life. Yet, there was something wrong. She felt it like "the pea in the bed of the Princess" (Carter, 1988, 14). "The questions of

marriage and the curtailment of personal freedom preoccupy Garcia Marquez in this novel" (Fiddian, 1987, 200).

Florentino Ariza does not marry at all. He has a brilliant career at the River Company of the Caribbean, ending up as its President. He is an excellent womanizer, with women ranging from a school girl to a fifty-year-old widow. Often his relationships end in catastrophe. A beautiful pigeon trainer has been killed by her cuckolded husband. The school girl, America Vicuna, commits suicide.

Florentino Ariza, the depressed lover, embarks on a course of womanizing. He has to his credit "622 long term liaisons apart from countless fleeting adventures..." (LTC, 152). Still he keeps his fidelity, his craving for a life with Fermina Daza. At the end of the novel he says, "I have remained a virgin for you" (LTC, 339).

Florentino Ariza's passion is consummated after fifty one years, nine months and four days. The consummation takes place in a river boat. To protect their privacy the Captain decides to hoist the flag of cholera. It is the love of old people with wrinkled skin, sagged breasts, withered neck and decaying bones.

The couple experiences "the tranquil, wholesome love of experienced grand parents" (LTC, 345). The boat is destined to go up and down the river perpetually. It is an "autumnal romance" (Franco, 573).

In "New Fidelity", they discover the new love. The boat moves along the ravaged land. Not much life is left. Though the yellow quarantine flag ensures privacy, they will never touch the land. The Captain discovers that "it is life more than death that has no limits" (LTC, 348). They enjoy the last fragrance of love.

Michael Wood speaks of Garcia Marquez's fondness for numbers in his essay "Hearstick" published in The New York Review of Books. There are one hundred years of solitude, the rain pours down on Macondo for 4 years 11 months and 2 days, one eats eight quarters of coffee, 30 raw eggs and the juice of 40 oranges and Florentino Ariza's love is consummated after fifty one years, nine months and four days. "The numbers call up an air of legend, a precision that wildly mocks the idea of precision. But numbers can also suggest patience, an intimacy with the slow passage of time" (Wood, 6).

The novel "is an extra-ordinary poetisation of old age" (Strawson, 1988, 42). In the first part Jeremiah de St. Amour commits suicide by inhaling the fumes of gold cyanide. His name suggests the loneliness of love. He dies of gerentophobia, to escape the indignities of old age. It is an overture to the novel. Jeremiah de St. Amour has decided that he will die at sixty. "As the date approached he had gradually succumbed to despair as if his death had been not his own decision but an inexorable destiny" (LTC, 15). Jeremiah de St. Amour's death is a resolution against old age. Florentino Ariza is tortured by the thought that death will conquer him. His fierce war of love will be turned to dust and nothingness.

Various types of love are described in the novel. "Nothing one does in bed is immoral if it helps to perpetuate love", Florentino Ariza tells the widow Nazret (LTC, 151). Bailey finds in the novel the manifestations of various types of love:

> Love in all its varied manifestations is celebrated and lamented in this eventful novel: platonic love, loveless love, the love that grows suddenly between two people who have lived together without it; maniacal love and love which is sickness unto death (Bailey, 1988, 29).

Garcia Marquez describes the pangs of unrequited love: the fever, the cramps and the heartburn.

Florentino Ariza's passion for Fermina Daza is "extravagant, pink, innocent, high pitched romantic love" (Simpson, 1988, 22). He goes to her house to deliver a message to her father. He finds her teaching her aunt to read. He wooes her through letters. He sends her a lock of his own hair. She sends him the veins of leaves dried in dictionaries, the wings of butterflies and the feathers of magic birds.

Florentino Ariza eats roses until he shows the symptoms of cholera. He gives her an ultimatum and receives a reply on a page torn from a school notebook. She lives in the kingdom of childhood, of pure and eternal love, devoid of the earthiness and the torment of the body. Her reply is: "Very well, I will marry you if you promise not to make me eat egg-plant" (LTC, 71).

When she is sent on a long journey it is the end of their childhood. Florentino Ariza also feels it so. He dives for sunken galleons in search of gold. There is no external obstacle in their affair. Fermina has achieved maturity. Her way of walking displays it.

