

**MARQUEZ'S NOVELS AS
CONFRONTATION AND CORRECTION:
A READING OF THE IMAGINATIVE
TRANSFORMATION OF POLITICS
AND HISTORY**

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D E C L A R A T I O N

I, Zainul Abid Kotta hereby declare that this dissertation entitled **MARQUEZ'S NOVELS AS CONFRONTATION AND CORRECTION: AN IMAGINATIVE TRANSFORMATION OF POLITICS AND HISTORY** is a bona fide imprint of research work undertaken by me, under the supervision of Dr. Sankaran Ravindran and that it has not previously been formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, or other similar title or recognition.

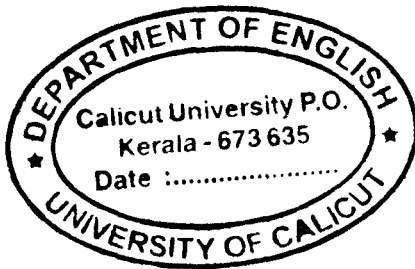
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20-6-07
Dr. Sankaran Ravindran

PREFACE

When I started reading Marquez as a casual reader, I considered him only as a novelist with the burden of magical realism. But the more I plunged into the core of his novels, the more I felt that Marquez would be best understood, if I had thorough knowledge of Colombian cultural manifestations. I realized that without proper cultural background the novelists like Marquez might not be properly digested. Books were minimum on the cultural background of Colombia in English, and on Marquez. But my enthusiasm and material hunting helped me to reach at certain conclusions about the celebrated author and his cultural commitments.

This dissertation falls into five sections. The first is an introduction about the socio cultural history of Colombia and of Latin America, sufficiently focusing their confrontation with various cultural interactions from time immemorial. It deals with the historical and cultural background of Colombia. Marquez may be read and enjoyed without an unfaltering knowledge of Colombia. But after having a very distinct background, our perusal of Marquez will be highly effective and sufficiently useful. Keeping this in mind, I have added a chapter on the historical and cultural background of Marquez and Colombia. The second chapter deals with Marquez's

magnum opus *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Actually this novel is a cross section of Colombia. This mythic narrative in all its possibility, explores all the major Marquezian concepts: his themes, viewpoints, his ideas about history, culture, language, memory, historiography etc. No one can write the history of the literature of 20th century without referring to *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

The third chapter is on *The General In his Labyrinth*, which circumnavigates around the historical figure Simon Bolivar. Bolivar is a legend in the minds of the Latin Americans since he was the one who had fought for the liberation of the whole of Latin America from the tiresome yokes of the Spanish and the Portuguese colonialism. There are many affinities between Bolívar and Marquez. Both of them had cherished the dream of Latin American unification. Actually it is a gargantuan task to write a novel about such a legendary figure as Simon Bolivar, especially when people kept every details of the hero in their minds. Marquez tried to document the last years of Bolívar, which was the least documented part of his life. In the epilogue of the novel Marquez had made it clear that he was ignorant about the historical writing. Marquez's Bolívar was a little bit different from the actual Bolívar referred to history. But Bolívar was used as a myth and a metaphor by Marquez to rewrite the history of the continent.

Marquez's journalistic skill is beautifully fruited in *In Evil Hour*. It explicates the corrupted political leaders and parties in Colombia.

6

Although Colombia is a democracy, it passes through political violence and oppression. Political enemies are devilishly tortured. The presidents of the nation behave as dictators. In *In Evil Hour* there is a mayor who controls all the political activities. He is the government, the police, the magistrate etc. Marquez wanted to communicate the idea that political parties of Colombia have no difference in their ideology, though the colours of their flags are different. Colombian political violence is picturized in the novel with all inherent witticism of Marquez. One cannot write the Colombian political history of today without speaking of *In Evil Hour*.

The last chapter speaks about the Marquezian themes and agenda. His novels can be treated as attempts for correction and confrontation. He has to correct the wrong notion of the Spanish intellectuals that the Continent was made by them. The only way to confront them is creating an alternative history that is very much regional and colonized- friendly. Marquez identified that in order to represent the experience of the colonized he has to find out new strategies and tools. So he tried to formulate a new historiography. He tried to rewrite the history of the colonized by using this new historiography. Here the source materials are not the history books written by the colonizer, but the memories, magical realism, and the oral history. The corpus of Marquezian narratives is made out of this awareness.

I am very much indebted to Dr. Sankaran Ravindran, Professor and the former Head of the Department of English, University of Calicut for his scholarly help and valuable guidance. His genuine interest and persistent encouragement helped me to a great deal in my pursuit of this task. My work would not have been a success if he had not shown his untiring enthusiasm towards academics and knowledge. I also thank Mr. T.M. Abdul Jaleel, (Head of the Department of English, University of Calicut), Dr. R. Viswanathan (the late), Dr. N. Ramachandran Nair (former Heads of the Department of English, University of Calicut), the Staff of the Library (of the Department of English, University of Calicut), Mr. Krishnanunni.P (Delhi University), Dr. Indira Nair (Principal, Thunchan Memorial Govt. College, Tirur), Mr. V. Kabeer (System Administrator, Madhyamam Daily). I am immensely grateful to the librarians of the following libraries: Theenmurthi, Delhi, Sahitya Akademi Delhi, Embassy of Colombia, New Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University Delhi, Delhi University, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh University Shimla, Indo American Studies and Research Hyderabad, Central Institute for English and Foreign Languages Hyderabad, and Indian Institute of Advanced Studies Shimla. The Staff and Students of Unity Women's College, Manjeri and Thunchan Memorial Govt. College Tirur, etc. helped me much in completing my project. Two persons to whom I myself found in need of expressing the most

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C O N T E N T S

Chapters	Page No.
Preface	
1. Latin American Confrontation	1 - 58
2. <i>One Hundred Years of Solitude:</i> A Tragic Comic Caricature of Colombia and Latin America	59 - 107
3. The Liberator in his own Labyrinth	108 - 161
4. <i>In Evil Hour</i> or Who is the Proprietor of this Cemetery	162 - 208
5. Marquezian Themes and Agenda	209 - 232
Bibliography	233 - 245

Chapter 1

LATIN AMERICAN CONFRONTATION

Marquezean narratives are the rewritings of Latin American written/oral histories. Out of his in-depth knowledge of the history of the Continent, Gabriel Garcia Marquez has formulated a fictional pattern that is very much akin to the indigenous cultural patterns of the Continent. Latin American confrontations have many distinct features. Those can broadly be classified into two: historical/political and geographical/topographical.

This chapter falls into two parts. The first part extensively elaborates those confrontations, and the second part fixes those confrontations in the fictional context. By historical confrontation I mean the historical undercurrents of Latin America before, during, and after the European Christian colonization. Those historical anecdotes have reached Marquez through oral traditions. His grandparents told him those stories on different occasions. Once he commented:

All I wanted to do was to leave a literary picture of the world of my childhood which . . . was spent in large, very sad house with a sister who ate earth, a grand mother who prophesied the future and countless relatives of the same name who never

made such distinctions between happiness and insanity.
(Apuleyo Mendoza 72).

The Inca and Maya civilizations and the history of pre-colonized Continent may have reached to him through this source. He read the history of post colonized Latin America from the books written by the colonizers themselves.

Marquez studied the political history of modern governments well. In his works he thinks of modern governments of Latin America of the two centuries: the 19th century democratic governments and the 20th century dictators. This is the narrative world of Marquez where social and political history are entwined together.

The second layer of confrontation is visible in the geographical/topographical realm. Latin American countries are different from one another. Some countries are predominantly arable lands whereas some others are high lands. Still, deserts and Amazon rainforest dominate some countries. Colombia provides the same picture. The Andean region is different from the central Colombia. So the geographical differences made different cultural manifestations possible.

The Latin American demographic pattern is really variegated. It is a composite of red Indians, Africans (migrants and slaves), Asians (primitive migrants), Whites, Mestizos, the tribal etc. The predominant

religion is, no doubt, Christianity and still paganism exists. In order to comprehend the complex pattern of those confrontations, a thorough knowledge of the history of the Continent is necessary. Hence I have added the first part of the chapter purely for historical awareness.

What is the relationship between history and fiction?

The question of the relationship between history and fiction is a major concern for today. Fiction can be called historical when its concentration focuses on historical incidents. History is believed to be factual, matter of fact, true whereas fiction is the production of imagination. Both the fiction and the historical texts are identified as linguistic constructs in the postmodern sense. Both texts are the products of creative intuition of the narrators. Linda Hutcheon observes the same.

Post modern theory and art, and the recent critical readings of both history and fiction focus on what the two modes of writing share than on how they differ....They have both been seen to derive their force more from verisimilitude than from any objective truth...They are both identified as linguistic constructs, highly conventionalized in their narrative forms, and not

at all transparent either in terms of language or structure (*Poetics of Post modernism* 122)

Fiction writers try to rewrite and present the past in fiction just like the historians try to present some anecdotes in their fashion. As Hayden White observes, the difference between history and fiction resides in the fact that the historian finds his stories, whereas the fiction writer invents his. This conception of the historian's task however obscures the extent to which invention also plays a part in the historians operations (*Metahistory* 06). Traditional historiography believes that history itself consists of a congeries of lived stories, individual and collective. Thus the principal task of the historians is to uncover these stories, and to retell them in a narrative, the truth of which would reside in the correspondence of the story lived by the real people in the past. It means that the literary aspect of the historical narrative is supposed to inhere solely in certain stylistic embellishments that render the account of the past in vivid terms. Hayden White further argues that "writers of fiction invented everything in their narrative – characters, events, plots, motifs, themes, atmosphere" (*Content of the Form* 20) in order to create a universe that is very much similar or superior to the universe created by pure historians. Marquezian texts are historically founded. Hence the knowledge of Colombian history is inevitable for best understanding of his fictional universe.

Very little authentic information is available on the matutinal inhabitants of Latin America. Historians like Edward Mc Nall Burns state that some 15,000 or 20,000 years ago, groups of people migrated from the Eastern Asia across the Bering Strait to the North America (576). The migrants included all stocks. Prominent among them was of the Mongoloid stock. Later they were known as Indians although they had no connection with the inhabitants of India, and some of them might have come from Polynesia by boat. The descendants of the new comers were trifurcated into three predominant geographical divisions: the North America, the Central America and the South America. The southern group had produced superior cultures unlike the northern group, which led nomadic and vagrant life. "Had they not been conquered, they might well have provided the basis for an indigenous cultural growth in central and south America equal to that of any continent" (MC Nall Burns *et al.* 576).

Historical records depicting the ancient history of South America were few, and the researchers should rely mostly on the writings of the colonizers. Three dominant cultures existed there: the Mexico based Aztecs, Central American Mayas, and the Incas with head quarters at Peru. In terms of geographical expansion, Incas of the South America was the greatest. "It embraced the ranges and plateaus of the Andes, the mountainous heart of the

continent, and its heights included most of the present day countries of Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia and the northern portions of Argentina and Chile." (Mc Nall Burns *et al.* 584). Like other contemporary civilizations, the Inca civilization left permanent footprints on the regions it had ensconced.

Cultural exchanges were possible among the contemporary cultures. The Incas borrowed extensively from its neighborhood. Gradually they have developed their own culture, acknowledging the contributions made by the Olmecs. "Olmec" is the first advanced culture in the Americas, began as early as 1000 BC. "They had settled on the tropical Gulf Coast of Mexico, South of Vera Cruz, and spread southward into Guatemala." (Mc Nall Burns *et al.* 576).

They laid the foundation for advanced cultures in Central and South America. The Incas established their culture about 1100 AD and found its apex in the late fifteenth century. They never constituted an empire. The nation was a confederation of tribes. The tribes were composed of clans. Available records indicate that the Inca was the ruler of the land and he was believed to be the son of the Sun God. The royal family too, was believed to be the descendants of God. In order to maintain the purity of the blood, the Inca sometimes married his own sister.

They mastered the art of cultivation and that was a triumph of will and energy over nature. They used to cultivate corn, potato etc. And domesticated animals. Their artistic talent was portrayed in pottery, in textile designs, and in metal works. "They were the outstanding engineers among the Indian people, in this respect suggesting a mentality akin to that of Ancient Romans." (Mc Nall Burns *et al.* 585). Their capital was surrounded and protected by large stones. They made roads, bridges, tunnels etc. Surprisingly enough, they had operated postal networks with human runners. Available records indicate that the Incas outshone all the contemporaries in medicine. Surgery was practiced and some surgeons performed even brain operations. But quite alarmingly, they neglected writing and not even a single book was available today, written by them.

Their religion was very complex and had a typical pagan air. They believed in the resurrection of the body and in the concept of heaven and hell. They had many deities, but the supreme God was the Sun God for whom temples were built. They practiced animal and human sacrifice. They believed in a crude form of communism which asserted that the land belonged to the community as a whole. Mc Nall Burns aptly sums up: "The Spanish and Portuguese conquerors found it hard to uproot this tradition of common

ownership as opposed to individual ownership and never entirely succeeded." (587).

Colombia and other Latin American countries were under the control of Spanish political and cultural supremacy from the dawn of 16th century to the threshold of 19th century. The colonial aggression was officially inaugurated when Columbus had reached America. By 1533, the Spanish established two vice-royalties in Latin America, the vice-royalty of New Spain, whose center was Mexico City and the vice-royalty of Peru, which covered the whole of South America. "This empire was highly centralized under the supreme body, The Council of Indies, established in 1524, and this body was directly accountable to the King and always met in Spain." (Franco 1).

The Beginnings

Carl O Sauer in his path breaking treatise on Spanish America explored the landing of Spanish conquistadors on the virgin soil of Latin America. In the opening decades of the Sixteenth century, the Spaniards ranged along the coast between the Cabo de la Vela and the Isthmus of Panama, searching for gold and slaves. (*The Early Spanish Main* 104-19, 161-77). It was Alonso de Ojeda, who founded the first colony in Colombian territory at San Sebastian de Uraba in 1510 (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 07). He was confronted by the belligerent local tribes. Indian hostility was further reinforced by the locals when

the infiltrators conducted more slaving incursions. The Spaniards were compelled to move further west and settled at Santa Maria de la Antigua. The colony was short lived. In 1524, it was abandoned due to sickness, making the Indians incapable of supporting the Spanish parasitic community. In a Colombian perspective, the year 1526 was crucial. In that year the Spaniards created another distinct base in Colombian territory, at the eastern end of Caribbean coast. They founded Santa Marta. This conquest made them accessible to the interiors of Colombia.

Santa Marta experienced the same kind of destructive exploitation. The indigenous Indian communities were looted for gold, provisions and slaves. When the natives resisted, they were burned out of their homes and fields. Santa Marta became a platform for expeditions into the interiors. In 1533 the Spaniards obtained another permanent foothold on the coast. Pedro de Heradia founded the town of Cartagena de Indias. This new settlement soon attracted hundreds of adventures and rapidly extended its influence westwards the Sinu River and the Uraba area, and the south-west with the lower reaches of the Cauca and San Jorge river. "Gold found in the Indian tombs of the Sinu acted like magnet, pulling in Spaniards to plunder the area in callous disregard of Indian life and culture". (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 08). Spanish looting became more systematic. Like Santa Marta, Cartagena became a nodal centre for

interior expedition for gold. Thus, as Mc Farlane has pointed out, during the 1520s and 1530s, the Spaniards had laid the foundations of one important region in Colombia's colonial society, that of Caribbean coast, focused on Cartagena and Santa Marta (*Colombia* 08).

After setting up permanent roots on the Colombian coast, the Spaniards created stations from which they could conquer and colonize the Colombian interior. When Pizarro (The Spanish explorer and military officer Francisco Pizarro was known for both his courage and for his cruelty. As a member of Vasco de Balboa's 1513 expedition to the Isthmus of Panama, Pizarro became one of the first Europeans to sight the Pacific Ocean. Pizarro later gained fame for conquering the Inca Empire in Peru during the mid-1530s, opening the way for the Spanish colonization of South America) discovered Peru in the early years of 1540, the penetration into Colombia's interior was finally achieved, and within a decade of the Peruvian conquest, the whole Colombia fell under the laws of Spanish aggression and they created the "Kingdom of New Granada".

The Demographic Pattern in the Sixteenth Century Colombia

When the Spaniards landed on the shores of Colombia, they encountered many indigenous cultural outfits. Some of them were totally wiped out. The Spanish aggression was the deadliest since it

concentrated on sweeping all native cultures away. When Spaniards first arrived on the Caribbean shorelines in the early sixteenth century, the coastal hinterland was populated by several distinctive groups. Most of those groups had disappeared in the “onslaught of war, disease, and exploitation” (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 13). The Tairona people, inhabited in the slopes of the Sierra Nevada and its neighboring plains in the Guajira Peninsula were the most ‘cultured’ people. Mc Farlane comments. “They lived in nucleated, densely populated settlements and subsisted by cultivating maize, yucca, chile peppers, and other vegetables; the Tairona also cultivated cotton to provide material for clothing, and were probably the most technically advanced people in pre conquest Colombia” (13).

They employed irrigation in agriculture and were experts in ceramics and gold working. Although they built mainly in wood, they used stone for public buildings. To the west of the Tairona, the Spanish met other groups, whom also they conquered. The most striking aspect of those coastal societies was the Sinu people who occupied the middle reaches of the Sinu River and its neighboring plains. They lived in stratified communities with permanent systems of leadership, used irrigation in their agriculture and created fine metal artifacts from gold obtained through trade with tribes in the interior. Historians like Le Roy Gordon made extensive commentaries about those people (*Human Geography*).

There were smaller native groupings with their own distinctive languages and forms of social organizations between the Tairona at the eastern end of Colombia's Caribbean littoral and the Sinu in the west. They were "sedentary agriculturalists" (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 14), earning livelihood from maize and yucca, supplemented with abundant fish and game found in the coastal area. Those settlements were relatively heavily populated, prior to the conquest and were to act first as barrier, then as springboard to Spanish invasion.

Once the Spanish had completed their invasion of the coastal regions, they turned their attention to the mountainous Andean region. On the Andean interior, the aggressors witnessed flourishing indigenous cultures, particularly in the high basins of the Eastern Cordillera. The cool highland plateaus of the region had attracted migration from the riverine settlements of the coastal low lands. This occurred because maize requires a particular pattern of seasonal distribution of temperature and rainfall for its most productive cultivation. Native farmers had spread inland, moving along the valleys of the Magdalena and Cauca rivers to the mountain slopes in search of the optimal combination of physical and meteorological factors.

The benign terrain and the climate of the Eastern Cordillera helped the Indians to develop a relatively dense concentration of population based on the intensive and varied agriculture. In the

region formed by the upper drainage of the rivers Bogota and Sogamoso, a vibrant native civilization was emerging at the time of the Spanish invasion. "There the tribal groups had come together within the two loose federations of the Chibcha "kingdoms", supporting a hierarchy of chieftains, warriors, and priests, and conducting an active and intensive exchange of agricultural products, textiles, salt and gold both between themselves and with Indian groups in other regions of the country" (Krober 887).

In the Cauca Valley and central Cordillera, many other Indian groups settled. Mc Farlane adds some words in this context. "Indian grouping whose origins, cultures, and relationship are still far from being fully understood" (*Colombia* 14). Their culture was not much developed compared to that of Chibchas but at the same time they were like other pre-colonial Colombian communities. Like others, they were agricultural communities based on maize farming supplemented by hunting and fishing, and specialized on artisan production of cotton textiles, gold and metal working. Quimbaya community specialized in gold and metalworking. Their social and political institutions varied considerably. They were large and relatively complex communities with thousands of inhabitants organized under hereditary leaderships and systems of tribute. Mc.Farlane commented that there was no certainty about the origin of those people. Some historians believe that those people are of

Carib origin, because of the apparently widespread practice of ritual cannibalism reported by Spaniards. Focusing on linguistic patterns, some other historians believe that those people were descended from Chibcha people who had fused with groups of other origins. "Whatever their provenance, when faced with Spanish invasion these distinctive, often competing cultures were to mount a fierce and prolonged resistance to the Spanish invaders." (Hernandes 915)

The Spaniards met, with the Magdalena valley and its surrounding slopes, numerous other Indian societies. Most of them were the descendants of Caribs who had migrated along the great river and its tributaries. "Such peoples – the sondaguas, the Carares, the Muzo, the Colima, and the Pijaos – were sedentary agriculturalists" (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 15). They had cultivated maize and Yucca, lived in tribal communities, organized in extended families without any high degree of specialization or hierarchy, and often occupied territories that were only roughly demarcated from those of the neighbors. To the south in the upper reaches of the Magdalena, this pattern varied. Mc Farlane identified them as Timanic, the Yalcones, and the Paez, who lived in larger, more stratified communities based on maize and potato cultivation, and with cultural and linguistic characteristics that suggested an affiliation with Chibcha rather than Carib culture. In the south, in the highland areas, where modern Colombia shares the border with Ecuador,

there were some other Indian groupings, some of possible Carib origin, others related to Chibchas. All of them represented distinctive cultures "These groups had an advanced agriculture based on cultivation of maize and potatoes and some were to survive as peasant population after the Spanish conquest" (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 15).

The native societies were quickly and severely depleted in the early years of the Conquest. It is not easy to scale and pace the decline because estimates of the Indian population at the time of the conquest varied widely. Some historians believe that Colombia's native population was probably not more than about 8,50,000, when the Spaniards arrived. Others estimated it as at least as high as three millions, and possibly in excess to four.

A recent calculation indicates a population in excess of one million for the Eastern cordillera region alone, with another million in the Cauca Valley, at least half a million on the Caribbean coast, and with population between 3,00,000 and 4,00,000 for the upper and middle Magdalena valley and its central slopes, and for the southern artiplano region around Pasto. In the light of these estimates the scale of demographic decline during the century after the conquest was terrific. Most of the Indian communities were to experience catastrophic reduction, and some had suffered complete extinction (Mc Farlane 16).

As a result of these decimation and destruction of indigenous societies, two basic patterns emerged: one was a rural economy based on arable farming and cattle raising, the other was mining economy that extracted gold, which was essential for trade with Europe. In order to keep control over an area, Spaniards founded towns by dominating and exploiting the native population.

The Policy Towards Colonies

The period between 1700 and 1810 encompasses a distinctive phase in Spanish history, opening with the crisis triggered by the accession of the Bourbon dynasty to the Spanish throne in 1700 and closing with another crisis caused by its collapse in 1810. It was a period when the Bourbon Monarchy tried to rebuild Spain's control over the colony, both politically and economically. Anthony McFarlane rightly nomenclatures it as the second conquest of America (*Colombia 2*)

The burgeoning Bourbon imperialism, rationalized the colonial political and economic system disregarding the interests of the colonies, created a context for the eventual collapse of the imperial supremacy. "Historians of colonial Colombia invariably assume that economic and political change during the period of the Bourbon rule created tensions that prepared the way to independence, either by

inducing or by exacerbating strains in the country's social and political fabric" (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 2).

The perpetual efforts to tighten Spain's control over New Granada constantly beset by difficulties. Geographically and topographically also Colombia was not a hot cup of tea. "New Granada was a large, diverse, and loosely integrated territory where the division of power among provincial governments impeded the impositions of central command from Spain, and where geographic realities inhibited the construction of clear times of commerce and communication with Spain". (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 3).

It was a fact acknowledged by all that Bourbon economic reform failed to transform New Granada's trade or to reshape its economy. Trade and commerce grew slowly and the region's economy continued to be oriented more toward self sufficiency than export. They introduced "commercio libre" to expand commerce with Spain during 1780s. But growth in exports was slight. Bourbon mercantilism, did not, then significantly enhance Spain's economic exploitations of the region, nor did it bind New Granada's economy much closer to that of metropolis.

When the Bourbons came to power, the region's administration came under the closer scrutiny from Madrid, and Philip V's Govt. started a series of reformatory movements. The

philosophy behind those reforms were for strengthening the crown's authority over the region, for improving the defenses against external attacks, forcing colonies to pay more towards the courts of empire etc.

The Viceroyalty of New Granada, established in mid 16th Century, was the first of its nature in America. Naturally the change of political climate of Spain has a strong reverberation in New Granada also. The year 1715 is remarkable in this context. New Granada's political life was overwhelmingly influenced by Bourbon policies of governance. During the eighteenth century New Granada witnessed three major political reforms; the crown reasserted royal authority, Spain established a permanent viceregal government, and thirdly and most importantly Charles III introduced a new reform "for enlarging colonial commerce, overhauling viceregal administration, restraining Creole influence in government, and creating a larger more efficient apparatus for exploiting the territory's fiscal potential" (McFarlane *Colombia* 231). All these measures and implementations improved commerce with Spain, but the political climate was haphazard.

The establishment of the second permanent viceroyalty in 1739 formally altered the structure of government in New Granada. Viceroy's jurisdiction was extremely large encompassing the territories now occupied by the Republic of Colombia, Venezuela,

Panama and Ecuador. In practice, New Granada was the only area that fell under the control of the Viceroy. The presence of the Viceroy was very prominent in New Granada politics because of a lot of reasons. "It enhanced the importance of Bogotá, relative to other cities in the region by strengthening its role as the centre of an administrative network, focused on Bogota, encouraged officials and Creole elites to think of the territory that embraced the provinces of the *audiencia* of New Granada and the province of Popayan as one country, governed from a single capital" (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 234). During the colonial regime the power was concentrated in the hands of the Crown. The bureaucratic corps appointed by Madrid provided 'justice', claimed and collected taxes and arbitrated between competing claims. "Politics in Bogota therefore had a parochial, nepotistic character, with the patrician family as a prime unit of organization and the occupation of offices in church and state as its primary goal". (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 240).

Revolutions Against Aggressors

Like other colonised communities, New Granadan society also began, though slowly to dream of independence. Comunero revolution was the forerunner of Bolivarian dream of Independence and Latin American Unity. Civil riots began as early as 1760s when the Corregidor of Tunja tried to raise an emergency war time loan from Velez in 1740. He was expelled by rioters, who refused the loan

and suggested their leader to replace Tunja Corregidor. In the 1750s and 1760s the town of Ocana also saw a series of local riots when an over zealous treasury official disputed with the local clergy and community over the collection of the sales tax. In the mid 1760, a wider region was infected by the riots because of the fiscal policy of the colonial regime. Mc Farlane identified the greatest one occurred in Quito, “where city people mounted a resistance that lasted for several months, brought royal Government to a stand still, and virtually constructed an autonomous Government of their own” (*The Rebellion* 283-330). Popular unrest occurred in southern and western Colombia between 1764 and 1766, in the province of Popayan and the neighbouring province of Choco. When the local officials and the clergy exploited their positions for personal gain by imposing abnormal demands on the resource of communities, whether for labor, money, goods, rioting arose in Indian and mestizo settlements. Community hostility towards local officials created collective responses. This unrest sometimes took the forms of rioting by crowds that openly demonstrated their rejection of officials, or was sometimes carried out by small groups operating in a semi clandestine manner. Mob challenged the local authority occasionally, when magistrates behaved unfairly, either by not enforcing the law or using it selectively. (Mc Farlane, *Civil Disorders* 22-44)

Collective protests sometimes reflected the factional divisions within communities, expressing ethnic and social resentments. They

were invariably structured action, underpinned by a sense of community and a belief that forceful collective protest was a legitimate form of action. Mc Farlane comments that acts of rioting and rebellion are part of a wider repertoire of practical politics, reflecting assumption that authority should take regard local interests and opinion. (*Colombia* 247). The rioters did not attack the machinery of the State, but they sought the control and manipulate its agents, showing a popular awareness of justice and the law that did not tolerate the unrestrained exercise of power by representatives of the State. Though such civil disorders were neither inspired nor guided by any specific or explicitly elaborated political thought, they were not entirely innocent of political ideas or significance. Mc Farlane identified the political disturbances of the area with other agrarian society. He comments: "In their reactions to the fiscal and economic impositions of government to the appointment of officials opposed by numbers of a local community or to perceived abuses of authority by incumbent officials, ... these highly localized disturbances are reflections of popular attitudes and values, especially with respect to the relations of govt. to its subjects" (*Colombia* 248). All agrarian societies believed in the right of land and the use of its products; a belief in the right to produce and consume essential items of consumptions such as foodstuffs, tobacco, and aguardiente without Spanish arbitrary taxation. This can be treated

as a notion of freedom, the right to resist arbitrary intrusion by government and its machines. This “minimal, residual notion of freedom” (Mc Farlane, *Colombia* 248) was bolstered by the colonial experience of Govt. though it has an imposing structure of law and bureaucracy. The Spanish Government in New Granada held only loose control over the mass of population. Maria Gongora describes it as “peculiar to the Americas – a form of liberty existing outside the frame work of the State...not based on any well defined notion or any new concept of the state ... (but)... rooted in laxity” (Gongora 125).

Even at the time of colonial administration, there were signs of lively political life. The official representatives of Church and State were aware that the authority depended on respect for local interests and opinion. The local participation in politics underlines the fact that the system of justice and administration depended on public support, and that the ordinary people expected their voices to be heard. Those politics was highly localized and focused around men rather than ideas or programme. “Popular politics and protest were...as integral part of colonial political culture as the maneuvers of the leading Creole families who occupied the front ranks of New Granadan society and governors.” (Mc Farlane, *Colombia* 248). The greatest challenge to Spanish government in Colombian territory since the accession of the Bourbon Dynasty had been the historical

Comunero rebellion. More than 20,000 people actively participated in this insurrection.

The Origins of the Rebellion

The immediate provocation for the rebellion was a similar one compared to the earlier rebellions. The fiscal measures of the new visitor General Gutierrez de Pineres triggered the popular unrest. His “reform” affected the cultivation and sale of tobacco, the sale of aguardiente, and the rate and collection of sales tax. The first signs of popular resistance erupted as small disturbances during 1780’s, in and around the villages of Simacota, Mogotes, and Charala, all areas where tobacco cultivation was prohibited by the implementation of new law. Those prefatory eruptions paved the way for a large rioting activated by the introduction of the new sales tax regulations in March 1781. Though started as a local resistance, soon it widened and acquired an organized and coherent form.

Defiance against officials in country parishes started in the town of Socorro on 16 March 1781. When the new sales tax regulation was announced, the crowd congregated at the town weekly market, began the rioting. The chain of discontent concentrated on the personnel and the property of the local tobacco and aguardiente monopoly administration. In the third stage of the riot, ‘there emerged a leadership dedicated to forming a concerted regional

movement against the Visitor General and his policies” (Mc Farlane, *Colombia* 252).

There are many reasons why the rebellion was born in and around Socorro. In 1776 Socorro was severely affected by the outbreak of small pox epidemic and was experiencing very poor harvests resulted in the hike of the price of food grains. The new taxes and higher prices for tobacco further aggrieved the people. Socorro had a distinctive local economy. The population comprises small tobacco producers and other crops like cotton, to be sold in the local and regional markets. So restrictions on tobacco farming, higher price for tobacco and aguardiente, hike in the sales tax, closer control of trade etc. had maximum impacts. Moreover it was a region where relatively recent colonization had stimulated a lively political life, which was grounded in local issues associated with the foundation of new parishes and aspirations to gain town status. (Graff 336).

