

What does colonel aponte represent about society? essay sample

[Government](#), [Military](#)



How was your understanding of cultural and contextual considerations of the work developed through the interactive oral?

I found that the interactive oral was very useful to understand the novella and various messages/symbols that are portrayed. It helped me realize many things about Chronicle of a Death Foretold and about Colombian culture back at that time since the novella is set up in Colombia.

One of the first things we noticed were how honor and virginity in women played a big role in the fundamentals of the community and how killing for honor was thought as a right thing. We also understand that Colombia was and still is a very religious country. This is portrayed by the act of Bayardo San Roman in refusing Angela Vicario because he married her but she was not a virgin and as we all know, the bible clearly says that a Christian women must be virgin until the marriage and if not the husband was allowed to refuse her or even kill her. Honor was also very important for Colombians, so important that they would kill for it. This is portrayed by the Vicario brothers because of how for the honor of their family and their sister they went and killed Santiago, and the interesting thing is that the murder of Santiago Nasar is actually based on a true murder that took place in Colombia.

Another motif that we explored was corruption. What left me a bit astonished when I read the novella was the fact that law was corrupted in an unusual way; an example can be Officer Pornoy and how he did not do his job correctly in stopping the Vicario Brothers. People in the community recognized law figures as such but didn't respect them as such, in fact they treated them like they were just normal people and " Officer" and "

Mayor/Colonel” were just labels. Labels are also a very interesting factor in the novella; in fact, labels are given to everyone throughout the book. Some examples are Clotilde, who is labeled as the “milk shop owner”, the twin brothers are labeled as “the bad guys, the killers”, Santiago is labeled as the “outsider, women deflowerer” and so on. The labels in the community are quite obviously used to distinguish the type of work that each person does or what the persons does or has done. The question is, have we missed something or did we find everything there was to be found out and can we be sure??

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

Colonel Aponte is the Mayor and Head of Police in his society and thereby he represents the law. Evidently, there are some issues concerning the way he fulfills his duty in terms of the measures he takes to prevent the killing of Santiago Nasar. The way in which he enforces law in trying to prevent Santiago’s death, is the way that Garcia Marquez reveals to the reader how law and belief systems are skewed.

One of the main actions we know he takes in trying to prevent Santiago’s death is when he hears about the twin’s plan and goes look for them, but then decides that they are of no real harm. “When I saw them I thought they were nothing but a pair of big bluffers,” he told me with his personal logic, “Because they weren’t as drunk as I thought.” (Garcia-Marquez, 2007: 56).

Colonel Aponte thought that the two brothers were just bluffing and pranking them. By this quotation, we can also assume that the authorities of the town

had a sense of moral duty to allow the murder to take place since everyone in the town knew that the brothers wanted to kill Santiago only to defend and preserve their sister's honour. However, this does not justify Colonel Aponte's actions since there is no such thing, to have moral duty to allow a murder.

Moreover, Colonel Aponte did not only decide that they are of no harm and just "big bluffers" (Garcia-Marquez, 2007: 56), he also decided not to follow the standard law procedures "Nor did he interrogate them concerning their intentions, but took away their knives and sent them off to sleep. He treated them with the same self-assurance with which he had passed off his wife's alarm." (Garcia-Marquez, 2007: 56). This quotation clearly shows how incorrect Colonel Aponte's practical actions are. In the part of the quotation that says "Nor did he interrogate them", the use of a negative 'nor' and the use of the word 'interrogation' makes the situation seem very serious because Colonel Aponte did not interrogate them. What Garcia Marquez is revealing is that it is a bad thing since that is what an officer of the law is meant to do, amongst other things. Another very interesting part of the quote is "He treated them with the same self-assurance with which he had passed off his wife's alarm"; this can also be seen as a bad thing that Garcia Marquez wanted the reader to explore since Colonel Aponte treats the brothers like he is sure that nothing is going to happen. The message Garcia Marquez exposes is how the law procedures are not followed or respected and he criticizes that the authorities in this society are incapable of fulfilling their duty.

