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THE SPACE OF SOLITUDE IN
CIEN AÑOS DE SOLEDAD

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En tí estás todo, mar, y sin embargo,
¡qué sin tí estás, que solo,
qué lejos, siempre, de tí mismo!
¡Qué plenitud de soledad, mar solo!

Antonio Machado

Solitude, like God, can be found anywhere. It has a tendency to mutate into the most unlikely set of opposites as well as to dissolve into nothingness. The sea and the desert, in their immense repose and capacity to erase all markings have been the metaphors most widely used to convey an image of solitude. Yet the student of solitude cannot rest content with this protean aspect of the subject. The critic, if only for sanity's sake, must seek to contain, in order to describe and analyze, solitude, as a subject of study. Looking for a basis, for a starting point, it seems to me that to focus on the space of solitude as it is given in the texts that I have chosen to represent the discourse of solitude in Latin American Literature, would be a useful way of cutting out its contours, of differentiating solitude from the other spaces that border on it.

When this working paper grows into a chapter of a book on the discourse of solitude in Latin American Literature it will include a discussion of the work of Garcilaso de la Vega, Inca; Sarmiento's Facundo, civilización y barbarie; Hernandez' Martin Fierro; Martínez Estrada's Radiografía de la pampa; Vallejo's Los heraldos negros; Paz's El laberinto de la soledad; Gorostiza's Muerte sin fin and Guimaraes Rosa's Grande sertão, veredas. For the purposes of this paper, however, I have chosen to focus on Cien años de soledad by García Márquez for two practical reasons: wide dissemination of the text and reading time and this colloquium.

I. Physical Space

The classical space of solitude in the cenobitic and Medieval traditions has tended to be divided into a pair of oppositions.

Away from the space of the community--village, town or city--the man who sought solitude could take up residence in the desert or in a cell/cave. In either space he found the isolation, from other men and even from beasts, that his desire impelled him to secure. Within the empty desert or the empty hermit, he could proceed to shed all the layers of otherness that culture had imposed on him. The process of divestment and cleansing would ordinarily start with a return to nakedness. The body, like the soul, would be freed from all objects of sense-perception that could divert the self's absolute focus on inwardness, that is to say on the pure contents of self consciousness.

Emptiness of the physical space is the sine qua non for the process of solitude to unfold. However, such space itself does not command any solitary powers. It is perceived as objective or rather passive and its meaning is derived from the value the occupant gives to emptiness. Sarmiento in his dramatic analysis of Argentina's civil wars (1830's-40's) sounds a highly contrasting, American, albeit Romantic, note about the physical space of solitude or rather space as solitude. In the opening chapter of Facundo, civilizaci3n y barbarie,¹ without much of a preamble, Sarmiento declares that

El mal que aqueja a la república Argentina es la extensión, el desierto la rodea por todas partes, se le insinúa en las entrañas; la soledad, el despoblado. . . . Allí la inmensidad por todas partes; inmensa la llanura, inmensos los bosques, inmensos los ríos, el horizonte siempre incierto confundiendo con la tierra.

(Sarmiento, p. 9)

The classical space of solitude has suffered several transformations in Sarmiento's assessment of Argentine history as a problem of isolation and solitude. For Sarmiento, preoccupied as he is with the viability of an Argentine polis or res politica as he calls it, the greatest threat and impediment to his desire is solitude. Yet this solitude, this proclivity for isolation is not to be found in the desideratum of the individual who inhabits the pampa. Solitude for Sarmiento appears as an inherent attribute of nature, of geography, to be precise.

The hermit looks for a space complimentary or analogous to his state of consciousness. He seeks a place for solitude but is not in the least preoccupied with a locus for solitude outside himself. Sarmiento reads the hermit's inner space of solitude into the very physical locus of the nation about to be born. One of the elements that changes the desert's empty passivity into Sarmiento's surrounding, marauding and separating presence is a transformation in size. Sarmiento insists on the immensity of each geographical feature. Each is so wantonly enormous as to defy any precedent of

sense of size. In fact, the size of rivers, plains and woods in Sarmiento's eyes is so very extravagant that such features cannot be taken in by the human eye at once thus rendering the idea of horizon impossible or even absurd. The isolation of each feature of geography from the other is so great, that to speak of landscape--arrangement of objects in one single coherent space--becomes also an absurdity.

Argentine geography, the spatial foundation of the nation, is thus rendered absurd and consequently evil. It harbors a "natural" solitude, a natural enmity to the works of man, to his desire for community. Inverting the position of classical solitude, Sarmiento's solitude is lodged in nature and not in culture. In Facundo, solitude and isolation overwhelm the confines of the cave and the desert and in transgressing the limits of size it becomes evil.

The other item that has changed in the pampas is the process and objective of perception. One cannot make out, says Sarmiento, the point of referential depth at which the earth ceases and the sky begins. To compound man's sense of loss (disorientation) neither the eye nor the ear command sufficient power to penetrate the all-encompassing and silent solitude on the pampas ("la callada soledad," p. 10). This solitude's scale borders on the inhuman. It is kin to the beastly and thus man finds himself obligated to turn to his beasts for guidance in this novel and endlessly evil desert. Sarmiento's fearful man, the isolated man "vuelve sus miradas, para tranquilizarse del todo; a las negras orejas de algún caballo" (p.10).

Besides immensity what makes this solitude so dreadful is the invisible presence of wild animals. It could be argued that the classical desert also harbors wild animals with which some hermits even shared a certain domesticity. But in Sarmiento's mind, the tiger, for instance, is man's implacable enemy; and yet, it is not the major beast he must confront in the developing solitude of the pampa. What for Sarmiento augments solitude to an unbearable degree is the knowledge that out there, in the invisible immensity exist, other men. Sarmiento calls them savages. They, like the tiger wear only their skin, and like the wild animal they silently dissolve in the vastness of a pampa which to them is not uncharted neither too large. The presence of the beastly enemy, the Indian, is in the end what transforms the value of the size and isolation of the geographical features of the pampa. The pampa, Sarmiento discovers, is in fact not a solitary desert and not a virgin land. It is inhabited and its specific contour and features are known, but they are known to other men, to the enemy. Knowledge of the pampa being alien, turns the pampa in Sarmiento's mind into an alien place of danger and solitude. His man is alone out there because what he fears most is not solitary nature but the species itself;

other men that he cannot see or hear as men, men that in being perceived as savages are likened to an alien, incomprehensible nature.

Impenetrable solitude now confronts Sarmiento's man. His alienated, deafened, blinded man inhabits the incomprehensible space of solitude and it is in his blindness, where the palpable world recedes, that "empiezan las mentiras de la imaginación" (Sarmiento, p. 26). Sarmiento adhered throughout Facundo to an environmental theory of culture. Accordingly he asks: what is the result of not being able to see much or anything? His answers tells us that the more man gazes into that uncertain horizon the more he becomes fascinated by it, to the point that his soul grows confused and finally sinks into contemplation. Sarmiento's man is unable to see the forms that he barely can discern and yet he "knows" that beyond those shadowy forms there await him, in the invaded and vitiated space of solitude, savage man, danger and death (Sarmiento, p. 26). This dread causes Sarmiento's man to feel assaulted by his waking dreams and this fearful dreading in turn determines the poetic "nature" of the Argentine people. Slowly, the space of solitude, the intractable physical space of the pampa, prompted by fear, has installed itself in the inner space of imagination. Like the pampa, this is a space whose paradoxically solitary and yet vitiated essence Sarmiento both despises and respects. The empty immensity if left untouched by "civilization" may well be populated by dreams, pure fantasy, poetry and even lies as Sarmiento fears and Martínez Estrada feverishly argues almost a hundred years later.