The change in her braid has erased all girlish traces. Earlier she let it hang down her back. She now wore it twisted over her left shoulder.

She marries Dr. Juvenal Urbino not for money. "She was stunned by the fear of an opportunity slipping away, and by the imminence of her twenty first birth day. Her father's business was on the ruin. Daza was alone in the world. Her former school mates were enjoying life.

Dr. Juvenal Urbino is a man who went to Europe and inherited its liberalism. He fights against superstitions. S.M.J. Minta calls him an outsider:

> Yet he remains as a man who will never know his own country... a man blinded by the promise of a dream that is forever future. In the end it is Urbino who appears ridiculous, one who dies not for science, not love but for a parrot (Minta, 1988, 730).

His son is an ordinary doctor who even failed to produce a child. His daughter also produces no son. The great tradition of medical practice ends with him. LTC is a "celebration of all that Urbino is not: it is a novel in praise of spontaneity, sexual passion,

disorder and vitality and of...old age over death..." (Minta, 730).

The bizarre and the outlandish dominate the novel. Garcia Marquez is interested in communities doomed for isolation. The time of cholera becomes the time of romantic love in this novel. "Like cholera, love is mortal, exclusive and undiscriminating" (Wood, 9). The novelist infuses the themes of decay and solitude through the landscape. It shows the stagnation and devastation of Latin America.

OF LOVE AND OTHER DEMONS

An atmosphere of death, decay and solitude permeates OLD. In this novel, Garcia Marquez takes us to a Caribbean town where slave trade and religious hegemony determine the destiny of the citizens. The ship with unexplainable series of death on board, the corpses thrown into the sea, and the disfigured swollen bodies with a strange majenta colouring washed ashore -- all introduced in the first page itself -- take us to the dark world of pagan beliefs and superstitions.

"The excellence of Garcia Marquez lies in the originality of his multi-layered story-telling" (Gill, 1987, 144). OLD is an example. On October 26, 1949,

while he was working as a journalist, he was sent to the cemetery of the Clarissan nuns at Santa Clara. When a burial crypt that bore the name 'Sierva Maria' was opened, a stream of long hair spilled out. He had heard of a twelve-year-old girl with hair trailing behind her like a bridal train, who had died of rabies. This incident helped him to write OLD. As S.P. Ganguly comments, "Memories and experience have played a vital role in his career as a writer" (Ganguly, 1987, 176).

Garcia Marquez explores "Latin American life to its roots or origin" (Gill, 144). In this novel he presents the events that follow when Sierva Maria, a twelve-year-old Marquise was bitten by a mad dog. The two important characters in this novel trapped in the inescapable labyrinths of solitude are the Marquis and his wife, Bernarda. Her craving for extreme sensations ruins Bernarda, an untamed Mestiza. She was "seductive, rapacious and brazen with a hunger in her womb that could have satisfied an entire barracks" (OLD, 8).

The Marquis is a "funereal effeminate man" "pale" and "forlorn" in appearance (OLD, 9). His house is in melancholy ruin. Sierva Maria is brought up in the slave quarters and picks up their superstitions.

Bernarda hates the girl and is not bothered when she is bitten by a mad dog. The Marquis consults Abrenuncio, a notorious and unconventional doctor who employs innovative methods. He examines the girl and assures that she is out of danger.

No medicine was available for rabies in those days. Often the patients were poisoned by their people to avoid a ghastly death. They would commend the dying to St Hubert, tie them to a pillar and prolong their suffering. The slaves secretly treat Sierva Maria. She is asked to chew a paste of manaju and she is placed naked in the onion cellar to counteract the evil spell of the dog.

"In much of his work Garcia Marquez has turned his home town into a dream kingdom of shattered expectations built on nostalgia..." (Rodman, 1983, 16). The Marquis in the novel is an example. He is a victim of circumstances. He is the son of an illustrious knight. When he falls in love with Dulce Olivia, an inmate of the nearby mental asylum, his father exiles him to his country estate. He is frightened of the loneliness. Then he has a shocking dream: the animals in the estate abandon the place and cross and fields in absolute silence beneath the full moon. He renounces

his love and marries Dona Ollala Mendoza, who is soon struck down by lightning. He lives alone in the mansion, frightened by death. He feels that he will be killed by his own slaves and so keeps a pack of ferocious mastiffs. He loses faith also. But within a year he is trapped into a marriage with Bernarda who comes there to supply pickled herring. Soon Sierva Maria is born. Bernarda spends her time in wild sexual orgies with her slaves.

