The Center for the Humanities, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Great World Texts

General Instructions for the Teacher

Preparation

The following materials are available for preparation of the units:

Unit 1

Handout # 1: "The Uncertain Old Man Whose Real Existence Was the Simplest of his Enigmas": http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_biography.html

Handout # 2: (Suggested) Janes, Regina. "A Myth of Origins for a Mythic Novel" (31-38)

Unit 2

Handout # 3: Mellen, Joan. "People of the One Hundred Years of Solitude" (14-25)

Handout # 4: Mellen, Joan. "Major Themes" (25-8)

Handout # 5: Johnston, Jan. "The Buendías: Men and Women" http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM

Handout # 6: Janes, Regina. "Principles of Construction" (81-96)

Handout # 7: "The Solitude of Latin America." Nobel Prize Lecture. http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_nobel.html

Unit 3

Handout # 8: Janes, Regina. "Magic Realism: Does He Or Doesn't He?" (97-106)

Unit 4

Handout # 9: Wood, Michael. "The History of Paradise" (excerpt in Mellen, 75-83)

Handout # 10: Wood, Michael. Map 1 (fictional setting)

Handout # 11: Wood, Michael. Map 2 (Caribbean Lowlands of Colombia)

Handout # 12: (Suggested) Merrell, Floyd. "José Arcadio Buendía's Scientific Paradigms: Man in Search of Himself" (21-32)

Unit 5

Handout # 13: Janes, Regina. "Liberals, Conservatives, and Bananas: Colombian Politics in the Fictions of Gabriel García Márquez" (125-146)

Handout # 14: Johnston, Jan. "Time as Linear History in the Novel" and "Time as Circular History" http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM

Handout # 15: Wood, Michael. "Sleep and Forgetting" (excerpt in Mellen 87-9)

Unit 6

Handout # 16: González Echevarría, Roberto. "*Cien años de soledad*: The Novel as Myth and Archive" (358-380)

Unit Structures

- Units 1-3 are intended to be taught in order. They provide students with basic knowledge about *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and its author, as well as with strategies to undertake close reading. They also give a basic foundation for more detailed and specific readings such as those suggested in Units 4-6.

- Units 4, 5, 6 are interrelated but can also be completed independently. However, it is advisable to teach Units 5 and 6 in this order.
- Since the different topics included in Units 1-6 are recurrent throughout novel it is also possible to combine aspects of different units in one class.

- A basic series of lessons consists of four Units (1-3 and 4 OR 5).

- An intermediate/advanced series of lessons consists of five to six units (1-3 and 4, 5 OR 1-3 and 5, 6 OR 1-6).

- Units 5 and 6 might be of special interest for use in history classes.

Close Reading Strategies

By "close reading" we mean the careful interpretation of a relatively brief passage of text. This reading technique emphasizes the particular over the general. It requires the reader to pay attention to single words or ideas. We suggest organizing the close reading with a limited set of questions, generally a selection of the ones provided. This selection also can be used to compose a handout for the students. These questions are organized in pre-reading questions, which emphasize the most basic understanding of the text; and post-reading questions, which are meant to enhance interpretation and to facilitate further discussion. In most cases, the teacher is given hints to help the students understand the meaning of the text.

One possible way to organize the close readings is to read the text aloud once for the students. Next, organize the students into groups of two or three for a second reading. They may wish to look over the close reading questions before reading a second time. After the second reading, the students should answer the questions and share them with the entire class. Since some passages might be longer than others, it is advisable to make a selection and let students choose another one to complete the reading at home or, if applicable, to use later in the writing of a final paper or in other activities.

Student Materials

The files labeled "Student Materials" are considered handouts. The texts for the close readings, the close reading questions and post-reading activities must be selected and compiled according to the class's needs, level, and the time available.

Homework Assignments

Although homework is meant to be a preparation for the final paper/project, each assignment has also been designed to enrich the in-class activities and it can also be used as an individual activity with no need for a further completion.

Other Activities
These activities can be used both as homework or in order to design student project ideas according to the needs and interests of groups or individuals.

Other comments
Due to the numerous circular events, zigzags, and flashbacks in the novel, we strongly encourage students to read the whole book. The Buendías' story is an organic one; each part relies on the others. However, teachers might want to make their own selection according to the level and time available in class. If this is the case, we suggest making a selection from page 1 to 79 and adapting the Units accordingly.

A Note of caution
With One Hundred Years of Solitude, as with other "great texts," it is easy for students to pursue pre-fabricated term papers from Internet sites. Teachers may wish to raise academic honesty policies and to discuss the difference between paraphrase, citation, and undocumented borrowing.

Bibliography

García Márquez, Gabriel. One Hundred Years of Solitude. (trans. Gregory Rabassa). New York: Harper Perennial, 2006.

Givert, Rita. Seven Voices. Seven Latin American Writers Talk to Rita Guibert. (Trans. Frances Partridge. Introd. Emir Rodríguez Monegal). New York, Knopf, 1973.

González Echevarría, Roberto. "*Cien años de soledad*: The Novel as Myth and Archive." MLN, Vol. 99, No. 2, Hispanic Issue (Mar., 1984), pp. 358-380

Janes, Regina. "Liberals, Conservatives, and Bananas: Colombian Politics in the Fictions of Gabriel García Márquez." Gabriel García Márquez (ed. Harold Bloom). New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988.

---. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Modes of Reading. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1991.

Mellen, Joan. Literary Masterpieces. One Hundred Years of Solitude. Detroit: Gale Group, 2000.

Merrell, Floyd. "José Arcadio Buendía's Scientific Paradigms: Man in Search of Himself." Gabriel García Márquez (ed. Harold Bloom). New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988.

Parkinson Zamora, Lois. "Magical Romance/Magical Realism: Ghosts in U.S. and Latin American Fiction." Magical Realism. Theory, History, Community. (ed. Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris). Durham: Duke U P, 1995.

---. "The Myth of Apocalypse and Human Temporality in García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* and *El otoño del patriarca*." Gabriel García Márquez (ed. Harold Bloom). New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988.

Vargas Llosa, Mario. "García Márquez: From Aracataca to Macondo." Gabriel García Márquez (Ed. Harold Bloom). New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988.

Internet Resources

Answers.com
www.answers.com

Emory University. "Postcolonial Studies at Emory"
http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/MagicalRealism.html

Faris, Wendy B. "The Question of the Other: Cultural Critics of Magical Realism"
http://www.janushead.org/5-2/faris.pdf

Johnston, Jan
http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM

"Macondo"
www.themodernword.com/gabo/

National Public Radio
www.npr.org

Oprah's Book Club
www.oprah.com

Queen's University of Belfast. "The Imperial Archive Project"
http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEnglish/imperial/india/Magic.htm

Span. Journal of the South Pacific Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies
http://wwwmcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/litserv/SPAN/36/Baker.html

The New Yorker
http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/05/23/050523ta_talk_mcgrath

Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gabriel_Garcia_Marquez

List of Handouts

Handout # 1
http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_biography.html

Handout # 2
PDF file

Handout # 3
PDF file

Handout # 4
PDF file

Handout # 5
http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM

Handout # 6
PDF file

Handout # 7
http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_nobel.html

Handout # 8
PDF file

Handout # 9
PDF file

Handout # 10
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Handout # 11
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Handout # 12
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Handout # 13
PDF file

Handout # 14
http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM

Handout # 15
PDF file

Handout # 16
PDF File

García Márquez: Aracataca & Macondo

Unit 1: Basic information about the author and his book

Goal
Familiarize the students with the historical context, biographical information about the author, and the significance of this book in the Latin American Literature.

Internet Resources for Preparing the Introductory Discussion

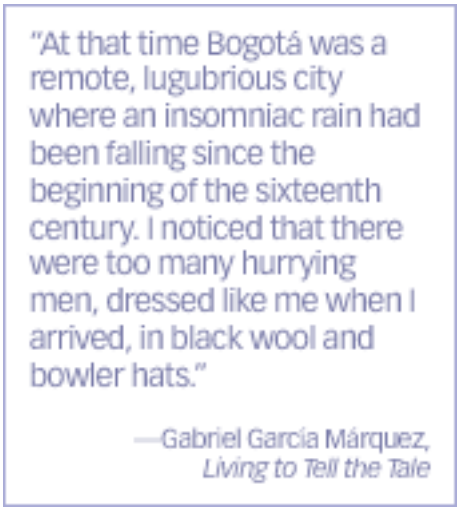
For information about the life of Gabriel García Márquez:
http://www.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/author/oyos_author_main.jhtml

For information about Colombia:
http://www.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/author/oyos_author_colombia.jhtml

I. Introductory Discussion

Suggested prompts

- Who is Gabriel García Márquez?
- From the title *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, what do you think the book is about?
- The novel is set in the town of Macondo. Do you think Macondo is a real place or just a creation of the author?
- García Márquez is from Colombia. What are your associations with the South American country of Colombia?
- García Márquez wrote this quote about Bogotá, the capital of Colombia. What elements of this quote are not literal or logical? What do you think he means metaphorically when he says these things that are not literal?



[If you have powerpoint capacity: Here is a powerpoint about Bogotá, Colombia. http://www.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/author/slide/oyos_author_slide_colombia_01.jhtml
Is it similar to what you imagined? Who can tell us the name of the hero of independence movements in Colombia and other parts of South America?]

II. Lecture

You can find detailed information about the author and his work at "The Uncertain Old Man Whose Real Existence Was the Simplest of his Enigmas": http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_biography.html
(also available as **Handout #1**).
Give the students the following set of questions to read before the lecture and to use during the lecture to organize their notes. Your lecture should address the questions.

About the Author and his Time

- Where is Gabriel García Márquez from?
- Are there any similarities between his hometown and Macondo?
- What are the main political parties that represent the political framework of García Márquez's fiction? Why are they so important to his fiction? Are they regionally located?
- What was the 1928 Banana Strike Massacre?
- What aspects of García Márquez's family most influenced his writing?
- What authors and/or books most influenced his writing?
- What was García Márquez's first job?

About <u>One Hundred Years of Solitude</u>

- How did the process of writing the novel start?
- What did he mention about the tone of the book? Why do you think his words might be useful to understand the uses of reality/fantasy in the novel?
- What is the importance of this book in Latin American literature? Why was it so successfully acclaimed?

<u>Other suggested readings for the teacher:</u>
Janes, Regina. "A Myth of Origins for a Mythic Novel" (31-38) **[Handout # 2]**

III. In-Class Activities

Pre-Reading questions for Reading 1 (below)

- What do you think Mario Vargas Llosa means by "extraliterary reasons" when he discusses the enormous popularity of the book?
- What does a "total" novel mean?
- What does Vargas Llosa mean by "unlimited accesibility"?

Reading 1

In about the middle of 1967, the novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was published in Buenos Aires, provoking a literary earthquake throughout Latin America. The critics recognized the book as a masterpiece of the art fiction and the public endorsed this opinion, systematically exhausting new editions, which, at one point, appeared at the astounding rate of one a week. Onvernight, García Márquez became almost as famous as a great soccer player or an eminent singer of boleros. The first translations have received an equally enthusiastic response. But the reasons behind the popularity of a book are hard to detect and often extraliterary, and what is especially remarkable in the case of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is that its thindering fame should be due to virtues which can only be defined as artistic.

What then are the virtues of this book whose existence contradicts the gloomy assertions that the novel is an exhausted genre in the process of extinction? I wish single out three. First, the fact that this is a 'total' novel, in the tradition of those insanely ambitious creations which aspire to compete with reality on an equal basis, confronting it with an image and qualitatively matching it in vitality, vastness and complexity. In the second place, something that we could call its 'plural' nature; that is, its capacity for being at one time things which were thought to be opposites: traditional and modern; regional and universal; imaginary and realistic. Yet perhaps the most misterious of its virtues is the third: its unlimited accessibility; that is, its power to be within anyone's reach, with distinct but abundant rewards for everyone…" (Vargas Llosa 5-6)

Post-reading questions/activities

Questions…	**your answers…**
• Do you know of any other novel, which can be called "total"? If so, explain why.	
• Do you agree with the statement that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is "within anyone's reach"? Explain if "yes" or if "no."	
• What part/passages of the novel that you have read so far would you pick as the most representative of Vargas Llosa's words? Justify your choice.	

IV. Homework Assignment

- Look for some covers of different editions of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (also in Spanish) on the Internet. Write a short report comparing these versions of the various interpretations the cover illustrations suggest in different years and countries. Are the English cover illustrations similar to those in Spanish? What does the original version (Editorial Sudamericana, 1967) show on the cover? What does this illustration have to do with the story?

(The idea behind this assignment is to encourage students to research on some of the cultural interpretations regarding the general meaning of the novel. Additionally, this assignment has been designed to help students in the process of writing a research paper).

V. Other Activities

- Listen to the NPR "Book Review: Gabriel García Márquez Memoir" http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1540735 What is the importance of Aracataca in García Márquez's books?

The Buendías' Solitude

Unit 2: Characters, plot and main themes of the novel

Goal
Introduce the students to the general structure of the book and its main characters.
Help students understand the main topic of the novel.
Help students develop a general interpretation of the book's themes.

Internet Resources for Preparing the Introductory Discussion

For information about the structure of the book:
http://www.answers.com/topic/one-hundred-years-of-solitude-novel-1
http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/novel/oyos_novel_main.jhtml

For information about characters:
http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/character/oyos_character_main.jhtml
http://www.answers.com/topic/one-hundred-years-of-solitude-novel-2

For information about the main themes of the novel:
http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/novel/oyos_novel_themes.jhtml
http://www.answers.com/topic/one-hundred-years-of-solitude-novel-3

I. Introductory Discussion
Suggested prompts

- At this point in your reading, what do you feel that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is about?
- What are the main characters' names?
- Can you describe these characters?
- Which characters so far best incarnate the idea of solitude, in your opinion? Why? (For the teacher: read "People of the *One Hundred Years of Solitude"* by Joan Mellen 14-25. **[Handout # 3]**
- What is the Buendía family like?
- What is the meaning of name repetitions throughout the different generations of the family? (For the Teacher: although students might have not yet read as far as page 181 it might be useful to give the narrator's comment, from Úrsula's perspective, on the male names of the family):

> "'We'll call him José Arcadio,' [Aureliano Segundo] said.
> Fernanda del Carpio, the beautiful woman he had married the year before, agreed. Úrsula, on the other hand, could not conceal a vague feeling of doubt. 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." (181)

II. Lecture

You can find detailed information for the preparation of your lecture in "Major Themes" (25-8) [**Handout # 4]** by Joan Mellen, "The Buendías: Men and Women" by Jan Johnson **http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM**
[also available as **Handout # 5]**; "Principles of Construction" (81-96) by Regina Janes **[Handout # 6]**.
Give the students the following set of questions to read before the lecture and to use during the lecture to organize their notes. Your lecture should address the questions.

- What are the major themes of the novel, according to Joan Mellen? [For the Teacher: themes are listed below, under "In-class Activities"].
- What are the differences, if any, between the male and the female characters? How are they presented to the reader?
- Describe the narrator's perspective in telling the story of the Buendía family.
- What does Regina Janes say about the process of reading *One Hundred Years of Solitude*? [For the Teacher: See especially Janes 83].
- What is the main structural pattern of the book? [For the Teacher: See especially Janes 88].
- What are some of the literary influences that appear in the book? What are the different literary genres that converge in the structure of the novel? [For the Teacher: See especially Janes 88].
- Why have critics argued that *One Hundred Years of Solitude*'s structure is "baroque"? [For the Teacher: See especially Janes 90-1]. Think of some examples of the book's "baroque" quality.
- Some other critics have described the novel as "a speaking mirror." What does that mean? [For the Teacher: See especially Suzanne Jill Levine's quote in Janes 95].

III. In-class activites

- Identify some of the passages of the book in which the theme of solitude is particularly relevant.
- Can you think of different consequences of solitude in the book?
- What are the political connotations of solitude? Does solitude stand as a symbol for something else? Read the author's Nobel Prize acceptance lecture: http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_nobel.html) **[**also available as **Handout # 7]**
- According to Joan Mellen, there are some major themes connected to solitude, in some cases, in the book. Try to identify at least one passage in the novel where those themes are present.

Themes	Some hints for the teacher	Passage	how?
The destructive power of solitude	32, 133, 137-8, etc.		
Solitude and the passage of time	1, 171, 266, etc.		
Incest and solitude	20, 91-2, 111, etc.		
Source of love and its power	58, 79, etc.		
How we are different people at different stages of our lives	88, 91, 187, etc.		

IV. Homework Assignments

- Some critics have argued that one of the major conflicts in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the permanent struggle between tradition and modernity. Do you agree with this statement? If so, explain why and write a paragraph that serves as an argument for this idea. If not, explain what you think is the major conflict of the novel, according to what you have read so far, and write a paragraph that justifies your statement. Later, when you have finished reading the book, come back to this assignment and check whether you agree with your first answer or not.

(The idea behind this assignment is to encourage students to come up with their own ideas and learn how to justify them in the process of reading literature).

- For fun: Take the "Quiz" for the section you have read on the Oprah Book Club website:

http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/character/oyos_character_quiz.jhtml

V. Other activites

- In groups of three people, pick your favorite character from *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and write his/her fictitious biography.

- Read García Márquez's Nobel Prize Lecture and analyze the theme of solitude in his works, making reference to quotations from the book. What are the dangers, in García Márquez'terms, that a culture undergoes in being interpreted and/or stereotyped by other cultures? Mention the specific examples given in the lecture.

Is It All About Magic?

Unit 3: Magic Realism

Goal
Provide the students with a basic understanding of the term "magic realism" (also known as "magical realism") and its uses in literary criticism.

Internet Resources for Preparing the Introductory Discussion

For an overview of the term:
http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_mr.html
http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/MagicalRealism.html
http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/magic/oyos_magic_features.jhtml

For an overview of problematic connotations of the term:
http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEnglish/imperial/india/Magic.htm
http://wwwmcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/litserv/SPAN/36/Baker.html
http://www.janushead.org/5-2/faris.pdf

I. Introductory Discussion
Suggested prompts

- What does "magic realism" mean?
- Can you give some examples of what you consider might fit in this category in literature, cinema, etc?

II. Lecture
Prepare your remarks by reading "Magic Realism: Does He or Doesn't He?" by Regina Janes (97-106) **[Handout # 8].**
Give the students the following set of questions to read before the lecture and to use during the lecture to organize their notes. Your lecture should address the questions**.**

- What does the term "magic realism" describe?

- When and where was this term first coined? [For the Teacher: See especially Janes 98]

- What is the nature of the debate about the concept of "magic realism"? What do anti-magic realists think about the term? [For the Teacher: See especially Janes 102]

- What does Gregory Rabassa assert about the term? Why? [For the Teacher: See especially Janes 102]

III. In-Class activities

Pre-reading questions for Reading 1 (below)

- What does the term "transgression" mean?
- What is the difference between the individual and the collective? Can you give some examples?
- What are "magical instabilities" in magic realist representations? Compare a "stable" description in a realist text that you have read to a magic realist description in reading 2, 3, 4, or 5.

Reading 1

"Magical realist texts, in their most distinct departure from the conventions of literary realism, often seem to pulsate with proliferations and conflations of worlds, with appearances and disappearances and multiplications of selves and societies. These magical instabilities depend upon an array of narrative strategies that multiply/blur/superimpose/unify or otherwise transgress the solidity and singularity of realistic fictional events, characters, settings. In magical realist fiction, individuals, times, places, have a tendency to transform magically into other (or all) individuals, times, places. This slippage from the individual to the collective to the cosmic is often signaled by spectral presences. Consider, for example, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, where Sethe is haunted by her dead daughter, a symbolic and historical embodiment of both her past and her future…" (Parkinson Zamora 501)

Reading 2

Read from page 131 (from "Not all the news was good…") to 133 (up to "…until the engineers from the banana company covered the grave over with a shell of concrete")

Reading 3

Read the last paragraph of page 140

Reading 4

Read page 183 (from "No one had gone into the room again"… to the end of page)

Reading 5

Read page 236 (from "Don't you feel well?" to "…highest-flying birds of memory could reach her")

Post-reading questions/activities

- Why are the excerpts in **Readings 2-5** considered to be good examples of magic realism? Did the examples you gave at the beginning of the lecture have anything in common with the passages of the novel you just read?
- Identify three other examples of magic realism in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. How do they contribute to the overall development of the novel?
- What is the aesthetic impact created by magic realism?
- Compare the use of magic realism in García Márquez's book with the use of this technique in other books or movies with which you are familiar.

IV. Homework Assignment

- Research articles, encyclopaedias, etc., on the possible contribution of the problematic term "magic realism" to a discussion of political aspects of society. Write a short paragraph about the political consequences of the term.

(The idea behind this assignment is to encourage students to think of the implications of certain literary tools beyond the limits of the text).

V. Other Activities

- Listen to NPR "Commentary: Meeting Gabriel García Márquez" http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1495140

What does the journalist Katie Davis say about her "magical experience" while interviewing García Márquez?

- On page 388 the narrator of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* says:

"For a man like him, holed up in written reality, those stormy sessions that began in the bookstore and ended at dawn in the brothels were a revelation. It had never occurred to him [Aureliano] until then to think that literature was the best plaything that had ever been invented to make fun of people, as Álvaro demonstrated during one night of revels."

What do you think about this passage? Do you think García Márquez might just be making fun of you? What does "written reality mean"?

Charting Macondo

Unit 4: The Symbolic Geography of Macondo

Goal
Provide the students with a detailed understanding of the imaginary "geography" of Macondo: its meanings and structures.

Internet Resources for Preparing the Introductory Discussion

For information on Macondo or Aracataca:
http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/novel/oyos_novel_macondo.jhtml
http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_images_house.html

I. Introductory Discussion

Prepare this introduction by reading "The History of Paradise" (excerpt in Mellen, 75-83) by Michael Wood **[Handout # 9]**

Suggested prompts

- What is Macondo like? [For the teacher: See pages 1-9 of the novel]
- Where is Macondo located? What does the location of Macondo have to do with the title of the novel?
- Why was Macondo established? Why did Úrsula Iguarán and José Arcadio Buendía abandon their original town?
- What is the importance of the Buendías' home in the town?
- What kind of changes does Macondo undergo with the passage of time? [For the teacher: See especially pages 223-9]

II. In-class Activities

Pre-reading questions for Reading 1 (below)

- Why does José Arcadio Buendía want to move out after settling down in Macondo?
- What did they find in their trip? What was the meaning of that discovery?
- Why is there more than one version of Macondo's map?

Reading 1

Read from page 9 (from "That spirit of social initiative dissapeared…") to 13 (up to "If I have to die for the rest of you to stay here, I will die")

Pre-reading assignment

- Before reading the following paragraphs draw a map of Macondo's location based on the information given in the novel

Reading 2

"Where is this Eden? If we draw a map based on the information given to us in the first two chapters of the novel, we get something like Map 1 **[For the Teacher: show Map 1 to students. Handout # 10].**

We have no way of knowing the shape of the coastline, but we know that the sea is to the nort of Macondo; that a range of mountains separates Macondo from Riohacha; that Drake is supposed to have attacked Riohacha in the sixteenth century and hunted crocodiles there; that there are swamps to the south and west to Macondo; and that roads, towns and a sort of modernity can be found two day's travel to the west, 'on the other side of the swamp' [39:43]. We hear of 'colonial coins' [10:12]; of 'authorities,' 'a government," and a distant 'capital' [11:13].

Northern Colombia, in which there is an 'ancient city' called Riohacha, looks something like Map 2 **[For the Teacher: show Map 2 to students. Handout # 11]**.

Macondo is the name of a banana plantation near Aracataca, García Márquez' birthplace, but this scarcely signifies, since it is now internationally famous as the name of a mythical community **[For the Teacher: see also Unit 6]**, the Latin America equivalent of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County. The point about the maps is not to say that the setting of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is Colombia –if García Márquez had wanted to name his country he would have done so –only that its geography and history are not different; that the imagined world has a real situation in time and space. The analogy with Faulkner is exact in this respect, I think. We are not going to find the town of Jefferson on any map of Mississippi. But there isn't anywhere else on earth it could be" (Wood in Mellen 78).

Post-reading questions/activities

- Try to re-create the map José Arcadio Buendía had drawn after he had come to believe Macondo was surrounded by water [see page 12].
- Does the map you drew before **Reading 2** look similar to the other students' maps, the map provided by your teacher, and José Arcadio Buendía's map?
- What does "Eden" mean? Can you give some examples of the cultural uses of that word? Why does critic Michael Wood call Macondo an "Eden"?
- What is the cause that, according to the narrator, would explain the following lines:

> "From a clean and active man, José Arcadio Buendía changed into a man lazy in appearance, careless in his dress, with a wild beard that Úrsula managed to trim with great effort and a kitchen knife" (9-10)
>
> Are these changes related to modernization and science?

Other suggested readings:
Merrell, Floyd. "José Arcadio Buendía's Scientific Paradigms: Man in Search of Himself" (21-32) **[Handout # 12]**

III. Homework Assignment

- Research articles, history books, encyclopaedias, etc. about Sir Francis Drake and the Colombian city of Riohacha. Think about the role that both Sir Francis Drake and the city of Riohacha play in One Hundred Years of Solitude. Write a paragraph describing the way García Marquez incorporates history and geography in his book.

(The idea behind this assignment is to encourage students to do research on some of the geographical/historical facts that give shape to the novel and that help us to understand the conditions of production of the text. This assignment has been also designed to help students in the process of writing a research paper).

IV. Other activities

- How to design "Eden"? Imagine you are a member of the Buendía familiy who is participating in the foundation of Macondo. In groups of four people try to design both the plan of the town and the plan of the Buendías' house following the descriptions given in the novel.

- Listen to NPR "Gabriel García Márquez Goes Home Again"
  http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=10613360&sc=emaf
  What does the journalist say about Aracataca? And about Macondo?

- In "Writers at Work", Ben McGrath says: "A room of one's own, in which to write: it's an old and chronically romanticized idea –the solitary space, with an ashtray, an Olivetti, the morning light just so". Read the whole article from the New Yorker
  http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/05/23/050523ta_talk_mcgrath
  With your class, imagine we are in 1966 and you have been commissioned to design García Márquez's "habitat" in which he will write One Hundred Years of Solitude. Think of what objects you would include there, what colors, etc. and justify your choices. Write a report or… just do it in your classroom!

(Hi)Stories of Macondo

Unit 5: Writing Time and History in Macondo

Goal
To help students understand the patterns of history in Macondo in a broader context.

Internet Resources for Preparing the Introductory Discussion

For information on the themes of time and history:
http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/novel/oyos_novel_time.jhtml
http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM

I. Introductory Discussion

Suggested prompts

- What is the importance of the Buendías' genealogical tree or the personal/familiar history in the book?
- Is the Buendías' personal history related to the history of Macondo? If so, why?
- Is that personal history related to the history of Latin America? If so, why?

II. Lecture

Prepare your remarks by reading "Liberals, Conservatives, and Bananas: Colombian Politics in the Fictions of Gabriel García Márquez" (125-46) by Regina James **[Handout # 13]**, "Time as Linear History in the Novel", and "Time as Circular History" by Jan Johnston http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM
[also available as **Handout # 14]**
Give the students the following set of questions to read before the lecture and to use during the lecture to organize their notes. Your lecture should address the questions.

- What are some examples of historical facts that Garcia Márquez incorporates into fiction?
- What is the relationship between history and fiction in this novel?
- What is the relationship between history and time? [For the teacher: See especially pages 302-311 of the novel]

III. In-class activities

Pre-reading questions

- What does the term "apocalypse" mean? Look up the word in the dictionary and find examples in the novel.
- What does the term "chronicle" mean? How would you apply this term to the succession of events in the novel?
- What is the difference between rectilinear and cyclical time?

Reading 1

"The history of Macondo, presented whole by García Márquez in *Cien años de soledad* (1967), is a monumental fiction of succession and ending, a fiction of temporal fulfillment. Origin and ending are harmonized, temporal coherence is imposed by the comprehensive apocalyptic perspective of Melquíades's narrative […]

Cien años de soledad is a novel about the finite duration of man's individual and collective existence. In one hundred years, the history of the Buendía family and of their town is chronicled from beginning to end. Like Revelation, *Cien años de soledad* sums up the Bible, projecting its patterns of creation, empire, decadence, renovation, catastrophe onto history. Like St. John of Patmos, García Márquez's narrator, Melquíades, stands outside time, recounting the past, present and future of Macondo from an atemporal point beyond the future […]

The temporal structure of *Cien años de soledad*, like apocalypse, is basically rectilinear rather than cyclical. Of course, human temporal reality is never merely flat or linear: García Márquez manages to convey in words the vagaries of our temporal condition, the unpredictable whimsy of time which makes moments seem endless and ages like moments, which makes Macondo's history seem to double back upon itself and describe circles in time." (Lois Parkinson Zamora 49-51).

Post-reading questions/activities

questions	hints for the teacher	your answers…
• Identify passages in the book that are descriptive/ illustrative of the biblical structure Louis Parkinson Zamora mentions in the paragraphs above	see pages 9, 46, 49, 59, 88, 180, 223, 293, 309, 315, 330, 333, etc.	
• According to Parkinson	see pages 1, 124,	

Zamora the novel contains both linear and cyclical times. Can you identify them by giving some examples? Are there different ideas or types of history in the novel?	181, 247, 258, 298, 335, 344-5, 396, 347-8, 351, 355, 362-3, etc.	
• What does apocalypse mean in the novel? Can you offer some examples of Melquíades's apocayptic perspective/writings?	See page 415 to the end	
• What is the relationship between the insomnia plague and the idea of history in the book?	Read "Sleep and Forgetting" by Wood in Mellen, 87-9 **[Handout # 15]**) See also pages 43-50 of the novel	
• What passages of the novel might represent a questioning of the Colombian history?	see passages of the wars (94-140, etc.)	
• In what way does the novel criticize the historical events of the North American intervention in Colombia?	see pages 237-8, 302-311, 347-8 (from "It happened once" to "and told him to be quiet").	

IV. Homework Assignment

- Research articles about the political situation in Colombia and Latin America. Consider how it might be related to some historical events depicted in the novel and write a short report on the most important ones.

(The idea behind this assignment is to encourage students to research on some of the historical facts at the foundation of the novel and to help them to understand the

conditions of the text's production. This assignment has been also designed to help students in the process of writing a research paper).

V. Other Activities

- Imagine there is an insomnia plague in Wisconsin. What kind of device/system would you create in order to identify objects and to remember their use?

- For fun: Take the "Quiz" for the section you have read on the Oprah Book Club website: http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/character/oyos_character_b_quiz.jhtml

Is Macondo a Myth?

Unit 6: Mythologies of Macondo

Goal
To help students understand one of the basic elements of the novel's structure and its relationship with history.

Internet Resources for Preparing the Introductory Discussion

For information on the theme of archetypes:
http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/novel/partthree/oyos_novel_partthree_summaries_a.jhtml
http://www.answers.com/topic/one-hundred-years-of-solitude-novel-7

I. Introductory Discussion
Suggested prompts

- What is a myth?
- Do you know any mythological characters?
- Can you describe him/her?

II. Lecture
Prepare your remarks by reading "*Cien años de soledad*: The Novel as Myth and Archive" (358-380) by Roberto González Echevarría **[Handout # 16].** The students should read the following set of questions before the lecture and then organize their notes accordingly. Your lecture should address the following questions:

- What different forms do myths take in the novel? [For the teacher: See especially González Echevarría 368].
- Does the novel portray a Latin American myth? [For the teacher: See especially González Echevarría 370].
- What is the archival aspect of the novel? Why does González Echevarría call Melquíades's room the Archive? [For the teacher: See especially González Echevarría 370-6].

III. In-Class activities

Pre-reading activities

In groups of three people answer the following questions:

- Can you identify a mythical figure in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*? If so, what archetype does the character represent?

- What is the relationship between history and mythology, according to the following quote?

"…the critical, myth-seeking tendency to find *the* value that holds the novel together –love, solidarity, community, historical consciouness- is doomed. There simply is no such value to be found in the text. When García Márquez has been forced outside the novel, in interviews, to provide such a myth, he calls on two twentieth-century favorites, love and solidarity, and an eighteenth-century standby, happiness. In effect, he provides an inside-out reading of his novel to placate those readers uncomfortable with the novel's lack of a positive promise or premise." (Janes 109)

Reading 1

Read page 10 (from "To the south lay the swamps…" to "…the northern route")

Reading 2

Read pages 416-7 (From "Only then did he discover…" to the end of the novel)

Post-reading activities

After reading the two passages above answer the following questions:

- What do you think these two excerpts of the novel symbolize, according to the definition of a myth?

- The excerpt from **Reading 1** reminds us of what other famous text by Homer? You can find some other hints that also refer to that famous text on pages 252 and 276.
  What are the names of the fabled marine creatures with the head and upper body of a woman and the tail of a fish? What role have they played in classical literature?

- Read the following quote by García Márquez: "I merely wanted to tell the story of a family who for a hundred years did everything they could do 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" (Guivert 314). Can you explain in your own words the paragraph from **Reading 2** in the light of this quote?

IV. Homework Assignment

- Take the quiz in http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/solitude/quiz.html and submit it. Compare your answers with the correct results.

- Write a paragraph about the importance of Melquíades's last words in his writings: "*The first of the line is tied to a tree and the last is being eaten by the ants*" 415). Think about the use of mythical elements and the end of the Buendía family.

- Incest is one of the themes present throughout the novel. Discuss this theme in comparison to the famous myth of Oedipus. To what extent do you think García Márquez is re-creating this old myth?

- Write a brief essay comparing the characters in the book that incarnate foundational myths or myths related to the origins, and those characters that incarnate apocalyptic myths.

V. Other activities

- In groups of four people, create a new mythological character. Describe his/her appearance and what role he/she could play in One Hundred Years of Solitude.

Cien Años de Soledad

Project Ideas
for Student Conference April 18, 2008

A worthwhile project will be a multi-faceted or multi-layered product of your imagination and intellect. It will be carefully crafted and detailed. It will be serious and academic even if creative and inventive. Remember that a public presentation of what you have done is the "final" product of your imagination.

This page is intended as a starting point for you and your group (or you alone) and not as the final word on ideas. The ideas in the chart below may cross categories. You can also blend ideas in ways that aren't shown below.

It is not simply enough to choose an idea below; you must consult your themes/topics/motifs list for ways to think about the project.

Or, of course, imagine and realize your own vision!!

Art	**Music (& drama)**	**Web**
Painting Sculpture Mixed media Mandala	Symphony A recorded CD (many songs) A single performed song A mini opera A musical	Podcast Website Blog Interactive map (Flash)
Creative Writing	**Academic Writing**	**Print Journalism**
Poetry (more than one poem) Travel diary Children's book Graphic novel	Literary analysis Interlinear translation Speech	Magazine article Newspaper Travel Guide A yearbook
Broadcast Journalism	**Movies, TV, Radio**	**Other**
News interview (like 60 minutes, etc) News broadcast	TV talk show A scene from a movie A radio program	Illustrated family tree Puzzle (functioning) Index (hypertext)

Project Proposal

All projects MUST be approved by your teacher before you begin.

Members of our group

_____
_____
_____
_____

Project title

_____

Project abstract (describe the project in 50-100 words)

_____
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Who will do what? Give a brief idea of the roles your members will play.

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_____

Project timeline (what will happen when)

What special equipment do you need?

What resources or materials are you expecting your teacher to help provide?

What equipment will you need to present your project at the conference? Be specific.

Project Grading Rubric

	4 Outstanding! Beyond expectations!	**3** Good work. Your care and effort is evident.	**2** Not bad. You may be lacking detail, seriousness, or complexity.
Quality	Precise, attention to detail is perfect.	Some lapses are evident; may look hurried.	Sense of carelessness exists.
Detail	Complex, rich, layered. Evokes contemplation.	Good detail, but not a rich as "4."	Limited detail; superficial.
Relevance	Connects in various ways; insightful, even moving	Multiple connections; less insightful than "4."	Makes only one connection; limited insight.
Sub total			

Total points: _____

12-10 = A; 9-7 = B; 6 = C

Preparing to present

Basically, you address the audience, introduce yourself, set some context for your project, and then present it (play, show, read some or all, or as in a painting or sculpture, give a "walk through." Groups need to share the presentation. So each person takes a speaking part.

At the end of your session, please ask if your audience has any questions.

Here are two scripts. Modify either needed.

Hello/good morning, etc. I am _____ from Sheboygan Falls High School. My painting is titled _____. I'd like to explain to you how I conceived of the idea for this painting. I based this painting on the scene in OYS where _____. It seemed to me that _____. So I wanted to show how _____. I chose oil as my medium because I thought it would best _____.

Next, do a good summary of the painting. For paintings and sculpture, you can't really expect it to stand alone. Like, well, here it is--look at it. :)

Ask for questions.

Hello/good morning, etc. We are from Sheboygan Falls High School. I am _____ and this is _____ and this is _____. We created a video called _____. We wanted to illustrate the theme of. OR We based this _____on the scene in OYS where _____. It seemed to us that _____. We wanted to show how _____. We thought a _____ would best represent the main.

Next, play the video, read excerpts from the yearbook, newspaper, etc. Invite your audience to get a closer look at the end of your session.

Ask for questions.

What to wear, bring, etc.

Dress nicely. Dress for success. Dress as if you're proud of who you are and where you come from.

What to bring:

- Bring everything you need for your presentation!
- Bring money for lunch, maybe ice cream after. Bring money for whatever you think you might need.
- Bring only what you need as far as personal items. It would not be good for you to lose an iPod or a phone, for example.
- Bring your best attitude!

Lunch:

Lunch is on your own. There will only be about 40 minutes for lunch, so heading too far off from the Pyle Center is not advisable. Have small groups, lunch buddies. It will make it easier to get served. It's harder for a large group to get anything done.

García Márquez: Aracataca & Macondo

Unit 1: Basic information about the author and his book

Student Instructions

Look over the following questions. As you listen your teacher's lecture, take notes that will address the questions regarding Gabriel García Márquez, his hometown, and some historical events related to the novel One Hundred Years of Solitude.

About the Author and his Time

- Where is Gabriel García Márquez from?
- Are there any similarities between his hometown and Macondo?
- What are the main political parties that represent the political framework of García Márquez's fiction? Why are they so important to his fiction? Are they regionally located?
- What was the 1928 Banana Strike Massacre?
- What aspects of García Márquez's family most influenced his writing?
- What authors and/or books most influenced his writing?
- What was García Márquez's first job?