Though Sarmiento speaks of the poetry and imagination of solitude in the second chapter of Facundo, if we go back to the initial passage quoted, we find that the inner place of solitude is already located in the womb (entrañas) of the Argentine republic, that is to say the fair maiden crossing the savage infested land. So that in Sarmiento's discourse the dynamics of solitude have taken up the imagination and the womb, the space of the future of the republic.

Moreover, Sarmiento's man is feeble because he lacks the tools of knowledge with which to enhance the insufficiency of his sense organs. In this dire situation any knowledge is welcome as the antidote to solitude. Thus the future president of the nation writes at length and with surprising admiration of the gaucho's empirical, although to him mysterious, knowledge of rivers, wind currents, weather patterns, vegetation, etc. Knowledge occupies firmly that inner space of man in which the solitude of the pampas is always making inroads, and keeping out that solitude is what makes the difference between civilization and barbarism for Sarmiento. This assessment of solitude and its relation to barbarism is not very far from Hobbes' own views on the subject. Hobbes

believed that man alone and without civilization would lead a "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short life" (

I have taken this long with Sarmiento because the points of continuity with García Márquez are, surprisingly, many. I say surprisingly, because we must bear in mind that Sarmiento's thought seats squarely in the 19th century, while Garcia Marquez's Cien años de soledad has been in the main correctly, compared to and praised mostly for its ties to the landmarks of twentieth century literature, i.e., Virginia Woolf, Kafka, Faulkner, Borges.²

Macondo, for the Buendías is a place of solitude and for solitude. Like the pampa, it too is extravagant, though the extravagance is not due so much to size as it is to isolation. The great solitude that irrevocably marks the lives of all the Buendias arrives in the footsteps of their defeated efforts to break out from the circumference of insular Macondo, absence of technological know how, generational incest, and the circle of chalk eventually drawn around each individual.

Ironically, like Sarmiento's pampas and Martinez Estrada's Argentina, Macondo is a place of desire and arrival, but not of origin.³ Macondo, the place of settlement, is not really a geographical space, much like Martínez Estrada's characterization of Argentina, "it did not exist in the maps."⁴ Rather, Macondo is a place for the weary dreamer, a space to serve as a substitute for the desired end to a journey; itself undertaken to put enough distance between the past and the future so as to separate them forever. And this is done generation after generation.⁵ In the beginning José Arcadio Buendía (JAB) and his people were lost in the "desert" (jungle) and when they reached the spot of the diaphanous waters, their tired bodies advised them to stop. The place is in the middle of nowhere and in this sense Macondo could hypothetically be located in the middle of the pampas or the sea. What matters is that it, like Sarmiento's Caravan, is surrounded by the unknown or, as JAB later learns, it is surrounded by water on all sides. Although in fact Macondo is a peninsula surrounded by mire on almost all sides, for many years it functions culturally as a prison island, visited once a year by the gypsies and their "gifts" of fragments of archaic technology. Like Sarmiento JAB feels that any knowledge is welcome as a means to break out of Macondo's isolation (backwardness).

In this insular location JAB's desire for separation with the past is given him in shocking material form. Macondo is the desert, not as it has been argued paradise. It is a simple solitary space thus far uninhabited by man. And yet, no sooner has the cut with the past been insured than the counter desire for contact with the world beings to wreak havoc in JAB's consciousness. The idea

that for lack of knowledge and of contact "aquí nos hemos de pudrir en vida sin recibir los beneficios de la ciencia" (García Márquez, p. 19) grows to an irresistible and unbearable magnitude in JAB's mind and eventually will drive him mad.

Macondo like the place of the Hermit and Martínez Estrada's pampa started out as a place of refuge from established society, temptation, and even death (JAB, Colonel Aureliano, Melquíades, José Arcadio Secundo, JABII). When Ursula finally happens upon the land route to the other communities and Macondo loses its insularity, the house she has built beckons her family as the best place where separation and refuse can be insured. But Ursula and for a while the pubescent daughters, like an open house. As the years pass, however, the centripetal proclivity of the family will privilege increasingly smaller and closer space in which to pass or use time. What we see throughout the novel succumbing to Sarmiento's critique is a constant reduction of the individual's living space. Starting with Macondo, the island, it winds down to the house (Ursula's and Rebeca's) to the work room (JAB, Melquíades, Aureliano, José Arcadio, JABII, Aureliano, the last Aureliano, Amaranta, Remedios the Beauty, Santa Sofía de la Piedad) and finally reduces itself to the body itself. Ultimately, as for Sarmiento and Martínez Estrada, the space of solitude will not be identifiable with any physical space. It will simply occupy, rather, saturate and thus rule the imagination.

II. Social Space

1. Scapes

Consciousness of nature as space is almost not existent in Macondo. The rhythms of nature mark the passage of communal time, but neither natural objects nor man-made objects are thought of as points of reference for the population or organization of space. The gaze of the characters does not focus on structural spaces. If they look out or away from a daily routine of thoughtless habit, their eyes encounter the air, its transparency. Later on, after the wars for example, what the Colonel and his friend Gerinaldo Márquez see is the emptiness of the streets of Macondo and perhaps solitude itself. When on rare occasions objects seize, for a unique instance, the consciousness of the Buendías, the objects are apprehended in all their solitary splendor. Such is the case of the Spanish galleon JAB finds in the thick of the tropical forest. "Toda la estructura parecía ocupar un ámbito propio, un espacio de soledad y olvido, vedado a los vicios del tiempo. . . . En el interior ho había más que un a pretado bosque de flores" (CM, p. 18). The Galleon defying all logical expectations, stands skeletal but apart; separated from trees and twines, all alone, like a great ceiba or for that matter a great macondo.⁶

Each object in Macondo, and especially so the objects introduced by the gypsies--fragments of the old world's archaic knowledge--comes to occupy a solitary space of its own. Because the objects appear loose and disassociated from an organizational cultural space, they propel JAB's imagination, itself excessive in size, to a realm past the laws of nature, magic and miracle (GM, p. 9) into the space of the totally unique, unprecedented solitary imagination. With each of his failed experimental dreams JAB ignores several concatenations of scientific speculation and trial. It took more than one man's imagination to discover the earth's roundness, but JAB, in a feat of individual will and ingenuity makes the discovery all by himself. His imagination conceives of knowledge as a series of discrete items, bearing no relation to one another in time or space. Unlike Sarmiento, he has no notion of history as a space of communal experience. Each object is a sealed, magical vessel of practical knowledge. Set apart from history it sits alone, prohibitively commanding a space that like the circle of chalk the Colonel draws around himself in the days of his absolute power, bars it from human use, understanding, exchange or transformation.

2. Sex

Just as certain objects privileged by the gaze of the Buendias tend to command a solitary space, several other cultural constructs that ordinarily facilitate social contact and exchange, in the realm of Macondo acquire the inverse faculty to produce and attract solitude. Following the chronology of Cien años itself, after the family is done and done for with Menquíades trinkets, the next object of curiosity and discovery will be sex.