Then the girl starts howling and barking. She has to bear many cures and healings associated with the primitive beliefs and superstitions. One doctor applies caustic poultices, another leeches on her back. She is subjected to herbal baths and enemas. Her body is scalded with mustard plasters and blistering poultices. Finally Sagunta applies her witchcraft. But these cannot cure her sickness. She has a fiery ulcer as a result of these wild treatments.

The Bishop summons the Marquis and questions him about his daughter's wild ravings. He concludes that they are sumptoms of demonic possession. The Bishop orders the Marquis to confine the girl in the convent of Santa Clara.

The Marquis takes Sierva Maria to the convent. The girl becomes a victim of the rivalry between the Fransiscan Fathers and the Clarissan nuns. Josefa Miranda, the abbess, hates the decision of the Fransiscan Bishop to hand over a possessed girl to her convent.

In the convent Sierva Maria is treated as one truly possessed with the devil. Her deeds are exaggerated and recorded as the actions of Satan. The nuns approach her for favours. Those who devoted their lives for the worship of Christ want Sierva Maria to intercede for them with the devil. They gamble, smoke and drink. The decay prevalent in the cloisters is shocking. Garcia Marquez points out the lapses of the Church which fail to nurture true notions of beliefs and worship. Instead, the Church worships false gods.

Dr. Abrenuncio alone protests against leaving Sierva Maria at Santa Clara for exorcising. He vehemently criticizes the heartlessness of the Church:

> There is not much difference between that and the witchcraft of the Blacks. In fact it is even worse because...the Holy Office is happy to break innocents on the rack or burn them alive in a public spectacle (OLD, 72).

The doctor reflects Garcia Marquez's own indignation at the cruel practices of Orthodox Christianity when he comments: "I think that killing her would have been more Christian than burning her alive" (OLD, 72). The Church executed mental patients for demonic possession or heresy, instead of giving proper treatment. Sierva Maria also awaits such a punishment.

The Bishop appoints a young priest, Cayetano Delaura, to exorcise Sierva Maria. He does not have the character or the training to become an exorcist. He fails and the girl becomes a victim of witch-hunting. After the arrival of Sierva Maria, everything ordinary that happens in the convent has something supernatural about it. Delaura is sceptic about such stories. He feels that the girl is not possessed. He knows that people attribute certain things they do not understand to the demon. He knows that even if the girl is not possessed by any demon, she is in the most propitious environment for becoming so.

The girl spits on his face and attacks him. But gradually he wins her confidence. The priest soon falls in love with her. The image of Sierva Maria with her fiery hair over her shoulders haunts the priest's

dreams. Like a passionate lover he visits her every day and recites love songs. He informs the Bishop that the girl is not possessed. What seems demonic to others are the customs of the Blacks. The girl is frightened because she feels that she is going to die. Her solitude nurtures the horrors of death. Delaura wants to save the girl, but he is helpless.

The Viceroy who visits the city also wants to save the girl. Ironically the Bishop speaks of the failure of the Church: "We have crossed the ocean sea to improve the law of Christ, and we have done so with Masses and processions and festivals for patron saints, but not in the souls of men" (OLD, 102).

When the Bishop learns of Delaura's passion for Sierva Maria, he strips him of his privileges and sends him to the Amor de Dios hospital to nurse the lepers. The Bishop blames Delaura for not confining himself to facing demons with the authority of Christ, but discussing matters of faith with them. Those who intercede for Dalaura argue that the exorcists sometimes become posessed with the demons they are trying to drive out. But the Bishop is adamant. He erases his former confidant from his heart.

With all humility Delaura nurses the lepers. Dr. Abrenuncio feels pity for him and believes that it is a waste of talent. Though he is an atheist, the doctor speaks of the need for clerics to win the souls of the patients. Delaura's friends abandon him. Still he is obsessed with thoughts of Sierva Maria. Love, like a demon traps him. He is doomed to fall.

