CHAPTER V

The Phoenix of Solitude

Gabriel Garcia Marquez is fascinated by solitude and all his books reverberate with the theme of solitude and its manifestations. Solitude is the central motif in Marquez's fiction motif and the other leitmotifs revolve around it. Marquez himself says,

It's the only subject I have written about, from my first book until the one I'm working on now.

One Hundred Years of Solitude is the book that encompasses within itself insistent and lasting solitude. The characters are bathed in solitude and their endeavours to communicate are negated due to complexities inherent in their self or the situation.

Garcia Marquez's characters have a profound sense of their solitude and vacillate between an attempt at communion and a return to total absorption in themselves.

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One Hundred Years of Solitude was published in 1970 and enabled Marquez to win the prestigious Noble Prize for literature. It is the quintessential book of the century, his most pivotal and complex works depicting the meandering magical world of Macondo. It is also considered to be one of the major examples of Latin American contribution to modernist writing. Solitude is the predominant motif of this book as of the rest of his works. One Hundred Years of Solitude is an elusive and enigmatic novel. Garcia Marquez in an interview with Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza said,

The Autumn of the Patriarch is a much more important literary achievement. But whereas it is about the solitude of power. One Hundred Years of Solitude is about the solitude of everyday life. It’s everybody’s life story.

The book is set in the fictional world of Macondo, and tells the simple tale of a Buendia clan in a span of hundred years. Macondo is the author’s cosmic world of characters and events. The chronological progress of the Buendias and Macondo is akin to the history of Latin America and the third world. As seen in the novel, the history of Macondo is one of the several histories of the western world but with a difference. The rise and fall of Macondo is analogous to the history of the third world.
Unlike the western civilization which, is the product of a century of gradual progress and development, the progress of Macondo from a pastoral idyll atmosphere to a technically advanced society is too swift, Linda. B. Hall says.

In the last thirty years, Latin America has gone from the age of the mule to the age of the airplane ---- the individual caught between two worlds: the peaceful static, rural world of his past and the teeming industrial urban world of the present and future.

Macondo is propelled from an infancy stage to an age of modern sophistication. Perhaps, Marquez is trying to project the fact that rapid development and excessive technology introduced to a nation before it is ready for it, can prove to be disastrous. That is why perhaps Marquez has taken an approximate number of years, a clan, a country or that a civilization takes to take birth and destroy itself, symbolizing especially the case of Latin America.

The title One Hundred Years of Solitude at the pre-set only establishes the tone of the novel. Whose solitude? Why a century of solitude? Solitude thus is the predominant factor in this story and even before we begin to read it, these question
The discovery of the town itself is explained in a manner that projects solitude. “The whole structure seemed to occupy its own space, one of solitude and oblivion, protected from the vices of time and the habits of the birds”\(^5\). Some critics link solitude to egoism and say solitude is a reflection of the egoistic, individualistic values by which people live, while according to some others solitude personifies the predicament of the human race, for the Buendías are not a family but a group of solitary individuals living together as strangers in a family. Early in the novel, as also in the title, the theme of solitude is introduced: Macondo is in a swamp cut off from civilization, ruled by solitude. “The world was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point”\(^6\). The people are so happy in their solitude that “Nothing has happened in Macondo, nothing has ever happened, and nothing ever will happen. This is a happy town”\(^7\).

One Hundred Years of Solitude is rendered in a biblical manner in concordance with the Christian belief of ‘Genesis’ and ‘Apocalypse’. The story starts with pre-history and Arcadio Buendia, the first man journeys to the (un) promised land and founds Macondo. The new land is troubled with the twin
plagues: insomnia and amnesia, which force the inhabitants of Macondo to forget their pre-historic past, their links with Arcadia. In order to salvage the last vestiges of their past, they start labeling things, thus giving birth to a long and written history. The arrival of Melquiades, the messiah of the latest scientific inventions, with his band of gypsies at Macondo, his Christ-like resurrection, the flood as deluge which lasts for precisely four years, eleven months and two days, the steady decline in moral and political standards and finally the end or apocalypse of a family, race, civilization till a biblical hurricane razes Macondo to the ground, is in short, the history of Macondo.

