

*One Hundred Years of Solitude*

Critical Reception

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For Gabriel García Márquez and the history of Spanish American literature, 2007 was a momentous year, one that, as newspapers around the world framed it, seemed to underscore the ever-growing myth of the author and his magical realist work. Twenty-five years had passed since the Colombian writer received the Nobel Prize for Literature and sixty since his first short story was published in a Colombian newspaper. The same year the Royal Spanish Academy celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the publication of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (*Cien años de soledad*, 1967) and the eightieth birthday of its author by publishing a commemorative edition of the novel. Featuring two commemorative notes by "Gabo's" friends, Álvaro Mutis and Carlos Fuentes, excerpts from Mario Vargas Llosa's important work *García Márquez: Historia de un deicidio*, as well as six additional pieces by Spanish and Latin American writers and scholars, the commemorative book was presented during the Congress of Language in the Caribbean city of Cartagena. A close look at these commemorative pieces reveals what perhaps is one of the main characteristics underlying a large portion of the critical works produced on *One Hundred Years of Solitude*: because they approach the novel as a classic, they elevate it to that untouchable pedestal to which some works of art are condemned, a place where their aesthetic attributes are so highly praised as to inhibit actual analysis.

*One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the type of classic that pleases the most sophisticated literary critics and the general public alike. García Márquez's novel has been translated into more than thirty-five languages and sold 30 million copies. And, as if these achievements were not enough to enshrine the novel into the realm of the classics, when the Royal Swedish Academy gave García Márquez the Nobel Prize in 1982, it did so in recognition not just of the success of his work but also of his social and political commitment. Perhaps Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges is the only other author whose literary works are considered "classic" in Spanish America; however, it has become commonplace for literary critics and commentators to point out that Borges lacked the kind of social and political commitment the Swedish Academy requires of its laureates.

To some extent, critical works written about *One Hundred Years of Solitude* have themselves been blemished by the novel's increasing canonization soon after its publication in the midst of the so-called "boom" of Latin American literature as well as by the demigod stature of its author. The consecration of the novel as a classic by literary institutions, critics, and writers is a matter to be taken into account when looking at these works. Each piece written about the novel establishes a dialogue with it but must also be read along with or in opposition to a vast network of critical texts.

It was not until Spanish editor Francisco Porrúa published *One Hundred Years of Solitude* with Sudamericana, a famous printing house based in Buenos Aires, that García Márquez became better known outside of Colombia and started to be widely read in the Spanish-speaking world. Prior to the novel's publication in

1967, García Márquez had already published an important body of work revolving around the permanent state of violence that was peaking in Colombia at that time. These works included *Leaf Storm* (*La hojarasca*, 1955), *Nobody Writes to the Colonel* (*El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*, 1961), *Big Mama's Funeral* (*Los funerales de la Mamá Grande*, 1962) and *In Evil Hour* (*La mala hora*, 1962). However, despite the acknowledged quality of these early works, until 1967 García Márquez had only attracted the attention of a select number of writers and critics, mostly in the academic circles.

Conceived in the author's imagination over the course of several years and written during his exile in Mexico between May of 1965 and December of 1966, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* would bring its author fame and long-awaited financial security. An international reputation would quickly follow, as would the critical works devoted to analyzing the novel. In most cases, the novel's initial reception was positive. Among the few exceptions, two comments stand out. On the one hand, Jorge Luis Borges sarcastically joked about the novel's excessive length, saying that it should have been called "Fifty Years of Solitude." On the other, Guatemalan writer Miguel Ángel Asturias declared that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* plagiarized Honoré Balzac's *La Recherche de l'absolu*.

A good example of the variety of critical works produced during the first fifteen years following the publication of the novel is Peter G. Earle's anthology, *García Márquez*. The volume compiles essays by international novelists and critics and includes two interviews with the author, the one made by William Kennedy being particularly noteworthy as it is the first García Márquez granted to an American. Among the novelists, Carlos Fuentes and Reinaldo Arenas share with García Márquez an abiding interest in Latin American history and the borders between myth and reality. Their analyses of the novel both express these interests.