About *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

- How did the process of writing the novel start?
- What did he mention about the tone of the book? Why do you think his words might be useful to understand the uses of reality/fantasy in the novel?
- What is the importance of this book in Latin American literature? Why was it so successfully acclaimed?

In-Class Activities

Pre-Reading Questions for Reading 1 (below) (To keep in mind while reading):

- What do you think Mario Vargas Llosa means by "extraliterary reasons" when he discusses the enormous popularity of the book?
- What does a "total" novel mean?
- What does Vargas Llosa mean by "unlimited accesibility"?

Reading 1

In about the middle of 1967, the novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was published in Buenos Aires, provoking a literary earthquake throughout Latin America. The critics recognized the book as a masterpiece of the art fiction and the public endorsed this opinion, systematically exhausting new editions, which, at one point, appeared at the astounding rate of one a week. Onvernight, García Márquez became almost as famous as a great soccer player or an eminent singer of boleros. The first translations have received an equally enthusiastic response. But the reasons behind the popularity of a book are hard to detect and often extraliterary, and what is especially remarkable in the case of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is that its thindering fame should be due to virtues which can only be defined as artistic.

What then are the virtues of this book whose existence contradicts the gloomy assertions that the novel is an exhausted genre in the process of extinction? I wish single out three. First, the fact that this is a 'total' novel, in the tradition of those insanely ambitious creations which aspire to compete with reality on an equal basis, confronting it with an image and qualitatively matching it in vitality, vastness and complexity. In the second place, something that we could call its 'plural' nature; that is, its capacity for being at one time things which were thought to be opposites: traditional and modern; regional and universal; imaginary and realistic. Yet perhaps the most misterious of its virtues is the third: its unlimited accessibility; that is, its power to be within anyone's reach, with distinct but abundant rewards for everyone…" (Vargas Llosa 5-6)

Post-reading questions/activities

Questions…	**your answers…**
• Do you know of any other novel, which can be called "total"? If so, explain why.	
• Do you agree with the statement that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is "within anyone's reach"? Explain if "yes" or if "no."	
• What part/passages of the novel that you have read so far would you pick as the most representative of Vargas Llosa's words? Justify your choice.	

Homework Assignment

- Look for some covers of different editions of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (also in Spanish) on the Internet. Write a short report comparing these versions of the various interpretations the cover illustrations suggest in different years and countries. Are the English cover illustrations similar to those in Spanish? What does the original version (Editorial Sudamericana, 1967) show on the cover? What does this illustration have to do with the story?

Other Activities

- Listen to the NPR "Book Review: Gabriel García Márquez Memoir" http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1540735 What is the importance of Aracataca in García Márquez's books?

The Buendías' Solitude

Unit 2: Characters, plot and main themes of the novel

Student Instructions

Look over the following questions. As you listen your teacher's lecture, take notes that will address the questions regarding characters, plot and main themes of the novel One Hundred Years of Solitude.

- What are the major themes of the novel, according to Joan Mellen?
- What are the differences, if any, between the male and the female characters? How are they presented to the reader?
- Describe the narrator's perspective in telling the story of the Buendía family.
- What does Regina Janes say about the process of reading *One Hundred Years of Solitude*?
- What is the main structural pattern of the book?
- What are some of the literary influences that appear in the book? What are the different literary genres that converge in the structure of the novel?
- Why have critics argued that *One Hundred Years of Solitude*'s structure is "baroque"? Think of some examples of the book's "baroque" quality.
- Some other critics have described the novel as "a speaking mirror." What does that mean?

In-class activites

- Identify some of the passages of the book in which the theme of solitude is particularly relevant.
- Can you think of different consequences of solitude in the book?
- What are the political connotations of solitude? Does solitude stand as a symbol for something else? Read the author's Nobel Prize acceptance lecture: http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_nobel.html)
- According to the critic Joan Mellen, there are some major themes connected to solitude, in some cases, in the book. Try to identify at least one passage in the novel where those themes are present.

Themes	Passage	How?
The destructive power of solitude		
Solitude and the passage of time		
Incest and solitude		
Source of love and its power		
How we are different people at different stages of our lives		

Homework Assignments

- Some critics have argued that one of the major conflicts in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the permanent struggle between tradition and modernity. Do you agree with this statement? If so, explain why and write a paragraph that serves as an argument for this idea. If not, explain what you think is the major conflict of the novel, according to what you have read so far, and write a paragraph that justifies your statement. Later, when you have finished reading the book, come back to this assignment and check whether you agree with your first answer or not.

- For fun: Take the "Quiz" for the section you have read on the Oprah Book Club website:

http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/character/oyos_character_quiz.jhtml

Other Activites

- In groups of three people, pick your favorite character from *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and write his/her fictitious biography.

- Read García Márquez's Nobel Prize Lecture and analyze the theme of solitude in his works, making reference to quotations from the book. What are the dangers, in García Márquez'terms, that a culture undergoes in being interpreted and/or stereotyped by other cultures? Mention the specific examples given in the lecture.

Is It All About Magic?

Unit 3: Magic Realism

Student Instructions

Look over the following questions. As you listen your teacher's lecture, take notes that will address the questions regarding the definition of the term "magic realism".

- What does the term "magic realism" describe?
- When and where was this term first coined?
- What is the nature of the debate about the concept of "magic realism"? What do anti-magic realists think about the term?
- What does Gregory Rabassa assert about the term? Why?

In-Class activities

Pre-reading questions for Reading 1 (below) (To keep in mind while reading)

- What does the term "transgression" mean?
- What is the difference between the individual and the collective? Can you give some examples?
- What are "magical instabilities" in magic realist representations? Compare a "stable" description in a realist text that you have read to a magic realist description in reading 2, 3, 4, or 5.

Reading 1

"Magical realist texts, in their most distinct departure from the conventions of literary realism, often seem to pulsate with proliferations and conflations of worlds, with appearances and disappearances and multiplications of selves and societies. These magical instabilities depend upon an array of narrative strategies that multiply/blur/superimpose/unify or otherwise transgress the solidity and singularity of realistic fictional events, characters, settings. In magical realist fiction, individuals, times, places, have a tendency to transform magically into other (or all) individuals, times, places. This slippage from the individual to the collective to the cosmic is often signaled by spectral presences. Consider, for example, Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, where Sethe is haunted by her dead daughter, a symbolic and historical embodiment of both her past and her future…" (Parkinson Zamora 501)

Reading 2

Read from page 131 (from "Not all the news was good…") to 133 (up to "…until the engineers from the banana company covered the grave over with a shell of concrete")

Reading 3

Read the last paragraph of page 140

Reading 4

Read page 183 (from "No one had gone into the room again"… to the end of page)

Reading 5

Read page 236 (from "Don't you feel well?" to "…highest-flying birds of memory could reach her")

Post-reading questions/activities

- Why are the excerpts in **Readings 2-5** considered to be good examples of magic realism? Did the examples you gave at the beginning of the lecture have anything in common with the passages of the novel you just read?
- Identify three other examples of magic realism in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. How do they contribute to the overall development of the novel?
- What is the aesthetic impact created by magic realism?
- Compare the use of magic realism in García Márquez's book with the use of this technique in other books or movies with which you are familiar.

Homework Assignment

- Research articles, encyclopaedias, etc., on the possible contribution of the problematic term "magic realism" to a discussion of political aspects of society. Write a short paragraph about the political consequences of the term.

Other Activities

- Listen to NPR "Commentary: Meeting Gabriel García Márquez" http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1495140

What does the journalist Katie Davis say about her "magical experience" while interviewing García Márquez?

- On page 388 the narrator of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* says:

"For a man like him, holed up in written reality, those stormy sessions that began in the bookstore and ended at dawn in the brothels were a revelation. It had never occurred to him [Aureliano] until then to think that literature was the best plaything

that had ever been invented to make fun of people, as Álvaro demonstrated during one night of revels."

What do you think about this passage? Do you think García Márquez might just be making fun of you? What does "written reality mean"?

Charting Macondo

Unit 4: The Symbolic Geography of Macondo

In-class Activities

Pre-reading questions for Reading 1 (below) (To keep in mind while reading)

- Why does José Arcadio Buendía want to move out after settling down in Macondo?
- What did they find in their trip? What was the meaning of that discovery?
- Why is there more than one version of Macondo's map?

Reading 1

Read from page 9 (from "That spirit of social initiative dissapeared…") to 13 (up to "If I have to die for the rest of you to stay here, I will die")

Pre-reading assignment

- Before reading the following paragraphs draw a map of Macondo's location based on the information given in the novel

Reading 2

"Where is this Eden? If we draw a map based on the information given to us in the first two chapters of the novel, we get something like Map 1.

We have no way of knowing the shape of the coastline, but we know that the sea is to the nort of Macondo; that a range of mountains separates Macondo from Riohacha; that Drake is supposed to have attacked Riohacha in the sixteenth century and hunted crocodiles there; that there are swamps to the south and west to Macondo; and that roads, towns and a sort of modernity can be found two day's travel to the west, 'on the other side of the swamp' […]. We hear of 'colonial coins' […]; of 'authorities,' 'a government," and a distant 'capital' […].

Northern Colombia, in which there is an 'ancient city' called Riohacha, looks something like Map 2.

Macondo is the name of a banana plantation near Aracataca, García Márquez' birthplace, but this scarcely signifies, since it is now internationally famous as the name of a mythical community, the Latin America equivalent of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County. The point about the maps is not to say that the setting of One Hundred Years of Solitude is Colombia –if García Márquez had wanted to name his country he would have done so –only that its geography and history are not different; that the imagined world has a real situation in time and space. The analogy with Faulkner is exact in this respect, I think. We are not going to find the town of Jefferson on any map of Mississippi. But there isn't anywhere else on earth it could be" (Wood in Mellen 78).

Post-reading questions/activities

- Try to re-create the map José Arcadio Buendía had drawn after he had come to believe Macondo was surrounded by water [see page 12].
- Does the map you drew before **Reading 2** look similar to the other students' maps, the map provided by your teacher, and José Arcadio Buendía's map?
- What does "Eden" mean? Can you give some examples of the cultural uses of that word? Why does critic Michael Wood call Macondo an "Eden"?
- What is the cause that, according to the narrator, would explain the following lines:
  "From a clean and active man, José Arcadio Buendía changed into a man lazy in appearance, careless in his dress, with a wild beard that Úrsula managed to trim with great effort and a kitchen knife" (9-10)
  Are these changes related to modernization and science?

Homework Assignment

- Research articles, history books, encyclopaedias, etc. about Sir Francis Drake and the Colombian city of Riohacha. Think about the role that both Sir Francis Drake and the city of Riohacha play in One Hundred Years of Solitude. Write a paragraph describing the way García Marquez incorporates history and geography in his book.

Other Activities

- How to design "Eden"? Imagine you are a member of the Buendía familiy who is participating in the foundation of Macondo. In groups of four people try to design both the plan of the town and the plan of the Buendías' house following the descriptions given in the novel.

- Listen to NPR "Gabriel García Márquez Goes Home Again"
  http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=10613360&sc=emaf
  What does the journalist say about Aracataca? And about Macondo?

- In "Writers at Work", Ben McGrath says: "A room of one's own, in which to write: it's an old and chronically romanticized idea –the solitary space, with an ashtray, an Olivetti, the morning light just so". Read the whole article from the New Yorker
  http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/05/23/050523ta_talk_mcgrath
  With your class, imagine we are in 1966 and you have been commissioned to design García Márquez's "habitat" in which he will write One Hundred Years of Solitude. Think of what objects you would include there, what colors, etc. and justify your choices. Write a report or… just do it in your classroom!

(Hi)Stories of Macondo

Unit 5: Writing Time and History in Macondo

Student Instructions

Look over the following questions. As you listen your teacher's lecture, take notes that will address the questions regarding the uses of time and history in the novel One Hundred Years of Solitude.

- What are some examples of historical facts that Garcia Márquez incorporates into fiction?
- What is the relationship between history and fiction in this novel?
- What is the relationship between history and time?

In-class activities

Pre-reading questions for Reading 1 (below) (To keep in mind while reading)

- What does the term "apocalypse" mean? Look up the word in the dictionary and find examples in the novel.
- What does the term "chronicle" mean? How would you apply this term to the succession of events in the novel?
- What is the difference between rectilinear and cyclical time?

Reading 1

"The history of Macondo, presented whole by García Márquez in *Cien años de soledad* (1967), is a monumental fiction of succession and ending, a fiction of temporal fulfillment. Origin and ending are harmonized, temporal coherence is imposed by the comprehensive apocalyptic perspective of Melquíades's narrative […]

Cien años de soledad is a novel about the finite duration of man's individual and collective existence. In one hundred years, the history of the Buendía family and of their town is chronicled from beginning to end. Like Revelation, *Cien años de soledad* sums up the Bible, projecting its patterns of creation, empire, decadence, renovation, catastrophe onto history. Like St. John of Patmos, García Márquez's narrator, Melquíades, stands outside time, recounting the past, present and future of Macondo from an atemporal point beyond the future […]

The temporal structure of *Cien años de soledad*, like apocalypse, is basically rectilinear rather than cyclical. Of course, human temporal reality is never merely flat or linear:

García Márquez manages to convey in words the vagaries of our temporal condition, the unpredictable whimsy of time which makes moments seem endless and ages like moments, which makes Macondo's history seem to double back upon itself and describe circles in time." (Lois Parkinson Zamora 49-51).

Post-reading questions/activities

questions	your answers…
• Identify passages in the book that are descriptive/ illustrative of the biblical structure Louis Parkinson Zamora mentions in the paragraphs above	
• According to Parkinson Zamora the novel contains both linear and cyclical times. Can you identify them by giving some examples? Are there different ideas or types of history in the novel?	
• What does apocalypse mean in the novel? Can you offer some examples of Melquíades's apocayptic perspective/writings?	
• What is the relationship between the insomnia plague and the idea of history in the book?	
• What passages of the novel might represent a questioning of the Colombian history?	
• In what way does the	

novel criticize the historical events of the North American intervention in Colombia?	

Homework Assignment

- Research articles about the political situation in Colombia and Latin America. Consider how it might be related to some historical events depicted in the novel and write a short report on the most important ones.

Other Activities

- Imagine there is an insomnia plague in Wisconsin. What kind of device/system would you create in order to identify objects and to remember their use?

- For fun: Take the "Quiz" for the section you have read on the Oprah Book Club website: http://www2.oprah.com/obc_classic/featbook/oyos/character/oyos_character_b_quiz.jhtml

Is Macondo a Myth?

Unit 6: Mythologies of Macondo

Student Instructions

Look over the following questions. As you listen your teacher's lecture, take notes that will address the questions regarding the uses of myths in the novel One Hundred Years of Solitude.

- What different forms do myths take in the novel?
- Does the novel portray a Latin American myth?
- What is the archival aspect of the novel? Why does González Echevarría call Melquíades's room the Archive?

In-Class activities

Pre-reading activities
In groups of three people answer the following questions:

- Can you identify a mythical figure in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*? If so, what archetype does the character represent?
- What is the relationship between history and mythology, according to the following quote?

"…the critical, myth-seeking tendency to find *the* value that holds the novel together –love, solidarity, community, historical consciouness- is doomed. There simply is no such value to be found in the text. When García Márquez has been forced outside the novel, in interviews, to provide such a myth, he calls on two twentieth-century favorites, love and solidarity, and an eighteenth-century standby, happiness. In effect, he provides an inside-out reading of his novel to placate those readers uncomfortable with the novel's lack of a positive promise or premise." (Janes 109)

Reading 1
Read page 10 (from "To the south lay the swamps…" to "…the northern route")

Reading 2
Read pages 416-7 (From "Only then did he discover…" to the end of the novel)

Post-reading activities

After reading the two passages above answer the following questions:

- What do you think these two excerpts of the novel symbolize, according to the definition of a myth?

- The excerpt from **Reading 1** reminds us of what other famous text by Homer? You can find some other hints that also refer to that famous text on pages 252 and 276.
  What are the names of the fabled marine creatures with the head and upper body of a woman and the tail of a fish? What role have they played in classical literature?

- Read the following quote by García Márquez:

"I merely wanted to tell the story of a family who for a hundred years did everything they could do 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." (Guivert 314)

Can you explain in your own words the paragraph from **Reading 2** in the light of this quote?

Homework Assignment

- Take the quiz in http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/solitude/quiz.html and submit it. Compare your answers with the correct results.

- Write a paragraph about the importance of Melquíades's last words in his writings: "*The first of the line is tied to a tree and the last is being eaten by the ants*" 415). Think about the use of mythical elements and the end of the Buendía family.

- Incest is one of the themes present throughout the novel. Discuss this theme in comparison to the famous myth of Oedipus. To what extent do you think García Márquez is re-creating this old myth?

- Write a brief essay comparing the characters in the book that incarnate foundational myths or myths related to the origins, and those characters that incarnate apocalyptic myths.

Other Activities

- In groups of four people, create a new mythological character. Describe his/her appearance and what role he/she could play in One Hundred Years of Solitude.

List of Handouts

Handout # 1
http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_biography.html

Handout # 2
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 3
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 4
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 5
http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM

Handout # 6
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 7
http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_nobel.html

Handout # 8
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 9
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 10
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 11
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 12
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 13
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 14
http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.HTM

Handout # 15
Photocopy (needs to be digitized)

Handout # 16
PDF File (included in the zip file)

always comfort us: we feel better about serial killers when we have blamed their mothers, and better about earthquakes when we have analyzed the movement of the plates. Or reading may lead to the probing of the aesthetic experience itself: if the text slips us past the dead baby, it is also the text that trips us as we skip past. It is easy to read past the last death in the last dawn of Macondo, but that hard little image mocks our obliviousness, whether or not we see it.

Now perhaps we can let those ants go about their business. They are part of the world that García Márquez has invented in *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* and what they tell us will depend on what we ask of them. The only additional thing we might ask is that they tell us one thing, and one thing only. That, of course, is the one thing they will not do. Pressed to limit their meanings, they may assert their *ant*ness and refuse to say anything at all. Silence or dissemination: those are the possibilities. But if, arbitrarily, we were to make one point about that hard, thoughtless little image on which we stub our moral toes, it would be that García Márquez simultaneously surprises us and makes us think. His text draws us into itself to account for its events, and it thrusts us out to consider in other contexts the meanings of its events. As the Argentine novelist Beatriz Guido put it, this book so impeccable as literature is also a very strong book that says the most terrible things.[4]

Those busy little ants work impeccably as literature: they make a sharp and luminous image that astonishes and surprises. They ground the concept of natural cycles, and in their final appearance they show the transforming power of the smallest, slightest, most specific detail. At the same time, they tell us terrible things about the failure of individuals, the disappearance of families, and the endless cycles of repetitions and annihilations to which nature condemns us. At the end, having dispersed over so much terrain and explored so many places, they lead both Aureliano and us back into the book. There they remain, ready to formicate again at the thrust of an interpretation. Dragging their baby down the stone path, the ants also belong in García Márquez's imaginary garden.

#2

31-38

5

A Myth of Origins for a Mythic Novel

There is a story García Márquez tells about how a certain famous novel came to be written. When he barricaded himself in the study of his house in Mexico to write *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* he did so because of a vision. On the road to Acapulco, driving his Opel with his wife and children, he suddenly had a revelation: he saw that he had to tell his story the way his grandmother used to tell hers, and that he was to start from that afternoon in which a father took his child to discover ice. The car made a U-turn on the highway, they never reached Acapulco, and 15 months later García Márquez emerged from his study with a manuscript in his hands to meet his wife Mercedes with the bills in hers. They traded papers, and she put the manuscript in the mail to Editorial Sudamericana.

In the barricaded room and the sudden revelation of a sentence, the attentive reader will see a parallel to the experience of the last surviving Aureliano. Any reader who also writes may recognize something else in the experience of the last Aureliano: the sickening sensation of absolute certainty that he will never be able to get out of this narrative, that he is trapped in it forever, that it will never, ever finish.

(The gleeful tone of the narrator writing *about* Aureliano as Macondo vanishes into the book must be that of the writer who knows this book is almost, at last, finally, over "from time immemorial and forever more.")

Like the stories García Márquez tells inside his novel, this story leaves out many details we would expect in a realistic account of how the novel appeared. Omitted are such matters as the interviews García Márquez granted while writing the book; the sending of early chapters of the completed manuscript out for review; the early praises of the book the year before it was published; the negotiations under way in 1966 to reprint his earlier writings on the basis of expectations about the work in progress. The story as García Márquez tells it ends on a tense note of uncertainty as the completed manuscript is entrusted to the post.

Not only does García Márquez leave out the "real life" politics of his book's appearance, but he also skips past the actual work of writing. If the story of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* begins with a myth, it ends with a mystery. When he received word that the book had arrived at the publisher, the author removed all trace of its passage through the world: "Mercedes helped me throw away a drawerful of working notes, diagrams, sketches, and memoranda. I threw it out, not only so that the way the book was constructed shouldn't be known—that's something absolutely private—but in case that material should ever be sold. To sell it would be selling my soul, and I'm not going to let anyone do it, not even my children."[1] This anecdote may tell us more about García Márquez as a person and a writer than the more famous myth of the road to Acapulco.

His reference to diagrams and sketches points to the careful planning of *One Hundred Years of Solitude;* the working notes and memoranda may be vanished traces of the basis in reality that García Márquez claims for every event in the novel. In the possibility (or certainty, in today's world of competing archives) that the working materials might be sold, commercial acumen appears, as does the author's confidence in the success of his book. The determination to prevent such a

sale marks a not uncommon aversion to the commercialization of artistic activity; but actually destroying the materials, then recounting the destruction, is less common. Making the sale of his working materials impossible, García Márquez cut himself off from the constitutive elements of his past, much as male characters do throughout *One Hundred Years of Solitude.* (José Arcadio Buendía axes the alchemical laboratory; Colonel Aureliano Buendía burns his poetry; Aureliano Segundo smashes the porcelain—each destroys an aspect of his self-definition.) Most striking, however, is the suggestion that the completed novel is a mask. García Márquez has denied access to the discarded fragments, not because he values art and the finished product over any process of construction, but because there is a soul in the fragments. From the ultimate privacy of writing itself he has shut out editors, biographers, and critics.

If the story of the turning Opel on the road to Acapulco leaves out a great deal, it does tell the story García Márquez meant to tell. It relates a myth (in the loose sense of an archetypal story) of solitary dedication in the service of an insight, a labor of solitude and isolation. And it focuses all our attention on the moment when, from nowhere, from out of the air, there suddenly descended a solution to the problem the author had long been struggling with. The problem was how to turn the remembered world of Aracataca into a book, how to write that world. The solutions were the discovery of a tone, the proper language for the fiction, and the initial event, the point from which to begin to tell the story.

García Márquez had wanted to write the story that became *One Hundred Years of Solitude* since adolescence, when he revisited with his mother the house of his grandparents in Aracataca. As an infant, García Márquez had been left in Aracataca in the care of his maternal grandparents, Col. Nicolás Ricardo Márquez Mejía[2] and Tranquilina Iguarán Cotes. Cousins, from Riohacha, the colonel and his wife had settled in Aracataca at the end of the War of a Thousand Days (1899–1902), a few years before the "leafstorm." Along with many other adventurers, the leafstorm brought a new telegraphist to town, Gabriel

Eligio García. He soon fell in love with Luisa Santiaga Márquez Iguarán, the daughter of the colonel and his wife, but the match was opposed by her parents.

Not only was the fellow a rootless newcomer, but he was also a member of the Conservative party, the traditional antagonist of the Liberal party. The colonel was a Liberal by party affiliation; he had fought on the Liberal side in the War of a Thousand Days under Gen. Rafael Uribe Uribe, and he had been present when the treaty was signed at Neerlandia. The Liberals had lost that war to the Conservatives, as they had lost almost every conflict since 1860. Not choosing to lose their daughter to the leafstorm and a Conservative, the girl's parents removed her from temptation by sending her on a long trip. But the amorous telegraphist secured the cooperation of other sentimental telegraphists on the route and contrived to communicate his continuing passion from afar. (The episode figures in *Love in the Time of Cholera.*) Eventually, the parents permitted the marriage, the young couple settled in Riohacha (where the telegraphist had been transferred), and the rift was healed when Luisa returned to Aracataca in December 1928 to give birth to her first son, Gabriel José García (for the telegraphist) Márquez (for his mother's father, the colonel).[3] When Luisa returned to her husband, she left Gabriel—"Gabo," or "Gabito"—in Aracataca with his grandparents. He would remain there until the death of his grandfather when he was eight.

In "the abandonment by his parents . . . [to] the big rambling house of his grandparents," Emir Rodríguez Monegal finds the roots of García Márquez's fiction.[4] García Márquez's anecdotes of childhood recall a big house full of ghosts and dead people, with conversations in code and prodigious terrors. There was an empty room where Aunt Petra had died, and another where Uncle Lázaro had died. He remembers being seated in a corner at six o'clock one night and being told not to move: "If you move, Aunt Petra will come out of her room, or Uncle Lázaro, who is in the other." The child did not move. There was another, very lively aunt, always busy, always consulted by townsfolk over mysteries. A boy brought her a hen's egg with a protuberance.

She looked it over solemnly, announced that it was a basilisk's egg, and ordered it burned in the courtyard. The same aunt set herself to weave a shroud, and when her nephew Gabriel asked why, she replied, "Because I am going to die, my son." When she finished the shroud, she went to bed and died. They buried her in the shroud.

There are also less spectral anecdotes. The colonel was a big, vigorous, gregarious man (closer to the physical type of the novel's Aureliano Segundo than Col. Aureliano Buendía). The house was full of guests, as well as ghosts. Among the guests were several natural sons of the colonel from his period of wandering during the war. The colonel took his grandson to the circus to see the dromedary and gave him a zoology lesson from the dictionary. When he realized that his grandson had never seen ice, he took him over to the banana company camp, ordered a case of frozen red snapper opened, and had his grandson put his hand on the ice. Having killed a man in a duel in Riohacha, he knew "how much a dead man weighs." His house was shaded by almond trees, and his patio was filled with flowers.

After he died, the boy was taken away from Aracataca to live with his parents. His grandmother had cataracts and was going blind. She was also becoming senile, and after Gabriel left, the house fell into decay. The almond trees were destroyed by ants, the flowers disappeared from the garden.

Word of his grandmother's decrepitude had reached the family from friends before her death. After she died, when he was about 15, Gabriel returned to Aracataca with his mother to sell the house in which they had both grown up. The return was a formula for nostalgia: a lively and beloved past confronted a dilapidated, disillusioning present. If, as Rodríguez Monegal maintains, García Márquez had first been abandoned by his parents, he duplicated his losses again and again. First there was the loss of his mother, then at eight of his grandfather. When he lost his grandfather, he lost the rest of his childhood as well: his room, his house, his friends, his Montessori school, his grandmother. For that familiar place, he got in trade a mother he had known briefly and at rare intervals, a houseful of

unknown siblings, and an unfamiliar father. Later, when his grandmother died during his adolescence, he lost to the ravages of time and reality even the idealized childhood memory of that house. More important than any individual loss was the pattern of losses, repeating themselves at intervals. From that return to a hot, desolate town under a merciless sun, García Márquez traces the initial desire to write the story of his house, his town, and his region.

The novel was to be called *La casa* (The house), and the earliest traces of it appear in the author's journalism of the 1950s as "Notes for a Novel," which, significantly, he always published under his own name, not under the pseudonym used in his column. Among the earliest pieces appears "The House of the Buendías," occupied by Col. Aureliano Buendía and his wife Doña Soledad, their son Tobías, and their daughter Remedios. An odd first-person fragment told from a child's point of view anticipates the interior monologues of *Leaf Storm*. Returning to church newly and dangerously decked out in too much finery, the runaway servant Meme is rescued from hostile townsfolk by "my father's" firmness.[5] Most of the early fictions contain elements that reappear in the later novel; in fact, it is difficult to find an early story that has not left a trace in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. (Jacques Joset's edition points out many of them.) A similar claim might be made for much of the early journalism (well treated by Raymond L. Williams in his *Gabriel García Márquez* [1984], as well as by Joset).

Inventing and reinventing Macondo was the work of more than 15 years. "Macondo" is the name of a banana plantation near Aracataca; it means "banana" in Bantu, and as Gaston discovers, to his dismay, it is homonymic with Africa's Makonde. By 1952 Macondo had become the town in *Leaf Storm*, García Márquez's first novel. It is also the setting for "The Monologue of Isabel Watching It Rain in Macondo," "One Day after Saturday," and "Big Mama's Funeral." Unnamed, but identified by the presence of the widow Rebeca, it is the setting for "Tuesday Siesta." It is also the town the Colonel (to whom no one writes) left in 1906, 50 years before his story begins, when the

banana fever arrived. He took the same little yellow train that reappears in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. "One Day after Saturday" (written 1955, published 1962) inaugurated the deadpan, twisted realism of the later novel, and it is retold in its entirety, from the rain of dead birds to the Wandering Jew, at the end of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Macondo was preeminently the town desolated by the leafstorm that the train had brought, the town of the grandfather and the child, the town of the banana fever. The other stories are all set elsewhere.

The final Macondo sweeps up themes, subjects, attitudes, images, and motifs that had first appeared in very different artistic contexts and styles. Realistic representations of political resistance reappear from *No One Writes to the Colonel, In Evil Hour,* and "One of These Days," and allegorical invention from the phantasmagoric account of Mr. Herbert's foreign exploitation in "The Sea of Lost Time" (the last story García Márquez completed before *One Hundred Years of Solitude*).[6] In *One Hundred Years of Solitude* Álvaro retells "Night of the Curlews," an extended metaphor for the denial of political violence: curlews peck out the eyes of three men, and all the world denies that it ever happened. Motifs less political and more personal include Meme deserted by her lover, with only her blind grandmother sensing her trouble ("Artificial Roses"). An old woman's senility grieves the three who care for her ("Bitterness for Three Sleepwalkers"). A woman returns to the house where many years ago she played with a boy who waits for her in death; she restores the house, and he narrates the tale ("Someone Has Been Disarranging These Roses"). Burial alive, doubles, even twins who have the same lover in a story by Mark Twain all make appearances in the early fictions or the journalism. Though none originally takes place in Macondo, they all make their way there for *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

When García Márquez came to write *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, he took with his own earlier texts the same freedom all writers take with life and others' writing. He stole, he borrowed, and he recombined. He reimagined the possibilities of literature, and the literature he reimagined included his own. He had served a rigorous appren-

ticeship to his craft in which he mastered his medium, explored different styles, and gradually moved closer to the peculiar blend of the real and the imaginary that characterizes *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. But between the earlier fictions and the "total" reality—personal, cultural, political—of the later novel there lies a long silence. Elements of style, atoms of detail, had made their appearance, but they were waiting for a form and a language. Familiarity with those earlier texts enhances one's appreciation of the magnitude of García Márquez's achievement in the later novel because the difference between them is so vast. It becomes clear why that experience on the road to Acapulco was so momentous.

6

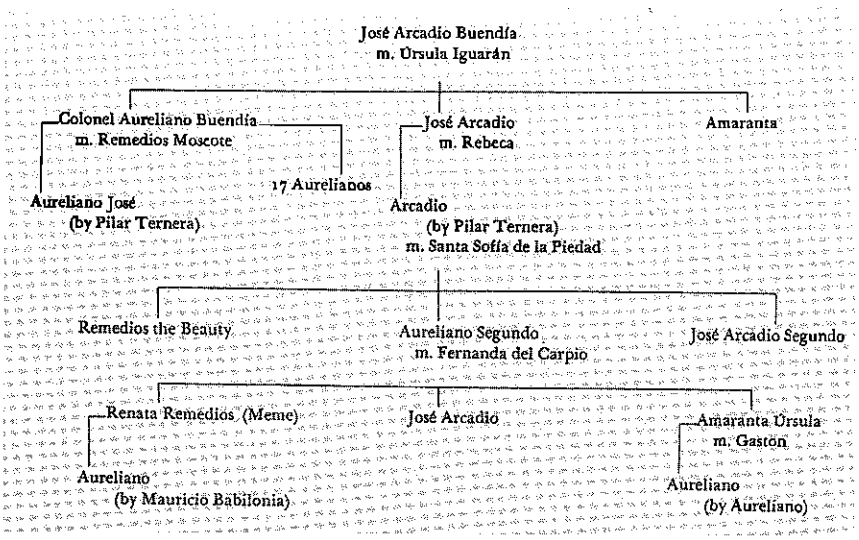
A Pig's Tail, a Pig's Eye

> 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.[1]

García Márquez tells stories for a living; he should almost never be believed. Anyone who has read *One Hundred Years of Solitude* knows that this innocent explanation does not hold water. It is not that the story is about important things and he is suggesting that it is about something unimportant. It isn't that. It is that the baby with a pig's tail is born to a couple who have never heard any warnings against incest and pigs' tails. Aureliano's grandmother, Amaranta Ursula's mother, Fernanda, keeps them ignorant of the precise details of their relationship, but she has no fear of incest and no interest in pigs' tails, and she makes no effort to inhibit the one or the other. The text does not sustain the causal suggestion García Márquez makes here. Let's try again.

"I wanted only to give a poetic permanence to the world of my childhood, which as you know took place in a large, very sad house with a sister who ate dirt and a grandmother who predicted the future and numerous relatives with the same name who never made much distinction between happiness and madness."[2]

This sounds much more like it. "The world of my childhood": a vanished world, like Macondo, destroyed inevitably by the simple



Family tree of the Buendías, the family at the center of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

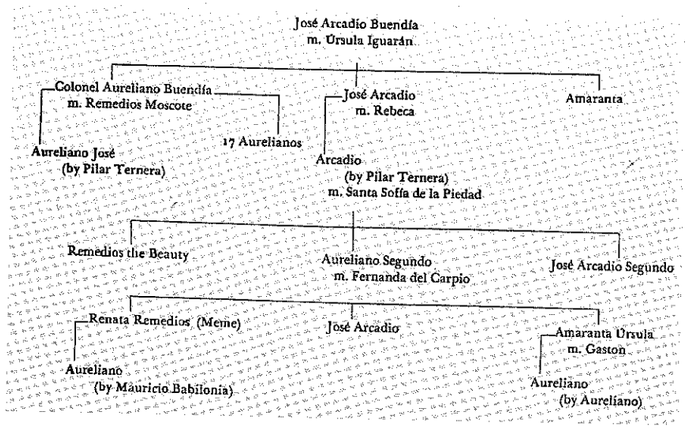
novel as a pharmacist and the "stealthy girl friend" (434) of Gabriel, who is a member of a group of intellectuals. A woman with a "thin neck and sleepy eyes" (444), she is, as in life, left behind when he goes to Europe.

Later García Márquez has Amaranta Úrsula, whose sexual relations with her nephew, Aureliano, bring the Buendía line to its end, hope to name her sons, "Rodrigo and Gonzalo, never Aureliano and José Arcadio" (410). These are the names of García Márquez's sons. Had he a daughter, she would have been named "Virginia and never Remedios" (410). The one thing in his life that he regrets, García Márquez has said, is never having had a daughter.[21]

García Márquez had called Amaranta his second favorite character because she "most resembles the original Úrsula," who was based on his grandmother, "but without the older woman's complexes and prejudices. Amaranta Úrsula is Úrsula again—but emancipated now, with the experiences of the world, with modern ideas."[22]

PEOPLE OF *ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE*

Michael Wood has observed of García Márquez's writing that "there are almost no villains in his work."[23] García Márquez has said



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that the characters are "jigsaw puzzles of many different people, and, naturally, bits of myself as well."[24]

Úrsula Iguarán. The central figure of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is Úrsula Iguarán, the family matriarch, an earth mother who holds together the Buendías for as long as she can, and who stays alive to do so for more than one hundred years. Not only is she the image of the strong woman, practical and enduring, but she has supernatural powers; she can, through memory, "leap back over three hundred years of fate" (22). She is the historian of the Buendías and of Colombia, the country that the Buendía family represents.

When José Arcadio Buendía tells her that "the earth is round, like an orange," she loses her patience. "'If you have to go crazy, please go crazy all by yourself.' She shouted. 'But don't try to put your gypsy ideas into the heads of the children'" (5). The strength with which she holds the family together is implied in her description: "Active, small, severe, that woman of unbreakable nerves who at no moment in her life had been heard to sing seemed to be everywhere, from dawn until quite late at night, always pursued by the soft whispering of her stiff, starched petticoats" (9).

José Arcadio Buendía. The founder of the town of Macondo and of the Buendía line, husband of Úrsula Iguarán, his "unbridled imagination" goes "even beyond miracles and magic" (2). As soon as he sees demonstration of a magnet's ability to attract metal, he wants "to extract gold from the bowels of the earth" (2). A magnifying glass at once becomes seen as a potential weapon of war. He has founded Macondo wisely, on republican principles, as a democracy and a place of fairness, but "too absorbed in his fantastic speculations" (16), he is barely aware of his two sons. Led astray by science, and its promises, he eventually smashes his laboratory and goes mad.

Prudencio Aguilar. After his rooster loses in a cockfight with José Arcadio Buendía's rooster, Prudencio Aguilar insults José Arcadio Buendía, who subsequently kills him with a spear. When the ghost of Prudencio Aguilar begins haunting him, José Arcadio Buendía decides to leave the village where he was born and travels to found Macondo.

Aureliano (Colonel Aureliano Buendía). The colonel is, Wood has written, "the novel's dark conscience."[25] "Silent and withdrawn" (15), as a young man he becomes an artist, teaching himself the art of silverwork. The times, however, convert him into a warrior, like the first ancestral Aureliano Buendía who "had exterminated the

jaguars in the region" (24). The remarkable character of Colonel Aureliano Buendía was evident even before he was born:

> He had wept in his mother's womb and had been born with his eyes open. As they were cutting the umbilical cord, he moved his head from side to side, taking in the things in the room and examining the faces of the people with a fearless curiosity. Then, indifferent to those who came close to look at him, he kept his attention concentrated on the palm roof, which looked as if it were about to collapse under the tremendous pressure of the rain. (15–16)

That it is little Aureliano who touches ice at the end of the first chapter, duplicating the experience of the author, is a clue to his being as close to an alter ego for García Márquez as any character in the novel. He repeats the words little Gabito used: "it's boiling" (19).

