



GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ 'ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE': AN OVERVIEW

Dr. Shabnam Parveen

Lect. Govt. Women's college, Baripada, Odisha

Abstract

The title captioned Gabriel Garcia Marquez "One Hundred Years of Solitude": An Overview traces the Buendia family dynasty through seven generation of chaotic decline. The use of real events and Colombian history by Garcia Marquez makes "One Hundred Years of Solitude" an excellent example of magic realism. Not only are the events of the story an interweaving of reality and fiction, but the novel as a whole tells the history of Colombia from a critical perspective. "One Hundred Years of Solitude" is a literary classic, and it garnered Marquez fame and acclaim as one of the greatest Spanish language writers in history. Marquez conception of the world is embodied in this novel. Further explication and ontological methods have been used.

Keywords: Magic realism, religion, politics, modernity, civilisation, female sexuality

Introduction

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a distinguished Latin-American author of novels and short stories, was a central figure in the so-called Magic Realism movement in Latin-American literature. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982. Garcia Marquez studied law and journalism at the National University of Colombia in Bogota and at the University of Cartagena. He worked many years as a journalist in Latin American and European cities and later also as a screenwriter and publicist, before settling in Mexico. Garcia Marquez began writing short stories in the late 1940s. His first major publication was the novella "La hojarasca" translated in the collection "Leaf Storm and other stories". This story introduced the fictional Colombian village of Macondo -The setting of much of his later work- and the combination of realism and fantasy characteristic of his style. His best-known, the novel "One Hundred Years of Solitude" (1967), recounts the history of Macondo and its founders, the Buendia family. Garcia Marquez's subsequent novels include "The Autumn of the Patriarch", "Love in the Time of Cholera", and "The General in His Labyrinth". His collections

of Short stories and novellas include "No one writes to the colonel" and "Leaf storm". In 2002 he published "Vivir para contrarla", an autobiographical account of his early years.

"One Hundred Years of Solitude", first published in Spanish as "Cien anos de soledad" in 1967 is a novel by the Colombian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez. It is considered Garcia Marquez's masterpiece and the foremost example of his style of magic realism. It is the author's epic tale of seven generations of the Buendia Family that also spans a hundred years of turbulent Latin American history, from the postcolonial 1820s to the 1920s. To be precise, it tells the multigenerational story of the Buendia family whose patriarch Jose Arcadio Buendia who built/ founded the utopian town of Macondo in the middle of a swamp. At first prosperous, the town attracts gypsies and hucksters- among them the old writer Melquiades, a stand-in for the author. A tropical storm lasting nearly five years almost destroys the town, and by the fifth Buendia generation its physical decrepitude is matched by the family's depravity. A hurricane finally erases all traces of the town. By the end of

the novel Melquiades has been revealed as the narrator; his mysterious manuscripts are in fact the text of the novel. Critics have noted the influence of urgentine writer Jorge Luis Borges in the book's labyrinthine fantasy. A dominant theme of the novel is the inevitable and inescapable repetition of history in Macondo. The protagonists are controlled by their pasts and the complexity of the time. Throughout the novel the characters are visited by ghosts. The major themes of this novel trickle like a water fall through one hundred years of solitude, returning again and again to illuminate the Buendias and human nature. They are time, fate, humour and magic. It is in these concepts that the great playfulness and great power of the novel live. In giving the world new narratives Garcia Marquez helped alleviate that solitude. This is how books like "One Hundred Years of Solitude" inspire us.. they offer new images, new myths, new ideas and new forms of understanding that cut against those keeping us in division and in comprehension. In this novel Marquez tricks us; the Colonel is not killed by a firing squad. He dies finally in solitude, leaning against the same chestnut tree where his mad father was tied for so many years. The Colonel, Aureliano Buendia, is supposed human being born in Macondo.

"One Hundred Years of solitude" traces the Buendia family dynasty through seven generations of Chaotic decline. Family patriarch Jose Arcadio Guendia dreams about a city of mirrors and creates the almost perfect town of Macondo according to his own perceptions, with three hundred inhabitants all under age thirty. A man of "unbridled imagination who always goes beyond the genius of nature and even beyond miracles and magic", Jose Arcadio

devotes his life to the quest of knowledge, but he is finally overwhelmed by the intensity of his own pursuit and spends his last days chained to a chestnut tree, preaching in Latin against the existence of God. Jose Arcadio's son Colonel Aureliano, shepherds Macondo into a period of political rebellion and conflict reminiscent of the civil wars that were part of the lore and culture of Garcia Marquez's youth. A giant American fruit company develops the town , but worker exploitation erupts in a violent strike, and thousands are killed in a secret massacre Ursula, matriarch of the family and Jose Arcadio's wife struggles to save the family from an evil destiny for more than 130 years. Her death, however, signals the demise of the family and of Macondo. At the end the two surviving Buendias together conceive a child, who is born with a pig's tail.