Of the seventeen critical articles included in Earle's book (six of them dealing with the works that preceded the publication of this novel, seven devoted to the novel itself, and four addressing the works that followed), one of the most interesting is "Macondo en París," by Tzvetan Todorov. Here, Todorov, an internationally recognized critic known for his studies on modern literature and the genre of the fantastic, argues that a conflict between two literary traditions plays out in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. On the one hand is the novelistic tradition, which began taking shape during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, that emphasizes the individual consciousness; on the other is the epic tradition, which has sporadically surfaced throughout the history of literature, that centers on the collective history. The author traces these traditions in García Márquez's work by connecting them with the work of the 16<sup>th</sup> century French writer François Rabelais. Todorov finds that three elements essential to *One Hundred Years of Solitude* are also present in Rabelais: laughter, excess, and bodily functions. By carefully analyzing García Márquez's characters and the complex relations that they establish within the narrative, Todorov concludes that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* participates in the epic tradition while simultaneously remaining attached to the novelistic genre.

The majority of critical pieces written on *One Hundred Years of Solitude* at least partially follow Todorov in examining the novel's connections with the works of other authors—what literary theorists understand as intertextuality, or how multiple texts function within another, single text. Most of these critical studies refer to the works of Rabelais, Miguel de Cervantes, Albert Camus, and, as we will later see, Sophocles. Comparisons between García Márquez's Macondo and William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha are also abundant as are those between the novel and the Bible.

At the center of the critical body surrounding *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, one debate in particular stands out because of the participants' notoriety and because of how, in retrospect, it would mark out ideological distinctions. On one side was Mario Vargas Llosa, who in 1971 published an almost seven hundred page long study entitled *Historia de un deicidio*. Not reprinted until 2007, this "History of a Deicide" described *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as a "totalizing" novel and examined the opposition that the novel establishes between the fictional and the real. According to Vargas Llosa, the fiction of the novel competes with the real, taking it over and supplanting it—hence the idea of deicide, or the murder of God, as the self-sufficient world of the novel replaces the world created by God. Following the publication of this book, Uruguayan scholar Ángel Rama criticized Vargas Llosa for using a teleological language that contradicted Latin Americans then-current attempts to find critical tools to adequately describe their unique and changing cultural reality. In Rama's view, instead of understanding the author as a producer who was a participant in a certain cultural market, Vargas Llosa was adhering to the old-fashioned romantic belief of the author as someone inspired by the muses or as some creature possessed by demons. Vargas Llosa's thesis, in the end, was "archaic," in Rama's assessment, and used circuitous metaphors instead of well-founded critical definitions.

Interestingly, the types of critical and methodological approaches that Vargas Llosa employed almost four decades ago, and that Rama criticized as old fashioned, are similar to those readers can find in the commemorative edition prepared by the Royal Spanish Academy in 2007. Within it, analysis is often replaced by tautological definitions and bombastic praise for the author's ability to accomplish the "cyclopean" task of creating for the Americas an all-inclusive mythical town in which everything seems possible.

Rama's remarks touched off an exchange between him and Vargas Llosa in the Uruguayan weekly *Marcha* between May and September of 1972. The writers' positions were part of the time's larger debate over how the literature of the relatively new Latin American nations—a literature that was gaining international recognition through the works of authors such as García Márquez, Julio Cortázar, Carlos Fuentes, and Vargas Llosa himself—ought to be approached. Was a literary work to be considered independently of its context, as the creation of an isolated mastermind, as Vargas Llosa seemed to suggest? Or should it instead be read, as the new generation of critics lead by Rama would argue, in the context of the ideological discourses in which it was inscribed and as a product of the social, political, and economic structures of the region from which it emerged?

The fascinating debate between Rama and Vargas Llosa was compiled as a book a year later, in 1973, and readers interested in situating García Márquez's novel in the intellectual atmosphere of the period will discover that its publication triggered a debate about the very nature of novelistic language and the dynamic relationships between novels, writers, readers, and society.