One night Delaura enters the convent through an underground tunnel and climbs the wall to see her. He visits her every night. Like a foolish lover he offers to do anything for her. Love, not the demon, has possessed him.

The Bishop himself assumes the responsibility of exorcising Sierva Maria. Her long hair is cut and she is taken to the Church. The Bishop shouts to the demon to leave her body. Sierva Maria shouts louder. Exhausted and breathless, the Bishop falls down. The Church, it is clear, misunderstands the true nature of certain occurences and considers them as the work of Satan. The fight against the illusory is certain to fail.

The Bishop then appoints another priest, Thomas de Aquino de Narvaez, to exorcise her. But he dies in mysterious circumstances. Sierva Maria asks

Delaura to rescue her. She asks him to marry her and leave the place. But Delaura tries to free her with the help of her father. The Marquis has sought the help of Dulca Olivia to get rid of his solitude. He goes in search of his wife to the Mahates Sugar plantations and dies there without the knowledge of anyone. His skeleton is discovered two years later. Bernard also meets a gloomy and solitary end.

When Martina Laborde, an ex-nun serving life imprisonment, escapes from the convent, the secret tunnel is closed. Delaura cannot enter the convent. He is mad with love. Dr. Abrenuncio dissuades him. He hates love: "To him, love was an emotion contra natura that condemned two strangers to a base and unhealthy dependence...(OLD, 145). He rejects the precepts of the Church which give importance to death than to life. He seems to be the voice of reason. Though hated by all and condemned as an atheist, he stands for human values and genuine consideration for fellow beings.

Then Delaura goes straight to the convent to see the girl. Possessed with love, he loses his senses. Ironically, he himself is taken for the devil by the nuns. They hold the crucifix against him and shout "Vade retro Satana" (OLD, 146). He is handed

over to the Holy Office, and is condemned for heresy. But he saves his life. He serves his sentence as a nurse at Amor de Dios hospital. Thus he loses his brilliant career and his important position in the Church. He loses them for love. His fall shows the failure of love.

The Bishop continues his exorcism. Sierva Maria rebels. She shouts and bellows. She is starving and is given an enema of holy water. When one of her legs becomes free, she kicks into the Bishop's lower abdomen, knocking him to the ground. In this act is reflected Garcia Marquez's own attempt to debunk the corrupt and superstitious clergy. They have to be kicked out at any cost. Otherwise, they will torture the poor and the destitute. This seems to be his message in this novel.

Sierva Maria does not know that happened to Delaura. She has a dream again. She sees herself sitting on the window eating grapes. She pulls them off two by two. It symbolically presents the end of her days. She dies that night. Her skin shines and her hair grows again. Later she is worshipped as a giver of boons. Garcia Marquez seems to assert the holiness of her sacrifice. The views of Alfred Kazin are quite relevant here:

> Strange things happen in the land of Marquez. As with Emerson, Poe, Hawthorne, every sentence breaks the silence of a vast emptiness, the famous New World 'Solitude' that is the unconscious despair of his characters but the sign of Marquez's genius (Kazin, 1972, 1).

He believes that 'a book must have an immensity about it in the same way life is enormous..." (Kennedy, 1976, 16). OLD proves this fact. It is yet another novel in the great gallery of novels supplied by Garcia Marquez to World Literature.

STRANGE PILGRIMS

SP is a collection of short stories. Loneliness, love and death emerge as the major themes in them. The setting is often bizarre and conveys a dark and dismal view of mankind. A sense of doom prevails in them.

"Bon Voyage Mr. President", the first story, portrays the loneliness of a former President who visits Switzerland to undergo treatment for an illness. Death dominates his thoughts. He is "one more incognito in the city of incognitos....The years of

glory and power had been left behind forever and now only the years of his death remained" (SP, 3-4). He wants to be forgotten by everyone. He feels that he is paying a high price for his foolishness. He is another Col. Buendia who wants to hide in total oblivion. He survives by teaching students Latin and Spanish. The news of his death has already appeared in six lines on the fifth page of a newspaper. His only son was killed by his officers during a rebellion that was aimed to overthrow his father. He lives in a garret in utter poverty. He undergoes surgery. He has to depend on the mercy of Homero Ray, a man from his own country who is working as an ambulance driver in a hospital.