As we mentioned earlier, the protest, inaugurated in Socorro, was not confined there. It began to revamp other areas of New Granada. This happened because of a lot of factors. One of the prominent reasons was that the authorities’ hesitant and equivocal response to early manifestations of protest. When they heard the first news of riot, the government in Bogota left municipal authorities to restore order, and it was only after the second Socorro riot that the

Visitor General interfered directly. He declared some conciliatory gestures and exempted cotton from sales tax. The following days he resorted on suppressing the rioters. The *audiencia* then published an edict demanding donation from the people. Although this was an emergency levy, it was rumoured as permanent head tax. Mc Farlane comments: "... having first ignored the rioters the authorities then mixed concession with repression and finally compounded this initial political 'error' by allowing the movement to develop purpose and momentum." (*Colombia* 253). The little or no opposition by the authority, the rioters not only found time and space to test their strength and spread their message, but they were also capable to sense the weakness of the government.

The most important factor was the unification of the people. This can be read as the prototype of the unification effort of Latin America by Simon Bolivar. This unification was under an ordered command "made possible by an alliance between the town's plebian and patricians" (Mc Farlane, *Colombia* 254). This alliance canalized the torrents of local protest in one stream. The third major riot put the town's alcalde and two excise officials to flight. They were additionally benefited by the written statement they had about their grievances, and which formally induced creole patriciate as their ringleaders. Mc Farlane states: "Now the rioters acquired ideology

and leadership, which molded them into a regional movement of formidable potential" (*Colombia* 254).

MC Farlane speaks about a poem that shaped their ideology. This poem served as a manifesto providing them guidelines. It was probably written by a Dominican friar of Bogota. The poem was composed of roughly rhyming stanzas. Its verses expressed the outrage aroused by new taxes, and by conjuring up images of tyranny and official impiety. It ignited patriotic feelings and hatred towards Spanish aggressors. It ridiculed "our royal order", "the holy gazette" or the "official message". Mc Farlane says that the poem "captured" and "crystallized" popular resentment (*Colombia* 254). In quasi Biblical order it called Socoran "chosen people". It issued a call to action, inviting the Socoro rebels to march to Bogota to aid their sympathizers in the capital.

Once enriched by ideology, they were not in trouble to have some leaders. On April 18, the Socorro crowds acclaimed four prominent citizens as their leaders. Members of different social groups reached in an alliance: Plebeians and patricians amalgamated together for a larger goal. John Phelan in his influential research on the rebellions, identified Mateo Ardila, the notary of Socorro, as the bridge between the leading plebian agitators and the town's prominent citizens and municipal officials. Ardila was familiarly connected to the clan of butchers who orchestrated lower class

protests in towns and he had relation with town's elite as town clerk and through family relationship. All these acted as a medium for forming the cross – class alliance vital to organized rebellion (*The People* 50).

The Leadership

During the course of time four leaders became actively involved in the movement. They were Don Salvador Plata, who later displayed reluctance to act, Francisco Berbeo, Antonio Jose Mousalve and Fransisco Rosello. They sympathized with the rioters and equally disliked the reforms personally. The entry of these notables to the movement has manifold importance. It neutralised the gentry opposition to lower class rioters. The rebellion's social base was broadened. Those leaders canalized popular protest into a clearly directed movement. This coalition made use of the inactive efforts of government. "The government's ill prepared attempts to crush the Comuneros was counter productive", says Mc Farlane (*Colombia* 257). They stimulated the rebellion by using force. The surrender of Oidor Osorio, the leader of military force boosted up the confidence of the revolutionaries. The government prestige was unquestionably humiliated. After their victory before Osorio, the rioters got their confidence hiked and new forces began to join with them.

As a result of this, the Bogota govt. reversed its strategy and turned from aggression to defense. Then a junta was formed to look into the every day matters and its first step was checking the advance of the rioters by suspending the visitor general's fiscal measures, and by negotiating with the protestors. A negotiating committee, led by the Arch Bishop of Santa Fe Antonio Caballero Y Gongora, was formed. The measures taken by the Bogota Govt. in a way pacified the rioters, for at least name's sake. But a new entrance was opened for revolters in the distant settlements of Llanos, where a group of Creoles raised an Indian rebellion and allied themselves with the Socorro movement (Jane Loy 235). The Comunero commander in chief Fransisco Berbeo behaved quite diplomatically. He was preparing parley with the royal authorities and was implementing an astute military strategy designed to extend the area under rebel control. He protected it from attack rescuing it from attack by viceroy's forces on the Caribbean coast. Other areas like Giron, Nemocon, Zipaquira etc. were also under the influence of the revolutionaries.

The Peak of the Comunero Rebellion and Its Meaning

The rebels assembled at Zipaquira and they were approaching the last moment : the seizure of Bogota and overthrow of the *audiencias* . But not surprisingly, the regionalism impeded them from the attack. They quarreled over the tactics. The Socorro

plebians had a well defined goal; the capture of Bogota. They considered it as the best means to ensure their demands to be honored. But the leaders of Tunja and Sogomosa were afraid of them. These conservative Creole gentry did not want to disturb the social and political order of the day. Social gaps were widened by the interregional rivalries among Tunja, San Gil and Socorro. Here Borbeo figured once again to reconcile. He opted a two-fold strategy. He satisfied Tunja leaders by opting for negotiation. Thus "he was able to tell his plebian followers that the capture of Bogota was no longer necessary since the capital now adhered to the movement, and he spread responsibility for the rebellion to the political establishment in Bogota by directly involving its municipal government and some of its most prominent citizens in the negotiation of terms between the rebels and the government" (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 260).

The Comunero leaders presented their thirty five clauses demands before the Government Peace Commission. Even though they were a mixture apparently not well knit, it shed light into the "grievances and aspirations" (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 260) of the different groups. Those demands could be categorized as economical and political. It demanded the long neglected grievances of the people about the tax and trade policy of the white rulers. It frankly demanded the abolition of the tobacco monopoly, allowing complete

freedom to cultivate and sell tobacco. It demanded the exemption of tax payment of cotton, which was considered to be a poor man's crop. The problems related with the ownership of land and mine also figured prominently in the clause. The indigenous Indians demanded independence to use their land, at least in a limited sense. By that time the clergy and Spanish elite became the largest property owners. They advocated that the local salt mines be returned to the native communities that had controlled them before they were taken over by the Crown. It is a call for social justice and an economic concern for free peasantry.

The Comunero rebellion has a very strong political air. The political grievances and aspirations were reflected in their clauses. They wanted to modify the practices of government rather than changing the structure fully. The Socorro elite championed for a greater degree of self-government for the town. They wanted to elaborate the social base of municipal governments. Some human rights demands were also figured in the claim. It demanded the release of the arrested people on payment of small bail fee. The rebels called for the expulsion of the regent visitor general and urged measures for not getting tortured by such appointment in a second time. They demanded that in offices of first, second and third levels, the nationals of "this America" should be given preference and privilege over Europeans. (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 262).

At first the govt. paid no attention to the pact of Zipaquita but later they were forced to accept, allowing the rebellion to have a full stop. By following the foot prints of Comunero, several rebellions took place in the places like Mariquita, Neiva, Antioquia, Llanos, Pasto etc. The Pasto rebellion had “a very different social character than the original movement, and never achieved the degree of regional mobilization or cross class organization found in the Comunero rebellion itself”. (Earle 263).

Some historians have regarded Comunero rebellion as a proto nationalist movement in which leading creoles aspired for the first time for independence from Spain. John Phelan in his influential thesis argued; the crisis of 1781 was essentially political and constitutional in nature. The central issue was the question: who had the authority to levy new fiscal exactions? (*The People*18). He believes that the political idea the revolutionaries received from Spanish golden age, and which was transmitted to New Granada through the practices of the Hapsburg government. The rebellion has a social implication too. It was rooted among an oppressed people compressed of poor mestizos, and Indians, who reacted against economic exploitation.

After the Comunero rebellion, Govt. resorted on some far reaching measures. By 1781 new military rule was enforced on the people, and the authorities were given unprecedented policing power

to suppress any further revolution. Those measures were initiated by Archbishop viceroy Cabellaro Y Gongora, who “convinced” the Spanish regime the need to “re deploy military power in the region both by enlarging the presence of regular troops in the capital and by raising a large disciplined militia in the towns of the interior” (McFarlane *Colombia* 272). Kuethe in his famous work *Military Reform and Society* gives a very detailed description about it. According to him between 1783 and 1789 New Granada saw the most rapid and far reaching reorganizations of military forces yet undertaken on its territory, mainly to ensure that government had means to enforce its authority. (169)

Political Order After The Rebellion

Archbishop – Viceroy Cabellaro Y Gongora has tightened control over the populace that was considered to be instinctively disorderly and insolent by him. He believed that the population lived in a deplorable state of “idleness and debauchery”. They were isolated from religion and social discipline. “New Granada’s mestizos’, he remarked, had almost lost the two principal sentiments which Nature inspires in rational man – belief in one God, whom he should love, and in one King, whom it is just to obey; he dismissed Indians and Blacks as people of even more debased character. In all, the Prelate concluded, the people at large were ‘an indomitable monster’ whose indiscipline was the cause of all the Colony’s ills”

(Mac Farlane, *Colombia* 272). He has a practical weapon to “domesticate” these unruly rustic; grouping them in ordered settlements and subjecting them to the discipline of law and religion. He argued that the vagabonds and beggars should be rounded up and forced to work. Severe measures were taken to bring scattered peasants in an ordered cluster of hamlets and villages. It reduced the number of vagrants in the area around Bogota.

The dispersed slave community posed no further threat to the authority. Mc Farlane in his path breaking study comments: the geographical dispersion of the slave population within and between regions, the fact that most slaves lived in societies where they were outnumbered by whites and free people and thus faced uneven odds in any conflict with slave owners, and the tendency for increasing numbers of Blacks to be born in to slavery and socialized in its ways, all stood in the way of generalized slave revolt. (*Out of the House of Bondage* 131-151)

The younger generation after the Comunero Rebellion was sharper and well driven. The Comunero generation actually fought against the bad government, not against the King, but the young blood creoles accepted ideas from the philosophy and science of the European Enlightenment and many of them saw science as a symbol of progress, as exemplified by American and French revolutions. A new political awareness was the result of it.

The Viceroyalty continually convinced the Crown that had it not been ready to appease the Creole elite, the colony would have been glided away from their grip. The Viceroyalty identified science as the method of reconciliation. They saw the “useful sciences” as a means of promoting the development of colonial economic resources and thereby serving the interests of Spain. Even the education system was restructured for this purpose.

The Enlightenment in New Granada

Like other imperial visionaries, the viceroys of Spain too made blunders by miscalculating that the promotion of economic and scientific ideas would harness Creoles. But, unlike as envisaged by the Viceroyalty, it promoted the foundation of a periodical plan, sanctioned the establishment of “Economic Societies” to promote the development of agriculture, industry and commerce and “allowed open discussion of economic issues in the Press” (Shafer 154-6). The “free press” thus educated the Creoles to look colonial policies with a critical eye. Another important feature of the time was the dispute between Creoles and Peninsulars. They disputed over the intellectual issues and academic positions.

The small intellectual world of New Granada, concentrated mainly in the Capital, became broadly divided into two camps. On one side, stood a conservative academic establishment that defended

scholasticism and opposed modern philosophy; on the other stood those who sought university posts and favoured curricular reform and the advancement of science. (Mac Farlane, *Colombia* 281).

The division has got a political dimension when the former comprised most of Peninsulars, the latter Creoles. The scientific debate of the time did not raise its hand to the irrational and unjustifiable conclusion that peoples of Americas were biologically inferior to those of the old world. New Granadan Scientists tried their level best to disseminate this absurdity by aligning themselves with other Americans and made attempts to establish that, they were not culturally isolated from Europe. Thomas F Glick has highlighted this as an example for the growing confidence of Americans in their own scientific endeavors. (*Science and Independence in Latin America*)

Some periodicals, published during the period, made their contribution to the elaboration and diffusion of new attitude and ideas. These periodicals reflected a more critical attitude towards imperial Government. They stressed the existence of public good in all human beings and promoted some novel concepts to enhance this goodness. It dreamt of a union of people under the conviction that the same would play a lead role in improving New Granada's economy and society. They enhanced a new style of criticism which stressed the superiority of empirical investigation of nature over the repetition of the texts invested with only traditional authority. They

created “forum” for debate and discussion, giving people a new tool and strategy to quench their thirst.

Those journals questioned the principles of nobility by birth, and emphasized the need for educated men to shape and dictate policy. This undoubtedly was an attack against the traditional elite political culture. The Creole writers proposed an alternative form of nobility. “The idea of replacing an ‘aristocracy’ with a species of ‘meritocracy’ was ...a modernization of Creole claim to exercise influence and power in their own land, restated in the language of the Enlightenment.” (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 282). The decade between 1780 and 1790 witnessed the struggle to overhaul university curricula, the promotion of empiricist and scientific thinking, the introduction of the printing press and the freer dissemination of information through the medium of books, newspapers and literary salons. This period invites the reference of an exceptionally talented youth Pedro Fermin de Vargas who nursed and cherished the immense spirit of independence. First he revolted against his family, and extensively traveled through Europe, along with his mistress. He went on evaluating his society critically. Travelling throughout Europe, he was able to conjoin different small groups of Spanish American revolutionaries, who plotted against Spain in Europe. In England he worked with Venezuelan revolutionary Francisco de Miranda and in 1799 and 1803 he presented memoranda to British

Govt. to persuade the cabinet that New Granada would rise against Spanish domination.

The great revolutions in Europe made their tremors in Bogota also, and in 1793, a friend of Pedro Fermín de Vargas, Antonio Narino printed the copies of the French Assembly's "Declaration of the Rights of Man", and circulated though secretly. Later the copies were captured by the Government and large scale search operations were carried out to bring the "culprits" into book. Thus the age saw the nascent revolutionary movements getting matured, and hence leading to ousting of the foreign element.

Even though certain highlightable attempts for liberating the mind and nation were felt, New Granada was still not a fertile land to pamper total freedom. The problem was that all those attempts were confined only with a negligible Creole minority and their enthusiasm for republican ideals far out distanced the bonds of effective political action. The liberators were politically inexperienced and isolated. Anyhow those political outbursts showed that the ideological foundations of Spanish rule had been weakened by the very forces that sought to revitalize the empire through "enlightened" reform. During this period, science had been used by the Creoles as a means to praise the environment of the New World and they were able to identify their own land and culture. Creoles found the scientific discourses of the Enlightenment a medium of expression.

The conspiracy of 1794 also was politically significant for the damage it inflicted on relations between the Creole patriciate and the Colonial government. Anyhow these tensions were insufficient to endanger the stability of Spanish empire. It was only when Napoleon usurped the Spanish throne in 1808, the commercial system, military power, and political authority built by Bourbons gradually succumbed to a total collapse.

The Fall of Royal Spanish Government

In September 1803 Don Antonio de Amar Y Bourbon arrived at Bogota as a Viceroy. He found the area apparently secure under the metropolitan government. He was vigilant against the flow of books and other printed materials to Bogota from different countries of Europe. But the real crisis was looming over the Viceregency : the collapse of the monarchy in 1808. The reason for the fall of the viceregency was the disintegration of authority in metropolitan Spain. Spain was already enfeebled by war and palace intrigues. It was easy for Napoleon Bonaparte to conquer the monarchy and putting his brother Joseph on the throne.

The fall of viceregal government in Bogota was essentially a coup d'etat carried over by a clique of patrician Creoles who wanted to take power from the hands of royal officials. They were additionally encouraged by the Spanish disintegration. But this coup was not like

comunero revolution of 1781. This time it was not the result of popular discontent and rebellion, but engineered by a faction within urban Patriciate. Creoles, at least, succeeded in neutralizing military forces in the capital through negotiation with the government and cooperation of army officer. Meanwhile by March 1811 Bogota declared its own Republic of Cundinamarca as its first president Jorge Tadeo Lozano. But this Republic did not last long. New Granada was fractured into contending cities and regions, some of which were themselves further divided by opposing local factions. The failure to build a coherent national polity once again paved the way for a second conquest by Spain in 1815.

Colombia Becomes Independent

The Spanish reconquest of New Granada was the result of the internal incoherence of the various communities, supplemented by the lack of leadership. When Simon Bolivar started his strategy of Latin American unification, once again New Granada began to think of Independence. In 1819 Bolivar led his irregular army across the Andes from the Venezuelan plains and defeated the Spanish aggressors.

At this point, New Granada was brought under republican government, but subsumed, together with Venezuela and Ecuador, within the great tripartite state known to historians as 'Gran

Colombia'. The arrangement lasted until 1830 (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 347).

By fighting against Bolivarian government, Venezuela and Ecuador seceded from the union and became new republics. In 1832, Republic of New Granada came into being, head quartered in Bogota. After further constitutional mutations in 1886 it became the Republic of Colombia.

The immediate concern of the Independent Colombia was the economic condition. The leaders of the Independent Colombia thought about a bright future for the State, which was then free to offer its rich resources in the markets of the world. In the critical years the Republic, Colombia remained "a cluster of unevenly developed regions, only loosely connected by a primitive network of transport by river and mountain trails". (Mc Farlane *Colombia* 351). The country comprised largely of self sufficient regions with distinctive local cultures and little economic interdependence. National unity was not possible amidst this regional diversity and growing social divisions. But more important was the economic problem. Assuming that the free pursuit of individual gain was synonymous with public welfare, liberal governments followed policies that tended to accentuate rather than heal social division (MC Greevey 67-181)

The Balance Sheet of Spanish Colonial Regime

The Spaniards overused the fertile and fecund land of South America to sow their seeds of colonialism. When the European powers infiltrated to the Caribbean treasure house, South America was profused with its own skyscraping culture. "In the course of two or three generations between 1492 and the middle of the sixteenth century, the great Inca and Aztec empires were reduced to fragments, their religion, culture, economy and history converted almost to nothing." (Franco 1). They tried to baptize South Americans into Christianity. The remnants of the indigenous cultures were erased by their intervention. In the colonizer's version, the transformation was from barbarism to civilization. After effacing all the native elements of cultural manifestation, they plastered Latin America with that of Spanish origin, and conquerors' culture and civilization became the official option for the Latin Americans. The Government building, the houses of Spanish officials, the church establishments etc. became the external identification of the colonizer's culture. The nomadic Indians, the aborigines and the isolated rural communities were callously sidelined. Jean Franco states that Spain allowed the Indian folk to exist concomitantly under some nefarious conditions; they should not pose any threat to the Spanish officials to transport the precious metals to their mother country, they should follow the catholic faith unquestionably, and more importantly male

chauvinistic, paternal family system should be followed. (1). But fortunately Indian cultural manifestations did not vanish fully. Though terribly marginalized, they existed to infatuate fiction writers.

Spanish empire was notorious for its impeccable orthodoxy. They didn't have much faith in individual liberty, and were not ready to allow even Creoles to interact and participate in state affairs. Though there was a body known as The Council of Indies, the agenda and decisions came from Madrid. This aspect is unambiguously echoed in Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (57-60), especially in the appointment of police officials to Macondo. The situation is the same with Church organization. It was imbued with Iberian (Iberia is the common name for Spain and Portugal) interests, not at all at par with peninsular interests. The Spanish rule was not at all close fisted in granting large sum of money to the church authorities. (Franco 2). Just like other European colonialists, missionary exploration was targeted at the indigenous Indians at the State expense. Zealous missionaries conducted extensive research on dilapidated Indian remnants only to make their missionary movements more successful. Not without exception. Some studied the culture, and organized debates and seminars to bring Indians out of the mysterious shroud of negligence. Bartolome de las Casas (1474-1536) argued that Indians were rational creatures and not natural slaves (Franco 2). All of the Jesuit groups and subgroups

identified the Americans as the ideal community to be converted to Catholicism because the people were unstained by any illusion of European luxury. The Spanish American church establishment was known for its narrow-mindedness and was sandwiched by terrible indoctrination and bloody inquisition. The free movements were guillotined by State censorship, and people had no option to read what they wanted. Anti Christian belief was deliberately eradicated preparing the ground for unquestionable Euro centric Christianity.

The Spanish were infatuated with the immense wealth of the colonies. They transported silver and gold first, and then began to cultivate in large estates. The setting up of the estates resulted in unprogressive and undemocratic feudalism, whose claws were not confined only with agriculture. It marched ahead through man's cultural and social life. Since education was monopolized by Church, the Spanish American intellectuals were either churchmen or land lords. "Their literary tradition was Classical and Spanish." (Franco 3). Their minds were moving along with Classicism. They were still hanging on classical odes, epic and elegies, including pastoral. The themes were stereotyped and confined with love, religion etc. Many budding writers were there. But they didn't get enough leaves to sprout. In a colonized society the wings of imagination might be cut off. In Latin America, when they were ruled by colonial super powers, novels were scarce because the

Church believed that Indians might not be permitted to read fantasy literature since it would “corrupt” their mind. If they read fantasy literature, they would begin to doubt religious arguments. But no regime could chain creative minds. The Colombian Juan Rodriguez Freile (1566-1640?) tried his level best to create a picaresque tradition even in 17th century. (Franco 3). Colombian soil was not rich in bringing up novels first. With religious fervor, drama was staged. Poetry also, was furnished by the bolster of Spanish intellectuals. As Jean Franco commented, the writers of the colonial period evidently cemented the foundation for the mytho-poetic pattern of Latin American literature, in which the themes of journey, and quest for truth are unavoidable spices. (Franco 5).

The colonial period witnessed the co-existence of warring elements at work. The native culture collided with the imported culture flinting sparks. The mosaic culture of South America is famous. Three fundamental groups, the Indian, the African, and the European, streamed into a general flow. In addition to social stratification, there were some unfathomed economic cracks. Urban elite turned their faces towards Europe round the clock. In the outskirts, older culture with immanent instinct to shrink into its shell developed their own fantasies. The fabric of native culture was not cut or dislocated totally by the Crown so far as they were not in conflict with the imported culture. Out of this cultural scenario

some important myths have got prominence: the frustrated journey, the myth of El Dorado (El Dorado is the legendary place in South America, where the streets were said to be paved with gold, and wealth and riches to be had in abundance, or any place where wealth is easily to be made), the golden age of Indians etc. (Franco 13).

In a conversation with the Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, Marquez asserted that good literature always showed a tendency to destroy that which was established, that which was imposed, and to contribute to the creation of new societies and the betterment of life for humanity (Oberhelman 3). By centuries Latin American countries were smeared with blood, and violence was erupting at every corner. Marquez was meticulously observing the tumultuous political somersaults in the Latin American continent first from Europe and then from Venezuela.

Colombia is a fortress nation, bordered by natural boundaries. High valleys bastioned her, and her back turned upon the outer world. She is more democratic than other Latin American countries.

Elections have always been important and sometimes honest; dictatorships have been infrequent, unpopular and brief. To be sure there have been civil wars, more than twenty since 1830. Riotous political controversy

resulted in a succession of twelve separate constitutions.
(Herring 538).

J.L. Anderson rightly quotes Marquez.

No body has taken into account . . . to what extent the social and political situation of our great, ill-starred Colombia, with its centuries of rural feudalism, its thirty years of unresolved guerilla conflicts, its long history of Governments which have failed to represent the wishes of the people, has bred the drug traffickers and all that they stand for. (3)

The present social political and economic clashes in Colombia should be understood against the background of the class environment of the nation. Tannenbaum's account in connection with the blood shedding culture is significant. He says further:

Violence has been an essential in Latin America because governments have been unstable and the governments have been unstable because violence is a traditional means of coming to office. And violence is traditional because there has generally been no other sure means of transferring political power from one administration to another (500).

For instance, two hundred to three hundred thousand people were devilishly slaughtered, when violence erupted in connection with the assassination of popular Colombian Eliecer Gaitan. The villain here too was the heinous clash between Liberals and Conservatives. (Herring 567).

Colombia has been liberated from the tiresome yokes of Spanish aggression by Simon Bolivar, the legendary liberator of Latin American countries like Venezuela, Peru and Ecuador. During 1819-1842 Colombians "discovered" their nation and they were administered by both liberals and conservatives. Hubert Herring describes two clashing ideals of Colombia: the first is the rivalry between partisans of strong central government and the defenders of the sovereign rights of the several departments (states) and the second is the status of Catholic Church (538-539). Religion was the primordial source fountain of conflict between conservatives and liberals. The conservatives stood for centralized government and the maintenance of traditional class and clerical privileges and they were against universal suffrage and complete separation of religion and state. From 1830 onwards Colombia has been governed by conservatives and liberals at regular intervals. "By 1967 anticlericalism lost much of its fury especially in the cities." (Herring 539).

Violence is rampant throughout Latin America, and people are habituated with it. People are armed sometimes for self-protection and often for aggression. Herring gives a paramount example. He states that city matrons took lessons in shooting pistols, businessmen protected themselves by taking burly bodyguards in their cars and having them stand watch over their offices, communities hired special guards to patrol their streets (567).

Colombia was one of the most violent and the least repressive nations in Latin America between 1950 and 1970. The geographical and political division of Colombia are considered to be the most potential reasons for the violence. The split in the Andes mountain into three distinct ranges has hindered communications, isolated villages, and created a healthy conditions to local guerilla bands and bandit gangs to operate with relative impunity. Since mid nineteenth century Colombia has been ruled by two political parties; the Liberals and the Conservatives. This division initiated violence in the minds of people.

Violence is an everyday affair in Colombia “Colombians and their governments have hacked away at each other with machetes, shot each other with assorted firearms ... and killed each other with reckless abandon since the 1850s” (Duff 204). Most of the hatred and violence in Colombia was the result of the instinctive rivalry between these two political parties. The civil war in 1876 – 1877 broke out

when the Conservatives in the Department of Tolima and Antioquia revolted against a national Liberal Administration. Another civil war broke out in 1899 and ended in 1903. This revolt was sponsored by the Liberals against a Conservative administration. In this “War of Thousand Days”, the Liberals were defeated and conservative government retained control of Colombian political scenario until 1930s. 1930 witnessed another political change. In that General Election, Liberals returned to power and an incipient civil war was averted only by a Peruvian invasion of Amazonian provinces.

Several outstanding features are there in the violences, erupted in Colombia. It is agreed that scores of thousands of Colombians actively participated in the violence, and casualties ran into thousands, if not lakhs. Another feature is that those acts and incidents of violence are not simply confined to an area to be called ‘simply’ violence, but grew into a ‘civil war’. Earnest A Duff *et al* in their studied thesis entitled *Violence and Repression in Latin America* state that Colombian villages and even some areas or regions are wholly influenced by either of the political parties. “Allegiance to either party is passed down through generations, so that villages and entire regions eventually are known as Liberal or Conservative” (204).

This large scale violence is called “La Violencia” in the Colombian perspective. The researchers who meticulously researched the roots of the violence unambiguously state some

economic or psychological reasons for this. One of the stated reasons is that the attempts of the above mentioned political parties to earn upperhand over the other. “It may be that the parties have capitalised on the existing conditions in Colombia – frustration, poverty, boredom, even the geography – to perpetrate violence, but the catalyst has always been their leaders”. (Duff *et al* 205). Violence became an unavoidable presence in Colombia and the reported violence during the decades of the 1950s and 1960s was among the highest in whole Latin America. The nexus between the politicians and guerilla leaders is quite transparent. Richard L Maullin’s book *The Fall of Dumar Aljuri, A Colombian Guerrilla Bandit*, elaborates this idea.

Another important feature of Colombian violence is its rural nature. So most of the incidents of violence do not reflect in the international press. So it is very difficult to get a real picture of the depth of the crisis. “One serious attempt to estimate the deaths from violence brought forth a figure of 179,820 people killed between 1949 and 1958 and according to Colombian National Police, average 3,000 Colombians were killed annually as a result of the violence between the years 1958 and 1962” (German Guzman in his *La Violencia en Colombia* as quoted by Duff *et al* 205).

Violence in modern Colombia has been divided into five distinct phases: the Hatfield-Mc Coy Era, (from August 1946, to

June 1948), the First Guerrilla war, (from April 1948 to June 1953), the second Guerrilla war (from July 1953 to May 1957), and the institutionalized violence (from May 1957 to July 1965) (Russell W Ramsay, *The Modern Violence in Colombia*). And the fifth is the ideological guerrilla warfare from July 1965 to the late 1970s. The Hatfield – Mc Coy Era had been an intensification of normal Liberal – Conservative feuding in the rural area of Colombia. Most of the incidents of violence seem to have been started by the conservatives. When Mariano Ospina Perez became President as the conservative candidate, the Liberals unleashed violence. The Conservatives came to power only by utilizing the split between the followers of Gabriel Turbay Ayala, a moderate Liberal and those of Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, a Liberal with more political ideas.

Turbay died in 1947 and Gaitan became the most influential leader of Liberals and naturally Conservatives identified violence as the most potential weapon to retain power. But unfortunately on April 9, 1948 Gaitan was assassinated on the Bogotan street. The wave of rioting, looting, burning and killing that swept the capital in the next week spread rapidly to the rest of the country. It was strongly rumoured that Conservatives assassinated Gaitan. Violence made its masterpiece. The criminals and thugs unleashed violence and the whole Colombia became bloody. The National Police was used by conservatives to massacre Liberals. “In addition, criminal

organizations, such as the Pajaros (Blue Birds) were given a free hand in attacking Liberal rallies and meetings” (Duff *et al* 207). To make the situation further worse, in the election of 1950, the neo Fascist Laureano Gomez enthroned as the President of the Nation. When Ospira was the ruler, it was really Gomez who ruled the Nation. Under Gomez regime, Liberals were crushed. Gomez used all governmental machinery to physically eliminate the Liberals. When the streets of Bogota was drowned by the Liberal blood, the military decided to interfere. In June 1953 Gomez was ousted and a military government under the leadership of Lieutenant General Gustavo Rojas Pimilla came to power with the intention of stopping the violence. Duff *et al* identified some reasons for this kind of unprecedented violence. “Economic growth had failed to keep up with social mobilization as Colombians began streaming to the cities” (207). In the 1950s radio became more and more important as the means of communication. The radio and press have extremely partisan feeling, supporting the government and urging to unleash attack against the oppositions. The backbone of Colombian economy was coffee production. But the drop in world coffee prizes in 1958 wounded the dream of the people. Another outstanding feature of the time was the involvement of the youngsters of the age group between eighteen and twenty five in the violence. Large scale institutionalization of the Catholic Church, the military and the

Colombian political parties during the 1950s contributed their share liberally to maximize violence.