Aureliano hears about the impending civil war from his Conservative father-in-law, Don Apolinar Moscote, who explains the politics of the civil war:

> the Liberals . . . were Freemasons, bad people, wanting to hang priests, to institute civil marriage and divorce, to recognize the rights of illegitimate children as equal to those of legitimate ones, and to cut the country up into a federal system that would take power away from the supreme authority. The Conservatives, on the other hand, who had received their power directly from God, proposed the establishment of public order and family morality. They were the defenders of the faith of Christ, of the principle of authority, and were not prepared to permit the country to be broken down into autonomous entities (104).

Don Moscote's description is a fairly accurate historical depiction of the theoretical distinctions between the two sides, although couched in decidedly Conservative rhetoric. As a humanitarian, Aureliano automatically favors the Liberal side. When Don Moscote, who is supposed to supervise elections, tampers with the ballots, destroying most of the red, or Liberal, ones, Aureliano says, "If I were a Liberal . . . I'd go to war because of those ballots" (105). Prior to the election, Don Moscote had ordered all potential weapons confiscated, including kitchen knives. When Aureliano discovers that the Conservative government is going to use the so-called weapons as "proof that the Liberals were preparing for war," he makes his final decision: "If I have to be something I'll be a Liberal," he said, "because the Conservatives are tricky" (106). Before long

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he has gone from being "Aurelito" to Colonel Aureliano Buendía. He organizes his "thirty-two armed uprisings" (113), only to lose them all.

Despite his inherited clairvoyance, Colonel Aureliano Buendía cannot predict the failure of his politics. After too many battles in the meaningless wars between the Liberals and the Conservatives, he becomes a man capable of anything, executing the Conservative General Moncada, a decent man, and nearly having his best friend, Colonel Gerineldo Márquez, executed as well. Cursed at by his mother for this last plan, Colonel Aureliano Buendía then "scratched for many hours trying to break the hard shell of his solitude" (184), the inhumanity with which the wars had infused his soul. Instead of killing his best friend, Colonel Aureliano Buendía tries to end the civil war. The process is one of unspeakable horror: "He went to inconceivable extremes of cruelty to put down the rebellion of his own officers, who resisted and called for victory, and he finally relied on enemy forces to make them submit" (184).

So the Colonel, paradoxically, manages to "win a defeat that was much more difficult, much more bloody and costly than victory" (185). The psychological result is that Colonel Aureliano Buendía loses affection for all other human beings: "all of that had been wiped out by the war" (188). By the time the official armistice is signed, "he had reached the end of all hope, beyond glory and the nostalgia of glory" (191).

Surviving a suicide attempt in which he shoots himself in the chest with a pistol only for the bullet to come out "through his back without harming any vital organ" (114), he lives into his old age, making gold fishes in his father's old laboratory, having "learned to think coldly so that inescapable memories would not touch any feeling" (286).

Melquíades. He is "a heavy gypsy with an untamed beard and sparrow hands" (1) and brings science to Macondo, first the magnet and then the telescope and the magnifying glass. He is "a gloomy man, enveloped in a sad aura" (6). He is also a great storyteller whose image will become "a hereditary memory" (6) to all the descendants of José Arcadio Buendía.

Melquíades is presumed dead, but after a long absence, he returns to Macondo, "which had still not been discovered by death" (54), because he cannot bear the solitude. Melquíades predicts that Macondo will become "a luminous city with great glass houses where there was no trace remaining of the race of the Buendías" (58).

José Arcadio. The elder brother of Colonel Aureliano Buendía, he has "a square head, thick hair, and his father's character" (15). He also lacks imagination. He grows into a "monumental adolescent," and "so well-equipped for life that he seemed abnormal" (27). A fortune teller, Pilar Ternera, informs Úrsula that the "disproportionate size" of his penis means that "He'll be very lucky" (28). She then proceeds to seduce him. Governed by his sensuality, José Arcadio runs away with the gypsies.

José Arcadio returns, a huge man: "He was wearing a medal of Our Lady of Help around his bison neck, his arms and chest were completely covered with cryptic tattooing, and on his right wrist was the tight copper bracelet of the *niños-en cruz* amulet" (97). Every inch of his body is tattooed, and, stranded on the Sea of Japan, he once resorted to cannibalism to survive. He is besotted by superstition, and, unlike his brother Aureliano, has little acquaintance with rationality and intellect. After he returns to Macondo, José Arcadio makes his living by selling his sexual favors to women. The minute Rebeca sees him, she rejects her longtime erstwhile suitor, the Italian immigrant Pietro Crespi as a "sugary dandy" (100). After having lived happily with Rebeca for years, José Arcadio dies mysteriously from a single gunshot wound.

Arcadio. José Arcadio's son by Pilar Ternera, Arcadio, raised indifferently, and never told his true parentage, turns out to be the cruelest of the Buendías. At first, he learns the art of silverwork from his uncle, Aureliano, then becomes a teacher. Raised with his aunt, Amaranta, he reflects the first incestuous feelings to surface among the Buendías of Macondo. Arcadio never learns who his biological parents are, and unknowingly lusts after his mother, Pilar Ternera, who tricks him into sleeping instead with Santa Sofía de la Piedad, with whom he later has three children.

Entirely without principles, Arcadio falls in love with soldiering, with the accoutrements of the military. Left in charge of the town when Colonel Aureliano Buendía goes off to war, he puts uniforms on his former pupils. He organizes a firing squad, and then employs it so capriciously that his grandmother, Úrsula, calls him a murderer. He is "the cruelest ruler that Macondo had ever known" (115). When he attempts to drag Don Apolinar Moscote out and have him shot, Úrsula intervenes and whips Arcadio mercilessly. Arcadio disobeys Colonel Aureliano Buendía's instructions to surrender the town to the Conservatives. After Macondo is devastated, he is captured and shot. As he faces the firing squad, he thinks of Remedios.

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Amaranta. Úrsula's daughter, and the sister of José Arcadio and Aureliano. Amaranta is also her own worst enemy. She falls in love with the same man whom Rebeca loves, Pietro Crespi, but she keeps her feelings locked inside. Unsent love letters grow moldy at the bottom of her trunk. Vindictive, she promises herself that Rebeca, who has been raised as her sister, will marry Pietro Crespi "only over her dead body" (76).

Rebeca. A young orphan who comes to the door of the Buendías carrying a sack containing her parents' bones. She carries a letter that states that she is Úrsula's second cousin, and hence related to José Arcadio Buendía as well, but no one in Macondo recognizes the name of the sender or her parents' names. The mysteries of her origin are never revealed in the novel.

For a long time Rebeca refuses to speak and will eat only "the damp earth of the courtyard and the cake of whitewash that she picked off the walls with her nails" (46). It is Úrsula who transforms her into the most affectionate Buendía. Yet, Rebeca carries the plague of insomnia, with its deadly consequence, "a loss of memory" (48), which makes its sufferers forget how to cook and eat." Although she seemed expansive and cordial, she had a solitary character and an impenetrable heart (69), characteristics that will lead to a lifetime of loneliness. She cannot escape the trauma of her childhood and so continues to eat earth even when she is an adult.

Pietro Crespi. An Italian who arrives from the import house "to assemble and tune the pianola, to instruct the purchasers in its functioning, and to teach them how to dance the latest music printed on its six paper roles" (65). He is young and blond and handsome, a dandy in a brocade vest, despite the "suffocating heat" (66) of Macondo. With his "patent leather curls" he arouses "in women an irrepressible need to sigh" (80); he is one of those men with so much allure that every woman falls for him, including both Amaranta and Rebeca. Critic Clive Griffin has noted that he is given "a comically inappropriate name: it recalls Pedro Crespi, a major character in Pedro Calderon de la Barca's play *El alcalde de Zalamea,* who, far from being an effete Italian, was a forceful and cunning Spanish peasant."[26] The transposition is one more example of the wit and sly humor of García Márquez. After Rebeca leaves him for José Arcadio, he proposes to Amaranta, who rejects him although she loves him. He then cuts his throat.

Don Apolinar Moscote. The magistrate who demands, to Úrsula's chagrin, that the fronts of all houses be painted blue, the Conservative color, "in celebration of the anniversary of national independence" (61). Don Apolinar Moscote brings government to Macondo, along with political parties, creating the groundwork for the bloody civil wars to come.

Colonel Gerineldo Márquez. The best friend of Colonel Aureliano Buendía and a son of one of the founders of Macondo. Playfully, the author makes his own family founders of Macondo, the town he has invented. Gerineldo is the one who accompanies Colonel Aureliano Buendía at the moment of his final defeat.

"Fragile, timid, with natural good manners" he is able to bring "the atmosphere of rural peace" (149) to Macondo. When he asks Amaranta to marry him, once more self-destructively she blights her own life. "You love Aureliano so much that you want to marry me because you can't marry him" (151), she tells her ardent suitor.

Pilar Ternera. A fortune teller and the woman who sexually initiates both José Arcadio and his brother, Aureliano. She smells of smoke under her armpits, which excites her young lover José Arcadio. She is a gracious and understanding lover to both of the sons of José Arcadio Buendía, and the mother of his first two grandchildren, Arcadio and Aureliano José.

Santa Sofía de la Piedad. The daughter of small shop owners, she is paid by Pilar Ternera to go as her substitute and sleep with Arcadio, who lusts after Pilar, not realizing that she is his mother. Santa Sofía de la Piedad and Arcadio have a daughter, Remedios the Beauty, and twin sons, Aureliano Segundo and José Arcadio Segundo.

Remedios. The daughter of Don Apolinar Moscote and the child-bride of Colonel Aureliano Buendía. As soon as she reaches puberty, from the moment of her marriage, Remedios becomes a gracious woman: "From that day on the sense of responsibility, the natural grace, the calm control that Remedios would have in the face of adverse circumstances was revealed" (88). She proceeds directly from playing with dolls and wetting her bed to being a wife.

Her sweetness is such that she begins to sing at dawn. Remedios is the only person who can intervene in the arguments between Amaranta and Rebeca. She takes care of the aging and mad José Arcadio Buendía under his chestnut tree, washing him and keeping "his hair and beard free of lice and nits" (95). In Remedios, whose name is

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Spanish for *remedies,* the moody Aureliano discovers "the justification that he needed to live" (95).

Aureliano José. The son of Colonel Aureliano Buendía and Pilar Ternera. When he is born, since he is illegitimate, Remedios decides that "he would be considered their oldest child" (95). Then, when Remedios dies, Amaranta adopts Aureliano José and raises him "as a son who would share her solitude" (96).

He develops incestuous feelings toward his aunt, Amaranta, as they take baths together. Aureliano José feels "a strange trembling at the sight of the splendid breasts with their brown nipples . . . and he felt his skin tingle as he contemplated the way her skin tingled when it touched the water" (156). Their infatuation ceases when Amaranta realizes she is "floundering about in an autumnal passion, one that was dangerous and had no future" (157). He is later shot in the back by a Conservative soldier and dies.

Father Nicanor Reyna. The priest who comes to Macondo to officiate at the wedding of Remedios and Colonel Aureliano Buendía and then remains in the town. When he drinks hot chocolate, he levitates. He collects money from those who come to see his miraculous levitation, and proceeds to build a church that is "the largest in the world, with life-size saints and stained-glass windows on the sides, so that people would come from Rome to honor God in the center of impiety" (90).

Remedios the Beauty. The daughter of Santa Sofía de la Piedad and Arcadio, Remedios is the "most beautiful creature that had ever been seen in Macondo" (177), although she is entirely indifferent to that fact. She is so beautiful that Úrsula must keep her secluded except to go to mass, and then her face is covered with a black shawl. Men literally die for love of her, but she remains oblivious. Although she wears a shapeless sack dress and shaves her head, she remains as beautiful as ever.

Aureliano Segundo. One of the twin sons of Santa Sofía de la Piedad and Arcadio, he marries Fernanda del Carpio. He has grown to look like the José Arcadios. Obsessed by Melquíades's books, he attempts to decipher them and is visited by the dead Melquíades. Aureliano Segundo recognizes him at once "because that hereditary memory had been transmitted from generation to generation and had come to him through the memory of his grandfather" (200). He becomes "one of the most respected men in Macondo" (204).

Aureliano Segundo and his brother share the same mistress, Petra Cotes, just as the first Aureliano and his twin brother, José Arcadio, were both initiated by Pilar Ternera. Thanks to the influence of Petra Cotes, his animals proliferate, and Aureliano Segundo becomes a rich, if wild, man. He takes the route of dissipation, of gluttony, profligacy and moral carelessness, bringing the Buendía family one step closer to destruction.

Fernanda del Carpio. She is a beautiful and repressed daughter of the interior, born in a place that sounds like Bogotá, "a city six hundred miles away, a gloomy city where on ghostly nights the coaches of the viceroys still rattled through the cobbled streets" (221). Descended from Spanish nobility, she has always been told that "One day you will be a queen" (222), but she is miserable. One of the most beautiful women in the land, she is devoid of sensuality and is inhibited and nunlike. Fernanda has been raised as a woman of the Colombian oligarchy and García Márquez does not spare her:

> At the end of eight years, after having learned to write Latin poetry, play the clavichord, talk about falconry with gentlemen and apologetics with archbishops, discuss affairs of state with foreign rulers and affairs of God with the Pope, she returned to her parents' home to weave funeral wreaths. (223)

Not surprisingly Fernanda, devoid of any sense of the practical, makes a poor wife and a horrific mother.

José Arcadio Segundo. One of the twin sons of Santa Sofía de la Piedad and Arcadio, he grows up to resemble the bony Aurelianos. He asks Colonel Gerineldo Márquez to let him witness an execution and is horrified when he thinks that the executed man is being buried alive. His earliest memory is of the man being shot. He assists the priest at mass and he becomes a Conservative, scandalizing Colonel Márquez. He opens up the river, attempting to establish a boat line between Macondo and the rest of the world but succeeds in bringing only one boat up the river. Then he takes a job as a foreman with the banana company. When the workers begin protesting working conditions, however, José Arcadio Segundo becomes a union leader and leads the workers of the banana company in their strike. The gringos soon spread disinformation about him: "Quite soon he was pointed out as the agent of an international conspiracy against public order" (320).

José Arcadio Segundo witnesses the massacre perpetrated by the banana company; unconscious and believed dead, he is transported along with three thousand corpses by freight train to the sea.

By the time he returns to Macondo, the banana company and the government have succeeded in convincing the people that there have not been any dead at all through an "extraordinary proclamation to the nation" (332). José Arcadio Segundo survives concealed in the magic room of Melquíades, somehow rendered invisible to soldiers who are searching for him.

Eventually José Arcadio Segundo goes mad, believing that every day the train left Macondo "with two hundred cars loaded with dead people: 'they were all of those who were at the station,' he shouted. 'Three thousand four hundred eight'" (361–362). Eventually, however, he becomes "the most lucid inhabitant of the house" (375) as he teaches the last little Aureliano to read and write and initiates him in the study of the parchments of Melquíades. José Arcadio Segundo also teaches him the truth of what happened in the banana strike.

Petra Cotes. A "clean young mulatto woman with yellow almond-shaped eyes that gave her face the ferocity of a panther" (205), she arrives in Macondo during the war. The twins Aureliano Segundo and José Arcadio Segundo mislead her into thinking they are one person, and she sleeps with them both at first, although José Arcadio Segundo eventually drops her. After he marries Fernanda, Aureliano Segundo continues to live with Petra Cotes.

Renata Remedios (Meme). The daughter of Aureliano Segundo and Fernanda del Carpio. Her mother calls her Renata. The Buendía family calls her "Meme," short for Remedios. Seduced by the idle pleasures and moral carelessness of the Americans (gringos), Meme rebels against the manners of Amaranta and Fernanda: "She had to make a great effort not to throw at them their prissiness, their poverty of spirit, their delusions of grandeur" (291).

She has an affair with Mauricio Babilonia. Her fate is terrible as, after her lover is killed while sneaking into the bathroom where she waits for him, her mother exiles her to a convent where she will be imprisoned forever. The cruel fate of Meme also prefigures the fall of the Buendía family:

> She was still thinking about Mauricio Babilonia, his smell of grease, and his halo of butterflies, and she would keep on thinking about him for all the days of her life until the remote autumn morning when she died of old age, with her name changed and her head shaved and without ever having spoken a word, in a gloomy hospital in Cracow. (319)

Mauricio Babilonia. A young man "sallow, with dark and melancholy eyes" and a "dreamy air" (305). He is an apprentice mechanic in the banana company garage. But Mauricio Babilonia has a "genuine elegance" (305) and he becomes the lover of Meme. He is a flawed man, bearing beneath his shirt "the rash of the banana company" (305), but wherever he goes he is surrounded by yellow butterflies. The child he fathers with Meme is named Aureliano. From the day Mauricio Babilonia is shot and killed, his spinal column shattered, Meme never again speaks.

José Arcadio. The son of Aureliano Segundo and Fernanda del Carpio and the brother of Meme. He goes away to a seminary in Europe, and Úrsula hopes that he will become a priest. When he returns, he is a vivid presence:

> His hands were pale, with green veins and fingers that were like parasites, and he wore a solid gold ring with a round sunflower opal on his left index finger. (393)

He remains, however, "an autumnal child, terribly sad and solitary," (393) the son of Fernanda. He had left the seminary long before his return to Macondo, yielding to dissipation, remembering with nostalgia his lust for Amaranta, an echo of the feelings of Aureliano José before him. When this José Arcadio discovers Úrsula's buried treasure, he wastes it in pedophilic debauchery. His asthma is relieved when Aureliano, his illegitimate nephew, purchases a remedy at the pharmacy run by Mercedes, "a girl with the stealthy beauty of a serpent of the Nile" (401) who will become the wife of Gabriel, the author.

José Arcadio and Aureliano are unable to recognize Aureliano Amador, the last of the colonel's seventeen illegitimate sons, and so the police "with their Mausers" are able "neatly" to penetrate, with bullets the cross of ashes that has remained for years on his forehead (403). José Arcadio is murdered by the children he has molested, and dies thinking of Amaranta, even as his nephew Aureliano realizes only at his death "how much he had begun to love him" (404). These are two more failures of love marking the fall of the Buendía line.

Amaranta Úrsula. The daughter of Fernanda and Aureliano Segundo, and the sister of Meme and José Arcadio, she is "Active, small, and indomitable like Úrsula" while being "almost as pretty and provocative as Remedios the Beauty" (407). Amaranta Úrsula will be the last woman of the Buendía line. She attempts to "rescue the community which had been singled out by misfortune" (408),

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but the Buendía propensities overwhelm her. A modern woman, she marries Gaston but is too attracted to solitude and falls in love with her nephew.

Gaston. The European husband of Amaranta Úrsula, he is an aviator and a romantic who "had come close to killing himself and his sweetheart simply to make love in a field of violets" (409). His wife, however, prefers her nephew. Gaston departs, leaving it to the Germans to create the Colombian national airline, Avianca, as they did.

Aureliano Babilonia. The last male Buendía to grow to adulthood, Aureliano is born in secret in the convent where his mother, Meme, was sent after his father, Mauricio Babilonia, was killed. After a nun delivers the illegitimate Aureliano to Macondo, his maternal grandmother, Fernanda, wishes to "throw him in the bathroom cistern" (315), but instead locks him up in Colonel Aureliano Buendía's old workshop. Like those of the Arcadios, his sex organ, "that was like a turkey's wattles" (316), is impressive. As he grows up, he possesses the "prominent cheekbones," and the firm and rather pitiless line of the lips of Colonel Aureliano Buendía (383–384).

The incest that has threatened the family since the days of Amaranta's youth is now fulfilled. Having learned the arts of lovemaking from the prostitute Nigromanta, as the young men of Colombia customarily learn from prostitutes and relatives, he returns to seduce Amaranta Úrsula. Aunt and nephew Buendía consummate their passion. Amaranta Úrsula dies giving birth to the result of their incestuous union, Aureliano, and he is that child born with a pig's tail so dreaded by Úrsula. The Buendía family line now comes to an end.

MAJOR THEMES

The underlying theme of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the destructive power of solitude. By the end, the last Buendías, Amaranta Úrsula and Aureliano, are left alone in the world, drifting "toward the desert of disenchantment and oblivion" (441). The fall of Macondo can be traced to the obsession with solitude that infected the first José Arcadio Buendía.

All the other themes of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* flow from this one central motif. Solitude, seemingly inevitable, is connected to the passage of time, of which García Márquez reminds the reader with persistent time cues, beginning in the first sentence of the novel, where there are two: "many

Mauricio Babilonia. A young man "sallow, with dark and melancholy eyes" and a "dreamy air" (305). He is an apprentice mechanic in the banana company garage. But Mauricio Babilonia has a "genuine elegance" (305) and he becomes the lover of Meme. He is a flawed man, bearing beneath his shirt "the rash of the banana company" (305), but wherever he goes he is surrounded by yellow butterflies. The child he fathers with Meme is named Aureliano. From the day Mauricio Babilonia is shot and killed, his spinal column shattered, Meme never again speaks.

José Arcadio. The son of Aureliano Segundo and Fernanda del Carpio and the brother of Meme. He goes away to a seminary in Europe, and Úrsula hopes that he will become a priest. When he returns, he is a vivid presence:

> His hands were pale, with green veins and fingers that were like parasites, and he wore a solid gold ring with a round sunflower opal on his left index finger. (393)

He remains, however, "an autumnal child, terribly sad and solitary," (393) the son of Fernanda. He had left the seminary long before his return to Macondo, yielding to dissipation, remembering with nostalgia his lust for Amaranta, an echo of the feelings of Aureliano José before him. When this José Arcadio discovers Úrsula's buried treasure, he wastes it in pedophilic debauchery. His asthma is relieved when Aureliano, his illegitimate nephew, purchases a remedy at the pharmacy run by Mercedes, "a girl with the stealthy beauty of a serpent of the Nile" (401) who will become the wife of Gabriel, the author.

José Arcadio and Aureliano are unable to recognize Aureliano Amador, the last of the colonel's seventeen illegitimate sons, and so the police "with their Mausers" are able "neatly" to penetrate, with bullets the cross of ashes that has remained for years on his forehead (403). José Arcadio is murdered by the children he has molested, and dies thinking of Amaranta, even as his nephew Aureliano realizes only at his death "how much he had begun to love him" (404). These are two more failures of love marking the fall of the Buendía line.

Amaranta Úrsula. The daughter of Fernanda and Aureliano Segundo, and the sister of Meme and José Arcadio, she is "Active, small, and indomitable like Úrsula" while being "almost as pretty and provocative as Remedios the Beauty" (407). Amaranta Úrsula will be the last woman of the Buendía line. She attempts to "rescue the community which had been singled out by misfortune" (408),

but the Buendía propensities overwhelm her. A modern woman, she marries Gaston but is too attracted to solitude and falls in love with her nephew.

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Banana plantation near the town of Santa Marta, where the 1928 banana strike fictionalized in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* took place

years later " and "that distant afternoon" (1). The next line introduces another: "at that time" (1).

Incest is another theme—incest and its link to solitude. Úrsula Iguarán and José Arcadio Buendía are cousins. The precedent for disaster befalling incestuous relations between members of this family is ever with her:

> An aunt of Úrsula's, married to an uncle of José Arcadio Buendía, had a son who went through life wearing loose, baggy trousers and who bled to death after having lived forty-two years in the purest state of virginity, for he had been born and had grown up with a cartilaginous tail in the shape of a corkscrew and with a small tuft of hair on the tip. A pig's tail that was never allowed to be seen by any woman and that cost him his life when a butcher friend did him the favor of chopping it off with his cleaver (22).

Another important theme of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is that individuals develop their uniqueness as a result of causal connections, with one event of their lives shaping another and so contributing to the evolution of their characters. It is not heredity, but environment which shapes their temperaments and their fates. Rebeca's sad childhood leads directly to her solitary adolescence, and to a sorrowful solitude that lasts to the end of her life. Arcadio's indifferent upbringing and his illegitimacy deform his character and account for his cruelty:

> Arcadio was a solitary and frightened child during the insomnia plague, in the midst of Úrsula's utilitarian fervor, during the delirium of José Arcadio Buendía, the hermetism of Aureliano, and the mortal rivalry between Amaranta and Rebeca. (121)

He grows up without anyone really noticing him: "no one imagined how much he wept in secret" (121). He becomes corrupt, confiscating public money and using it for his own ends. If some characters

are born with certain powers, like Colonel Aureliano Buendía and his clairvoyance, most become what their experience has made them.

The source of love and its power in this novel are inexplicable, another persistent García Márquez theme. In a *coup de foudre,* love at first sight, Aureliano feels an instant affection for little Remedios. When she comes to the door of his workroom "his heart froze with terror as he saw the girl at the door, dressed in pink organdy and wearing white boots" (71).

Yet, even if love arises instantaneously and seemingly without reason, it is not necessarily superficial. Aureliano's love for Remedios is powerful enough to last for a lifetime: "He wanted to stay beside that lily skin forever, beside those emerald eyes, close to that voice that called him 'sir' with every question . . . " (71). From then on "everything, even music, reminded him of Remedios" (71)—as accurate a description of the experience of falling in love as any author has offered.

That life is frequently absurd is another persistent theme of *One Hundred Years of Solitude.* The author's sense of humor is aroused as Aureliano begins to write poetry, not only "on the harsh pieces of parchment that Melquíades gave him," but also "on the bathroom walls" and "on the skin of his arms" (72). Rebeca, waiting for a letter from Pietro Crespi in a "slough of delirium" (72), behaves in a similar way. The father of Remedios puts the irrationality of love bluntly and truly: "It doesn't make sense," he argues, "we have six other daughters, all unmarried, and at an age where they deserve it, who would be delighted to be the honorable wife of a gentleman as serious and hardworking as your son, and Aurelito lays his eyes precisely on the one who still wets her bed" (76).

"Love is a disease" (75), José Arcadio Buendía shouts when he learns that his son Aureliano wishes to marry a child. But it is not the youthfulness of Remedios that upsets him. "With so many pretty and decent girls around," he argues, "the only thing that occurs to you is to get married to the daughter of our enemy" (75).

The senseless cruelty of war, another major theme in *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* is expressed in the physical transformation of Colonel Aureliano Buendía, after his years of fighting in the lost Liberal cause:

> On his waist he wore a holster with the flap open and his hand, which was always on the butt of the pistol, revealed the same watchful and resolute tension as his look. His head, with

> deep recessions in the hairline now, seemed to have been baked in a slow oven. His face, tanned by the salt of the Caribbean, had acquired a metallic hardness. He was preserved against imminent old age by a vitality that had something to do with the coldness of his insides. He was taller than when he had left, paler and bonier, and he showed the first symptoms of resistance to nostalgia. "Good Lord," Úrsula said to herself. "Now he looks like a man capable of anything." He was. (170–171)

García Márquez expresses how we are different people at different stages of our lives; Colonel Aureliano Buendía has become a reflection of how he has lived.

After Colonel Aureliano Buendía returns from the civil war, the sexual and political themes merge. Ruined by war and now heartless, Colonel Aureliano Buendía has permitted the execution of the decent and good General Moncada. His bodyguards have ransacked the house of Moncada's widow. Now he orders the execution of his best friend, Colonel Gerineldo Márquez, who protested against his signing away all the principles of the Liberals in the peace treaty.

Personally allowing themselves to be guided by lust and politically infected by the pursuit of power, the Buendías have transgressed against the human solidarity which alone would ensure their survival. Yet, there is hope, if not finally for the Buendías, then for humanity. Colonel Aureliano Buendía sets his friend Colonel Gerineldo Márquez free, the friend who would rather die than see him "changed into a bloody tyrant" (184).

When Aureliano does finally cease being a warrior, he finds all normal affections gone; he cannot remember his love for his wife, Remedios, or his love for his mother, now old and worn. He is left to await his death.

IMAGES

Beginning with the ice mentioned in the first line, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is replete with images, which appeal to the five senses, not only visual images, but images of sound, of smell, of touch, and of taste. José Arcadio Buendía and his men are forced to "eat macaws, whose blue flesh had a harsh and musky taste" (11). Their lungs "were overwhelmed by a suffocating smell of blood" (12). The world of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is a world made richly visible by scores of such vivid images. So the band of founders of Macondo come upon "an enormous Spanish galleon. Tilted slightly

to the starboard, it had hanging from its intact masts, the dirty rags of its sails in the midst of its rigging, which was adorned with orchids. The hull, covered with an armour of petrified barnacles and soft moss, was firmly fastened into a surface of stones" (12). This ship is more than a mere relic, however, for in García Márquez the strongest of his images are enlisted in the service of reiterating his major themes: "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" (12).

The Spanish galleon reminds the founders of Macondo of their Spanish forbears, and points as well to liberation by revealing the proximity of the sea. The galleon is alluded to later in the text in the description of the settlers of Macondo as "shipwrecked people with no escape" (26).

Many other images recur during the course of the narrative. Among these are the "gigantic chestnut tree" (9) in the courtyard which appears in the first pages and will reappear, and the almond trees planted by José Arcadio Buendía which are "broken and dusty" (43) after the invasion of the banana company. García Márquez is also fond of compiling images in lists, as in the catalogue of diseases that the gypsy Melquíades has survived:

> 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 (6).

The gypsies provide some of the most profound imagery, as in José Arcadio Buendía's walk among the gypsies "suffocated by the mingled breath of manure and sandals that the crowd exhaled" (17).

Often the imagery borders on magic: that Amaranta and Arcadio as children drink lizard broth and eat spider eggs together predicts their later sexual attraction. García Márquez, referring to Melquíades, describes the appearance of the vegetarian: "His skin become covered with a thin moss, similar to that which flourished on the antique vest that he never took off . . . " (78). Even more vivid is the image of the dead body of Melquíades: "the body was already beginning to burst with a livid fluorescence, the soft whistles of which impregnated the house with a pestilential vapor" (78).

At times García Márquez clusters his images so there are powerful descriptions of Macondo after the rains. Amaranta Úrsula and

of foremen-contractors. They moved from plantation to plantation, and because they were not directly employed by the banana growers, the growers were able to evade the provisions of Colombian labor law that mandated protections for workers such as latrines, hospitals, and accident insurance. The use of contract labor meant that United Fruit did not have workers of its own; it hired only the contractors. That fact lay behind the now famous and very real determination of a Colombian court that, indeed, the banana company had no workers.[11]

In describing the massacre of striking workers at the train station, García Márquez follows the account of the general, Carlos Cortés Vargas, who issued the decrees, ordered the firing, and oversaw the "mopping up" operation after the massacre. Labor organizers and sympathizers "disappeared" in a pattern that has become more familiar to us in recent years, from Argentina, El Salvador, Chile, and so on. The general and the novelist agree that the army was called in to break the strike, that saboteurs were interfering with the work of scabs, that a crowd assembled at the train station to await a mediator, that they were ordered by Decree No. 1 to disperse or the army would fire, that the army fired, that there was more violence in the days that followed as the army, under Decree No. 4, restored order and eliminated hooligans. Where the accounts differ is the number of dead: Cortés Vargas testifies to 29 men. García Márquez uses the largest number reported in North American newspaper accounts, 3,000. Cortés Vargas does not contrast the playful, friendly activities of his men by day with the murderous disappearances they caused by night. But he allows that it was three months before martial law could be lifted and order declared restored. The novelist eliminates the three months and has order declared at once.

The point, again, is that the narrative restores to reality an event that the "official story" denies. The story recovered here is rather minor by the standards of modern atrocities, just as the Terror of the French Revolution dwindles to nothing beside our gulags and holocausts. But the act of remembering is the paradigmatic act: it is the act of consciousness that creates a conscience in us.

9

Principles of Construction

One Hundred Years of Solitude is a technical tour de force that not only offers itself up to its reader for multiple readings but also forces multiple readings on the least willing reader. Having performed a few of the infinite number of readings possible, let us take a brief look at some of the structural features that prevent the reader from coming to rest. Briefly put, the novel seems elusive because it is both decentered and episodic. It is highly specific and detailed in its images, characters, and events; the narrator is more interested in telling us about his characters and their world than he is in telling us what anything or everything means.

The narrative tone in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is often described as uniform or as identical with the characters' point of view. The reason for this not entirely accurate account is the narrator's imperturbability in the face of strange events. He expresses no surprise at the reappearance of the dead or astonishment that a room (Melquíades's) should be seen differently by different characters: luminous and untouched, or decayed and filthy. Nor does he ever judge his characters as primitive, ignorant, or defective in historical conscious-

ness. But while the narrator is indeed serene and unflappable, his relation to the text is unstable. Sometimes he explains things to us from a perspective superior to his characters, as with José Arcadio Buendía's imagination that always went beyond miracles and magic. Sometimes he relates events from his characters' point of view, as when José Arcadio Buendía greets the aged ghost of Prudencio Aguilar. Sometimes he lets us see that the character greeting the ghost is deluded, as when we understand that José Arcadio Buendía takes Ursula for Prudencio Aguilar when she cares for him and talks to him.

Sometimes he deliberately confuses us, as when, without explanation, Arcadio replaces his uncle, Col. Aureliano Buendía, in a prediction of death by firing squad. Sometimes he deliberately deceives us, as in his account of the mysterious murder of José Arcadio. Sometimes he may be putting us on or he may be echoing an unidentified voice or he may be serious: it is impossible to be sure, as when he tells us that Melquíades really had been through death (55; 125). Sometimes he simply dislocates us by introducing an unfixed frame of reference, as when the little yellow train arrives "for the first time eight months late" (210; 299). Eight months late? Eight months late for whom? Relative to what? You ask in vain. Often—though it seems in recollection to be always—he constructs a double reading for us, creating anticipations of events before they occur, creating memories and nostalgia for events that still exist, in narrative time, in the reader's future.

Only once does anything make him angry, that "dragon," those "*hijos de la misma madre*" ("sons of the same mother," "bitch" in the English translation), the Antioquian army that obeyed the command to fire on the banana workers. Not only does he interpret for us as we read, but he also reinterprets the narrative we have read when it is read by Aureliano Babilonia as the manuscripts of Melquíades (and reread by us). There is more, but we might as well conclude with what the author condemns critics for overlooking. The narrator is animated, always, by an "immense compassion" for his "poor creatures,"[1] for the unloved Fernanda, the forgotten Santa Sofia de la Piedad, who cuts the throat of her own dead son, for the frightened homosexual José

Arcadio, and for the slimy green teeth, glowing in the dark, of José Arcadio Segundo. (Compassion does not preclude comedy.) The narrator is even busier than those ants, and since the novel is almost entirely narrated, with very little dialogue, the success of the novel belongs essentially to his quick changes within a serene, imperturbable tone that does not prefer one aspect of reality to another or depreciate any at the expense of others.

Readers can always locate a reality behind the narrator's mirages. To do so, they have to shift codes as rapidly as the narrator does. And, as soon as they have identified the metaphor literalized, the wish fulfilled, the text echoed, as soon as they have cut through the jungle to "reality," the text behind them closes up and resumes its mask. Is the reader required to cut through to reality, or can the text be read as just an imaginary world? Both. Much of the time, the reader cannot help seeing two realities simultaneously (the magnets, flying carpets, television). Relative to the characters, their loves, lives, and losses, the reader can read *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as any other novel is read. But from time to time, the narrator tosses in an episode that cannot immediately be understood, that stymies the reader completely. Such episodes force readers to try to cut through the impenetrable image. Since the image is impenetrable, readers will fail, but they also will not be content unless they try. The ice and the insomnia plague are such images. The ice is far more impenetrable than the insomnia plague, but the insomnia plague will stop the reader who got past the ice without difficulty the first time.

The teller has to have something to tell, of course, and what is told also multiplies the variety of the text. Instead of one story, it tells many stories; instead of one character with whom the reader identifies, or one generation of characters in whose relationships the reader is interested, the novel shifts from character to character, from generation to generation. It lacks the protagonist who always unifies an episodic structure in Western literature, and it lacks the unified action whose resolution is conventionally the ultimate (as it were) source of meaning in a text.

The characters themselves are fragmented by the episodic succession of the narrative. At first they seem to be types: the founder, the matriarch, the macho, the spinster, the *cachaco* (uppity highlander), the homosexual. However strange the events that happen around them or however hyperbolic such attributes as José Arcadio's penis, the characters represent central cultural types, not aberrant or deviant or weird marginal figures. (The exception is Remedios the Beauty. As an idiot or as the only rational being in the house, she deviates, and her fate is appropriately unlike any one else's.) When the scattered parts of these characters are assembled, however, they yield characters of substantial, novelistic complexity.

The reader putting together the fragments the narrative provides may end up "writing" a very different kind of novel out of the materials supplied by this one. What sort of woman could cut the throat of her own dead son, as Santa Sofia de la Piedad does? What weakness in José Arcadio Buendía's character leads him to allow a year to pass before he consummates his marriage? Col. Aureliano Buendía loves a prepubescent girl, loses himself in the solitude of power, and foresees the room of Melquíades filled with trash. The first leads toward a psychoanalytic reading of the character or the amorous habits of his family, the second connects him with history and the futility of historical action, the third with the question of reality and unreality. But all are the colonel, even if, laid out this way, it seems a bit difficult to fit them into one body. To take in the full complexity of the characters with all their dispersed characteristics is to construct characters and a novel of a different sort than García Márquez has written. But the one he has written provides many opportunities for the reader to write his or her own.

At first, the structure, if not the events, of the novel seems conventional enough. The novel seems to promise that it has both a plot and a protagonist in the history of Col. Aureliano Buendía and his wars. But no single character dominates the whole of the action, and no single action (or intertwined or parallel actions) extends the length of the narrative. Novels, it is unfair to say, always end with the death, marriage, or long meditative walk on the beach of a principal character.

At worst, there is a scene "many years later" with the heroine now plump and reproductive or "many years before" with our hero returning to his point of origin. Something occurs that resolves the character's fate and ties up the action, even if tying up the action only means a significant, suggestive, meaning-fraught pause to enable the author to stop. If nothing happens to change the character's life (as frequently happens these days), his or her consciousness is explored and transformed, and that makes all the difference.