The power of gypsies over the people of Macondo is a fascinating power. The people are attracted towards them and their gifts. Melquiades is the first to arrive after the founding of Macondo to befriend Jose Arcadio Buendia. Melquiades and his wandering band, arrive every March and bring with them new scientific inventions to surprise the people of Macondo. On the first visit, they had lighted up the lives of the inhabitants with magnetized ingots and during the subsequent visits, they bring a telescope, a magnifying glass, and daguerreotypes of the Buendia family. Though Melquiades dies in the first chapter, the fascination and power he holds over the people and the indirect
references to him throughout the novel make it appear as if he keeps returning to Macondo time and again, enhancing the circular aspect of time.

Industrialization is literally pushed upon the inhabitants even before they are ready for it. Due to an unsteady historical foundation and rapid industrialization, the land is torn by civil wars and power hungry politicians who exploit both people and country. The clash between the liberals and the conservatives serves to heighten the conflict between the people and the state. Colonel Aureliano Buendia, a liberal, leads thirty-two futile uprisings against the conservatives and eventually ends up doubting his own existence. Hard on the heels of civil wars and military uprisings, capitalism forces its way into Macondo. As a result of this new ideology, the old feudal order established by Jose Arcadio Buendia is destroyed. Eventually capitalism too, comes in conflict with the Marxist ideology of economic equality. Mauricio Babilonia’s courtship with Renata Remedios symbolizes the rise of the working class in a capitalist society. Another example of capitalism is the banana company episode in the novel. It also signifies the imperialistic stronghold of richer politically powerful nations over economically poorer countries.

In 1928, a strike called by the labour union of the American United Fruit Company, was subsequently repulsed by
the govt. troops at the Cienage, Colombia railway station. This incident is reflected in the banana company strike episode in the novel. The govt. squashes out the revolt, leaves thousands dead (three thousand, as Jose Arcadio Segundo believes) but the officials purposely mislead the people into believing otherwise. They declare "that the demands lacked all validity for the simple reason that the banana company did not have, never had had, and never would have any workers in its service because they were all hired on a temporary and occasional basis ---- that the workers did not exist". Marquez points out that history can be fabricated and manipulated to suit vested interest.

The most prominent factor is the continuation of the Buendia legacy of illegitimate offspring's for one hundred years. The Buendia line is maintained at all costs. Patricia Tobin emphasises the importance of genealogy that signifies the western concept of continuity. She says,

The western family has always served the biological imperative of procreation and the maintenance of children. The obligatory link between two generations, that which generates the linear emphasis's, promotes the twin principles of the child's legal social status in reference to his parents.
Undoubtedly, the Buendia 'line' is maintained throughout the novel, but the genealogical imperative is thwarted at every stage by the Buendias. The attainment of parenthood is always accidental and the strongest attractions are incestuous. In the family, bastards are accepted and legally wedded wives are marganised. The twin principles of 'authority' and 'legitimacy' which, Tobin speaks of hold and sustain a family together while their lack spells doom. Legitimacy among the Buendia's is nullified by their bohemian activities. When the very foundations of the family are raised on doubtful grounds; the Buendia's cannot be accepted to survive for long. Jose Arcadio Buendia marries his cousin Ursula, kills a man to prove his manhood, flees Arcadia and founds Macondo. The first couple carries with them the sin of incest, (since they are blood relations) homicide and abandonment. Their progeny are ill-begotten and fated to die unnatural deaths for seven generations.

There is all this while a linear movement of the Macondian history, where time is measured through the happening of events in the Buendia family and Macondo, but it is not a smooth history; it has been punctuated with irregularities. It is also sometime during the period of industrialization, that Ursula remarks, "The years nowadays don't pass the way old ones used to". She perceives time from her point of view. During the pre-
industrial days, the people of Macondo had experienced the passage of time leisurely, but after the little yellow train of capitalism passes through the peaceful land, the pace of development destroys the tranquil atmosphere, its inhabitants are unable to cope up with the speed with which changes are taking place in Macondo. Thus, advances in technology effect the psychology of man, reminding us that time is a mental phenomenon.