The Church in Colombia was strong in all respects. They were highly partisan towards Conservatives in the early years of violence. And the churches were interested more in maintaining its perquisites than with the values of society. Those people who participated in the violence are “religious” to the core. “People wore religious medals in the midst of savage butchery. Many times, bandit gangs asked for the blessing of the local priest for their upcoming assault” (Duff et al 208)

The period between 1953 and 1957 witnessed the second guerilla war. And all attempts to stop violence failed. During this period army was in power. They sympathetically failed in stopping the violence because they employed violent tactics to stop violence. “Students were killed, campesino villagers, suspected of harboring *antisociales* were assaulted and burned ... the army behaved with the political insensitivity and abandoned the characteristic of many military governments”. (Duff *et al* 208). After 1955, the violence became more blood thirsty and anarchic because of some socio psychological reasons. “There were people who had witnessed the atrocities of the earlier period, who now hated all conservatives or (Liberals) for the simple, apolitical reason that they had seen their

fathers cut open, their mothers raped and their villages burned by the other side” (Duff *et al* 209)

The 1950 Coup, which overthrew Rojas occurred, because of his veniality and inefficiency. The Declaration of Benidorn was a positive nod by both Liberals and Conservatives to declare a truce for twelve years. The pact was signed in Spain by the leaders of both parties in July 1956. The pact was known as the Pact of Sitges. The National Front arrangement of 1957 was the fruit of this pact. Alberto Lleras Camargo, a Liberal, became the first President under the National Front in 1958. There was an agreement that the Presidency should alternate between a Liberal and a Conservative every four year and every elective and appointive post should be divided between these two parties. One of the mentionable aspects of this presidency of Lleras Camargo was the shift of violence to the country side from city nerve center. It was a fact that Camargo too failed in the attempts to stop violence.

Guillermo Leon Valancia, a conservative took office after Camargo, and he was considered to be the principal architect behind Plan Lazo. “The plan embodied the basic assumption that mere physical eradication of existing guerrillas and bandits would not solve the problem of violence in the Colombian country side, and that the underlying causes of violence – political social, and economic – had to be eliminated” (Duff *et al* 210). Military was entitled for this

palliative social action. During this period violence reached at its heights. However the National Front governments contributed much to reduce the ratio of violence in Colombia, and 1970s witnessed a comparative calm Colombia. But still fighting are there between left extremists and right fanatics.

Marquez diagnoses this problem of humanity and he lavishly spills the ink in order to bring forth the bleak side of the life of the poor folk and the rich as well. The moment he holds the pen, he gets imbibed with the political disturbances of the time. Marquez inclines towards history and makes use of it as source for his plots and characters. He was inescapably ensnared by the clashes of civilizations and cultures. The discovery of America was considered by many as the most important break in Western history after the embrace of Christianity. (Gonzalez Echevarria 183). To Mendoza, Marquez told that the person he disliked most was Christopher Columbus (Mendoza 116). Abel Posse rightly called the incident a “historical Big bang, a beginning.” (Gonzalez Echevarria 183). The writers of the hemisphere especially Mario Vargas Llosa and Carpentier along with Marquez found in the conquerors, right from Columbus, a repository of rugged narrators, speaking out of their experience in flesh and marrow.

Echevarria justifiably coins a phrase to describe Latin American writers undivorcable wedding with history and

contemporary politics. He terms it “archival fiction”, trying to answer for the question why should the writers of fiction depend so much on history as their source material. “The main reason”, he comments, “is that the historical texts are not literary.”(183-184). By dragging history to their bosom, these writers narrate an urgent present as well as a surviving past.

Marquez's fiction depicts unambiguously the social and political realities of Colombia and Latin America. As epic novels, they represent some people with historical existence. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* unravels the history of Colombia after her emancipation from the reprehensible colonial chains. Since then Colombia has been suffering much from the bloodthirsty rulers and her streets were red carpeted by incessant flow of human blood. Scores of barbarian civil wars between 1885-1902 are examples. Once colonized by Spain, Colombia now falls under the claws of Banana Fruit Company of Boston. The company has exploited the laborers, inviting mass protest. The resultant labor trouble reached at its apex on 7th October 1928. Thousands of workers actively and diligently participated in the strike. The Company with the help of Colombian military, devilishly suppressed the strikers massacring hundreds of unarmed, starved workers. Marquez family suffered much in the ongoing strike. The government hushed the news and no journalist was capable enough to collapse the iron wall. It was

Marquez who first brought this news out of the shroud through his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. (Lee Anderson 4).

Marquez was dead frank in acknowledging that he wanted to bring forth “the outsized reality” of Colombia. He illustrated this predicament in his Nobel Lecture entitled *The Solitude of Latin America* in the following lines.

I dare to think that it is this outsized reality and not just its literary expression, that has deserved the attention of the Swedish Academy of Letters. A reality not of paper but one lives within us and determines each instant of our countless daily deaths and that nourishes a source of insatiable creativity full of sorrow and beauty of which this roving and nostalgic Colombian is but one cipher more, singled out by fortune. (Mc Guirk *et al.* 207).

Briam Conniff quotes an interesting passage from Marquez's above-mentioned Nobel Lecture,

In the past eleven years twenty million Latin American children have died before their second birthday. Nearly one hundred and twenty thousand have disappeared as a consequence of repression . . . A country created from all these Latin Americans in exile or enforced emigration would have a larger population than Norway. (Conniff 167)

The “Boom” and “New novel” are the two key terms a reader of 20th century Latin American novel meets with. Both terms are sometimes used confusedly. Philip Swanson defines Boom as follows. “The Boom is basically the sudden explosion of literary activity which occurred amongst Latin American writers in 1960s when there was a marked increase in the production and availability of dazzlingly innovative and experimental novels”. (1). ‘New novel’ is an umbrella term used for the novels written before the Boom and even after the Boom. The fiction of Marquez has parallel horizons and atmospheres. He endeavors to create a new world, far away from reality. He uses history, works on it, preparing a new version of Latin American history that was the mixture of fantasy and realism. To sum up I quote Elizabeth A Spiller.

One Hundred Years of Solitude is at once both mythic and historical because it emerges out of a Renaissance genre, which used myth to create, what then become history while it is also transformed existing history into a form of myth (Spiller 377).

Chapter 2

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE: A Tragic Comic Caricature of Colombia and Latin America

It is highly useful to start this chapter with a very authentic comment by the Latin American expert Gerard Martin.

... Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* portrays the development of Latin America as a kind of tragic comic caricature of European history, or as a vicious circle, a repetitive nightmare in which the same sins and curses come to haunt the continent and its children through century after century--conquest, murder, violation, illegitimacy, and dictatorship--countered by the redemptive quest for legitimacy and identity and the struggle for liberation, inevitably involving a raising of consciousness, further repression from without and within, and a new round of disillusionment and despair. (Martin *Journeys* 27)

Pierre Nora's idea that "the quest for memory is the search for one's history" (289) provides a new angle to look at the interrelationship between history and memory, the dichotomy on which Garcia Marquez works with. On reconstructing the communal

history of Colombians, Gabriel García Márquez relies heavily on the use of memory as a means to rewrite the history of those oppressed because of race, class and/or gender in a world where historiography has been controlled by the white colonizer. Memory is closely related to the reclamation of identity and history -- both personal and collective. Memory and history dominate in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* from the very beginning, where the character Aureliano Buendía is introduced through his own recollections: "Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice" (OHYS 01). García Márquez believes that memory and imagination are essential parts of the narrative art, especially in a Colombian perspective. The use of memory and imagination reaches the realm of myth and fantasy in him. That is why his novels are peopled with the living dead, superstitions and beliefs, folk wisdom, oral tradition, dreams, and fantastic elements. He has a historical past marked by the oppression (internal as well as external), violence, and exploitation developed either by colonialism or slavery, racial marginalization and the consequences of technological progress and industrialization. Louis Parkinson Zamora has made a comparative study of García Márquez and William Faulkner in which he stated that "contemporary Latin American writers have found in the literature of the South elements akin to their own national

experiences: colonial appropriation of land and culture, a decadent aristocracy, injustice and racial cruelty, belated modernization and industrial development" ("*One Hundred*" 28). He added also that "... history has provided the tensions and ironies of much of the best of recent Latin American fiction" (Parkinson Zamora *Usable Past* 13),

Marquegian narratives are the recreations of his own and his community's history recorded. Born in Aracataca, on the Caribbean coast of Colombia, García Márquez acknowledged the footprints left in his fiction, from the synthesis of the different cultures he grew up in — pre-Colombian, Spanish and African:

In the Caribbean, to which I belong, the overflowing imagination of the black African slaves was mixed with that of the pre-Colombian natives and then with the fantasies of Andalusians and the Galicians worship of the supernatural. ... I believe the Caribbean taught me to see reality in a different way, to accept supernatural elements as something that forms part of our daily life (qtd. in Pierce 67).

He also feels indebted to the stories told by his grandparents, with whom he lived until the age of eight. His grandmother narrated him incredible stories with utmost naturalness together with war adventures related by his grandfather, the Colonel Nicolás Ricardo Márquez Iguarán. García Márquez recreated the figure of his grandfather in the character Colonel Gerineldo Márquez, recalling

episodes from his life such as the murder of his grandfather, his ensuing escape and his foundation of a village (García Márquez, qtd. in Coser 199), as José Arcadio Buendía does in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Finally, the family name Iguarán is transposed from the writer's own life to his work in the character Ursula Iguarán, who marries her cousin, as García Márquez's maternal grandmother had done.

In any conventional sense of the literary appellation, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is an epic. An epic work has a long narrative fiction with swingeing scope. The novel is the history of the founding, development and death of human settlement Macondo, and of the most important family in that town, the Buendias. Like many other epics, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* has correspondence with a particular people's historical reality – the development of the Latin American country of Colombia since its independence from the manacles of Spain's loathsome imperialism in the early nineteenth century (1810-1825). Marquez transplanted the waging civil wars that took place in Colombia into the novel. Between 1885 and 1902 Colombia witnessed many heinous civil wars. The character of Colonel Aureliano Buendia has enough comparability with General Rafael Uribe Uribe, under whom the grandfather of Marquez fought. Uribe's struggles culminated in 1902 with the Treaty of

Neerlandia, which echoed in the novel on various instances. Here I quote only two incidents:

While he was shut up in Melquiades' room he was drawn into himself, the way Colonel Aureliano Buendia had been in his youth. But a short time after the Treaty of Neerlandia, a piece of chance took him out of his withdrawn self and made him face the reality of the world. (OHYS 192)

and

The indolence of the people was in contrast to the voracity of oblivion, which little by little was undermining memories in a pitiless way, to such an extreme that at that time, on another anniversary of the Treaty of Neerlandia, some emissaries from the president of the republic arrived in Macondo to award at last the decoration rejected several times by Colonel Aureliano Buendia , and they spent a whole afternoon looking for someone who could tell them where they could find one of his descendents. (OHYS 351).

On many occasions Garcia Marquez has explicitly illustrated that he was working on Colombian life and its history.

All I wanted to do was to leave a literary picture of the world of my childhood which . . . was spent in large, very sad house with a sister who ate earth, a grand mother who prophesied the future and countless relatives of the same name who never made such distinctions between happiness and insanity. (Apuleyo Mendoza 72).

One Hundred Years of Solitude has attracted more critical attention than any other narrative of Marquez. It “talks not about the myth of creation but about the time which lies beyond the normal comprehension of the people in Latin America.” (James 76). As Krishnan Unni suggests, Garcia Marquez unsettles the entire historical background of Colombia in the mixing ups of characters from the legends, folklores, and modern traditions (08). A number of critics ferreted for the roots of Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and unearthed the reality behind it. Garcia Marquez found, in his own past tradition, the seed for his literary career.

One Hundred Years of Solitude. . . can justly lay claim to being, perhaps the greatest of all Latin American novels, appropriately enough, since the story of Buendia family is obviously a metaphor for the history of the continent since Independence, that is, for the neo colonial period. More than

that, though it is also, I believe a narrative about the myths of Latin American history. (Martin *Magical* 97)

The same spirit is echoed in Angle Rama also. "I do not believe any other novelist has so acutely, so truthfully seen the intimate relationship between the socio political structure of a given country and the behaviour of his characters" (as quoted by Martin 97).

Garcia Marquez supported this argument unequivocally clear in his world acclaimed conversation with Mendoza. "Buendia family could be an account of Latin American history." (Apuleyo Mendoza 73). It seems, in no other novelist so acutely, so credibly seen the intimate relationship between the socio-political structures of a given country and behavioural modifications of his characters. Garcia Marquez's adherence to the Colombian history and civilization is quite perceptible. He squandered the first eight years of his life in Aracataca, a steamy banana town, not far from Colombian coast. "He also tells the story that his grandmother invented fantasies so that he wouldn't be saddened by the truth of things." (James 66). A lot of readers identified considerable political significance of the novel, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, though the author once commented that there was no message in the fiction.

Bell-villada remarked with enough ratiocination that the novel's appeal was to all ideologies: leftists liked its dealing with

social struggles and its portraits of imperialism; conservatives were heartened by the corruption and failure of those struggle and with sustaining roles of the family; nihilists and quietists found their pessimism re-confirmed; and the political hedonists found solace in all the sex and swashbuckling. (93).

Structurally speaking, the novel may be divided into four segments. The first section has five chapters; a Utopian innocence and social coherence, in which Macondo existed, like a resplendent Eden, its inhabitants so innocent that no one has yet died and they didn't have even names to signify things, "the world was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it is necessary to point." (OHYS 01). The story then moves on to the military struggles in the various civil wars and revolutions. The incidents were realistically pictured in the chapters six to nine. Then Macondo plunges into a period of economic prosperity and spiritual decline, chaptered from ten to fifteen and finally, decadence and destruction.

There are many different ways to read *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. The Biblical interpretation is one of the very prominent readings. Solitude mimics the first books of the Bible, with a particular emphasis on the Book of Genesis. The narrator's remark that "the world was so recent that many things lacked names," is a transparent reference to the "In the Beginning" opening of Genesis,

wherein the Lord creates first the world, and then the objects that fill it. Macondo is picturized as an Eden-like village where no one grows old and no one dies. Jose Arcadio Buendia and Ursula Iguaran are obviously meant to stand in for Adam and Eve. Like Adam and Eve, Jose Arcadio Buendia and Ursula Iguaran are driven from their homes, to wander in the cruel landscape because of a crime they have committed (the murder of Prudencio Aguilar). Jose Arcadio Buendia has an obsession with "knowledge" and "progress," the cardinal desires that caused Adam and Eve to be ousted from Eden garden .The final image of (in Chapter four) the humbled and defeated Jose Arcadio Buendia, lashed to a tree is very much supportive of this Bible affiliation. Continuing with the Biblical overtones of the book, this tree is meant to suggest the Tree of Knowledge, the tree that was forbidden to Adam and Eve and caused their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. That is not all. Many allusions are there in the novel with strong arguments, which are very close to the Bible.

One Hundred Years of Solitude introduces the crucial theme of solitude that is core to Marquez's project. Solitude can be a healthy thing as the village grows and more and more frightening aspects of civilization come to Macondo (absurd governmental regulations, prostitution, etc.). Macondo fails to communicate and reach out to the rest of the world. All the individuals are facing this or that kind of

indefinable solitude. And their country too passes through such a temperament. Their solitude has two levels: individual and societal or national. By having Jose Arcadio Buendia babble in a foreign tongue at the end of chapter four, and using the example of labeling during the insomnia plague, Marquez introduces the unsettling question of what happens to communication when even language breaks down. It asks myriads of questions like to what extent languages are reliable for the permanence of memory, and what happens when we all stop speaking that language? Those topics are particularly relevant in Latin American history, which was notoriously distorted in textbooks when Garcia Marquez was studying it in schools.

Garcia Marquez picks up an important theme that is central in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*: the political violence in Latin America. Garcia Marquez wanted to say that politics was necessarily linked with violence in Latin America. This theme is vital for a number of different reasons. Without this kind of a view the rest of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* might seem comical, fanciful even. Critics would have been able to dismiss it as an uproarious romp through the lives of some colorful, and admittedly exaggerated, characters. The inclusion of the Latin American political and historical background to the novel in the serious and the tragic manner allows Garcia Marquez to make fascinating links between the fantastic, which is a vital part of this novel, and the realistic,

which is often even more fantastic than the levitating priests and gypsy fairs that populate the book. Garcia Marquez does compare reality as it is seen in Latin American politics--the corruption, the dishonesty, the violence, the dictatorial behavior to the unreality of the world he spins in this book, and dares the reader to decide which one is harder to believe.

This Marquezian masterpiece is a parable of civilization, especially the Greek civilization: first comes settlement, then agricultural development, then scientific inquiry and achievement (Jose Arcadio Buendia's scientific experiments are a parody of this stage of development), then literature (Melquiades' texts and Aureliano's poetry), and finally, war and the building of an empire before a distinct decline (which will be reflected later in the book). But Garcia Marquez does not allow readers to successfully halt here by making such a safe conclusion. He intends to connect this with specific historical cycle that is a reflection of Latin America. The constant and useless war, the futility of politics, and the ultimate absurdity of the revolutionary project are the themes, not only in One Hundred Years of Solitude but also specific to Latin American history. By contrasting the rise of classical Greek civilization with the violence of his own civilization, Garcia Marquez is opening a dialogue between the two civilizations that questions where the first left off and the second began. He is also using this dialogue to question

what Latin America would have been like had the Europeans never conquered it; for instance if it had been free to develop and possibly turn into a colonial power the way ancient Greece did.

The fiction *One Hundred Years of Solitude* maintains a tension or dialectic between different perspectives. First of all it is a comic novel, an entertainment. At the same time it is a deeply serious and highly ambitious novel, which tries to "rewrite the history of Latin America and to offer a view of the human conditions." (Higgins 145). It established its fictionality when Aureliano Babilonia discovered that Buendias were no more than creatures of Malquiade's imagination with no existence outside the pages of his manuscript.

It undoubtedly narrates the history of the town, Macondo and of its founders, the Buendia family. They were forced to quit their native village, due to the murder of Prudencio Aguilar (OHYS 22-23).

"You go home and get a weapon, because I am going to kill You." Ten minutes later he returned with a notched spear that had belonged to his grandfather. At the door to the cockpit where half the town had gathered, Prudencio Aguilar was waiting for him. There was no time to defend himself. Jose Arcadio Buendia's spear thrown with the strength of a bull and with the same good aim with which the first Aureliano Buendia had

exterminated the jaguars in the region pierced his throat
(OHYS 22)

As magical realist incidents, Prudencio Aguilar appeared before Jose Arcadio Buendia many times, so finally they resolved to quit the place.

"It is all right Prudencio", he told him. "We are going to leave this town, just as far away as we can go, and we'll never come back. Go in peace now" (OHYS 23)

Jose Arcadio Buendia, his resourceful wife Ursula and a handful of associates abandoned their native town and started an exodus for an "un promised" land. They found an isolated region in the swamplands and settled there.

In the course of events the outsiders infiltrated into Macondo. Improvised technology, the masterly gypsies, ready-to-act government officials, priests of various military forces, the ubiquitous lawyers, the railway, American capitalists, the European with bicycle, the passion for airplanes etc. planted their roots in Macondo. In the Edenic innocence, people didn't have the vision and power to resist the aggression effectively. The only hand of remonstrance was that of Jose Arcadio Buendia. He was synonymous with eccentricity and unpredictability. One should not neglect the fact that Macando was founded quite accidentally. The Buendias had no programme of

action or chart. They started the exodus unpremeditated. And so they founded Macondo, the town of mirrors and mirages, an innocent and idyllic community with no sense of history or any political gonfalon. Macondo is a golden age commonwealth as Gonzalo introduced one in *The Tempest*.

. . . no kind of traffic

. . . no name of magistrate

. . . but nature should bring forth

Of its own kind,

All foison, all abundance (Act 1 Scene 2)

Macondo was a village that was more orderly and workaholic, than any known until then by its three hundred inhabitants. "It was a truly happy village where no one was over thirty years of age and where no one had died." (OHYS 9).

The story of Macondo mirrors the general pattern of Latin American history. To the Latin Americans, history is a farce. Traditional approach and conventional readings are not sufficient to nose-dive into the inexorable undercurrents of Latin American history. Wood's explanation is of high use here.

. . . their fear that they are not quite real people, that their world is not entirely a real world. This is not a metaphysical or epistemological problem, it is not the

European anguish of Kafka or Beckett and it is not the uneasiness of North Americans faced with a fast changing social physical landscape. (37)

This feeling is very intimate to the Latin Americans. That is similar to an actor's weariness about finishing his job. Macondo was the dream of Jose Aracdio Buendia. His dream had a Latin American plurality of signification. Marquez's novels do not argue that life is a dream but rather that Latin American life is a dream, "the unreality and unauthenticity imposed by almost five hundred years of colonialism and that when a dream becomes permanent living nightmare, it is probably the time to wake up." (Martin, *Magical* 104).

Latin American history is "made up of immense useless enterprise and great dramas which are condemned to oblivion." (Apuleyo Mendoza 73). As Williams puts it, the endless repetition of useless actions are an idologeme for a capitalist society. In this sense the Colonel's endless battles are the same as his repetitive creations of little goldfish and sons. The thirty three wars Colonel Aureliano Buendia had lost would be an expression of the continent's political frustration. Macondo never represents as a natural participant in the affairs of the nation. "It is always marginal at best." (Williams 85). Even after establishing his government position in

Macondo, the magistrate Don Apolinor Moscote is nothing more than a titular authority.

National politics is more a matter of disruption or confusion than an integral part of Macondo's life. After painting and repainting their homes the colours of both liberals and conservatives, Macondo's citizens eventually have houses of an undefined colour, a sign of the failure, in effect, both traditional parties. (Williams 85).

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, nothing ever turns out as the inhabitants envisaged. Every happening bewilders them. Most of their actions are circular. Marquez authentically presents Macondo inhabitants in their perverted hallucinations. Time leads them to realize that lives are for others. They keep alive for the sake of living. "The only explanation possible is that they are living out their lives in the name of someone else's values." (Martin *Magical* 106). As we know already, solitude is the central theme of *One Hundred Years of solitude*. The dramatis personae of the fiction reclude into solitude just like believing solitude is sometimes the best society.

Hence the solitude, the central theme (together with the quest) of Latin American history, it is their abandonment in an empty continent, a cultural vacuum, marooned

thousands of miles away from their true home. (Martin *Magical* 106).

One Hundred Years of Solitude maps the true image of Latin American history. It is the narration of an era smeared with blood and revolution.

Conceived by Spain in the Sixteenth century ... the characters awaken in the late eighteenth century Enlightenment ... but are entirely unable to bring themselves into focus, in a world they have not made. Influences from outside (the gypsies) are sporadic, piecemeal throughout the notional hundred years of the novel, which is the span from the Independence era to the early 1960s... Seen in this light, the novel seems less concerned with any "magical reality" than with the general effect of a colonial history upon individual relationship, hence the theme of circularity, irrationality, fatalism, isolation, superstition, fanaticism, corruption and violence (Martin *Magical* 106).

If one sketches the character of Jose Arcadio Buendia, the patriarch, he can observe these basic points being brought out. His story is the history thus shattered. His life starts with an incestuous marriage and erotic passions and a sense of macho pride, which

results in the murder of Prudencio Aguilar (OHYS 22). The murder compelled the Buendias to retreat to the interiors. They founded Macondo by accident. Jose Arcadio Buendia was a man of immense energy, ambition, talent and imaginative intuitions. He wanted to explore more knowledge and made it available for the Macondo community. He optimistically believed that science would break away the manacles of geographic imprisonment. But there was a problem with Jose Arcadio. He failed to bifurcate magic and knowledge. He knew nothing about geography and although he had got a sextant, a compass, and maps, he got physically lost, defeated by the nature which surrounded them (OHYS 4). His wings of imagination lead him ahead of the business at hand. That is why he was confronted with alpine failures. He was an Icarus, but incapable of directing them purposefully with any firm sense of reality of the available climate and atmosphere. Then quiet instinctively he commented: "We shall get anywhere We will rot our lives away here without the benefit of science." (OHYS 19) The descendants of Jose Arcadio Buendia circumnavigate through this astute problem and eventually succumb to the miraculous energy of nostalgia to opting out of their historical reality, which they could not comprehend discernibly. They affiliate their innate failures with an inner withdrawal. This activity of resignation is the key factor for "it condemns the Buendias to a life without science, to a state of mind,

that is, which cannot make firm distinctions between objective fact and the subjective projections of desire." (Williamson 49). At the outset of the novel, Jose Arcadio Buendia was terribly haunted by the past memories, especially of Prudencio Aguilar. These personal moulds have been reflected later, when Colonel Aureliano Buendia destroyed the revolution. The scheme of pensiveness, nostalgia and sudden outbursts are reiterated in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, especially with the male characters. They endeavored for active fulfillment as dynamic and spirited young men, but became disillusioned and ended up with withdrawal. Just like some dictators of Latin America, they were unable to confront with actual life situations; hence retreating finally into an indomitable solitude. Wood opined that Buendias sought out the solitude as if it were their shroud. He furthered that the sought after solitude became their emblem (40). Loneliness in Macondo and among the Buendias is spontaneous. "It is a particular location, a shape of character that is inherited, certainly, but also chosen, a doom that look inevitable but is freely endorsed." (Wood 40).

Throughout *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, reiteration of incidents can be perceived – reiteration of names and incest, solitude and nostalgia, madness and failed revolutions. The gypsies are the knowledge mongers. They visit Macondo every year with an uproar of pipes and kettledrums. Gypsies tried to colonize the virgin

Macondo intellectually by bartering technology. They had first appeared in a remote part. The pre-experienced life was inerasably manifested by Jose Arcadio Buendia. "We are so peaceful that none of us has died even of a natural death . . . You can see that we still don't have any cemetery." (OHYS 58). In to this uncolonised and inexperienced "primitive world" the gypsies bring a portent of the future, an invention of wonder and potential: the magnet. The pre-gypsy era of Macondo was similar with the pre-colonized Colombia. The gypsy encroachment and the followed infiltration of state authority symbolically represent the advent of Spanish aggressors to the new world.

Jose Arcadio Buendia reminds of the indigenous instinct of any pre colonized community to welcome and absorb whoever or whatever comes before them, without any attempt to unfasten the tie behind it. He is the first and the most responsible citizen of Macondo. He predicts the future as a prophet. He is a patriarch, inventor, architect, designer, and murderer. The multi dimensional personal moulding up of Jose Aracadio Buendia is typical with pre-colonized Colombia. He is "the most enterprising man ever to be seen in the village." (OHYS 09)

He had set up the placement of the houses in such a way that from all of them one could reach the river and draw water with the same effort and he had lined up the

streets with such good sense that no house got more sun than another during the hot time of day. Within a few years Macondo was a village that was more orderly and hard working than any known until then by its three hundred inhabitants. It was a truly happy village where no one was over thirty years of age and where no one had died" (OHYS 09)

Melquiades, the gypsy wanted to mystify the town folk. Jose Arcadio Buendia looked towards future. Ursula Iguaran was critical of Jose Arcadio Buendia's blind infatuation with science. This depicts another aspect of pre-colonized society – fearful perception of what was new. After getting enough bolster and deliberation from the master gypsy Melquiades, Jose Aracadio Buendia tried to "extract gold from the bowel of the earth." (OHYS 02). He began the search for excavating gold enough and more to pave the floors of the house. He trades in his mule and a pair of goats for the two magnetized ingots (OHYS 02), and meticulously explores each and every inch of the area. He was confronted with failure in his endeavour to excavate gold. He finds only "a suit of fifteenth century armour which had all of its pieces soldered together with rust and inside of which there was hollow resonance of an enormous stone filled gourd" (OHYS 02). The more he searched for gold the more he found the remnants of Spanish imperialism and the fossilized past. This is

really a paradoxical situation. Macondo stands for the whole of Latin America after Independence. It craved for a changed world away from that of one already had established by the imperial hawks. But even after the revolution, lead by Simon Bolivar, Latin American countries were still following outdated Iberian models of governance and institutions. Jose Arcadio Buendia wanted to return to the pre-Fall paradise of Indian. But he reached at the colonial powers and realized the conspicuous erosion of his dreams.

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, people vary on many grounds. Science and its application to real life invited heated discussion from various quarters. Melquiades was the man who had brought science to Macondo and Jose Arcadio Buendia had blind optimism on its use. Melquiades brought telescope and magnifying glass, "the latest discovery of the Jews of Amsterdam." (OHYS 3). Here Melquiades believed in the potentiality of new apparatus and its kinetic principle, the science.

Science has eliminated distance . . . In a short time man will be able to see what is happening in any place in the world without leaving his own house. (OHYS 03).

His anachronistic theory of elimination of distance is the fusion of a chicanery and an "advanced" science. But the approach of Jose Arcadio Buendia towards science was different. He was focusing on the

pragmatism of scientific discoveries. Though he obediently shadowed Melquiades with admiration, his vision was different. Melquiades was 'global' and metropolitan, but Jose Arcadio Buendia was hardly global and seldom metropolitan. Melquiades has circumnavigated the world and has known "what there was on the other side of things." (OHYS 05). He resembles the navigators, who explored the world by making use of boats and yachts. "He had survived pellagra in Persia, scurvy in the Malayan archipelago, leprosy in Alexandria, beriberi in Japan, bubonic plague in Madagascar, an earthquake in Sicily, and a disastrous shipwreck in the strait of Magellan" (OHYS 06). This metropolitanism naturally contrasts with regionalism and paucity of knowledge of Jose Arcadio Buendia.

Jose Arcadio Buendia was completely ignorant of the geography of the region. He knew that to the east there lay an impenetrable mountain chain and that on the other side of the mountains, there was the ancient city of Riohacha where in times past – according to what he had been told by the first Aureliano Buendia, his grandfather – Sir Francis Drake had gone crocodile hunting with cannons and that he repaired them and stuffed them with straw to bring to Queen Elizabeth. (OHYS 16).

Melquiades, the first intellectual colonizer conquers Macondo with his science. In the real sense, the Europeans including the Spanish, employed the same strategy to colonize the Latin American countries. Melquiades has his followers. The magistrate, Don Apolinar Moscote is one among them. When Apolinar Moscote issued the order commanding all houses to be painted blue in accordance with the government order, Jose Arcadio Buendia registered his protest but of no use. This pictorially depicts the negligible resistance of Indians when Spain tried to ensconce Latin America.

Throughout the novel, scientific discoveries were administered for two purposes; to mystify the citizens and eventually to exploit them. The very first sentence of the novel is arrestingly gripping and elaborating the point. "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." (OHYS 01)

Jose Arcadio Buendia learns nothing, whereas Ursula is capable of learning and understanding. He never really pays any attention to the suit of armour from the past, so he never learns that the rusted coat of armour apparently anticipates the soldiers and machineguns that will support the banana company, that the imperialism of the past prefigures the imperialism of the future. "The difference between Jose Arcadio and other residents of Macondo . . .

is merely that he is a useful citizen of the active type, whereas they are useful citizen of the passive type", comments Brian Conniff (174). Macondo villagers believe that magic and advanced technology from outside will be of great help to them. By presenting the unquestionable faith in outside world, Marquez underlines this fact. "Once the people believe that science, like all uplifting things must come elsewhere, that outside world is better because it is more "advanced", then imperialism becomes much easier to justify." (Conniff 174). The gypsies' "discoveries" are always excessively foreign. Later the residents of Macondo easily convince themselves of the innate superiority of Italian music and the French sexual techniques.