What does not happen is what happens in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. The opening sentence promises a principal character, Col. Aureliano Buendía, whose life and career should provide a conventional structure of novelistic expectation. But neither his life nor his career constitutes the whole of the action, and even during his wars, the actions of other characters are not subordinate to the colonel. Instead, such episodes as the loves of Rebeca and Amaranta, the madness of José Arcadio Buendía, and the discoveries of Ursula parallel the love and loss of Remedios Moscote by Aureliano. Then he and his wars are pushed from the center for the loves of Amaranta, Arcadio, and Aureliano José, the murder of José Arcadio, and the death of José Arcadio Buendía. By the end of Chapter 9, not halfway through the book, the wars end, and the colonel drifts into the obscurity of his workshop to die at the end of Chapter 13. The circus animals desert him on a street filled with flying ants. Without him, the book moves on through several more generations in seven more chapters to end with different characters in a different world.

Nor does any other character replace the colonel as protagonist or stay with us until the end, the last page of the novel. The women last longer, and the novel depends heavily on the reader's identification with them. Readers sometimes confess to a terrible sense of loss or an overwhelming nostalgia when Ursula dies. Even more stunning is the shock of Pilar Ternera's death at the beginning of the last chapter. Like Ursula when Rebeca is discovered, we had forgotten she was alive, and now she is dead. The last Buendías do not know their relation to her, so remote has she become from the continuing life of the family.

But the women's lives do not shape the action or provide narrative

structure. The only other novel I know so careless of the conventions of Western novel plotting is Lady Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji.* Since Lady Murasaki wrote hers in eleventh-century Japan, she has an excuse. García Márquez does it on purpose. He uses the colonel as a structural prop for the first half of the fiction and then kicks the prop away. (Not easily: García Márquez describes the day he had to kill Col. Aureliano Buendía as a day he dreaded.)

It is a risky gesture. The reader loses the clue to the direction of the narrative line, the convention of identification with a single character is violated, and the reader's attention disperses among the many new characters in the family of Aureliano Segundo. What García Márquez accomplishes, however, is very important. He prevents the significance of his fiction from terminating or seeming to terminate in an individual, in a single character or a single action. If the novel ended with the death of Col. Aureliano Buendía, we could comfortably sum up by saying the novel was about the futility of political action, the pointlessness of war, the inability to love. The novel is, of course, about all those things, but it is also about more than those, and it is about more than one life. It shatters what seemed to be a center in order to bring the wider historical, cultural, metaphysical, and literary implications of the narrative to the surface. The novel lives in its particular details, characters, and events, but its purposes and interests extend to the whole world that it has evoked, a world that exists in time as well as in space, through generations as well as in a remembered place.

Although the de-centering of the novel has been represented here in terms of something missing, a lack, it is in part to the de-centering that the novel owes the popularity that still puzzles its author.[2] While the restless activities of the young fill the page and occupy the reader's attention, the reader rests securely, babe in arms, on the stability provided by the mothers, Ursula and Pilar. Meanwhile, the narrative brims with episodes, characters, and richly elaborated language so that there are no vacancies save that periodically opened by the word *solitude.* Although de-centered, the text is full (not unlike the world we live in). It creates multiple, momentary, successive centers, and in

doing so gives wholeness and integrity to lives that would otherwise be subordinated to a protagonist. The presence of a protagonist or a single center means the exclusion, subordination, or marginalization of all other contenders. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is more democratic, pluralist, and inclusive than that, and it makes its characters, for a moment, the heroes of their own lives. In turn, the combination of de-centering with fullness enables readers to find their own place (or their own mirror) within the text.

Once the usual narrative conventions have hooked us into the novel, García Márquez can discard them because of the novel's extraordinary surface complexity. At first, the novel does not seem complex at all, especially if complexity is taken to mean difficulty. As Ricardo Gullón put it, García Márquez seems to have rediscovered "the lost art of story-telling."[3] The endless stream of incidents, punctuated by bizarre moments and peopled by dramatic characters, moves with a rapidity that puts airport fiction to shame. Promising violence and discovery, the opening reintroduces us to the world of fairy-tale quests and childhood astonishment. Once out of the "latency" period of boyish explorations and discoveries, the novel discovers sex.

As Fausto Avendaño pointed out in his analysis, "*El factor del best-seller en* Cien años de soledad,"[4] and Gustavo Alvarez Gardeazábal confirmed in "*Las formas de hacer el amor en* Cien años de soledad," the vigorous sexuality of the *macondanos* teases the reader on as the novel penetrates the private life of the bedroom (bathroom, hammock, violet fields). The text presents no impediments, save one, to an easy, rapid, and superficial reading. The single impediment is the confusion deliberately provoked by the recurrent names José, Arcadio, Aureliano, and their combinations.[5] (The women's names present no difficulty, though at least one critic did manage to confuse Remedios the Beauty with her great-aunt Remedios Moscote.) That confusion is the reader's first hint of the underlying complexity in the patterning of the text.

Once we notice the presence of repetition and contrast, patterns begin to multiply. Everywhere we look, we see parallels, echoes, con-

trasts, emblems of the whole. Nothing happens only once in *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* and nothing happens the same way twice. This narrative that has seemed so lucid, so transparent, so easy, begins to overload with signification. Such patterning prevents the narrative from becoming tediously episodic, as almost happens to a few of Cervantes's *Exemplary Tales.* With so many patterns, no single pattern can hold *the* meaning of the text. Instead, the perception and ordering of patterns figure among the meanings of the text.

There are two principal kinds of pattern, the warp and the woof of the narrative web: diachronic transformations and synchronic repetitions.[6] Lucila Mena has described both very well. The diachronic dimension of the narrative is dynamic, characterized by change, development, chronological time, and historical becoming. It constitutes a horizontal axis running the length of the narrative. The synchronic dimension is static, mythic, characterized by eternal models, universal archetypes, stopped time.[7] It constitutes a vertical axis of repetitions without external causes. Multiple patterning occurs along both the synchronic and the diachronic dimensions of the narrative.

Along the diachronic dimension stretch both literary and historical patterns. Western literature's originating texts, the Hebrew Bible and the Hellenic tragedy, provide the basic structures. From Genesis to Apocalypse (or Revelation, a book), the narrative repeats the Bible. Over the same period, it ostentatiously defers the incest of *Oedipus Tyrannos.* Within those literary limits, historical narratives unfold. Carried by the novel's highly specific details are a history of science and technology, a history of economic development and decline, a social history of Latin America, a political history of Colombia, and a regional history of the banana zone. There is also a history of changing female roles as the characters in the female line mark an erratic progress from sexual inhibition and economic productivity (Ursula) to sexual liberation and economic uselessness (Amaranta Ursula, Meme).

Also marking time's changes is a literary history of the West: folktale is followed by epic and romance, the bourgeois novel, and the self-reflexive fictions of modernity. Literary genres shift with characters

and episodes: José Arcadio Buendía's quest for gold follows folktale patterns. The founding of Macondo falls under epic, as do the wars of José Arcadio Buendía's son, the colonel. The period of Amaranta and Rebeca's love for Pietro Crespi and Aureliano's for Remedios Moscote is evidently romantic, as the house fills with love and poetry; while the family-centered, adulterous, and mysteriously rich Aureliano Segundo and his radical labor organizer twin bring us to the bourgeois, economic novel. We end with the self-reflexive fiction and the self-absorbed adolescent of the modern novel. These literary types also correspond to stages of historical, social, and economic development: founding, civil wars, social and economic progress or growth, and marginalized modernity. (We have inventive explorer José Arcadio Buendía; the warrior or *caudillo* Col. Aureliano Buendía and his brother José Arcadio, the *latifundista*; the bourgeois and radical great-grandsons, Aureliano Segundo the prosperous and José Arcadio Segundo the labor organizer; and finally, the bookish, adolescent, intellectual great-great-great-grandson Aureliano Babilonia. Aureliano's friends are also observers, readers, and writers: Álvaro on his endless train ride, Gabriel in Paris sleeping by day and writing by night, the Catalan with his spidery manuscripts.) Dry as these bones are, the patterns perform a skeleton's service. They enable readers to be entirely absorbed by the sharp, luminous, comical details of an active panorama, yet to recognize where they are in an otherwise unfamiliar landscape.

While more than one historical narrative is at work in the fiction, the tendency of each has often been described as a movement from myth, the timelessness of epic and origins, into historical time. The novel actually begins with a sentence that straddles both time frames. Before the firing squad, Col. Aureliano Buendía is "in history," after Melquíades's second death in Macondo and before his final disappearance. Threatened by history, the colonel remembers a moment from his childhood (life's prehistoric period) in a mythic setting, before Melquíades's first death. When Melquíades returns from his first death (on the sands of Singapore) to halt the insomnia plague and to die a second time in the waters of Macondo, historic time begins. History

means written documents, and at that period Melquíades begins to write his mysterious parchments. At the end of the novel, Macondo passes out of historical time into fictive time, the time of the book.

If the novel has a fundamental ploy, it is to enhance the experience of recognition by estranging the reader from the text. Certainly the management of time works that way. The narrator often puzzles his reader by remembering events before they happen. Later the reader understands what he was referring to, as in Amaranta's weaving of her shroud. Or present events are treated from the perspective of their future repercussions, as in the nostalgia evoked by the little yellow train the moment it arrives. Or two present moments are juxtaposed, as when José Arcadio Buendía finds the galleon covered with orchids, and many years later his son finds it burned out in a field of poppies. Or a past that belongs to the reader and the novel, not to the character, is heaped up, as when Aureliano Babilonia sinks into the chair in which Rebeca embroidered, Amaranta played Chinese checkers with Gerineldo Márquez, and Amaranta Ursula sewed baby clothes. To Aureliano's nostalgia for Amaranta Ursula, the text adds the reader's (and the narrator's) for all the others. Such management of time makes even the first reading of the novel seem to be a second reading. The narrator's habit of predicting things means that when readers first happen on an episode, they already know it. They are already remembering it, rather than encountering it unmediated for the first time. In Michael Palencia-Roth's formulation, the line (diachronic, chronological) turns into a circle. As the narrative carries the reader forward, other, synchronic patterns swirl across the surface.

The best account of the synchronic patterning of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is Josefina Ludmer's, supplemented by Lydia Hazera for the female characters.[8] Ludmer summed up the novel's patterning this way: "Similitude and alteration, reflections and doubles, same and other, paradox, irony, symmetry, complementarity: a continuous work of variations, multiplications, fusions, inversions, substitutions, metamorphosis and anamorphosis operate in personages, names, scenes, objects, actors, paragraphs in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*: we're

dealing with an essentially baroque space, saturated with a kind of cosmic narcissism" (145). She did leave out "phrases," which are subjected to the same kind of treatment as persons and everything else, but otherwise she covered the ground. We will not try to duplicate that effort of insight and ingenuity, but we should mark a few of the ways in which such patterns work.

Patterns first press themselves into awareness through the repetition and variation of men's names. The reader's first impression of the novel is that all the men are named either José Arcadio or Aureliano and that it is impossible to tell one from another. In fact, while the names are all repeated, each character has a distinctive variant until the end of the novel (José Arcadio Buendía, José Arcadio, Aureliano, Arcadio, Aureliano José, José Arcadio Segundo, and Aureliano Segundo). Then Aureliano Babilonia is called just Aureliano, as the colonel was at the beginning, and José Arcadio, his homosexual uncle, is called just José Arcadio, like the macho José Arcadio, the colonel's brother. From one parallel, others grow. The inversion homosexual/macho forms an ironic identity/contrast. Both the homosexual and the macho return to Macondo after long travels, both find an unconventional love in Macondo, and both are murdered by those they have abused over money. Such patterns begin to emerge as soon as one puts any character beside another, but with repetition, there is always variation, not identity.

Having established the principle that confusing repetitions occur within the simple onward flux, the narrative then nudgingly suggests that the reader really ought to begin to interpret this continual change, to make patterns and impose order on this apparent chaos of similarities with differences. About halfway through the novel, at the beginning of Chapter 10, Ursula develops a hypothesis: the contrast between lucid and withdrawn Aurelianos and active, enterprising, tragic José Arcadios, with a mix-up in the twins José Arcadio Segundo and Aureliano Segundo. The narrator adds his hint to Ursula's, for the sentence that opens the tenth chapter conspicuously echoes the opening sentence of the novel. ("Years later on his deathbed Aureliano Segundo would

remember the rainy afternoon in June when he went into the bedroom to meet his first son" [174; 258]; "Many years later, before the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía would remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice" [11; 71]. The parallels are more exact in Spanish, where the verbs "discover" and "meet" are both "*conocer.*") With that license to categorize provided by the narrative itself, a mad categorizer is unleashed in many readers. The reader should be warned: there is a great danger that he or she will begin to seek out *unduplicated* episodes, as well as predictions that are forgotten and that neither come true nor fail to come true. At that moment, the reader may find in the mirror the glassy stare of José Arcadio Segundo in Melquíades's room, or the whole novel may begin to swirl like the manuscripts of Melquíades, "when" and "then" vanishing.

Things start simply enough, with obvious contrasts between the first pair of brothers, José Arcadio and Aureliano: the easy sexuality of the first, the difficulties of the other. Both succeed with Pilar, but José Arcadio succeeds with his young gypsy girl, and Aureliano fails with the equally young prostitute. The dominant organ for José Arcadio is his preternatural penis, for Aureliano his eyes—the obvious contrasts between them generalize to include body and head, sexuality and clairvoyance. The sexual contrasts are repeated at the political-economic level: José Arcadio seizes land by violence and the threat of violence, and both Liberal and Conservative governments acquiesce. The radical Col. Aureliano Buendía restores land to its rightful owners, and both Liberals and Conservatives oppose him. Thanatos herself recognizes their differences, their strengths and their weaknesses: invulnerable to attempted murders, Aureliano is unable to kill himself when he tries and dies old, while urinating outdoors. José Arcadio dies young, murdered, indoors, with blood streaming from his head at the ear. José Arcadio's blood seeks his mother; Col. Aureliano Buendía once pissed on his father's ghost at the same tree. José Arcadio's corpse reeks of powder (perhaps suggesting that the deliberately misleading story of his death stinks, even from underground); Col. Aureliano Buendía's

body is found only when Santa Sofia de la Piedad notices the vultures descending as she is throwing out the garbage.

Now that is all fairly obvious, surely, and we can continue the activity of parallel, antithesis, chiasmus and zeugma through Aureliano José and Arcadio, Fernanda and Ursula, Pilar Ternera and Petra Cotes, and so on. More can be done with some parallels than others, but they extend to what seem to be the minutest details, and new examples turn up at every reading. We all know on our first reading (it is the narrator's first trick) that Col. Aureliano Buendía is not shot in front of the firing squad and that Arcadio is. But it was long before I observed that Remedios Moscote, the colonel's child-wife, dies of a ruptured uterus with twins twisted inside her, while Santa Sofia de la Piedad, Arcadio's unmarried widow, gives birth to (Remedios's) twins after Arcadio, remembering Remedios in his last moment, is shot. Schematically put: young wife dead/husband before firing squad, not shot/husband lives to be old/twins die// wife lives to be old/husband before firing squad, shot/husband dies young/twins live. And the impatient gentle reader says, so what? I like to read novels, not parse them.

Impatience with other people's lists of parallels is entirely justified. It's a bit like diagramming sentences: it's fun to do yourself, but tedious to watch other people doing, unless they solve a problem for you in your own diagramming, or unless you catch them in a mistake. (That is to say, like other games, it is boring unless you are playing it, too.) What doing a little parsing shows, however, is the difference between the experience of reading the text and the actual structural underpinnings of the text.

The underlying structure of details is enormously complicated. To chart them all would require a text longer than *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* and the chart would have the same interest as those infinite chains generated in transformational grammars. Even though the reader may not care to embark on the enterprise of making such a chart, the presence of such an underlying structure of details makes a difference to the reading. Every time the reader makes a connection between one detail and another, he or she experiences a small, pleasant

explosion of enlightenment. The same thing happens when the reader connects details in the novel to events outside the novel, of whatever category (biographical, technological, political, psychological, and so on). The experience of such recognitions is like having one's own private, mental fireworks display.

There are trade-offs, of course. This constant sensory teasing or gratification at the surface of the narrative forestalls the explosive intensity of a Sophocles or a Milton.[9] For García Márquez to achieve a comparable effect, he has to wrench his text off its ostensible ground in Macondo and catapult it into "a text."

At the stylistic level, the patterning is essential to the reader's sense of the text's density and richness, just as rhetorical and metaphorical manipulation of language is responsible for the richness and density of a Renaissance sonnet. The text fills with echoes. Within it we see a pattern of words striking in itself, whether or not we can assign any particular, extrinsic meaning to that pattern. The irrationality of the figure, its resistance to rational interpretation, is often part of its power. (Shifting patterns of metaphor in Shakespeare, of rhetorical figures in Sidney, and of rhymes in Pope work the same way.) An example of a powerful, irrational parallel is the carnival massacre and the striking workers' massacre. To recognize the parallel is chilling; to account for it, save as rhetorical contrast, impossible (I think). Ludmer's analogy with the baroque is very apt: there are no bare spots. Everywhere, moving figures and shifting spaces fill the eye.

When the figure does not resist rational interpretation but offers itself up as an increment to sense, then meaningful patterns begin to form. Once rational interpretation begins, meanings proliferate crazily along all the available codes. Is our concern or subject the novel as a whole? The presence of antitheses, of contradictory characters, episodes, and ideas, is essential to the impression of totality that the novel conveys. Is our concern the realistic basis for a serious story about a family and a town? The persistence of unconscious physical and psychological characteristics communicates family resemblance. Is our concern the relation between time, character, and memory? Repetitions

mark the difference between an experience as it is lived and an experience as it is remembered. For Col. Aureliano Buendía in front of the firing squad, the memory of the ice is much thinner than the discovery of ice experienced and recorded in the first chapter. Has life thinned his memory so much, or does he retain, unarticulated, some of the ambivalent, disillusioning glory of that moment? For Aureliano Segundo, the "lived" narrative passes over almost without notice the actual experience of seeing his first son, but as a memory on his deathbed the narrative marks it indelibly. So, too, for the departure of his daughter Amaranta Ursula; but did he remember anything of Meme, his other daughter? Only by enumerating the parallels can we observe what has been left out, and omissions, we all know, emit infinite implications.

Such parallels explain, in part, what it means to call Macondo the "city of mirrors." As Suzanne Jill Levine has reminded us, the novel is "a speaking mirror." It reflects a world, and within that world every event mirrors another. Yet every reflection differs from its original, and no event occurs the same way twice. Looking for the face of the real Macondo, we see an image distorted, repeated, and so endlessly duplicated, that it mocks us with a carnival of masks. Macondo is the city of mirrors because the book of Macondo is a mirrored room (and vice versa).

The city of mirrors (or mirages) is also a city that lures readers and characters on, past the mirage of the colonel before the firing squad, past Fernanda's "accepting the miracle" (rejected by outsiders) of Remedios's ascension, past Aureliano Segundo's Divine Providence Raffles, to the final dissipation of illusion in the novel's last lines. In the desert, wanderers with thirsty eyes find only lines of heat, not the alluring oasis. So Macondo's reader finds not a new world, but mere words on parchment—not "the meaning of it all," but the end of a manuscript and the other reality of language. For a brief, illusory instant, Macondo was also a city of ice. A fundamental, irreducible, mysterious, and multi-interpretable reality, the great block of ice opens the novel and closes its first chapter. José Arcadio Buendía's fertile

imagination turns it into the hallucinatory image of a city of ice, another mirage created by desire. In the light of common day and the hands of his grandchildren, the city of ice melts into a less romantic but more useful ice factory.[10] García Márquez's ironic, affectionate art creates and dissolves the illusion. The speaking mirror having spoken, he breaks it.

10

Magic Realism: Does He or Doesn't He?

> It is the discovery of a whole new world. One paints pots and piles of rubbish and sees these things in a completely different way as if one had never before seen a pot. One paints a landscape, trees, houses, vehicles, and one sees the world anew. One discovers like a child a land of adventure.
>
> —Grethe Jurgens[1]

So perfect is the balance between the strange and the familiar in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* that readers often emphasize one at the expense of the other, as with the glass that is either half-full or half-empty. For Anglo-American readers one great delight of the fiction is the constant renewal of a sense of surprise, as if the imagination were being reborn. For many Spanish-American readers, the novel's essential virtue is that it renders, with "beauty and humor" (Fuentes's phrase), a world and people they know. Anglo-American critics always provide their lists of impossible happenings, levitating priests and sailing virgins, while Spanish-American critics often insist that there is nothing "magical" in the novel, that Spanish-American reality is like that. García Márquez himself falls in the second camp. Every event, he insists, has a basis in reality, and he is always eager to cite examples that show reality imitating his fiction. Both are right, of course, or both are wrong. If this world were not distinctly bizarre, it would not be necessary for Spanish-American critics to insist, again and again, that it is realistic. If this world were as purely bizarre or fantastic as Anglo-

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American critics often make it seem, no one would marvel at the wonders it contains or make long, delighted lists of marvels. Noticing the wonders is a silent acknowledgment that the text reposes—or spins—on the stability of truth.

"Magic realism" is the term often used to describe the characteristic mingling of the real and the fantastic in *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* and the reader will, naturally enough, want to know what the term means and how to use it. That would be a simple need to meet were it not for considerable disagreement within the critical community as to what the term means and how it should be used. In 1973 the International Association of Iberoamericanists devoted its proceedings to the question, and the disputants produced so many different and incompatible definitions that it was proposed the term be abandoned forever.[2] Even that proposal failed to win assent. The quarreling persists because some critics find indispensable a term that others find mortally offensive. Over this phrase, unknown to the combatants, a guerrilla war is being fought against Anglo-American cultural imperialism; the cause is just, but, in the Anglo-American context, doomed. Losing the Battle of the Phrase north of the border, anti-magic realists have the consolation that they win the War of Understanding the Text. Equally hopeless is the situation of those snipers, as isolated as Japanese stragglers on a Pacific island, who want to hold magic realism to its original sense, undistorted by the impact of García Márquez.

In current Anglo-American usage, magic realism is a narrative technique that blurs the distinction between fantasy and reality. Angel Flores first applied the term "magical realism" to twentieth-century Spanish-American writing in 1955, using Kafka and de Chirico as the European models and Borges as the great American exemplar. Unlike other postenlightenment forms of the fantastic, magical realism treated fantastic events as entirely natural, or real. "Magic" meant almost any deviation from the conventions of nineteenth-century European realism, as long as the style was precise and lean, the effect surprising, and the plotting "logically conceived: well-rounded or projected

Sketch of García Márquez by Lowell Boyers, 1982.

against an infinite perspective."[3] Flores's account omitted the folkloric (Indian, African, or mestizo) that others now often regard as an essential characteristic or source of Latin American magic realism.

When the folkloric is taken as essential to magic realism, Miguel Angel Asturias and Alejo Carpentier replace Borges as exemplars, and Borges is shifted off toward "fantastic literature."[4] "Magic" ceases to be the fantastic and becomes the real practice and belief of the folk, related from their perspective. When this definition is strictly adhered to, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* ceases to be a magic realist text, since many of its events are inescapably fantastic: insomnia plagues just do not happen anywhere. As a result, some critics prefer to call García Márquez's practice "fantastic realism," reserving "magic" for those who still practice it.[5]

Still others prefer to keep the term "magic realism" closer to its origins in art criticism. In 1925 the German art critic Franz Roh used the term to distinguish a new trend in modern painting that departed from expressionism's "fantastic, supraterrestrial, remote subjects" and "shocking exoticism."[6] That movement sought to represent "the strange, the eerie, the uncanny, the dreamlike," the magical in commonplace, everyday reality, or it infused the quotidian with a primitive or childlike naïveté. Through hard edges and sharp detail, artists rendered scenes of everyday life with a "precise realism enveloped in an atmosphere of lucid amazement."[7] In this usage "magic" is an effect or an aspect of technique rather than the feature of content that it is in other definitions. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude* this magic realism appears in the narrative voice, as well as in episodes such as the discovery of ice, when an ordinary object is made to seem "magical."

The beleaguered "strict constructionists" are not placated, however. They rule *One Hundred Years of Solitude* out of the magic realist canon because it contains fantastic episodes. John W. Ferguson, for example, following Enrique Anderson-Imbert, disqualified the novel as magic realism because of events such as the ascension of Remedios the Beauty, the insomnia plague, Melquíades's return from the dead, the map of the dead read by ghosts and followed by them, and so on.[8]

In this impeccable use, the term "magic realism" applies to García Márquez's writing after *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, but not to *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *Autumn of the Patriarch*, or *Innocent Eréndira*. The later writings abandon the fantastic and, with it, the mythic ambitions of the master narratives in favor of imaginative elaborations that cling more closely to (modern urban notions of) the possible.

For the reader who has followed the twisting lines of these battles over nomenclature, there is a small reward in the recognition that García Márquez's practice in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* fuses elements of every definition and corresponds in its entirety to none. Linked with Borgesian or Kafkaesque magic realism through fantastic invention, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* also possesses a significant folkloric element in its representation of village culture.[9] It then fuses those two "magic realisms" in a lucid style affined to the third, as does García Márquez's account of the novel's project.

The principal challenge in writing *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, García Márquez explained after he had done it, was finding a style that would permit him to erase the barrier between fantasy and reality: "My most important problem was to destroy the line of demarcation that separates what seems real from what seems fantastic. Because in the world that I was trying to evoke, that barrier didn't exist."[10] The "problem" is technical or stylistic, as for Roh et al. Erasing the line between the real and the fantastic corresponds to Flores's "magical realism." The world "I was trying to evoke" is the real world of a real village, where the line to be erased has never existed.

So around we come again to the broad, current definition in which magic (all senses) and realism are equally features both of style and of content: magic realism is a technique that blurs the distinction between fantasy and reality. So confident is Anglo-American usage that, from London, Edwin Williamson has assured us there can be no dispute about this definition.[11] Not only has there already been considerable dispute, however, but passionate quarrels also continue over the unreality that attaches to "magic" in modern usage.

In much Anglo-American critical practice that relies on a defini-

tion derived from *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* such as Williamson's, "magic" or the fantastic is deemed to be content, while realism is relegated to background technique, illuminated by an occasional flash of "magical" style. The reality of the "world I was trying to evoke" is erased, to the great resentment of some readers. Inverting the earlier, also principally Spanish-American, objection that in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* García Márquez has replaced reality with fantasy, those readers care little for the subtleties of nomenclature or the history of taxonomy. But they care greatly for something perhaps more important, the political and intellectual consequences of our choices of words.

Anti-magic realists object to the way "magic" undermines the realism of "magic realism." The more the term is depended on as description, especially by readers unfamiliar with Latin America, the more "magic" displaces "reality." Irate Latin American critics quartered in Anglo-American universities object that their reality is forced to conform to Anglo-American norms. Julio Ortega has dismissed "the traditional notion of 'magic realism' [as] a conceptually poor representation of the *specific differences* that shape Latin American text and culture" (emphasis added).[12] Fernando Alegría has snapped rather sharply that Flores could not resist waving "the magic wand" to describe such disparate works as Asturias's *Legends of Guatemala* and *Men of Corn* or Carpentier's *The Lost Steps* and *The Kingdom of This World,* "books that abruptly dismantled the stage of regionalism which had been the one ring-circus of Latin American narrative for several generations." If the reality of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* seems strange to Europeans, that is only because they do not know its world.[13] Gregory Rabassa, a recruit from the Anglos, has delicately suggested that to speak of "magic realism" is to adopt "flat-headed nineteenth-century norms" of reality and magic.[14] In effect, Latin American reality is colonized by the term. A reality that one knows to be real is dismissed as fantastic or "magical," and that can be very annoying. If they lose the battle, however, the anti-magic realists win the war. The inhabitant of an isolated Mexican mountain town can say (as at least one has said) of the world of *One Hundred Years of*

Solitude, yes, that's what life is like here. "In the world that I was trying to evoke, that barrier didn't exist." The world García Márquez was trying to evoke is a world without the barrier that the term "magic realism" reimposes.

Anglo-American readers do not share that reality and cannot recognize it. So magic encroaches on the real, to the great increase of credulity. To take an unlikely example: We cannot fathom a world where a gypsy might say, when he next returns to town, that he died on the sands of Singapore, but didn't like being dead. It was too lonely. Paradoxically, we give such a statement more credence than it deserves or would get in its own context. We confuse what can be said to have happened with what has actually happened. Yes, Melquíades, you died on the sands of Singapore. Right—you say it, the children will believe it, so will some adults, why should we quarrel with a story that we would much rather repeat? And life goes on. There exist worlds in which such assertions will be made, and they will be received with different degrees of assent by different auditors (and readers). But it probably takes an Anglo-American critic to insist with entire seriousness that people really do come back from the dead in *One Hundred Years of Solitude.* That critic enjoys the excitement of a wish-fulfilling fantasy but never possesses the supple response that recognizes such an event as not "magic" but "real." Meant to evoke a continuum, magic realism often reerects a barren dichotomy.

In spite of the damage the term "magic realism" causes and the imperialism it promotes, it seems impossible (for an Anglo-American critic) to do without it. As Seymour Menton's taxonomy shows, many different relations between the real and the magical or the fantastic are comprehended under the term in García Márquez's practice, and it is essential to the effect of *One Hundred Years of Solitude.*[15] The principal competitive term is Alejo Carpentier's "marvelous [American] real" ("*lo real maravilloso americano*").

Alejo Carpentier coined "*lo real maravilloso americano*" in the preface to *The Kingdom of This World* (1949). Like Roh's original magic realism, it was invented in opposition to surrealism and the

fantastic. As González Echevarría has explained, Carpentier adopted the surrealist term "the marvelous" but dismissed the European surrealists' straining after marvelous effects. America's "hyperreality" had only to be represented as it is, and it would astonish Europeans as it had since Columbus.[16] The banana strike, the weather, the flora and fauna, bloody lilies and golden salamanders—in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* geographical and naturalist description and most political events are Carpentier's "marvelous reality." The marvelous appearance depends entirely on rendering: Rebeca's eating dirt, the child with a pig's tail, a plague of butterflies, a rain of dead birds, the seemingly interminable rains, the news-songs of Francisco the Man, the loss of 32 civil wars in 20 years, a strike in which the courts decree that the workers do not exist. These things happen. Entailing no violations of the laws of physics, they may be marvels, but they are not magic.

Since magical practices and folkloric beliefs, as well as the ironic incredulity of European consciousness, form part of American reality, they too may be comprehended by the marvelous real. Such boundary-blurring events, enacting folkloric beliefs that are real for some people though not for us, include the assumption of the virgin, Remedios the Beauty, the levitating priest, or the persistence of the dead. If such episodes are "marvelous" to the European eye, they may be "real" to the folk, who know more about them. But even if Melquíades now returns from the dead with more plausibility, the insomnia plague and the flying carpets still present difficulties.

Whether or not the reader chooses to apply the term "magic realism" to García Márquez has implications for how he or she understands the work. Menton is an exception, but one of the more distressing aspects of the use of the term is that it often produces in critics the fuzzy blur that Alegría, Ortega, and Rabassa so object to. As Alegría has indicated, magic realism has had a tendency to spread itself uniformly over a wide area, rather like an oil slick. It blankets different aspects of the text—the stylistic heightening and defamiliarization of the purists or the realistic rendering and fantastic content of popular use—and does not distinguish among them. Rather like "romanticism" or "classicism," the term takes on a life—or death—of its own. The

critic begins to quarrel with a definition of his own devising, while the text sinks, cased in the concrete block of a critical term, to the reefs below. The specificity of the text's imagery, its rootedness in reality, the interplay between the real and the imagined are all lost in a uniform swirl of improbabilities.[17]

The loss of specificity and difference is troubling. To repeat Williamson's observation, García Márquez's technique in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* works precisely because it forces us to become conscious of differences. Without the specificity of difference, reading ends up with everything being the same as everything else, as in Richard Watson's brilliant parody (I trust) of a reading, "A Pig's Tail." Reading a "novel in English written by Gregory Rabassa based on a novel in Spanish by Gabriel García Márquez," Watson proved that life and death are the same, that one endeavor is like another, everything repeats everything else, you succeed, you fail, life goes on, death is inevitable, so it doesn't matter if you're alive or dead. It is a very persuasive reading (especially the bit about its not mattering if you're alive or dead), and it demonstrates, terrifyingly, what happens when similitude is substituted for difference in the novel. (Do read "A Pig's Tail"; it does a marvelous bit with Col. Aureliano Buendía's death and his "critical tool," and it is very funny.[18]) For Watson, the text has no reference to a real reality at all.

Watson and the Mexican who lives *One Hundred Years of Solitude* occupy different realities and read different books, Watson's more literary and clever, the Mexican's more real and richer. One denies the reality, the other the "magic," and both disdain debates over critical terms. But how then is the critic to describe that peculiar mix of the real and the fantastic that defines, if not magic realism, then the technique of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*? No one wants to call the novel an example of the fantastic. It is too firmly based in the powerful reality of the characters, their lives, and their politics. The author insists that he does not invent but elaborates reality, and the horror of many of his inventions confirms that fundamental, if sardonic, commitment to the real.

Replacing "magic realism" with the "marvelous real" has not

worked because readers know full well that it is not all real, however marvelous it is. People who have ashes put on their foreheads at Ash Wednesday mass may be "marked for life," but the ashes do wash off. Given that current usage blurs a once useful term, it would doubtless be best to abandon it for a term more specific to García Márquez, on the model of "Joycean," "Kafkaesque," or "Borgesian." Thomas Pynchon has put in for "Garciamarquesian," but other people's editors might find "*Garciamarquesianismo*" awkward.[19] For the duration, then, Anglo-American readers are likely to be stuck with the term. The only consolation is that in modern usage, the text itself has shaped the definition.

11

And If He Does, What Does It Mean?

Modern Myths and a Metaphysical Reading

Whatever one calls the distinctive mingling of realities that García Márquez practices in *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* its most obvious effect is to renovate a tired, old history of violence, exploitation, futility, and decay. When García Márquez defended himself against activist critics who had attacked the novel as escapist, he argued that Latin American readers had a right to see their reality transformed by literature. They did not need to read yet again of the poverty, dryness, and despair that they knew too well from living it.

As Williamson and others have observed, "magic realism" is a device of both alienation and attraction, and it enables that peculiar tone of great satire that gives *One Hundred Years of Solitude* much of its resilient toughness, a combination of irony, invention, and sympathy. That tone or manner is not one that readers of novels are much accustomed to. To those critics who believe the novel condemns Latin America to "a hopeless condition of historical failure, allowing no scope for change or free human action,"[1] it is difficult to resist recommending a course in *The Dunciad.*

If they take that course, the incorrigible ones will begin by asking,

Bloom's Modern Critical Views anthology also includes Vargas Llosa's "García Márquez: From Aracataca to Macondo," a translation of some of the biographical material from the first sections of *Historia de un Deicidio.*

Of special interest to teachers and advanced students is a short book edited by María Elena de Valdés and Mario J. Valdés, *Approaches to Teaching García Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1990). Several essays demonstrate how this novel is studied in various academic contexts: in humanities courses; in comparative literature courses; in history, politics, and civilization courses; in women's studies courses; in interdisciplinary courses; and in Latin American literature courses.

Chester Halka's essay placing *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in its historical context is particularly helpful, and Halka also suggests further readings for students interested in pursuing this frame of reference. In particular he cites Lucila Inés Mena's study of the novel, *La función de la historia en "Cien años de soledad"* (The Function of History in *One Hundred Years of Solitude,*1979), available, however, only in Spanish. He quotes from Mena's comparisons between Colonel Uribe Uribe, Colonel Nicolás Márquez, and Colonel Aureliano Buendía.

CRITICAL EXCERPTS

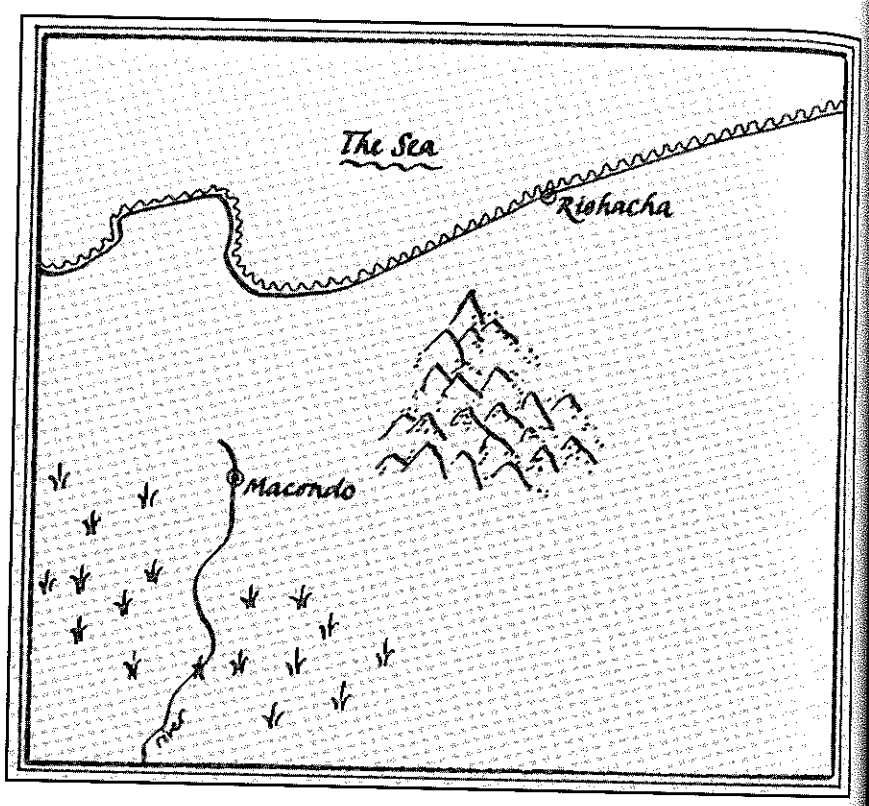
Michael Wood, "The History of Paradise," from his *Gabriel García Márquez: One Hundred Years of Solitude* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 24–40

This is the story of how we begin to remember.