"The Saint" is the story of Margarito Durate who waits in Rome to convince the Vatican authorities of the sainthood of his daughter. His attempt proves futile. The author feels that "while he was still alive he had spent twenty two years for the legitimate cause of his own canonization" (SP, 53).

"Sleeping Beauty and the Airplane" reveals an anecdote in which the author meets and travels with a beautiful lady who does not care for him or for anything else. "I Sell My Dreams" is about Frau Dreida who predicted the fortunes of others by her dreams.

When she is killed in an accident the author remembers how he met her in Vienna thirteen years ago. She lived by selling her dreams.

"I only Came to Use the Phone" has a surrealistic aura about it. It is the story of Maria who is accidentally trapped in a mental asylum for females. All her efforts to escape from that hell fail. Her husband waits and then drops her. When she succeeds in contacting him, he feels that she is mad. Maria rejects him and remains inside the asylum.

"The Ghost of August" tells a strange experience. The writer, his wife and their two sons visit the castle where the Venezuelan writer Miguel Oreto Silva lived. It was supposed to be haunted by the ghost of Ludovico, the great patron of arts and of war, who built the castle. In a moment of madness he had stabbed his lady, turned his ferocious dogs on himself and was torn to pieces. The author does not believe in the existence of ghosts and sleeps in a modernised and well-furnished room. The next morning, to his absolute horror, he finds that he and his wife are in the bed-chamber of Ludovico, "under the canopy and the dusty curtains and the sheets soaked with still-warm blood of his accursed bed" (SP, 96).

"Maria dos Prazers" is a story of old age and death. Maria dos Prazers, an ex-prostitute, is convinced of her imminent death and makes arrangement for a decent funeral in a cemetery. No one is there to weep for her death. So she teaches her pet dog, Noi to weep and to reach her would-be-burial place. But life surprises her with a new lover in the form of a taxi driver.

"Seventeen Poisoned Englishmen" is the story of Senora Prudencia Linero, 72, who travels from Riohacha, Colombia, to Rome to meet the Pope. She miraculously escapes from food poisoning in which seventeen Englishmen are killed.

"Tramontana" speaks of the death of a young Caribbean. Eleven Swedes take him away to Cadaques, where he is a singer in a bar. It is a city frequented by tramontanas. He is terribly afraid of the tramontana, a violent and depressing wind that goes on blowing for hours. To escape from that he refuses to go with them. They drag him along with them to cure him of his African superstitions. The boy, terrified by his imminent return to Cadaques, throws himself from the speeding van and dies.

"Miss Forbes's Summer of Happiness" is the story of two boys who are having training in good manners and table etiquette, under a German governess

named Miss Forbes. They hate the rigorous exercises and the overassuming mannerisms of the lady. They poison her. But the next day she is found dead, in a pool of blood, stabbed to death by an unknown hand.

"Light is like Water" is the story of two boys Toto and Joel, who break a glowing bulb and row their boat in the golden light as light fills the room like water. They invite their friends also for the adventure and they turn on so many lights at the same time that all of them are drowned.

"The Trail of Your Blood in the Snow" is the most haunting story in the collection. It is the story of Nena Daconte and Billy Sanchez who are on their way to Paris to enjoy their honeymoon. Nena's finger bleeds all the way and she dies in a hospital. Billy Sanchez cannot see her, he is lost in the town and frantically searches for her. It is the story of his desolation and loneliness.

Some of these stories have a Pinteresque quality about them. The threat of an external menace is very much evident in them. The characters flee from the clutches of death. But death overpowers them. Garcia Marquez uses magical realism too in these stories. They are stories of despair, and isolation.

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CONCLUSION

Gabriel Garcia Marquez's novels have rapidly changed the entire literary history of Latin America. They capture the real picture of life in that forlorn continent. They are rootd in the folklores of Colombia. The stories which frightened Garcia Marquez when he was a boy, are retold with new vigour and charm in his novels. He returns to the sweet moments of his past and visualises them in his works. His attempt is to find out the true life of the Colombians. He is a writer of admirable genius and explores the predicament of helpless human beings who are trapped in the inescapable labyrinths of solitude.

