

A Study of Environmental Psychology: Gabriel Garcia Marquez's One Hundred of Years of Solitude

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Abstract:

The research paper on One Hundred Years of Solitude is an attempt to elucidate how the period from 1800-1900 portrayed by the Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The novel mirrors the Colombian Civil wars, solitary confinement, corruption, dislocation, deterioration, political violence, incest etc. The story sets in the fantasy community of Maconda, a hamlet in Colombia coast. It unveils the story of Buendia family, common cultures in the community life, rise of political consciousness, growth of technology and its impact in environment. The characters in the novel get defense mechanism of illusion and loss of memory to escape from fear, denial, solitude and hermit in their life time. The imagination of each individual brings both discovery and destruction to the village. This article is an effort to explore the significance of the imaginary village Maconda, its people, their closeness to the ecology and environmental concerns for their happy life.

Key words: Invasion of technology, Ecology, Psychology

Introduction

Gabriel Garcia Marquez (1927-2014) is a notable Colombian 20th century novelist. Besides, his familiarity for the novels, he is an accomplished short story writer and journalist. He is awarded Nobel Prize for Literature. He wrote many much-admired non-fiction and short stories. He is significantly notable and popular for the literary style named magical realism and also he is credited for having introduced the readers to genre of magical realism with conventional method of fantasy story telling. Like, Thomas Hardy's Wessex and RK Narayan's Malgudi, Gabriel too sets a

fictional village called Maconda for most of his works. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is his masterpiece and translated to thirty languages. His notable works are Ice of a Blue dog, The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor, Chronicle of a Death Foretold, Love in the Time of a Cholera, News of a Kidnapping , Love and other Demons Memories of My Melancholy Whores

The story begins with the flashback of Colonel Aureliano Buendia who is one of the sons of Jose Arcadio Buendia, the founder of the village Maconda. He is much obsessed with the magical implements and inspired by the gypsy Melquiades. He completely believes in illusion, resigns his domestic obligations, and spends the entire night in courtyard by watching and sometimes counting the stars. His regular farming working such as growing banana and caladium, cassava and yams, ahuyama roots and eggplants have been absolutely replaced by a kind of fascination, The children would remember for the rest of their lives the august solemnity with which their father, devastated by his prolonged vigil and by wrath of his imagination, revealed his discovery to them , the earth is round, like an orange” (p.25).

His concerns for environment is evidenced with his courtyard gigantic chestnut tree, well-kept garden, goats and hens, they all live in a peaceful communion. It is amazing to know that people in Macondo never crossed thirty years old and no one died since the time of founding the place. Every March the gypsy visits the place with some new inventions such as talking parrots, a hen with hundred golden eggs, multiple use machines, apparatus to forget bad memories etc. The founder is inspired to follow Melquiades and tries to become an alchemist to get gold out of any other metals. In the next March month, another group of young men and women gypsies arrive at the village with their new products for the sale His quest for knowledge withdraws him from contacting people even his own children and wife, becomes unkempt, antisocial and later his obsession drags to establish disconnecting from the environment.

After murdering Prudencio, for his humiliation on Jose Arcadio Buendia, he begins his expedition along with the young men and women and cross the mountain by dismantling their houses and packs up their wives and children. After many months of wandering, they create the village Macondo. Her happiness starts to decline soon after the departure of her son Jose Acardio. She becomes half insane and departs the

place to search him among the gypsy. Jose Arcadio Buendia has become tired of his research on the unknown topic of finding ways to convert the metal to gold, slips into insanity. She persuades her husband to stop wandering for the search of crazy invention. She is efficient in making domestic affair and taking care of her children. His mind is slowly delved with his past and present memories, his anxiety and abnormal behavior destined him as insane. His obsession goes beyond the regardless of any one to consider him, he is taken to backyard of the house and is tied to a tree where he reminds ill, his thoughts are crumbled under the stress of his solitary musings. Later, he is identified as sane by the church builder who further ascertains that his words are not gibberish but it is the Latin language. The return of Jose Arcadio gives a solace to the mourning family of Buendia but it has not been retained for long time. His transformation in the behavior and appearance upset the family members but his masculinity enthralls Rebecca. They are attracted for each other and get married. Later, they have been exiled from the Buendia family by Ursula. She gradually loses her sense of reality and confuses present time with remote past in her life for an example she cries for three days deeply over the death of her grandmother.