—Paul Simon

Situations

It would be absurd, and horribly dull, to try to summarize *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, except as a rambling joke. "I merely wanted," García Márquez said to Rita Guibert, "to tell the story of a family who for a hundred years did everything they could in order not to have a son with a pig's tail, and . . . ended up having one." This is a good joke because the pig's tail is both much worried about and really a diversion. It is what the family is afraid of, and what awaits it. But between the fear and its fulfilment the whole novel takes place, and most characters don't think about the pig's tail at all. It is a lure, an instance of what Roland Barthes

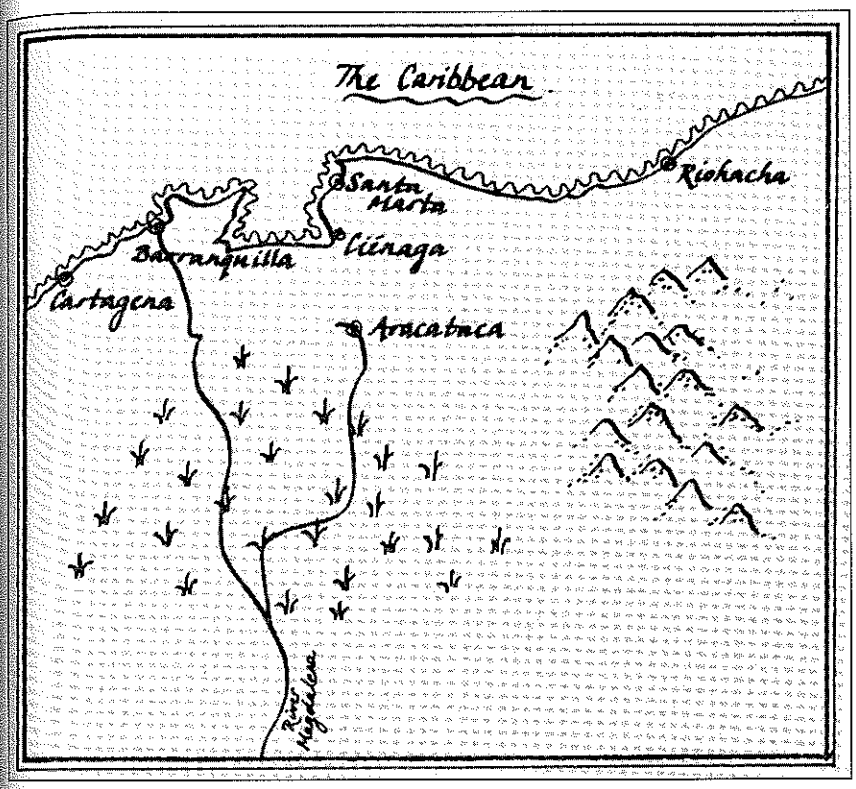


Map of the fictional setting for *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (referred to as Map I in Michael Wood's "The History of Paradise")

called "a narrative enigma." Well, it is also a sign of incest, but that is a lure too, since the incest in the book, although always hovering, is mainly metaphorical or merely flirted with.

Still, summaries apart, we do need a means of holding the book in our minds, and we see at once that it is indeed "the story of a family," the prodigious Buendías; and even more the story of a place, the human geography of the family's fortunes.

José Arcadio Buendía, with whom our story begins, is described as a young patriarch, and might be said to go even further back into the Bible, since he is the first citizen of a sort of paradise. It is an ambiguous paradise, far from perfect and not available for easy nostalgia, but its loss, nevertheless, means that much of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* reads like an elegy. From the start the tiny settlement of Macondo is offered to us as a ver-



Map of the Caribbean Lowlands of Colombia (Map 2 in Wood's essay)

sion of Eden. "The world," we read, "was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point." The polished stones in the clear river are "white and enormous, like prehistoric eggs" [9:11]. There are twenty-odd mud and cane houses in the villages, homes of the twenty-odd founding families. The population soon grows to 300, but it is still a "truly happy village" where no one is over thirty and no one has died [16:18].

Where is this Eden? If we draw a map based on the information given to us in the first two chapters of the novel, we get something like Map 1.

We have no way of knowing the shape of the coastline, but we know that the sea is to the north of Macondo; that a range of mountains separates Macondo from Riohacha; that Drake is sup-

posed to have attacked Riohacha in the sixteenth century and hunted crocodiles there; that there are swamps to the south and west of Macondo; and that roads, towns and a sort of modernity can be found two days' travel to the west, "on the other side of the swamp"[39:43]. We hear of "colonial coins" [10:12]; of "authorities," a "government," and a distant "capital" [11:13].

Northern Colombia, in which there is an "ancient city" called Riohacha, looks something like Map 2.

Macondo is the name of a banana plantation near Aracataca, García Márquez' birthplace, but this scarcely signifies, since it is now internationally famous as the name of a mythical community, the Latin America equivalent of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County. The point about the maps is not to say that the setting of *One Hundred Years of Solitude is* Colombia—if García Márquez had wanted to name his country he would have done so—only that its geography and history are not different; that the imagined world has a real situation in time and space. The analogy with Faulkner is exact in this respect, I think. We are not going to find the town of Jefferson on any map of Mississippi. But there isn't anywhere else on earth it could be.

The recentness of this world turns out to be a metaphor, an impression, and not a situation in time. The time indeed is relatively late, very late if we are thinking of Eden: "several centuries" later than the sixteenth, and some "three hundred years" since Drake's incursions into the Spanish Main [24:27]. An early expedition by the villagers discovers a suit of rusty armour, complete with calcified skeleton; a later expedition leads them to a great Spanish galleon, stranded some twelve kilometres from the sea, embedded among stones and draped with orchids. The armour is said to be from the fifteenth century, which it could just be, since the northeastern coastal region of South America, what is now Colombia and Venezuela, was first visited by Europeans, with and without armour, in 1499–1500. Santa Marta was founded in 1525; Cartagena in 1533.

Do we *know* we are in the Americas? Even if we don't look at the maps? We do if we are not desperate to see Macondo as a never-never land or a universal allegory. García Márquez is scrupulously quiet about large terms like nations and the year of Our Lord. But he is precise about place names, days of the week, months, seasons, political parties, peace treaties, an accordion

given to a musician by Sir Walter Raleigh. We learn of the Spanish ancestry of the settlers. There are Liberals and Conservatives. There is much importation of fancy goods from Europe: furniture from Vienna, linen from Holland, glassware from Bohemia. A civil war ends with the peace of Neerlandia, which the history books (but not García Márquez) tell us was signed in 1902. There are Indians in the region, speaking their own prehispanic tongue, a people for whom this world is not at all recent. When the settlers are said to be "the first mortals" [28:31] to see the western slope of the mountains they have crossed in their pioneering journey, we need to understand the phrase, again, as a metaphor or hyperbole, a figure for feeling. They were the first mortals of European descent, the new world was not empty, just empty of their kind. Even Eden is relative in this light, a glancing joke (can one *arrive* in Eden?), and another Biblical reference confirms this sense of mischief. The founders of Macondo have travelled to a "land no one had promised them" [27:31].

García Márquez creates wide meanings by copious omissions and by the use of specific but not local details. Colombia becomes a generic, legendary Latin America, a place of innocence and isolation and charm, of high mountains and rainy tropics and ash-coloured sea, but also of internal wars, bureaucrats, booms, strikes, North American intervention, and fits of fondness for the military. It is a sub-continent carefully suspended between myth and the atlas, rather as the name Baghdad, say, used to make Westerners feel they were both in the Middle East and in the Arabian Nights. It feels recent because it keeps hiding from history. It is Eden not because it is pristine and original, but because it has forgotten the Fall. Or almost forgotten.

The settlers bring with them the very stories they hoped to leave behind. The happy village is founded on remorse, since José Arcadio Buendía killed a man who attacked his honour, and whose ghost troubled his sleep and sent him journeying. José Arcadio Buendía is above all struck by the *loneliness* of the ghost, an early sounding of the theme which dominates the book, and later, when the village is not quite so happy and someone has died, the ghost finds his way to Macondo, driven by a longing for the company of the living, and oriented by Macondo's appearance on the "motley maps of death" [75:80]. He is old now, his hair white and his gestures uncertain, and José Arcadio Buendía is startled to learn that "the dead also aged" [74:80]. Perturbed

by the contradictory behaviour of time—it seems both static and changing—José Arcadio Buendía loses all sense of temporal measurement, and runs amok, frothing at the mouth, reverting to what is described as "a state of total innocence"[76:82]. It is a haunted innocence, though, since he is also barking in a strange language which turns out to be Latin: the linguistic equivalent of finding the old armour or the Spanish galleon. José Arcadio Buendía has fallen into a past he didn't know was there. Certainly only a miracle could start a man speaking a language without learning it, but even miracles have implications. There is a similar implication in another splendid gag, worthy of Cervantes, which has José Arcadio Buendía, by dint of much watching of the sun and stars, and much work with his astrolabe, sextant and compass, discover for himself that the earth is round. The discovery is authentic, all his own, so foreign to his community that no one there believes him. But this new Columbus gets his chance only because his culture has forgotten the old one, and it is of course a lovely, dizzying touch to make a group of *Americans* forget Columbus.

Macondo's innocence is also an ignorance. Paradise is a refuge, a simplification of social existence, a form of solitude. There is another Fall. Progress arrives uninvited, propelled by its incapacity for leaving things alone. The distant government, for example, stretches out an unwelcome arm in the shape of a *corregidor* (chief magistrate), complete with six ragged soldiers, ordering all the houses in the village to be painted blue, "in celebration of the anniversary of national independence" [56:61]. Independence, the nation: the very history Macondo thought it had abandoned.

But the inhabitants of Macondo also reverse their escape themselves by seeking out the once excluded world. Even Úrsula Buendía, remorselessly sceptical about her husband's inquiries, orders a pianola for her new house, which in turn attracts an Italian pianola expert, who becomes a suitor to the girls of the family. José Arcadio Segundo tries to open up river communication for the town, and brings in its first and last boat, a log-raft loaded with French prostitutes. Aureliano Triste goes off to find his fortune and returns to Macondo with the railway, "the innocent yellow train that was to bring so many ambiguities and certainties, so many pleasant and unpleasant moments, so many changes, calamities, and feelings of nostalgia to Macondo" [196:210]. The

railway indeed announces the whole modern world, with its electricity, movies, telephone, gramophones, cars.

What all this tells us is that haunted paradises come to an end just like their pure precursors. There is no hiding from history for long, and we know this from the very first sentence of the book, where we hear of violence before we hear of Eden. "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" [9:11]. *Discover* is *conocer*, to get to know what ice is, to see a piece of ice for the first time, exactly as José Arcadio Buendía discovers that the earth is round. Another name for innocence here is isolation, solitude: not knowing and not having what others know and have. It is a dubious privilege, but even so there is sadness in its cancellation. The *distant afternoon* is the time of the refuge, the tiny settlement and the clear river, and we learn at once that at least one of its inhabitants will find his way to a military rank and a death sentence. Much turbulent Latin American history hovers in that casual mention of the firing squad—in the casualness perhaps even more than in the mention. It is in exactly the same tone that the narrator, describing the founding of the village, alludes to the second civil war before we have heard of the first [28:31].

In this paradise as in others knowledge is the serpent's bait, innocent enough in moderation but only to be had, it seems, in excess. In the early days a band of gypsies is Macondo's single connection to the wide world. They arrive every March, bringing with them what are described as "new inventions" [9:11]—new to Macondo, that is—like magnets, magnifying glasses, instruments of navigation, an alchemy set, false teeth. Their leader is a fat fellow with a beard and sparrow's hands and an "Asiatic look that seemed to know what there was on the other side of things" [13:15]. His name is Melquíades. One March, a fresh set of gypsies appears with the news that Melquíades is dead, and with rather different inventions: a mind-reading monkey, a machine that sews buttons and brings down fever, a poultice for killing time, and the ice Aureliano Buendía discovers in the book's first sentence. José Arcadio Buendía leads his two sons into a tent which is said to have belonged to King Solomon:

> there was a giant with a hairy torso and shaven head, with a copper ring in his nose and a heavy iron chain on his ankle, watching over a pirate chest. When it was opened by the giant, the chest gave off a glacial exhalation. Inside there was

only an enormous, transparent block with infinite internal needles in which the light of the sunset was broken up into colored stars. [23:25–26]

José Arcadio Buendía touches the ice, "his heart filled with fear and jubilation at the contact with mystery," and solemnly announces, "This is the great invention of our time" [23:26].

José Arcadio Buendía's appetite for inventions is an appetite of the imagination. Even his apparently practical schemes, like finding gold with a magnet or making gold through alchemy, are really dabblings in disinterested science, quests for wonder—the chance of gain a mere mask or excuse for curiosity. And when José Arcadio Buendía and his men go exploring, they are seeking "contact with the great inventions" [16:19], as if they could modernize Eden without damage, as if they could import only wonder. What they find is the Spanish galleon.

There is more than a mild and amusing relativism here. What is new for some is old for others, but the inference points not simply to the variety of human experience but to the vagaries of historical time, and to the special meaning of innocence I mentioned a page or so back. "We do not all inhabit the same time," Ezra Pound said, and García Márquez, later in this book, offers a concise and witty formulation of this theory:

time also stumbled and had accidents, and could therefore splinter and leave an eternalized fragment in a room . . . [303:332]

Certain South American Indians even now live in the Stone Age while we live in the Age of the Concorde. We ourselves have mental equipment, assumptions and values which largely belong to the nineteenth century, as if the twentieth century had not entirely happened to us yet. Terms like the Third World, concepts like backwardness or mental age, rest on the notion of splinterable time, and when, in this novel, the self-taught yet very learned Aureliano Babilonia grows up, he know nothing of his own period, the early twentieth century, but has "the basic knowledge of medieval man" [309:328].

Macondo then is neither benighted nor blessed nor removed from time altogether. It is remote and contemporary, one of time's fragments, a place of temporal solitude. José Arcadio Buendía's wonderment at the ice and his brilliant personal discovery of the earth's roundness are both jokes on him and tributes to him, concrete forms of equivocation, rather like Don Quixote's courage when faced with lions which won't fight him.

The lions are hungry and dangerous, but not in the mood for battle right now, so Quixote's quite genuine courage remains untested: his folly is heroic, but his heroism looks foolish. José Arcadio Buendía's intelligence and imagination are astounding but absurdly situated, and his innocence adds a further twist to the story. He doesn't even know that folly or heroism is in the offing.

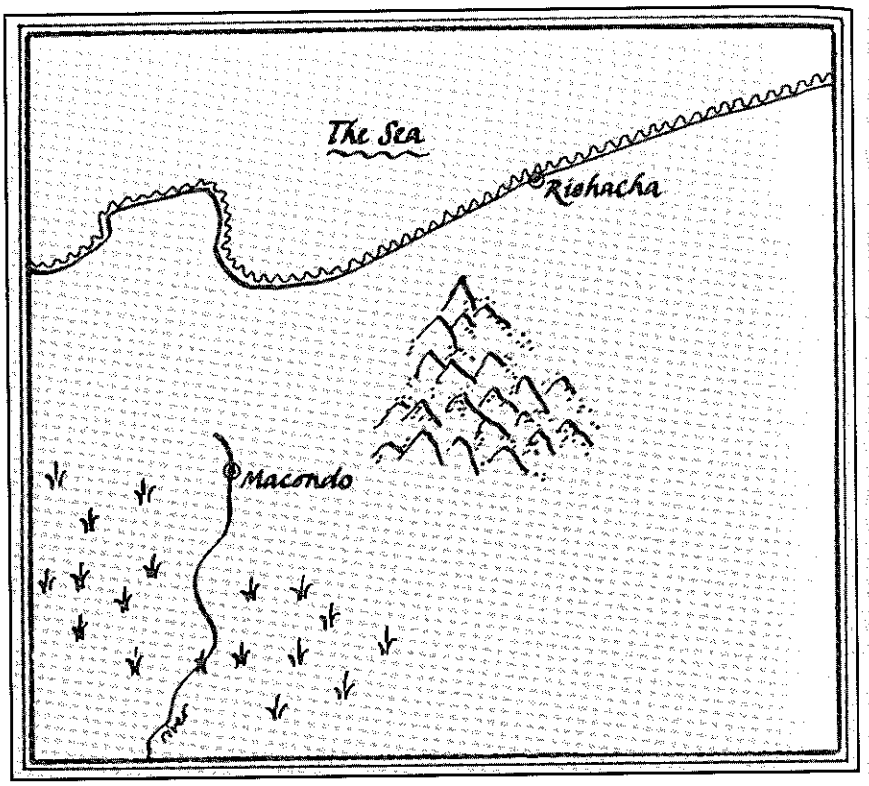
Solitudes

The Spanish galleon the settlers find is beached out of its time and out of its element, and it hangs in the mind like an emblem of Macondo and the Buendía family, or rather of the kind of enchantment they suffer and embody:

> Before them, surrounded by ferns and pale trees, white and powdery in the silent morning light, was an enormous Spanish galleon. Tilted slightly to the starboard, it had hanging from its intact masts the dirty rags of its sails in the midst of its rigging, which was adorned with orchids. The hull, covered with an armor of petrified barnacles and soft moss, was firmly fastened into a surface of stones. The whole structure seemed to occupy its own space, one of solitude and oblivion, protected from the blemishes of time and the habits of birds. Inside, where the expeditionaries explored with careful intent, there was nothing but a thick forest of flowers. [18:20–21]

The mood of this vision is oddly attractive and dislocated. Commentators have naturally seized on the sentence beginning "The whole structure seemed to occupy its own space, one of solitude and oblivion . . ." This is, as Jacques Joset remarks in his edition, the first mention of solitude in the book. We have the words *oblivion, forgetting* and *forgetfulness* for *obvido,* but here we really need something like *forgottenness,* a state of abandonment or neglect which is not quite the blankness of oblivion. It is true that the sentence allegorizes the ship, and points to other magical spaces, like Melquíades' room in the Buendía house, the place where time splinters and leaves fragments. But the effect of the image is less logical and discursive than allegory usually is, more like a moment in a dream which trails criss-crossing meanings from waking life. The ship is piracy and conquest, a whole patch of Spanish history. But it is also elegance and magic, a release from the purposes of plunder and voyaging. The rags of sail suggest a disaster, but the orchids look like a carnival.

We are viewing a wonder and a freak, a sight at once ruined and luxurious. It implies a human invasion of nature, and nature's easy incorporation of the man-made. A whole tradition of Latin American fiction is evoked here, in a mixture of homage



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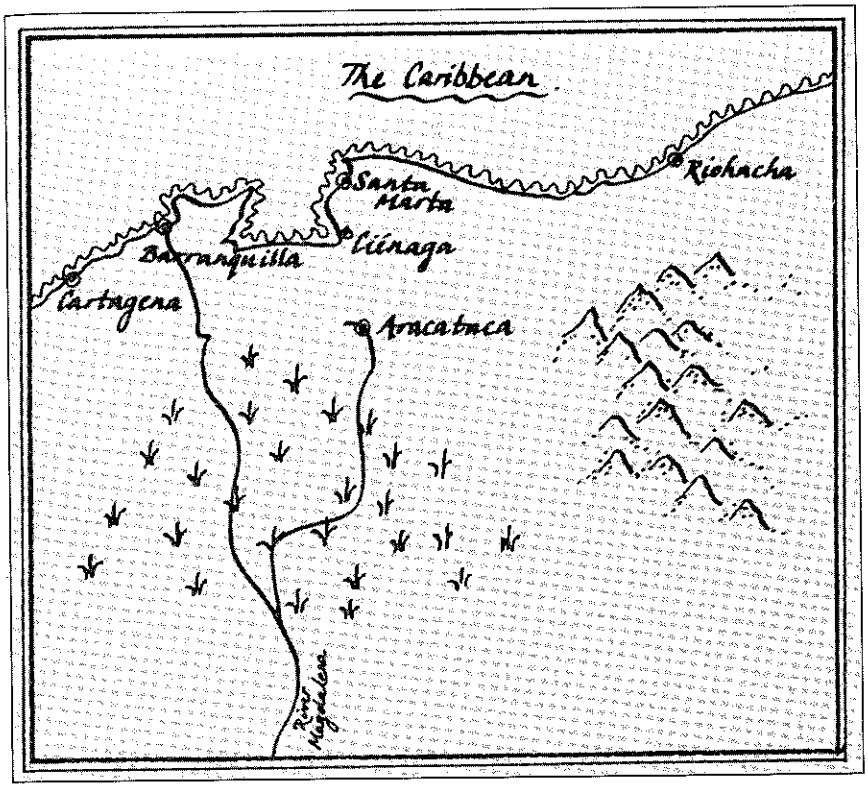

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FLOYD MERRELL

José Arcadio Buendía's Scientific Paradigms: Man in Search of Himself

The stuff of the world may be called physical or mental or both or neither as we please; in fact the words serve no purpose.
—BERTRAND RUSSELL

Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (*One Hundred Years of Solitude*) presents a multidimensional microcosm. The novel can be construed as symbolic of Colombia (the socio-political level), Latin America (the mythico-cultural level), Christianity (the mystico-religious level), the world (the historical/archetypal levels), or the universe (the cyclical/entropic levels). In light of this observation, our analysis will focus on certain elements of García Márquez's novel which are analogous, on broad historical/archetypal levels, to Western man's struggle to explicate and comprehend nature. Our procedure entails the construction of a system of parallels between the "scientific paradigms" postulated and implemented by José Arcadio Buendía, founder and patriarch of Macondo, and the structural history of scientific philosophy in the Western World.

One of the first great scientific movements arose among the Ionian philosophers, a branch of the Asiatic Greeks, from six hundred to four hundred years B.C. They attempted to present ideas as bare facts devoid of all subjectivity. In so doing they removed the gods from nature and repudiated magic and mysticism. However, having established commercial relations with the Mesopotamian cultures, they were inevitably subjected to certain "exotic" ideas from the East.

From *Latin American Literary Review*, no. 4 (Spring–Summer 1974).

In *Cien años de soledad*, José Arcadio Buendía's attitude *vis-à-vis* the exotic gypsies who visit Macondo is favorably analogous to that of the Ionians when introduced to Eastern thought. The gypsies' inventions, revealing a mystico-religious substratum, are the product of a knowledge as an end in itself. On the other hand, José Arcadio desires knowledge solely as a means to an end. Thus the gypsies, whose non-utilitarian, "animistic" conception of nature implies a ritual-oriented play element predominating over seriousness, represent the polar opposite to José Arcadio, who seeks practical ends through the methodical exploitation of a nature of which he considers himself no integral part. One world-view connotes cyclicality, an eternal recurrence where chaos is periodically ordered and where there is a continuous tendency toward conjunction between man and nature. In contrast, a rectilinearity is implied by the opposing world-view where disjunction is engendered, where time can not be regained, and where a reordering of the universe is denied.

Therefore, José Arcadio, whose imagination went far beyond miracles and magic, believes that he can find a practical application for the "useless" inventions in spite of the fact that Melquíades, spokesman for the gypsy tribe, warns him that his attempts will lead to naught.

When the gypsies return to Macondo and introduce the astrolabe, the compass, the telescope, and the magnifying glass (all Arabic contributions to the Western World from the tenth to the twelfth centuries), José Arcadio significantly plays the role of innovator rather than creator: he once again searches for a practical use for these inventions. Thus, from the very beginning a polarity between the utilitarian and the non-utilitarian world-view is apparent in García Márquez's novel. In addition, as illustrated through the Ionian philosophers (historically) and José Arcadio (symbolically), Western man, with his developing view of reality, optimistically begins his ascent into time toward an objective comprehension and a systematic utilization of nature.

Melquíades later returns to Macondo introducing the fabled seven metals corresponding to the seven planets, documents describing the possible construction of the philosopher's stone, and formulas for the alchemical transmutation of lead into gold. This event is analogous historically to the revival of astrology and alchemy in the Western World, primarily through contact with the East, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. José Arcadio's interest still remains discreetly with the practical aspects of these inventions. He immediately conducts an experiment to produce gold but his mixture is burned to a crisp.

At the same time, José Arcadio recognizes the superiority of the gypsies' (Arabic) technology over the stagnant knowledge of the people of Macondo (Western World): "En el mundo están ocurriendo cosas increíbles, . . . mientras nosotros seguimos viviendo como burros (Incredible things are happening in the world, . . . while we keep on living like donkeys)." Melquíades, the "foreigner," is exercizing a predominant influence on José Arcadio, the "westerner"; and the latter is undergoing an intellectual transformation as a result of this contact. Historically, it may be safely posited that, in a similar manner, traditional European learning changed radically after the Arabs entered Spain. Kurt Seligman observes how:

> endowed with an insatiable curiosity concerning foreign learning, guided by a truly Oriental imagination, and filled with the energy of a people who had extended their boundaries from the Indies to the Pyrenees, the Arabs in their writings show a dynamism which contrasts sharply with the passive wisdom of the West.
>
> (*Magic, Supernaturalism, and Religion*)

José Arcadio is temporarily overwhelmed by the gypsies' new inventions. However, contrary to his utilitarian spirit, they are intuited ideations, constructed to satisfy lucid curiosity and invariably tinged with mystical qualities. Perpetually oriented toward the future, confident that the projected ends will be ultimately achieved through the eclectical formulation and utilization of practical means, he nevertheless attempts to transform each of these inventions. The futility of each of his projects leads only to renewed obstinacy rather than discouragement or admission of defeat.

To José Arcadio's surprise, when the "foreigners" arrive once again they appear even more exotic than before: "Eran gitanos nuevos . . . ejemplares hermosos de piel aceitunada y manos inteligentes, cuyos bailes y músicas sembraron en las calles un pánico de alborotada alegría (They were new gypsies . . . handsome specimens with oily skins and intelligent hands, whose dances and music sowed a panic of uproarious joy through the streets)."

Historically, the philosophical and ideological separation of the East and the West is epitomized by the arrival of the new gypsies. Melquíades, the divulger of ideas, is no longer with them. The new inventions they introduce appear relatively frivolous, mere gadgetry, with the sole exception of a block of ice. Overcome with curiosity, José Arcadio puts his hand on the ice, "y la mantuvo puesta por varios minutos, mientras el corazón se le hinchaba de temor y de júbilo al contacto del misterio (and held it

there for several minutes as his heart filled with fear and jubilation at the contact with mystery)."

José Arcadio's experience with the ice is both inspiring and confounding since it opens him up to his inherent conflict between the "ideal" and the "real." After having witnessed the mysterious ice, he "idealistically" envisions Macondo as a city constructed entirely of ice. This is an isomorphism of his *a priori* conception (intuited image) of a utopian city whose houses have mirrored walls and simultaneously a city where man is perpetually confronted with a reality which is the mirror-image of himself, a reality he himself has created. And as this reality "out there" coexists with him it becomes eternally inseparable from him; a dualism from which he cannot escape. At the same time he feels compelled to pursue his quest for a comprehension of perceptual reality (empirical knowledge) and consequently resumes his observations in the laboratory.

This dualism parallels historically the coming of the Renaissance and the Copernican revolution when the ideality of *Utopia* existed side by side with the quasimathematized model of the universe, or when lofty visions of the future of mankind fomented by the discovery of a *New World* were juxtaposed with the birth of a precise experimental method and the rejection of secondary (sensory) qualities in favor of the exclusive use of primary (quantitative) qualities in all attempts to comprehend natural phenomena.

The separation of the East and the West is also becoming absolute since the gypsies, whose explication of nature exalts mystery over reason, atemporality over historicity, no longer attract the attention of José Arcadio. The rift becomes more distinct after their subsequent visit since these new gypsies, unlike Melquíades's tribe, soon give evidence that they are no longer "heralds of progress but purveyors of amusement." Unlike José Arcadio, most of the people of Macondo remain intrigued by the new frivolous inventions. When they dig up their last pieces of gold to pay for a ride on the flying carpet, José Arcadio contemptuously declares: "Déjenlos que sueñan. . . . Nosotros volaremos mejor que ellos con recursos más científicos que ese miserable sobre-camas (Let them dream. . . . We'll do better flying than they are doing, and with more scientific resources than a miserable bedspread)." Just as Eastern science did not "develop" rapidly enough for the Western World, so José Arcadio is no longer interested in the gypsies' "useless toys." Only through a systematic study of nature can true knowledge, and ultimately the practical application of that knowledge, be acquired.

Eventually, however, the inevitable consequences of José Arcadio's

position *vis-à-vis* nature become evident. His son, who falls in love with a gypsy girl, abandons Macondo and Ursula leaves in search of his whereabouts. José Arcadio seems to have lost a part of himself when his wife leaves but rather than despair, he soon resumes work in his laboratory. However, nature now begins to behave in a mysterious fashion:

> Una cazuela de agua colocada en la mesa de trabajo hirvió sin fuego durante media hora hasta evaporarse por completo. José Arcadio Buendía y su hijo observaban aquellos fenómenos . . . interpretándolos como anuncios de la materia. Un día la canastilla de Amaranta empezó a moverse con un impulso propio y dio una vuelta completa en el cuarto, ante la consternación de Aureliano, que se apresuró a detenerla. Pero su padre no se alteró.
>
> (A pan of water on the worktable boiled without any fire under it for a half hour until it completely evaporated. José Arcadio Buendía and his son observed those phenomena . . . interpreting them as predictions of the material. One day Amaranta's basket began to move by itself and made a complete turn about the room, to the consternation of Aureliano who hurried to stop it. But his father did not get upset.)

In the light of these rare occurrences José Arcadio nonchalantly states: "Si no temes a Dios, témele a los metales (If you don't fear God, fear him through the metals)." Here may be observed various aspects of José Arcadio's conception of reality which are analogous to seventeenth-century scientific thought. First, Ursula's absence symbolically indicates that José Arcadio's science has been "separated from humanity" just as during the seventeenth century the conception of the universe as a vast perpetual-motion apparatus and man as a machine marked a further stage in the separation of the sciences and the humanities. Second, God the creator and mover of this clockwork universe gradually begins to fade away and the "metals," or nature, begin to replace him; that is, divine law is being replaced by physical law and God is being substituted by human reason as the instrument for understanding life. Third, this period in history best represents the stage where the dominance of a materialistic, inductive science and the industrialization of Western societies is indicative of a transformation of man's ambient to conform to the accepted mechanical model of man and the universe. Correspondingly, José Arcadio is separated from "humanity," he no longer fears God in the traditional sense, and his world vision has become materialistic.

When Ursula finally returns to Macondo she is followed by a multitude of immigrants. But this time the newcomers are not gypsies:

> Eran hombres y mujeres como ellos. . . . Traían mulas cargadas de cosas de comer, carretas de bueyes con muebles y utensilios domésticos. . . . Ursula no había alcanzado a los gitanos, pero encontró la ruta que su marido no pudo descubrir en su frustrada búsqueda de los grandes inventos.
>
> (They were men and women like them. . . . They had mules loaded down with things to eat, oxcarts with furniture and domestic utensils. . . . Ursula had not caught up with the gypsies, but she had found the route that her husband had been unable to discover in his frustrated search for the great inventions.)

The town is consequently transformed. There is renewed activity; new stores, shops, and homes go up, public works are inaugurated, a permanent trade route is established between Macondo and the outside world. José Arcadio is so fascinated by this activity he loses interest in his idealistic speculations and in his experiments in the laboratory. He soon imposes a state of "order and progress" in the village and it begins to prosper as in the first days after its establishment. The *acacias* (acacias, or locusts) which were planted along the streets during the early days are replaced by almond trees. And Ursula significantly contributes to the industry of the town with her production of candied fish and little roosters.

It was, as José Arcadio realized when Ursula returned, exactly what he had been unconsciously longing for. He believed that man, or humanity, had once again arrived in Macondo. This period in *Cien años de soledad* is historically reminiscent of the Enlightenment. The mechanization of man proceeds when the birds in the cages are turned out and replaced by clocks, and consequently the town is now dominated by a new demon: time. The acacias, or "thorny" trees, having been replaced by almond trees, man now optimistically proclaims his ability to transcend the biblical fall from Paradise, overcome his drab existence where suffering is inevitable, and commence to construct his utopian world. The rise of capitalism is depicted by Aureliano's fabrication of golden fish for sale and by Ursula's peddling of her wares. Aureliano also replaces his father in the laboratory and the nature of the experiments simultaneously to gain lucre. As a final note, having previously lost his fear of God, José Arcadio now feels that he can exercize dominion over the "metals," or nature.

Thus, José Arcadio's retirement is accompanied by the institutionalization of the materialistic paradigmatic model of nature he established. It has now become a standard norm governing all activities, just as the materialistic view of nature became the norm in the Western World.

Very shortly two plagues attack the town: insomnia and loss of memory. Insomnia because Macondo, not unlike the eighteenth and nineteenth century Western World, having realized success with its postulated materialistic conception of nature, considers itself wide awake, or enlightened concerning the ultimate realities of the universe. Loss of memory because the people of Macondo forget that the mechanistic view they have adopted, was, in the beginning, only a hypostatized model rather than an invariable truth. It is also significant that during the plagues Melquíades returns from the dead to introduce the daguerrotype, an optical instrument the Arabs contributed to the Western World.

With his daguerreotype José Arcadio endeavors to prove scientifically the existence (or inexistence) of God. However, when his experiments result in failure, rather than modify his established scientific paradigm, he continues blindly to accept it on faith, convinced of his *a priori* postulate that God does not exist, and proceeds to conduct his life accordingly. It is, of course, difficult to make reality fit into a preconceived mold. The neatness of the hypostatized paradigm is marred by an incorrigible reality and a dichotomy between theory and practice inevitably ensues. This dichotomy has been prevalent in history. For example, Rousseau, postulating the innate goodness of man, could appear as the apostle of liberty (theory) and at the same time advocate a coercive collectivism (practice). And utilitarianism could embody a doctrine of laissez faire but inevitably lead to a system of parental government.

Analogous to the thought of the Western World edified upon the foundation of rationalism, José Arcadio's paradigm—knowledge on the basis of *a priori* postulation—is not entirely valid. Nevertheless, he doggedly retains faith in this paradigm even though nature refuses to conform. José Arcadio's science (the mechanical principle) becomes predominant and Melquíades slowly wanes away while his conception of knowledge (the vitalist principle) becomes nil. Simultaneously, the dualism inherent in José Arcadio's epistemological method becomes apparent: an undying faith in his scientific paradigm—in spite of its apparent shortcomings—as the ultimate road to total comprehension is opposed by an existence which forces him into certain patterns of action notwithstanding his desires to the contrary.

José Arcadio's final crisis parallels the fate of the classical mechanistic model of the universe at the beginning of the present century. The first

indication of this impending crisis occurs when he realizes that all forms of evolution and chronological succession had existed only in the mind:

> "¿Qué día es hoy?" Aureliano le contestó que era martes. "Eso mismo pensaba yo", dijo José Arcadio Buendía. "Pero de pronto me he dado cuenta de que sigue siendo lunes, como ayer. . . ." Al día siguiente, miércoles, José Arcadio Buendía volvió al taller. "Esto es un desastre—dijo—mira el aire, oye el zumbido del sol, igual que ayer y antier. También hoy es lunes."
>
> ("What day is today?" Aureliano told him that it was Tuesday. "I was thinking the same thing," José Arcadio Buendía said, "but suddenly I realized that it's still Monday, like yesterday. . . ." On the next day, Wednesday, José Arcadio Buendía went back to the workshop. "This is a disaster," he said. "Look at the air, listen to the buzzing of the sun, the same as yesterday and the day before. Today is Monday too.")

José Arcadio's thought, implying reversibility, periodicity, and stasis, is a mirror image of the ultimate extension of classical physics. Inherent within the Newtonian corpuscular-kinetic theory of matter where it is meaningful to speak of a definite state of the universe at a particular instant, and where the universe is made up of a finite number of distinct, unvarying atomic entities, time becomes in essence reversible (the eternal return). Consequently the image of a definite number of identical cycles succeeding each other *ad infinitum* implies the negation of real novelty or change: stasis. Therefore, buried within the foundation of the materialistic philosophy is a denial of a thoroughgoing evolutionary philosophy.

Significantly, cyclicality, or periodicity, which has become the basis for the mechanistic explanation of matter, fascinated José Arcadio just prior to his death. He considered his greatest invention a small figurine he connected to a clock pendulum:

> El juguete salió sin interrupción al compás de su propia música durante tres días. Aquel hallazgo lo excitó mucho más que cualquiera de sus empresas descabelladas. No volvió a comer. No volvió a dormir. . . . Pasaba las noches dando vueltas en el cuarto. Pensando en voz alta, buscando la manera de aplicar los principios del péndulo a las carretas de bueyes, a las rejas del arado, a todo lo que fuera útil puesto en movimiento.
>
> (The toy danced uninterruptedly to the rhythm of her own music for three days. That discovery excited him much more than any of his other harebrained undertakings. He stopped eating. He stopped sleeping. . . . He would spend the nights walking around the room thinking aloud, searching for a way to apply the principles of the pendulum to oxcarts, to harrows, to everything that was useful when put into motion.)

Obsessed with his mechanistic view of reality, he attempts to periodize all movement. However, he finally realizes that his concept of cyclicality, although producing the illusion of dynamism, is in reality sterile, repetitive motion where novelty is impossible. He soon hypothesizes that: "¡La máquina del tiempo se ha descompuesto. . . . Pasó seis horas examinando las cosas, tratando de encontrar una diferencia con el aspecto que tuvieron el día anterior, pendiente de descubrir en ellas algún cambio que revelara el transcurso del tiempo (The time machine has broken. . . . He spent six hours examining things, trying to find a difference from their appearance on the previous day in the hope of discovering in them some change that would reveal the passage of time)."

Unable to come to grips with this new realization, his only recourse is violence. He smashes his alchemical apparatus, his daguerreotype, and his silver workshop. Ten men are required to throw him down, fourteen to tie him up, and twenty to drag him to the chestnut tree where he remains until his death.

In his state of apparent dementia, José Arcadio can not cope with present reality and insists on returning physically to the past, to the "beginning of time." This is evidenced by his ability to effectively communicate with only one person: Prudencio Aguilar. He and Prudencio had fought a duel in the "beginning," before the creation of Macondo (the world). After José Arcadio succeeded in slaying his adversary he found it necessary to take Ursula and flee into the "wilderness" where he created Macondo, his dream city. Now, after his psychic abolition of time, he can communicate at will with Prudencio, that is, he can regress to the mythical beginning.

José Arcadio, not unlike modern man, is on the one hand attempting to satisfy his desire for the eternal return to the beginning in order to counteract the "terror of history." On the other hand, there exists the paradox of the mechanical view of the universe which, rather than tracing a linear historical trajectory, reveals on the contrary the image of a vast machine governed by timeless cycles. Time loses meaning, yet man ages

irreversibly within this great timeless machine. All attempts to seek timelessness through the abolition of "time's arrow" become, for José Arcadio and for man, futile.