After the publication of his thesis on *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Vargas Llosa and García Márquez had a dispute that caused the book to vanish from the bookstores' shelves. Though the reasons for the falling out remain unclear—the political differences between the right-wing Vargas Llosa and the left-leaning García Márquez, who supported the Cuban Revolution and maintains a lasting friendship with Fidel Castro, are often cited—it continues to be among the most famous affairs of the Latin American literary world. But beyond the anecdotal and personal twists of the story, it is worth keeping in mind that in Latin America the economic, political, and cultural spheres have more often than not been intricately interrelated, and the success of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* cannot be comprehended outside of this context. The “boom” as a market phenomenon, and the unprecedented reception of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by the reading public, are to be regarded in light of it. Jorge Lafforgue summarizes the phenomenon by explaining how, when the novel came out in the mid-sixties, a wave of political and economic optimism driven by the triumph of the Cuban Revolution dominated the continent. This feeling corresponded with a rebirth of the printing industry in Spain, an increase in the number of Spanish language readers, and the emergence of a huge number of journals and conferences devoted to the study of this massive new literary production.

Readers will find that, along with Vargas Llosa, other writers of the “boom” contributed autobiographical or critical perspectives on the period that are crucial to understanding the context surrounding the critical reception of García Márquez's novel. In 1972 Chilean author José Donoso wrote *Historia personal del boom*, later to be published in English as *The Boom in Spanish American Literature, A Personal History*. A somewhat bitter and, as the title suggests, very personal perspective on the boom, the book does not offer a critical analysis of García Márquez's novel but rather provides an interesting account of the commercial phenomenon surrounding its publication. With its sharp statements on several of the novels published during that period, along with quite a bit of literary gossip, Donoso's is a good introduction to the history of the growth of the editorial enterprise, the internationalization of the novel, and the rebirth and innovation of the novelistic genre in Latin America, a genre that, until then, had been limited to the *costumbrismo* and the “social denounce.”<sup>1</sup> As described by Donoso, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* triggered and nurtured the whole boom phenomenon.

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<sup>1</sup> *Costumbrismo* refers to the literary representation of everyday life and manners in a rather simplistic way. Originating in Spain in the 19th century as part of Romanticism, it also became popular in the Americas. Unlike realistic representations, *costumbrismo* does not make a critique of the reality that it depicts.

Another work written by one of the main protagonists of the “boom” is *La nueva novela hispanoamericana* (“The new Spanish American novel,” 1969), by Carlos Fuentes. The Mexican author tells the story of how the new novelists founded a new Latin American literature by developing a new language and by proposing an innovative, radical approach to the representation of time and history. He also traces the genealogy of this new narrative, affirming that what made it possible for the great novels of the “boom” to be written was the prose of authors like Juan Rulfo and Jorge Luis Borges, who introduced a mythical dimension that was absent before, and who faced the tension between two apparently contradicting perspectives that previous Spanish American writers seemed to be unable to resolve: to be universal artists and yet maintain a national outlook. Thus, Fuentes’ analysis revolves around Alejo Carpentier’s *The Lost Steps* (*Los pasos perdidos*, 1962), Julio Cortázar’s *Hopscotch* (*Rayuela*, 1963), Mario Vargas Llosa’s *The Time of the Hero* (*La ciudad y los perros*, 1962), José Donoso’s *Hell Has No Limits* (*El lugar sin límites*, 1966) and García Márquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Although *The new Spanish American novel* has not been translated into English, a similar essay by Fuentes, “Gabriel García Márquez and the invention of America,” was included in his collection *Mysself with Others: Selected Essays*.

A main critical trend has explored the place of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in the subgenre of magical realism, with some critics claiming it as greatest expression of the subgenre. Such an affirmation is in fact controversial, as other critics have pointed out that the importance of the subgenre has been overstated, resulting in the mislabeling of the majority of Latin American literature as magical realist and the consequent oversight of the heterogeneity of writers across the continent and the dismissal of the broad variety of national realities. According to Argentine writer, journalist, and scholar Tomás Eloy Martínez, the term is an erroneous way of referring to a whole body of literature and in fact can only be applied to *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. As he states it, not even Alejo Carpentier’s writings can be described as magical realist, since the Cuban writer described his work with a term of his own creation, “marvelous realist.”