The gypsy role is distinctively strewn to give the impact of introducing the new inventions to the imaginary village. They carry civilization and transformation, their senior representative Melquiades is terribly ensnared by the illusion. He mistakes for his strength rather he is affected with multiple rare diseases during the world trips. He also has a sense of illusionary dread that death follows him everywhere. His delusion knows no boundary and escapes from pellagra, archipelago, disastrous earthquake etc. In spite of his immense wisdom and knowledge, he conquers human burden, earthly conditions, ailments of his old age, the scurvy has taken away his teeth and he stops laughing for long time. They bring pipes, magnet, telescope, astronomical and calculation which wash away the spirit of social eco living. The words of Jose Arcadio Buendia explicates, the old tribes of Melquiades, contribute so much to the growth of the village with his age-old wisdom and his fabulous inventions, would always find the gate open. But Melquiades tribe, according to what the wanderers said, had been wiped off the face of the earth because they had gone beyond the limits of human knowledge (p.41).

The village people once solely associated with the environment concerns in protecting the nature and ecology. The voice of the free bird flutes is replaced with

the musical clocks which are made of carved wood, at every house. Once they plant almond trees on the streets for the sake of birds and other beings but the trees are broken and look dusty as the arrival of wooden house with zinc roofs in the village.

The dirt and whitewashing orphan Rebeca is identified with insomnia which causes memory loss. Ursula offers herbal juice to all the insomnia affected people. Insomnia causes the sleepless of all almost for more than fifty hours and plunged into hallucinated lucidity. Jose Arcadio Buendia realizes that the disease has invaded the town and gathers all the heads of the family to spread awareness about the insomnia. And he again proves his irrationality with an order to remove the goat bells and to be kept at the entrance of the village to help the strangers to ring the bells and alert the sick people that they are hale and healthy.

After the death of Ursula, the aristocratic Fernanda is curious to know about the torrential hundred years life of Ursula. She shuts her up inside the doors, nailed her windows and obeying paternal order of being buried alive. Her correspondence with the expensive invisible doctors becomes vulnerable to prevent or cure her unusual disease of memory loss and being in delusion. She stays in the room with card on date and hour of getting into the room. All of a sudden, early in the morning, she dreams that her head is covered with white handkerchief and soaked in a glacial liquid. Contrary to her vision, it is found that she has been inspected for six hours to find out the symptoms by the invisible doctors. Further, the readers perceived that actually she has pernicious habit of forgetting the names of object and it leads her to the world of chaos and imagination. Another incident reflects her unstable mind that when she tries to cook in the kitchen for the first time in the absence of Santa Sofia de la Piedad, wife of Arcadio, she finds it difficult to locate the things in the kitchen. She slams with words that the house is filled with the elves. It further confirms her panic condition and unlimited imagination, loss of remembrance when she worries for the missing fountain pen and inkwell, "she tied the shears to the head of her bed with a long string. She tied the pen bottle to the leg of the table and she glued the inkwell to the top of it to right of the place where she normally wrote. The problems were not solved overnight, because few hours after she had tied the string to the shears it was not long enough for her to cut, as if the elves shortened it"(p.92) .