In his stories, he normalises the abnormal. His characters are always larger-than-life; they take more food, have tempestuous love affairs and end their lives as tragic characters. They are not frightened with death and disaster; they survive attempts on their lives. By presenting the dark realities of a conflict-ridden continent Garcia Marquez deftly portrays the destiny of mankind at large.

This great writer believes that a novelist really writes only one novel in his lifetime. He follows this belief in his own writings. His stories

and novels are the broken pieces of a more perfect fictional world. Garcia Marquez creates a continuum where the characters and incidents reappear in his subsequent works. We find in his novels a web of connections and relationships. The short stories are often material chopped off from the major bulk of fiction. The Colonel, for example, appears in LS and NWC. We find a character named Rebeca in "Tuesday Siesta", "One Day after Sunday" and HYS. The Mayor appears in NWC and IEH. The recurring incidents and characters make the entire corpus of his work a single unit. Readers as well as critics place HYS at the centre of the Marquez canon. They return to it for incidents, allusions and repetitions found in his other works.

His early stories like LS, IEH and IES did not receive the critical attention they deserved. Later, when HYS became a world famous novel, they were studied to assess Garcia Marquez's growth as a writer. The early writings also reflect the writer's skill in characterisation. 'Loneliness' emerges as a major theme in them.

The author presents an absurd world in his novels. His stories abound in cyclical and mythical

patterns of time. A recurring cycle of birth, boom, decay and death is enacted in his works. Time plays a vital role in them. Myth and fantasy are used by the writer to present the absurdity of human life. History is often mixed with fantasy. The past, present and the future are dovetailed to a single entity.

He uses myths and fables to portray man's life and the evolutionary process in terms of parables. The history of Latin America is repeated in the stories. They reveal the story of mankind in allegories. Everything that concerns the growth of man -- from genesis upto the Apocalypse -- is repeated in his tales.

Macondo, a typical Caribbean village, is the major setting in all his novels. It becomes a metaphor for Latin America and for the entire world. In HYS, Garcia Marquez strives to depict human existence in its totality, from Eden to Apocalypse, by depiciting the complex history of a family (the Buendias) and a town (Macondo).

The writer illuminates the seamy side of life with a profusion of fantasy and absurdities. As a result, a funny world is created with its tragi-comic undertones. Magic and miracles are accepted as daily

occurences. In this enhanted world, people ascend to heaven, dead men return to life, a foreigner conjures up a rain and a lady dies at her own behest. But the land of magic is doomed to loneliness. An element of repulsion and hatred prevails even among people who live in the same house. The disaster of Macondo results from this lack of solidarity.

The setting, 'Macondo', bears comparisons with William Faulkner's mythical Yoknapatawpha county. In his "Nobel Acceptance Speech", Garcia Marquez acknowledged his indebtedness to William Faulkner. Macondo is a microcosm for Latin America. The Biblical and classical myths raise it to the stature of a universal statement on the condition of man.

Fantasy and magical realism play important roles in levelling the boundary between the real and the fantastic. Garcia Marquez presents strange events as if they were the real ones. He blends reality and fantasy in such a way that anything is possible in his fictional world. Macondo is a magic world and the reader is trapped in its shrinking boundaries and swept off by final holocaust. Miracles and superstitions are accepted as day-to-day events. Ghosts and living souls peacefully co-habit in the fictional space of Garcia Marquez.

His women characters are strong, stern and stoic. They are duty-bound and possess an unquenchable dynastic urge while their male counterparts are dreamers who pursue their harebrained schemes. Such a contrast exists in LS, NWC, AP and OLD. Ursula in HYS is such a foil to Jose Arcadio Buendia, her husband.

Loneliness is an important theme in the novels of Garcia Marquez. From his first story to the last novel, it emerges as a recurring problem. The Marquez oeuvre presents a world that is doomed to loneliness. His characters fail to communicate with each other. Hence, they fall into the abyss of loneliness.