When on the one hand, the Buendia family suffers the crisis of genealogical legitimacy, on the other, the politico-economic front is torn by conflict. At this juncture it is inevitable that the civilization should perish. Macondo heads towards a devastating end. The end is apocalyptic in dimension. In the novel, terror is not conspicuous, but it is a vibrating and powerful undercurrent, simmering, below the surface of daily activity. A subtle yet distinct feeling of terror grips the heart as one realizes the enormity of the situation confronting this unfortunate clan. Unfortunate because the family members are drawn by mysterious forces to commit actions beyond their comprehension. It seems that their fate has already been sealed. The last lines of the novel emphasize that the end was preordained, "for it was foreseen that the city of mirrors (or mirages) would be wiped out by the wind and exiled from the
memory of men at the precise moment when Aureliano Babilonia would finish deciphering the parchments, and that everything written on them was unrepeatable since time immemorial and forever more, because races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth". These chilling words convey in no uncertain terms, the destiny of such a family race. The lines suggesting the apocalyptic fate of Macondo, "Macondo was already a fearful whirlwind of dust and rubble being spun about by the wrath of the biblical hurricane", conveys a sense of terror as its image dances before our eyes. The fact that the Buendía’s are inevitably going to face such an end is anticipated well in advance. Every now and then the author keeps making predictions of the future and prepares the reader for the ultimate end. "The events that would deal Macondo its fatal blow were just showing themselves".

An expatriate, Jose Arcadio Buendia, bears the seeds of destruction that will wipe out his entire clan and city. But it is only towards the end of the novel that we come to know that the history of the Buendias has been documented by Melquiades "down to the most trivial details, one hundred years ahead of time" in the secret parchment. Our worst fears are confirmed when we see that the family has absolutely no hopes of surviving. Six generations of Buendias display mirror-like
traits in them, be it appearance, actions or attitudes, and the seventh and the last Buendia is the embodiment of their follies, a freak of nature and destiny.

Every generation has its own Aurelianos, Arcadios, Amarantas, Joses and Ursulas, its married incestuous ones, its dreamers savage men, its resident alchemist--- the same obsessions the everlasting solitude.

Jose Arcadio and Ursula are the founders and their successive generations have their weakness and strengths. And the mingling of this trait is found in the younger; the Aurelianos and the Jose Arcadios, Aurelianos have the intellect and the Jose Arcadios the physical strength. Aurelianos are introverts and Arcadios extroverts, only the twins were interchanged and thus lived with different names. Apart from physical strength the Buendias possess marvelous supernatural powers acquired through a deep contact with solitude. "Throughout the long history of the family the insistent repetition of names had made her draw some conclusions that seemed to be certain. While the Aurelianos were withdrawn, but with lucid minds, the Jose Arcadios, were impulsive and enterprising, but they were marked with a tragic sign."
The crux of all the family's misfortune is the dreaded prophesy of a child with a 'pig's tail'. This is the curse that the first couple Jose Arcadio Buendia and Ursula carries with them. It has been predicted that if two cousins of the families that had interbred for centuries married, they "would suffer the shame of breeding iguanas". A precedent in the family has only strengthened this belief. Ursula's and Jose Arcadio's uncle had married and their offspring "had been born and had grown up with a cartilaginous tail in the shape of a cockscrew and with a small tuft of hair on the tip". Incidentally, all the activities in the Buendia family seem to move inevitably towards the fulfillment of the oracle. The excesses and abnormal behavior of her progeny heighten Ursula's fear of the realization of the curse. Inspite of her indefatigable efforts, she is unable to stop the cause of events. The fear of a greater power making the curse come alive drives her to go through repetitive actions of examining every newborn in the family for the accursed tail. The incestuous attractions between the family members keep on recurring generation after generation. The women who attract the Buendia men are invariably the same: three Buendias of two generations lust after Pilar Ternera; the twins enjoy Petra Cotes, and a nephew as well as a grand - nephew is tormented by Amaranta. Pilar Ternera sees the Buendia fascination for incest as a circular retardation of linear time. The Buendia offsprings
are only repeating themselves all over again. Ursula is disturbed by the iterative nature of incidents in her family, the name of her progeny, their physical appearance and eccentricities all remind her of the curse.