What sets loose the imagination of José Arcadio (JA) and contributes to keep him apart from all social behavior is the anticipation and desmesurate fulfillment of sex. From the very first encounter with Pilar Ternera and perhaps to the last with his murderous wife/sister Rebeca, the silent JA knows a terrifying solitude "soledad espantoso" (GM, p. 31). Sex, the body's ability to make contact with the other, to break the individual's physical insularity, for the solitary Buendías, comes almost always by incest, denying thus its very cultural and biological purpose. In his childhood encounter with Pilar Ternera, the middle-aged woman who had lost the strength of her muscles and the firmness of her breasts, the only face that surfaces in JA's consciousness is his mother's face (GM, p. 32). After his curiosity and urgency has been satisfied, JA discovers three things: a prodigious toy lodged in his body, the silence of solitude lodged in his incestual proclivity and the fear of death (GM, p. 32). A similar sense of physical solitude, without the very clear sexual component, is also experienced in Sarmiento's solitude of the pampas.

Aureliano's first acquaintance with sex, which immediately makes him seek refuge in solitude (GM, p. 33), comes as an impossible and failed feat of imagination. As his brother relates his wild or "savage" nights with Pilar Ternera, Aureliano "no lograba concebir la fascinación del objetivo" (GM, p. 33). Words fail to communicate feeling. The boys give up and each in his own separate way sinks into solitude, diving deep into inwardness ("ensimismados"). When Pilar tells JA that he is about to be a father, he is totally startled by the idea that his acts can have such consequences. Disgusted with what his toy can do he turns away and seeks refuge in his father's laboratory (GM, p. 34). Finally, "anxious of solitude" and "bitten by a virulent rancor against the world," a world of consequences, he leaves the house and Macondo. JA's departure, the first person born in Macondo to break out from its insularity and with a member of another clan to boot, the gypsy girl, closes, promisingly the first stage of the family's story.

Yet the sexual solitude of the Buendías continues unbroken. Aureliano falls in love incestuously too. Inverting the terms of his brother's desire for the mother, Aureliano seeks the child. In spite of it all, his marriage to Remedios, like the marriage of Aureliano II to Fernanda, serves the customary function of contact with the other and means of exchange. Remedios' presence in the Buendía family mediates the political conflict between the conservatives and the non-conservatives (at this point the Buendías are not liberals yet). She mediates the sexual rivalry between Rebeca and Amaranta and she also mediates between Aureliano and his work because she gives him a purpose other than itself (GM, p.). But her name is Remedios and not Milagros. She does not have the power to mediate between Aureliano and himself, much less his solitary mental habits. It is never reported that they talked or did anything else together than to make love, eat and sleep. As marriage with Remedios, the doll, passes in time "the straight line of his solitary mediation hardened on his lips" (GM, p. 82).

This couple, unlike Fernanda and Aureliano II, the only other conventional couple, seemed to have the best chance for love--the spiritualization of eros--for the instant when solitude is broken. All the other couples whose sexual attraction is consummated, often deliriously and happily, are marked by incest (Rebeca-JA; Meme-Mauricio Babilonia; Aureliano the last-Amaranta Ursula) and it is not that I have something against incest, but it is that logically, incest is part of the movement of self-reference and insularity that seals the social space of the Buendías.

3. Marriage and family

Marriage, as a social space, fails to constitute itself into that space of exchange and production (genes, goods, power, work and offspring) that anthropologists have described and analyzed in their studies of kinship. In the stereotypical extended family that Ursula supports with her home industries, all the marriages to outsiders come to reside in her house. This is also true for all the offspring of her children and grandchildren conceived with outsiders. The Buendías, like the swallows always return to the original nest: Ursula and the primordial space she provided for them in the house and the room. Of the two incestual marriages, JA and Rebeca move out because of Ursula "it is as if they were dead" (GM, p. 86). They comply with the linguistic and social status she gives and so they rent a house right across from the cemetery (GM, p. 86). The other couple, the last couple, can never really use the house because they cannot revive it. As their incestuous desire rises, the house crumbles. It is as if the erection of the all-consuming desire brought the house down with it, until, like all the other Buendías, Amaranta Ursula and Aureliano, come to live their final days of total happiness and total solitude in one single room of the house.

Ursula is only too aware of the centripetal tendency of her family. Besides providing the basic economic freedom for all the members of the family to enjoy themselves in their particular avocations, she also feeds and attends an unending number of strangers in order to keep other people circulating throughout the self-absorbing members of her family. Under closer scrutiny, however, her behavior in fact does not differ much from the pattern of return to the house/origins of her children and other descendants. Her invitations to other people (Pietro Crespi, Gerinaldo Márquez, Colonel Moncada, Mayor Moscote, strangers) are all just that, invitations to inhabit her house, her space and use it as the space for all possible social transactions. Like Amaranta, or Rebeca, or Fernanda she leaves her house only in extreme circumstances: to rescue her fugitive son JA, to rescue her grandson Arcadio from war and certain death, to help her son Aureliano escape from prison and the firing squad, to bring them all home and to say to all of them "ven, ya basta de locuras" (GM, p. 106). The all-containing, not unclear, but certainly insular extended family, in Ursula's desire, should be the one social space for all seasons. It should be the place for schooling, the place for work, the place for match-making. It should be the space for politics "al día siguiente el coronel /Moncada/ almorzó en casa de Ursula. . . fue una reunión familiar" (GM, p. 138); it should be the place for madness, the place for illness and the place for death. Ursula's house, the social space of the extended family, is so full of itself, so complete in its variety of social functions, that it can and indeed it does,

dispense with all other social institutions. Whatever social transaction human beings need, it can be carried out in the self-sufficient House. There should be no desire, no need for some other place. Ursula laments that the Buendías are fine until puberty, when their beards grow and they become dissolute, lost, "unos perdidos" (GM, p.). And if one leaves in search of a wife, one should come back. And if what one gets in the way is a series of offspring, they too should be brought under the one, single space appropriate to life: the matriarchal household.

For Ursula, the house should be the source of common sense, it should put limits to the madness and exuberance of sexual desire and it should, as well, imbue the thirst for knowledge and power with a relation to practical reality. In Ursula's utopia her household should also be the place for love, where solitude ends. But alas, Ursula discovers that her family is congenitally incapable of love or communication. Her descendants can barely tolerate the proximity of others. What the solitary Buendías tolerate, with a necessary distance of course, is the proximity of women who like Ursula herself (Santa Sofía de la Piedad, Remedios la Bella, and even Amaranta) work, to keep the basics of life going on but ask no questions and make no demands.

Ursula's self-sufficient space negates the possibility of society, it makes impossible Sarmiento's desired res politica. It is indeed a refuge, but it also isolates and alienates the Buendías from participating in social transactions beyond the immediate circle of the family. The mores of the family itself are constituted to respect each individual's freedom of choice to such an extent that with the exception of Ursula's meddling care, they might as well live as if they were strangers to one another somewhat like a community of cenobites.