Shortly before his death, José Arcadio, when alone, found consolation in his dream of the infinite rooms:

> Soñaba que se levantaba de la cama, abría la puerta y pasaba a otro cuarto igual. . . . De ese cuarto pasaba a otro exactamente igual, cuya puerta abría para pasar a otro exactamente igual, y luego a otro exactamente igual, hasta el infinito. Le gustaba irse de cuarto en cuarto, como en una galería de espejos paralelos, hasta que Prudencio Aguilar le tocaba el hombro. Entonces regresaba de cuarto en cuarto, despertando hacia atrás, recorriendo el camino inverso, y encontraba a Prudencio Aguilar en el cuarto de la realidad. Pero una noche . . . Prudencio Aguilar le tocó el hombro en un cuarto de intermedio, y él se quedó allí para siempre, creyendo que era el cuarto real.
>
> (He dreamed that he was getting out of bed, opening the door and going into an identical room. . . . From that room he would go into another that was just the same, the door of which would open into another that was just the same, the door of which would open into another one just the same, and then into another exactly alike, and so on to infinity. He liked to go from room to room. As in a gallery of parallel mirrors, until Prudencio Aguilar would touch him on the shoulder. Then he would go back from room to room, walking in reverse, going back over his trail, and he would find Prudencio Aguilar in the room of reality. But one night . . . Prudencio Aguilar touched his shoulder in an intermediate room and he stayed there forever, thinking that it was the real room.)

José Arcadio's illusions during the final days of his life are indicative of a cosmological vision pushed to its extreme form in face of new circumstances which will inevitably destroy it. Historically, this is analogous to the first decades of the twentieth century when the classical conception of the universe was challenged by a new model. José Arcadio's *anguish* before a static universe of timeless corpuscles where there is no novelty and where all is rigidly determined is converted into a *desire* for a return to the origin, to a communion with himself in the *illud tempus*. At the same time the rooms through which he could freely pass represent an alteration of his traditional mode of reasoning to conform to new evidence.

Similar modification of a traditional scientific paradigm may be observed in the twentieth century when the quantum theory gave rise to speculations concerning the possibility of spacio-temporal intervals, or "pulses" (the *hodon* and the *chronon*), which render both space and time finitely divisible (microscopically and quantitatively), but, for practical purposes still infinitely divisible (macroscopically and psychically, or qualitatively). Given this atomistic view, not only may a certain variation of the corpuscular-kinetic theory of infinitely divisible time and space be maintained but the idea of temporal reversibility may also be implied.

José Arcadio's "infinite rooms" might indicate these spaciotemporal intervals, his passage through the rooms temporal reversibility, the sameness of the rooms a static corpuscular-kinetic conception of matter, and the "room of reality" that state in the idyllic beginning with Prudencio Aguilar. José Arcadio is not bound by finitude inasmuch as he can, at will, return to the origin (the eternal return) but once he mistakenly assumes he is in the "room of reality" when actually in another of the infinite number of rooms, he instantaneously tastes death (becomes finite). It is also significant that as he returns to the origin he traverses the rooms "waking in reverse"; that is, an awakened state comes in simultaneity with the return to the primordial origin while a linear projection into the infinite future is merely a dream.

José Arcadio's impulse to modify his traditional paradigm in view of new circumstances which contradict it also represents a universal human trait. He is attempting to ascertain and delineate—in a confusing, vastly changed world of relativity, finitude, and indeterminacies—a new road to the absolute where the eternal need for security is satisfied albeit at the expense of the eternal desire for novelty.

Soon after José Arcadio dies, when the carpenter is measuring him for a coffin; "vieron a través de la ventana que estaba cayendo una llovizna de minúsculas flores amarillas. Cayeron toda la noche sobre el pueblo en una tormenta silenciosa (through the window they saw a light rain of tiny yellow flowers falling. They fell on the town all through the night in a silent storm)."

The flowers, indicative of the brevity of life, are significantly yellow since this color represents the "farseeing sun, which appears bringing light out of darkness only to disappear again into darkness." Thus, José Arcadio's struggle for total comprehension of reality, symbolic of Western man and his materialistic conception of nature, was in a way futile while at the same time potentially beneficial. Man's course in history was forever altered and in the end he was opened up to himself once and for all, forced

to realize that rather than standing above nature as a neutral observer he is a participant with nature and both comprise one organic whole.

In conclusion, it appears plausible that certain elements in *Cien años de soledad* may be projected out and amplified to give universal implications. If, as the psychologist Jean Piaget maintains [in *Psychology and Epistemology*], an individual's stages of psychogenetic development are isomorphic to the various stages in the history of scientific thought, it may be safely posited that the transmutations in José Arcadio's conception of reality may be analogous to the development of scientific thought in the Western World.

WILLIAM PLUMMER

The Faulkner Relation

The writer's only responsibility is to his art. He will be completely ruthless if he's a good one. . . . If a writer has to rob his mother, he will not hesitate; the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" is worth any number of old ladies.

—WILLIAM FAULKNER, *Paris Review* interview with Jean Stein

Naturally, wanting to know more about the author after having had the top of my head blown off by *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, I looked around for interviews with Gabriel García Márquez. I learned that García Márquez is not keen on formal audiences with his admirers, in part because of a fear of becoming conscious where he should be unconscious, in greater part because he has yet to recover from the trauma of being the Latin American phenom of 1967. Prior to that date he had published four books in fifteen years to the lamentable tune of some five thousand copies sold. Suddenly, thanks to the chronicle of the Buendía family, García Márquez had an instant celebrity, comparable in its whirlwind intensity to Erica Jong's, as well as that rare popular-critical success on the order of Joseph Heller's with *Catch-22*. At one point new editions were spewing forth at the incredible rate of one a week.

The few interviews with García Márquez available in English offer a number of departures. But especially striking are the remarks about Faulkner, who might well be touted, by a thorough-going Bloomian, as the featured player in the Colombian writer's "family romance." *Influence* is, to say the least, a loaded word, and I don't want to tote Harold Bloom's cabalistic baggage. But the "relation" between García Márquez and

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REGINA JANES

Liberals, Conservatives, and Bananas: Colombian Politics in the Fictions of Gabriel García Márquez

García Márquez once remarked that the reader of *Cien años de soledad* who was not familiar with the history of his country, Colombia, might appreciate the novel as a good novel, but much of what happens in it would make no sense to him. Such a reader is in danger of giving to the author's inventiveness what belongs to reality's own absurdity and the author's gift for perceiving, selecting, and heightening the impossible fact. The danger is García Márquez's own fault. Solitude and the operation of the imagination on life are the obsessions of his fiction, and neither is intrinsically political or social. The reader accustomed to García Márquez's smudging the line between the possible and the impossible can locate himself more or less comfortably and correctly when the references are to universal history or human psychology, but if he misses the specific historical allusions, he misses the intersection of the imagined and the real in the realm of the political where men meet to struggle for power. *Cien años de soledad,* with which we will be principally but not exclusively concerned, integrates personal obsessions, literary allusion, and political interpretation in a "total" novel, a kind of which Vargas Llosa has usefully remarked, "The novelist creates from *something;* the total novelist, that voracious being, creates from *everything.*"

It took García Márquez some time to discover how to integrate the political with everything else. In his earlier works, political issues are either allegorized or serve as an indistinct backdrop against which a conflict between characters or within a character is enacted. In *Cien años de sole-*

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dad and *El otoño del patriarca,* the political serves as an organizing principle for the work, providing the structure of the two central sections of *Cien años de soledad* and informing the whole of *El otoño del patriarca,* which blends the allegorical, satirical, and mythic in a manner reminiscent of the earlier short story "Los funerales de la Mamá Grande." In an early essay, "Dos o tres cosas sobre la novela de violencia" (1960), García Márquez discussed the problem of treating contemporary political issues in fiction and defined the way he was to handle them in his earlier works. The fault he found with most novels dealing with "la violencia" was that they were bad novels, and they were bad in large part because the novelists had forgotten that novels must deal with the living and not with the dead. They had put "la violencia" first and gone astray in descriptions "de los decapitados, de los castrados, las mujeres violadas, los sexos esparcidos y las tripas sacadas," forgetting that "la novela no estaba en los muertos . . . sino en los vivos que debieron sudar hielo en su escondite." He preferred the indirect mode of Camus's *La Peste* in which the horror is in the atmosphere men breathe and through which they move and not in piles of corpses. In his own early works, "la violencia" and the memory of the civil war occupy the prescribed place, a stifling backdrop of fear and insecurity, an atmosphere heavy with oppression affecting the lives of the characters but not at the center of the action of the fiction. In *La hojarasca* (completed in 1952, published in 1955), the conflict between the grandfather who would bury the dead doctor and the town who would have him rot in his house depends for its motivation on the civil wars and guerrilla activity, but the action of the fiction is the grandfather's determination to fulfill a promise. In *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba* (1958) the action is again centered on an old man's determination, a determination to continue waiting for the pension promised him at the end of the last civil wars as he struggles with the governmental bureaucracy, and his son and his son's friends die in guerrilla struggles. The rage of the waiting finally finds a focus and purpose in the care of his son's fighting cock, and it is his discovery of that purpose that forms the action of the fiction, while governmental lethargy and betrayal constitute a context, a backdrop on which he can have no effect, before which his struggles are futile, and because of which his struggles continue. In stories such as these, García Márquez takes fifty years of Colombian history for granted and expects his reader to recognize his references.

The same need for recognition occurs in stories written at about the same time in the fantastic mode. Historical realities are still recognizable but are now deformed by the imagination, and the effect of the stories depends on the reader's recognition of the truth of the deformity. Both "Los funerales de la Mamá Grande" and "El mar del tiempo perdido" are satirical allegories, the first like *El otoño del patriarca* (from which it differs most in the character of the narrative voice) packed with specific references; the second more general, making use of a symbolic action parallel to that of the foreign exploitation it satirizes. One of the triumphs of *Cien años de soledad* and *El otoño del patriarca* is the integration of the fantastic and the realistic in the interpretation of political history, and to appreciate that integration some sense of the realities on which it is based is necessary.

The principal events to which García Márquez refers throughout his fictions are the traditional opposition between political parties, the civil wars of the nineteenth century, "la violencia" of the twentieth century, and the banana strike of 1928 in the Santa Marta region. García Márquez has on occasion argued, following Carpentier, that the reality of Latin America is in itself marvelous, and while one may quarrel with the premise, Colombia seems to have done its best to be useful to its author both as a history and as a habit of mind.

In common with most Colombian historiography, García Márquez's work neglects the colonial period and confines itself to the period following independence and to the modern period. In the neglected period, there are at least two events that García Márquez might have invented but did not need to. Bogotá, the capital of Colombia, occupies part of a high plain separated from the Caribbean to the north by 400 miles of jungle and mountains; it is 200 miles due east from the Pacific with two Andean ranges and jungle intervening; to the east of the city, there are again mountains, a great desert plain, and more jungles. In pre-Colombian times, it had acquired some indigenous fame as the site of "El Dorado," "the gilded man," from the custom of the king's rolling himself in gold dust and going for a swim in a nearby lake. In 1538 this remote and inaccessible city was discovered simultaneously by three Spanish explorers coming from three different directions: one from the north (he arrived first by a week), one from the southwest, and one from the east. Colombia also contrived to double its wars of independence. With the lawful king of Spain ousted by Napoleon, Colombia declared itself independent in 1810. In 1815 the Spanish general Murillo effected a brutal reconquest of which the centerpiece was the siege of Cartagena where some 6,000 people died. In 1820, Bolívar reliberated the country. Murillo's initial victory had been facilitated by internal squabbling among the Colombians themselves, and that period is enshrined in Colombian historiography under the dubious title

"la Patria Boba," "the Booby Fatherland." Somewhat unexpectedly for the home of the Buendías, Colombia has given itself seven different names.

The period prior to independence exists in García Márquez's fictions largely in the form of memories and relics. Drake's attack of Riohacha in 1568, the discovery of the skeleton in armor and the galleon in *Cien años de soledad,* the defeat of William Dampier's lombards in 1681 in *El otoño del patriarca* are memories of past incursions unconnected with the life of the present but preserved as talismans of an heroic past. The life of the colonial period surfaces briefly in the house that Ursula built in *Cien años de soledad.* It was constructed for the most aristocratic of purposes, to promote and arrange the marriages of marriageable daughters, and it is filled with imported objects, Viennese furniture, Bohemian crystal, tablecloths from Holland. With the guest list for the inaugural party, Macondo emerges as a town with an aristocracy and leading oligarchs, for the only people invited, we are told, are the descendents of the founders, with the exception of the scandalous and therefore excluded family of Pilar Ternera. The social pattern incarnated in that house can be called colonial, but it could as well be postindependence and early modern, for it is a pattern that was established early and has endured long in Colombian society, reputedly one of the most traditional, aristocratic, and closed in Latin America.

As soon as the house is finished, Don Apolinar Moscote materializes as magistrate to order it painted blue, the color of the Conservative party, for the celebration of national independence. José Arcadio Buendía tries and fails to throw him out of town in an early enactment of the futile resistance of local and apolitical caudillos to the power of the central authority impinging on their own. Shortly thereafter, Moscote explains the difference between the political parties to the incipient Colonel Aureliano Buendía:

> Los liberales, le decía, eran masones; gente de mala índole, partidaria de ahorcar a los curas, de implantar el matrimonio civil y el divorcio, de reconocer iguales derechos a los hijos naturales que a los legítimos, y de despedazar al país en un sistema federal que despojara de poderes a la autoridad suprema. Los conservadores, en cambio, que habían recibido el poder directamente de Dios, propugnaban por la estabilidad del orden público y la moral familiar; eran los defensores de la fe de Cristo, del principio de autoridad, y no estaban dispuestos a permitir que el país fuera descuartizado en entidades autónomas.

Moscote is not a bad political analyst, and the father-in-law teaching the son agrees with one despairing scholarly analysis of party affiliation in Colombia—that it is inherited and passed on through the family.

Inadvertently echoing Gilbert and Sullivan, Milton Puentes began his history of the Liberal party in Colombia by saying that there are five kinds of human beings, but only two kinds of political beings: liberal and conservative. Hernández Rodríguez maintains that "among the most remote childhood memories of a Colombian are . . . those of political parties similar to two races which live side by side but hate each other eternally." Colombia's political parties came into being with independence but acquired their formal designations in the election of 1849. The ideological division between them has always been clear and distinct, the armed conflict bloody and recurrent. It was an axiom of Colombian historiography in the early twentieth century that unlike the revolutions in other parts of Latin America and other parts of the world, violent conflict and intestine broils in Colombia were caused not by conflicting economic interests or by a brutal drive for power, but by the opposition of political ideals. Abstract and principled, Colombia's conflicts were bloodier and longer lasting than those of other nations because they could not be satisfied with blood or bread or any material thing. Conflict was rooted in the national character, and with the nation embattled over abstractions there was not room for Burkeian compromise. This fatalistic and poetic rendering of the national history was facilitated by the vertical organization of the parties. Both included representatives from all social and economic strata instead of being organized horizontally to represent a single class interest.

But the relations between the parties are by no means so simple as that description would have it. The parties have consistently joined ranks to expel dictators; factions of one party have aided factions of the other in fomenting civil wars; both parties have joined together not only to oust dictators who threaten the hold of either party on political power, but also to quell social unrest rising from below. Perhaps the most bizarre arrangement anywhere in recent political history was the formation of the National Front in 1957, by which the two parties agreed to alternate in power for sixteen years with one term a Conservative president, the next a Liberal president, and balanced cabinets. Such an arrangement, possible only among those with a common class interest transcending ideology,

gives some force to the cynical popular saying, quoted by García Márquez in *Cien años de soledad,* that "La única diferencia actual entre liberales y conservadores es que los liberales van a misa de cinco y los conservadores van a misa de ocho."

The ideological question that first divided the parties was the structural one that Moscote lists last: federalism versus centralism. Should the provinces of New Granada be united in a loose federation with a high degree of local autonomy or should there be a strong central government with a powerful executive exercising significant control over state governments? The quarrel arose from the bivalent structure of Spanish colonial rule and an ideological split with respect to the appropriate constitutional model. In the colonial period, there had existed a central authority sent from Spain and concentrated in the capitals of the viceroyalties. But the territories so ruled were vast, and effective control of the entire territory by the central authority was impossible. Thus there existed, as a product of the isolation created by distance and the difficulty of communication across mountain ranges and jungles, considerable autonomy of the local level in spite of the constitutional concentration of power. After independence it remained the interest of local magnates to retain their autonomy, and as a result such anomalies occurred as the Conservative support of the federalist constitution of 1863 when the Liberals were briefly the dominant party.

Linked to the question of structure were a number of other issues, and the conflict between the parties on those issues has found two principal outlets: civil war and the writing of new constitutions. Between 1821 and 1945 Colombia formulated eleven national constitutions, and in 1976 the president of the republic was calling for yet another constitutional convention. It is difficult to keep track of the number of civil wars. One source estimates that there were between seventy and eighty major uprisings between 1821 and 1930, with most of them occurring between 1821 and 1903, averaging a war every year and a half. In 1883 Rafael Núñez, twice president of the republic, complained that Colombia was morally and materially ruined by revolutions. Rather unkindly, he compared Colombian politics to the London zoo and quoted a North American minister to the effect that "In Colombia they've organized anarchy itself."

Although there are of course no constitutional provisions regulating marriage and divorce, the constitutions are the documents that define the structure of the government, the role of the church, and the extent of civil liberties. The first few constitutions (of 1811, 1821, 1830, 1832, 1843) were centralist, but in 1849 the Liberals assumed power, and the succeeding constitutions (1853, 1858, 1861, 1863) became progressively more federalist and, in the broader sense of the term, liberal. As García Márquez has pointed out, the Liberal constitution of 1863 provided for more fundamental civil liberties than does the constitution in effect in Colombia today. Looking for ideological support to the European revolutions of 1789 and 1848, the Colombian Liberals sought to ensure religious toleration and to secularize the state by removing education from the control of the church, by barring clerics from national office, and by depriving the church of state support and the right to acquire real property. They removed all property, income, and literacy qualifications for voting and for holding public office and maximized the number of officials elected directly by the people. That constitution also provided for free, secular, and obligatory primary education, unlimited freedom of the press, and the right to traffic in and possess arms. The provisions with respect to the church, as Moscote confirms, were particularly sensitive. The constitutions of 1861 and 1863 are the only constitutions not drawn up in the name of God; excluded from those proceedings, he has been recalled in subsequent deliberations. The provision for secular and obligatory primary education was the immediate occasion of the civil war of 1876–77, when the Conservatives of Antioquia and Cauca rose against the national government. Other uprisings were occasioned by the confiscations of church property and the closing or consolidation of religious houses. The status of the Jesuits provides something of a weathervane. García Márquez alludes to one wholesale expulsion of religious in *El otoño del patriarca* but the Jesuits have made more than one round trip out of and back into Colombia. Expelled in 1767 from all his dominions by the king of Spain, they returned to Colombia in 1844 by an act of 1815. Expelled again in 1850, they were allowed to return in 1858; expelled yet again in 1861, they returned in 1886 and are still there.

The provisions of the constitution of 1863 that allowed traffic in arms and rendered the states sovereign entities resulted in a period of such social unrest that it has been called the "era of the warlords." Riascos Grueso estimates that in the fourteen years between 1862 and 1876 there were forty-five local civil wars affecting almost every part of the country. That comes to better than three uprisings a year and should make Colonel Aureliano Buendía's thirty-two uprisings in almost twenty years appear rather modest, though by no means negligible. The continued turmoil occasioned a split in the Liberal ranks in which the "radicals" continued to support the constitution of 1863 and its provisions for state sovereignty and arms traffic, while the "independents" favored a new constitution that

would fortify the central government and reserve the police power to it. Led by Núñez, the "independents" gathered support from 1878 on, and in 1884 Núñez was elected president. In 1884–85, the bellicose wing of the "radicals" (as distinct from the "pacific" wing which opposed war) rose against the "independent" government headed by Núñez. Núñez promptly called for and received support from the Conservatives, defeated the radicals, and established the National party, composed of Conservatives and "independent" Liberals. Núñez and his supporters, replaying on their own terms the convention of Rionegro that had put together the constitution of 1863 without a Conservative in the room, composed the constitution of 1886 at a convention to which no radicals were invited.

The constitution of 1886, which remains the basis of the constitution in effect in Colombia today, promptly abolished the states as substantive political entities, forebade the possession of arms and traffic in munitions except by the government, declared Catholicism the religion of the nation, enjoined the public authorities to protect and respect it, and ordered public education to be organized and directed in accord with the Catholic religion. Religious toleration was respected in that no one was to be required to contribute to the support of the church or to support its doctrines; clerics were still barred from public office, and the freedom of the press was guaranteed, with the wide proviso that the press was to be "responsible under law for injuries to personal honor and for disturbances of the social order and public peace." Indirect elections and the appointment of officials were reintroduced on a massive scale, and property qualifications for voting and for holding office were reinstituted. In effect, the constitution aimed to reassert the power of property in the state, to reestablish the privileged position of the church, and to tighten the control of the central government over the states by insuring that officials in state governments would be dependent upon the national government for their tenure.

Although marriage and divorce are not constitutional topics, there is a curious provision in the constitution of 1886 relating to legitimacy. Colonel Aureliano Buendía was, it will be remembered, much moved by the concern of Liberals for the rights of illegitimate children. In the articles treating of citizenship, the constitution of 1886 confined nationality by birth to those born in Colombia and to the "legitimate" children of Colombian father and mother born abroad. The illegitimate child of Colombian father or mother born abroad had to apply for nationality "by origin." No other constitution, earlier or later, contains such a provision, and it vanished in the next constitution or codification of 1936.

Moscote's representation of the positions of the political parties is then a relatively orthodox one, even to the association of the Liberals with the masons. It is a representation nineteenth-century Conservatives would have appreciated, though the Liberals might have been rather miffed. "Our ideals have been distorted, the blood we shed for liberty mocked," they might protest, and justly since the description of positions is given to a Conservative. But Moscote's schematic description is not the only way political positions are rendered in the fiction, and while the Liberals may object, the Conservatives have no occasion to crow. Even if there were no other evidence to dispute the conservative claim to superiority, Moscote's ideas are clearly anachronistic: the English reader cannot help remembering that the last political theorist to argue seriously that power was given directly by God was Sir Robert Filmer in 1680. In his rendering of interparty conflict, García Márquez exposes the irrelevance of ideology to conflict, the corruption of both parties, and the way the parties have provided an identity for their adherents.

The irrelevance of ideology appears on several levels. Moscote identifies the Conservative party with the church, but it is the Conservatives who brutalize a priest and who shell the church. The Liberals, in the person of Arcadio rather than Colonel Aureliano Buendía, are anti-clerical, but as Amaranta remarks with sardonic wonder of Gerineldo Márquez, the Liberals go to war to destroy the church and give prayer books as presents, and it is the Liberals who rebuild the church destroyed by Conservative bombardment.

Colonel Aureliano Buendía's ideological base is, at the beginning of the conflict, nil, less even than that of the memorialists of the War of a Thousand Days who tell us that the fundamental liberties of the nation were threatened by the Núñez regime and that war was necessary to preserve Colombia's most basic freedoms but who never enumerate the freedoms or liberties or describe the character of the threat. Moved by a vague humanitarianism, offended by the stealing of elections, Colonel Aureliano Buendía takes his twenty-one men to war after a series of atrocities committed by the Conservative forces occupying the town, the summary execution of Dr. Noguera, the brutal beating of Father Nicanor, the murder of a woman by pounding her to death with rifle butts. The response is to the brutality of power, not for or against any abstract ideas or threats to liberty. When the Liberals possess power, their atrocities are less only because they are weaker: Arcadio is prevented from murdering Moscote only by the superior force of his grandmother. (The women of the town consistently support a stable social order, whether by curbing the excesses of an

Arcadio or defending the regime of the Conservative General Moncada.) When they are not weaker, they are fully as brutal. Colonel Aureliano Buendía connives at the murder of a general who threatens his position as leader of the Liberal forces, Teófilo Vargas, allows the execution of General Moncada, and destroys the house of Moncada's widow. In the background, politicians in black frock coats negotiate and compromise, jockey for places in a Conservative administration, and alter the ideological terms of the struggle. The Colonel himself finally embraces the conflict as a struggle for power alone, with which the terms of ideological conflict have nothing to do. For others, the possibility of absolute power never theirs or lost once held, party affiliation exists as a state of mind, a form of allegiance and personal identity, for Gerineldo Márquez throughout the struggle, for the Colonel in the long years after his defeat. Before the firing squad, when Arcadio shouts "¡Cabrones! ¡Viva el partido liberal!" he defines himself as a man, affirming a self he never had as he loses it.

But if ideology is irrelevant, why is the Colonel a Liberal? Could he not as easily be a Conservative, like the sympathetic Moncada, whose name is an anagram for Macondo? As a Liberal, the Colonel belongs to the party of the progressive left for his period, the party that would institute some social reforms, labor, and welfare legislation in the 1930's and that had been the defender of civil and political liberties throughout the nineteenth century. García Márquez himself is a liberal by family inheritance, a revolutionary socialist by modern conviction. He began his reportorial career writing for the liberal paper *El Espectador,* and the grandfather who raised him was a colonel in the forces of the Liberal General Rafael Uribe Uribe. Not accidentally, Colonel Aureliano Buendía's political development manifests an anachronistic radicalization. His wars are "the wars of the last century," but his final political positions belong to the twentieth century. He becomes an instigator of radical land reform repudiated by his party. The wars he fights correspond in duration not only to the incessant wars of the nineteenth century but also to the "almost twenty years" of "la violencia" from 1948 to, roughly, 1964. García Márquez has mingled the experience of his grandfather in the nineteenth century with his own experience as witness to the conflicts of the twentieth.

Colonel Aureliano Buendía's wars end after almost twenty years under a great ceiba tree with the Treaty of Neerlandia. The last war of the nineteenth century, the War of a Thousand Days, ended with two treaties, the Treaty of Wisconsin and the Treaty of Neerlandia at which Uribe Uribe surrendered to the Conservative government in the presence, among others, of García Márquez's grandfather, Colonel Nicolás Márquez. The War of a Thousand Days (1899–1902) was the explosive finale to decades of conflict, and it should not lead us to reduce the Colonel's years of war from a "fictitious" twenty to a "real" three. For the period 1863–1876 estimates of civil wars somewhere in the country range from forty to forty-five. In 1875 an uprising in the department of Magdalena, the coastal state where García Márquez was born and Macondo is located, required federal intervention; in 1876–77 civil war was general throughout the nation; in 1879 civil war was confined to three states, including Magdalena; and in 1880 only Antioquia had a civil war. From 1884 to 1902 there were three general civil wars, in 1884–85, 1895, and 1899–1902. Uribe Uribe outdid Aureliano Buendía in the length if not the intensity of his military career, since his lasted almost thirty years from his participation at the age of seventeen in the war of 1876–77 through the other conflicts to 1902.

Vargas Llosa has pointed out that the camaraderie between Colonel Aureliano Buendía and General Moncada is based on that between Uribe Uribe and the conservative General Pedro Nel Ospina. The two exchanged "tuteando" letters, lamented separation from their families, and entrusted the wounded to each others' good care, while reiterating the desire to civilize war. The same pattern marks the correspondence and public statements of the liberal General Benjamín Herrera, commander of the Liberal forces in Panama. But neither Uribe Uribe nor Herrera executed his correspondent in the name of the revolution, largely because neither conceived of himself as a revolutionary. The brutality of the nineteenth-century civil wars was considerable: Herrera issued so many proclamations in favor of civilizing war because he disliked the habit of murdering and mutilating wounded prisoners. But the brutality lacked theoretical justification.

In the history of Colonel Aureliano Buendía, García Márquez suggests not only the corrosive effects of power but also the brutalizing effects of ideology, even radical ideology. No direct connection is drawn between radicalism and brutality, but the two are consistently juxtaposed. As a youthful widower and sentimental liberal, Aureliano Buendía could not understand shedding blood for things that cannot be touched with the hands, and he rejected Dr. Noguera's politics of assassination as the politics of a butcher. As he becomes more effective as a military leader and instrument of political change, his humanity evaporates. The transformation is dramatized in his relations with General Moncada. Once a friend, he allows Moncada's execution against the wishes of the town and with a humanly impenetrable shifting of responsibility for the action: "—Re-

cuerda, compadre—le dijo—, que no te fusilo yo. Te fusila la revolución." A page earlier, he had acted to redistribute property on a more equitable basis, annulling the legal outrages of his brother José Arcadio. Similarly, when he orders the house of Moncada's widow pulled to the ground, that act is juxtaposed to the revision of property titles and the joint opposition of Liberal and Conservative landowners to the radicalism of the Colonel. The distrust of political action is profound, but it is less a distrust of actions than of actors. Land reform does not become less necessary or less desirable because it is performed by a brute, but the character of the actor prevents a simple response of unconsidered satisfaction to the action. We approve without much thought José Arcadio Buendía's patriarchal and egalitarian distribution of property at Macondo's founding; Colonel Aureliano Buendía's redistribution occurs in more complex circumstances.

In addition to the colonel's commitment to land reform, other elements in the history of his wars seem to echo events more recent than the civil wars of the nineteenth century. He is declared a bandit; a price is put on his head; Conservative and Liberal leaders combine against him. These details point to the period of "la violencia," though the connection is less explicit in *Cien años de soledad* than it is in such other fictions as *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba, La mala hora,* and "Un día de éstos."

For almost twenty years, rural violence harried the Colombian countryside. In the names of the traditional political parties, small and large landowners were dispossessed, properties burned, men murdered, and women raped. Some called the perpetrators guerrillas; others called them bandits. It began in Bogotá with the assassination of the popular leader of the left wing of the Liberal party, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, on April 9, 1948. Gaitán had originally come to prominence in 1929 by exposing the brutality of the army's suppression of the banana strike in Santa Marta. Named the "bogotazo," the riots that followed the assassination levelled large parts of the city, burned down the pension of a law student named García Márquez, and left thousands dead. Quelled in the city, violence spread to the countryside where, in widely separated geographical areas, independent bands of guerrillas rose in rebellion. Some of the bands were Conservative; some ten to fifteen percent were, it is estimated, Communist-led; but most were Liberals who rose against the Conservative regime, the local authorities, and the traditional enemy, Conservatives of all classes, from campesinos to landowners. Between 1948 and 1964, according to conservative estimates, some 200,000 Colombians died in this unofficial civil war. For ten years, the toll of civilian dead alone rose, reaching over 300 a month in 1958, when it leveled off at 200 a month for four years until

1963, and the rate began to fall. While some groups received support, material and moral, from Liberal leaders in the cities, they were for the most part disowned by the national Liberal directorate, which joined with the Conservatives to repudiate the "bandits" or *"antisociales."* In 1952 a national Conference of Guerrillas convened to formulate a program including agrarian reform and other radical goals, but the movement remained a guerrilla movement composed of largely autonomous bands. The atrocities committed by both sides, guerrillas, army, and police, were horrific, and one of the more significant elements in García Márquez's work is his deliberate refusal to enumerate horrors. One anonymous witness described the actions of the Conservative authorities:

> My eyes have seen many sights. I have seen men coming into the cities mutilated, women raped, children flogged and wounded. I saw a man whose tongue had been cut out, and people who were lashed to a tree and made to witness the cruel scene told me that the policemen yelled, as they cut out his tongue: "You won't be giving any more cheers for the Liberal Party, you bastard!" They cut the genitals off other men so that they wouldn't procreate any more Liberals. Others had their legs and arms cut off and were made to walk about, bleeding, on the stumps of their limbs. And I know of men who were held bound while policemen and Conservative civilians took it in turns to rape their wives and daughters. Everything was carried out according to a preconceived plan of extermination. And the victims of these bloodthirsty policeman were poor, humble country people who were members of the Liberal Party. Their wives, their old folk and their children were shot in the full light of day. The official police took possession of the property of Liberal farmers, killed the owners, requisitioned their barns and disposed of their money, their livestock; in a word, of all that had been the livelihood of their families. It was an avalanche of pillage and an orgy of blood. At times these atrocious crimes were committed under the cover of night, with the encouragement of high government officials. And all this in the false name of God, with holy medals jingling around their necks, and without remorse.

Fiction can add nothing to such scenes, and their force is capable of destroying the balance of any fiction. But it is important to be aware of the depth of hatred such actions illustrate and evoked. Liberals did not fail to

reciprocate in kind. In 1957, after ten years of "la violencia," and recourse to the dictatorship of Rojas Pinilla, the leaders of the Liberal and Conservative parties formed the National Front to eliminate the dictator and to collaborate in extermining the guerrillas. By the end of the sixties, with the active collaboration of the church and the increasing efficiency of the army, they were largely successful. While the guerrilla movement affected large parts of the country, it was essentially a rural phenomenon and failed to spread to the Atlantic coast and the department of Magdalena.

The traces of "la violencia" in García Márquez's fictions are relatively slight, a few situations, an atmosphere, an intimation of guerrilla activity, but no direct grappling with the violence of "la violencia." In "Dos o tres cosas" he argued that the writer should not try to treat what he has not actually experienced, what he has only at second-hand. Vargas Llosa, commenting on the essay, observes that it is imaginative and not actual experience that counts. The imagination must be able to digest its materials to put them to use. The raw material of "la violencia" is rather indigestible, but the reason García Márquez has chosen not to deal directly with those materials has more to do with the character of his imagination than with the innate intractability of the material. His stories grow from images; his novels are chains of stories; meanings and effects in both emerge not from authorial analysis but from the multiple levels of suggestion communicated by the plot line and details of the inset narratives. He consistently subordinates historical detail to the integrity of the anecdote. To deal directly with "la violencia" would require either accounting for it historically and analytically, not a mode with which García Márquez is comfortable, or putting it at the center of the narrative. But what would be its effect at the center of the narrative as the focal point? In themselves, the materials produce horror and outrage, but they cannot illuminate anything unless they are subordinated to some other end, and subordinating them means moving them away from the center. Thus, in the earlier short stories and novellas, the references to "la violencia" illuminate character in resistance; in *Cien años de soledad,* they illuminate character and condemn militarism; in *El otoño del patriarca,* they illuminate the character of despotism itself. Further, the attitudes called forth by "la violencia" can only be unambiguous; there is little room for complexity of response in scenes of rape, torture, murder, and mutilation. Now García Márquez is perfectly capable of unambiguous renderings, but they tend to occur in his reportage rather than in his fictions. The nearest approach to an historical event rendered without ambiguity of any kind is the banana strike of 1928 in *Cien años de soledad.* While "Los funerales de la Mamá Grande" and *El otoño del patriarca* let us know without much delving that our attitude towards the protagonist is to be disapproval, the effect of focusing on that pair of saurians is to create admiration for their energy and a strong sense of their superiority to their sycophants and even to the harmless, afflicted people whose passivity lets them continue. While the final attitude is perhaps a simple one, the attitudes experienced in reading the fiction are complex. The exception is the treatment of the banana strike, but even there García Márquez's treatment is more sophisticated and more complex than the interpretations placed upon that episode by some critics who praise it for its political message.

As Lucila Mena has pointed out, the banana episode could serve as a textbook illustration of "lo real maravilloso (the marvelous-real)." Rendered with scrupulous accuracy, the historical event seems incredible, as "marvelous" as Remedios the beauty's rising into the heavens holding on to the family sheets. The key to the marvelous in the episode is the real: García Márquez has told the episode as it happened, and it is scarcely accidental that other, non-fictional descriptions of the events in Santa Marta in 1928 produce comparable effects of absurdity. The presence and nature of the episode raise a number of interesting questions. In the first place, what is it doing in the fiction? García Márquez has said that experience must be lived, but having been born in 1928, he can scarcely be said to have lived through the banana strike. Then its tone: it is the only episode characterized in large part by a tone of simple outrage. Finally, associated with the question of tone is the question of genre: the reportorial character of the episode associates it with the genre of "banana novels" and protest literature. The most famous examples of the kind are Asturias's banana trilogy, but the twenties and thirties saw dozens of others, and García Márquez's friend Álvaro Cepeda Samudio wrote a novel on the subject of the strike in 1967, *La casa grande.* The episode of the banana strike is in part an example of generic allusion, parallel to the allusions to Borges, Carpentier, Fuentes, Rulfo, and others, but distinct in that the shape and matter of the entire section constitute the allusion. Other instances of generic allusion define the fiction's structure: bildungsroman, patriarchal epic, Biblical and mythic structures, fairy tale structures. That of the banana episode simply pertains more immediately to the national literatures of Latin America.

But what of the charge that against his own dictum the banana strike was not lived through? There are two principal kinds of significance in the episode of the banana strike: the events themselves and the official obliteration of the events. It is the latter that finally emerges as the more impor-

tant: not that 3,000 people died, but that 3,000 people die *and no one believes it.* It will be remembered that the horror of the insomnia plague at the beginning of the novel is not wakefulness but the obliteration of the past and that many of the inhabitants "sucumbieron al hechizo de una realidad imaginaria, inventada por ellos mismos, que les resultaba menos práctica pero más reconfortante." In the same fashion, the horrors of the banana strike are the obliteration of the existence of the workers by the lawyers and the denial that the massacre ever took place by both the people of Macondo, "Aquí no ha habido muertos," and the official versions that eventually triumph: "La versión oficial, mil veces repetida y machacada en todo el país por cuanto medio de divulgación encontró el gobierno a su alcance, terminó por imponerse: no hubo muertos, los trabajadores satisfechos habían vuelto con sus familias, y la compañía bananera suspendía actividades mientras pasaba la lluvia." The final, fitting irony of the episode is that North American readers unfamiliar with the history of Colombia assume that the episode is one more fantastic invention. For them, the event is saved from oblivion by the novel itself, but it is not restored to reality.

The banana strike and its bloody aftermath were the major events in García Márquez's natal year in the area in which he was born. He has said that he remembers conflicting reports of the strike from friends and neighbors, some of whom claimed there were no dead, others said an uncle, a brother had died. The time and place of the event gave it a certain privilege in his imagination, and it serves as the locus for the fury with military repression that appears in so much of his non-fiction. The banana episode integrates the memories of childhood with the adult's outrage at the combined forces of foreign imperialism, domestic injustice, and military repression exerted against the legitimate desires of the people. It is an episode that belongs to the past, threatened with oblivion, unless it is rendered, saved, in words. A public event that became part of the personal past is now rendered public again through the medium of the fiction.