Incest runs throughout the book from the fear of Ursula to consummate her marriage with Jose Arcadio for the fear of giving birth to a child with a pigtail. The book ultimately ends with the realization of the curse and the fulfillment of the prophecy.

Marquez says

I merely wanted to tell the story of a family who for a hundred years did everything they could to prevent having a son with a pig's tail and just because of their very efforts to avoid having one they ended by doing so 19.

The incest motif recurs in the novel when. Amaranta feels sexual desire even for her little great, great nephew Jose Arcadio every time she bathes him. Her incestuous leanings spell bitterness, hatred and loneliness. Solitude marks the beginning and the end, all characters live in the grip of solitude. Amaranta and Aureliano Jose fondling of one another is stopped in a stroke by
Amaranta who thinks she has gone too far as a result of which both are cast into a new solitude.

The final consummation between Aureliano Babilonia and Amaranta Ursula marks the violation of the incest prohibition. Aureliano comes home and finds his child consumed by ants he realizes that he and Amaranta Ursula had been seeking each other “through the most intricate labyrinths of blood until they would engender the mythological animal that was to bring the line to an end” 20. The child symbolizes the complete and absolute destruction of the family rather then the hoped for release from solitude. In fact, it is solitude that rules the town and besets the lives of all the Buendias. It is this archetypal ethos that marks links and binds the seven generations of the novel.

Solitude rules Macondo and the world of the book, like Thor with his hammer, like Siva with his trident. It possesses both the positive and the negative powers of the archetype, it fosters as well as condemns 21.

The history of Macondo comes a full circle; the power of time is great and on finding themselves caught the world of the Buendia’s starts deteriorating rapidly. Finding no escape from fate, the Buendia family succumbs to the realm of decay and
decline. The downfall is hastened all the more by the death of Ursula whose warmth and radiating presence has held the family together. At the end of the book Macondo comes back to its prehistoric state. Time has turned a full circle. The solitude of the title derives not just from Macondo’s physical isolation but from ‘the solitary destiny’ of the family itself. One hundred years is exploration of all aspects of solitude, loneliness and sexual anguish. Macondo is condemned to solitude and is so remote from the rest of the world that it possesses its very own laws of nature and logic.

The history of the Buendias is predicted one hundred years in advance by Melquiades. In the manner of Nostradamus, he prophesies the end of the Macondian civilization in a span of one hundred years. The prophecy leaves no space for any hope but ultimate death. Like the characters, even the weather is obsessive. If it is hot then it is immensely hot, if it rains, it continues excessively. Whenever plague occurs it is extreme, if massacre takes place it is an immense loss of life till finally the whole town is erased. The destruction of Macondo is paralleled to the disintegration of Buendia family and both deteriorate steadily through the course of the novel.