All of Ursula's hopes for her House fail. Her cultivated friendship with her son's political enemies, even though she managed to make them compadres, cannot prevent the endless executions that the war brings to Macondo. Her own alienation from the family grows to the point when she senses her son Aureliano an intruder (GM, p. 138). Once more she accepts defeat in the deeds on her male heirs and takes on the government of Macondo herself in the spirit of one more household routine. "A partir de entonces (tratado de Neerlandia) fue ella quien mandó en el pueblo" (GM, p. 96). And with this acceptance of the ultimate responsibility, solitude comes to her also. "Se sintió tan sola que buscó la inútil compañía del marido olvidado bajo el castaño: Mira en lo que hemos quedado, la casa vacía. . .nosotros dos solos, otra vez como al principio." (GM, p. 96).

III. Inner Space

1. Love

We have already indicated that solitude follows in the wake of the discovery of sexual desire. I don't believe that it can be argued that any of the Buendías whose desire is rewarded with the "joys of sex" (Aureliano II-Petra Cotes; José Aracadio-Pilar Ternera, Gypsy girl, Rebeca; Meme-Mauricio Babilonia, Amaranta Ursula-Caston, the last Aureliano; Remedios-Aureliano) found also love in the "inconceivable pleasure of that unbearable pain (GM, p. 86) in that space where there is "no gap between desire and satisfaction."⁷ When Aureliano falls in love with Remedios, his love is likened to a manglar del delirio. Like Dulcinea Remedio's image is everywhere and the whole world becomes but a mirror of her attributes. Aureliano is so possessed of her that he projects and captures her image into poems "without beginning or end" (GM, p. 63). Nevertheless, his yearning for Remedios, the beloved, can in a way, be satisfied at Pilar Ternera's "Aureliano dejó los acantilados del amor y encontró a Remedios (en Pilar Ternera) convertida en un pantano de horizontes" (GM, p. 65). Remedios, to a large extent, functions as an illusion, a projection of Aureliano's fancy; a fancy that like a mire will always prove absorbing and self reverting. Consequently Aureliano can find her image in all other objects of contemplation. In Jung's classical theory of projection, "projections change the world into a replica of one's own unknown face. In the last analysis, they lead to an autoerotic or autistic condition in which one dreams a world whose reality remains forever unattainable."⁸ Jung adds that "the more projections are thrust in between the subject and the environment, the harder it is for the ego to see through its illusions (Jung, p. 147). This describes, perfectly Aureliano's "love" for Remedios. As the beloved she is not irreducible and unique in the Romantic style. Rather, much like Dulcinea, she is instead a mere projection of Aureliano's self-desire, for Aureliano does not love an other, that is to say a woman inasmuch as Remedios is the promise of a woman and Pilar is the shadow of a woman. Aureliano's love, like Amaranta's or even Rebeca's is a narcissistic and solitary love (GM, p. 65). This propensity in her children's love, does not escape Ursula who many years later, after her son returns from the wars, mad in his absolute power, she concludes that he never loved anyone else but himself (GM, p.).

2. Work

Octavio Paz, following Sprager, situates solitude as the first stage of man's solitude to be broken by play and the world of magic the child creates for himself. The second stage comes with adolescence. Narcissus presides over these years. Extreme self

consciousness is eventually broken, Paz argues, by extreme giving of oneself (entrega). When the adolescent finally opens himself to the world he will do it in extreme fashion. Like the Buendías he will know great love, action, friendship and heroism. "La madurez no es etapa de la soledad" (Paz, p. 183) because man finds work and with it the creation of objects, ideas and institutions. "Su conciencia personal se une a otras: el tiempo adquiere sentido y fin, es historia, relación viviente y significativa con el pasado y el futuro" (Paz, p. 183).

It would seem however that García Márquez has chosen to re-elaborate this neat succession of personality stages, vis-a-vis solitude, with his characteristic disregard for developmental order, and on the surface at least presents us with one of the most bantered about theories of the Latin American personality: its eternal adolescence. The grown-up Buendías work, although not for a living. Work for them, inasmuch as it is activity, helps turn the gaze of the mind away from the self and onto otherness. But the same could be said of the child's play, for the Buendías do not seek, nor do they find in work a meaningful activity that extricates them from self regard and places their consciousness in contact with the other, or much less, render their labor a living relation between past and future. Quite the contrary, the Buendías see in work, in their repetitious non-accumulative and non-reproduction work (gold fish, shroud, deciphering of Melquíades xeroglyphs), the last refuge from society and at the same time the final reduct of solitude. For the adult Buendías work and solitude bite each other's tail, become self-reflective. It is the self prescribed daily antidote to solitude. Paradoxically, within it they find the repose and contemplation necessary for solitude. Work as play is indeed what the Buendías engage in their mature years and those years, after the magic of the sexual games is over, are years of complete and quiet solitude.

Work in Macondo is a solitary enterprise and creative work, such as the work attempted by JAB, takes place in a solitary room within the confines of an obsessive solitary imagination. Even though Karl Vossler notes that with the ascent of humanism solitude takes on the value of the "atrio que transponemos para entrar al reino del arte"⁹ and that "la soledad empezó a ser cada vez más, lugar de estudio, de, educación, de formación. . ./y/ las bellas artes y todas las musas se instalaron en ella" (Vossler, p. 63). The self-reflective nature of his work eventually leads JAB to madness. He gets there after having passed through fevers of absorption and seizures of activity, both of which take place in disregard for the world around him. His experiments are his play, and this attitude to knowledge, as it is keenly shown in the days of his final decline when he tinkers most successfully with Pietro Crespi's clock mechanism, is also a ludic. "Pietro Crespi filled

the house with music boxes, and "the fabulous mechanical fauna that brushed away Melquiades' death and transported him back to the old games of the alchemist" (GM, p. 70).*

Like a child's his imagination is a paradoxical mixture of obsession and fickleness. For an instant it seizes on an object but then it also moves freely from one magic novelty to another. The realization that on the other side of the rivers "right now there exist all sorts of magical contraptions," that more than one object can be seized at the same time, is almost greater than JAB's imagination can bear (GM, p. 14). At the height of his mature powers, we are told, that the "sopor of the mire," not unlike the effects of the diet Don Quijote consumes, and the fever of the magnets, not unlike the books Don Quijote reads, "destroyed his social initiative." The solitary exercise of his work represents a relapse into play. To call JAB's imagination creative would be misleading. His desire to understand as well as his experiments become a deadly combination which destroys the objective of his experiments. The corrosive nature of his imagination destroys Ursula's gold, burns wounds into his own flesh and takes apart Pietro Crespi's gifts. Just before he lapses into his final state of silence and immobility, tied to the great chestnut tree, "he lived in a paradise of disemboweled animals and shattered mechanism" (GM, p. 70). Inhabiting exclusively the space that Paz believes belongs to childhood, to the supreme exercise of the ego, JAB "no volvió a comer, se dejó arrastrar por la imaginación hacia un estado de delirio perpetuo del cual no se volvería a recuperar (GM, p. 72).