Another relevant action of Colonel Aponte that represents how skewed is authority is when he decides to go have a look at a domino game rather than to go immediately to save Santiago. “ He promised to take care of it at once, but he went into the social club to check on a date for dominoes that night, and when he came out again the crime had already been committed.”

(Garcia-Marquez, 2007: 58) Further proof is evident in the of the lack commitment to his job and duty since he put a game of dominos before his duty and before a possible murder; which then took place. “ He promised to take care of it at once”, is a very important part of this quotation because as we then find out he does not take care of it immediately and what Garcia Marquez is trying to expose to the readers’ eyes is how Colonel Aponte was not very reliable and trustworthy. This strongly encourages us to think of how terrible law enforcement was and how the society was thereby affected by the weak sense of duty.

Through Colonel Aponte’s actions, Garcia Marquez is criticizing authority in this society because of the actions they take, especially when warned about something or when it is said by them that something will be done immediately, since it is clearly not. Colonel Aponte’s role is to further criticize society, as he is an authority figure who does not even carry out his duties of law enforcer, which are not only meant to make sure that people follow the law but also to safeguard the citizen’s life within the town, city or area in which they have jurisdiction. Real Authority does not seem to exist, ‘ Colonel’ is more of a mere title given to people that differentiates them for

their job, but being a police officer just seems a job like another without real relevance as it should have.

Law in ' Chronicle of a Death Foretold' is ' corrupt', in the sense that people do not really respect it nor respect authority figures. Garcia Marquez tries to convey how authorities were not respected in Colombia, in fact being a Colonel or and Officer was just a mere title that people did not respect, or did to a certain point. People did not speak to them respectfully, they spoke to them as if they were regular people and had no real authority. " It can't be, because I took them away from them before sending them home to bed,' said the mayor. ' It must be that you saw them before that.' ' I saw them two minutes ago and they both had pig-killing knives,' Cristo Bedoya said." this quotation is an example of dialogue between the Colonel Aponte and Cristo Bedoya and as it is easily read, there is no use of polite and respectful terms such as " Sir" or " Colonel".

As it happens, the use of " two minutes ago" highlights vividly how Cristo Beyoda is arguing with Colonel Aponte and the use of the word " both" is to emphasize even more that Beyoda saw both of the brothers with the knives which both result as an impolite thing to do. Also, the use of repetition of the word " them" gives a strong emphasis to the sentence " I took them away from them before sending them to bed" although with the use of ' them' it refers to the brothers and the knives, two distinct things, the syntax makes it seem like the brothers and the knives are one thing. In all this, Colonel Aponte plays a role being the corrupt authority, which does not seem to really enforce his authority properly over the society. Garcia Marquez

through this is conveying the fact that, not only were authorities not respected, but also authorities like Colonel Aponte contribute to this by not doing anything voluntarily or involuntarily to enforce respect.

Through Colonel Aponte, things such as corruption, lack of actual authority power, untrustworthiness, lack of law enforcement and of actual interest in a man about to die and more in a domino game are conveyed. These things all together convey how authority systems in Gabriel Garcia's novella are skewed. Colonel Aponte is shown as being unconcerned with people's well being in fact he fails in the intent of keeping the town in order and preventing the murder of an innocent man from two other men, only for an issue of honor. This novella was taken from an actual murder that took place in Colombia in 1951, in which a man called Cayetano Gentile Chimento was butchered with a machete for deflowering a woman called Margarita, who had been returned to her family on her wedding night by her groom Miguel Reyes Palencia.

As it occurs also in Garcia Marquez's novella, the ones who killed Cayetano were the two brothers of Maria, which spent only a few years in jail for what was regarded as a crime of honor. This story revolves around a murder that happened 27 years before Garcia Marquez wrote the novella "Chronicle of a Death Foretold" and it involved people with whom Garcia Marquez was acquainted. Garcia Marquez's aim through this novella was to criticize Colombian authorities and authority figures, both of law and religion, because of their lack of action, proper carrying out of their duty and for allowing a murder to happen because of honour.

Garcia-Marquez, Gabriel. 2007. Chronicle of a Death Foretold. Translated from Spanish by Gregory Rabassa. London: Penguin