The lives of the seven generations of Buendias are so similar to one another that they give the impression of a single
action and create the effect of spatiality. The epigraph in Melquiades secret parchment. “The first of the line is tied to a tree and the last is being eaten by ants” 22 is the best example of spatiality. Two temporal events that are separated in time over a period of one hundred years are simultaneously juxtaposed. When Aureliano Babilonia sees his child, the child with the pig’s tail being eaten by the ants, he experiences a moment of epiphany “at that prodigious instant” 23. The image of the past and the present flash across his eyes as he foresees himself in the simultaneous act of reading on the verge of getting destroyed along-with Macondo. The images of the Buendia history are presented like a simultaneous picture on a screen, eternally frozen in time space for that one ‘instant’. Another example of spatiality is the first sentence of the story. “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” 24. Here the event of Colonel Aureliano Buendias execution is foreshadowed; the memory of his childhood transports the temporal level from the future to the present act of reading. It brings together memory and prophecy, the dream of a life of fullness and the certainty of a violent end. Memory also plays an important past. It not only links the characters with their past but also acts as a constant reminder of their previous action, memories also signifies psychological implication.
Solitude, the novel's central theme, knits personal destinies closely. Whatever their essence, all the characters are born condemned to suffer it. It is a universal law.

Solitude is a trait of Buendías. Solitude is also the mirror that recovers a life in the passing instant of a recurring time. Solitude occurs and recurs over and over again and haunts the house of Buendías. Solitude is not a physical thing but a state of mind, an emotional mindset and all the characters inherit it. Solitude is also passed on from generation to generation. Colonel Aureliano Buendía making and remaking his gold fishes over and over again bears testimony to solitude's iterative nature. Every single character in the novel right from Jose Arcadio and Ursula to the last of the generations Aureliano and Amaranta Ursula is a victim of appalling loneliness. Some of the characters end their lives in total isolation locked for years in a room, tied for years to a tree or alone forgotten in a deserted house. The rain lasts for four years, eleven months, and two days, and all this time Jose Arcadio Segundo was reading the parchments. Even the dead who haunt the house are in solitude and Melquiades the gypsy returns to life from distant shores where he had died of fever because he could not endure death's solitude. Such is the grip of solitude that it breaks the barriers of
death even. Melquiades is a being without a beginning or an end. He is the wanderer who circulates freely through the space of the novel and beyond, crossing without effort the boundaries between the living and the dead.

Michael Wood says,

A rich, funny, powerful, and appealing book, but it is all but silenced by the sound of the echoing word, solitude. Loneliness in Macondo and among the Buendias is not an accidental condition, something that could be alleviated by better communications or more friends, and it is not the metaphysical loneliness of existentialists, a stage shared by all men. It is a particular vocation, a shape of character that is inherited, certainly, but also chosen, a doom that looks inevitable but is freely endorsed. The Buendias seek out their solitude, enclose themselves in it as if it were their shroud.

Solitude can be seen in all the character and though they all share the common condition of solitude, this very solitude isolates them from one another. "The unfathomable solitude that
separated and united them at the same time." The observation of each lonely Buendia isolates him from the other. Solitude is most marked in Colonel Aureliano Buendia. Marquez himself in an interview said,

\[ \text{The story of Colonel Aureliano Buendia - the wars he fought and his progress to power - is really a progress towards solitude.} \]

Colonel Aureliano Buendia discovers the contradiction of power in the life of a rebel and then subsides into a protracted period of solitude. He pursues a highly repetitive act of gold craftsmanship, making and unmaking gold fishes and understands that the "secret of a good age is simply an honorable pact with solitude." One day he sees a circus and in it the parable of his own life. As the circus ends, he recognizes his solitude in the emptiness of the street. Defeat forces the Colonel into a fruitless solitude. He is the most highly individualized member of the family and remains an isolated, eccentric figure.

Amaranta spends her entire life in "weaving her shroud. It might have been said that she wove during the day and unwove during the night, and not with any hope of defeating solitude in that way, but, quite the contrary, in order to nurture it." She lives in isolation, and spends her life being jealous of Rebeca;
she keeps alive her hatred for Rebeca while she brings up the various children in the family. Her relationship with men like Pietro Crespi and then Colonel Gerineldo Marquez all remain unfulfilled. In fact the men are cast into solitude because of her. “the slow martyrdom with which she had frustrated the life of Colonel Gerineldo Marquez”31. Her incestuous relationship with Aureliano Jose is “a palliative for her solitude”32 but when she realizes her mistake she cut off the relationship with one stroke and now it is Aureliano Jose who seeks “consolation for his abrupt solitude”33. Jose Arcadio Segundo turns from solitude to action, “a short time later the drumbeats, the shrill of the bugle, the shouting and running of the people told him that not only had the game of pool come to an end, but also the silent and solitary game that he had been playing with himself ever since that dawn execution”34.