Work as feverish play, functions in Cien años de soledad as the last and not the first stage of solitude. In it the individual maintains a semblance of participation in family life. However, as the deceased imagination takes over the last recesses of the solitary mind the behavior of the individualist passes from relentless activity into total disregard for the needs of the body: movement, food, sleep. The behavior of these solitary beings resembles here the final consequences of Jung's theory of projection: autism. Aureliano, Amaranta, Rebeca, Jose Arcadio II, the last Aureliano, all refuse food, spend sleepless nights and motionless days. García Márquez calls this state "perpetual delirium" (p. 72). When work fails to integrate the individual into the community and acquires the solitary and self-indulgent fascination of play, it constitutes the passage, the threshold for the socially disengaged man into the realm of pure and secret solitude.

*All translations are mine.

3. Silence, memory and time

In the sleepless nights, in the dreamless sleep, in the total lucidity of the day, the monologue (GM, p. 72) appears as the first signal of a mind in the process of cleansing itself from all otherness. Thought becomes the negation of all possible dialectic with the world and even with the self. It can drift on reflecting exclusively itself until finally it achieves the purity of silence. All that flows comes to repose in the infinite space of solitude. The metaphor that García Márquez chooses for JAB's final lapse out of the world of oppositions, away from a dialectical sense of the self given in time, is precisely the image of chronological time stuck on Monday. Conscious of his own consciousness, JAB announces that "la maquina del tiempo se ha descompuesto" (GM, p.) and this becomes his farewell, the last words he is heard to address to anyone in the family. With such a realization he has divested himself of the great curse of time, the time that began to flow the day after Adam sank his teeth in the famous apple, and which condemns us to see ourselves today as different from yesterday and from tomorrow. Without this time to divide the even flow of self and to make the self dialectically reflexive, JAB enters the pure space of solitude where, because he is one with undifferentiated self, he lives in "un estado de inocencia total" (GM, p. 74). His consuming desire for knowledge has paradoxically led him to find its opposition. The man is now innocent. He knows nothing, not self and even guilt. The knowledge he could have achieved, indeed that Sarmiento would have urged him to acquire, has left no scars in this huge ageless child who took his pleasure not in running away from home for an overnight sojourn, but in founding Macondo, not in cutting and pasting paper planes, but in searching for a route out of the mire, not in playing money games with fake bills but in transforming all useless metals into the equally unnecessary gold.

But before reaching the threshold of the final, peaceful solitude--the yogi's or anchorite's ideal¹⁰--the Buendía individual must traverse the explored space of memory.¹¹ JAB like his descendants (Aureliano, Amaranta, Rebeca, JAB II, the last Aureliano, and even Ursula) make of personal memory the substitute terrain for the shadowy and eclipsing world of nature's laws, politics and love. Yet, the light needed to illuminate the features and contours etched by life in this unknown region is, again paradoxically, oblivion. Otherwise the result is likely to be a sort of "idiotez sin pasado" that the sleeplessness pest almost brought upon Macondo. However, the stages towards final solitude and "idiotez sin pasado" are remarkably alike: sleeplessness, diminished energy, loss of

speech, forgetfulness of all things except memories of childhood, confusion of the past and the future ("leer el pasado en las barajas"), and idiocy. Only the very last two stages differ. On the road to solitude what counts is the strict selection of memories as a prevention from falling into the indulgences of nostalgia or a totally imaginary past (GM, p. 48). As the selection of memories goes on eliminating and cleaning the space of recollection, it finally moves into the chamber of stillness and "allucinated lucidity" (GM, p. 45).

Here again, García Márquez's idea of solitude diverges notably from Paz's whose diagnosis of solitude as the inescapable fate of modern man (Godless man) is mitigated by nostalgia as well as the constant search for community (Paz, 175). If anything García Márquez dwells in the creation of a man condemned not to love (Paz, pp. 175-181) but rather to estrangement, rancor and incommunication.¹² Nostalgia of childhood or as Paz would say, of paradise, is not for the living in García Márquez's world. Nostalgia is only for those facing death, and may be for those who have not been tempered by life. "Arcadio encontró ridículo el formalismo de su muerte. En realidad no le importaba la muerte sino la vida, y por eso la sensación que experimentó cuando pronunciaron la sentencia no fue una sensación de miedo, sino de nostalgia" (GM, p. 107). Arcadio, a mere mortal youth, faces the firing squad long before he has had time for contemplation. The same nostalgia for life, and for his childhood encounter with ice fills the Colonel's mind the first time he faces the firing squad, the scene with which the whole novel begins. Arcadio's and even the Colonel's nostalgia, compared to Amaranta's contempt for it seems the feeble adieu of an inexperienced youth. Amaranta instead, "siempre a toda hora, dormida o despierta, en los instances más sublimes y en los más abyectos, pensaba en Rebeca, porque la soledad le había seleccionado los recuerdos y había incinerado los entorpecedores montones de nostalgia, que la vida había acumulado en su corazón y purificado, magnificado y eternizado los otros, los más amargos" (GM, p. 190). Rebeca, Amaranta's true mirror image (reverse) has not wasted her time in nostalgic indulgences either. Passing through the temptations of the desert of memory in "muchos años de sufrimiento y miseria /necesarios/ para conquistar los privilegios de la soledad" (GM, p. 191), Rebeca too eventually safely inhabits the purified state of solitude and rejects all the belated attentions and charities of Aureliano's sons.

Each Buendía, who reaches the "privileges of solitude" like a monk before entering his cell, burns away the past, leaving himself the bare essentials for the continuation of selfhood. In Rebeca's case this is very clearly stated: "El hambre de tierra, el cloc-cloc de los huesos de sus padres, la impaciencia de la sangre frente a la pasividad de Crespi, estaban relegados al desván de la memoria" (GM, p. 102). As the Colonel, after he has fought the last campaign

for his final defeat, arrives in Macondo with a trunk of written memories which he proceeds to burn after the treaty of Neerlandia is sealed, then he feels free to enter the cloister of his work room.

Life, transformed into a heap of memories, of dead leaves, becomes a burden for the person in need or in search of separation from the past and the privileges of solitude." In the end, the trouble with Macondo itself and the last of the Buendías is that the past, after Ursula's death, lingers on in the guise of nostalgia (p. 349). Macondo in ruins is thought of by the narrator as "pasado cuyo aniquilamiento no se consumaba, por que seguía aniquilandose indefinidamente, consumiéndose dentro de si mismo, sin acabar de acabarse jamas" (GM, p. 340). What Macondo needed in this scheme of the things of solitude, was a purifying fire, long before the return of Amaranta Ursula and her brother; a purifying fire that could cut it loose from the past long before the child monster is born and the Biblical wind carries Macondo and the last Aureliano away. In this way the world of Macondo would have had a human ending.

García Márquez, in denying even nostalgia as a link with the past and in seeing the past as debris to burn away and leave behind, has carried the isolation of his individual to an extreme position, surpassing even Sarmiento's worst fears, for the Buendías do not fall into barbarism, they fall right out of the species.

4. The body

The hard gaze of García Márquez's solitude, perched on the debris of the past, clears the inner space of memory and yet as it proceeds it also reclaims the body as the space of solitude. Three parts of the body are particularly subject to become the locus of solitude: the genes, the entrails (guts, womb) and the face. Like other physical characteristics, these can be inherited and life infectious or hereditary diseases they are contracted unwittingly. The filiation of all seventeen of the colonel's sons, for instance, is not a question of birth certificates, or of laboratory blood type matching. It is rather a question of blood in the sense of unmistakable physical resemblance for "todos /tenían/ un aire solitario que hubiera bastado para identificarlos (GM, p. 187). It should not surprise us then that their skin should take so indelibly to the ash Wednesday ashes, or that two of them (Aureliano Triste and Aureliano Centeno) should inherit the Buendía obsessions of connecting Macondo to the outside world by means of navigation or rail (GM, p. 192).