García Márquez's narrative traces the history of the banana company in Macondo from the arrival of the company and its physical and social transformation of the town, through the organization of the workers against the company, to the strike, the massacre at the train station, the final "mopping up" operation conducted by the army afterwards, and the expunging of the events from the secondary school history texts. The United Fruit Company was incorporated in New Jersey in 1899 in the merger of the Colombia Land Company and the Boston Fruit Company. In the first decades of the twentieth century, it established itself as a state

within a state in the "banana zone" on the Atlantic coast of Colombia. The company constructed an irrigation network (the moving of the river in *Cien años de soledad*), maintained its own railroad, telegraph network, retail stores, and fleet to carry its cargoes to U.S. ports. The company owned 30,000 acres in the region and employed about 18,000 men. In addition to the company, there were independent growers, Colombian nationals, dependent on the company's irrigation network and transport facilities who do not appear in the novel. The development of the banana industry produced an influx of workers both domestic and foreign that acquired the contemptuous nickname "la hojarasca" from the longtime inhabitants. As two of the sons of Colonel Aureliano Buendía remark, "'Nosotros venimos . . . porque todo el mundo viene.'"

The period was a boom period, but the position of the workers was not altogether advantageous. Workers were paid on a piece-work system by the number of bunches of bananas cut or the amount of land cleared. For the most part, they were not employed directly by the company or by individual growers, but worked under foremen-contractors and migrated from one plantation to another. Part of their wages were paid in scrip for exchange at the company's commissaries, kept stocked by the ships of the banana fleet that must otherwise have returned empty from New Orleans. The system of contract labor allowed both native growers and United Fruit to evade the provisions of Colombian law intended to protect the workers by requiring employers to provide medical care, sanitary dwellings, collective and accident insurance. Since the contractors lacked capital, they were not legally required to provide those benefits; since the growers did not employ the workers directly, neither were they. In 1918, the workers of the region had exerted enough pressure on the company to persuade it to promise to consult its Boston home office on the complaints raised by the workers, principally demands for wage increases and the elimination of scrip payments, as well as fulfillment of the company's obligations under the labor laws for workers' conditions. Ten years later, the workers raised their demands again, and the company refused to bargain but again promised to consult.

In his account, García Márquez gives us two strikes, though they do not seem to be separated by ten years. The first occurs on Fernanda's return from incarcerating Meme and brings José Arcadio Segundo out of the houses of French whores into political action: "La huelga estalló dos semanas después y no tuvo las consecuencias dramáticas que se temían." The second, "La huelga grande," begins after a period of demonstrations, agitation, and fruitless pursuit of the authorities of the banana company

that had begun when Aureliano, Meme's son, was a year old. The widespread support for the workers among merchants and newspapers in the region seems to be signified in the fiction by Father Antonio Isabel's approval of the workers' demands: "La petición pareció tan justa que hasta el padre Antonio Isabel intercedió en favor de ella porque la encontró de acuerdo con la ley de Dios." The incredible evasions by the banana company are represented in the fiction by the disappearances and multiple disguises of Mr. Jack Brown, but García Márquez closes that absurd and comical account not with an invention of his own but with the actual ruling of the courts that because labor on the plantations was temporary and occasional, the company had no workers: "se estableció por fallo del tribunal y se proclamó en bandos solemnes la inexistencia de los trabajadores."

In his account of the strike proper, García Márquez conflates a few events, drops others, and does not disguise the incipient violence in the workers' confrontation with the army. In García Márquez's account, the army arrives to break the strike, martial law is declared, the workers gather at the station to await a mediator, are fired upon by the army after having had read to them Decreto Número Uno, declaring them a "cuadrilla de malhechores," signed by General Cortés Vargas and his secretary Enrique García Isaza. José Arcadio Segundo wakes up to find himself on a nightmare train ride with thousands of corpses and returns to a Macondo in which no one believes anything has happened. The workers' demands have been reduced and accepted, but the rains have begun and the search for the assassins and incendiaries of Decree No. Four continues until the union leaders are eliminated. So much for the efficacy of grassroots organization.

The differences between García Márquez's account and that of General Cortés Vargas himself are relatively minor. Both agree that the workers were interfering with the work of scabs, stopping trains, and damaging cut fruit. Martial law was not declared, however, until the night at the train station in the Decreto Número Uno that ordered the workers to disperse. In Cortés Vargas's account, as in García Márquez's, after the order to disperse had been given and the crowd was told it would be fired upon in five minutes, "'Le regalamos el minuto que falta,' gritó una voz de entre el tumulto." At this point, the accounts diverge. Cortés Vargas's all male crowd falls to the ground and flees after the army fires, leaving behind nine dead and a litter of machetes and hats. García Márquez's mixed crowd of men, women, and children is brutally mown down in numbers that correspond to those given in North American newspaper

accounts and those of the strike leaders. The next day, Cortés Vargas issued the notorious Decreto Número Cuatro that declared the strikers a "cuadrilla de malhechores" and marked the beginning of the army's "mopping up" operation, resulting in the jailing of hundreds of workers by his own account. In Cortés Vargas's version, most of the real violence occurred after the firing at the train station, but García Márquez uses the massacre at the train station as a climax and limits the bloodbath afterwards to a few sentences: "La ley marcial continuaba. . . . En la noche, después del toque de queda, derribaban puertas a culatazos, sacaban a los sospechosos de sus camas y se los llevaban a un viaje sin regreso. Era todavía la búsqueda y el exterminio de los malhechores, asesinos, incendiarios y revoltosos del Decreto Número Cuatro. . . . Así consumaron el exterminio de los jefes sindicales."

As to the concessions won by the strikers, García Márquez tells us that the workers' demands had been reduced to two points, the provision of medical services and the building of latrines, and indeed Cortés Vargas assures us that most of the demands were illegal, but the company graciously consented to raise wages slightly, to build two hospitals (instead of the one for every four hundred workers demanded) and "mejorar e higienizar las habitaciones de los trabajadores en las fincas."

At the end of the episode, the official obliteration of events receives as much if not more attention than the horrors of the events themselves, and Mercado Cardona has pointed out the passage in Henao and Arrubla, the standard secondary school text on Colombian history, that deals with the strike:

> El gobierno declaró turbado el orden público el día cinco del mes siguiente, como medio de defensa social, una vez agotados los recursos que indicaba la prudencia para ver de pacificar los ánimos, en la provincia dicha. Las vías de hecho adoptadas, mediante el imperio de la ley marcial, hicieron renacer la tranquilidad y volver al régimen legal. El orden público se restableció en la región el 14 de marzo de 1929.

There was admittedly a strike, but fortunately nothing much occurred except the restoration of public order.

Most of the narrative of the banana strike is told in the neutral narrative tone customary in the novel, but the description of the arrival of the army troops violates the usual convention:

> Eran tres regimientos cuya marcha pautada por tambor de ga-

> leotes hacía trepidar la tierra. Su resuello de dragón multicéfalo impregnó de un vapor pestilente la claridad del mediodía. Eran pequeños, macizos, brutos. Sudaban con sudor de caballo, y tenían un olor de carnaza macerada por el sol, y la impavidez taciturna e impenetrable de los hombres del páramo. Aunque tardaron más de una hora en pasar, hubiera podido pensarse que eran unas pocas escuadras girando en redondo, porque todos eran idénticos, hijos de la misma madre, y todos soportaban con igual estolidez el peso de los morrales y las cantimploras, y la vergüenza de los fusiles con las bayonetas caladas, y el incordio de la obediencia ciega y el sentido del honor.

The description is heavily freighted with hostility, from the "dragón multicéfalo" and "vapor pestilente" to "la vergüenza de los fusiles" and "la obediencia ciega," and it appears before anything has occurred to warrant the hostility as a projection of an attitude to be justified in the course of the narrative. The soldiers are of course the principal actors in the brutality to follow, but directing hostility at those who follow orders rather than at those who give them still seems odd. One of García Márquez's omissions clarifies the matter a little. In Cortés Vargas's account, the principal reason the people did not disperse when ordered was that the people were confident that the soldiers, common people like themselves, would not act against them but would throw down their arms and join them. A memory of that conviction lingers in the woman's murmured remark, "'Estos cabrones son capaces de disparar,'" which suggests that the discovery of the capacity to fire is new. The betrayal of the people by the people seems to arouse more anger in the narrator than the actual massacre, perhaps because the massacre can be allowed to have its own effect.

El otoño del patriarca cannot be attacked, as *Cien años de soledad* has been, for abandoning the politically committed or engaged novel in favor of the byways of myth and fantasy. In it, García Márquez has taken on one of the central problems of Latin American and indeed world politics, the endurance of the dictator. But he has been attacked for one aspect of his method, his failure to represent the people successfully resisting the dictator. Like Carpentier in *Recurso del método,* García Márquez has represented the experience of dictatorship from inside, from the perspective of the dictator himself. Unlike Carpentier, he provides no hints as to how the dictator may eventually be brought down. His means and his end are those of satire: not to provide a blueprint for action but to purge our vision by stripping bare the horror that exists in the fulness of its power. His initial

intention for the structure of the book was to have the dictator brought before a tribunal for a people's trial. That plan was abandoned, fortunately if the puerile trial scene in Bertolucci's *1900* is any indication of what might have gone on in García Márquez's version. Instead of using a form based on polarization and judgment, he plunges the reader into a stew of allusions, anecdotes, and images culled from Colombian, Latin American, European, and classical history. Just as Pope keeps us fast within the realm of Dulness and her minions in *The Dunciad* to show us the all-pervading power of the anti-Christ of intellect, so García Márquez keeps us by the patriarch, the demon of his world, to force us to recognize the truth, the horror, and the black comedy of the world he inhabits, the sources of his power and his undeniable skill in holding on.

The principal satiric devices that García Márquez exploits are magnification, the hyperbolic length of the patriarch's career, equivalent in time to Swift's static, spatial magnification of the human body in *Gulliver's Travels,* and the persona of the naif. All the multifarious voices of the novel are those of innocents, whether the people who cannot believe that the patriarch is dead, the expelled dictators who arrive in their pajamas with their trunks full of press clippings, the mother who would have had her son learn to read and write had she only known he would become head of state, and the wily, cynical old man himself, fearful of assassination yet convinced the people love him, amorous, sentimental, and murderous. There is an authorial narrative voice distinct from the voices of the innocent, but it is not a judgmental voice. It is the voice of one who sees both sides of the tapestry of illusions of reality and who persistently turns the tapestry over to show both sides, juxtaposing what seems and what is. Both kinds of voice keep us fast within the patriarch's world, allowing us no perspective from which to feel superior or immune to that world, enacting the fundamental paradox of satire, that it imprisons us within a world it condemns.

As he did in *Cien años de soledad,* García Márquez plunders Colombian history and his own earlier fictions. Victorious federalists dismember the country; the Liberals sell the revolution, and the Conservatives buy it; the great noise, a mysterious subterranean blast that occurred in 1687, acquires a new explanation; the people of a high, cold, misty city (Bogotá) look like poets but are really "godos," "goths," the old nickname for Conservatives; a figure resembling either Bolívar or Colonel Aureliano Buendía wants to wipe out every conservative regime from Alaska to Patagonia. Names and episodes recur: Papa Montero's wake is celebrated; the patriarch possesses the fertilizing powers of Petra Cotes and the supernatural

powers of the banana company, discards Aureliano Segundo's faded animal lotteries for a more scientific system using billiard balls, and another Iguarán runs afoul of him in a cock fight. Most centrally, the patriarch is Colonel Aureliano Buendía having won his wars instead of having lost them; as locked in solitude, he possesses the small glass ball of power that the colonel never managed to grasp and hold.

When García Márquez moves politics from the background to the foreground of his works, he abandons realism for suprarealism and becomes a satirist. The apolitical abandonment of realism in many of the short stories and much of *Cien años de soledad* pushes to a bitter contrast between the limitless powers of the imagination and the limitations of the body bound to death. Enacting solitude and death, those fictions offer the exuberance of imaginative play to soften that awareness and reconcile us to it. And sometimes to blind us to it: we forget the tragedies of the lives of the characters in the comedy of events. In the political fictions (including the political sections of *Cien años de soledad*) the same contrast operates but with the realm of experience narrowed to the world of power and a far bleaker view of human possibilities because there can be no escape by way of the imagination from the world imagined. The play of the imagination serves not to free us but to return us to the world of the powerful, and the only cheering, consoling invention of *El otoño del patriarca* is the patriarch's death from natural causes. Dictators, like other men, do die, but García Márquez reminds us that the species continues. A novel that showed the triumph of the people in action might be more optimistic, but García Márquez's revelation of the care, feeding, and endurance of the beast shows a preference of truth to wish, of perception to dream or desire. The satirist may no longer be able to kill rats, as Irish poets used to do, and he may no longer believe that his ridicule will change men's actions for the better, but he does know that unless we see clearly, we can have neither motive nor power for action.

RAYMOND WILLIAMS

The Autumn of the Patriarch

The publication of this novel about a dictator disappointed some of those readers who had associated García Márquez exclusively with the enchantment and accessibility of Macondo. It does not take place in Macondo and is more difficult to read than any of García Márquez's other novels. Judged strictly on its own intrinsic artistic merit, however, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* is a major book for both García Márquez and the field of the contemporary Latin American novel. It was one of several Latin American novels appearing in the 1970s dealing with a dictator.

The novel of the dictator is a venerable tradition in Latin America. The two best known initial novels of this type were *Tirando Banderas* (1926) by the Spaniard Ramón del Valle Inclán and *El señor presidente* (1946) by Miguel Angel Asturias. The decade of the 1970s saw the startling empowerment of military dictatorships in Latin America, particularly in the Southern Cone. As if by tacit agreement, major novelists, such as Alejo Carpentier, Augusto Roa Bastos, and García Márquez all published novels on dictators: Carpentier's *Reasons of State* appeared in 1974 and Roa Bastos's *Yo el Supremo (I, the Supreme)* in the following year. García Márquez had begun his project at the end of a dictatorship that preceded these sanguine *caudillos* of the 1970s, that of Pérez Jiménez, ruler of Venezuela during the 1950s. Upon arriving in Caracas from Europe in 1958, García Márquez witnessed the downfall of Pérez Jiménez and the concurrent spectacle created by the outburst of a national celebration in Venezuela. The figure of Pérez Jiménez, nevertheless, was just a point of departure. García Márquez began reading histories of dictators, books containing historical anecdotes that can make the most fantastic Latin

From *Gabriel García Márquez.* © 1984 by G. K. Hall & Co., Boston.

have gained "the privileges of solitude," which are contrasted to the "false charms of pity" [194:208—"los privilegios de la soledad/los falsos encantos de la misericordia"]. Better to be alone and uncomplaining then to enjoy the promiscuous pity of others. We recognize a version of Meme's reaction to her grief. There is arrogance in such a posture, of course, but there is also dignity, and much moral authority. The privileges of solitude are not an illusion—and are certainly not to be spirited away by any sort of well-meaning sermon about companionship.

The other instance is even deeper. There is an ancient rivalry between Rebeca and Amaranta. They first fell out, or rather committed themselves to a scarcely spoken but implacable and enduring enmity, over Pietro Crespi, the Italian pianola expert. Amaranta discovers shortly before her death at a fairly advanced age that her feelings have ended neither in hatred nor in love but in "the measureless understanding of solitude," "la comprensión sin medidas de la soledad" [244:260]. Grammatically the phrase could mean that solitude is what is understood, and it is true that the understanding concerns the solitary Rebeca. But the context clearly suggests the measureless understanding which solitude can give, which is the portion, or may be the portion, of those who are truly dedicated to solitude, like the Buendías. It is not an understanding that many of them reach, but the interesting implication lies in the moral possibility: solitude is a way of losing others and the world, but may also be an austere way of finding them. It was in just this sense that Proust spoke of books as the work of solitude and the children of silence.

As I have suggested, García Márquez himself is inclined to moralize this issue in a rather narrow way. "The Buendías," he said in an interview, "were incapable of loving and this is the key to their solitude and their frustration. Solitude, I believe, is the opposite of solidarity." Elsewhere he has insisted that this is "a political concept: solitude considered as the negation of solidarity." It is true that the attraction of solitude, or quietism, is very dangerous, and especially for politically disaffected or despairing Latin Americans. And it is true that the Buendías are a family of monsters. But they are tremendously appealing monsters, and we can't dissipate their appeal by pretending we don't feel it—as García Márquez himself must have felt it. To say that the Buendías are incapable of loving is to travesty all the tenderness and torment and longing that abound in the book, and to muffle

all kinds of differences among the characters. The Buendías have a hard time loving anyone. They get tangled in their pride, and they are amazingly stubborn. But this is not a moral or political verdict, or material for a slogan. It is what the novel is made of. García Márquez comments that he is "not very good at these theorizings, which in my case are always *a posteriori.*" Or not quite always *a posteriori,* since we also find such theorizings, albeit quite rarely, in the novel itself. These attempts are invariably intelligent and interesting, but generally unavailing. The characters and events slip away, not because they are independent of their author—their place in the plot sees to that—but because they are, in most cases, richer than his formulas for them. This is particularly true, as we shall see, of Colonel Aureliano Buendía. Ideas may slip away too, because they are more complex in their concrete, dramatized form then they are when construed for argument. The Spanish galleon occupies a space of solitude and oblivion, but it is also a material memory, a recall to history, a lingering of the past in the present. It waits in the jungle like a destiny.

Sleep and Forgetting

Paradise can be translated as solitude, and solitude, in this novel, suggests a lapse of memory. But what is forgotten is not necessarily dead, it may not be mislaid or repressed. And even if dead, it may be buried. When the unsettled past is refused by conscious thought, it often returns as a set of spectres—which is one reason for the multiplicity of ghosts in *One Hundred Years of Solitude.* They walk in these pages "like a materialization of a memory" [309:328]—because they *are* a materialization of memory, of a memory which has been denied or distanced, like the Latin language or a lost and found ship. The image is reversed, the ghosts quite plainly made figuratively, when Rebeca is said to have "found peace in that house where memories materialized through the strength of implacable evocation and walked like human beings through the cloistered rooms" [142:152]. The whole novel is an evocation of this kind, since the Buendías are consigned to oblivion *in* the story, but resurrected *by* the story, remembered as often as the story is told.

Of course this story itself could be lost, or not have been told in the first place. We can see with the memory, as Úrsula Buendía does; but there are blindnesses of memory too, and all feats of remembering have to be set against this risk, as lights

are held up against an always possible darkness. If there is one thing worse than the traffic of unquiet ghosts, it could well be the entire absence of ghosts, memory's utter abolition. The risk is notably dramatized in an early chapter, where the whole of Macondo finds itself unable to sleep, and consequently unable to remember.

The village has turned into a lively town, with Arab traders and new houses and musical clocks. Two Indians, brother and sister, now work for the Buendías. They have left their home region because of a "plague of insomnia" there [40:44], and this magical disease, reported like everything else in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as if it were the most natural thing in the world, now smites the family and the town. At first people are quite pleased. They don't sleep but they don't feel tired, and there is plenty to do. "This way we can get more out of life," José Arcadio Buendía happily says [45:50]. But the disease insidiously develops toward "a more critical manifestation: a loss of memory":

When the sick person became used to this waking state, the memories of his childhood began to fade, then the names and notions of things, and finally people's identities and even consciousness of his own being, until he was sunk in a kind of idiocy without a past.[46:50]

The inhabitants of Macondo soon start to long for sleep because they miss their dreams even before they miss their past, and José Arcadio Buendía begins to study the "infinite possibilities of forgetting" [48:53]. Aureliano thinks of a temporary stay against the damage. Every object is marked with its name—table, chair, clock, door, wall, bed, saucepan, cow, goat, pig, hen, banana—and in time with a note about its use—"This is the cow. She needs to be milked every morning so that she will produce milk, and the milk must be boiled in order to be mixed with coffee to make milky coffee . . ." [49:53]. At the entrance to the town a sign says MACONDO, and in the main street a larger sign says GOD EXISTS. Of course these measures will help only as long as people remember the alphabet. "Thus they went on living in a reality that was slipping away, momentarily captured by words, but which would escape irremediably when they forgot the values of the written letters" [49:53]. This sounds like a situation imagined by Borges, but only because Borges has caught so well the spectral, vanishing quality of so much of what is called reality in Latin America. "Only the mist is real," Octavio Paz says in a poem.

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Mario Vargas Llosa, "*Ga*
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Macondo does manage to quarantine itself and to stop the disease from spreading; in an imaginative inversion of the old practice connected with leprosy the town asks visitors to carry a bell signalling that they are healthy. And luckily, before forgetfulness takes over completely, the gypsy Melquíades returns from the dead, recognizes the illness for what it is, and supplies an antidote. The people of Macondo are able to celebrate "the reconquest of memory" [50:55].

Here as elsewhere in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* there is so much deadpan mischief in the writing that any act of interpretation is likely to seem pretty elephantine. I am sure that the chief connection between sleeplessness and forgetting is that there isn't one. Nonsense is precious and should not be recklessly converted into meaning on all occasions. Even so, I can't shake off the feeling of a subtly implied logic here, a sense that confirms rather than quarrels with the nonsense. Sleep is the means of memory, it seems. The past can accumulate only in the apparent forgetfulness of the night. If we were always awake, the time would always be the present. Or more crudely, if we can't forget, we can't remember. This is partly a truism, of course, a mere statement of what the word *remember* means; but it may also be an insight into quite particular fears, a specification of the tightrope that needs to be walked. The *totally* forgotten would not longer be forgotten, it would be nothing, it would have entered oblivion, a meaning the Spanish word *olvido* includes, as we have seen. Macondo is trying to forget history. The galleon and the armour, the Indians, the return of the dead Prudencio Aguilar and the dead Melquíades, are points where the enterprise fortunately fails. The insomnia plague is a figure for the possible and terrible *success* of the enterprise, for what its success would actually mean. There is a forgetting which allows memory to accumulate, unspied on; and there is a forgetting which takes memory away, along with everything else that matters. Time itself is the repository of history; and also an insomnia plague. The final wind which erases Macondo is a materialization of oblivion, the plague's last triumph, mitigated only by the precarious memory game of writing.

Mario Vargas Llosa, "García Márquez: From Aracataca to Macondo," from *Gabriel García Márquez*, edited by Harold Bloom, Modern Critical Views (New York & Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 1989), pp. 5–19. This essay

Cien años de soledad: The Novel as Myth and Archive

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Cien años de soledad: The Novel as Myth and Archive

Roberto González Echevarría

I

To most readers the Latin American novel must appear to be obsessed with Latin American history and myth.[1] Carlos Fuentes' *Terra Nostra* (1976), for instance, retells much of sixteenth-century Spanish history, including the conquest of Mexico, while also incorporating pre-Columbian myths prophesying that momentous event. Alejo Carpentier's *El siglo de las luces* (1962) narrates Latin America's transition from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth, focusing on the impact of the French Revolution in the Caribbean. Carpentier also delves into Afro-Antillean lore to show how Blacks interpreted the changes brought about by these political upheavals. Mario Vargas Llosa's recent *La guerra del fin del mundo* (1980) tells again the history of Canudos, the rebellion of religious fanatics in the backlands of Brazil, which had already been the object of Euclydes da Cunha's classic *Os Sertões* (1902). Vargas Llosa's ambitious work also examines in painstaking detail the recreation of a Christian mythology in the New World. The list of Latin American novels dealing with Latin American history and myth is very long indeed, and it includes the work of many lesser known, younger writers. Abel Posse's *Daimón* (1978) retells

[1] This paper was originally the keynote address in a Symposium on the Works of Gabriel García Márquez held at Wesleyan University, on April 9, 1983. I wish to thank Professors Diana S. Goodrich and Carlos J. Alonso for their invitation and hospitality. I also wish to thank the Guggenheim Foundation for a fellowship that allowed me to do some of the research that led to many of the ideas put forth here.

the story of Aguirre, the sixteenth-century rebel who declared himself free from the Spanish Crown and founded his own independent country in South America.[2] As the title of the book suggests, Posse's fiction centers on the myth of the Devil and his reputed preference of the New World as residence and field of operations, a theme that had been important in two earlier Latin American masterpieces: Alejo Carpentier's *El reino de este mundo* (1949) and João Guimarães Rosa's *Grande sertão, veredas* (1956).[3]

Given that myths are stories whose main concern is with origins, the interest of Latin American fiction in Latin American history and myth is understandable. On the one hand, American history has always held the promise of being not only new but different, of being, as it were, the only *new* history, preserving the force of the oxymoron. On the other hand, the novel, which appears to have emerged in the sixteenth century at the same time as American history, is the only modern genre, the only literary form that is modern not only in the chronological sense, but also because it has persisted for centuries without a poetics, always in defiance of the very notion of genre.[4] Is it possible, then, to make of American history a story as enduring as the old myths? Can Latin American history be as resilient and as useful a hermeneutic tool for probing human nature as the classical myths, and can the novel be the vehicle for the transmission of these new myths? Is it at all con-

[2] Abel Posse (Argentina, 1934), is the author of *Los Bogavantes* (1967), *La boca del tigre* (1971—Premio Nacional de Literatura), *Daimón* (1978) and *Los perros del paraíso* (1983).

[3] The topic of the presence of the Devil in Latin American culture has been the object of many studies. A useful introduction to the topic in relation to literature may be found in Sabino Sola, *El diablo y lo diabólico en las letras americanas* (Madrid: Castalia, 1973).

[4] Ralph Freedman made a useful suggestion about the study of the origins of the novel that is my point of departure here: "Instead of separating genres or subgenres artificially and then accounting for exceptions by stipulating mixtures and compounds, it is simpler to view all of prose fiction as a unity and to trace particular strands to different origins, strands which would include not only the English novel of manners, or the post-medieval romance, or the Gothic novel, but also the medieval allegory, the German *Bildungsroman*, or the picaresque. Some of these strands may be close to folk material or to classical epics, others may have modeled themselves on travelogues and journalistic descriptions of events, and others again suggest drawing-room comedies and even lyrical prose poetry, yet all, to varying degrees, seem to mirror life in aesthetically defined worlds (life as myth, as structure of ideas, as worlds of feeling or quotidian reality). . ." "The Possibility of a Theory of the Novel," in *The Disciplines of Criticism. Essays in Literary Theory, Interpretation, and History*, ed. Peter Demetz, Thomas Greene and Lowry Nelson Jr. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 65.

ceivable, in the modern, post-oral period, to create myths? Latin American history is to the Latin American narrative what the epic themes are to Spanish literature: a constant whose mode of appearance may vary, but which rarely is omitted. A book like Ramón Menéndez Pidal's *La epopeya castellana a través de la literatura española* could be written about the presence of Latin American history in the Latin American narrative. The question is, of course, how can myth and history coexist in the novel? How can founding stories be told in this most ironic and self-reflexive of genres? It seems to me that the enormous and deserved success of Gabriel García Márquez's masterpiece *Cien años de soledad* is due to the unrelenting way in which these forms of storytelling are interwoven in the novel.

II

In order to explain why and how myth and history are present in *Cien años de soledad* I must first give a brief outline of the broad theory within which my arguments are couched, a theory that, I hope, will allow me to bring a new perspective to the study of the origins and evolution of the Latin American narrative. It is my hypothesis that the novel, having no fixed form of its own, assumes that of a given document endowed with truth-bearing power by society at specific moments in history. The novel, or what is called the novel at various points in history, mimics such documents to show their conventionality, their subjection to rules of textual engenderment similar to those governing literature, which in turn reflect those of language itself. The power to endow the text with the capacity to bear the truth is shown to lie outside the text; it is an exogenous agent that bestows authority upon a certain kind of document owing to the ideological structure of the period. In sixteenth-century Spain these documents were legal ones. The form assumed by the Picaresque was that of a *relación* (report, deposition, letter bearing witness to something), because this kind of written report belonged to the huge imperial bureaucracy through which power was administered in Spain and its possessions.[5] The early history of Latin America, as well as the first fictions of and about Latin America, are told in the rhetorical molds furnished by the

[5] For further details on this, see my "The Life and Adventures of Cipión: Cervantes and the Picaresque," *Diacritics*, 10, no. 3 (1980), pp. 15-26.

notarial arts. These *cartas de relación* were not simply letters nor maps, but also *charters* of the newly discovered territories.[6] Both the writer and the territory were enfranchised through the power of this document which, like Lazarillo's text, is addressed to a higher authority. The pervasiveness of legal rhetoric in early American historiography could hardly be exaggerated. Officially appointed historians (*cronista mayor de Indias*) were assigned by the Crown and the Royal Council of the Indies a set of rules which included ways of subsuming these *relaciones* into their works. American history and fiction, the narrative of America, were first created within the language of the law, a secular totality that guaranteed truth and made its circulation possible. It is within this totality that Garcilaso de la Vega, el Inca, wrote his *Comentarios*

[6] On the *relaciones* there are the following studies: Vittorio Salvadorini, "Las 'relaciones' de Hernán Cortés," *Thesaurus* (Boletín del Instituto Caro y Cuervo), 18, no. 1 (1963), pp. 77-97; Roberto González Echevarría, "José Arrom, autor de la *Relación acerca de las antigüedades de los indios:* picaresca e historia," *Relecturas: estudios de literatura cubana* (Caracas: Monte Avila, 1976), pp. 17-35; Walter Mignolo, "Cartas, crónicas y relaciones del descubrimiento y la conquista," in Luis Iñigo Madrigal, coordinador, *Historia de la literatura hispanoamericana,* Tomo I "Epoca Colonial" (Madrid: Cátedra, 1982), pp. 57-110; Tzvetan Todorov, *La conquête de l'Amérique. La question de l'autre* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1982); Roberto González Echevarría, "Humanismo, retórica y las crónicas de la conquista," *Isla a su vuelo fugitiva: ensayos críticos sobre literatura hispanoamericana* (Madrid: Porrúa, 1983), pp. 9-25. Mignolo's work is particularly useful, for he carefully distinguishes between the various kinds of discourse available to chroniclers in the colonial period, without falling into the trap of considering their work literary or imaginative before taking into account first what each text was (letter, chronicle, history, etc.). Todorov's book rediscovers a good deal of material available in the extant bibliography in Spanish, which he apparently did not consult, and reaches conclusions that are fairly predictable. Todorov was unable to keep clear of the dramatic moral issues raised by the conquest of the New World, which have continued to determine much of the scholarship on the colonial period. His confession of being chiefly a moralist does not absolve him for being banale: "Pour Cortés, la conquête du savoir conduit à celle du pouvoir. Je retiens de lui la conquête du savoir, même si c'est pour résister au pouvoir. Il y a quelque légèreté à se contenter de condamner les méchants conquistadores et à regretter les bons Indiens, comme s'il suffisaint d'identifier le mal pour le combattre. Ce n'est pas faire l'éloge des conquistadores que de reconnaître, ici ou là, leur supériorité; il est nécessaire d'analyser les armes de la conquête si l'on veut pouvoir l'arrêter un jour. Car les conquêtes n'appartiennent pas qu'au passé" (p. 258). In my own work, as sketched briefly in the text of this paper, I intend to study how through notarial rhetoric the newly deployed Spanish State controlled historical discourse. To do so one has to follow the development of legal rhetoric from Bologna to the Renaissance, and then its application in America through the various institutions created or developed in the late XV and early XVI century. For the history of legal rhetoric see Rafael Núñez Lagos, *El documento medieval y Rolandino (notas de historia)* (Madrid: Editorial Góngora, 1951). I draw from Núñez Lagos' extensive discussion of the *carta* my assertion concerning the *cartas de relación.*

reales de los incas (1609), for one must not forget that the *mestizo*'s book is an appeal to restore his father's name to an honorable position.[7]

In the nineteenth century Latin America is narrated through the mediation of a new totality: science, and more specifically the scientific consciousness that expresses itself in the language of travelers who journeyed across the Continent, writing about its nature and about themselves. This was the second European discovery of America, and the scientists were the chroniclers of this second discovery. Except for a ground-breaking article by Jean Franco, little attention has been paid to this phenomenom, whose dimensions can be glimpsed by looking at the recent *Travel Accounts and Descriptions of Latin America and the Caribbean 1800–1920: A Selected Bibliography,* compiled by Thomas L. Welch and Myriam Figueras, and published by the Organization of American States (1982).[8] Though selective, this volume contains nearly three hundred pages of tightly packed entries. The names of these scientific travelers are quite impressive, ranging from Charles Darwin to Alexander von Humboldt, and including the likes of the Schomburgk

[7] For details of Garcilaso's legal maneuvers, see John Grier Varner, *El Inca. The Life and Times of Garcilaso de la Vega* (Austin and London: The University of Texas Press, 1968), pp. 213-26. The first century of colonization was characterized by spectacular legal cases that matched the fabulous adventures of the conquistadores: first Columbus and his successors, later Cortés and Pizarro. Even an adventurer and marvellous storyteller like Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca ended his life embroiled in costly legal proceedings that left him as devoid of wordly goods at the end of his life as he had been among the Indians of North America.

[8] Jean Franco, "Un viaje poco romántico: viajeros británicos hacia Sudamérica: 1818-28," *Escritura* (Caracas), Año 4, no. 7 (1979), pp. 129-41. On scientific travelers there is also: Christian C. Chester, Jr., "Hispanic Literature of Exploration," *Exploration* (Journal of the MLA Special Session on the Literature of Exploration and Travel), 1 (1973), pp. 42-46; Evelio A. Echevarría, "La conquista del Chimborazo," *Américas* (Washington), 35, no. 5 (1983), pp. 22-31; Hans Galinsky, "Exploring the 'Exploration Report' and Its Image of the Overseas World: Spanish, French, and English Variants of a Common Form Type in Early American Literature," *Early American Literature,* 12 (1977), pp. 5-24; C. Harvey Gardiner, "Foreign Travelers' Accounts of Mexico, 1810-1910," *The Americas,* 8 (1952), pp. 321-51; C. Harvey Gardiner, ed. *Journeys Accross the Pampas and Among the Andes* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967); Mary Sayre Haverstock, "La fascinación de los Andes," *Américas,* 35, no. 1 (1983), pp. 37-41; Ronald Hilton, "The Significance of Travel Literature With Special Reference to the Spanish- and Portuguese-Speaking World," *Hispania,* 49 (1966), 836-45; S. Samuel Trifilo, "Nineteenth Century English Travel Books on Argentina: A Revival in Spanish Translation," *Hispania,* 41 (1958), 491-96; Victor Wolfgang Von Hagen, *South America Called Them: Explorations of the Great Naturalists La Condamine, Humboldt, Darwin, Spruce* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945).

brothers, Robertson, Koch-Grünbergh, and many others. Their fictional counterpart is Professor Challenger in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World,* whose voyage to the origins of nature takes him to South America. A scientific consciousness that expresses itself in the language of the travelogue mediates the writing of Latin American fiction in the nineteenth century. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento's *Facundo* (1845), Anselmo Suárez y Romero's *Francisco* (1880), and da Cunha's *Os Sertões* (1902) describe Latin American nature and society through the conceptual grid of nineteenth-century science. Like the chronicles, which were often legal documents, these are books that have a functional value and begin outside of literature. *Francisco* was originally part of a report sent to the British authorities documenting the horrors of slavery in Cuba.[9] Latin America's history and the stories of adventurers, who seek to discover the innermost secrets of the New World, that is to say its newness and difference, are narrated through the mind of a writer qualified by science to search for the truth. Both the self and science are, as Franco suggests, products of the power of the new European commercial empires. Their capacity to find the truth is due not to the cogency of the scientific method, but to the ideological construct that supports them, a construct whose source of strength lies outside the text. The "mind" that analyzes and classifies is made present through the rhetorical conventions of the travelogue. Sarmiento ranges over the Argentine landscape in a process of self-discovery and self-affirmation. In his book he dons the mask of the traveling savant, distanced from the reality that he interprets and classifies according to the intervening tenets of scientific inquiry. This particular mediation prevails until the crisis of the nineteen-twenties and the so-called *novela de la tierra.*[10]

The modern novel, of which *Cien años de soledad* is perhaps the best known example, avails itself of a different kind of mediation: anthropology. Now the promise of knowledge is to be found in a

[9] The book was not included in the report, which did contain the autobiography of the Cuban slave poet Juan Francisco Manzano: *Poems by a Slave in the Island of Cuba, Recently Liberated; translated from the Spanish by R. R. Madden, M.D., with the History of the Early Life of the Negro Poet, Written by Himself; To Which are prefixed Two Pieces Descriptive of Cuban Slavery and the Slave-Traffic* (London: Thomas Ward and Co., 1840). There is a modern edition by Edward J. Mullen (Hamden: Archon Books, 1981).

[10] On the *novela de la tierra* the most advanced work is by Carlos J. Alonso in his, "The *novela de la tierra:* The Discourse of the Autochthonous," Doctoral Dissertation, Yale University, 1983.

scientific discourse whose object is not nature, but language and myth. The truth-bearing document the novel imitates now is the anthropological treatise. The object of such studies is to discover the origin and source of a culture's own version of its values, beliefs, and history through a culling and re-telling of its myths. Readers of Mauss, Van Gennep, Lévi-Bruhl, Frazer, Lévi-Strauss and other anthropologists will no doubt recognize the inherent complexity of such works. In order to understand another culture, the anthropologist has to know his own to the point where he can distance himself from it. But this distancing involves a kind of self-effacement, too. This dramatic process has been beautifully expounded by Lévi-Strauss in *Tristes tropiques,* a book in which he devotes a good deal of time to his stay in Brazil. John Freccero and Eduardo González have studied how much this book has in common with Alejo Carpentier's *Los pasos perdidos,* a text to which we shall have to return shortly.[11]

Anthropology is the mediating element in the modern Latin American novel because of the place this discipline occupies in Western thought, and also because of the place Latin America occupies within that discipline. Anthropology is a way through which Western culture indirectly affixes its own cultural identity. This identity, which the anthropologist struggles to shed, is one that masters non-historical cultures through knowledge, by making them the object of its study. Anthropology translates into the language of the West the cultures of the others, and in the process establishes its own form of self-knowledge through a kind of annihilation of the self. Existential philosophy, as in Heidegger, Ortega and Sartre, is akin to this process, because it is only through an awareness of the other that Western thought can pretend to wind back to the origin of being. The native, that is to say Latin Americans or in general those who could be delicately called the inhabitants of the post-colonial world, provide the model for this reduction and beginning. The native has timeless stories to explain his changeless society. These stories, these myths, are like those of the West in the distant past, before they became a mythology. Freud, Frazer, Jung, and Heidegger sketch a return to or a retention of those origins. Anthropology finds their analogon in the

[11] John Freccero, "Reader's Report," Cornell University. *John M. Olin Library Bookmark Series,* no. 36 (April 1968); Eduardo González, *Alejo Carpentier: el tiempo del hombre* (Caracas: Monte Avila, 1978).

contemporary world of the native. The modern Latin American novel is written through the model of such anthopological studies. In the same way that the nineteenth-century novel turned Latin America into the object of scientific study, the modern Latin American novel transforms Latin American history into originary myth in order to see itself as other. The theogonic Buendía family in *Cien años de soledad* owes its organization to this phenomenon.

