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Title: One Hundred Years of Solitude

Garcia Marquez, Gabriel. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Published by Harper Collins and Row, 2004 Edition. Appendix, index, pp 464.

This novel is about the rise and fall of the mythical town of Macondo and is about the rich chronicles of life and death of humankind. One family of the Buendia sees all humanity. This book is the history of a family who finds an isolated town, Macondo. The unique point of this town is that it has no contact with the outside world except gypsies. The style that has been used in this book is old and simple. The chapters are titled one after another and all the contents are provided on the second page of the book. The author of the book talks about the solitude of one family and argues that the village loses its innocence and loneliness when it contacts other cities in the region but no one can ever be able to live in isolation. The conflicts between the need for love and desire for solitude in this novel give rise to a different genre known as “Magical realism”.

“Races condemned to 100 years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth”, these last words of the novel are very powerful and relates to the title of the book. The book uses many examples to show that people cannot exist in isolation. People need to be interdependent for the race to survive. The examples of loneliness are found throughout one-hundred-years of the Buendia family and life of Macondo. The loneliness is both emotional and physical. It is shown romantically, geographically and individually. It seems to be the core intention of the characters to stay alone and be forgotten as they have no control over it. They take it as their destiny.

The novel begins with geographic isolation as the character Jose Arcadio Buendia says in the novel, "Damn! Macondo is surrounded by water from all sides". This describes the village which is not an island in reality but because it is surrounded by water and believed to be cut off from the rest of the world, it seems an island. In addition to this, along with the characters of Jose Arcadio, the males that are named as Aureliano of the Buendia family have solitary nature. The author suggests that loneliness or solitary is a character portrayed by fate and his characters in the book suffer from negative effects of a community that compels its members to do things that are expected from them rather than follow their dreams (Jordison). The patriarch of the family, Jose Arcadio Buendia is the most prominent example of this society-imposed solitary since his creative ideas and new approaches to life make him an outcast. For example, in the book ,when he tries to create new ideas to use the technologies brought by Melquiades to the town but the community condemns his efforts and calls him insane for pursuing his dreams. The community has forcefully imposed loneliness on the first male member of the family. Other characters, however, are lonely because of their nature like Colonel Aureliano Buendia is a loner from the start of the book. As in the book, the author says "silent and withdrawn”. Jose Arcado Segubdo is isolated because of his knowledge, his resistance to the banana company and his disbeliefs.

Garcia Marquez uses Magical Realism to show the political atmospheres and events that the author along with other Americans experienced in their lifetimes. He uses elements of spiritualism, the paranormal, the supernatural and divine along with certain feelings, tensions and emotions, as a tool to draw the readers in. Magical realism serves two main purposes in the novel; firstly it introduces the culture of Columbia as the story revolves around Columbia. Secondly, it questions the absurdity of our day to day lives. Marquez's approach to creating magical realism is somewhat different and unconventional as he uses exaggeration to create a fantasy that gives a mystical aura to the environment. This mystical aura is an actual representation of the actual Columbian culture. The people of Macondo are used to bizarre incidents that involve supernatural elements and consider reality. Like in the book, it says, “This time, along with many artifices, they brought a flying carpet.  But they did not offer it as a fundamental contribution to the development of transport, rather as an object of recreation.  The people at once dug up their last old pieces to take advantage of a quick flight over the houses of the village”. Just like the culture of Columbia, everything that was invented by the people seemed to have a magical element in them as the culture is made up of old superstitions and traditions. The readers can observe the fears of one of the characters Ursula who gives birth to a child with a pigtail and in this way, Marquez shows the possibility of a child being born with a pig's tail as an unusual thing to his readers because things like these often happen in the village. Dates are also twisted and exaggerated in the novel to contribute to magical realism.

Marquez has contributed a lot to literature through his brilliant writings. This book is a perfect depiction of Columbian culture and the people of Columbia. Through this book, the author has successfully portrayed the mystical beliefs of the people of Columbia. The book has a lot of important themes and techniques which a common reader cannot understand unless the reader is a book lover. There are thousands of techniques that cannot be simplified by everyone which is one of the flaws of the book. However, the good thing about this book is history i.e. the history of people in terms of a single-family. The author's uses of supernatural elements are the best things about the novel. The book can be made less exhaustive by using maps and images because it is already a complex story so the addition of pictures can enhance its elements and can make it easy to read.

**Works Cited:**

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Jordison, Sam. “Can One Hundred Years of Solitude Be Read as More than Just Fantasy?” *The Guardian*, 16 May 2017. *www.theguardian.com*, https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2017/may/16/one-hundred-years-of-solitude-gabriel-garcia-marquez-magical-realism-fantasy.