The term magical realism was coined in 1925 by the German art critic Franz Roh, who described the “magic” perceived in the real elements represented in a certain type of post-Expressionist painting. Extrapolated to the Latin American context in 1955, the concept has been applied to literary works in which some form of magic materializes in everyday reality. As Seymour Menton points out, the use of the term has been responsible for giving international fame to authors such as Borges, Carpentier, Asturias, Cortázar, Rulfo and García Márquez. In a conference paper delivered at the University of Kentucky in 1973 and later published in *El realismo mágico y otros ensayos* (“Magic Realism and Other Essays”), renowned critic Enrique Anderson Imbert laid out a theoretical

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The novel of social denounce, on the other hand, originates in Spanish American naturalism and is typical of the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its main goal is to denounce unjust social situations and the exploitation of certain underprivileged class or race (indigenous peoples, immigrants, the proletariat).

framework aimed at differentiating the fantastic and the magical realist by finding similarities between and establishing frontiers around the two sub-genres. He wrote that if the fantastic took life in the realm of the unnatural, where natural laws are broken or completely subverted, magical realism belonged to the realm of the strange, where reality is merely deformed, partially due to the character's own disturbed minds. He also said that the difference was in that magical realism, "instead of presenting magic as real, it presented reality as magic" {my translation] (Anderson Imbert 1975, 42).

However, within the same year, in a congress organized by the International Institute of Iberic-American Literature with the specific purpose of discussing magical realism, Uruguayan critic Emir Rodríguez Monegal made the case for the elimination of the term due to the "dialogue of deafness" that its use was creating among his colleagues. Already controversial during the 1970s, Anderson Imbert's definitions are nowadays mocked by critics such as Jorge Lafforgue, who describes them as "pitiful" and nothing but "the true plague of pseudo critical language" [my translation].

Nevertheless, this despite the refutations of some of their peers, during the seventies critics such as Graciela Maturo and, later, Seymour Menton became interested in exploring magical realist characteristics in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Problematically, the labeling of all of García Marquez's works—along with many other works by Spanish American authors—as magical realist still continues to be a prevailing trend in American academia. One should point out that, ultimately, the true tragedy of the overuse of the term lies in the homogenization of an otherwise rich literature and in the misunderstanding of Latin American realities. One of the misunderstandings originating with this generalization has been the trivialization of Latin American political and social situations in which violence or poverty do not always wear magical masks. If we consider García Márquez's own perspective, we might conclude that, more than anything else, magic realism takes a broad attitude toward life itself: "I think that if you know how to look, things of everyday life can become extraordinary. Daily reality is magic but people have lost their ingenuity and they don't pay attention anymore" [my translation] (qtd. in Menton 1998).

Readers wanting to explore specific characteristics of magical realism in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* might want to look at Menton's *Historia verdadera del realismo mágico* (*True Story of Magic Realism*). Here, the author extensively explains the genealogy of the term and devotes an entire chapter to the analysis of specific elements in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*—such as time and space; the chestnut tree; fire and ice; platonic and sexual love—and explains how they are treated in a magic realist manner. In its appendix, the book includes an international chronology of the term that can be of use for students wishing to situate magical realism in a Latin American and international context. Those interested in exploring *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in these contexts will also find in Stephen Hart's and Wen-chin Ouyang's *A Companion to Magical Realism* five articles on the works of the Colombian writer, one of them dealing specifically with his most famous novel.

In 1972, the first edition Josefina Ludmer's *Cien años de soledad: una interpretación* (*One Hundred Years of Solitude: An Interpretation*) was published. Arguing that the novel is built on a family tree and the myth of Oedipus, her book presents itself as a meticulously sharp structuralist analysis of the text. In analyzing myth as a people's—specifically, Macondo's and the Buendía family's—means of collective communication and in pointing out incest as a universal taboo in which the universality of the novel's message is founded, Ludmer agrees with many critics who underline the universal quality of García Marquez's work.

Readers interested in exploring the dense network of relationships, doubles, mirror images, and oppositions running through the novel's characters will find Ludmer's formal scrutiny to be exhaustive. It is worth looking at an example of her structural inquisition. In order to demonstrate that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is "written twice and as a mirror" (i.e., that the first ten chapters tell a story and the second ten tell it again, inversely), Ludmer finds several "double inscriptions" or "internal duplications" that saturate the narrative. Among many others, these double inscriptions include: two lost wars, the first one Auerlano's and the second José Arcadio's; two uncles who teach their nephews to read, the first Aureliano, who teaches Arcadio, and the second José Arcadio, who teaches the last of the Aurelianos; Aureliano José loses his innocence to his aunt Amaranta in the first part and José Arcadio does it in the second part (Ludmer 139).