THE BANANA COMPANY AND ITS IMPACTS

The economical status of Aracataca and the surrounding region of Colombia was predominantly controlled by the United Fruit Company, in the first decades of the last century. Then the company was re christened as Chiquita International. The founder of Boston based United Fruit began to purchase land in 1894 and by nineteen twenties the area became the third largest exporter of banana in the world. "La Fruit, as the company is known to the locals, did not own most of the plantations, but it bought bananas from growers, controlled the railroad that took them to the port and managed the distribution of irrigation water." (Lee Anderson 11). Although the

workers were properly paid by the company, they were not the workers of the company technically and they were compelled to spend their whole income at the company stores. The United Fruit did not provide benefits to the workers. This was one of the issues that precipitated the 1928 banana strike. The Colombian Communist Party sent delegation to organize the banana workers. The banana company, with the help of the government fired at the people during the demonstration of 32,000 workers, an event locally known as Slaughter of 1928 (Lee Anderson 11), which has taken place in Cienaga on 05 December 1928. The government iron-curtained all information regarding the egregious killings and virtually nothing had been written about them. Garcia Marquez was the first one who made the incident the culminating event in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, where thousands of workers were machine gunned in the town square and their bodies were transported to the coast to be thrown into the sea. (Lee Anderson 11)

Jose Arcadio Segundo and the Mexican exile Lorenzo Gavilan were the ring leaders of the movement. "The protests of the workers this time were based on the lack of sanitary facilities in their living quarters, the non existence of medical services and terrible working conditions" (OHYS 305). Jose Arcadio Segundo challenged the scrip system alleging that it was good only to buy Virginia ham in the company commissaries. "The company physicians did not examine

the sick but had them line up behind one another in the dispensaries and a nurse would put a pill the colour of copper sulfate on their tongues, whether they had malaria, gonorrhoea or constipation" (OHYS 306). All the complaints and grievances of the people remained unredressed. People lost all their hopes and patience. At last the great strike broke out. "Cultivation stopped half way, the fruit rotted on trees and the hundred-twenty-car trains remained on the sidings." (OHYS 307). People congregated together. The authority wanted to disperse the striking crowd. But no use. They were committed and duty bound. Then the captain of the army issued the last command demanding the immediate disperse of the assembled folk. He shouted

Ladies and gentlemen, You have five minutes to withdraw [. . .] Five minutes have passed. One more minute and we'll open fire." (OHYS 310).

It happened at last. Machine guns started their job with professional accuracy and precision. Many people were devilishly massacred. "There must have been three thousand of them" (OHYS 313). As an aftermath of the slaughter, 'it rained for four year eleven months and two days." (OHYS 320). As usual, government statistics about killing was funny and ridiculous. It reads :

. . . there was no dead, the satisfied workers had gone back to their families and the banana company was

suspending all activity until the rains stopped. Martial law continued with an eye to the necessity of taking emergency measures for the public disaster of the endless downpour, but the troops were confined to quarter (OHYS 315).

During the Depression of nineteen thirties, The United Fruit Company cut back production, and by 1965 they totally pulled out of Aracataca permanently.

The massacre was perpetrated by troops under General Carlos Cortes Vargas at the Cienaga (Magdalena) railway station on 05 December 1928 in direct connivance with The United Fruit Company. The Conservative Government of Miguel Abadia Mendez (1926—30) reported that a mere nine strikers were killed and tried it to suppress the whole story. People resorted in a solitude but Jose Arcadio Segundo remembered "the insatiable and methodical shears of machine guns" (OHYS 273). Other inhabitants and military pacified themselves by recalling, "nothing has happened in Macondo, nothing has ever happened, and nothing will ever happen. This is a happy town" (OHYS 277). Jose Arcadio Buendia shares many qualities with other Marquezian characters. He is so strange, and so absurd. But Jose Arcadio Segundo is his precise opposite. When government troops bustled into the room, where he was hiding, they could not see him, even though they were looking right at the place,

where he believed he was sitting. It makes no difference that they did not actually kill him, that he jumped off the train on which the corpses had been "piled up in the same way in which they transported bunches of bananas" (OHYS 284). Krishnan Unni finds this incident as the reason for the eternal solitude of Latin America.

As a result of this massacre ,several workers were bereft of their homes and other ties in the society. This eternally lead them to plunge in to the grooves of solitude.”(10).

Stephen Minta too identified this political incident in connection with Garcia Marquez novel. Minta added that very few Colombians really wanted to discuss the violence, "something like a conspiracy of silence developed" (169).

The 'Banana episode' invites interpretation in another angle as well. The novel enacts quest stories since they enclose the development of a character's search for his family history, which consummates in his solving an enigma, be it enclosed in a song or in some parchments written in a foreign language. This is another example of the inadequacy of the history written in a hierarchical world where the oppressors/colonizers write the history of the oppressed/colonized. This is very much portrayed in the novel, especially in the episode of the massacre sponsored by the banana

company, which takes a toll of three thousand deaths. However, the official account of the facts released by the authorities intends to hide the gruesome cruelty: "There was no dead, the satisfied workers had gone back to their families, and the banana company was suspending all activity until the rain stopped" (OHYS 314). The fear of retaliation creates a web of collective amnesia; only José Arcadio is aware of such a conscious manipulation of events. Wolfgang Karrer's statement sheds light to this factor. "...recall and amnesia are intimately connected with power relations between cultures -- collective amnesia results from hegemony of one culture over another" (143). But before the written history there was the oral history that was transmitted from generation to generation. Thus José Arcadio tells Aureliano the real text of what had happened, although years later Aureliano would realize that collective amnesia still dominated Macondo, where many "would repudiate the myth of the workers hemmed in at the station and the train with two hundred cars loaded with dead people, and they would even insist that, after all, everything had been set forth in judicial documents and in primary-school textbooks: that the banana company had never existed" (OHYS 315).

García Márquez portrays the marginal communities within capitalist economies, and the evils those economies can impose on the people. The banana company is but a sign of the invading

imperialism Macondo falls prey to. In spite of its initial lure of progress and wealth, the banana company takes a heavy toll on this pre-industrial village. It is agreed upon by all that when progress is achieved at the expense of human rights, when material wealth brings about exploitation and spiritual death, then the foundation of a people or a nation are shattered. Referring precisely to the harmful traces the banana company left behind for the Macondoians, Aureliano Segundo realizes that "Macondo had been a prosperous place and well on its way until it was disordered and corrupted and suppressed by the banana company" (282). In fact, after the dissolution of the company, Macondo faces unremitting decadence conducive to its final destruction. José Arcadio Buendía in his excessive thirst for material progress leads both of them towards a futile search for gold. In his obstinate attempt to find the precious metal, José Arcadio, who had already been looking for the sea, and who had ended up founding Macondo, decides to use the magnet the gypsies had brought into the village.

He explored every inch of the region, even the riverbed, dragging the two iron ingots along and reciting Melquíades' incantation aloud. The only thing he succeeded in doing was to unearth a suit of fifteenth-century armour which had all of its pieces soldered together with rust and inside of which there was the

hollow resonance of an enormous stone-filled gourd"
(OHYS 02).

José Arcadio succeeds only in finding the traces of the Spanish imperialism. These findings are surely prophetic of the new oppression his village will be submitted to with the presence of the banana company and the bloody events it will bring about between the natives of Macondo and the army. However, he is blinded by the fierce race for progress, the technological advances and the lure of enrichment, all of which certainly prevent him from seeing further implications of the Spanish armour he comes upon. His obsession with scientific inventions exerts a progressive damage on his initial attitude of communal initiative. His first creations had been the traps and cages to ensure that all the houses in the village would have birds; he had placed the houses in such a way that they could all receive the same amount of solar energy and river water. However, "that spirit of social initiative disappeared in a short time, pulled away by the fever of the magnets, the astronomical calculations ... the urge to discover the wonders of the world" (OHYS 15-16).

At the end Jose Arcadio Segundo shares something in common with first Jose Arcadio. The events that would deal Macondo its fatal blow – the strike, the public unrest, the massacre and its aftermath – take shape at the precise moment that the train begins to control the events of the novel (OHYS 272). Transportation and public

commutation in Colombia were inseparably entwined with progress. Aureliano Triste's sketch of Macondo's railroad was a direct descendant of the plans with which Jose Aracadio Buendia had illustrated his project for solar warfare. Triste believed that rail road was necessary "not only for the modernization of his business but to link the town with the rest of the world" (OHYS 209). Only Ursula was conscious about the danger of the science from outside. She was equally afraid of modernization.

The train service helped Fernanda to travel back to the city of her birth. She believed that Macondo people were barbarians (OHYS 265). She desired to enroll her daughter in a convent, away from the savagery of the Carribean Zone. She did not want to see the shady banana growers, the oxcarts on the dusty roads loaded with bunches of bananas and the skeleton of Spanish galleon (OHYS 273). Brian Conniff comments in this regard. " At this point it is clear that she has failed in her attempt to colonize Macondo with the manners and rituals of the inland cities; but her "internal colonialism" has been superseded without her noticing it, by the brutal imperialism of the banana company" (176). When Fernanda returned to Macondo, the train was guarded by police officers. Since Segundo organized the labourers of banana company, he has been pointed out as the agent of an international conspiracy against public order (OHYS 276). The mentality of Spanish superiority has been personified by Fernanda

del Carpio. Higgins identifies her with Bernardo del Carpio, the legendary Spanish hero of medieval times (150). She was cynical to the poor Latin Americans. She lived in illusions. When Macondo was ensnared by the colossus Banana Company and the resultant lower class uprisings, she believed that she was superior to the vulgar tradesman there. This kind of an attitude, the Spanish conquistadors and intelligentsia showed against indigenous Americans.

THE NOVEL AS ALTERNATIVE HISTORY

One Hundred Years of Solitude debunks the official myths by offering an alternative history. This is the view of a local community subjected to domination by the external forces. James Higgin's influential essay sheds light on affiliating the incidents of the novel with the real Latin American history.

. . . events of the novel roughly span the century from the years after Independence to around 1930, the early phase of Macondo's history evokes, Latin America's colonial period, when communities lived outside from one another and the viceroalties themselves had little contact with the distant metropolis (149).

Latin American isolation from scientific Europe is explicated when Jose Arcadio's researches lead him to discover that the earth was

round. (OHYS 5). Colonial under development is mirrored in his acute awareness of Macondo's backwardness in relation to the external world.

Incredible things are happening in the world ... Right there across the river there are all kinds of magical instruments while we keep on living like donkeys (OHYS 8).

The novel ironically questions Spain's claims that they have bequeathed to America the benefits of European civilization. The much boasted conquest is ridiculously parodied by the expedition in which the Macondoians re-enact the ordeals of the Spanish explorers and conquistadors in order to make contact with the civilization which Spain expanded to its colonies. One of the prime factors of Latin America's miserable backwardness is identified as the Spanish colonial heritage.

The republican era of Macondo was officially started when Don Apolinar Mascote, the self styled magistrate entered Macondo. The magistrate's advent was really the beginning of the social strife between the 'civilized' and barbarian, rural and cosmopolitan, spontaneous and cultivated. Macondo's spontaneous flow of life was troubled by the appointment of the magistrate and the subsequent government interventions. It had always been a well ordered rural

community far from imposing law and order. The new magistrate stirred up unrest by commanding all houses to be painted blue, the colour of the ruling conservative party. This is a very powerful symptom of tyrannous autocracy and insensitive imposition of central government. Don Apolinar Mascote introduces parliamentary democracy and cynical manipulation of democratic institutions. He wanted to bring his party in to the throne. The more he compelled the Macondoians to enthrone his party, the more they caught up in the instinctual civil violence.

The reiterated civil wars between the liberals and the conservatives were the manifested feature of the 19th century Colombia and other countries in the South American hemisphere. The staunch liberal Colonel Aureliano Buendia embodies the futility of the bloodshed. He was disillusioned of the whole project. The most important reason is the ideological fanaticism of the agitator Dr. Alirio Noguera, who advocates a scheme of liquidating conservatism by pre-conceived idea of nationwide assassination. (OHYS 102). Colonel and Noguera represent the two sides.

...the day the doctor revealed the secret to Aureliano, the latter elicited the whole plan of the conspiracy. Although he was convinced at that time of the urgency of liquidating the Conservative regime the plot horrified him. Dr. Noguera had a mystique of personal

assassination. His system was reduced to coordinating a series of individual actions which in one masterstroke covering the whole nation would liquidate the functionaries of the regime along with their respective families, especially the children, in order to exterminate Conservatism at its roots. Don Apolinar Mascote, his wife, and six daughters, needless to say, were on the list (OHYS 102).

The angry Aureliano called him a butcher." You are no liberal or any thing else...You are nothing but a butcher." (OHYS 102).

The extremists of both sides were bolstered by such fanaticism. They forgot the common humanity. Once again Aureliano becomes exceptional. He made friendship with General Moncada crossing the ideological divider between them. They had dreamt of forming a new party with humanitarian agenda and approach. But the reality was very severe. "That night he (General Jose Raquel Moncada) was captured when he tried to escape from Macondo after writing a long letter to Colonel Aureliano Buendia in which he reminded him of the common aim to humanize the war and he wished him a final victory over the corruption of the militarists and the ambitions of the politicians in both parties." (OHYS 159-160). Paradoxically enough, Colonel Aureliano Buendia became uncompromisingly fanatic and was ready to sacrifice his own friends

only to achieve his hellish political objectives. The enmity against his political rivals made him totally inhuman. Anyhow that midnight General Jose Raquel Moncada was sentenced to death. The final words of Colonel Aureliano Buendia to Moncada was suggestive.

Remember, old friend', he told him, I am not shooting you. It is the revolution that's shooting you. (OHYS 163)

Though ideologically different the liberals and conservatives were controlled by the same privileged elite. Ultimately there was no distinction between their action plans. The constant painting and repainting of Macondo houses is an example. Liberals committed the same abuses of conservatives. When Arcadio Buendia became the Governor he behaved like a dictator. He legalized Jose Arcadio's right to levy tax on the usurped land. This undoubtedly exemplifies the traditional Latin American pattern of oligarchy. Politicians change their chameleon countenance every now and then opportunistically. Colonel Aureliano identifies the fact that he was not only fighting the conservatives but at odds with his own party. The liberal landowners secretly parleyed with the conservative bourgeoisie to protect their vested interests. Colombia became a "mad house" (OHYS 184) in the hands of these politicians. At the end a pact was signed between the parties readying to share power. "Liberals and Conservatives are thus exposed as ultimately representing the same class interest" (Higgins 152).

Neo Colonialism became a reality when peace and stability entwined together. Earlier Jose Arcadio Buendia dreamt of transforming Macondo a modern state by the help of Science and technology. Latin America's neo-colonial status as dependent on foreign investment was undoubtedly figured out in the fiction. North American capital flew into Macondo. Aureliano Segundo became immensely rich by the fecundity of his livestock and the whole community benefited from banana boom. Those things were really unsubstantial bubbles disappearing very easily. Macondo's financial prosperity did not represent the real economic growth, but rather it was something accidental. The region's natural resources and outside demands made Macondo prosperous. Latin American economy was totally engineered by the outside business magnets. When Aureliano Segundo felt extreme shock out of financial failure, he was ready to run a lottery and was nicknamed as Don Divina Providencia. Aureliano Segundo is the personified Latin America. The Buendias represent the oligarchy, which ruled Latin America by centuries. They were gradually transformed into land owning class and eventually became business bourgeoisie.

James Higgins comments. "The ending of the novel reflects, at least on the socio-political level, the optimism generated through Latin America in the 1960s by the triumph of Cuban Revolution" (154). Melquiades, the gypsy predicted the future of Macondo by

following the precincts of the prophesy of Nostradamus. Later Aureliano Babilonia reads the manuscripts of Melquiades and the story was about the end of the Buendia dynasty. The manuscript is a multi suggestive metaphor of the South America's attempt to unearth its past. Jose Arcadio Segundo taught Aureliano Babilonia to treat history from a working class point of view.

Gerald Martin in his path breaking book *Journeys Through the Labyrinth* connects the novel with the real Latin American history. “How does a Latin American end a story? How does the story of Latin America itself begin? [...] It begins with a discovery and conquest (1492, when Columbus sailed the ocean blue) and ends with a revolution (in this case 1959,when Castro said this land is thine)” (221). The same is with the novel. It is “about a frustrating and frustrated history, beginning with revelations and ending with a revolution in consciousness—a dialectical transformation, a critical awareness of the self in history a hundred years of self absorption...” (Martin 221)

MAGICAL REALISM FOR RECREATING HISTORY

Garcia Marquez recreates the lost world of his childhood by exploiting the inherent possibility of Magical Realism, which ostracizes the documentary approach of realist fiction and expresses the world view of rural people destined to life in remote isolation from

the developed modern world. Marquez's name is inerasably associated with the phenomenon known as Magic Realism or magical realism. Coined by the German art critic Fraz Roh in 1920s the term magical realism has been most usefully applied to Latin American writers like Borges, Marquez, Carpentier, Vargas Llosa etc. According to the revised edition of the Oxford Companion to English Literature, "magic realist novels have typically a strong narrative drive, in which the recognizably realistic mingles with the unexpected and the inexplicable, and in which elements of dream, fairy story or mythology combine with the everyday, often in a mosaic of Kaleidoscopic pattern of refraction and recurrence."

Philip Swanson in his influential introduction to *The Landmarks in Modern Latin American Fiction* has drawn a clear picture portraying the various aspects of the term magic realism. Magical realism in his version, is the bridge linking regionalism and social realism with fantasy and formal innovation (Swanson 04). Neo Indianism is another related phenomenon though not popular. Swanson finds justification for using this narrative strategy, for both these styles involved the assimilation of the technical accomplishments of European writers in order to explore better the nature of an essentially Latin American reality. Magical realism, strictly speaking, has got no confinement only with Latin American writers. Many prominent writers of the world, other than South

Americans use this technique. Massie included Salman Rushdie, Angela Carter, Emma Tennant etc. in the list of magical realists. (55). But in a Latin American perspective, the phrase has indomitable sharpness and significance. Swanson speaks:

Essentially magical realism is based around the idea that Latin American reality is somehow unusual, fantastic or 'marvellous' because of its bizarre history and because of its varied ethnological make up. In other words reality in Latin America is more akin to fantasy given its prodigious historical background, its incredible range of communities and living conditions, its spectacularly heterogeneous geography -- and above all - the indigenous population's view of life based on myth and legend. (4).

Garcia Marquez made fictions where fantasy was incorporated into realistic narratives with incredible events and incidents, presenting in a dead pan manner as if they were really happening. One of the affiliated names in connection with magical realism is Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier (1904-1980). Carpentier extensively travelled European countries and was influenced by the surrealist movement of the time. "Carpentier began to apply the lessons of Europe purely to Latin America, seeing the surreal as a daily feature of life in his own sub continent." (Swanson 5). As Abrams comments:



Magic realistic writers interweave, in an ever shifting pattern, a sharply etched realism in representing ordinary events and descriptive details together with fantastic and dreamlike events as well as with materials derived from myth and fairy tales. (135). *NB 5842*

The last words ('myth' and 'fairytales') of this comment are highly rewarding in analysing Marquez's novels. He plunges into the unfathomable depths of Colombian myth and brings up some valuable gems. He uses history of Indians and manufactures his own world of myth. The terms like 'metafiction' and 'fabulation' are proximals with the phrase magical realism. The term metafiction is popularized by Robert Scholes. 'Metafiction' has been defined as 'fictional writing which self consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality'. (Waugh 2)

It is an overall term for the large and growing class of novels which depart drastically from traditional categories of realism or romance. Fabulation is a mode of free wheeling narrative invention. Abrams aptly states:

These novels violate, in various ways, standard novelistic expectations by drastic - and sometimes highly effective experiments with subject matter, form, style, temporal

sequence and fusion of the every day, the fantastic, the mythical and the nightmarish, in rendering that blur traditional distinctions between what is serious or trivial, horrible or ludicrous, tragic or comic. (135).

Gonzalez Echevarria's argument is scientific and ratiocinated.

Magical realism results from the meeting of the two tendencies. One is the formal experiment of the avant-garde, partly inspired by new conceptions of temporality and perception derived from the sciences. The other is the realism popularised in the nineteenth century and taken up as a programme by politically motivated artistic trends such as socialist realism. (19)

In short, magical realism is an effort to have a new look at the unique problems of Latin America. Such a new look could be attained only after erasing the European cultural presupposition, because of the complexity of the class and ethnic pattern in Latin America. In a close analysis, the critic may be convinced of the defamiliarization, for the writers laboured. Gonzalez Echevarria goes further: "magic would explain the difference; realism would provide the contrasting background of ordinary experience that made it discernible." (20). Jose Arcadio's unusual fecundity, Colonel Aureliano's thirty two armed revolutions, the seventy two school girls

queuing up to empty seventy two chamber pots etc. have a typical Latin American air and smell. The narrative has an Old Testament instinct: an original sin, an exodus, a promised land, a plague, a deluge and a final apocalypse.

Garcia Marquez's version of magical realism has a declared objective. In order to recreate and rewrite history supported by memory, he believes that no other technique is more ample than the employment of magical realism. Here, magic realism proves to be a valid means of rewriting history for those people who have to deal with the ghosts of slavery and colonialism and the distorted reality they bring about. Although magic realism has been traditionally associated with contemporary Latin American fiction, it is also present in authors from other continents (Lodge 114) and, particularly, in the works of contemporary ethnic writers, "who have lived through great historical convulsions and wrenching personal upheavals, which they feel cannot be adequately represented in a discourse of undisturbed realism" (Lodge 114). Latin American/Colombian world of corruption, war, exploitation, colonialism, and imperialism turn everyday reality into a surreal experience verging on the fantastic. The constant presence of supernatural events, dreams and visions, the use of the flying motif, the power of myths and oral tradition, the pendulum-like movement between past and present

and the break of linear narrative are but some of the features of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

In keeping with the conventional parameters of magic realism, García Márquez dismantles traditional binary oppositions such as life/death, material/spiritual, reality/fantasy, good/evil in what we can describe as an apologia for a hybrid discourse or a synthetic fusion of binary oppositions. The very term "magic realism" entails the symbiotic synthesis of opposites; it is the synthesis between the real (thesis) and the supernatural (antithesis). In this novel, the life is dominated by the presence of the dead and the daily life of characters intermingles with the world of myth, folklore and the supernatural. The spirits of the dead populate Macondo's world too; the gypsy Melquíades returns from the realm of the dead to talk to Aureliano Segundo, and José Arcadio Buendía has several conversations with the murdered Prudencio Aguilar. The flying motif is included in García Márquez's novel in the shape of flying carpets. The story of the Buendías enters a mythic dimension as it turns out to be a one-hundred-year family saga written by the soothsayer Melquíades before it happened.

If transgression of boundaries is one of the features of magic realism, the break of narrative linearity -- by means of flashbacks and flash forwards -- is another feature of magic realism. The characters journey into the past through their memories. Through

this way they reconstruct their personal and collective histories. Time plays a crucial role in García Márquez's masterpiece, as it can be inferred from its very title. The novel begins with one of the multiple flash forwards which anticipates future events and memories throughout the novel: "Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice" (01). In short the novel starts and culminates with an event that fuses beginning and end in a circular movement.

One Hundred Years of Solitude comes full circle from the foundation or genesis of Macondo to its destruction or apocalypse. The circularity and repetition of time is thus acknowledged by Ursula Iguarán, who "shuddered with the evidence that time was not passing ... but that it was turning in a circle" (OHYS 272). In short magic realism proves to be a valid means of rewriting history for those writers who have to deal with the ghosts of slavery and colonialism and the distorted reality they bring about. As Michael Dash points out, although

colonization and slavery did not make things of men ...
in their own way the enslaved peoples might have in
their own imagination so reordered their reality as to
reach beyond the tangible and concrete to acquire a new
re-creative sensibility which could aid in the harsh battle

for survival. The only thing they could possess ... was their imagination and this became the source of their struggle against the cruelty of their condition.(200).

Garcia Marquez has incorporated the oral history into literature to convey a "Third world experience." (Higgins 147). He pinpoints the relativity of all world views for events which appear fantastic to the sophisticated reader - Remedio's ascent to heaven trips on flying carpets, the parish priests' feats of levitation - are accepted as every day realities in the cultural milieu of Macondo and by contrast the modern technology - ice cubes, false teeth, the locomotive - is greeted with awe as something miraculous and magical.

Brian Conniff states that "the novel's 'apocalyptic closure' is a denial of progress, as conceived by either the scientist or the politician, and a momentary glimpse of the world that might have been, if the great patriarch had not been so carried away with his idea of the future -- if he had tried, instead, to understand history" (173). Indeed, the history of the Buendía family is founded on murder , violence, fratricide, rape and hegemony, all of which is but a reflection of Colombian and much of Latin American history -- episodes such as the civil war and the banana company massacre are based on real events occurred in Colombia. And a nation based on such foundations is doomed to solitude and spiritual death.

Therefore, Macondo proves to be one of García Márquez's "doomed enterprises" (Franco 132), an aborted nation whose founding family does not have the chance of redemption at the end of the book.

All the above arguments bolster the statement that Marquez makes use of history and its crosscurrents as his source for creative intuition. Many typical Colombian ideas along with its peculiar and extra ordinary incidents become immortalized by his pen.

Chapter 3

THE LIBERATOR IN HIS OWN LABYRINTH

I merely dream that I lie here
locked in this prison cell,
but have also dreamed of another time
when fate treated me right well.
What then is life but a fiction,
a shadow, an illusion, naught else,
and the greatest good is as nothing ,
for all of life is but a dream,
and like wise dreams themselves.

Pedro Calderon de la Barca

"Generous spirit will always be concerned with the fate of a people striving to recover the rights which their Creator and Nature once bestowed on them". Simon Bolivar (*In Jamaica Letter*)

General In His Labyrinth (GIHL) is the novel about Simon Bolivar, Latin America's most famous and most glamorous historical figure of all times, by the most famous writer of the Continent. It is remarkable that it deals with two cardinal words, especially in a Latin American perspective the "general" and the "labyrinth".

Historical accuracy is not a question when a writer like Garcia Marques narrates a dictator like Bolivar. But Marques confesses about his “absolute lack of experience and method in historical research”(GIHL 272). Here Garcia Marquez thanks and acknowledges a number of dignitaries including ex Colombian President, a Panamanian foreign secretary and a sundry academic. It maps the Bolivarian journey -- the least well documented time of his entire life -- from Bogota down the Magdalena River to Santa Marta, where he died between 08 May and 17 December 1830. So the subject of the novel is again the solitude-- seven months solitude. Just like the beginning of *Love in the Time of Cholera*, *General in His Labyrinth* begins in the death and as *No One Writes to the Colonel* it ends with the actual death. Once the General asks the most important question: how can he escape from the labyrinth?. Then he gazes at the mirror and observes

the diamond of Venus in the sky as it went away forever, the eternal snows, the creeper whose yellow flowers he would not see bloom the following Saturday in a house closed down by mourning. The last splendor of that life that till the end of time itself would never ever be repeated (GIHL 272)

Unlike other Colonels, Bolivar here was not waiting for his pension, but for his passport. “Like the patriarchal dictator wandering

through the labyrinthine corridors of his palace, Bolivar wanders through the wintry labyrinth of his stunning decline and fall.” (Martin 293). The work is about defeat, not about victory, about disillusionment, not about apotheosis of an idea. It is not about the glorious triumphs but about the dark hours of Bolivar’s life.

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF A LABYRINTH

Though many writers including the Europeans have worked out with labyrinths of experiences, the Latin American enthusiasm for the topic cannot be seen there. This has become a fashion since 1920s. George Luis Borges was mainly responsible for popularizing the concept. Through his *Fictions* (1944) Borges patented the concept in elaborating his own conception of what reading, writing, thinking or culture are. Octavio Paz’s *Labyrinth of Solitude* is another celebrated attempt towards this line.

A labyrinth may be natural or manmade above or below ground, designed as a puzzle, entertainment, trap or prison. This labyrinth may sometimes be real or imaginary, metaphoric, symbolic or mythic. It may be essentially symmetrical or spiral. Some times not discernible structure. It may be centrally or severally focused. And implies journey or journeys.

Most often... one associates it with an underground quest, in the darkness through spiralling corridors, in

which one easily gets lost, downwards towards some intimidating Center; nocturnal, the space for our worst dreams but also the arena of our greatest triumphs and discoveries, including ...our identity and the meaning of our life (Gerald 26).

According to Sigmund Freud the labyrinth is the archetypal uterine symbolizing simultaneous longing to the maternal origin and fear of regression to the preconscious world of chaos, and historically a journey from darkness, enveloping matriarchal consciousness in the light of knowledge and patriarchal civilization. Gerald Martin's thesis about the labyrinth is highly usable in this regard. According to him there are fields and paths for this labyrinth. Fields include language, culture, memory and text whereas paths comprise of utterances, discourses, images and themes. There are labyrinths or networks fusing and confusing the two (words, lives, books) embracing past, present and future, the collective "we" and "they" and the individual "I", "you" and s/he (*Journeys* 26). For instance a hall of mirrors is a kind of labyrinth in which there are not only unpredictable roots and corridors, but also misleading and illusory ones. One can step through the mirror to a now reflecting world, and that world is an alternative reality. These ideas are not very novel, but being reiterated after Renaissance. The Latin American writers are very familiar with this reiteration since they are very

intimately related with Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, the Spanish classic of all times. In short, the modern labyrinthine concept was parented by the European enlightenment and renaissance, and the most important characteristic of this labyrinth is that each observer experiences it differently.

The origin of the labyrinthine concept was more or less the same, both in Europe and in Latin America. Independent Latin America was the same as Europe in its search for individual and collective identity. Martin observes in this regard, "Latin America's historical experience had been inherently labyrinthine for a century, but without the mental tools to think around its contours and without, as yet, the consolation that Europe was in a similar predicament" (*Journeys* 27). So Latin American writers found it spontaneous to make labyrinth a symbol of Latin American literature.

OUT OF THE LABYRINTH?

Is there a way out of this labyrinth? There must be a way out. Once the way is found, then it is easy for Latin Americans to answer the perennial questions like where they are, who they are, where they have come from, and where they are going to etc. Then they could have escaped from the labyrinth of solitude, have completed the quest for identify, have looked themselves in the mirror, and have seen what was truly there. One of the peculiar problems of a Latin American

is not giving out his identity but searching for the identity. This search is important as the 'waiting' in *Waiting for Godot*. In an average Latin American, two elements are always at war; an original Spaniard and an original Indian. As Gerald Martin puts it,

a Latin American must face the fact that s/he is both part of and the product of many cultures, but at least two: hence the proliferation of concept like biculturalism, trans curation, the neo baroque or Magical Realism, as codes for the social reality and cultural expression of the colonized Mestizo continent-- whose project, nonetheless, in the modern era must surely be that of the truly multicultural and poly lingual space (*Journeys* 28)

This statement gets more meaning when we consider Latin America of the past century. In the beginning of last century, the Latin American social sphere was extra ordinarily complicated -- twenty separate nation states unified and divided by history and geography by the interwoven concepts of race, nation, class, gender and culture.

