

Speculation paper on the novel the old gringo

Literature



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Cultural Analysis of "The Old Gringo" Published in 1985 by Carlos Fuentes, The Old Gringo is a novel, which at its core is about the vanishing of an American short story writer and newspaperman, Ambrose Bierce. The novel uses different phenomena to scrutinize the culture of the modern Mexico. The narration goes on by speaking about the old gringo, who left his place and travels to Mexico to unite with the revolutionary party. There he meets a school teacher and a General. Hence, the trio probe and experience love and respect in such a way that it underlines the distinction between Mexican and American process of analysis. In relation to this the themes in this novella, we will be talking about is the treatment of the women, the Mexican class system during the period of novel and how Mexican's like all things American.

Starting with the initial theme, treatment of women, Fuentes describes the women in form of a school teacher from Washington, namely Harriet Winslow who is decent and unsophisticated woman and has an artless view of the world, which helps highlighting the female character in the light of Latin American culture. However, the idea of Winslow to turn over the Mexican ways by educating them about the way things are done in America can be seen as the snobbish way at which the Americans used to look upon at the Mexican. Furthermore, the part of Winslow becomes lover of the General Arroyo and the old man's similar feeling towards her, tells that the role of women are only appropriate in form of teacher and lover, which in my opinion is a very pompous assumption.

Moving to the next theme that is the Mexican class during the novel period; the period described by Fuentes is of the 20th century, a period of non-typical political security and the region of the Mexico which is being

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discussed, shares the northern border which is nearer to the United States. However, this political security was breached as the instability arose and economic conditions started declining. The picture drawn by the author of the Mexico is bleak, gloomy, ignorant and poverty in face of ungovernable situations. Moreover, the conflict between the government and that of Villa is also illustrated, where the latter party seems to have an upper hand as they assail over the northern Mexico and into southern America. Hence, the novel portrays the peasantry and middle class support that was extended to Villa on his goal.

Moving to the third theme that is how Mexican's likes all things American; to say the least, there wasn't anything remotely alike between the Mexico and America, they were two both very different country whose culture and ethics could not be interlinked or changed into another's one. An example of this can be found from the futile efforts of Ms. Harriet Winslow, whose naivety led her to believe that she can transform the negativities of Mexico into the civilized way of America. Hence, in the end she comes to term with the Mexican way and loves it culture and procedures.

To sum up the article, the cultural description of Carlos Fuentes is not exaggerated or underestimated, as the picture stretch by him is agreeably correct and shoe the audience the culture of Mexico and America and the difference between them. The novel also gives preview of both nation's person inform of Harriet Winslow and old gringo and the ex-general Arroyo.

Works Cited

Fuentes, Carlos. *The Old Gringo*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1985.