The historical data behind my hypothesis concerning the modern novel and its relation to an anthropological model are vast. Miguel Angel Asturias, as is known, went to Paris to study ethnology under Georges Raynaud, an experience that produced in 1930 his influential *Leyendas de Guatemala.* One of Asturias' classmates at La Sorbonne was none other than Alejo Carpentier, who was then writing *¡Ecué-Yamba-O!* (1933), a novel that is, in many ways, an ethnological study of Cuban Blacks. Another Cuban writer was also preparing herself in Paris in those years: Lydia Cabrera, whose pioneering studies of Afro-Cuban lore would culminate in her classic *El monte* (1954). In more recent times Severo Sarduy has been a student of Roger Bastide, and his *De donde son los cantantes* is, among many other things, a sort of anthropological study of Cuban culture, seen as the synthesis of the three main groups inhabiting the island: the Spanish, the Africans, and the Chinese. Borges' 1933 essay "El arte narrativo y la magia," where the art of storytelling is compared to two kinds of primitive cures outlined in *The Golden Bough,* is but one indication of the wide-ranging impact of Frazer on Latin America. Traces of this influence are visible in Octavio Paz, Carpentier, Carlos Fuentes, as well as in many others. Lydia Cabrera is perhaps the most significant author here, for she stands for a very important kind of Latin American writer who sits astride both literature and anthropology. Cabrera is a first-rate short-story writer, just as she is a first-rate anthropologist. Her teacher, Fernando Ortiz, was also claimed by literature and his influence upon modern Cuban letters is vast. Examples of writers straddling literature and anthropology are plentiful. The most notorious in recent years is Miguel Barnet, whose *Biografía de un cimarrón* not only contains all the perplexing dualities and contradictions of that relationship, but is also the perfect example of a book whose form is given by anthropology, but which winds up in the field of the novel. But the Peruvian José María Arguedas is without a doubt the most poignant figure among these anthropologist-writers: a novelist, anthropologist, and

raised by Indians, Arguedas whose first language was Quechua, not Spanish, carried within him the contradictions and the tragedy inherent in the relationship between anthropology and literature with such intensity that he chose suicide in 1969.

Arguedas' radical gesture is a literal version of the reduction of the self inherent in the process of re-writing Latin American history in the context of the anthropological mediation. It is a gesture that has its literary counterpart, as we shall see, in *Cien años de soledad.* Arguedas' radical effacement of self, like the one practiced by Barnet as he turns or pretends to turn himself into Esteban Montejo, is part of the "unwriting" involved in the modern Latin American narrative. For the modern Latin American narrative is an "unwriting," as much as it is a rewriting, of Latin American history from the anthropological perspective mentioned. The previous writings of history are undone as the new one is attempted; this is why the chronicles and the nineteenth-century scientific travelogues are present in what I will call the Archive in modern fiction. The new narrative unwinds the history told in the old chronicles by showing that that history was made up of a series of conventional topics, whose coherence and authority depended on the codified beliefs of a period whose ideological structure is no longer current. Those codified beliefs were the law. Like the Spanish galleon crumbling in the jungle in *Cien años de soledad,* the history in the chronicles is a voided presence. Likewise, modern novels disassemble the powerful scientific construct through which nineteenth-century Latin America was narrated by demonstrating the relativity of its most cherished concepts, or by rendering literal the metaphors on which such knowledge is based. The power of genealogy is literalized in *Cien años de soledad* by, among other devices, the stream of blood that flows from José Arcadio's wound to Ursula. The presence of the European travelers Robertson and Bonplant in Roa Bastos' *Yo el Supremo* attests to this second voided presence. But the paradigmatic text among these unwritings is Alejo Carpentier's 1953 *Los pasos perdidos.* In this first-person narrative, a modern man travels up the Orinoco river in search of native musical instruments that will unveil the origins of music. As he travels upriver—clearly the river in which Melquíades dies many years later—the narrator-protagonist writes about his voyage as if it were a journey back not only through time, but through recorded history. Hence he passes through various epochs, the most significant of which are the nineteenth century of

the traveling European scientists, who provide him with a way of interpreting nature and time, and the colonial period of Latin American history, characterized by activities such as the founding of cities, the indoctrination of Indians, the beginning, in short, of history in the New World as set down by the charters of those institutions—the *cartas de relación*. There are other epochs, reaching all the way back to pre-historic times, but the above are the most important ones, because they are present not only thematically, but through the mediating texts themselves: the era of the petroglyphs is narrated in the language of the scientific travelogue, and the founding of cities in that of the legalistic chronicles. The narrator-protagonist's text is organized according to a set of rhetorical conventions that reveal themselves as such in the process of reading. In the fiction of the novel, the narrator-protagonist cannot remain in what he has termed the Valley-of-Time-Detained, the origin of time and history, for he needs to secure enough paper to set down the music he has begun to compose. In the fiction the quest for that degree zero of time and history whence to inscribe a rewriting of Latin America history has not been found. But in the writing of the novel a clearing has been reached, a razing that becomes a starting-point for the new Latin American narrative. That razing involves the various mediations through which Latin America was narrated, the systems from which fiction borrowed truth-bearing forms, erased to assume the new mediation, which requires this level-ground of self and history. This is the point at which *Cien años de soledad* begins, and the reason why the world is so recent "that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point" (p. 1).[12] It is also the point that the last Aureliano seeks at the very end when he discovers how to translate Melquíades' manuscripts. He reads in a frenzy "discovering the first indications of his own being in a lascivious grandfather who let himself be frivolously dragged across a hallucinated plateau in search of a beautiful woman who would not make him happy" (p. 421). What is left for fiction after *Los pasos perdidos?* Clearly, only fiction; but novels are never content with fiction, they must pretend to deal with the truth. So, paradoxically enough, the truth with which they deal in the modern

[12] All references are to Gabriel García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, tr. Gregory Rabassa (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), and *Cien años de soledad* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1967).

period is fiction itself. That is to say, the fictions Latin American culture has created to understand itself, the myths about the origin of its history.

III

The importance of myth in *Cien años de soledad* was noticed by the first commentators of the novel and later studies have again taken up the topic.[13] It seems clear that myth appears in the novel in the following guises: 1) there are stories that resemble classical or biblical myths, most notably the Flood, but also Paradise, the Seven Plagues, Apocalypse, and the proliferation of the family, with its complicated genealogy, has an Old Testament ring to it; 2) there are characters who are reminiscent of mythical heroes: José Arcadio Buendía, who is a sort of Moses, Rebeca, who is like a female Perseus, Remedios, who ascends in a flutter of white sheets in a scene that is suggestive not just of the Ascension of the Virgin, but more specifically of the popular renditions of the event in religious prints; 3) certain stories have a general mythic character in that they contain supernatural elements, as in the case just mentioned, and also when José Arcadio's blood returns to Ursula;

[13] See, for example, Ricardo Gullón, *García Márquez o el olvidado arte de contar* (Madrid: Taurus, 1970) and Carmen Arnau, *El mundo mítico de Gabriel García Márquez* (Barcelona: Ediciones Península, 1971). There have been many studies since along these lines. The most convincing is by Michael Palencia-Roth, "Los pergaminos de Aureliano Babilonia," *Revista Iberoamericana*, nos. 123-124 (1983), pp. 403-17. Palencia-Roth's splendid piece argues in favor of the Biblical myth of Apocalypse as the principal one in the organization of the novel and insists on the influence of Borges on García Márquez. There is much to be learned from his interpretation. However, it seems to me that Palencia-Roth allows himself to be intoxicated by the mythic quality of the novel when he writes that the meeting of times at the end elevates time to eternity, and jumps to the conclusion that Melquíades' manuscripts are the novel. As I will argue further below, no myth controls the novel, and no transcendence is allowed by the constantly undermined and undermining world of writing. To believe in the possibility of eternal time, or to think that there is a text to which the title of the novel gives a name, requires that we accept that visions such as Colonel Aureliano Buendía and Aureliano Babilonia have in the fiction of the novel exist outside of the verbal realm. If we could escape the verbal, then the sort of simultaneity and atemporality of which Palencia-Roth speaks so persuasively, and which are characteristic of myth, would be possible. On the influence of Borges on García Márquez, see: Roberto González Echevarría, "With Borges in Macondo," *Diacritics*, 2, No. 1 (1972), pp. 57-60 and Emir Rodríguez Monegal, *"One Hundred Years of Solitude:* The Last Three Pages," *Books Abroad*, 47 (1973), 485-89. I have learned a good deal from this article, in which the author singles out Melquíades' room as an important feature of the novel, and insists on the notion of the Book as a key to an understanding of the text.

4) the beginning of the whole story, which is found, as in myth in a tale of violence and incest. All four, of course, commingle, and because *Cien años de soledad* tells a story of foundations or origins, the whole novel has a mythic air about it. No single myth or mythology prevails. Instead the various ways in which myth appears give the whole novel a mythical character without it being a distinct version of one given myth.

At the same time, there is lurking in the background of the story the overall pattern of Latin American history, both as a general design made up of various key events and eras, and in the presence of specific characters and incidents that seem to refer to real people and happenings. Thus we have a period of discovery and conquest, when José Arcadio Buendía and the original families settle Macondo. There is in this part of the book little sense that Macondo belongs to a larger political unit, but such isolation was in fact typical of Latin America's towns in the colonial period. Even the viceroyalties lived in virtual isolation from the metropolitan government.[14] The appearance of Apolinar Moscoso and his barefoot soldiers is the beginning of the republican era, which is immediately followed by the outbreak of the civil wars in which Colonel Aureliano Buendía distinguishes himself. Though Colombia is the most obvious model for this period, nearly the entire continent suffered from civil strife during the nineteenth century, a process that led to the emergence of dictators and *caudillos*. This period is followed by the era of neocolonial domination by the United States and the struggles against it in most Latin American countries. These culminate in the novel with the general strike and the massacre of the workers. There are, unfortunately, countless models for this last, clearly defined period in the novel. After the flood, there is a time of decay before the apocalyptic wind that razes the town at the end. The liberal priest and the various military types who surround Colonel Aureliano Buendía, are among the characters with counterparts in Latin American history. Lucila I. Mena has already demonstrated that some of the historical incidents in the novel can be documented, and a sedulous critic with time and

[14] C. H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1963 [1947]). Such isolation did not mean that the colonial towns were independent, nor that they could develop according to the whims of their inhabitants.

the proper library can probably document many others.[15] But to carry this sort of research much further than Mena has would be a rather gratuitous critical exercise. Set against the global, totalizing thrust of the novel are these historical details which, without being specific, are nonetheless true in a general sense. Each of the above mentioned epochs is evoked not only through major historical events, but also through allusion to specific minor incidents and characters. For instance, early Macondo is inhabited by a *de jure* aristocracy made up of the founding families, which is analogous to that of colonial Latin America, where conquistadores and their descendants enjoyed certain privileges and exemptions.[16]

The blend of mythic elements and Latin American history in *Cien años de soledad* reveals a desire to found an American myth. Latin American history is set on the same level as mythic stories, therefore it too becomes a sort of myth. The lack of specificity of the various incidents, which appear to represent several related or similar events, points in this direction. The Latin American myth is this story of foundation, articulated through independence, civil war, struggle against U.S. colonialism, all cast within a genealogical line that weaves in and out, repeating names and characters. There is a Whitmanian thrust to the brash declaration of the existence of a literary language that underlies this mixture of historical fact with mythic story in *Cien años de soledad.* The novel is in fact intimately related to similar efforts in poetry, such as the ones by Neruda in his *Canto General* and Octavio Paz in his *Piedra de Sol. Canto General* in particular is one of the most important sources of García Márquez's novel. Framed by Genesis and Apocalypse, fraught with incest and violence, the story of the Buendía family thus stands as Latin American history cast in the language of myth, an unresolved mixture that both beckons and bewilders the reader.

This duality is present throughout *Cien años de soledad* separating the world of writing from the atemporal world of myth. But the play of contradictions issuing from this duality reaches a synthesis that is perhaps the most important feature of the novel. As we have seen, myth represents the origin. Latin America's history is narrated in the language of myth because it is the other, represented by incest, taboo, and the primitive act of naming. The nov-

[15] Lucila I. Mena, "La huelga bananera como expresión de lo 'real maravilloso' americano en *Cien años de soledad,*" *Bulletin Hispanique,* 74 (1972), 379-405.

[16] For details on this see Haring and Varner, op. cit. Much of the legal jousting mentioned before had to do with the claims of this spurious aristocracy.

el's persistent preoccupation with genealogy and with supernatural acts performed by various characters belongs to this realm.[17] History, on the other hand, is critical, temporal, and dwells in a special place: Melquíades' room in the Buendía house, which I have chosen to call the Archive. The room is full of books and manuscripts, and has a time of its own. It is here that a succession of characters attempt to decipher Melquíades' parchments, and the last Aureliano, in an epiphanic inspiration, orally translates the whole (or nearly the whole) manuscript and dies. What occurs here, the text of the novel suggests, is unrepeatable. In the fiction of the novel, on the other hand, there are many repetitions. Ursula, for instance, twice feels that time is going around in circles and that members of the family follow one or two patterns of behavior indicated by their names. Time is circular in the fiction, but not in Melquíades' room. The Archive appears to be linear and teleological, while the plot of the novel itself is repetitive and mythical. *Cien años de soledad* is made up of two main stories: one has to do with the family and culminates in the birth of the child with the pig's tail, while the other is concerned with the interpretation of Melquíades' manuscript, a linear suspense story that culminates in Aureliano's final discovery of the key to the translation of the parchments.

That there should be a special abode for documents and books in *Cien años de soledad* should come as no suprise to readers of modern Latin American fiction. In spite of its apparent novelty, there are such enclosures in *Aura, Yo el Supremo, El arpa y la sombra, Crónica de una muerte anunciada* and *Oppiano Licario,* to mention a few of the novels where it plays a prominent role. What is characteristic of the Archive is: 1) the presence not only of history, but of previous mediating elements through which it was narrated, be it the legal documents of colonial times or the scientific ones of the nineteenth century; 2) the existence of an inner historian who reads the texts, interprets and writes them; 3) and finally the presence of an unfinished manuscript that the inner historian is trying to complete. In *Cien años de soledad* the most tenuous presence is

[17] Patricia Tobin has written an illuminating chapter on genealogy in *Cien años de soledad* in her *Time and the Novel. The Genealogical Imperative* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). Another excellent study, carried out incidentally by someone trained in anthropology, is Mercedes López-Baralt's "*Cien años de soledad:* cultura e historia latinoamericanas replanteadas en el idioma del parentesco," *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos* (San Juan de Puerto Rico), año 6 (1979), pp. 153-75.

the legal texts, but one can infer it from the allusions to the chronicles that were in fact *relaciones,* and particularly in the founding of Macondo, for the founding of cities, primordial activity of conquistadores, was closely connected to the writing of history. The vagueness of this presence is only so in relation to the others, for at least two critics have convincingly argued in favor of the overwhelming influence of the chronicles in *Cien años de soledad.*[18] The

[18] Iris M. Zavala, "*Cien años de soledad,* crónica *de Indias,*" *Insula,* no. 286 (1970), pp. 3, 11; Selma Calasans Rodrigues, "*Cien años de soledad* y las crónicas de la conquista," *Revista de la Universidad de Mexico,* 38, no. 23 (1983), pp. 13-16. García Márquez's interest in the *crónicas de Indias,* established beyond doubt in Zavala's article, was made evident again in his speech accepting the Nobel Prize: "Los cronistas de Indias nos legaron otros incontables [testimonies of astonishing events and things in the New World]. El Dorado, nuestro país ilusorio tan codiciado, figuró en mapas numerosos durante largos años, cambiando de lugar y de forma según la fantasía de los cartógrafos. En busca de la fuente de la eterna juventud, el mítico Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca exploró durante ocho años el norte de Mexico [sic], en una expedición venática cuyos miembros se comieron unos a otros, y sólo llegaron cinco de los 600 que la emprendieron. Uno de los tantos misterios que nunca fueron descifrados, es el de las once mil mulas cargadas con cien libras de oro cada una, que un día salieron del Cuzco para pagar el rescate de Atahualpa y nunca llegaron a su destino. Más tarde, durante la colonia, se vendían en Cartagena de Indias unas gallinas criadas en tierras de Aluvión, en cuyas mollejas se encontraban piedrecitas de oro." *El Mundo* (San Juan de Puerto Rico), Sunday, December 12, 1982, p. 21-C. In a long interview published as a book in that same year, he said: "Yo había leído con mucho interés a Cristóbal Colón, a Pigafetta y a los cronistas de Indias, que tenían una visión original [del Caribe], y había leído a Salgari y a Conrad. . ." *El olor de la guayaba. Conversaciones con Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza* (Bogota: Editorial La Oveja Negra, 1982), p. 32. The early history of Macondo furnished in "Los funerales de la Mama Grande" links the origins of the town to colonial Latin America through legal documents setting down the proprietary rights of the Matriarch: "Reducido a sus proporciones reales, el patrimonio físico [de la Mamá Grande] se reducía a tres encomiendas adjudicadas por Cédula Real durante la Colonia, y que con el transcurso del tiempo, en virtud de intrincados matrimonios de conveniencia, se habían acumulado bajo el dominio de la Mamá Grande. En ese territorio ocioso, sin límites definidos, que abarcaba cinco municipios y en el cual no se sembró nunca un solo grano por cuenta de los propietarios, vivían a título de arrendatarias 352 familias." *Los funerales de la Mamá Grande* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1967), pp. 134-35. In *Crónica de una muerte anunciada,* the Archive is full of colonial documents: "Todo lo que sabemos de su carácter [the lawyer whose version of the crime would have been the first of the story being told] es aprendido en el sumario, que numerosas personas me ayudaron a buscar veinte años después del crimen en el Palacio de Justicia de Riohacha. No existía clasificación alguna en los archivos, y más de un siglo de expedientes estaban amontonados en el suelo del decrépito edificio colonial que fuera por dos días el cuartel general de Francis Drake. La planta baja se inundaba con el mar de leva, y los volúmenes descosidos flotaban en las oficinas desiertas. Yo mismo exploré muchas veces con las aguas hasta los tobillos aquel estanque de causas perdidas, y sólo una casualidad me permitió recatar al cabo de cinco años de búsqueda unos 322 pliegos salteados de los más de 500 que debió tener el sumario." *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* (Bogotá: Editorial La Oveja Negra, 1981), pp. 128-29. The interplay of this floating history in legal cases, the absent first author (a lawyer) and the "pliegos salteados" as a version of the origin of the fiction being narrated deserves a commentary for which I have no space here.

nineteenth-century travel-books are evident in the descriptions of the jungle and at a crucial moment when José Arcadio Segundo hears Melquíades mumble something in his room. José Arcadio leans over and hears the gypsy mention the name of none other than Alexander von Humboldt and the word *equinoccio,* which comes from the title of the latter's book, which in Spanish is *Viaje a las regiones equinocciales del Nuevo Mundo.* In Macondo's Archive, there are in addition two key words: the so-called English *Encyclopedia* and *The Thousand and One Nights.* These two books play an important role in Melquíades' writing, and the *Encyclopedia* is instrumental in the decoding of his manuscripts. The existence in Melquíades' fiction of precisely these two books adds a peculiar twist to the Archive, one that points to its own literary filiation.

I do not think that it would be too farfetched to say that *The Thousand and One Nights* and the so-called English *Encyclopedia* together are allusions to that master of fictions called Borges. In fact, Melquíades is a figure of the Argentine writer. Old beyond age, enigmatic, blind, entirely devoted to fiction, Melquíades stands for Borges, the librarian and keeper of the Archive. There is something whimsical in García Márquez's inclusion of such a figure in the novel, but there is a good deal more. It is not too difficult to fathom what this Borgesian figure means. Planted in the middle of the special abode of books and manuscripts, a reader of one of the oldest and most influencial collections of stories in the history of literature, Melquíades and his Archive stand for literature; more specifically, for Borges' kind of literature: ironic, critical, a demolisher of all delusions, the sort of thing we encounter at the end of the novel, when Aureliano finishes translating Melquíades' manuscript. There are in that ending further allusions to several stories by Borges: to "Tlön, Ucqbar, Orbis Tertius," in that Macondo is a verbal construct; to "The Secret Miracle," in that Aureliano, like the condemned poet, perishes the moment he finishes his work; to "The Aleph," in that Aureliano Babilonia's glimpse of the history of Macondo is instantaneous and all-encompassing; and particularly to "Death and the Compass," for the moment of anagnorisis is linked to death. Like Lönnrot, Aureliano only understands the workings of his fate at the moment of his death.

The Archive, then, is Borges' study. It stands for writing, for literature, for an accumulation of texts that is no mere heap, but an *arché,* a relentless memory that disassembles the fictions of myth, literature and even history. The masterbooks in the Archive are, as we have seen, the *Encyclopedia* and *The Thousand and One Nights.* The *Encyclopedia,* which Aureliano has read according to the nar-

rator from A to Z as if it were a novel, is in itself a figure of the totality of knowledge as conceived by the West. But how is it knowledge, and how has Aureliano read it? The moment we consider the order of knowledge in the *Encyclopedia* and the way in which Aureliano reads it, we realize the paradoxes inherent in the Archive as repository of history. The *Encyclopedia* is organized, of course, in alphabetical order, without the order of the entries being affected by any sort of chronological or evaluative consideration: Napoleon appears before Zeus and Charles V before God. The beginning is provided arbitrarily by the alphabet as well as by the sequence: apocalypse must appear in the first volume. *The Thousand and One Nights,* on the other hand, stands for a beginning in fiction, or beginning as fiction, as well as for a series of individual, disconnected stories, linked only by the narrator's fear of death. Aureliano is like Scheherazade, who tells her stories on the verge of death. Neither book seems to have priority over the other. Both have a prominent place within the Archive, providing their own forms of pastness, of documentary, textual material. The order that prevails in the Archive, then, is not that of mere chronology, but that of writing; the rigorous process of inscribing and decoding to which Melquíades and the last Aureliano give themselves over, a linear process of cancellations and substitutions, of gaps.

Writing and reading have an order of their own which is preserved within the Archive. It might be remembered that in Melquíades' room, it is always Monday and March for some characters, while for others his study is the room of the chamberpots, where decay and temporality have their own end embodied in the very essence of eschatology. The combination of feces and writing in the Archive is significant enough. Writing appears as an eschatological activity in that it deals with the end. Yet writing is also the beginning, insofar as nothing is in the text until it is written. Hence the prevalence of Monday and March in the secret abode of Melquíades, the beginning of the week and of spring respectively (March, not April, is the "cruellest month" in García Márquez). Melquíades is both young and old, depending, of course, on whether or not he wears his dentures; he presides over the beginning and the end. The Archive, then, is not so much an accumulation of texts as the process whereby texts are written; a process of repeated combinations, of shufflings and re-shufflings ruled by heterogeneity and difference. It is not strictly linear as both continuity and discontinuity, held together in uneasy alle-

giance. This is the reason why the previous mediations through which Latin America was narrated are contained in the Archive as voided presences; they are both erased and a memory of their own demise, keys to filing systems now abandoned, but they retain their archival quality, their power to differentiate, to space. They are not archetypes, but an *arché* of types.

This process is evident in the way in which Melquíades' manuscript is written and translated. Throughout the novel we are told that Melquíades writes undecipherable manuscripts, that his handwriting produces something that looks more like musical notation than script, that his writing resembles clothes on a line. Eventually José Arcadio Segundo discovers, with the aid of the *Encyclopedia,* that the writing is in Sanskrit. When Aureliano begins to translate from the Sanskrit, he comes up with coded Spanish verses. These verses have different codes, depending on whether they are even or odd numbered. Aureliano is finally illuminated when he sees the dead newborn being carried away by the ants and remembers the epigraph of the manuscript, which is supposed to read: *"The first of the line is tied to a tree and the last is being eaten by the ants"* (p. 420, emphasis in the original). He realizes then that the manuscript contains the story of his family, and hurries on to translate it to discover his own fate and the date and circumstances of his death. We shall return to the significance of all this, but first let us complete our description of the manuscript and its translation, for it is very easy to leap to conclusions concerning Melquíades' writing. Aureliano begins to translate the text out loud, jumping ahead twice to get to the present faster. Once he reaches the present he has a second illumination: that he would die in the room where the manuscript is kept once he finished translating the last line of poetry ("el último verso"). Critics have been quick to say that what we have read is Melquíades's version of the history of Macondo, that is to say, *Cien años de soledad.* Even if in fact it is Aureliano's translation that we read, then some changes have been made. To begin with, the epigraph has been omitted, as we have seen. In addition, Aureliano's leaps to get to the present have either not been accounted for in this version, or the holes they left have been restored. But by whom? The only solution to this enigma is to say that our reading—that each reading—of the text is the text, that is to say, yet another version added or appended to the Archive. Each of these readings corrects the others and each is unrepeatable insofar as it is a distinct act caught in the reader's own temporality.

In this sense, we, like Aureliano, read the instant we live, cognizant that it may very well be our last. This is the eschatological sense announced in various ways by the Archive.

The radical historicity to which the Archive condemns us belies its apparent atemporality and the bizarre order that the masterbooks within it have. It is a historicity that is very much like the one to which the narrator-protagonist of *Los pasos perdidos* is condemned at the end of that novel. In fact, Aureliano's reading of the manuscript in search of his origins and of an understanding of his being in the present is analogous to the reading performed by Carpentier's character in search of the origins of history and of his own beginnings. Such dearly achieved historicity in the face of the circularity and repetition of the family's history is somewhat ironic, given the sense of ahistoricalness with which many readers, intoxicated by the similarity of names and by Ursula's notion that time is going round and round, leave the novel. Such historicity, however, is needed to represent, within the anthropological mediation posited, the lucid consciousness of the West, able to understand itself by posturing as the other, but unable to abandon the sense of history to which writing sentences it. This is a sentence from which we can gain acquittal by means of a wilfull act of delusion, but one that *Cien años de soledad,* for all its fictive force does not allow the reader.

There is a curious fact that few readers of *Cien años de soledad* remark upon: even though the novel begins with Colonel Aureliano Buendía facing the firing squad, the one who dies at the end is not Aureliano the soldier, but Aureliano the reader. It seems to me that this displacement, plus the fact that Aureliano's moments of vision are flashes of insight parallel to those of the rebel, seem to suggest a most significant connection between the realms of history and myth, one that constitutes a common denominator between the repetitions of the family history and the disassembling mechanisms of the Archive. In the Archive, the presence of Melquíades and Aureliano (and in *Aura,* Felipe Montero, in *Yo el Supremo,* Patiño, etc.) is an insurance that the individual consciousness of a historian/writer will filter the ahistorical pretense of myth by subjecting events to the temporality of writing. But in *Cien años de soledad* the death of these figures is indicative of a mythic power that lurks within the realm of writing, a story that makes possible the Archive. In *Yo el Supremo* this is clearly indicated by Patiño's being a "swollen foot," that is, an Oedipus who pays a high price

for his knowledge. In *Cien años de soledad* Aureliano suffers a similar fate. He commits incest with his aunt, engenders a monster with her and dies the moment he has a glimpse of his fate. Aureliano is the necessary victim for us to be able to read the text, for us to acquire the knowledge we need to decode it. He (we) is no Oedipus, but more likely a Minotaur, which would bring us back to Borges (and also Cortázar). The ritualistic death—which prefigures that of *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*—is necessary because of the incest committed both at the genealogical and the textual level. In both cases, what has been gained is a forbidden knowledge of the other as oneself, or vice-versa.

As we have seen, the most salient characteristic of the text we read is its heterogeneity. However, this heterogeneity is made up of differences within similarity. The various versions of the story are all related, yet differ in each instance. Their difference as well as their relation is akin—*valga la palabra*— to the relationship between the incestuous characters and to the broader confrontation between writer and a primitive other who produces myth. Put differently, the self-reflexiveness of the novel is implicitly compared to incest, a self-knowledge that somehow lies beyond knowledge. A plausible argument can be made that the end results of both are similar, in the most tangible sense, or at least related. When the ants carry away the carcass of the monstrous child engendered by Amaranta Ursula and Aureliano, its skin is described in terms that are very reminiscent of Melquíades' parchments. The English translation blurs that similarity. It reads: "And then he saw the child. It was a dry and bloated bag of skin that all the ants in the world were dragging. . ." (p. 420). The Spanish reads: "Era un pellejo [it was a skin] hinchado y reseco, que todas las hormigas del mundo iban arrastrando. . ." (p. 349). I need not go into the etymological and historical kinship uniting skin and parchment because the novel itself provides that link. The parchments are once described as "parecían fabricados en una materia árida que se resquebrajaba como hojaldres" (p. 68), and the books in the Archive are bound "en una materia acartonada y pálida como la piel humana curtida" (p. 160). The English reads, "the parchments that he had brought with him and that seemed to have been made out of some dry material that crumpled like puff paste" (p. 73), and "the books were bound in a cardboard-like material, pale, like tanned human skin" (p. 188).

The monster and the manuscript, the monster and the text, are

the product of the turning onto onself implicit in incest and self-reflexivity. Both are heterogeneous within a given set of characteristics, the most conspicuous of which is their supplementarity: the pig's tail, which exceeds the normal contours of the human body, and the text, whose mode of being is each added reading. The novel is a monster, engendered by a self-knowledge of which we too are guilty, to which we add our own pig's tail of reading and interpretation. The plot line that narrates the decipherment of the manuscripts underscores our own falling into this trap. Like Aureliano, we follow along in search of the meaning of the manuscripts, constantly teased by scenes where Melquíades appears scratching his incomprehensible handwriting onto rough parchment, by scenes where José Arcadio Segundo or Aureliano make preliminary discoveries that eventually lead them to unravel the mystery. But like Lönnrot in "Death and the Compass," and like Aureliano himself, we do not discover, until the very end, what the manuscripts contain. Our own anagnorisis as readers is saved for the last page, when the novel concludes and we close the book to cease being as readers, to be, as it were, slain in that role. We are placed back at the beginning, a beginning that is also already the end, a discontinuous, independent instant where everything commingles without any possibility for extending the insight, an intimation of death. This independent instant is not the novel; it is the point to which the novel has led us. By means of an unreading, the text has reduced us, like Aureliano, to a ground zero, where death and birth are joined togehter as correlative moments of incommunicable plenitude. The text is that which is added to this moment. Archive and myth are conjoined as instances of discontinuity rather than continuity; knowledge and death are given equivalent value.

It is a commonplace, almost an uncritical fetish, to say that the novel always includes the story of how it is written, that it is a self-reflexive genre. The question is why and how it is so at specific moments. Clearly, *Cien años de soledad* is self-reflexive not merely to provoke laughter, or to declare itself literary and thus disconnected from reality or from history. In García Márquez, and I daresay in all major Latin American novelists, self-reflexivity is a way of disassembling the mediation through which Latin America is narrated, a mediation that constitutes the pre-text of the novel itself. It is also a way of showing that the act of writing is caught up in a deeply rooted, mythic struggle that constantly denies it the

authority to generate and contain knowledge about the other without at the same time generating a perilous sort of knowledge about one's mortality and capacity to know oneself.

What do we learn about Latin American history in *Cien años de soledad*? We learn that while its writing may be mired in myth, it cannot be turned to myth, that its newness makes it impervious to timelessness, circularity, or any such delusion. New and therefore historical, what occurs in America is marked by change, it is change. García Márquez has expressed this by tantalizing the reader with various forms of myth, while at the same time subjecting him to the rigors of history as writing, of history as Archive. He has also achieved it by making Borges the keeper of the Archive, for the figure of the Argentine ensures that no delusions about literature be entertained. In a sense, what García Márquez has done is to punch through the anthropological mediation and substitute the anthropologist for an historian, and to turn the object of attention away from myth as an expression of so-called primitive societies to the myths of modern society: the book, writing, reading, instruments of a quest for self-knowledge that lie beyond the solace mythic interpretations of the world usually afford. We can always use *Cien años de soledad* to escape temporality, but only if we wilfully misread it to blind ourselves of its warnings against it. American history can only become myth enmeshed in this very modern problematic that so enriches its most enduring fictions.

For it is not toward a high-pitched rationality that *Cien años de soledad* moves, but toward a vision of its own creation dominated by the forces that generate myth. This is perhaps most evident if we consider that the Archive may very well be the most powerful of cultural retentions. The Archive is, first of all, a repository for the legal documents wherein the origins of Latin American history are contained, as well as a specifically Hispanic institution created at the same time as the New World was being settled. As is known, the great Archive at Simancas, begun by Charles V, but finished by the King Bureaucrat Philip II, is the first and possibly most voluminous such storehouse in Europe. The same Herrera who designed the Escorial had a hand in planning the Archive, that is to say, in turning a castle that was originally a prison into the Archive. America was discovered by Columbus, but really became a historical entity as a result of the development of the printing press. Latin America was created in the Archive. It may very well

have been Carlos Fuentes in his *Terra Nostra* who most clearly saw the connection, making Cervantes the inner historian in that novel. In terms of the novel's ability to retain and pass on cultural values, the message contained in books such as Fuentes' and *Cien años de soledad* is indeed disturbing, for they tell us that it is impossible to create new myths, yet bring us back once and again to that moment where our desire for meaning can only be satisfied by myth.

Yale University

Gabriel Garcia Marquez: One Hundred Years of Solitude

Teaching Materials

Teaching One Hundred Years with Faulkner's Sound and the Fury
http://www6.semo.edu/cfs/tfn_online/sound_frisch.htm
Mark Frisch, Duquesne University, writes that combining these novels in the classroom environment is fruitful.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez/ Colombia
http://retanet.unm.edu/article.pl?sid=03/05/18/2110111
Lesson plan about Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Colombia and two of his works, short story "The Saint" and film *Miracle in Rome*.

"On Marquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude"
http://www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/introser/marquez.htm
Ian Johnston's lecture explores many elements of the novel. He looks at the use of linear and circular time, and magical realism. He also celebrates the comic elements of the book in addition to the tragic ones.

Advanced Placement English 12: Literature and Composition

http://www.briarcliffschools.org/upload/upload_1079_AP%2012%202006.htm

Spanish Language Resources

http://www.uwosh.edu/faculty_staff/cortes/classes/Spring2004/301/undia.html

Other Information about Marquez

Macondo
http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/
Pictures, essays, reviews, biographies about Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Pretty cool site.

The Nobel Prize in Literature 1982
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1982/
This website has a short biography of Marquez, his Nobel lecture in English and Spanish, and a bibliography. There is even an 18 minute recording of Marquez in Spanish.

Internet Book List: Author Information: Gabriel García Márquez
http://www.iblist.com/author559.htm
This has a longer biography of Marquez and a complete list of his works with synopses.

SoloLiteratura: Gabriel Garcia Marquez
http://sololiteratura.com/php/autor.php?id=15
This Spanish site has some of his speeches, interviews and articles about him.

General Latin American Literature

Putting the Puzzle Together: Art, Literature and History of Latin America
http://www.chatham.edu/pti/Contemp_Latin/Swazuk_01.htm
Mary Eileen Swazuk, a teacher at Taylor Allderdice High School, writes that combining art and literature provides students with a better understanding of history, culture and the Spanish Language. Notably, she suggests teaching One Hundred Years in conjunction with Botero's artwork so that students can learn more about Colombia.

Survey of Latin-American Culture Through Literature
http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1997/1/97.01.08.x.html#c
This is a lesson plan about Latin American literature with general discussion questions. Movies and novels are listed.

Exploring Genre Through Latin American Poetry and Literature
http://www.outreachworld.org/resource.asp?Curriculumid=989
The literature is available in English and Spanish. This syllabus is for primary grades but it can be changed for intermediate grades and even adult instruction. Some suggested works are included.

Retanet: American Literature: an Oblique Introduction
http://retanet.unm.edu/article.pl?sid=03/05/18/1942111&mode=flat&tid=40
Since alternate discussions of American history have only begun to emerge, this curriculum tries to engage students in exploring Latin American and Caribbean authors. This course has students learn about the impact of Colombus' encounter in the Americas.

Latin American Literature: Revelation and Revolution
http://www.chatham.edu/pti/Contemp_Latin/Weiss_01.htm
Constance Weiss, a teacher at Schenley High School, writes about her reasons for choosing to study Latin American literature. She lists the authors and their works by country. There are some links and a bibliography. It's pretty informal but it has some thoughts about what is age appropriate and what to discuss.

Books and Films about Gabriel Garcia Marquez and his Works

Book: Mario Vargas Llosa. *García Márquez, Historia de un Deicidio*
Spanish only. This is a work about Marquez by another famous Latin American writer. Incidentally, after the book was written, the two had a falling out after Llosa punched Marquez at a movie theatre.

Book: Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Special Edition of One Hundred Years of Solitude for 40 year anniversary.

It will include contributions from Carlos Fuentes, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Víctor García de la Concha, Real Academia de la Lengua.

Book: Joset Jacques. Gabriel .
This short book explores themes in Marquez's fiction. In Spanish.

Book: Harold Bloom. *Gabriel García Márquez's One hundred years of solitude*.
This book contains many essays about *One Hundred Years*.

Book: George R McMurray. *Critical essays on Gabriel García Márquez*.
Essays cover many topics and works of Marquez.

Documentary: *Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a witch writing*.
http://www.documen.tv/asset/Gabriel_Gracia_Marquez_Film.html
This website has information about this documentary about Marquez and magical realism. There is a short free version of the film and links to obtain full access for a charge.

Documentary: *García Márquez in 90 minutes*.
This film explores Marquez's life and works.