Modern critics use the terms labyrinth or labyrinths indiscriminately: the first stands for dissolving difference and the latter for multiplying differences. This term is tri-dimensional. In the

Borgesian concept, it is the image of life – the human condition, the eternal perplexity, condemned to journey perpetually through a time and space odyssey towards death without knowing why. In Pazian vision, it is history --the history of each individual and each republic and the relation among the republics and to the world outside. It tries to interpret the quest, identity and meaning of life. The rise of the novel can be perceived as another form of labyrinthine perception. It can be called the eternal quest for meaning and identity.

The Latin American labyrinth is made out of different republic's specific origins, conditions, compositions and history. It is vast and multiple. And static in the past, mobile in the present and in the imagined future, of course in the human mind and memory. Gerald Martin says that historic individuals, fictional characters, authors and readers all confronted by these paths and alternatives either in reality or in their imagination (*Journeys* 30). Most of the Latin American writers are socially and politically committed, and some times their heroes commit some errors and those errors can be treated as an attempt to go out of this cultural labyrinth. So the myth developed by Latin American writers is itself a grand narrative, which collectively interprets Latin American history and politics. The individual/ collective journey through the labyrinth of life. "Thus the life of a writer or a fictional character, especially as in this case the

Continent itself as a date of birth and a pre-history, as do each of their republics some three hundred years later". (Gerald *Journeys* 31). In short, every fiction or fictional construct in itself is a journey through and out of the labyrinth .

This is the reason why the quest for identity has become the central problem of the Latin American culture. It is the material framework for its cultural horizon and historical perception. Anthropologists and other cultural workers had explored literature by using this eye and they explored three parameters, development, nationality and identity to delve into the labyrinth. Though some social realists failed to understand the labyrinthine complexity of language, myth, urban consciousness or modernity, the novelists of 1960s completed the process of self discovery by powerfully trying to march out of this cultural labyrinth. Borges had frankly proclaimed that all reality, all experience was labyrinthine, and his leading contemporaries agreed (as quoted by Martin *Journeys* 31)

A grand historical narrative is being felt if one travels through the Latin American novel history. The concept of labyrinth or labyrinthine was created from this historical reality. Their myth is drawn from the whole history of the Latin America but only began to become thinkable by the Latin American fiction writers from 1920s, for a number of reasons. Latin America's cultural transformations took place at the conjectural moment of modernity.

Gerald Martin calls this the 'Joycean' or 'Ulysean moment' (*Journeys* 08). This happened because of many political reasons like the rise of workers movements world wide, the increased mobility of the easily alienated intellectual strata, the beginnings of decolonization, the emergence of Third World etc. This myth making has a romantic sensibility and sensuousness. Its focus is surrealistic and oriented towards an instinctive quality of romanticism' i.e. rebellion. This conspicuous myth is frank about "the discovery and conquest, endlessly reproduced and repeated and of desperate struggles, usually fruitless, to resist, rebel and liberate, to overcome solitude and attain some kind of collective unity and identity" (Martin 09). We can see here the internalization of people's dreams, utopias, and sometimes triumph over nature and colonizers through "collective unconscious" (see Carl Jung), folk memory etc. synthesizing past, present, and future.

As Gerald Martin points out, the Latin American myth is not a separate entity. Actually it is an extension of the grand narrative of the western history, the road to freedom, and the progress and development through self realization. Jorge Luis Borges too has acknowledged this fact. "...the generation of men, throughout recorded time, have always told and retold two stories-- that of a lost ship which searches the Mediterranean seas for a dearly loved island, and that of a god who is crucified on Golgotha" (*Doctor*

Brodies Report 19). Throughout the world, this same pattern works. The oppressed people had sailed the dangerous seas of freedom, established small democratic and god fearing communities, and were afraid of wild animals. Each community pampered a faith that was more or less picturized the marginalized as barbarians, cannibals etc. Here in this Latin American side of the world, the Indians were picturized as barbarians or semi- human beings. We can see here the repeated unfurling of the great myth of progress, the endless frontier, the one identity, the permanent march of capitalism, knowledge and freedom etc.

When the Spanish/ Portuguese conquistadors landed on the shores of the Caribbean region, definitely they came across not just the nomadic Indian tribes but a complex tapestry of civilization and smaller cultural clusters. The Spanish could neither move, ignore or liquidate those indigenous cultural outfits. Then there was a compulsory compromise between the outsiders and the insiders. The result was the emergence of a composite and complex culture. Even after Independence, in South America there had been a plurality of countries which have failed to become one entity. The existence of this complex culture is a stumbling block for progress. Progress was there but usually for brief periods, “erratically, sporadically, spasmodically” (Martin 10). Most often those attempts for progress were not a collective enterprise but by the effort of a single

individual, often of tyrants. This happened only because of some charismatic leaders.

The Latin American myth making and its roots can be perceived from different angles. Gerald Martin has the opinion that it can be read as progressive and conservative, male and female (*Journeys* 10). It is neither personal nor individual but a collective ideological response towards the prevailing realities. Two concepts are very common here. Europe is treated as father with all masculine and paternal specifications like an outsider, cold, rationalistic and covetous, motivated by theories (not experience), lust, power etc. At the same time the mother America remained aboriginal, virgin, fertile, creative and productive. As everywhere happened, the aggressor has a patriarchal air. This gave birth to the Mestizo cultural hero. Even today the average Latin American looks at this duality, when he considers his history of past. There is not an identity but a duality, a dichotomy: Indian/Spaniard, female/male, America/Europe, country/city, matter/spirit, barbarism/civilization, nature/culture, speech/writing etc. Here emerges the fundamental questions about the origin of Latin America. When or what Latin? Even the name is foreign. Not indigenous. The most important confrontation here is the 'known' world of Europe and a recently "discovered" world, America. The Spanish nomenclatured the South

Americans barbarous long before they named themselves cultured and refined.

As I already propounded, this Latin American dualism can be interpreted by borrowing some of the important reading strategies of the twentieth century Europe. Here the Latin American expert confronts with another problem, which is very common with all post colonial societies. They have to depend on European theories, and those theories were Euro centric and were formulated when those countries were voyaging with their colonial agenda. Freudian psycho analysis sheds light to the sexual oppression and the resultant Complex. The Indian Mother was initially rebuked and faced violent form of suppression by their European fathers. This father's (European) violation towards the mother (America) still incessantly continues and it prefigures in metaphorical form the structure and Oedipal processes of the patriarchal bourgeoisie family with its violent confrontation between male and female, word and flesh , law and fantasy, violence and rebellion. Thus Freudian interpretation is a powerful apparatus to explore the labyrinthine complex of the origin and development of the Latin American myth. Though it is oriented towards male/female dichotomy, it treats other areas of human endeavors too.

Everybody knows that Marxism is founded not up on the synthesis of societal factors, but up on class struggles and conflicts.

They are interested to study the interrelations between value, and exchange value, country and city, manual and mental labour. This approach provides ample metaphors for the antagonism between America and Europe which is rampant within each Mestizo, and within the culture as a whole. Gerald Martin comments in this regard: Like the Freudian perspective [Marxism] can serve to liberate Latin Americans from any sort of inferiority complex by inverting the terms of civilization -- barbarism, polarity and attributing barbarism of the imperialist camp (*Journeys* 12) The Swiss anthropologist Claude Levi Strauss gave us some new dimensions to consider the issue. He distinguished between nature and culture as a potential reversal of the hegemonic interpretation of the barbarism versus civilization opposition. The female-male polarity is identified with the nature- culture distinction in many cultures not necessarily South American. This phenomenon is more clear in the Western cultural milieu at the advent of romanticism. Some anthropologists believed that "savage thought" is more inherently civilized than western rationalism and for them Shakespeare's Caliban stands for this alienated world.

As many thinkers noted down, these potential dualism journeyed throughout the Latin American culture and history along the "forking paths of race, nation, class, and gender, taking up ever new forms and combinations, slipping, superimposing, eliding,

metamorphosing, always re-emerging over time in new and unexpected guise” (Martin 13). The Mestizo community was forced to abandon its past and began to dialectically negate the historical mission of the crusaders, explorers, conquistadors, and took the road in search of its own cultural identity, national expression, and continental liberation. They were ready to imitate European heroes like Ulysses, Theseus, Prometheus, Dante, Icarus etc. along with their own Quetzalcoatl. This endless journey through the labyrinth has woven the myth of Latin America and which synthesized with Europe and very difficult to separate. Gabriel Garcia Marquez was indebted to James Joyce on many grounds. In an interview with Peter H Stone, he made it clear. From James Joyce “I did learn something that was to be very useful to me in my future writing—the technique of the interior monologue”(Gabriel Garcia Marquez 19). The labyrinthine concept reached Latin America mainly via James Joyce.

It has been suggested that the greatest Latin American novels are not speculation or experimentation but dedicated explorations of the Latin American reality. Though Christopher Columbus “discovered” America in 1492, many native Americans do not acknowledge it. They prefer to call it conquest rather than discovery. Unlike the past, the history text books of today’s Latin America start not with 1492 but with the story of aboriginal cultures, that was there long before of the European invasion and colonization. “Our

fifth grade social studies textbooks devoted a lot of praise to the abominable United Fruit Company, and South American generals were supposed to be jokes, brutal windbags in gold-embroidered tunics" (Stein Mayer 28). It is not to say that every body is like that. Some still call it pre history or a prelude to welcome the European textuality. Unlike other ex colonies Latin America enjoyed independent republic hood. Some cynics call this is only a shift of masters: first Europe, now United States of America.

The cultural problem faced by Latin America was pendular and persistent. It started at the moment of conquest and "specifically when first rape of an Indian woman by a European took place and the first Mestizo was born, a matter of months after Columbus first land fall" (Martin 14). That child was the prototype, that carried the conflict within itself-- the conflict of conquest or resistance or of both. This forking path is the historical labyrinth out of which no Latin American can either come out or bury inside. Martin says that this disunity is the factor which helps to integrate the separate republic in to, the over arching concept of Latin America "... twenty odd different nationalities united by geography and history, by the imposition of the two dominant Iberian languages, their culture and catholic religion on every other ethnic and social group existing in the continent before or since" (Martin 15).

The conquest has created a new race of people not by consent but by violation. Here the rapist is from allegedly superior and the victim inferior, and the child, when it knows this sympathizes with the mother and was afraid of the father. Sometimes he admires his father for his admirable masculinity. But Enlightenment has taught them a different story. The church was mute but the secular constitution provided them new space to be filled with. Biology and Ideology were not theirs, but politics was theirs. After hugging enlightenment principles, liberation became a perennial theme, revolution accepted means of bringing about change, and socialism became a standing item on the historical agenda.

The question of illegitimacy rules over the Latin American social sphere right from the advent of Spanish inflow to the virgin soil. The attitude towards women is one of the prime indicators of any society. The Spanish family was headed by a patriarch, who married a 'sinful' female, liable to be led by serpents, responsible for rejection of nature and its gardens. A Spaniard's house was his castle and his wife's prison. This is not the case with a classic Latin American family structure. Then the Indian mother was sexually harassed by a Spanish father, who was not ready to acknowledge his offspring, "the child was therefore the product both of fornication outside of wedlock and of a violation on his mother's legitimate territory" (Martin 16). Catholic church found the situation very ideal

to interpret like this. Father is nonviolent father, mother is virgin and impregnated by holy ghost (typically biblical!). This illegitimacy became the central theme of Latin American culture; illegitimate mother, illegitimate offspring, illegitimate governor, government and regime, illegitimate geography etc.

As usual, during the colonial regime, political, economic, cultural, religious, and educational fields were ruthlessly monopolized by the Spanish/Portuguese masters. Racial monopoly was very conspicuous. Though the 19th century has witnessed some twenty national projects of emancipation, they cannot escape from the labyrinth, they made and were in. More over they cannot divorce all the cultural pasts. This led to the two potential intellectual themes of the time -- conflict between civilization and barbarism, and the reiterated theme of solitude. By civilization, the European values of enlightenment, reason and sobriety were indicated whereas barbarism was intended to stand for violence, spontaneity and improvisation of nature. Europeans believed that they were synonymous with civilization whereas America championed barbarism. Octavio Paz's work *The Labyrinth of Solitude* metaphysically explains other implications of the theme of Solitude. The terms like distance, divisions, separateness, incommunicability, loss of memory, collective amnesia (See OHYS for example) etc. are some of the extensions of the theme. It is a sense of isolation and

abandonment of Europeanized psyche. Actually the theme of solitude is closely associated with colonialism, bi-culturalism, civilization and barbarism, and illegitimacy. This historical juncture leads *pensadores* (thinkers) like Bolivar to pamper the quest for identity and struggle for liberation, and he identified that his journey would be through this labyrinth.

SIMON BOLIVAR IN HISTORY

Simon Bolivar was born in Caracas on 24th July 1783. He was the descendant of a family of Basque origin established in Venezuela since the end of the XVI century and which occupied a distinguished social and economic position in the province. His parents were Colonel Juan Vicente Bolívar y Ponte, and Concepción Palacios Blanco. Before he was three years old, Simon lost his father, who passed away in January of 1786.

His education was supervised by his mother, a woman possessing a fine sensibility, but also capable of administering the family's numerous properties. Apart from his paternal heritage, Simón was the owner of a rich "mayorazgo", or inheritance, which was given to him in 1784 by his cousin Juan Felix Jerez y Ariteguieta, a priest.

His Early Years

Early years of Simón's life were spent with some occasional trips to the family estates located in the Aragua Valley. In 1792 Doña Concepción passed away and Simón continued to live with his maternal grandfather who was also his tutor.

On the death of his grandfather, Simón Bolívar's upbringing was left to the care of his uncle, Carlos Palacios. In July of 1795, when he became 12 years old, he suffered a crisis quite common to the adolescence. He fled from his uncle seeking refuge in the home of María Antonia and her husband, for whom he felt greater affection.

Studies in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela

Simón Bolívar spent a few months as a guest of Don Simón Rodríguez (1771-1854), also born in Caracas, who was the headmaster at an elementary school in the city. A relationship of mutual comprehension and sympathy sprung up between the genial pedagogue and social reformer, and the young Simón Bolívar. This relationship lasted for a lifetime. Before and after having been Rodríguez's pupil, Bolívar studied under other teachers in Caracas, and was instructed in writing and arithmetic, history, religion and Latin. He also received classes in History and Literature with Don Andrés Bello (1781-1865) who cultivated his blossoming wealth of

knowledge, which in later years was to make him America's greatest humanist.

At 14, Bolívar entered the Battalion in the White Militia in the Aragua Valley, which had been headed by his father, a Colonel, years before. Within a year he was promoted to Second Lieutenant. Bolívar combined the practical training in military duties with theoretical education on subjects considered at that time to be the basis for a proper formation: mathematics, topographic design, physics, etc., which he had learned at the Academy established in Bolívar's own home by the learned Capuchin Monk Francisco de Andujar.

First Travel to Spain and Marriage

In early 1799, he travelled to Spain. In Madrid, he devoted himself passionately to his studies. He received education in history, classical and modern literature, mathematics, and French. He also learned the arts of fencing and dance, making rapid progress in all these activities. His frequenting of parties and dances polished his spirit, enriched his language, and gave him social poise. In Madrid, he became acquainted with María Teresa Rodríguez del Toro y Alayza, with whom he fell passionately in love. At the end of 1800, his thoughts turned to setting up a family life, and return to Venezuela, particularly to attend to his properties.

In May 26, 1802, he married María Teresa. The couple traveled to Venezuela, but their bliss was short lived, for she passed away in January of 1803. The widowed youth returned to Europe at the end of the same year, passing through Cadiz and Madrid, and established residence in Paris in the spring of 1804.

Journey to Rome

Frequenting theaters, balls, and parties, where he was introduced to the beautiful women who graced Parisian society, he divided his time between useless coquetry and meetings with scholars such as Alejandro Humboldt and Bonpland, and attended conferences and courses where the most recent theories were made known. During this stage in his life, he devoted himself with passionate abandon to his studies, concentrating his time on literary pursuits. He ran across Simón Rodríguez once again, whose wisdom and experience made of him an extraordinary conversationalist and an admirable companion during lectures and travels.

Both of them journeyed to Italy and crossed the Savoy range on foot. While in Rome, in 1805, in Monte Sacro, Bolívar took an oath in the presence of his teacher that he would not allow his arm to rest nor his soul to die until he had realized his dream of liberating the South American world from Spanish dominion.

At the end of 1806, cognizant of the efforts undertaken by Francisco de Miranda in Venezuela, Bolívar comes to a decision that the time has come for him to return to his country. He boards a neutral ship which made a stopover in Charleston, in January of 1807; he travels throughout the United States and returns to Venezuela at the middle of the year. He now lives in the style of an aristocratic youth, supervising the management of his properties and meets regularly with his brother and a group of close acquaintances to discuss not only literary subjects, but the most important topic: to determine the course of events which would, in future years, give Venezuela its independence.

Revolutionary and diplomat

April 19, 1810 marks the date of the Declaration of Independence. The "Junta" formed on that day appoints Bolívar, in the company of Luis López Méndez and Andrés Bello, as the representative to the British Government. Once his mission was completed, Bolívar returns from London at the end of the same year. In Britain he was able to observe the practical functioning of institutions. Once restored to his place in the Caracas Patriotic Society, he becomes one of the ardent spokesmen for Independence which is finally proclaimed by Congress on July 5 of 1811. Bolívar enters military service, and rising to the rank of Colonel he takes a hand in the raid of Valencia under the orders of Miranda in 1811.

In 1812, despite his efforts, he cannot avoid the fall of Puerto Cabello, of which he was commander to royalist forces as a result of treason. In the middle of 1812, General Miranda capitulates before the Spanish leader Domingo de Monteverde. In the La Guaira port, a group of young officers including Bolívar, intent on continuing the struggle against the arrest the unfortunate Miranda. However, all the efforts were futile and Bolívar manages to save himself, thanks to the influence of his friend, Don Francisco Iturbe, who procures him a passport. He then travels to Curazao, later to Cartagena de Indias, where he publishes his "Memorial to the Citizens of Nueva Granada by a Caraqueño", one of the fundamental pieces of his early literature, in which his political beliefs are set forth, such as the principles which were to guide his actions in the future years.

Venezuela towards Independence

His brilliant military campaigns get underway in which victory and defeat alternate until 1818, and from the following years onwards his victories predominated. Heading a small army, he clears the Magdalena River (now part of Colombia) of enemies, and in February of 1813 he takes the Villa de Cúcuta and the liberation of Venezuela begins in May. This series of battles and adroit maneuvers which took the victors within a period of three months from the Táchira boundary to Caracas where he entered on August

6, merit the name “Admirable Campaign” with which it became better known in later years.

After this event, while passing through Mérida, the humble people acclaimed him as the Liberator, a title which the Municipality and people of Caracas conferred on him during a solemn act in October of 1813 and a title with which he was to go down in history.

The period between 1813 and July of 1814, known as the Second Republic, is in reality the Terrible Year of Venezuelan History. The “War to Death” decree creates a furor, and the combats and indecisive battles, won or lost, follow one upon the other with increasing rapidity. Despite important victories, Bolívar as well as General Santiago Mariño (who had previously liberated the eastern areas of the nation) find themselves obliged to give way in the face of a more numerous adversary led by the royalist José Tomás Boves.

Boves emerges victorious from the La Puerta battle (June of 1814), and the patriots are forced to evacuate Caracas. A massive emigration towards the east takes place. There, Bolívar and Mariño see their authority challenged by their own companions at arms. The Liberator finds again fraternal asylum in Nueva Granada, where he intervenes with some measures of success in internal political struggles which enable the city of Bogotá to find a place in the newly

established United Provinces. In May of 1815, in Cartagena, Bolívar resigns his command to avoid the outbreak of civil war.

In Jamaica

Isolated in Jamaica from May to December of 1815, Bolívar waits impatiently for the right moment to intervene in the new fight. Meanwhile, he meditates on the destiny of Latin America and in September he draws up the now famous "Jamaica Letter", in which he reviews with penetrating comprehension and with a prophetic vision, the past, present and future of the Continent. Napoleon's defeat in Europe and the arrival in Venezuela of a powerful Spanish army under the command of General Pablo Morillo gave a new enthusiasm to sympathizers of the royalist cause. Bolívar, after eluding the knife of a hired assassin, moves to Haiti, in search of financial resources to continue the struggle. Haiti's President, Alejandro Petion, lends him aid with admirable magnanimity. An expedition soon leaves Los Cayos headed by Bolívar arriving in 1816 at the island of Margarita. A short while later it leaves for the mainland. Carúpano is taken by assault and there, on June 2nd, Bolívar issues a decree which grants the slaves their liberty. The expedition moved on to the port of Ocumare de la Costa, where Bolívar is accidentally separated from the main body of his army, and is forced to leave the shore once again. Returning to Haiti, he

organizes a second expedition which arrives at the island of Margarita at the end of the year.

The rebirth of the republic

At the beginning of 1817, Bolívar is in Barcelona. His purpose is to take the Guayana Province, and to make it a point from which to work towards the definitive liberation of Venezuela. In July, the capital of that Province, Angostura (today Ciudad Bolívar) is taken by the patriots. The new state is organized. Bolívar creates the State Council, the Government Council, the Superior War Council, the High Court of Justice, the Trade Council, and undertakes the establishment of a newspaper (which was to appear in June of 1818) called the "Correo del Orinoco". Meanwhile, his struggle is not confined to the Spaniards but also to the seeds of anarchy which have been sown in his own field: in October of 1817, after a military trial, General Manuel Piar, one of the Republican leaders is shot in Angostura. During the same period the Liberator decrees the "Law of Distribution of national Property", which was to contribute to the strengthening of patriotic sentiment.

In 1818, the central campaign begins under favorable circumstances, due to the fact that the Liberator manages to surprise the royalist General Morillo in the city of Calabozo, but the Republicans are defeated in the vicinity of Semen. Days afterward,

Bolívar is at the verge of dying in the hands of a royalist platoon. He moves again to Angostura on June 5. At this time, a diplomatic agent and a significant number of European volunteers arrive from the United States.

The Second Venezuelan Congress, convened by Bolívar, was held in Angostura on February 15th of 1819. He gives a speech which is one of the fundamental documents of his political ideology. He presents at the same time a draft of the Constitution.

Attempts for the 'Gran Colombia' (The Great Colombia)

Soon afterward, he launches a campaign which was to liberate Nueva Granada. The army crosses the Andes via the inhospitable Páramo de Pisba, and after bloody battles fought in Gameza and the Pantano de Vargas, in July of 1810, he obtains a decisive victory in the battle of Boyacá on August 7th.

Days later, Bolívar enters Bogotá. Leaving the provinces of Nueva Granada organized under the command of General Francisco de Paula Santander, the Liberator returns to Angostura, where the Congress, with Bolívar's proposal in mind, issues the Fundamental Law of the Colombian Republic on December 1819.

This great state created by the Liberator comprised the republics of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Panamá. In addition

to these events, which had strengthened the Republican cause, the Liberal Revolution broke out in Spain, in January, 1820.

The situation has changed. The Republic's military has obtained advantages in all areas of the nation. Cartagena is besieged, Mérida and Trujillo are liberated. The new Spanish government attempts to reach a peaceful agreement with the patriots. The appointed rulers of both parties sign in Trujillo, on November 1820, both an Armistice Treaty and another for the Regulation of the War. The Liberator and General Morillo confer in Santa Ana. Some months afterwards, the Armistice having expired, the Republican army begins its march towards Caracas.

On June 24 of 1821, on the Carabobo plains, Bolívar fights a battle which finally seals the independence of Venezuela. What remained of the Royalist Army took refuge in Puerto Cabello, which was destined to fall in 1823. The Liberator makes a triumphant entrance to his natal city, in the midst of a joyous reception from his fellow citizens, on June 29, 1821.

The liberation of Ecuador

Bolívar's sights are now turned towards Ecuador, which was still under the dominion of the Spaniards. He travels by the way of Maracaibo to Cúcuta, where Congress is convened, and from here goes on to Bogotá. In 1822 two patriot armies attempt to liberate

Quito: Bolívar leads the northern thrust; General Antonio José de Sucre the southern one, starting from Guayaquil.

The action at Bomboná, initiated by Bolívar in April, breaks the resistance of the “pastusos” or Andean people, while the Pichincha battle, won by Sucre on May 24, finally liberates Ecuador, which integrates with the Great Colombian Republic. In Quito, Bolívar becomes acquainted with Manuela Saenz, the cherished love of his last years. On July 11, Bolívar is in Guayaquil, where General José de San Martín lands on the 25th, coming from Perú.

The two illustrious captains of the South American independence embrace and hold conversations there. What they had discussed in private was later revealed in authentic documents emanating from Bolívar and his General Secretary. General San Martín’s main objective which was to negotiate the future destiny of Guayaquil, could not be realized because the Province had already been incorporated into the Great Colombian Republic.

Peruvian campaign

During the middle of 1823, the political-military situation of Perú had deteriorated considerably. Called on by the Congress and the people of that nation, the Liberator left Guayaquil on August 7 and arrived at Callao in early September. Anarchy was rampant among the patriots. Bolívar, whose charge was limited to military

operations, dedicated himself to reorganize the military, forming a nucleus comprised of battalions which had accompanied him from where he was given notice that the garrison of Callao had taken up the royalist cause. Facing many difficulties, his indomitable spirit manifested itself in his now famous exclamation "Victory".

Lima fell into the hands of the royalists, but before dissolving itself, the Peruvian Congress appoints Bolívar Dictator-as in the ancient Roman Republic-with limitless power so as to save the nation. He accepts the tremendous responsibility serenely. Retiring to Trujillo, he works tirelessly, his genius and faith in the destiny of America working miracles. He begins an offensive and on August 6th of 1824, in Junín, he defeats the Royal Army. The campaign continues and while Bolívar enters Lima and re-establishes the siege of Callao, General Sucre, in Ayacucho, places a definite seal on American liberty on December 9 of 1824.

Great projects of continental unity

Two days earlier, from Lima, Bolívar sent an invitation to the governments of Latin America asking them to send their representative to a Congress that was to be held in Panamá, in June of 1826.

The military phase of Independence had concluded. On February 10, 1825 in the Peruvian Congress in Lima, Bolívar renounces the limitless powers that had been granted to him. Two

days later that body decreed honors and recompense for the Liberator and his Army, but he refused the million pesos which he was offered. He leaves the capital to visit Arequipa, El Cuzco and the provinces of Alto Perú. These provinces are constituted into a nation under Bolivar's protection and is named "Bolívar Republic", the nation we know today as Bolivia. Bolívar draws up a Constitutional Project for the New State in 1826, in which his ideas for the consolidation of order and the independence of the recently emancipated nations are expressed.

The fight against adverse conditions

Meanwhile, in Venezuela, a revolution known as "La Cosiata", headed by General José Antonio Páez, breaks out against the Bogotá government. In April of 1826, Bolívar returns to Caracas and manages to reestablish peace at the beginning of 1827. However, the forces working toward dispersion prevailed over tendencies toward union. Bolívar withdraws politically as well as personally from the Vice President Santander, until a total rupture in their relations occurs. On July 5 of 1827 Bolívar leaves Caracas for the last time, boards a ship in La Guaira, and arrives in Bogotá. On September 10, he takes oath before the Congress as the President of the Republic. The National Convention meeting in Ocaña in 1828 is dissolved without the diverse parties having reached an agreement. Bolívar, acclaimed Dictator, escapes an attempt against his life in

Bogotá in September of the same year; shortly afterward he was forced to launch a campaign against the Peruvian forces which had menaced Ecuador. He remained there throughout the year of 1829. Despite sickness and exhaustion, he struggles to preserve his work. At the beginning of 1830 he returns to Bogotá to install the Constituent Congress. Venezuela again faces agitation and proclaims an Independent State. In Nueva Granada, the opposition grows and becomes stronger.

A perennial lesson

The Liberator, with failing health, renounces the Presidency and embarks on a trip to the coast. The news of the assassination of General Sucre, which he received in Cartagena, affects him deeply. He envisions a trip to Europe, but death takes him by surprise on December 17, 1830 in San Pedro Alejandrino, an estate located on the outskirts of Santa Marta. On December 10, he made his last proclamation to his countrymen, which is considered to be his political testament. He distinguished himself among his contemporaries through the use of his prodigious talent, his intelligence, his will and abnegation, qualities which he placed entirely at the service of a great and noble endeavor: that of liberating and organizing the civil life of many nations which today view him as their founding Father. His mortal remains, brought to Venezuela with great pomp in 1942, now lie in the National Pantheon in Caracas.

**THE GENERAL IN HIS LABYRINTH : THE MYTHOPOEIC
DESCRIPTION OF SIMON BOLIVAR**

Though most of the fictional works of Marquez were much flavored by Colombian culture *The General in His Labyrinth* draws directly from the “tortured and labyrinthine” (Webster 07) history of the region. The novel tells the story of the final journey of General Simon Bolivar, known as "The Liberator" in many South American countries.

Bolivar led the revolution that liberated the northern part of South America from Spanish domination and made all possible efforts to unite the emancipated regions into one country. In those attempts he was opposed by the local aristocracy and oligarchy because the oligarchies in each country had declared war to death against the idea of integrity because it was unfavorable to the local unjustifiable privileges of the great families there. The failure to realize this dream led Bolivar to the irrecoverable disillusionment.

The General in His Labyrinth speaks about the last days of Bolivar, particularly about his last voyage along the Magdalena River from Bogotá, Colombia to the sea. “Disillusioned, consumptive, and reeling from an assassination attempt, he has renounced the presidency of the Republic of Colombia” (Webster 07). His plan seems to be leaving the quagmire of political strife and civil wars

that followed the expulsion of the Spanish from the region, sail to Europe, and live out his days in retirement. However, the siren call of a people in agony, the stubbornness of his own dreams, and the failure of the government that replaces him force his return to the political stage. Bolivar is once again on his path to the realization of his desire for a united South America when illness and death end his return.

Throughout his lifetime, The Liberator was larger than life. “He had fought all his wars in frontlines, without suffering a scratch, and he had moved through enemy fire with such thoughtless serenity that even his officers accepted the easy explanation that he believed himself invulnerable” (GIHL 08). He was known for his passionate nature and titanic temper, as well as for his unparalleled leadership abilities. He dominates the novel much as he would have any gathering he attended.

As he commented explicitly in the after word of *The General in His Labyrinth*, Garcia Marquez picked the voyage down the Magdalena to fictionalize because it was the least known part of a well-documented life. The reasons were no doubt thematic. Bolivar's final voyage has got achieved a symbolic power that the author uses to good effect. The trip becomes one of nostalgia and sentiment for the glories and hopes of his youth. As the general and his large entourage float towards the sea through the steamy jungle,

the general floats in and out of sickness and delirium, and memories become confused with hallucinations. The attitudes and arcane discomforts of illness and old age play a prominent role in these final days. His illness and its effects on his body are described in detail.