His characters are embodiments of the various aspects of loneliness. Important characters like Colonel Aureliano Buendia (HYS), the Patriarch (AP), the Colonel (NWC), the Mayor (IEH), Florentino Ariza (LTC), Simon Bolivar (GIL) and Sierva Maria (OLD) acknowledge and accept loneliness as the profoundest fact in human life. They are always conscious that they are alone and try to get rid of this terror in many ways. But these attempts do not succeed and they have to return to their lonely secluded spheres.

Most of his characters are hopelessly marooned on the remote, swampy village named Macondo. They

leave it, spend their days in meaningless struggles and battles and finally return to its unredeemable loneliness. They can do nothing but get themselves immersed in loneliness. No relief can be found to take them away from their miserable situations. 'Loneliness' is not something that is casual and unexpected, but it is a predestined vocation. Characters acquire it naturally. It comes as a part of their existence.

The isolation of Macondo from other towns and from the mainstream of civilization is a reason for incest and the inevitable offshoot, loneliness. The increasing temptation for incest shows the failure of the characters to communicate with other families. The fear of incest haunts the characters throughout their lives. Remedios the Beauty (HYS) lives under this threat. Amaranta (HYS) struggles against her strong incest urge. Incest, in turn, leads to solitude and despair. It plays a decisive role in characterisation. Marriages often end up in failures. Marriages fail to produce offspring. Suppressed desires lead to an urge for incest. When the characters succumb to the incest urge, it leads to death and disaster.

No one can abstain from the pains of loneliness because it is a universal law in Garcia Marquez's works. His characters may follow their individual destinies, but the element of solitude brings them together. It becomes a common factor in their lives. People get marked with the symptoms of solitude. It always leads to sadness and failure. He offers love as the only remedy to transcend loneliness. But the characters who pursue this goal are driven to tragic ends. The tragedy of Father Cayetano Delaura (OLD) is an example. Love and sex often lead to loneliness. The indulgence in unrestrained sexual pleasure culminates in more terrible loneliness.

The attempt in his novels is to explore in detail the multifaceted aspects of loneliness. He examines vistas like loneliness and power, sex and loneliness and the loneliness of old age. The names of his recurring characters are sometimes confusing to a reader. For instance, in HYS names like 'Aureliano'. 'Arcadio' and 'Ursula' appear and reappear with intricate features. The Aurelianos are small in physical stature and are solitary dreamers. They pursue worthless endeavours. The Arcadios, on the other hand, are large in size and are adventurous. Amarantas and Remedioses remain as virgins and radiate danger to men.

His novels are often hailed as comic masterpieces. But the tragic and the gloomy far outweigh the comic. Comedy is always peripheral in them. A sense of doom pervades the novels in spite of the farcical elements. Life, as portrayed in his novels, startles us with its wonders and extravagances. When a novel ends, we are left with a feeling of pleasant exhaustion. Our minds are enlarged by a reading of his tales. This ennobling quality is a unique feature of his works.

The novels provide a commentary on the terrible reality of human existence. He presents a dark world haunted by the forces of disintegration. His sense of humour helps only to darken the sombre vision.

Loneliness and power are inter-related problems in Garcia Marquez's works. He believes that all great dictators are men who cannot love. Lovelessness and loneliness are closely related phenomena. A dictator fails to communicate with his people. His loneliness leads to cruelties. At the apex of power he will always be alone. Garcia Marquez proves this fact in AP, GIL and CIC.

This Colombian writer gave a new life and new vigour to modern fiction. He is noted for his prolific imagination, remarkable precision and wide popularity. His novels abound in anecdots of brutality, exploitation and degradation. He presents the dark realities, the political struggles of Latin America. He built up an entirely fresh fictional world. As a result, his works are received by readers and critics as important documents on the lives of the people in Latin America. His wild imagination combines the fantastic and the realistic in 'magic realism'. Thus, Garcia Marquez has achieved the stature of world renowned writers like Borges, Balzac and Faulkner. The Nobel Prize in 1982 was the official recognition of his global readership.

His readers believe that he is a vehement critic of the out-dated conventions and manners of the twentieth century. He uses myths and cyclical patterns of time to alleviate the terror of modern man's solitude. 'Loneliness' is an important characteristic that permeates all his novels. His comprehensive and masterly sounding of the depths of loneliness and love have made Gabriel Garcia Marquez one of the most widely known living novelists.

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