Solitude, more often than not, grows in the undistinguishable union of body and spirit that constitutes character. When it becomes distinctly visible, as it does in the cases of JAB and the Colonel, it appears, in our perception, after the time of the great travails is over. Consequently, we are tempted to think that solitude comes as a result of failure and disillusion in the world. This is not entirely incorrect. But perhaps this thinking corresponds more to force of habit on our part than to what Cien años de soledad in the main says about solitude, its locus and its dynamics. The extreme case, as extreme as the child with the pigtail, of congenital and chemically totalizing solitude is embodied in Remedios la Bella's solitary, unique and unprecedented beauty. Her perfect beauty is perceived by those around her by their sense of smell: "el olor de Remedios, su fragancia mortal" (GM, p. 203) and not by their vision. However, our canon of beauty is highly visual, even when "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" and not on the nose of the bewitched.

Remedios' consciousness is not really of this species. She is beyond Bachelard's idea that "the passions simmer and resimmer in solitude: the passionate being prepares his explosions and exploits in this solitude" (Bachelard, p. 9). Her consciousness does not register the accidents of human affairs and it does not seem to be even aware of itself, especially since self awareness means awareness of otherness. She, like an angel is "inmune a toda clase de sentimientos apasionados y mucho mas a los ajenos" (GM, p.). Remedios' solitude is so perfected and impregnable, that differing from the rest of the family, she does not need a cloister in order to live her estrangement. Her horrifyingly and deadly beauty "exalaba un flujo mortal" (GM, p. 202). Her totally unique body protects her solitude and gay indifference from all possible human vitiating contact. So very inhuman is her solitary body/soul that she is not long for this world of necessary but always incomplete community and estrangement, and thus she logically and naturally ascends to heaven.

Like her great-grandfather in the days of the chestnut tree, Remedios passes through this world in a total state of innocence and freedom. Without even the experience of "a primitive feeling such as love" (GM, p. 203) Remedios enters the final stage of solitude exactly as she was born, guiltless and without memories of nostalgia. Emulating JAB, she too ambulates throughout the featureless space, the "desert of solitude" (GM, p. 204) until one day, in imitation of the Virgin Mary, her sinless counterpart, she ascends in body and soul.¹³

Not only is solitude physically inherited, but the same is paradoxically true for madness (GM, p. 41), memories (GM, p. 13) and for the countenance of solitude. They are all passed on from

generation to generation, in the "blood." For Ursula, whose consciousness must closely represent the values of the reader, the extravagant hereditary madness of her children ("son locos de nacimiento," GM, p. 159) is frightfully similar to the pig's tail (GM, p. 41). Her simple logic leads her to understand the correct reading of the disease that affects her family. While the bodily features of solitude: high cheek bones, sunken cheeks, hard lips, pale, almost gray skin (GM, p. 111), solitary countenance (GM, p. 159), thin, tall and bony bodies (GM, p. 138), and piercing eyes, behave as dominant genes, the pigtail behaves like a receding gene, a gene that she believes her incestuous marriage brought into the family's constitution.

Once again Sarmiento's nightmare, that the solitude of the pampas had moved right into the womb (*entrañas*) of the nation, has been carried to its ultimate literal consequences by García Márquez. The Buendías' genes, inexorably pass solitude on to one another. In some, such as the Colonel and Amaranta, the consciousness of such physical attributes is felt like a constant coldness in the entrails (gut, heart, womb). Such cold is identical with solitude, it preserves their possessors from aging, from mellowing before the false warmth of nostalgia (GM, p. 133) and above all, it makes the solitary man capable of "*pensar en frío*" (GM, p.). Harboring coldness, although bitter, holds the key to the ultimate freedom of solitude: indifference to living.¹⁴

The body impregnable, physically holding within it the vast deserts or labyrinths of the purified space of solitude, eventually supercedes the closed house, the closed workroom, and the hermetically sealed bedroom (Rebeca) as the space necessary for solitude. If temptation to reopen contact with the outside world should ever occur, as it does in the case of the Colonel and Rebeca, the person in solitude finds his body his prison and his protection. The Colonel, for example, "*rasgano durante muchas horas tratando de romper la dura cascara de su soledad*" (GM, p.).

5. Complicity

If nostalgia of paradise and or childhood will not soften the impregnable solitude, if love will not put an end to Narcissus, to self infatuation and incest, and if work and marriage will not provide the social spaces for sharing and exchange with otherness, what can possibly prove the equalizing opposition in the dialectic of García Márquez's solitude? Although we may confuse the sexual extravagance and freedom of the Buendías with love, García Márquez takes care to show a significant difference between pleasure ("*el desierto del amor*," p. 152) and our modern neo-platonic spiritualization of sexual love.¹⁵ Describing, for instance, the last days of

Amaranta Ursula and the last Aureliano he says: "recluidos por la soledad y el amor y por la soledad del amor. . .eran los únicos seres felices y los mas felices de la tierra" (GM, p. 340).

Few, indeed, are the instances when two people, let alone a community, partake of each other and these are almost without exclusion, experiences of complicity, like the love of the two happy lovers, or the rare solidarity of the town or even the family during the years of war.

Father and son, in Cien años, can easily ignore that "natural" relation to the point of behaving like total strangers. When José Arcadio returns, his son, Arcadio, is already grown up and yet there is no reunion, not even recognition. Nevertheless, and in spite of Ursula's condemnation of the marriage between José Arcadio and Rebeca, Arcadio becomes a frequent visitor to their house and this is so because José Arcadio and Arcadio have a pact. Arcadio, as mayor, keeps the secret of José Arcadio's false property titles and José Arcadio in turn says nothing about Arcadio's squandering of public funds (GM, pp. 101-102).

A companionship, which could easily be confused with friendship, also grows between two other unlikely Buendías; the last José Arcadio and the last Aureliano. Both secretly know that each, incestuously, desires Amaranta Ursula, and so in chatting about other things and in sharing the space of the crumbling house they manage to "bear the depthless ("insondable") solitude which at once separated and united them" (GM, p. 316). In the same vein, a generation earlier, two other Buendías, found consolation for their solitude in a similar pact of pretended ignorance of the desired tabu. Amaranta and the nephew she brought up as a son, Aureliano José, in bed one night realize that "aunque aparentaron ignorar lo que ambos sabían; . . .desde aquella noche quedaron mancornados por una complicidad inviolable" (GM, pp. 126-127). The same Aureliano José, eventually rejected by Amaranta, and as all the Buendía males are programmed to do, seeks refuge in Pilar Ternera. Although this other incest does not get consummated either, "el y Pilar Ternera eran más que madre e hijo, complices en la soledad" (GM, p. 135). And the same is true even for the hardened and cold Aureliano. The only time when he allowed his feelings to register the presence of another human being as if it were his own, was the time when he and his brother shared in complicity the discovery of sex. García Márquez clarifies once more: "el único afecto. . . fue el que sintió por su hermano José Arcadio, cuando ambos eran niños y no estaban fundado en el amor, sino en la complicidad" (GM, p. 152). Even the friendship of the last Aureliano and Gabriel turns out to be a mirage of complicity, for the two men are set out from the rest of the group by their complicitous belief in the historical reality of the massacre.