Mark Webster finds it very interesting the combination of Garcia Marquez' myth-making talents and Bolivar's own mythical public persona. "The dangers of such an undertaking are multiple, ranging from public censure for daring to write about such a reverent figure to an excess of factual information in the story at the expense of creativity" (07). Bolivar's epic accomplishments and strong character gain immediacy and resonance without diminishing the towering myth of The Liberator.

In *General in His Labyrinth*, the element of the real is front and centre: most of the people in it actually lived; all of the events and most of the incidents actually took place, and the rest have their foundations in voluminous research: if someone eats a guava, then guavas existed, in that place and at that season.

For the fictionalization, Garcia Marquez avoids a chronological narrative of the history of the protagonist. Instead he begins his book at the point at which General Bolivar, an 'old man' at the age of 46, literally shrunk by the unspecified illness that would soon kill him, "The General's hands lacked strength when he grasped the

handles of the tub, but he rose up from the medicinal waters in a dolphin-like rush that was surprising in so wasted a body” (GIHL 03). He was voyaging through the unspecified illness and the resultant disillusionment. He was brooding over the past years he spent with all attractions of life, cajoling with famous beauty queens of the world. But now, contrary to the past, “the General discovered [that] he was losing height as well as weight” (GIHL 04). He was haunted by the feeling that the curtain of his life was going to fall and thought that every minute he was rushing to the catastrophe: the demise of Bolivar as an individual, and the long cherished ambition of unifying all the South America by a single republic --the dream of continental unity. “He had turned forty six this past July, but his bones were twisted by premature old age, and he had deteriorated so much he did not seem capable of lasting until the following July” (GIHL 04). This is the dilemma, General was put inside and he could not escape. Nothing enjoyable, the General can locate there. So he thinks of shifting the place – a fragile way to escape the labyrinth. He calls the land, the land of infidels. “There is nothing here”, said the General. “It is the land of the infidels” (GIHL 05). He recognizes how he has wasted his life and time “.... trying to purge his body and spirit of twenty years of fruitless wars and the disillusionment of power”. (GIHL 05)

The General was under the attack of many diseases like insomnia, vomiting, chronic constipation, amnesia, dementia etc. Most often he was “laying face down on the bed, trying to vomit up his insides” (GIHL 09). The General was disillusioned because nobody there acknowledged his merit and contribution. Instead they were hostile towards him. They wanted everything General’s to be swept away and hence bury in oblivion. Manuela reported him that his political enemies were very active. Those political enemies were called up by Bolivar, the demagogue party. This ‘party’ was inciting people against him. “Students from the Academy of San Bartolome had assaulted and seized the offices of the Supreme court in order to force a public trial of the General, and they had slashed with bayonets and then hurled down from the balcony his life size portrait painted on oils by a veteran of liberating army” (GIHL 13). This forced the General to aside to Field Marshal Sucre. “In short, the General concluded, “ everything we created with our hands is being trampled on by others”. (GIL 18). Field Marshal Sucre replied : “it seems we planted the ideal of independence so deep that now these countries are trying to win their independence from each other” (GIHL 18).

He is rejected as president of the new government he himself has helped to create. Cold-shouldered by the elite, jeered by the rabble, he leaves the Colombian city of Bogota for a meandering

journey by barge down the Magdalena River with the stated intention of sailing to Europe. The General was responsible for the emancipation of the Latin American nations from the ruthless manacles of Spanish colonial regime. During those march of wars and struggles, the General had sacrificed them all. "He had wrested from Spanish domination an empire five times more vast than all of Europe, he had led twenty years of wars to keep it free and united, and he had governed it with a firm hand until the week before, but when it was time to leave he did not even take away with him the consolation that anyone believed in his departure" (GIHL 37). This is the sad plight of the General. Thus a dream was shattered. This is the major project, whose project officer witnesses its collapse. Representatives of the government, the diplomatic corps, and the armed forces were present at his departure. But there was a perfect confusion about the genuineness of those people who congregated. "No one was certain...who was there for the sake of friendship, who in order to protect him, and who to be sure that in fact he was leaving" (GIHL 36).

Sometimes the General was insulted physically. Once he was nicknamed as "Skinny Shanks", the name of a mad man famous for his theatrical uniforms. He was thrown cow shits sometimes. "He did not have time to dodge the cow manure that was hurled at him

from a stable, smashed into the middle of his chest, and spattered his face" (GIHL 27).

Actually the General wanted to nominate Field Marshal Sucre as his successor, and himself as Generalissimo. But that was too declined, both by Field Marshal and by the Republic. Field Marshal said that he would never govern a nation whose structure and future direction were growing more hazardous (GIHL 19). In his opinion the first step toward correction was to distance the military from power and which was the most unwelcoming suggestion for the General.

The depth of hostility of the Colombians against Bolivar became very clear when Don Joaquin Mosquera had been elected President of the Republic by unanimous votes. The General was surprised at the news that he had bagged not even a single vote. His deputies did not name him "so he would not appear to be the loser in a bitter contest" (GIHL 29). The loss of prestige really astonished the General. No body cares him now. More over he was vigilantly watched over. "The government had posted hidden guards even at the least dangerous locations, and this prevented a confrontation with the choleric gangs of hoodlums who had shot him in effigy ..." (GIHL 41)

In his "permanent entourage" (GIHL 42), Bolivar was escorted only by six men, Jose Palacios, his oldest servant, General Jose

Maria Carreno, Colonel Bedford Hinton Wilson, his Irish aid-de-camp, Fernando, his nephew, aid-de-camp and clerk, Captain Andres Ibarra, his kinsman and aid-de-camp and colonel Jose de la Cruz Paredes. Though the general air of the fiction here is serious, Marquez provides some jovial incidents. For example, when the General was asked some alms by a novice after the song, the former replied; "I'm the one who needs charity my girl" (GIHL 44). Another incident is the introduction of Indian with some superhuman medical capacities. This Indian "could cure a sick man, regardless of distance, and sight unseen, just by smelling a shirt he had sweated in to" (GIL 45). The General forbade all dealings with this "back water spiritualist" (GIL 45), though he has no faith in doctors "whom he called traffickers in other people's pain" (GIHL 45).

The disillusionment developed a sort of inferiority complex and self humiliation in the General. He was already caught up with the feeling of solitariness just like other Marquezian heroes. While he was conversing with German with rooster claws he bluntly added that it was better to use him than the rooster. "Take me instead", the General said to him. "I assure you you'll earn more money showing me in a cage as the biggest damn fool in history" (GIHL 95). The same feeling compelled him to comment the following lines, though he was sure he was the man who gave the people what now

they have--independence. "Now we are the widows... We are the orphans, the wounded, the pariahs of independence" (GIHL 98).

While anchoring in Mompox he visited Lorenzo Carcamo. Carcamo too was tired of illness. He helped the General too much both in war and peace. Now he has more or less the same plight of the General. Marquez comments: "Together they lamented their misfortunes, mourned the frivolity of nations and the ingratitude of victory, and ranted against Santander who was always an obligatory topic for them" (GIHL 17). Loss of power is reiteratingly distorted the uprightness of Simon Bolivar. On many occasions, while he was conversing with his friends he made utterances like this;

During the war to the Death I myself gave the order to execute eight hundred Spanish prisoners in a single day, including the patients in the hospital at La Guyara. Today, under the same circumstances, my voice would not tremble if I have the order again ... (GIHL 123).

This type of an experience compelled the General even to renounce his dream -- the Latin American Unity. The General opened his mouth to General Carmona. "What vile trash," he said. "while I waste my time preaching union, these half baked imbeciles accuse me of conspiracy." (GIHL 143,144)

He never makes it. Thwarted by the oppressive and calamitous weather, by the machinations of his enemies - in particular his fellow revolutionary and archival, Francisco de Paula Santander - by the political ambitions of his friends, by his illness and above all by his own reluctance to leave the scene of his former glories, he wanders from city to city, house to house, refuge to refuge, dragging his increasingly baffled and restless entourage in his wake.

It was General Santander's political somersaults that inflicted pain on Bolivar very much. He was his one time associate, now his political arch rival. It was Santander who had spread the rumor that the General's mysterious and publicized illness and the tiresome show he made of leaving were mere political ruses to make people beg him to stay. Santander was appointed President of Colombia by the General during the cruel campaigns for the liberation of Quito and Peru, and the founding of Bolivia. Santander was an effective and brave soldier according to the General. He was very fond of cruelty, and his academic training was excellent. "He was without a doubt the second man in the movement for independence and the first in the legal codification of the Republic, on which he imprinted for ever the stamp of his formalist, conservative spirit" (GIHL 52).

On many occasions long before his final resignation, Bolivar tried to install Santander in the seat of President of Colombia. The General was confident with Santander at that time. "I am leaving

you here, my other self, and perhaps my better self" (GIHL 52). All this confidence and enthusiasm forced the General to distinguish Santander with the title "The Man of Law". (GIHL 53). But the same Santander turned against the General and plotted many assassination attempts of the General. Marquez gives many samples of those assassination attempts in the novel. One is on September 25, 1828. "..... at the stroke of midnight, twelve civilians and twenty six soldiers forced the great door of Government House in Santa Fe de Bogota, cut the throats of two of the President's blood hounds, wounded several sentries, slashed the arm of Captain Andrez Ibarra, shot to death the Scotsman Colonel William Fergusson, a member of the British Legion and an aide-de -camp to the President..." (GIHL 53). The rebels who waged war against Bolivar shouted the slogans "Long live liberty, "and 'Death to the tyrant'. They alleged that the General wanted to be a tyrant just like what Brutus labeled Caesar a tyrant in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. The enemies of Bolivar believed that he had tried to belittle Santander and had tried to thwart Santanderist victory at the Ocana Convention. More over they were provoked by the decision of the General to abolish the post of vice President, which "Santander occupied for seven years" (GIHL 53).

Santander's involvement in the assassination attempts was proven before a tribunal, headed by General Rafael Urdaneta. And the tribunal condemned him to death. But the helping hands of the

General protected him and his punishment was commuted to exile into Paris (GIHL 56). Jose Palacios reported that three unnatural dreams his master had about Santander. Once the General dreamt that Santander was “holding an open book on his round belly, but instead of reading he tore out the pages and ate them one by one” (GIHL 57) as a goat did. Another dream was a Santander covered with cockroaches. And the third one was funny and macabre. While the General and Santander were having their lunch the later “plucked out his own eye balls because they interfered with his eating and placed them on the table” (GIHL 56). Jose Palacio’s statement proves that the mental as well as the physical distance between the General and Santander is very far and no body can bridge the gap. “There is a whole ocean between him and us” (GIHL 56).

The grudge between the General and Santander was not merely personal or founded up on power politics. The most important concern of the General was the unification of Latin America into a single nation. Santander has no opinion about it. So we can see ideologically also, they were ‘oceans’ apart. Santander has never assimilated the principle of Latin American Unity. “The real reason was that Santander could never assimilate the idea that this continent should be a single nation.... The unity of America was too much for him” (GIHL 117). In some places he is treated with

scorn, in others with veneration; he endures endless celebrations in his honor, pleas for his intercession, fiestas and official receptions, punctuated by the brutal interventions of nature -floods, heat waves, epidemics - and by fresh episodes in the decay of his own body. Always he is dogged by a question he refuses to answer: will he recapture the presidency in order to suppress the anarchy and civil war that are threatening to tear the continent apart? In other words, is he willing to purchase unity at the expense of a rudimentary democracy, and at the price of a dictatorship headed by himself?

Both Marquez and Simon Bolivar pamper the thought of Latin American unification –“the golden dream of continental unity” (GIHL 17). Marquez once said it was “the only cause I would die for” (See the Nobel lecture of Gabriel Garcia Marquez entitled *The Solitude of Latin America*).This principle, definitely he has drawn from Simon Bolivar. They share many qualities together: their views on politics, federalism, art, culture, labyrinth etc. Like Marquez, Bolivar too was ready to die for liberty and the unification of the South American continent. In order to make a unified Latin America, he had liberated eighteen provinces from Spanish domination. “His ultimate hope was to extend the war in to the South in order to realize the fantastic dream of creating the largest country in the world: one nation, free and unified, from Mexico to Cape Horn”. (GIHL 48). He dreamt of a nation which was free and unified. That is why he was capable of

shouting the slogan "Liberty or Death". (GIHL 49). As a man educated in Europe, he had his own developed idea of Federalism and Democracy. From Paris he learned more about the ideal of liberty. He was well versed in the ancient Greek concept of republicanism. So his ideal was forming a federal democratic republic. On 8, February 1826, he liberated Peru. "That day confirmed the independence of the huge continent which he proposed to turn, according to his own words, into the most immense, or most extra ordinary, or most invincible league of nations the world had ever seen" (GIHL 74). He championed the cause of unity whenever he got a chance. In the Jamaica Letter, he accuses the Latin Americans for their disunity. "It is not the Spaniards but our own lack of unity that has brought us again to slavery...We are the human race in miniature" (See Bolivar's *Jamaica Letter*).

Simon Bolivar ardently believed that the only way of unarming the enemies of Latin America was their unity at any cost. He was never tired of repeating this even in his final voyage of disillusionment. "Our enemies will have all the advantages until we unify the government of America" (GIHL 97). His aim was not winning the war. According to him the war against the aggressors will be meaningful only when the victory is supplemented with unity. In order to attain this elite vision, sacrifice is the most important

ingredient. "The great sacrifices must come afterwards, to make a single nation out of all these countries". (GIHL 99). The General posed himself as the model for this sacrifice. One of the reasons for the grudge between the General and his one time close associate Santander was the latter's non assimilation of the idea that the Latin American continent should be a single nation. All the people were not ready to accept and follow the proposal of Bolivar of unifying the whole America. Some attacked him physically and others opposed the idea. So Bolivar lost all patience and shouted once. "While I waste my time preaching union, these half baked imbeciles accuse me of conspiracy" (GIHL 144). Possibly he is waiting for the right moment to make a comeback; but this moment never arrives. The headlong race between his misfortunes and his dreams is won by the misfortunes, and the monster at the center of his "labyrinth" gets him at the end.

Simon Bolivar's political ideas are drawn out of his wealth of knowledge in History. In his younger days he devoted his time for studying and analyzing history. Though educated in Europe, his mind was not European. In his famous conversation with the French, he very bluntly opened his heart and the whole audience was thunderstruck by the verbal downpour of the General. The French man just asked the General's opinion about which form of government was suitable for the new republics. He answered that he

liked the example of Bonaparte and added, "Europeans believe that only what Europe invents is good for the entire universe, and anything else is detestable" (GIHL 122). The French man misunderstood Bolivar and accused him of a monarchist. Bolivar was against Federalism as advocated by Benjamin Constant. Benjamin Constant was least consistent according to Bolivar. This Constant was called 'pastry chief' by Bolivar. "... who was against the Revolution, and then for Revolution, who fought against Napoleon, and then was one of his courtiers, who often goes to bed republican and wakes up monarchist"(GIHL 123).

Simon Bolivar indirectly wanted to say that many European thinkers are one sided and they criticize others for the same heinous crime they committed and continued. While they were shedding blood, they would speak against it. While they were the least federal or democratic, they will shout for those qualities. He added; "... Europeans would not have the moral authority to reproach me, for if any history is drowned in blood , indignity, and injustice, it is the history of Europe" (GIHL 124). He was dead frank in analyzing the whole European history. The French man was shocked by the wealth of knowledge, the power of analysis, the flow of vocabulary etc. The General began to bring out the hideous slaughters committed by Europeans with their damned accuracy.

On Saint Bartholomew's night the number of slain reached more than two thousand in ten hours. During the splendor of the Renaissance twelve thousand mercenaries in the pay of imperial armies sacked and devastated Rome and cut the throats of eight thousand of its inhabitants. And the apotheosis: Ivan iv, Czar of all the Russians, who deserved the name The Terrible, exterminated the entire population of the cities between Moscow and Novgorod, and in Novgorod, in a single assault, massacred all twenty thousand inhabitants on the simple suspicion of a conspiracy against him. (GIHL 124).

His conclusion was more powerful and brought all his colonial experiences together. All his matured thoughts really pained the French. "So stop doing us favor of telling us what we should do", he concluded. "Don't attempt to teach us how we should be, don't attempt to make us just like you, don't try to have us do well in twenty years what you have done so badly in two thousand" (GIHL124).

Just like other fictions of Marquez, the structure of *General in His Labyrinth* too is labyrinthine, turning the narrative back on itself, twisting and confusing the thread of time until not only the general but the reader cannot tell exactly where or when he is.

Woven into the present, as memory, reveries, dream or feverish hallucination, are many scenes from the general's earlier life: near catastrophes in war, splendid triumphs, superhuman feats of endurance, nights of orgiastic celebration, portentous turns of fate and romantic encounters with beautiful women, of which there seem to have been a large number.

The General had deep rooted and intimate relationship with many women. The most dearly of the General was Manuela Saenz, the bold Quietana. They have a history of eight years ardent love. She reads books to the General. Bolivar "... left in her care some articles whose only value was that they had belonged to him, as well as some of his most prized books and two chests containing his personal archives". (GIHL 07). He met her on his final voyage at Cuatro Esquinas last and after that they did not see each other.

The General created by Marquez is always running after women. The history books about Bolivar, that I searched for this project, kept mum about that aspect. But Marquez, with his particular style makes comments that it was an acknowledged fact that the General had sexual connection with many women. This weakness of the General was favorably exploited by Santander in his campaign against Bolivar. His libertine nights were advertised in Santanderist press for their political gains. The same technique had been taught to Santander by Bolivar himself, while they were

campaigning against the Spanish leaders. Once Santander called Bolivar, "a good teacher" (GIHL 114) in this regard. Marquez's Bolivar spent many nights and many beds with women with different names, colours, and ethnic origins. "Even before the final victory it was said that at least three battles in the wars for independence had been lost only because he was not where he was supposed to be, but in some women's bed instead" (GIHL 113). While he was in Mompox he was frequented by a caravan of women. "They rode side saddle, carried parasols of printed satin, and wore dresses of exquisite silk the likes of which had never been seen in the city". (GIHL 113). All these illegal traffickings were given prominence in the fiction. But unlike Jose Arcadio Buendia, the General is least fecund "The General had fathered no children during his countless nights of love (although he said he has proofs he was not sterile),and on the death of his brother he had taken charge of Fernando" (GIHL 58).

There is the deeply suppressed image of his young wife, dead after eight months of marriage; there is his devoted, cigar-smoking Amazonian mistress, Manuela Saenz, who once saved him from an assassination attempt. Bolivar is not only a prime exponent of the well-known Latin American machismo but a true child of the Romantic age. His political imagination was formed by the French Revolution; his heroes were Napoleon and Rousseau. Like Byron, he was a romantic ironist, a skeptic in religion, a flouter of social norms,

a philanderer - a man capable of great self-sacrifice in the pursuit of large and glorious goals (here the liberation and the unification of the whole Latin America) but otherwise a worshipper at the altar of his own ego. He has approached each new woman as a challenge; "once satisfied, he [would] . . . send them extravagant gifts to protect himself from oblivion, but, with an emotion that resembled vanity more than love, he would not commit the least part of his life to them" (GIHL 132).

On the subject of politics, Mr. Garcia Marquez's Bolivar is little short of prophetic. Just before his death, he proclaims that South America is ungovernable, the man who serves a revolution plows the sea, this nation will fall inevitably into the hands of the unruly mob and then will pass into the hands of almost indistinguishable petty tyrants. He foresees the perils of debt: He warned Santander that whatever good they had done for the nation would be worthless if they took on debt because they would go on paying interest till the end of time. Then it was clear: debt would destroy them in the end. He has something to say, as well, about the role of the United States in Latin American affairs: inviting the United States to the Congress of Panama is like inviting the cat to the mice's fiesta. He warned his colleagues not to go to the United States. Because it is omnipotent and terrible, and its tale of liberty will end in a plague of miseries for them all. As Carlos Fuentes has remarked, the patterns of Latin

American politics, and of United States intervention in them, have not changed much in 160 years.

In addition to being a fascinating literary tour de force and a moving tribute to an extraordinary man, *The General in His Labyrinth* is a sad commentary on the ruthlessness of the political process. Bolivar changed history, but not as much as he would have liked. There are statues of "The Liberator" all over Latin America, but in his own eyes he died defeated. As Michael Bell has pointed out, behind the popular impact of its "magical realism" lies Marquez' abiding meditation on the nature of fictional and historical truth (123).

We can call *The General in His Labyrinth* a novel, as Marquez himself does, based on material drawn from history, and it works beautifully as a history text book. As Otto Stein Mayer aptly argued, history here does not happen in a dignified orderly way: rain drowns out the parade, stray dogs leap aboard the General's barge, presidents escape assassination because they are in bed with a mistress. (*Marquez* 13)

Jim Mc Curry believes that the success of this Marquezian narrative lies in the balancing act between inner and outer, fiction and history, past and present, reflection and action, and the centripetal quietness.

The book is the labyrinth, the sentences are its passages, and in our slow progress, it is as if we had become shades, allowed by the author's guidance and intervention to dog Bolivar's last steps, to watch over his shoulder and hear his dying thoughts.

Chapter 4
IN EVIL HOUR
or Who is the Proprietor of this Cemetery

Government and Politics in Colombia

Garcia Marquez has written *In Evil Hour* to 'celebrate' the violence stricken Colombian social and political life. There is no clear indication that Marquez is commenting on Colombia. But even the casual reader is able to recognize the cemented affinity between the unnamed town *In Evil Hour* and that of Colombia. It will be useful for best understanding of the fictional milieu of the novel once we get an overview of Colombian socio political life. Colombian political system severally distinguished from that of other Latin American nation states. It has a long history of party politics, comparatively fair and regular elections, and though very rarely it respects political and civil rights. Traditionally two parties came into the helm of power--the Liberals and the Conservatives. They have been competing for power since the mid nineteenth century and have been alternated frequently as the governing party. Colombia's armed forces have seized power on only three occasions ---1830, 1854, and 1953. This number is negligible once we compare Colombia with other Latin American countries. The 1953 coup was sponsored by the military when the Liberals and the Conservatives equally failed to maintain a

minimum of public order, and it was found that some political leaders were instrumental for the regime change by supporting military intervention. Colombia's conservative Roman Catholic Church has been more influential than the military in enthroning and dethroning the presidents. On many occasions, they were contributory for the political socialization of Colombia.

But we cannot neglect the fact that the military began to exercise more power in Colombian political affairs in 1980s and they could influence their active decision making role, owing to the inability of the civilian governments to resolve critical situations, such as the sixty one day terrorist occupation of the Dominican Republic Embassy in 1980. Another reason for this military activism is the growing and more unified guerrilla insurgency and increasing terrorism of drug traffickers (*narcotraficantes*). Nevertheless, Colombia's long tradition of military subordination to civilian authority did not appear to be in jeopardy in late 1980s. When military leaders had attempted to challenge civilian authority on several occasions in the 1970s and 1980s, the incumbent presidents dismissed them.

It is highly agonizing that Colombia's long democratic tradition is jeopardized by its high level of political violence (six inter party wars in the nineteenth century and two in the twentieth century, and individual attacks everyday). An estimated 100,000 Colombians died

in the War of a Thousand Days (1899-1902), and 200,000 died in the more recent period of inter party civil war called *la violencia*, which lasted from 1948 to 1966.

La Violencia

La Violencia is one of the most violent and destructive riots in the country's long history of conflict. The immediate provocation was that Jorge Eliécer Gaitán was assassinated at midday in the heart of Bogota, the capital of Colombia. An angry mob immediately seized and killed the assassin. In the ensuing riot, around two thousand people were killed, and a large portion of downtown Bogotá was destroyed. The whole episode was an expression of mass social frustration and grief by a people who had lost the man who represented their only potential link to the decision-making process. Although law and order was restored in Bogotá, and Ospina remained in power, the tempo of rural violence quickened to a state of undeclared civil war known as *la violencia*. *La violencia* claimed over 200,000 lives during the next eighteen years, with the bloodiest period occurring between 1948 and 1958. *La violencia* spread throughout the country, especially in the Andes and the llanos (plains), sparing only the southernmost portion of Nariño and parts of the Caribbean coastal area. An extremely complex phenomenon, *la violencia* was characterized by both partisan political rivalry and sheer rural banditry. The basic cause of this protracted period of

internal disorder, however, was the refusal of successive governments to accede to the people's demands for socioeconomic change.

As retaliation, the Ospina government became more repressive. Ospina banned all public meetings in March 1949 and fired all Liberal governors in May. In November, Ospina ordered the army to forcibly close Congress. Rural police forces heightened the effort against belligerents and Liberals, and eventually all Liberals, from the ministerial to the local level, resigned their posts in protest.

In the 1949 presidential election, the Liberals refused to field a candidate. As a result, Gómez, the only Conservative candidate, took office in 1950. Gómez, who had opposed the Ospina administration for its initial complicity with the Liberals, was firmly in control of the party. As the leader of the reactionary faction, he preferred authority, hierarchy and order, and was contemptuous of the universal suffrage and majority rule. Gómez offered a program that combined traditional Conservative republicanism with the European corporatism of the time. The neo-fascist constitution drafted under his guidance in 1953 would have enhanced the autonomy of the presidency, expanded the powers of departmental governors, and strengthened the official role of the church in the political system.

Gómez acquired broad powers and curtailed civil liberties in an attempt to confront the mounting violence and the possibility that the Liberals might regain power. The pro-labour laws passed in the 1930s were cancelled by executive decree, independent labour unions were struck down, congressional elections were held without opposition, the press was censored, courts were controlled by the executive, and freedom of worship was challenged as mobs attacked the Protestant chapels. Gómez directed his repression in particular against the Liberal opposition, which he branded as communist. At the height of the violence, the number of deaths reportedly reached 1,000 per month.

Gómez began to lose support because of protracted violence and his attacks on moderate Conservatives and on the military establishment. Because of illness, in November 1951 Gómez allowed his first presidential designate, Roberto Urdaneta Arbeláez, to become acting president until Gómez could reassume the presidency. Although Urdaneta followed Gómez's policies, he refused to dismiss General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, whom Gómez suspected of conspiring against the government. When Gómez tried to return to office in June 1953, a coalition consisting of moderate Conservatives who supported Ospina, the Liberal Party, and the armed forces deposed him and installed a military government. They viewed such action as the only way to end the violence. Rojas Pinilla, who had led the coup

d'état, assumed the presidency. Thus though for a short interval Colombia became calm and returned to normalcy.

According to Colombian Ministry of National Defense statistics, an additional 70,000 people had been killed in other incidence of political violence, mainly by guerrilla insurgencies, by August 1984. Left-wing insurgency and terrorism, right-wing paramilitary activity, and narco terrorism etc. have equal shares to make Colombian soil bloody. When the 1948 Bogotazo (the riot following the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán) was broken out, Colombia lived under a constitutionally authorized state of siege invoked to deal with civil disturbances, insurgency, and terrorism. In mid-1988 everybody believed that the government was losing control over smugglers, guerrillas, death squads, and the commoners. These groups are mainly responsible for the country's rampaging violence. Then the fact became very clear that even if the guerrillas laid down their arms, violence by narcotics traffickers, death squads, and common criminals would continue unabated.

Robert H. Dix believes that Colombia's violent legacy is created out of the elitist nature of the political system. He opines that the members of these traditional elite have competed bitterly, and sometimes violently, for control of the government through the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party, which changed its name to the Social Conservative Party in July 1987. There is an unwritten

communication between them. They united only when the position of the upper class seemed threatened. Colombia's political climate is different from other Latin American countries, comparing the status of its Christian democratic, social democratic, and Marxist parties. These parties are very weak and insignificant in the political scenario of Colombia. Constitutional amendments and the evolution of Colombia's political culture reinforced its highly centralized and elitist governmental system. The elitist management controls over the political system by co-opting representatives of the middle class, labour, and the peasantry.

Writers like Bruce Michael Bagley believes that the guerrilla insurgency was only the most visible "dimension of a far deeper problem confronting the Colombian political system: the progressive erosion of the regime's legitimacy" as a result of its failure "to institutionalize mechanisms of political participation." Bagley also saw the legitimacy problem reflected in rising levels of voter abstention and mass political apathy and cynicism, as well as declining rates of voter identification with either of the traditional parties and the emergence of an urban swing vote. The economic factors were also responsible for spawning political violence.

The Political Parties in Colombia

Right from the formation of Colombia's political system the elitism and dualism of party politics were visibly transparent. Elites

from the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party, which in 1987 rechristened its name as the Social Conservative Party, have dominated the nation's political institutions. The majority of Colombians had little input in the political process and decision making as a result of this elitist orientation. Another important feature of Colombian polity is that the formation of the life-long party loyalties and enmities of most Colombians traditionally begin at an early age. Peasants usually adopted the party affiliations of their master or patron. Being a Liberal or a Conservative was part of one's family heritage and everyday existence. During the period of *la violencia*, party membership was a sufficient reason to kill or be killed. Families, communities, and regions have identified with one or the other party. The Liberal Party traditionally dominated, the main exception being the period of Conservative hegemony from 1886 to 1930. For most of the twentieth century, the Conservative Party has been able to gain power only when the Liberal vote was split.

Nepotism and misappropriation of power are at its worst in Colombia. Any party that won an election rewarded its members by appointing them to public positions or by funding special projects. The party in power controlled the national budget, government jobs, and most of the economy. The party out of power did not necessarily lose support, however, because unemployed members in need of assistance often had nowhere else to go other than to the local party

chief, who was usually a large landowner. The philosophy of Colombia's political parties was founded upon traditional patron-client ties. They were not genuinely mass parties that served to integrate individuals and groups into the politics of the nation. Members of the national elite monopolized all national leadership positions. The Liberals and Conservatives have continued to shape the traditional pyramidal structure of Colombian society as a whole, by thwarting the emergence of modern parties organized around common socioeconomic interests.

These parties have stemmed not from organizational activity and ideological or class differences, but from traditional loyalties and identifications. In the larger cities, the parties were detached from any popular base. As a result, opinion polls indicated that party identification in the larger cities was beginning to diminish in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The two major parties were confederations based on regional party organizations headed by, and dependent on the chief, who acquired their positions through birth or connections with the wealthy and prestigious families that made up the national party leadership. Although the chief retained their positions through personal loyalties, their role diminished somewhat as the country became more urban and literate. Nevertheless, local leaders acted as power brokers by trading votes and electoral support for programmes from the national government. Colombia's political culture has

shown the patronage and brokerage patterns that were dependent on the subordination and loyalty of the lower classes. The elites felt that government leadership should be the prerogative of a paternalistic upper class, whose members made decisions and cared for the nation and its people. Within those elites, loyalties were as much to one's class as to the nation. Acceptance of paternalism by the lower classes, however, eroded further in the 1970s.