Ursula, the most sensible and stable member of the family tries to cure her sons of their solitude mistaking their loneliness to be a condition that they have worms but she herself succumbs to solitude “in the impenetrable solitude of decrepitude she had such clairvoyance as she examined the most insignificant happenings in the family that for the first time she saw clearly the truths that her busy life in former times had prevented her from seeing” 35.
Rebeca, the adopted daughter of Jose Arcadio and Ursula also exemplifies the condition of solitude that defines and dominates the novel. Her duality of character, her innate primitive sense and her desire for refinement is reflected in her choice of men - Pietro Crespi and Jose Arcadio yet she lives out her life in embittered solitude as a widow. Her isolation is so intense that she has no inkling of the happenings of the world outside, she sends out currency of the previous century without realizing it has gone out of circulation and it was then “that they saw to what a fantastic point her separation from the world had arrived and they understood that it would be impossible to rescue her from her stubborn enclosure while she still had a breath of life in her” 36.

Solitude in the book is of various types and every character experiences it, There is the solitude of birth that we see in the case of seventeen Aurelianos “seventeen men of the most varied appearance, of all types and colours, but all with a solitary air that would have been enough to identify them anywhere on earth”37. The solitude of burying oneself alive as in the case of Rebeca who shut herself up in a house never to be seen again. The solitude of silence is that of Meme and Mauricio Babilonia and the solitude of madness of Jose Arcadio the first who remains tied to a tree and speaks in a language unknown to
the people of the house. Fernanda, the wife of Aureliano Segundo who isolates her husband from herself, suffers the solitude of pride; she is not close to her daughters, Rene and Amaranta Ursula. Fernanda lives in solitude and at the end of her life she is supported by Petra Cotes and it is then that lonely and alone she becomes 'human' in her solitude. Petra Cotes is a woman who is responsible for the prosperity and love in Aureliano Segundo’s life and together in their happiness they find a shared solitude as they lead an absolutely isolated life. The solitude of waiting endlessly is undergone by Pilar Ternera, who waits for men in her life but finally fed up of waiting gives her body to every one till her body becomes old and disfigured and then she lends her room to lovers. The solitude of dedication is of Santa Sofia de la Piedad who spends her life rearing the children and asking for no reward in return. The solitude of innocence is of Remedios the Beauty who “stayed there wandering through the desert of solitude, bearing no cross on her back, maturing in her dreams without nightmares, her interminable baths, her unscheduled meals, her deep and prolonged silences that had no memory”38. There is also present in the book solitude shared between individuals as of Jose Arcadio and Prudencio Aguilar, each shared their solitude as they were lonely and the two bitter enemies became friends while Aureliano and Fernanda did not share their solitude but
continued living on their own while the solitude of the house is shared by Aurelanio Babilonia and Jose Arcadio. “That drawing closer together of two solitary people of the same blood was far from friendship, but it did allow them both to bear up better under the fathomless solitude that simultaneously brought them together and separated them”39. Solitude is also equated with death when Colonel Aureliano locks himself up and the family thinks he is dead. The solitude of power is also personified in the Colonel. The solitude of longing is of Melquiades who comes back from the dead because he could not live in solitude and longed for Macondo. Thus the solitude of these one hundred years of events lives in all the characters as a condition fixed in the spiral of their history.

The characters find ways of defeating solitude. The Colonel makes and unmakes fishes; Amaranta sews and unsews her shroud. Several of the men are driven by a need to enter the solitude of the alchemical quest and the reading and rereading of Melquiades parchments. All these solitary games are meant to hoodwink time. Even the last Aureliano remains true to his name by growing in his workroom and nurturing his solitude. The Buendias cannot fulfil themselves and as a result they become unhappy with their actual condition and tend to withdraw into a frustrated solitude. “The uncertainty of the future made them
turn their hearts towards the past". Fear of the new, the unknown and the different makes them turn towards the familiar past.

