

The novel chronicle of a death foretold english literature essay

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Candidate Name: Swayam Shah Candidate Session Number: 00 2798---Exam Session: May 2014 Name of School: Symbiosis International School School Code: 002798 Word Count: 1265

Gabriel José de la Concordia García Márquez, a prominent Colombian author, one of the most significant authors of the 20th Century is a short story writer, screenwriter and a journalist. Being a journalist during his early age, his journalist techniques are reflected in the novel " Chronicle of a Death Foretold" which was written in 1981.[1] This novel is based on his childhood friend, Cayetano Gentile Chimento, who was murdered. The story takes place in Latin America, which includes many cultural beliefs, traditions and rituals of the catholic religion which is realistically reflected in the characters. Marquez explains the cultural norms of the Latin American town using characters that fight for honour, respect, and love. At the beginning of the novel " Santiago puts on a shirt and pants of white linen"[2]. Since white is said to be the colour of innocence, this choice of clothing is very symbolic. It creates an innocent picture of Santiago Nasar. " On the day they were going to kill him... He'd dreamed he was going through a grove of timber trees, where a gentle drizzle was falling, and for an instant he was happy, but when he awoke he felt completely spattered with bird shit"[3]. Birds in the book connote two symbols, one it is recognized as an evil omen, which is depicted in the quote above and on the other hand it is strong symbol of luck and destiny which is depicted in the following quote: " Any dream about birds means good health"[4]. The book starts with the narrator giving a description about Santiago's Dream. In the Quote " He'd dreamed he was going through a grove of timber trees where a gentle drizzle was falling, and for an instant he was happy in his dream, but when

he awoke he felt completely spattered with bird shit." [5]. Marquez uses almond tree to represent the element of the power of knowledge, this is shown by the quote " alone in a tinfoil airplane flying through the almond trees without bumping into anything" 6. The open doors usually symbolize hope, a new beginning, a change, etc. Also Falconry is used as a symbol so as to depict love and relationship in the novel. When Bayardo San Roman first comes to the town he takes a strange decision of marrying Angela. This decision was strange because Bayardo San Roman has never met Angela before and thus this depicts the Latin American culture. The Vicario brothers are the new men of the family as their father could not provide financial aid to his family as he went blind. Therefore, the brothers provided financial aid to their family by operating a pig- slaughter house. This decision of them taking over depicts their manliness and masculinity. All the characters in Chronicle of a death Foretold are influenced by this powerful construction of honour. Chronicle of a death foretold depicts how pride and honour was important in the Latin American Culture. " The lawyer stood by the thesis of homicide in legitimate defence of honour, which was upheld by the court in good faith" [7] When Angela reveals that Santiago Nasar had raped her; it is the duty of Pedro and Pablo to get back their family's honour by killing Santiago Nasar. As they plan to kill Santiago, they go to their slaughter house and they pick up two knives which they use to slaughter the pigs. This visual imagery conveys they are going to kill Santiago in the same way they kill pigs. [8] The brothers were brought up to be men. The girls were brought up to be married. They knew how to do screen embroidery, sew by machine, weave bone lace, wash and iron, make artificial flowers and fancy candy, and

write engagement announcements... my mother thought there were no better-reared daughters. 'They're perfect,' she was frequently heard to say. Any man will be happy with them because they've been raised to suffer".

[9]Another reason of killing Santiago was because of the social status given to men and women of the society. In the Latin American society men of the house dominated and the woman's status increased if she got married to a man of high respect. But in the book as Angela sleeps with Santiago before the marriage, her social status is ruined as the society does not permit this. (Angela's marriage to Bayardo San Roman). People in the town did not react after they heard about the Vicario's brothers Plan on killing Santiago. In the book Garcia Marquez portrays the political and religious leadership in Colombia for example the Mayor. But in the book the mayor being the head is more interested in the Domino game rather than the attempt of the murder of Santiago Nasar. Rather the priest of the town Father Amador tries to stop the murder to happen.[10]Marquez uses the setting of Columbia to depict Latin superstition thus bringing out surrealism.[11]For example, Santiago's mother Placida interpreted the dream that Santiago had the night before his death; she interprets the birds in the dream as a good omen, and the trees as a bad omen. The dramatic irony makes it so that you can't help but feel sorry for Santiago as none of the members of the town warned Santiago about the Vicario Brothers plan on killing Santiago for his attempt of raping Angela who was Vicario Brother's sister. The books Chronicle of a death foretold uses tradition, customs and beliefs to convey its message. In the book the reader is carried through a timeless narration where he

questions the reader and the society about the principles of love, family, and respect and honour in real life.[12]