Also, those interested in the critical debate going on in Latin America immediately after *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was published will find Ludmer's "Prologue" to be a sort of manifesto of structuralist criticism. Borrowing from psychoanalytic and ideological systems of thought, Ludmer puts to work a series of structuralist schemes aimed at throwing out two kinds of critical trends. On the one hand, she discards the type of sociological criticism that places a strong focus on understanding the authors as subjects and sees their works as the products of specific epochs and personal biography. On the other hand, she also rejects the type of ornamental and subjective criticism that tries to compete, or even meld, with the very literature it analyzes.

Alongside the "boom," the epicenter of which was *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Spanish speakers also witnessed a proliferation of new anthologies of criticism devoted to the boom authors and their literature, their novels especially. It was not until the 1980s that the phenomenon reached the United States. At that time, structuralist analyses of all sorts were popular in both U.S. and Latin American academic circles, and García Marquez's monumental novel lent itself well to such theories, allowing critics to draw on a variety of concepts like Russian formalist Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of carnivalization or French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss' approach to myth.

Published in 1981 and 1984 respectively, Regina Janes' *García Márquez: Revolutions in Wonderland* and Raymond L. Williams' *Gabriel García Márquez* are two of the first book-length analyses on the author to appear in the U.S. Offering biographical, political, and historical contexts for García Márquez's works in general, they both summarize major critical trends in reading *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in particular, such as the analysis of myth, intertextuality, and magical

realism, and they constitute a good start for readers who are not fluent in Spanish.

The rewriting of the national history and the universal meanings that Gabriel García Márquez presented in his novel, and that his critics interpreted, created an expansive wave that, though originating in Colombia, swept across all of Spanish America. The influence of the novel and its implications for readers across the region have been referred to as the “Macondo phenomenon” in which, as Colombianist researcher Raymond L. Williams explained, critics have played an essential role. Readers in a country with a small tradition of literary criticism had never before seen such an enormous amount of critical work about one of their living authors. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* created a literary watershed in Colombia. Overwhelmed by the novel’s long shadow, the country’s writers had to take a stand, either by imitating it or trying to overcome it. Williams writes that it was García Márquez himself who was one of the authors to address the matter of the novel’s impact as he questioned the validity of the critical interpretations of his novel and reacted to the “rationalist” explanations of his literary creation. In fact, by affirming that “reality is a better writer than us” and that “our destiny, and perhaps our glory, is to try to imitate it with humility, as best as we can,” García Márquez rejects most of the critical interpretations that try to explain the magical elements of his work based on the rational systems of thought that we are so used to employ [my translation] (García Márquez 1979; qtd. in Williams 1981).

Following the publication of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, García Márquez published the collection of short stories *Innocent Eréndira and Other Stories* (*La increíble y triste historia de la Cándida Eréndira y su abuela desalmada*, 1972) and the novel *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (*El otoño del patriarca*, 1975). This last is considered one of the canonical García Márquez works along with *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *No One Writes to the Colonel*, and *Love in the Time of Cholera* (*El amor en los tiempos del cólera*, 1985). According to Williams, *Innocent Eréndira* and *The Autumn of the Patriarch* can be read as García Márquez’s response to the Macondo phenomenon. For example, he understands “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” (“Un señor muy viejo con unas alas enormes”), the first story included in *Innocent Eréndira*, to be about the problem of interpretation and an author’s statement on the “epidemic” flows of interpretation that followed the publication of his famous novel. *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, for its part, proposes to transcend the “Macondo cycle” by overcoming the archetypical figures of his previous novel and focusing on the psychology of a dictator. In this novel, the focal point is not Colombia but Latin America (Williams 1981).

Another important critical anthology on García Márquez is the one published by Harold Bloom in 1988 and subsequently reprinted. Most of the articles in this anthology deal with *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and include topics such as myth, science, history, intertextuality, translation, and politics. Regina Janes’ “Liberals, Conservatives, and Bananas: Colombian Politics in the Fictions of Gabriel García Márquez” offers a profound analysis on the author’s satirical approach to social and political issues. Following this anthology, Bloom co edited

a volume compiling twelve critical pieces devoted solely to *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

In 1994, Bloom published his famous and controversial *Western Canon* in which he argued in favor of the “autonomy of the aesthetic” and repudiated the use of ideology in literary criticism. A product of ideology like any other piece of critical work, Bloom’s book included extensive lists of canonical Anglophone works and shorter lists of works in other languages. On one of these lists, titled “Canonical Prophecy,” were two of García Márquez’s novels, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Love in the Time of Cholera*.