Still, ideological differences existed between the Liberal and Conservative parties. The Liberals were oriented towards urban areas, industrialization, and labour; and they were more pro-welfare state and anticlerical, and less private property-oriented than the Conservative Party. The Conservatives concentrated on rural areas and favored the military, large landowners, and the Roman Catholic Church. The Liberals traditionally carried almost all of Colombia's significant cities, although the Conservatives' percentage of the urban vote increased in the 1980s. In general, each party had interests and support among groups and classes associated with the other. The memberships of both parties included merchants, landowners, professionals, peasants, artisans, and workers. Inter party differences were largely personal, political, and pragmatic. For example, Liberal Party membership was more upwardly mobile than that of the urban Conservative members traditionally derived from old families of high social status. Of the two parties, the

Conservatives had a more effective hierarchical structure at the regional and municipal levels.

Minor Political Outfits

Although Colombian politics is predominated by two major parties as mentioned above, some minor parties are there trying to make their presence felt. In Colombia all parties are free to raise funds, field candidates, hold public meetings, have access to the media, and publish their own newspapers. One of the outstanding features of these small parties is that they are generally class oriented and ideological, and they field candidates at all levels and usually are represented in Congress, departmental assemblies, and city councils. As a rule they do not have any share in policy making or stopping violence, though they are included in the populist National Popular Alliance created by Rojas Pinilla in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Generally, those small parties have few members and little impact on the political system.

The Soviet Communist Party of Colombia (PCC) (which works for communist revolution) and the National Opposition Union are the other political outfits working in Colombia. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the guerrilla arm of the PCC, sought to make its presence felt in the political process through a legal political party called the Patriotic Union. On many occasions the kingpins of those

parties were assassinated. Those parties were the prime targets of unidentified "paramilitary" groups. On October 11, 1987 prior to the election of March 1988, one of the top leaders of the party Pardo Leal was assassinated by a major drug trafficker, José Gonzalo Rodríguez Gacha ("the Mexican"). The PCC weekly, *La Voz*, published documents that allegedly revealed ties between Rodríguez and members of the armed forces, and it suggested that the military was linked to Pardo Leal's murder. In an April 1988 report on Colombia, Amnesty International charged the Colombian government and military with carrying out "a deliberate policy of political murder," not only of UP members but of anyone suspected of being a subversive.

Another minor party is the Christian Social Democratic Party (PSDC), founded in May 1959 and composed mainly of students and a few workers. The reformist PSDC identified itself with the Christian democratic movements that had become political forces in other parts of Latin America. In all elections it contested, it failed to attract people.

The Roman Catholic Church and the armed forces have a nexus to monitor and hijack Colombia's political system. Scholars like Jonathan Hartlyn observed that the most powerful interest groups of Colombian polity was a small, informal elite composed of leaders from business, politics, religion, and military. Some have argued that those power brokers effectively usurped power from

Congress and the president by making the decisions--sometimes at informal meetings held in private homes--about what policies or laws should be implemented prior to final action by the legislature.

The Liberals and the Conservatives, the armed forces and the Roman Catholic Church traditionally have co-opted emerging sectors of Colombian society, thereby limiting the development and influence of other potential interest groups and political parties. It is interesting to note that the Roman Catholic Church and the political parties created the two major labour unions at a time when labour movement was beginning to develop strength in 1960s and 1970s. They also established government-sponsored community action programmes when the lower classes were beginning to develop some political awareness. The government was ready to contain increasingly the militant workers, peasants, and the students through co-optation and intimidation. In the 1980s, bribery and assassination of government officials became very conspicuous. The assassination attempts were there against the leaders of the Press to intimidate them. There were some organizations which were sometimes stronger than the State. It demonstrated its financial power when, at a meeting with Colombian government officials in Panama in 1984, its chiefs offered to pay off Colombia's national debt and terminate their involvement in the drug trade. The traffickers demanded in exchange that the Colombian government should

refuse to extradite them to the United States and permit them to invest their profits, deposited in foreign banks, in Colombian enterprises. The government, political elites, and the public categorically rejected this offer.

The justice minister Enrique Parejo's statement in late 1985, speaks about the depth of the matter "There is not a single Colombian institution that has not been affected in some way . . . by the illegal activities of the drug traffic." Colombian officials were compelled to release the drug boss Jorge Luis Ochoa Vásquez from prison twice during the 1986-88 period. The second time Ochoa was arrested, in November 1987, the cartel threatened to "eliminate Colombian political leaders one by one" if he were extradited to the United States under a 1984 request. Thirty-nine days later, he was released from Bogotá's La Picota Prison. In late January 1988, the cartel assassinated Attorney General Mauro, who had begun investigating the Ochoa release, during a visit to Medellín.

The wonderful fact was that the Colombian public was not always critical toward the drug kings. Their stand could be justified by the fact that the drug lords helped them for their livelihood, which the Government neglected for a long time. Their plea for decent life was unheeded. Until the mid-1980s, the influence of Colombia's cocaine billionaires and marijuana millionaires extended from high society in Bogotá to many cities and towns, where they were often

popular figures in certain neighborhoods for providing jobs and financing soccer teams, athletic facilities, public housing projects, and disaster relief efforts. When Lara Bonilla was assassinated in 1984, the public began to doubt the drug mafia. The public fury against the drug lords reflected in March 1988 mayoral elections--in which two strongly anti drug candidates, Pastrana and Juan Gómez Martínez, were elected as mayors of Bogotá and Medellín. Their elections prompted the military, in subsequent weeks, to mount numerous aggressive raids on suspected strongholds of cartel kingpins, including Pablo Escobar Gaviria and Gonzalo Rodríguez.

Post-National Front Political Developments

In August 1978 presidential elections, the Liberal Turbay was elected president. Shortly after taking office, Turbay was faced with the most serious guerrilla threat in recent decades. He strengthened his state of siege and powers by decreeing the harsh National Security Statute, giving the police and military greater authority to deal with the growing domestic social unrest and political violence. The Turbay government used this statute to help minimize the security threats posed by the guerrilla and terrorist groups. The human rights situation deteriorated seriously, however, and armed opposition mounted dramatically. United Nations Commissions criticized the regime many times for the devilish activity of State terrorism.

Betancur assumed office as president after Turbey. The highest domestic priority was to pacify Colombia's four main guerrilla groups. His approach to dealing with the escalating political violence differed profoundly from that pursued by his hard-line predecessor. After his inauguration of administration in August 1982, Betancur called for a democratic opening, an end to Turbay's repressive policies, a truce with the guerrilla groups, and an unconditional general amnesty for the guerrillas. By August 1984, the Betancur government's peace commission had reached short-term accords with most of the major guerrilla groups, with the main exception of the pro-Cuban National Liberation Army. In June 1985, however, the peace process began to unravel when the 19th of April Movement resumed fighting, followed by other groups. Only the FARC agreed to renew its truce, although not all of its guerrilla fronts complied.

Labour Unions and their Unrest

Persistent inflation, charges of government corruption, and high unemployment accounted for the increase in labour militancy in the mid-1970s. Comparing to other Latin American countries like Argentina and Chile, the Colombian labour movement did not have a long history of militant confrontation. But they contributed their share in transforming Colombia in to a 'bloody' nation. The labour unrest was inaugurated in the 1920s, when Colombia experienced sustained, violent labour revolts, including strikes against the United

Fruit Company (See Chapter 1). The Colombian labour movement never has accounted for more than one-third of the organized labour force, which itself represented only about one fifth of the total labour force. In 1988 an estimated 12 percent of Colombia's economically active population was unionized. The labour movement increasingly resorted to strikes and demonstrations in the 1980s, but these generally were resolved by concessions on both sides. The labour unions sometimes had an impact on policy through the use of strike tactics.

The Military and Human rights Violation

Colombia has not had a long history of military coups. Beginning in the 1960s, the armed forces attempted to increase their prestige and self-esteem by improving their competence and professionalism. The nonpartisan professional reputation that the military had begun to build, however, was damaged in the 1980s by accusations of human rights abuses and narcotics-related corruption among officers. By this time the mounting violence reportedly had forced the armed forces to install military governors in certain departments, presumably with the president's concurrence. In an unusually blunt public statement, General Manuel Jaime Guerrero Paz, commander general of the military forces, stated publicly that Colombia should not hold dialogues with the guerrilla groups and drug traffickers because of their lack of sincerity.

Democracy in *In Evil Hour*

Throughout the novel, Garcia Marquez found time to criticize the 'democratic' set up of Colombia. Colombia is one of the earliest democracies of Latin America. She got her liberation from Spain in 19th century. Unlike other Latin American countries, she was ruled by democratic governments many years, excepting two short intervals that saw military administrators. Those short intervals could be excused. But the democratic parties of Colombia contribute their share in making the nation drowning in blood. The widow Asis in the novel is happy because she can exercise her franchise that comes in every five year tenure. "Every day I'm getting better and better so I can vote," (IEH 28 – 29). This remark of the widow Asis shows the in-depth existence of democracy in the nation. Even the mayor, the autocrat, while conversing with Father Angel reminds the latter of the strong founded democracy in the nation. "We're living in a democracy". (IEH 34).

The political climate of Colombia is not always congenial to personal liberty and individual freedom. Though they live in a democracy, the Press witnesses strong censorship. And political parties are creating problems for their narrow minded political manipulation. "We've gone through a difficult political moment, but family morals have been maintained intact" (IEH 39). The politicians exploit and suppress the interest of the people by saying that family

is more important item than all politics. "The only newspaper left in the country are the official ones and they won't enter their establishment as long as I am alive" (IEH 43). This statement of the mayor shows the gravity of the Press censorship in Colombia.

Some times the administrators sidestep the elected body and they behave as autocrats. This happens because of the failure of the civil administration, and the active interference of guerrilla groups. "The deputy used to be named by the town council", Judge Arcadio explained. "Since there is no council now, the government by state of siege authorizes you to name one." (IEH 63).

The mayor is approaching politics quite funny and he is not serious at all about the party political system in Colombia. One of the serious concerns of the mayor is his aching teeth. "My teeth are above party politics" (IEH 70). As a wartime measure (always it is like that) curfew has been established and no political or other forms of protest has been permitted by the police, headed by the mayor. So democratic principles are seriously torpedoed and people lost all chances to interface with the authority.

No one could go out onto the streets after eight O' clock and until five in the morning without a pass signed and stamped by the mayor. The police had orders to call Halt three times at anyone they found on the street and if

they were not obeyed, they had orders to shoot. The mayor would organize patrols of civilians, appointed by him, to collaborate with the police in the nocturnal vigil. (IEH 117).

People are ready to experiment with government change. When a party contests election they promise peace and prosperity to all, but the moment they occupy the chair of power they place all those election promises in the reservoir of oblivion. Same people, same leaders, same policies. This idea is being fruited in Toto Visbal. "The government changed, they promised peace and guarantees; and at first everybody believed them. But the officials are the same once" (IEH 149).

In *In Evil Hour*, Garcia Marques presents a town which was disturbed and affected by lampoons, floods, draughts, violence, fratricides, political murders etc. War and infights are games for the people. It is a matter of game to them! "A group of boys who are playing war threw a mud ball that splattered on the wall a few feet from his newly pressed pants." (IEH 42). The mayor pretends that he wants to transform the town calm and serene. On many instances he tried to convince others that he has a decent job that was to make the town decent. "We have got to make this town a decent sort of mess". (IEH 48). This 'flooded part of town' (IEH 49), does not create anything new instead it distorts the people and the environ. Father

Angel's attempts to pacify the townsfolk failed enormously. Nobody can offer people peace in such a situation, where humanity is facing the spiritual and existential dilemma. Like other Marquezian towns, this town too has a macabre impact. For example the women's words to Father Angel, actually terrorize the people. Those words are heart throbbing and blood chilling. Usually most of the mothers cannot adjust with this sort of a sight.

Stretched out on a mattress was a child of indefinite sex, nothing but bones, covered all over by yellowed skin. Two men and a woman were wailing, sitting by the partition. The priest didn't smell any odour, but he thought that creature should have been giving off an intense stench.

Who is it?" he asked. "My son," the woman answered. And she added, as if excusing herself. "For two years he has been shitting a little blood. (IEH 50).

This indifference to life marks the difference between a Latin American and an outsider. This macabre sight forced Father Angel to make a comment like this. 'No one of the dead people I've seen in my life seemed as dead as that poor boy' (IEH 51).

The funny stories and worries of the people about the lampoons overwhelmingly occupy a remarkable portion of the novel. "It is not the lampoons that won't let people sleep; it is fear of the

lampoons". (IEH 65) The townsfolk were suffering from this mental disease. Those already frustrated minds were further contaminated by the dead bodies of the animals and the flying buzzards on them. "A drowned cow enormous was coming down along the streams of the current, with several buzzards on top of it." (IEH 70). There prevailed a stench everywhere. A rottenness. The appalling stench gave the ordinary folk a chance to develop a negative attitude towards life. A stench of rottenness hung over the town for quite a long time. By the incessant rain and decomposition of the dead bodies, the whole town became haphazardly uncongenial for life. "Even though it rains it stays hot" (IEH 106). As Mr. Benjamin puts, it was a symptom of social decomposition (IEH 108).

Widow Montiel is a prominent character in the novel, and she predicts about the impending danger to the town. She thinks always death and warns the people. "Death!" exclaimed the widow Montiel, seeing doors and windows open and people pour out into the square from every where. "Death has come" (IEH 116). On another occasion she laments: "Death is feeding on this town" (IEH 117). Mr. Benjamin too shared the same predicament. "This house is burning up". (IEH 124)

In the whole town, there is only one soul, who is aware of the unfathomable depth of the tragedy. That is the Widow Montiel. Just like the prophetesses of ancient Greek culture, she prophesies about

the dangerous consequences and resultant disorders of the town. She echoes the scriptures when she utters the statements like this. "It is written" the blind woman said. "Blood will run in the streets and there won't be any human power capable of stopping it." (IEH 148). Nobody believed in the statements made by such an old woman. Characters like the priest pitied on her. The prophetess was very old and pale, and her eyes were almost dead. Some even tried to mock her by echoing her own words. "We'll be bathed in blood". (IEH 148). Mima mocked her once by trying to parrot her.

There is a theory that only two characters are dominating in the novel. They are the unnamed mayor and Father Angel. Father Angel is an active character who interferes with the State always. Just like the mayor is preoccupied with his tooth ache, Father Angel's time was consumed by rats. He wanted to exterminate all the mice, but he fails. Though Trinidad has been assigned for the extermination of mice, the latter's disturbance is never cut short. He is able to spiritually guide the parish community, but quite frequently he communicates with the mayor the State affairs. In Colombia Christian Church is one of the potential institutions that control the socio-political fabric of the nation. It was the Spanish people, who introduced Christianity in Colombia. Now Christian population is not negligible (Catholicism is the accepted faith for

nearly ninety percent of the population) and they have a good say in enthroning or dethroning a regime.

The mayor is always accommodative of the Father in the novel. On many occasions he made it clear that the duties of the Father were confirmed not on the road but inside the Church. "Don't worry, Father, nothing is going to happen to him. Go inside; that is where they need you". (IEH 148). The mayor wanted to communicate in clear terms that he would not entertain the interference of the Father in State affairs.

Father Angel was equipped with a short list which instructs which are the movies/ books good, which are not. When a new book comes before him, he refers to the list he has and passes the judgment. He has a Catholic Censorship list with him. He asked Rebeca Asis, about the name of the picture going to be shown in the local exhibition. Rebeca told him that it was Pirates of Space. "Father Angel looked for it in the alphabetical listing, muttering fragmentary titles while he ran his index finger over the long classified list" (IEH 37). He found it was not permissible and there was no show.

State Violence in Colombia

The situation of human rights and humanitarian law in Colombia have been deteriorating for a long time. Many outstanding international organizations acknowledged this fact in their study

reports and projects. United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR) comments that

the human rights violations are taking place in a context of serious, massive and systematic repetitive practices (...) The breaches of international humanitarian law also constitute a widespread practice occurring on a large scale... (Report of the UN as quoted in 'State Violence' page 15)

The Colombian spectrum of socio-political scenario comprises of political murders, murders of socially/economically marginalized groups, enforced disappearances, forced displacement of population etc. In the recent years, these practices became persistent and systematic; as United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR) said that "torture has become a systematical, recurring practice of terror" [in Colombia] .('State Violence' page 15).

It is highly disgraceful to say that the Colombian government has not initiated any effective measure to ensure the respect for and guarantee human rights to its citizen. It is high time they ended the atrocities. It is both pathetic and amazing to note the fact that today in Colombia "...about 20 people die every day due to the socio-political violence [] and an average of one person a day is a victim of torture" (*State Violence* 16). Those violation of the right to life, torture,

inhuman treatment etc. are neither reported nor investigated impartially or by a transparent authority.

In a Colombian perspective the violence against humanity is 'scientific' and systematic. The continuance and the widespread nature of violence are pinpointed by reviewers always. This continuance of the torture for a long time might have been started since the advent of foreign aggressors like Spanish and Portuguese. It has three distinct periods of operation. The first stage was officially started when the Colonial superpowers landed on the virgin shores of Caribbean. When the Europeans evacuated the place, it has been fallen prey to the local tribes and tribal warlords. Violence incessantly continued. The third stage was inaugurated by modern Governments led by the "democratic" powers.

The whole country of Colombia was affected by that habitual, intentional and systematic violence. Modern technology and its never before facilities were tactfully exploited for the purpose. Colombian rivers are the best travel routes and those facilities too have been exploited for the purpose. As the Report says torture is systematically used throughout the national territory by all of the combatant groups: the military forces and the police, the paramilitary groups, and the guerrilla groups. This crime is most frequently committed by the military and police forces and by the

paramilitary groups who act with their support, tolerance and acquiescence, as well as by the guerrilla groups.

The paramilitary groups of Colombia are mainly responsible for the lion share of atrocities. In the cases where they do not have active role the Government is responsible due to the absence of a decided and clear cut policy. United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR) observed:

For the purposes of this report acts that can be attributed to the latter [paramilitary groups] also constitute human rights violations which, by act or omission, therefore also entail the international responsibility of the State. This consideration is based on the fact that these groups have the support, acquiescence or toleration of State officials and benefit from the lack of an effective response by the State (U N Report paragraph 25).

When we discuss the reasons for this unjustifiable and incessant flow of blood, the Government is at stake. There is no diligent and serious policy to dismantle these groups, who actively contributed their share in red carpeting the sands of Colombian social sphere. As already pinpointed, thorough investigation and

penalization of those criminals are a very rare phenomenon in Colombia.

The wonderful factor every outside agency that looked into this Colombian terror history pointed out was that those tortures were neither isolated nor accidental. The perpetrators have well defined and crystal clear objectives. Those attempts for life and tortures were methodical and well patterned. Those flatulent groups use torture and terrorism for at least three purposes; to obtain information, to persecute political rivalries or to terrorize the civilian population. The statement of the Special Rapporteur agrees with this:

Most of the torture, which is widespread, is said to be used by the security forces, and by paramilitary and other armed groups working in parallel with them, if not as a direct part of their campaigns. Torture may be used to extract information or confessions or to terrorize. It may occur before the victims are killed or are subjected to enforced disappearance. (Human Rights Commission, paragraph 104).

The first one is especially practiced by Public Forces. They wanted to extract information on some underworld guerilla groups. Usually they take some civilians in custody and interrogate them. According to the Forces, they are collaborators of the guerilla groups.

The Forces unleash violence on them and at last in order to have a stop of these tortures they inculcate themselves as members of guerilla groups. *The State Violence* says that the victims are usually peasants who have been submitted to the control of guerrilla groups or they are persons who carry out activities that the Public Forces consider subversive, that is to say, they are union leaders, human rights defenders or persons who are social leaders and community leaders. (19). In order to practice this sort of violence the Public Forces militarized certain zones and named them paradoxically "rehabilitation and consolidation zones" (*The State Violence* 20) and most often it is very difficult to distinguish between the civilian population and the military because the latter "camouflage themselves among the civilian population". (*The State Violence* 20).

Colombia is notorious for its practice of political persecution. When a party comes in to power, the opposition leaders and workers were devilishly hunted down and crushed. The only 'justification' is that they belong to the other party. Their philosophy is very simple; punish the victims for their political or social activity. Widespread use of torture has been used for terrorizing the civilian population, giving them a clear message that they should act like this and should not like that. This is a sought after recurring incident designed by the Paramilitary. As United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR) says

Members of paramilitary groups frequently use torture and, in almost all cases, it preceded extra judicial execution. People who are taken prisoner by paramilitary groups are generally tortured, not during questioning, but for the purpose of punishment, coercion or intimidation. In this way, torture has become a systematic and habitual way of instilling terror. (U N Report paragraph 34)

State Violence in *In Evil Hour*

In Evil Hour takes place in an unnamed town/nation, but the meticulous reader can very easily identify it with Colombia. The town is very close to Macondo the imagined town created by Marquez. The reference to Macondo led many reviewers of the novel to stress that the novel undoubtedly speaks about Colombia and its regression. Many a time the Mayor visited a hotel of the area, where Colonel Aureliano Buendia frequented. "Colonel Aureliano Buendia himself, on his way to Macondo to draw up the terms of surrender in the last civil war , had slept on that balcony one night during a time when there weren't any towns for many leagues around" (IEH 47). On another occasion Macondo was referred to like this:

The hot peppers, the profound silence of the house, and the feeling of uneasiness that filled his heart at that

moment carried him back to his narrow little neophyte's room in the burning noon of Macondo . On a day like that, dusty and hot, he had denied Christian burial to hanged man whom the stiff necked inhabitants of Macondo had refused to bury. (IEH 47).

These two quotes from the text unambiguously argue that the setting is Colombia.

As mentioned elsewhere Colombia has got an impeccable record of state terrorism imposed on its citizens indiscriminately. The international agencies who looked into the matter very frankly expressed their concern over the issue. *In Evil Hour* starts with a murder of a popular pastor by one Cesar Montero, thus becoming an ideal prologue for a novel like this. The state terrorism and the terrorist activities by individual groups and smugglers are very rampant in the novel. As retaliatory response the mayor takes him in custody and physically tortures him.

On the square, Cesar Montero was walking around with his shot gun pointed at the crowd. The mayor recognized him with a little trouble. He took his revolver in his left hand and started forward toward the center of the square. (IEH 09).

Both parties – the State, represented by the mayor and Cesar carry guns, the inevitable thing in Colombia. Cesar Montero was thoroughly searched for any other weapon he was hiding.

The mayor frisked Cesar Montero without making him take off his raincoat. He found four shells in his shirt pocket and in the back pants pocket a switch blade knife with a bone handle.(IEH 10).

One of the dangerous reminiscences of Colombian reality can be seen in the conversation of Doctor Giraldo and the mayor about autopsy.

“Doctor,” the mayor said,” get dressed so you can go perform the autopsy.”

The Doctor looked at him, intrigued. He revealed a long row of solid white teeth.” So we are doing autopsies now,” he said and added: That’s a great progress, obviously.” (IEH 13).

Killing is quite common, but even autopsy is very rare in Colombia. This idea Marquez has when he was penning down the Colombian reality. Father Angel’s words also orate about this blood shedding reality. Everyday the town returns from sleep with some news of public disorder and personal tragedy. According to the priest

people are observing the daily funeral. He further added: “all the fighting for a chance to carry the coffin” (IEH 13). This sort of experience forced the theatre manager to comment like this: “This place is an inferno” (IEH 19). Some ‘measures’ have been taken in the pretext of putting a full stop for the unending violence. The mayor with his aching tooth tries to implement his own autocratic views without any consultation with others about state matters, though every now and then he stresses that he wants to bring democracy and the resultant peace. On many occasions he stressed this fact while he was conversing with other prominent characters in the novel.

And something else, Father,” the mayor said. “Try in any way you can to talk to the tooth puller.” He looked at the curate, who was beginning to go down the stairs, and added as before, smiling; this all contributes to the consolidation of peace. (IEH 35).

In many pages of the novel Garcia Marquez subtly observes that state terrorism of Colombia has crossed all boundaries of decency. Garcia Marquez was very much concerned with this reality though he lives in Mexico City. From *In Evil Hour*:

Last year the police themselves killed a man inside the movies and as soon as they took the body out the show went on," he [*the manager*] exclaimed.

"It is different now," the priest said. "the mayor's a changed man".

"When they hold elections again the killing will come back," the manager replied, exasperated. "Always, ever since the town has been a town, the same thing happens."

"We will see," the priest said. (IEH 18).

The hopelessness and the disillusionment of the people about the regime change are echoed in the novel many a time. Almost all the characters (including the mayor) share the same predicament at least in their private hours. "Besides, we thought that the country is recuperating and that this present calamity might cause trouble" (IEH 39). There are some fine observations about the politics of Colombia by the famous barber in the novel. The barber was visited by all the characters in turn and they share some views. The barber put a display board on his shop. *Talking Politics prohibited*. He was not ready to allow speak politics in his shop. With all sarcasm the barber opened his mouth before Carmichael. "A fine business: my party gets in power, the police threaten my political opponents with

death, and I buy up their land and livestock at price I set myself.” (IEH 43). All on a sudden Mr. Carmichael heard shouts from the street. He looked in the mirror: children and women were passing by the door with the furniture and utensils from the houses that were being carried. He commented with acrimony:

Misfortune is eating at us, and you people still with your political hatreds. The persecution’s been over for a year and they still talk about the same thing” (IEH 44).

The entire tale is inexorably redolent of a quiet, throbbing paranoia as the result of the lampoons, which haunted and rendered everyone insomniac. It is not exaggerating to say that the most important character of the novel is the lampoon. It is the central chord that binds the fiction together. The mayor becomes a lampoon hunter but he fails. It is highly ratiocinated to believe that Marquez created him for to speak against state sponsored terrorism. Many a person (including women) he arrests, interrogates and kills.

A woman was shouting in the lock up, while the guard was sleeping his siesta lying face down on a cot. The mayor kicked the leg of the cot. (IEH 48).

So arrests are daily. Most of them are followed by regression and unprecedented physical torture and extermination. Throughout the novel the police represent the State and they wear guns and rifles

always. They stand for State terrorism, and ample evidences are there to suggest that people are afraid of those policemen.

In the door to the porch stood the policemen with their rifles at the ready. The mayor looked at them without seeing them, breathing like a cat, and they lowered their rifles but remained motionless beside the door. (IEH 52)

One of the arrest episodes elaborated in the novel is the arrest of the dentist Don Lalo Moscote. Many a time the mayor and other State agencies got treatment from the dentist. But unbelievably he was misbehaved by the same people whom he gave treatment. The mayor appointed 'three ordinary half breed' (IEH 55) policemen for the operation. They were named as Gonzalez, Rovira and Peralta. These policeman bursted to the office of the dentist and exhibited all kinds of atrocities against the man. With two quick charges they battered down the door with their rifle butts. The man was in his bedroom half naked. When the police unleashed violence on him he came out of the room, still in his nightgown, along with his wife.

A small bald man with veins showing through his skin appeared in his shorts at the rear door, trying to put on his bathrobe. At the first instant he remained paralyzed with one arm up and his mouth open, as in the flash of a photograph. Then he gave a leap backward and bumped

into his wife, who was coming out of the bedroom in her night gown. (IEH 56).

The dentist then went toward the vestibule, tying the cord on his bathrobe, and only then did he make out three policemen who were pointing their rifles at him. The wife too had got alarmed and the mayor threatened her with all ferocity. "If the lady leaves her room they have orders to shoot her" (IEH 56). The police under the able supervision of the mayor destroyed not only the dentist but also his livelihood. They destroyed the apparatus, chemicals and other instruments.

They dumped the instrument box onto the worktable, scattered plaster molds, unfinished false teeth, and gold caps on the floor. They emptied the porcelain vials that were in the cabinet and, making quick stabs with their bayonets, gutted the oilcloth cushion on the dentist's chair and the spring cushion on the revolving chair (IEH 56).

State terrorism is not always a strife between the State and individuals. Most often in Colombia the opposition party is at the receiving end of violence. The police and other Forces have been used against the opponents.

As a result of the last elections, the police had confiscated and destroyed the electoral documents of the opposition party. The majority of the inhabitants of the town now lacked any means of identification. (IEH 62).

As Judge Arcadio puts it “it was an emergency procedure under an emergency regime” (IEH 62). He goes on: “A year and a half ago they busted the head of the deputy with rifle butts and now he’s looking for a candidate to give the job to” (IEH 64). The mayor is empowered to exercise certain powers because he is part and parcel of the regime. Marquez wanted to say that the regimes of Colombia cannot wash their hands and all the perfumes of Latin America cannot sweeten their big hands. When the mayor was speaking to Cesar Montero, he explicitly made it clear.

Everything you’ve got you owe to me,” he said. ”There were orders to do you in. There were orders to murder you in ambush and confiscate your livestock so the government would have a way to pay off the enormous expenses of the elections in the whole department. You know that other mayors did it in other towns. (IEH 74),

and quite often political opponents were forced to pay special taxes. “You will have to pay a special tax” (IEH 93).

The conversation between the mayor and the barber reveals the depth of the tragedy. As stated earlier the barber put a board on the wall of his saloon stating talking politics is prohibited. The mayor got angry with this “anti national’ stand point of the barber. From their conversation:

“Who authorized you to put that up?” the mayor asked, pointing to the notice.

“Experience,” said the barber.

The mayor took a stool over to the back of the room and stood on it to remove the sign.

“Here the only one who has the right to prohibit anything is the Government,” he said. We are living in a democracy.” (IEH 103).

In practice the mayor is the Government. He owns not only the people but the cemetery also. Once he commented: “Because of the floods, the people in the lower part of town have brought their houses to the lots located behind the cemetery, which are my property.” (IEH 105).

To own a rifle is believed to be everybody’s dream in Colombia. This dream of heavy armament shows the volume of everyday violence in Colombia. Arms were used for regression, torturing and

for self defence. Some of the statements of the mayor shed light on this aspect of Colombian reality. "Tonight you'll have the rifles you've wanted so much; let's see if you are rotten enough to turn them against us." (IEH 119). And "Oh, shit," the mayor answered. "You spend your lives whispering for a rifle and now that you've got one, you can't believe it." (IEH 120).

The arrest and inhuman interrogation of the young boy Pepe Amador is another heartbreaking episode in the novel elaborated by the fiction writer. He was not provided basic necessities of life in the cell in which he was kept in custody. When the mayor approached him in the cell, "the boy was sitting on the concrete platform that served the prisoners as a bed." The mayor started his session with Pepe by commenting, "Well, Pepe," [] "I think you fucked up yourself." The mayor entrusted the boy with the policemen and gave them all rights and authority to interrogate him using any measure.

"Take charge of that boy," he said. "Try to convince him to give you the names of the ones bringing clandestine propaganda into town. If you can't get them in a nice way," he made clear, "try any way you can to get him to talk" (IEH 146).

Pepe Amador was in jail for two years suffering and experiencing all kinds of devilishness. And the town was passing through the noise of the boots and weapons.