The use of real events and Colombian history by Garcia Marquez makes "One Hundred Years of Solitude" an excellent example of magic realism. Not only are the events of the story an interweaving of reality and fiction, but the novel as a whole tells the history of Colombia from a critical perspective. The novel is considered the Don Quixote of the global south, proof of Latin American literary prowess and the author was "Gabo" known all over the continent by a single name like his Cuban friend "Fidel". The plot moves in fairly straightforward chronological order, with only occasional forays into the past or the future. The first chapter of this novel which comprises 20 unnumbered chapters introduces Jose Arcadio Buendias the founder of Macondo, his wife Ursula, and the Gypsy Melquiades, who brings inventions to the town "One Hundred Years of Solitude" is a literary classic, and

it garnered Marquez fame and acclaim as one of the greatest Spanish language writers in history. Its final move is to destroy the whole town by a hurricane, leaving a completely flat, empty space with no sign that there was ever anything. Marquez basically takes a great eraser and wipes the state clean.

The novel under discussion has such themes as incest, magic/magical realism, religion civilisation, the book of Genesis, plagues, politics, modernity and female sexuality. Incest is a secondary theme of “One Hundred Years of Solitude”. It plays an enormous role in the novel from the very beginning with Ursula’s warning that children born of incestuous relationships may be born with the tails of pigs. And indeed, at the very end of the novel Buendia is born with the tail of a pig. For most families, incest is not a great threat. The fact that it is something the Buendias have to keep dodging marks them as a family unable to escape the family homestead, unable to look outside themselves. They are too solitary. Essentially, incest is the practice of keeping family members within the family; so it marks the Buendias as too disengaged from the world around them.

The term “magic realism” was coined by Franz Roh who was concerned with the characteristics and tendencies discernible in the work of certain German painters of the period, especially the artists of Munich. In course of time the label “magic realism” was used for certain kinds of fiction. In the novels where the technique of magic realism is used there is an interplay of fantasy and realism. In the novel “One Hundred years of Solitude”, organized religion is often the subject of jokes and satire. From the first paragraph the narrator gives his readers the impression that

Macondo is akin to the Garden of Eden. The preponderance of plagues that the townsuffers through (insomnia, rain) are also biblical; as is the flood that affects Mocando in an effort to rid the town of wicked men. By consciously echoing the Book of Genesis, Marquez is altering us that this is attempt to rewrite the history of the world and the human race, in a novel that has everything in it. The twisted and meandering world of politics is under a great deal of scrutiny in this novel, particularly the chapters that deal with. Colonel Aureliano Buendia. The world of politics is a gloomy one. Identity is at the centric of the novel. Characters often share the same name, and names change to suit personal identity. It is important to keep in mind that “One Hundred Years of Solitude”, while basically chronological and “linear” enough in its broad outlines, also shows abundant zigzags in time, both flashbacks of matters past and long leaps towards future events.

The novel’s central theme, highlighted by the title is human isolation. If the solitude of the Buendias is directly linked to their egoism, it is so only in part, for it is too persuasive to be explained away so easily as an external condition. Love as suited in the novel is complex and enduring. Solitude is a theme that touches every character in the novel in some way or form and directly influences decisions and character developments. Each character has his or her particular form of solitude. Here solitude is not defined as loneliness but rather a fated seclusion by space or some neurotic obsession. Sex is one of the major themes of the novel “One Hundred Years of Solitude”. It motivates most of the characters in their decision-making.

The novel created a global appetite for rich Latin American traditions of storytelling

and lyrical poetry. The supernatural and the surreal suffuse each page, raising even mundane encounters to a mythic dimension, staging history as timeless drama, played out over and over again through each generation. Marquez's conception of the world is embodied in this novel. The novel reflects reality not as it is experienced by one observer but as it is individually experienced by those with different backgrounds.

References

1. Bloom, Harold. *Modern Critical Views: Gabriel Garcia Marquez..* New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989.
2. Janes, Regina. *One Hundred Years of Solitude: Modes of Reading..* Boston: G.K. Hall and Co., 1991.
3. Marquez, Gabriel Garcia. *One Hundred Years of Solitude..*New York: HarperPerennial, 1991