6. Quietismo

For García Márquez, the individual does not live in solitude because sin separates him from God (Kierkegaard) or because birth cuts him from the womb (Paz) or because ignorance separates him from the consolation of knowledge (Sarmiento) or because the past is insurmountable (Paz). As I have shown, solitude is born in the chemistry of the body/spirit and it is identical to an ahistorical innocence. Furthermore such a state is not undesirable for it erases pain and desire and doing so it brings forth an equilibrium and indifference that negates the dynamics of change. García Márquez's individual lives at this point in the quiet of resignation, of not knowing and being lost, being "perdido en la soledad" (GM, p.).

The angst of existential man (Nietzsche, Dostoievski, Kierkegaard, Camus, Kafka) does not really have a place in the cloisters of Macondo either. The Godless Buendías inhabit the cell of solitude without a longing for divine or human love, for God or for country. Their solitude leave no room for an opposition that may attract it and set it in movement towards a synthesis with something other than itself. Solitude in Cien años de soledad is the final point to which the stream flows and as it does so the water pools in self-reflection and self-sufficiency. Denying the linear movement of logic, in extreme cases of innocence (JAB, Remedios la Bella), this solitude would seem to constitute a subject without an object and as such it must be seen closer to the mystical tradition¹⁶ than to the modern discourse of Godless man's sense of loss and aimlessness.

From the foregoing it should not surprise us, in spite of the much hailed modernity and indeed well-deserved labeling of the novel,¹⁷ though based on other aspects of it, that the process and the final state of solitude it posits (Aureliano, Amaranta, Rebeca, JAB, and JAB II, and even Ursula and the last Aureliano) have more in common with the solitude of the Illuminist Spanish movement of the seventeenth century than with our contemporary angst of solitude. If we take care to compare Miguel de Molinos's¹⁸ spiritual guide for the illuminated ("alumbrados," "perfectos," or "dejados") as they were called in their time, we will find a close parallelism of the movements and moments towards final solitude, in the inner lives of most of the Buendías who reach that state, with the steps that Molinos outlines for his followers. Also, we would do well in not forgetting that the attitude of the narrator of Cien años is not altogether negative to solitude, for he shows himself partial to Rebeca's uncompromising defense of her isolation and the "privileges of solitude."

Persecution of the "quietistas" was due in part to their heterodox religious beliefs. But the Inquisition was also aware of

the socially rebellious, though not revolutionary, tendencies of their behavior. Besides their negation of the value of action in the world (good deeds) and their total contempt for institutions, their behavior was strongly marked by a play-like attitude which often bordered on the pathological and went as far as "impostura y lascivia."¹⁹ Thus we cannot fail to see the similarities of the quietista's behavior to the Buendías total disregard for institutional life, their fascination with play and even the pathological profile of their personalities and sexual "freedom." What is even more striking is the coincidence in the language descriptive of the space of solitude to deserts, mirrors, paradise, infinite clear space, empty peaceful spaces of secret and immense distances. Above all, the space of solitude is silent and filled with light. In that incomparable light, in the light beyond memory, the soul, that is to say the self, because it is totally empty and totally nude, shines forth in wisdom.

Three inner movements of the spirit are necessary to reach solitude according to Molinos. Although exterior solitude helps in order to reach "la preciosa margarita de paz interior,"²⁰ the first requirement, as we saw earlier in the section on nostalgia and memory in Cien años, is divestment of memory²¹ for "consiste la interior soledad en el olvido" (Molinos, p. 166). The second requirement is silence and this itself is made of three parts: silence of words, silence of desires and silence of thoughts. "No hablando, no deseando, no pensando, se llega al verdadero y perfecto silencio místico, en el cual habla Dios con el ánima" (Molinos, p. 164). Finally comes forgetfulness and contempt for friends, parents and even disciples (Molinos, p. 164).

Such exercise of negation of the world with inaction and with total silence (Amaranta, Rebeca, Remedios la Bella, Santa Sofía de la Piedad, José Arcadio II, José Arcadio, less so the Colonel who cannot resist temptation as well as the others)²² rewards the soul with the contemplation of pure being or rather, nothingness (Heidegger). "Qué dichosa será tu alma y que bien empleada estará si entra dentro y se está con su nada allá en el centro, sin advertir lo que hace. . .sin mirar ni cuidar, ni atender a cosa de sensibilidad!" (Molinos, p. 163).

No more living, no more suffering, the soul and the body have achieved the indifferent gaze, the atemporal eye of the yogi whose total stillness stops the passage of time. Indifference to time, rejection of the past and the nostalgia of the past self, that is to say solitude, is what mandates the atemporal and synchronic structure of the narrative.²³ The astonishingly credulous and neutral perspective of the narrator (Melquíades), albeit counterpointed with Ursula's perspective, is also part and parcel of this quietismo²⁴ and not as it has been argued the influence of Marcel Schowb's of Virginia Woolf's fictional autobiographies.²⁵

In Cien años de soledad the characters no longer embark on the recovery of Proustian time. Decoding the structure of memory, "reimagining memory" as Bachelard would have us attempt is a search not quite compatible with the state of lucidity of the consciousness of solitude. This is not to say that solitude is not itself a way of spending time. In their cloisters and while working, the Buendías can indeed empty the contents of consciousness and contemplate the disrobing self. When Rebeca, having conquered all vanities (GM, p. 139) finally finds the peace of solitude, the few items left in her seared memory materialize "por la fuerza de la evocación implacable y se paseaban como seres humanos por los cuartos clausurados" (GM, p. 139). Consequent to this kind of objectivization of the self, the self overcomes the anguish of time and the differences that its passage brings to awareness of the world and the self itself. Strict concentration on selected contents of consciousness brings forth the freezing of time that I discussed earlier, and it also brings into focus Molino's paradox of being fully at the center of nothingness.

In the shimmering light of the desert of solitude, Amaranta can engage at length and without fear, the presence of death. For in solitude--the negation of the world--death as a parting from life, from the love of others, from meaningful activity, from the sense of existence that we derive from behaving as social and political animals becomes absurd. And so Amaranta sitting in the garden of the begonias, as advised by death itself, spends time weaving and unraveling her shroud "no con la esperanza de derrotar en esa forma a la soledad, sino todo lo contrario, para sustentarla." (GM, p. 222).

If the two great opposites of life and death can be made to shed their differential attributes, it should not be surprising, as Jean Franco has already pointed out, that many other differences of great significance to what we call life, should fail to matter in Macondo. In the space of solitude, children do not resemble their parents, they are identical with them (GM, p. 133) or with their siblings (GM, p. 151, twins). In politics the conservatives and the liberals are so much alike that to fight a war for the differences they could make in government is simply madness. Events distant and disconnected in time, therefore supposedly different, turn out to be so much alike in Macondo that Ursula's mounting sense of déjà vu makes her believe that time simply turns upon itself.

In the space of inner repose, where even the self disappears as an object of contemplation; in the space of total emptiness, there is nothing left to reflect.²⁶ Like the sea of Machado's poem, there appears in full sight the plenitude of solitude, for the self is left to reflect its very selfness.