After two years, when the mayor once again met Pepe Amador in prison, he observed that the face of Pepe was totally disfigured by the blows he received from the police. He was not given food for a long time and was totally dishevelled. The mayor enquired about the meal Pepe was supplied. "How long since he's eaten?" he asked. The police man replied that he was given food three nights before. (IEH 169). The mayor ordered the police to pick him up. Pepe was dragged by the armpits and was deposited on the concrete platform. He was totally dishevelled and almost dead by the prison experience.

While two policemen held him sitting up, another supported his head by grasping the hair. One would have thought that he was dead but for the irregular breathing and the expression of infinite weariness on his lips. (IEH 169).

Pepe Amador remained there motionless and painful for a while and the mayor ordered the policemen to give the former something to eat. But the mayor was not ready to release or giving him a standard life situation. Instead he authorized the Policemen to resume the torture with greater spirit and enthusiasm. He gave the final verdict. "Keep

working on him until he spits up everything he knows. I don't think he'll be able to resist for long". (IEH 170) When Pepe's mother approached Mr. Benjamin to prepare a writ to save her son, the latter replied like this. Those words are explanatory statements about Colombia. "You go right believing in writs. These days", he explained lowering his voice, "Justice doesn't depend on writs; it depends on bullets". (IEH 173)

At last Pepe was killed in police custody and the town witnessed some tremors though custodial deaths were not a rare phenomenon there. It was announced by Mr. Benjamin. "They have just killed Pepe Amador". (IEH 174). When Pepe Amador's mother howled like a dog out of pain, the mayor commanded the police to arrest the woman too. And the mayor checked the body of Pepe. Pepe was "lying on the floor, curled up, he had his hands between his thighs. He was pale, but there were no signs of blood" (IEH 175).

In the case of Carmichael, the same scene was repeated. In connection with the cattle theft he was taken into custody. He was not permitted to wear his dress and was inhumanly insulted. The mayor ordered Rovira, a police man to meet the wife of Carmichael and bring his dress. Carmichael also was exposed for violent methods of torturing. "Twenty four hours earlier Mr. Carmichael had been led into the armored office and subjected to an intense interrogation..." (IEH 170). When he could not resist the physical

torture, Carmichael requested the mayor to shoot him. But the mayor paid no attention to the plea. As a result of all these the whole nations became a jail.

It seems they were going crazy looking for clandestine time flier. They say they lifted up the flooring of the barbershop, just by chance, and they found guns. The jail is full, but they say men are going into the jungle to join up with guerrilla bands. (IEH 183).

Terrorism by individuals

It seems that both the Government and other armed groups of Colombia have unified in their attempts to smear the whole nation with blood. When the regime and public forces have exercised their power to unleash violence, private groups are recruiting people and giving training for jungle operation. The bloody episodes of the novel start with Cesar Montero, killing the pastor. He carries a gun always and the trigger is ready always to be pulled. "Cesar Montero first firmed his heels against the ground, then the butt, with his elbow against his hip; then he clenched his teeth and, at the same time, the trigger." (IEH 08). The news of killing spread very fast and the whole town was once again undulated by the news. Cesar Montero was not satisfied with the killing of the pastor , rather he was putting the people before gun tip. Thus terrorizing the people.

On the square, Cesar Montero was walking around with his shot gun pointed at the crowd. The mayor recognized him with a little trouble. He took his revolver in his left hand and started forward toward the centre of the square. The people made way for him. Out of the pool room came a policeman holding his rifle aiming at Cesar Montero (IEH 09).

When the mayor arrived at the site the crowd was commanded to be dispersed. He asked the people to disperse. Cesar Montero was heavily armed and he represented the mafia culture of Colombian politics. The mayor “found four shells in his shirt pocket, and in the back pants pocket a switch blade knife with a bone handle. In another pocket he found a notebook, a ring with three keys, and four one hundred peso bill” (IEH 10). The pastor was very violently killed by Cesar Montero. It was a bloody experience and the body was pathetically mutilated.

The shirt was torn and the belt buckle broken. Underneath the shirt he saw the disclosed viscera. The wound had stopped bleeding. (IEH 11).

Everywhere in the novel, there is blood. Even the Asises, the founders of this unnamed town seem to have a bloody history. “The turbulent Asises, founders of the town when they were nothing but

swine herds seemed to have blood that was sweet for gossip” (IEH 30). Nothing changed in the town. Though the governments changed quite occasionally, situation never improved. When the opposition comes into power, the members of the other party organize themselves as guerrilla groups and they fight the people. This factor comes out of the mouth of Toto Visbal. “Now they are saying that they are organizing guerrilla groups against the government in the interior again”. (IEH 149). The mayor also thinks about those guerrilla groups and political parties.

“All right,” the mayor said after a long pause. “We all know that you [Carmichael] are an honest man. But remember one thing: five years ago Don Sabas gave Jose Montiel the complete list of the people in contact with the guerrilla groups, and that’s why he was the only leader of the opposition who could remain in town. (IEH 170 – 171).

Violence Against Women

The womanhood of Colombia was under attack several times. They were targeted in order to terrorize them in particular and the society in general. Many reports shed light into this side of Colombian reality. Special Rapporteur comments on this regard “Although men are most frequently the victims of summary

executions and massacres, violence against women, particularly sexual violence by armed groups, has become a common practice in the context of a slowly degrading conflict and lack of respect for international humanitarian law” (Coomaraswamy 42).

One of the saddest aspects of this side is that after gang raping the women even before their children and loved ones, the criminals murder the women. Reports were there like capitulating the pregnant women after dismembering the fetus. Special Rapporteur comments that women were often killed after the rape and therefore were documented as a murder statistics only; there must be a move to document what happened to the victim prior to death by including information contained in the forensic reports in the official statistics so a record was compiled of the various elements of the crime that was committed including the gender-based dimension” (‘The State Violence’ 28).

The violence against women is widespread and that has a systematic order and frame. As everybody knows, in every armed conflict womenfolk is the most affected party. In Colombia this theory has no exception. Special Rapporteur states with enough sympathy that

the failure to investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible for rape and other forms of gender-based

violence has contributed to an environment of impunity that perpetuates violence against women, including rape and domestic violence. It is essential that cases of gender-based violence are investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice. (Coomaraswamy 103).

In spite of this, the policies implemented by the State have not been aimed at investigating and punishing those responsible for committing this type of abuse. On the contrary, the measures adopted by the Government within the framework of the reinstatement policy are aimed at letting grave violations of human rights such as rapes go unpunished. (The State Violence 30)

Once read all this observations of international agencies it seems very clear that the novelist Garcia Marquez was trying to give us the real picture of modern Colombia . There are many affinities that compel us to believe that the unnamed and panic stricken town mentioned in the novel is none but Colombia. The town and its inhabitants are Colombians in blood and spirit.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

MARQUEZEAN THEMES AND AGENDA

As I already suggested, Latin American literature till the threshold of 19th century was principally based on Iberian models. The contemporary scene begins around the year 1940. The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the unequal fratricide made a tremor in the Latin American minds. And as a consequence the reading materials from Spain were cut short. The liberal intellectuals of Spain migrated to the continent. One of the reasons for the much celebrated "boom" was this. By the hands of the "Boom writers" Latin Americans became the producers of literature. They were considered customers in the past.

Marquez believes that any novel has the spirit to unravel the world. Then a good novel becomes a poetic transcript of reality. "Good novel must be a poetic transposition of reality" (Apuleyo Mendoza 97). That is why in his novels, the real and the fantastic merge, the anachronistic and the contemporaneous fuse and co-exist, and ultimately the narration moves forward and backward. His novels are the poetic transcriptions of Colombia in particular and Latin America in general, where the impact of modernity and technological advance has not yet swept away the hard and simple

way of living. They still believe in magic and miracle. The Latin Americans accept death and destruction, war and violence, horror and cruelty, the gruesome and squalid, and the absolute power of bloodthirsty dictators as basic ingredients of life.

"Our great problem is the search for identity, we haven't found it yet" (Larmer *et al.* 44-45), once he remarked. This perennial problem haunts the lion share of his novels. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Melquiades, the gypsy, introduces the dazzling world of science and technology to Macondo. Jose Arcadio Buendia applied the "mystified" science of Melquiades in real life situation. He unearths a "colonial coin" and "calcified skeleton". His search for identity is multi dimensional. He digs the past and he gets colonial remains. Simon Bolivar at his autumn years thinks about escaping the labyrinth, and thinks about his roots in Colombian soil (*General in His Labyrinth*). The unnamed patriarch in *Autumn of the Patriarch* introspects his past life, and thinks of returning to the past.

The theme of revolutions has been reiterated in his novels. Latin America has a history smeared with blood. Many dictators quenched their power thirst by massacre. The report of *Amnesty International* (in March 1979) said that sixty two percent of world's political tortures took place in Latin America. And this devilish brutality has been depicted in many novels. In *Autumn of the Patriarch* Marquez shows the patriarch ruling Latin America for 150

years. Here reality and fantasy hobnob with each other and truth becomes as powerful as the truth of fable, where everything is far away from reality. It is a novel of social and political protest. Violence and poetry, magic and realism heighten the effect.

Politics and prose are entwined in his novels. Marquez, it seems, is driven by a sublime mission, the political, social and cultural integration of Latin America, a continent forever crippled by its internal divisions. It was the ideal of Simon Bolivar . Marquez once made it explicitly clear. "For me what is fundamental is the ideology of Bolivar; the unity of Latin America that is the only cause I'd die for." A man overburdened by historical consciousness, Marquez makes use of not only the written history of Colombia but the oral history transmitted to him by the old generation. That is why he was able to create a new history as Jean Franco once wrote "Garcia Marquez magically recreates past." (Franco 259). Any meticulous exploration on Marquez's fiction should start from this vantage point. Latin American creative minds are obsessed with rebellion and revolution. Marquez is no exception. He handles these themes with instinctual potentiality. In the first novel, *Leaf Storm* (1955) itself, Garcia Marquez presents a lonely figure living a life as a defiant. In this novel the stupendous banana company spreads its wings covering a wide area. Observing objectively, the conscious reader can formulate a theory of fiction which Marquez

fondles always: an individual fighting against a cruel and cannibalistic society. In order to materialize this, he creates the imaginary world Macondo. He elaborates how he was struck with the name Macondo in his autobiography *Living to Tell the Tale*. Macondo is the microcosm of the world in general and Colombia in particular. Colonel Aureliano Buendia and Jose Arcadio Buendia in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* embody the recurrent problems of solitude and alienation.

Solitude and alienation are the two favourite themes of Garcia Marquez. Majority of his characters faces and experiences unresolved and unjustifiable solitariness. *No One Writes to the Colonel* (1962) is a masterpiece in which the Colonel deplorably suffers from impeccable loneliness. Here the Colonel is an eminent military man who staunchly participated in a civil war (which is not infrequent in Colombia). He exhausted long fifteen years waiting for pension. The mail brings him nothing. To make things worse he was stricken by poverty. Augustin, his son was shot for distributing illegal pamphlets and he left nothing but a cock, putting the man in a very miserable condition to feed it. The horizon of his hopes were shattered when he had gradually realized the fact that his country had fallen into the hands of his political enemies. The dignity hanged on him and when the novel ended, he was starving with his dignity.

Death and its pangs of agony is one of the outstanding features of Marquez novels. Every character in Marquez faces the dilemma of life and death. Some characters are invulnerable and death halts before them. In the magical world of Marquez, death is the factor which links the puzzles of life with infinity. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, death is presented in a magical way-- terrain of flowers on Jose Aracadio when he dies, Remedio's exaltation into heaven hanging on a sheet, the massacres during a carnival are instances. Then the novel is a "magical attempt to confront death." (Franco 258).

Marquez's infatuation with solitude has a biographical strain. He experienced indomitable solitude when he was very young. He grew up as a solitary little boy among elderly adults. "Latin experiences were to reinforce the deep rooted sense of solitude that runs through all his writing." (Higgins 141). Marquez endeavours deliberately to pour solitude in to his writings. In fact he has been ensnared in the cobweb of man's ultimate destiny--death and infinite solitude. He is inescapably entrapped in the labyrinth of death and its omnipotent omnipresence. He mentioned this fact in his famous conversation with Rita Guibert.

It is the only subject I have written about, from my first book. Of absolute power, which I consider must be total solitude. (Guibert 314).

Daruwalla's essay on Marquez's fiction wonderfully analyses the psychological impulse of his typical characters. He rightly comments, "Marquez touches up on megalomania." (Daruwalla 68). Here solitude, power, death, isolation etc. entwine together to blossom into a fictional atmosphere. Marquez likes power but he cannot be seen in the corridors and in the cunning passages of power. He presents his characters' unquenchable thirst for power in a satisfying way. Marquez made it overtly clear that he has a strong intimacy with 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. Lord Acton said. "All power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." This has to be an enthralling subject for a writer. (Apuleyo Mendoza 88)

Power enthralled not only Marquez but many writers of the continent as penned by Daruwalla

Power, whether exercised by a system, a party, or the bureaucracy, has held considerable fascination for the twentieth century novelist. In Latin America, where political reality often becomes central to life and

overshadows most other things, it is only reasonable to expect that prominent novelists would eventually record the political reality around them and give expression to their personal vision through it. (Daruwalla 68)

It is important to notice the fact that some of Marquez's characters are very old and they face identity crisis and the problem of isolation. For instance, the starting point of *Leaf Storm* (1955) is an old man taking his grandson to a funeral, in *No One Writes to the Colonel* (1961) it is an old man waiting, in *General in His Labyrinth* (1989) the General waits for his death and in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) an old man taking his grandson to find ice. Marquez underlined this observation in his conversation with Guibert. "The guardian angel of my infancy was an old man --my grandfather." (Guibert 323). His characters face absolute seclusion. "Alone in their dreams, and these dreams are vast smoke screens between them and oblivion, like the gold fish which the Buendias manufacture in their workshop." (Franco 258). Garcia Marquez has the capacity to create both a vast inter-connected fictional universe and a brief, tightly woven narrative. "Driven by primary passion – lust, greed, thirst for power – his characters are checked by crude societal, political, or natural forces like figures in classical myth." (Gonzalez Echevarria 383).

While analyzing Latin American novel atmosphere, Jean Franco identifies two aspects: firstly, the universal need that writers have felt to break, with the linear narrative, and secondly the use of myth, fantasy, humour and parody. This fantasy and humour, he comments, "may act as a shield between the writers and reality too dreadful and hopeless to be contemplated direct." (272). Marquez too falls prey into this dialogue between reality and fantasy. In his phraseology there is a conspicuous synthesis between reality and imagination. To him fancy and imagination are instruments to produce reality. The distinction between fancy and imagination baffled many writers. The romantic critic Coleridge has made distinction between fancy and imagination even in nineteenth century. Marquez opened his mind before Mendoza in this regard. "Because I believe the imagination . . . is just an instrument for producing reality and that the source of creation is always in the last instance of reality." (Apuleyo Mendoza 31). As far as Marquez was concerned there was no remarkable distinction between what is termed as reality and what is called fantasy and in his case "the truth becomes as powerful as the truth of a fable, where everyone and everything are far from real." (Dey 19).

Higgins was right when he said that in all fictions, Marquez endeavoured to achieve a poetic transposition of reality, but in most of his early works he did so in a style that by and large was

extremely realistic. "The narrator introduces himself as some one who sits down at his front door to tell a tale as a kind of spokesman for the community." (Higgins 144). The structural skill, the genuine power to narrate, perfection of characterization, employment of myth, irony and paradox, the flamboyant fusion of comic and tragic elements etc. are some of the outstanding features of Marquezian narratives. His "narration moves backward and forward in time." (Mohan 2).

Mottram suggests that Marquez's texts constitute a field of memories of narratives already told in some way to him, out of the history and fantasy of Colombia and those were mediated through the inter textuality of his own fiction reading in both local and international literatures. He further adds: "Marquez constructs a mosaic of narrative to resist judgments." (Mottram 9). He calls the memories fictionalized and how they are projected out. "Marquez's fictions self-consciously record a design, a fictionalized memories playing on events--a structure of speech, reportage, and a memory without judgmental criticism." (Mottram 10).

Marquez has amazing command over story telling. He has an instinct to tell stories genuinely. Marquez has assimilated and inculcated in him the method of telling stories beautifully from his grandmother. Gill rightly observes: ". . . the excellence of Garcia Marquez lies in the originality of his multi layered story telling."

(145). His story telling method is wonderful. Vargas Llosa called him "a seed bed of anecdotes." (Guibert 318). His spontaneity in framing and unraveling stories are glossy and recommendable. He inherits this instinctual potentiality from his family atmosphere.

. . . his grandmother and aunts were credulous, superstitious women who believed in the supernatural and recounted all sorts of magical happenings as if they were every day events, and the author has often claimed that it was from his grandmother that he learned his narrative manner (Higgins 142).

Many writers were baffled with history, and some of their attempts in connecting history with literature failed. History is believed to be logical, reasonable, rational and conventionally founded upon what is termed, matter of facts. Historians' texts were believed to be objective, comprehensive, and founded upon concrete realities. Fiction is, fundamentally speaking, a product of man's imaginative world in which the reasonable, rational and logical mind is at rest. But serious artists who work after getting influenced by history could not escape from the labyrinth of realities. Marquez succeeds in blending history and fiction because of two reasons: firstly, he has the magical thread known as magic realism and secondly his agenda of rewriting Latin American history by a newly formulated historiography.

THE SUMMARY OF MARQUEZIAN AGENDA

He wanted to create alternative history since available texts of histories are Spanish sponsored. They are based on the colonizer's experience, neglecting the version of the colonized. Marquez used his version of magical realism and the myths from pre colonized Latin America to create alternative history . Pierre Nora's idea that "the quest for memory is the search for one's history" (289) provides a new angle to look at the interrelation between history and memory, the dichotomy on which Garcia Marquez works with. On reconstructing the communal history of Colombians, Gabriel García Márquez relies heavily on the use of memory as a means to rewrite the history of those oppressed because of race, class and/or gender in a world where historiography has been dominated by the white colonizer. Memory is closely related to the reclamation of identity and history -- both personal and collective. Memory and history dominate in majority of Marquezian narratives including the novels under study here, especially in his magnum opus *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. García Márquez believes that memory and imagination are essential parts of the narrative art especially in a Colombian perspective. Marquezian narratives are the recreation of his own and his community's history recorded. On many occasions Garcia Marquez explicitly illustrated that he was working on Colombian life and history.

Marquez introduces the unsettling question of what happens to communication when even language breaks down. It asks myriads of questions like to what extent languages are reliable for the permanence of memory, and what happens when we all stop speaking that language? Those topics are particularly relevant in Latin American history, which was notoriously distorted in textbooks when Garcia Marquez was a child. Marquez's novels do not argue that life is a dream but rather that Latin American life is a dream.

Hence the solitude, the central theme (together with the quest) of Latin American history, it is their abandonment in an empty continent, a cultural vacuum, marooned thousands of miles away from their true home. (Martin *Magical* 106).

The novels like *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *General in his Labyrinth* enact quest stories since they enclose the development of a character's search for his family history, which consummates in his solving an enigma, be it enclosed in a song or in some parchments written in a foreign language. This can rightly be interpreted as another example of the inadequacy of the history written in a hierarchical world where the oppressors/colonizers write the history of the oppressed/colonized.

Garcia Marquez debunks the official myths by offering an alternative history. He metaphorically questioned Spain's claim that it has bequeathed to America the benefits of European civilization. The much boasted conquest is ridiculously parodied by the expedition in which the Macondoians re-enact the ordeals of the Spanish explorers and conquistadors in order to make contact with the civilization which Spain expanded to its colonies. Marquez reiterates that one of the prime factors of Latin America's miserable socio economic backwardness is the Spanish colonial heritage.

Garcia Marquez recreates the lost world of his childhood by exploiting the inherent possibility of Magical Realism, which ostracizes the documentary approach of realist fiction and expresses the world view of rural people destined to life in remote isolation from the developed modern world. Magical realism is an effort to have a new look at the unique problems of Latin America. Such a new look could be attained only after erasing the European cultural presupposition, because of the complexity of the class and ethnic pattern in Latin America.

Garcia Marquez's version of magical realism has a declared objective. In order to recreate and rewrite history supported by memory he believes that no other technique is more ample than employment of magical realism. Here, magic realism proves to be a valid means of rewriting history for those people who have to deal

with the ghosts of slavery and colonialism, and the distorted reality they bring about.

If transgression of boundaries is one of the features of magic realism, the break of narrative linearity -- by means of flashbacks and flash forwards -- is another feature of magic realism. The characters journey into the past through memory to reconstruct their personal and collective histories. Time plays a crucial role in García Marquez's masterpiece, as it can be inferred from its very title. The novel begins with one of the multiple flash forwards which anticipates future events and memories and it continues till the end.

Marquez makes use of history and its crosscurrents as his source for creative intuition. Many typical Colombian ideas along with its peculiar and extra ordinary incidents become immortalized by his pen. The history written by colonialists start only with the conquest of America by Columbus. They deliberately avoided any reference about the full fledged civilization of the continent long before the Europeans reached there. In fact Latin America developed a strong culture before the colonization.

The boom writers were not ready to start their history with Columbus. They were not even ready to call him discoverer. They prefer to call him conquistador. The discovery of America was considered by many as the most important break in Western history

after the embrace of Christianity. (Gonzalez Echevarria 183). To Mendoza, Marquez told that the person he disliked most was Christopher Columbus (Mendoza 116). Christopher Columbus is a tradition. That name indicates everything European. European historiography, religion, culture, literature, economics, philosophy music, food culture , dress code, colonization, sexuality, music etc.

Marquez was dead frank in acknowledging that he wanted to bring forth 'the outsized reality' of Colombia. He illustrated this predicament in his Nobel Lecture entitled *The Solitude of Latin America* in the following lines.

I dare to think that it is this outsized reality and not just its literary expression, that has deserved the attention of the Swedish Academy of Letters. A reality not of paper but one lives within us and determines each instant of our countless daily deaths and that nourishes a source of insatiable creativity full of sorrow and beauty of which this roving and nostalgic Colombian is but one cipher more, singled out by fortune. (Mc Guirk *et al.* 207).

It has been suggested that Marquezian novels are not speculation or experimentation but dedicated exploration of Latin American reality. Though Christopher Columbus "discovered" America in 1492 many native Americans did not acknowledge it. As

suggested earlier, they prefer to call it conquest rather than discovery. Unlike the past, the history text books of today's Latin America start not with 1492 but with the story of aboriginal cultures, that were there long before of European invasion and colonization. "Our fifth grade social studies textbooks devoted a lot of praise to the abominable United Fruit Company, and South American generals were supposed to be jokes, brutal windbags in gold-embroidered tunics" (Stein Mayer).

Latin American confederation is a long cherished ambition of Marquez, and like Simon Bolivar he pampers the thought of Latin American unification –"the golden dream of continental unity" (GIHL 17). Marquez once said it was "the only cause I would die for" (See the Nobel lecture of Gabriel Garcia Marquez entitled *The Solitude of Latin America*). This principle, definitely he has drawn from Simon Bolivar. He championed the cause of unity whenever he gets a chance. In the Jamaica Letter, he accuses the Latin Americans for their disunity. "It is not the Spaniards but our own lack of unity that has brought us again to slavery...We are the human race in miniature" (See Bolivar's *Jamaica Letter*). Simon Bolivar ardently believed that Latin American Unity was the only way of unarming its enemies. He was never tired of repeating this even in his final voyage of disillusionment. "Our enemies will have all the advantages until we unify the government of America" (GIHL 97). His aim was not

winning the war. According to him the war against the aggressors will be meaningful only when the victory is supplemented with unity. In order to attain this elite vision, sacrifice is the most important ingredient. "The great sacrifices must come after wards, to make a single nation out of all these countries". (GIHL 99).

Marquez believed that in order to bring Latin American themes to the nucleus of historical discourse, mere anecdotes written in a European fashion were not sufficient. European colonizers formulated their concept of historiography to reproduce their perception. So naturally it was inclined towards colonizers, not towards colonized. So why Marquez thought of new historiography, not based on the "lie" of colonizers but the memories of the people. He attempts, through this strategy, to highlight Latin American reality that is different from European sensibility.

I started my research on Marquezian works with the hypothesis that Marquezian narratives were the imaginative transformation of politics and history of the Continent, Latin America. He used history as his source material to correct the European notion that Latin Americans were subhuman or mean creatures. His works are the strong attempts to confront this notion and he wants to prove that the indigenous cultures of the Continent are either as strong as or at least equal to the European ones. The three major works that I have chosen for detailed exploration are the

imaginative transformation of politics and history of Colombia in particular and Latin America in general. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* celebrates all Marquezian themes : solitude, discovery, science, frustration, liberation and colonialism. *The General in His Labyrinth* exclusively focuses on Simon Bolivar and his final disillusionment. The major concern of *In Evil Hour* is colombian polity and heinous civil war along with individual violence and state repression.

History has been an inspiration for many writers from the classical age to today. It has been widely used, and sometimes abused by different writers at different times. In English literature Sir Walter Scott was a memorable figure who extensively used history for creating his literary world. Most of his writings are based on history. He has written more than twenty history novels. Of them *Ivanhoe* and *Heart of Midlothian* are very famous. He portrayed Scotland, England, and the whole of Europe from the medieval times to the 18th century. But he concerned only with an aristocratic segment of society. Moreover his novels are moving around certain major figures. The concern of all serious historians has been to collect and record facts about the human past and often to discover new facts. They know that the information they have is incomplete, partly incorrect, or biased and requires careful attention. Even the Greek master Aristotle acknowledged this aspect of incorrectness. He tried

to distinguish between fiction and history. Historian would tell lies. And fiction writers too. Many of the fiction writers and historians rely on falsehood or untruthfulness. But Aristotle supported the fiction writers . His famous aphorism, probable possibility is better than improbable possibility, justifies all fiction writers who work with history. (See *Poetics*). Fiction is not something outside, but rather an integral part of human imagination. That is why there is a strong communication between fiction and history. In other words, fiction establishes its identity when it is being placed in a historical context. A literary work gets its full meaning when it is placed in a historical context, what Wilson and Duttan call “archival continuum” (See *New Historicism and Renaissance Drama* as qtd by Peter Barry, 173).

In short, history has been widely used by many writers. The degree or quantity may be different from one writer to another. In addition to that, the aim or agenda of using history may be different. Walter Scott used ancient, medieval and contemporary history as the source and theme of his novels. He concentrated on the social, cultural and political history of the period/person of his choice. Shakespeare used history for many of his plays. Again the implication was socio political. Many modern thinkers believe that Shakespeare was not as innocent as we perceived in handling history. His “plays represented not harmony but the violence of the puritan attack on carnival, the imposition of slavery, the rise of

patriarchy, the hounding of deviance ...". (Wilson and Duttan 08). His portrayal of Shylock, Caliban , Othello etc. are the explication of his communal agenda of Christian and Elizabethan England. His kings are remarkably different from the Kings with same name who ruled the nation.

When Marquez keeps the tradition of using history as his source material, we can see that his focal arena is political history of contemporary situation. Equal importance he gives to intellectual and cultural history of his Continent. Since his narrative technique is different from that of many writers, and his employment of past, present, and future indiscriminately, we are not able to place him in a confined historical context. But he relies on the political history of his Nation and its neighbourhood. He uses not the remote past but the contemporary history. To him history is a tool by which he wanted to educate his own community to realise their strength and weakness. This kind of a treatment of contemporary history for correction is not very common among writers who dealt with history. His employment of peripheral and deep history of the Latin American consciousness is highly praisable.

Although history was used by many writers like Scott and Shakespeare in English literature, Marquezian concern, unlike that of other major writers who used history, is with the contemporary social, political and economic situation which constitute present

history. Therefore it is a device for exploration and correction. He touches the life around him and experiences the trauma that society creates for itself, and his fiction is a projection of that aspect where we find human desire and aspiration in terrible confrontation with forces of denial and refusal. Therefore the drama in his fiction is the real felt experience, of course, transformed through fictional devices. He does not have a retrospect into the remote past in his search for history. History is what is near, what is felt everyday. This kind of a projection of history transforms the near and the familiar into something highly imaginative. History is the material on which the simulacrum in fiction is constructed. By reading Marquez' novels one can experience what individuals would have felt in a wide background of collectivity.

Marquez tries to formulate a new pattern of historical writing through his fiction. It is a multi layered approach that looks into the colonised individual who experiences solitariness, frustration, setbacks, illusions, hopes, dreams, etc. Most of his characters are ordinary human beings with certain amount of individualism and weaknesses. Jose Arcadio Buendia, Ursula Iguaran (*One Hundred Years of Solitude*) Carmichael (*In Evil Hour*), Jose Palacios (*General in his Labyrinth*) etc. are examples. Most of the characters of the writers with history as background are either great personalities or historical figures. But Marquezian heroes and characters are simple human

beings. These human beings have their own dilemmas and delicacies. These dilemmas lead them to many discoveries and fatal setbacks. Marquez novels are premier examples for how an individual's history becomes the history of a community. As a post colonial society, Colombian society too suffered the aberrations from the colonial high handedness. Here comes the second layer of Marquezian employment of history. The individual's history becomes the corner stone of the collective history, which in turn influences the individual back. So Marquezian characters are the microcosm of a larger macrocosm that is the society as a whole. Then this society stretches to the Nation and the nation is the result of a system. Only great writers with high level of brilliance can effect this kind of a projection of history with an agenda of awareness creating mechanism.

This historical sensibility leads him to further explore the underground quest through the spiralling corridors of the labyrinth of Latin American colonial experience. Individual labyrinths have their own fields like language, culture, memory and text, and paths comprised utterances, discourses, images and themes. This multi layered labyrinthine experience is the product of each individual's specific origins, his conditions, compositions and history. In Latin America writers as well as others pamper the quest for identity theme. Marquezian characters share this aspect and they think of

four things: development, nationality, identity and self realization. Identity crisis of a Latin American is different from that of a European. It is a duality or a dichotomy like Indian/Spaniard, female/male, America/Europe, country/city, matter/spirit/barbarism/civilization, nature/culture, speech/writing, etc. He tries to place his characters in this cultural context to define an individual only to comment that the Latin American individual was not made out of his choice, but by others.

Marquez depicts in his novels an urgent present as well as a surviving past. Through archival fiction he tries to place his characters in the historical context. Marquez started writing with history because the available history texts are not literary and moreover the available books celebrate the European heritage. In his Nobel lecture he acknowledged his vision of literature that he wanted to write about "a reality not of paper but one lives within", and he calls himself a "roving and nostalgic Colombian" (Mc Guirk *et al.* 207). Even the autobiographical work of Marquez carries this message. His autobiography has been rightly named *Living to Tell the Tale*.

Autobiographical material gets integrated with the collective experience of the society, which in turn merges with and defines the national history. All these are shaped in the mould of a complex

and ill-defined post colonial background. The interconnecting narrations holding different levels of experience create a whole which speaks on different levels simultaneously.

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