John Leonard says,

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

The novels circular and dynamic structure reduces the Buendia family to an isolated individual. The novel is like a gyrating wheel, circular not linear. It’s constant motion make us move from present to past to future with ease and in all time, it also helps to link the beginning and the end. Solitude is omnipresent in the life histories of almost all the Buendia’s. Generations sink deeper and deeper into the morass of solitude. History of the Buendia family is a chain of irreparable repetitions, a gyrating wheel that would have continued turning forever had it not been "for the progressive and irremediable wearing out of the axle".

The theme of love in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is seen in a revelatory and redemptive light, the novel pivots around multifarious failures of love. Every member of the
family, from the Colonel to the others cannot love. Ursula realizes, "that the son for whom she would have given her life was simply a man incapable of love". Even the women, Remedios, Amaranta, Rebeca, Fernanda are wrapped up in themselves and arouse the passion of men but cannot establish a meaningful satiating relationship with them.

One Hundred Years of Solitude portrays many characters whose isolation ranges from the sheer loneliness and physical longings of actually being alone in time and place, to the solitude of being alone in power, to the paradoxical solitude of a personal and intimate love.

Love in hundred years always ends disastrously. The love between Ursula and Jose Arcadio is in trouble because she refuses to consummate the marriage for fear of producing a monster. Her reaction makes Jose Arcadio murder Prudencio Aguilar. Rebeca loves Pietro Crespi but because of some or the other tragic turn the wedding is postponed and the love dies, then Amaranta loves Pietro Crespi and leads him on but when he proposes marriage she rejects him saying that she would not marry him even if she were dead. Pietro Crespi cannot bear the hurt and commits suicide. The love and marriage of Jose Arcadio
and Rebeca though a happy marriage ends in the death of Jose Arcadio, a murder that never gets solved in Macondo, making a love affair end in death. Love is always tragic, ending in catastrophe. The marriage of Colonel Aureliano and Remedios also ends in the death of Remedios. Though they are happy together and she fills the house with happiness she dies "poisoned by her own blood, with a pair of twins crossed in her stomach". Meme loves Mauricio Babilonia with an intense heart but their love is also doomed because Fernanda comes to know of their affair and Mauricio is shot while he is trying to enter the house from the back yard to meet a waiting Meme. Though this love doesn't end in death, Mauricio is crippled because of a bullet wound in his spine and spends his life in bed. "He died of old age in solitude, without a moan, without a protest, without a single moment of betrayal, tormented by memories and by the yellow butterflies, who did not give him a moment's peace, and ostracized as a chicken thief." Meme Buendia too withdraws into silence and retreats into her own cocoon and spends her entire life in a convent never once opening her mouth. Remedios the Beauty, though herself unconscious of her beauty has a fatal effect on her lovers, a young commander of guards dies under her window driven mad by rebuffs. Another man watching her having a bath slips and dies. Remedios the beauty it was said did not "give off a breath
of love but a fatal emanation"\textsuperscript{47}. In fact it is the inability of the Buendía’s to love that result in their solitude. If love were fulfilling then there would be no solitude. This lack of fulfillment makes them withdraw into a frustrated solitude. Marquez in interview with Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza says the solitude of the Buendia family comes from their lack of love.

You can see in the book that in a whole century the Aureliano with the pig’s tale is the only Buendia to have been conceived with love. The Buendías were incapable of loving and this is the key to their solitude and their frustration.\textsuperscript{48}

because of solitude and the reaction to it both the Buendías and Macondo finally end without ever being able to conquer solitude.