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²See the essays in Helmy F. Giacomani, Homenaje a García Márquez (New York: Las Americas, 1972). Also Mario Benedetti et al., Nueve asedios a García Márquez (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 1969). Also Pedro Simón Martínez Ed., Sobre García Márquez (Montevideo: Biblioteca de Marcha, 1971).

³It should be remembered that the person Sarmiento has in mind for the foundation of his Argentina is the new settler of the Pampa and not the Gaucho.

⁴"El nuevo mundo recién descubierto, no estaba localizado aun en el planeta, ni tenía forma ninguna. Era una caprichosa extensión de tierra poblada de imagenes. . . . Los mapas antiguos no pueden darnos una idea aproximada de esos otros mapas absurdos de marchas y peligros y tesoros dibujados en la boca del oído," in Ezequiel Martínez Estrada, Radiografía de la Pampa (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1974), p. 9.

⁵Several characters seek refuge in Macondo after the original migration led by JAB. After the wars the Colonel "Buscó su último refugio en Macondo" (p. 147); "Melquíades decidió refugiarse en aquel rincón todavía no descubierto por la muerte" (p. 49) and JAB II after the massacre and his flight from the police finds refuge in the old family homestead and "hizo que echara candado a la puerta" (p. 265). These and all subsequent references are made to Gabriel García Márquez, Cien años de soledad (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1967).

⁶See Santa María, Diccionario de Americanismos.

⁷Octavio Paz, El Laberinto de la soledad (México: Fondo de la cultura económica, 1967), p. 175. All subsequent references are made to this edition.

⁸Joseph Campbell, Ed. The Portable Jung (New York: The Viking Press, 1974). This quotation comes from "Aion: The Phenomenology of the Self" on page 146 of this collection of Jung's essays. In the same essay Jung further explains that "as we know it is not the conscious subject but the unconscious that does the projecting. Hence

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one meets with projections, one does not make them. The effect of projection is to isolate the subject from environment, since instead of a real relation there is only an illusory one: (p. 146).

⁹Karl Vossler in La Poesía de la soledad en España (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1946), p. 80. All references are made to this edition.

¹⁰Vossler says that "La soledad como estado de ánimo es poco conocida en la antigüedad greco-romana," p. 35, and much later in the context of his analysis of the Spanish Illuminists he adds that "el quietismos español a veces se confunde con lo Indo," p. 171.

¹¹In order to illustrate I will cite the process of transition in JAB as García Márquez describes it. "Tuvo la impresión que en ese momento (sus hijos) habían empezado a existir concebidos por el conjuro de Ursula. . . . Algo ocurrió entonces en el interior, algo misterioso y definitivo que lo desarraigó de su tiempo actual y lo llevo a la deriva, por una región inexplorada de los recuerdos," p. 20.

¹²The threat to end all communication, to cut man apart from his own humanity forever, eventually materialized in the bodily solitude of the child born with the pig's tail, is already spelled out in the inverted synecdoche of the sleeplessness plague as a communicable disease. The conceptual pun is clever and its import is far reaching. The plague is literally on the mouth, on the maker of speech and thus by extension on memory. When this faculty is denied to the mouth, the body ceases to communicate and the mouth itself can revert to being simply the initial piece of the digestive tract, that is, it can revert to its merely "natural" functions.

¹³In one of those unusual moments, when the narrator openly judges a situation, he says that to bring her into the human fold a primitive feeling, such as love, would have been enough. And this statement goes beyond the situation of Remedios la Bella's. It affects the basis for the whole mythological reading of Cien años de soledad. The novel so hailed by so many for having been conceived in a mythic structure, within the mind set of the primitives of Levi-Bruhl, gives us characters incapable of "primitive feelings." If Levi-Strauss shows one thing in The Savage Mind it is that the primitives are capable of maintaining and living with a large and

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sophisticated array of feelings and empirical knowledge, which is not the overwhelming case with the characters of Cien años de soledad. While myth critics may prove very useful at the level of the superstructures within the novel, examined in detail, it becomes a great deal less convincing.

¹⁴Upon seeing her son back from the Caribbean campaign, Ursula recognizes in his body the inner transformation that the years of circular war have etched in the Colonel's original mild and easy solitude. "Estaba más pálido que cuando se fue, más pálido y óseo y manifestaba los primeros síntomas de resistencia a la nostalgia" (p. 138). Even the Colonel's realization that the war had been but a struggle for power and not ideological and that the only thing which can avert his turning into a monstrous dictator in his own defeat and thus his liberation, can be read in his face. Ursula decodes this content of consciousness and tells herself that "ahora parece un hombre capaz de todo" (p. 138).

¹⁵See Karl Vossler, op. cit., p. 36.

¹⁶"Solo en el místico olvido de si mismo coinciden soledad y unidad de universo," in Karl Vossler, op. cit., p. 33.

¹⁷For a balanced view of modernity in this novel see Emir Rodríguez Monegal, "Novedad y Anacronismo en Cien años de soledad," in Helmy Giacomani (ed.), op. cit., pp. 13-42.

¹⁸For a fuller reference see Miguel de Molinos, Guia espiritual (Rome, 1675). All reference in this paper are made to the selections that Karl Vossler includes in his La poesía de la soledad en España, op. cit., pp. 160-168.

¹⁹See Karl Vossler, op. cit., p. 158.

²⁰See Molinos as included in Karl Vossler, op. cit., p. 166.

²¹At this moment the characters of Cien años de soledad have passed the stage in which according to Bachelard theory of creative thought and reverie "all memory has to be reimagined. For we have in our memories micro-films that can only be read if they are lighted by the bright light of the imagination," in Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, translated by María Jolas (Boston: The Orion Press), p. 175.

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²²"Lo atormento la definitiva certidumbre de que había sido un error no proseguir la guerra hasta sus últimas consecuencias," p. 206. But he rejects the idea so as not to be like other veterans "sobreviviendo de rabia, pudriéndose de viejos en la exquisita mierda de la gloria," p. 120.

²³In Cien años, no longer do we recover time coded in memory in the manner of Proust, whose sense of self dwelled inscribed in memory and writing, in the kind of memory Bachelard privileges as the new space of imagination.

²⁴Godless as the solitude of the Buendías turns out to be, it is not a black solitude, it is not quite the supervalorization of Nietzsche's ego. Neither can one say that the rural solitude of Macondo has truly a coincidental profile with the sweet and light solitude of the Renaissance heirs of Horace, Virgil and Cicero (see Vossler, pp. 61, 74). The sweet and light solitude of those who leave the court and retire to the "attenuated sociability" of the "descansada vida del que huye del mundanal ruido" of Fray Luis de Leon or Sâ de Miranda is simply not cut out of the same cloth as the uncompromising solitude of the cloisters of Macondo.

²⁵See especially, Susane Jill Levine, "Cien años de soledad" y la tradición de la biografía imaginaria," in Helmy Giacomani (ed.), op. cit., pp. 185-196.

²⁶That space can be as large as the sea, as concrete as Macondo, as intimate as one's laboratory or sewing room and as ridiculous as the Colonel's circle of chalk, where Aureliano felt "disperso, repetido y más solitario que nunca; . . .extraviado en la soledad del poder," p. 146.