

One hundred years of corruption

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The novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is one with the allusion of corruption. “ It’s funny how men spend their lives fighting preachers yet offering prayer books as gifts” (176 Marquez). The quotation demonstrates the irony of the small town. The town seeks opportunities to greaten society, yet it is that action that is leading to the downfall. Within a society that becomes corrupted with the arrival of the outside world, Gabriel Garcia Marquez could be eluding to the corruption within our own society.

War, the institution of government, and the acquiescence for wealth are the corrupting factors of not only Macondo, but of society today. Macondo is located in a world unknown. Marquez never directly identifies where the setting of the novel takes place. Whenever an outside presence enters the town such as gypsies, medical doctors, foreigners, or even the force of government, either chaos ensues or a fatality is struck. It is as though the corruption among the society of fragmented individuals occurs from these outside presences.

Marquez is trying to warn the present world of the fatalities that can lead to the corruption of the society. Marquez connects the novel to the outside world not only through the elusive location, but also through the similarities in names. The names of the main characters are all similar in spelling and within pronunciation. Marquez’s culture could be one explanation for why the names are similar, however their maybe a deeper meaning to it all. Marquez created these characters with faults that allude to different pieces of corruption. For example, Colonel Aureliano Buendia represents the struggle for power within a society and how mankind believes that power is the key to success.

Another significant character demonstrating a piece of corruption is the handsome Jose Arcadio Segundo. Jose Arcadio Segundo swept up with the consumption of wealth connects the small town to the industrial world. By not being able to identify one part of individual or piece of corruption within the novel Marquez demonstrates the evil twist that exists, that all of these parts of corruption are tied together. It is the evil twist that Ursula detects and exclaims, “ We’ll turn to ashes in this house without men, but we won’t give this miserable town the pleasure of seeing us weep” (191 Marquez). The quotation reflects that without power the town would fall not being able to withstand the corruption that would ensue without the men’s strength.

The connection of the outside world to the town of Macondo proves that this connection cannot always bring prosperity. “ It was as if God had decided to put to the test every capacity for surprise and was keeping the inhabitants of Macondo in a permanent alternation between excitement and disappointment, doubt and revelation, to such an extreme that no one knew for certain where the limits of reality lay.” (242 Marquez) Marquez uses this quotation to show to demonstrate the temptation of corruption and how it progresses as a society advances. War will lead to the destruction of society. The war within the novel between the liberals and the conservatives is one that does not allow the community to prosper.

This war starts with the institution of government. Government as Jose Arcadio Buendia predicts will only bring about evil onto society. This evil will occur when a man will seek power and wish to enhance this power to strengthen his name. While the individuals of Macondo are living in a free state of nature, without any form of government the town prospered and

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continued to advance. However, when the institution of government is instilled the society begins to fall into corruption. The instillation of the governmental system brought on war which prompted Ursula exclaim " Dear Lord, make us poor again the way we were when we founded this town so that you will not collect for this squandering in the other life" (209 Marquez).

Ursula is referring to the time where, there was peace and liberty, when Macondo was originally founded. " The only human trace left by that voracious blast was a glove belonging to Patricia Brown in an automobile smothered in wild pansies" (356 Marquez), demonstrates Marquez's use of the destruction of the town through the flood symbolizes Marquez's want to reconstruct society. Marquez then indicates to the reader that society needs to return to the foundations of civilization. The society of Macando is founded upon the principles of loyalty, love, government, money, and war. Ursula quotes often for her wish that soon her old town can be restored to peace. She makes this exclamation, yet she realizes that the only way to restore peace back into the society founded on these immoral beliefs would be to accept the fact that there is corruption and then rid that corruption out.

" Had understood that he would never leave races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on Earth"(448 Marquez), by the finish of the novel Marquez warns the public of the evils of corruption and immorality. Gabriel Garcia Marquez wishes to end the corruption not only by destroying of Macondo, but also by destroying corruption within society today.