Pilar Ternera , the foul mouthed and deserted wife of Jose Arcadio and also a witch like woman to predict the future with a card, as an alternative for the herbal medicine. Her paradoxical expression conveys the readers about their devotion and respects to the nature as well the contact of technology. She says that it is superstitious to have faith on the herbal medicine and turns to read the cards. After reading the cards, she explains that the causes for such illness is that Fernanda, the queen of diamond wants to get her husband by means of discredited methods of sticking pins into picture and therefore he is instructed to come with a picture for doing some rituals to sway away the problem. He searches for the picture in the absence of his wife but he finds only the red rubber rings. As a matter of fact, she does not understand it and look at them with surprise and suspicion. Then, she promises to conjure away the alleged curse of Fernanda by soaking a broody hen and bury her alive under the chestnut tree.

Aureliana Segunda has passion for Petra Cotes and he has assumed that their magical union causes their farm animals to be supernaturally fertile. He fabulously becomes wealthy with the virtues of livestock productivity and turns to be the cynosure of the whole village. Thus, everyone in the novel have their own reasons to make things run smooth. The author has carefully entwined the bond among the people, nature and technology.

Jose Arcadia Segunda calls for the banana plantation workers to protest against their inhumane working condition. The protest turns to be a massacre where the army surrounds the workers with machine guns and kills them all. The corpses have been gathered onto a train and unload into the sea. Jose Arcadio Segunda is mistaken for the dead and thrown into the sea along with the other corpses. But he manages to return Maconda, and horrifies to note the people have lost their memory and refuse to believe his words. He becomes a refuge in the gypsy's room and studies Melquiades manuscripts. He reappears from his solitary but incapable for expressing his emotion, tries to regain his past memories, lost his curiosity for making fish out gold and passes away.

After the massacre, and almost five years of rain, Maconda people experience the normal life. The torrential rain eats away all the animals, banana plantation and

the hellish heat washes away many lives such as birds, semi-human creature, the wandering Jew, all discovered in the streets.

Maconda was in ruins in the swampy streets. There were the remains of furniture, animals skeletons covered with red Lily. The house that had been built with such haste during the banana fever had been abundant the banana company to down its installations all that remind of the former wired in city were the ruins. The wooden houses, the cool terraces for breezy god playing afternoon, seems to have blown away in the anticipation of the prophetic wind that years later wipe away Macondo of the face of the earth (p.103).

Ursula is the first victim of illusion as she fears of incest marriage. Her aunt gives birth to a baby with a cartilaginous tail in the shape of a corkscrew and also with a small tuft of hair on the tip. When the tail is chopped by the butcher, he dies. Her constant effort to protect her from the seduction of her husband is an example for her horrified imagination and fear before going to bed would put on a rudimentary kind of drawers that her mother had made out of sailcloth and had enforced with a system of crisscrossed leather straps and that was closed in the front by a thick iron buckle. Amaranta Ursula, the last living second generation of the Buendia family, is in her delirium and foresees her death approach. She proclaims that she will carry letters from the living to the dead.

The installation of modern technology, railroad, industries, the cinema theatres, phonographs, luxurious imports are amazing and troubling to the citizen of village. Besides, they are doubly confused with the arrival of foreign capitalist in Maconda. They establish a banana plantation in the village and build the fence. The uncontrolled growth and invasion gradually, damages the autonomy of the village. Colonel Aureliano repents for his decision on stopping the war against the conservatives. They facilitate the foreign imperialist and encourage the police force to attack the citizens brutally even for the menial offences.

Eco criticism takes its literary beings in the 19th century American writers of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller and Henry David. Their works manifest the nature and wilderness. Then, they prove that everything is socially and linguistically assembled. They ascertain that nature exist beyond everything and everywhere. And

when the man mistreats it, in return it affects the world brutally. The climax of the novel exactly goes with an ideology of eco criticism or environmental psychological. The new invention, thirst for magic and materialism brutally devastate the beauty and ecstasy of the culture of the innocent people.

The thought provoking ideas of Lenin 1908, "our knowledge comes from experience from sensation from perception. That is true. But the question arises, does objective reality belong to perception, is it the source of perception? If your answer yes, you are a materialist. If you answer no, you are inconsistent and will inevitably arrive at subjectivism" explain the association of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's characters.

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