On her return to Macondo, Amaranta Ursula seems to have escaped the pox of solitude that marks so many of her line. She lives and moves comfortably in the element of time without nostalgia or remorse till she also finally succumbs to it. The narrator of hundred years stresses the tragic inability of the Buendia’s to overcome solitude. The only way to transcend the common solitude of the family is through love and that is why the love between Aureliano Babilonia and Amaranta Ursula is
seen as redemption. They are secluded by solitude of love and loose there “sense of reality, the notion of time, the rhythm of daily habits” 49. They are the only people who withdraw more and more into solitude while defying it through love. The last baby, Jose Arcadio is expected and considered by Amaranta Ursula as a liberator, he is expected to cleanse them of this heritage of “pernicious vices and solitary calling, for he was the only one in a century who had been engendered with love” 50. But the love ends disastrously and the child who was supposed to liberate them once again unifies them to solitude.

Within this great book Marquez has encompassed all the three leitmotifs of love, power and solitude beautifully. We have seen that solitude is an integral part of the Buendia clan. The characters experience love with all its manifestations. Sexual love is dominant in the novel and the act of love has different meaning for different people. In Colonel Aureliano Buendia’s life girls merely come and go in the darkness. Aureliano Segundo and his mistress Petra Cotes have a good relationship. Power is the political power for Colonel Aureliano and the wars he fought and lost. Power structure of a different kind also lies within the women of the Buendia family. Ursula is the power behind the house. It is she who controls the house with an iron
fist. She is the power of the family and all draw and seek inspiration from her.

The novel therefore also succeeds in creating a total myth of Latin America from its earliest days. Macondo is actually the author's cosmic world of characters and events, symbolizing Colombia, Latin America and the third world. The rich and varied experiences from his childhood family life coupled with the troubled historical and political situation of the country inspired Marquez to write this wonderful work of art. He admits that some of his characters, in the novel, events and happenings, history etc. are facts to which he stands witness. The book is a collective microcosm of Latin America. Marquez says in an interview with Rita Guibert.

The whole disaster of Macondo - which is a telluric disaster as well - comes from this lack of solidarity - the solitude which results when everyone is acting for himself alone. That's is then a political concept, and interests me as such - to give solitude the political connotation I believe it should have.
Here solitude is also associated with the politics of Latin America. Marquez in his acceptance speech on Nobel Prize for literature, equated solitude with the estrangement of Latin America that is, the reluctance on the part of other nations to accept the Latin American nations for what they really are, he suggests that other countries should accept these differences, accept Latin America for what it is, and so remove it from its state of solitude.

The book reflects not only the colour and shapes of Latin America but also its despair and irony. The book can be interpreted as nostalgia for paradise and a meditation on the history of cruelty, lust, greed and fear. While at the same time dealing with the social and political problems common to most Latin American countries. The thin line between reality and fiction ceases to exist any more. History and myth are shown to intermingle within the structure of the novel. Marquez has skillfully projected and utilized the dimensions of time which are woven into the themes of solitude, incest, history, politics, and death etc. Also linear, cyclical, historical, psychological, temporal and spatial time are presented brilliantly. One Hundred Years of Solitude is the story of a search for meaning and fulfillment, a quest of solitude that can be summed up as the
parchment condensing family history into an instant “perfectly placed in the order of man’s time and space”.

This singular treatment of time can be attributed to singularity of the Latin American reality, which is full of strange incident and occurrences. Marquez feels that the rest of the world has failed to understand this uniqueness which enhances the isolation of Latin America. As Marquez has said in his Nobel Prize address.

The interpretation of our reality through patterns not our own serves only to make us evermore unknown, ever less free, ever more solitary.

This probably explains why the theme of solitude figures so prominently in his writings. The isolation of a person is extended to the isolation of the whole continent or vice versa. It not only encompasses the Latin American continent but also becomes a part of human condition as in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Jonathan Baldos words aptly say

Garcia Marquez’s novels show solitude to have insinuated itself into every nook of experience. No one is immune from solitude: neither those who repeat, in an apparent
attempt to unburden themselves of memory,
nor those who scrupulously resist the
temptation to repeat; neither those who are
most susceptible to nostalgia⁵⁴.
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