A lot has been said and written about the first sentence in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*: “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.” In his article “Exchange System in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*,” Julio Ortega compares the freedom of the writing process to the combinatory freedom of language itself, and analyzes how these freedoms are passed on to us, the readers, through the narrative process. In that first sentence, Ortega says, García Márquez breaks with the tradition of “Once upon a time.” Instead of bringing us, readers, directly to the past, the novel promises us a future within the past narrative, placing us in that “back-and-forth motion of reading.” Thus, as we are promised a fabular “later” that will follow the present in which we are reading, “the novel’s initial sentence defines our role in the contract –we are made of, and for, reading” (Ortega 1-2).

In the second section of this article, Ortega uses Bakhtin’s concept of carnivalization to analyze the function of time as “a signifier in the story” (5). Like Josefina Ludmer, Ortega also addresses the Oedipus myth; however, what we see in his analysis is that, in opposition to the classic myth and in alignment with the upside down world of carnival, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* replaces the Oedipus complex with an “Oedipus conversion” (8). According to Ortega, this is because in the novel paternity is erratic and, as the last of the Aurelianós’ ignorance of his family origins proves, legitimacy and real fatherhood are put into question.

Finally, the third section of this significant article deals with the dysfunctional use of certain objects in the novel (daguerreotypes, ice, a magnet, a mule), and the new meanings and values that these objects acquire throughout the narration. Entitled “Writing and the Economy of Self Deconstruction,” this last section illustrates yet another theoretical approach to *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. This time, the main concept is borrowed from Jacques Derrida’s theory of deconstruction, the idea that every text contains the process for its own self-dismantlement. Consistent with the proposal enunciated in the title, Ortega’s article concludes that even the novel’s characters undergo the process of exchange. Thus, for example, Remedios the Beauty is an apparition that can only be “exchanged” by its own disappearance.

More recently, feminist critics have been paying attention to gender relationships in García Márquez’s novel. Although one can affirm that not enough attention was paid to the subject during at least the first two decades following the

publication of the novel, it is also fair to say that feminist criticism only gained prominence on the international level during the 1960s and 1970s, becoming established in Latin American circles only in the 1980s. While several critical pieces dealing with the main female characters in the novel (Úrsula Iguarán, Pilar Ternera, Remedios the Beauty, Petra Cotes) were written during these early years, the feminist perspective was lacking.

Among the feminist works that have considered the novel, it is worth mentioning Alessandra Luiselli's recent article "Los demonios en torno a la cama del rey: pederastia e incesto en *Memorias de mis putas tristes* de Gabriel García Márquez" ("The Demons Around the King's Bed: Pedophilia and Incest in *Memories of My Melancholy Whores*," 2006). The piece does not deal with *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in particular but, as the title suggests, with García Márquez's last novel *Memorias de mis putas tristes* (*Memories of my Melancholy Whores*, 2004). However, Spanish language readers will find it interesting to look at the author's analysis of the treatment of women in four of García Márquez's novels, including *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

According to Luiselli, the time has come, well into the twentieth century, to declare that: "there exists an incestuous and pedophile narrative in the 'classic' García Márquez's narratives" [my translation]. In analyzing the Nobel laureate's last novel, Luiselli compares it with *The House of the Sleeping Beauties* (1961), a novel by another Nobel laureate, Japanese author Yasinari Kawabata, which García Márquez acknowledges as an inspiration for his own novel by quoting a sentence from it at the beginning of his novel. Luiselli argues that none of the philosophical depth referred to in Kawabata's story, such as the sublime beauty of the poetic form of the haiku, can be found in García Márquez's. According to the author's mordacious criticism, the novel should be called "Sad Memories of My Whores." However, what is most important to point out here is that, in her search for characters that "use the explanation of love as a discharge for their pedophile tendencies," Luiselli follows in the steps of several of García Márquez's characters, and the first one on the list is Aureliano Buendía and his love for the young Remedios the Beauty, a sharp and important position to consider when dealing with García Márquez's "untouchable" classic.

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