

Candidate 6**To what extent does the theme of honour in ‘Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada’ by Gabriel García Márquez contrast with today’s perception of honour?**

The novel ‘Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada’ explores the theme of honour constantly throughout by looking at the dynamics of women and the way they have been predestined to bring honour to both society and family. Moreover, it deeply contrasts with today’s perception of honour. The novel looks at the murder of Santiago Nasar committed by the twin brothers of Ángela Vicario in order to bring vengeance after Santiago dishonoured her. The murder was regarded as an act of honour, which was shown to be a feasible excuse in society at that time. This essay will explore the theme of honour in society, the role of honour amongst women and family honour in both ‘Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada’ and ‘Casa de Bernarda Alba’ by F.G Lorca.

Society in the novel can be regarded as outdated looking at it from today’s perspective. For example, the idea of honour was strife amongst the people in the town, something which plays a limited role in our modern-day world. However, the murder can be related to crimes of today, such as martyrs in terrorist attacks and crimes of passion. The importance of honour is displayed in that society after the judge rules defence of honour for the reason of murder, when Márquez writes ‘*fue un asunto de honor*’¹ and ‘*el abogado sustentó la tesis del homicidio en legítima defensa del honor, que fue admitida por el tribunal de conciencia, y los gemelos declararon al final del juicio que hubieran vuelto a hacerlo mil veces por los mismos motivos*’² proving the view as a legitimate excuse. Furthermore, during the novel Ángela was regarded as only a symbol of honour, an item to bring the Vicario family a good reputation. This is demonstrated when Márquez writes, ‘*y la hermana burlada estaba otra vez en posesión de su honor*’³, which demonstrates that the women in the Vicario family were only valuable when they were in control of their honour.

Another important factor when looking at the importance of honour in the novel and its contrast to today, is the role of women and how that role was vital to bringing family honour. In the society explored in the novel, women were designed to make perfect housewives and

¹ Gabriel García Márquez, ‘Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada’, 1981- pg 23

² Gabriel García Márquez, ‘Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada’, 1981- pg 23

³ Gabriel García Márquez, ‘Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada’, 1981- pg 36

take on the role of a mother. As pointed to in *'los hermanos fueron criados para ser hombres. Ellas (hermanas) habían sido educados para casarse. Sabían bordar con bastidor, coser a máquina, tejer encaje de bolillo, lavar y planchar, hacer flores artificiales y dulces de fantasía, y redactar esquelas de compromiso'*⁴, while men were expected to be strong and carry out the supposedly more important roles in society, a woman's sole aim was to get married, bare children, and carry out more mundane, feminine tasks. Moreover, this role was designed to be successful based on a woman remaining 'pure' (remaining a virgin before marriage). However, as the story progresses the Vicario family grow worried that Ángela will lose her virginity and let down the family before her marriage to Bayardo San Roman. On the night of their marriage, Bayardo discovers Ángela is no longer a virgin and returns her to the family. Márquez emphasises this point, writing *'Bayardo San Román no entró, sino que empujó con suavidad a su esposa hacia el interior de la casa, sin decir una palabra. Después besó a Pura Vicario en la mejilla y le habló con una voz de muy hondo desaliento pero con mucha ternura'*⁵. This part of the novel displays the important idea of purity in society. Bayardo respectfully returns her to her mother, who later attacks Ángela with the intent of punishing her after she destroys the family honour. Ángela is then later forced to flee, as she is no longer sought after for marriage. *'Lo único que recuerdo es que me sostenía por el pelo con una mano y me golpeaba con la otra con tanta rabia que pensé que me iba a matar'*⁶, shows the harsh way her mother acted when she found out the news, proving that her mother valued the way society viewed her family more than she valued and cared for her own daughter. Throughout the novel *'Casa de Bernarda Alba'*, Lorca further develops the argument that women were designed to conform to society's expectations, including carrying the weight of honour on their shoulders. *'Necesito una mujer buena modosa y ésa eres tú si me das la conformidad'*⁷ and *'Nacer mujer es el mayor castigo'*⁸ show how little value was placed on women and the people those women could become.

Another important aspect of honour explored in *Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada* is the idea of family honour. The expectations the family, particularly women, were extremely high in terms of bringing respect to the family name. *'Ángela Vicario no olvidó nunca el horror de la noche en que sus padres y sus hermanas mayores con sus maridos, reunidos en la sala de*

⁴ Gabriel García Márquez, *'Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada'*, 1981- pg 16

⁵ Gabriel García Márquez, *'Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada'*, 1981- pg 21

⁶ Gabriel García Márquez, *'Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada'*, 1981- pg 21

⁷ Federico García Lorca, *'La Casa de Bernarda Alba'*, 1998- Act 2

⁸ Federico García Lorca, *'La Casa de Bernarda Alba'*, 1998- Act 2

*la casa, le impusieron la obligación de casarse con un hombre que apenas había visto*⁹, displays the horror Ángela felt when the day came for her family to pick a suitable husband for her, despite Ángela not being ready for marriage. Regardless of Ángela's true feelings, she had to abide by her family's orders to bring honour to them through marriage. Furthermore, the Vicario family chose a suitor based on money, family name and prestige rather than someone who was a good match for their daughter. Leading on from this, after the Vicario family discovered that Ángela was no longer a virgin, after saying she lost her virginity to Santiago Nasar before marriage, her mother attacked her and forced her to leave the town. Angela had no choice but to try and hide her news because she knew how serious the consequences would be. '*Nadie hubiera pensado, ni lo dijo nadie, que Ángela Vicario no fuera virgen*'¹⁰, proves that this was an extremely taboo subject, which was never addressed in the town. A point which further proves this is when the novel mentions '*aun cuando le faltaban menos de dos meses para casarse, Pura Vicario no permitió que fuera sola con Bayardo San Román a conocer la casa en que iban a vivir, sino que ella y el padre ciego la acompañaron para custodiarle la honra*'¹¹, which shows that society was so strict on the idea of honour, that Ángela was not allowed to be alone with the man she was going to marry, let alone a man her family did not approve of. At this point in the novel it was clear that if Ángela had let her secret slip, the reader was aware of what the consequences would be. '*Casa de Bernarda Alba*' by F.G Lorca explores the Alba family and in particular the way mother Bernarda Alba reacts to the news of her daughter becoming pregnant before marriage. '*Mi hija ha muerto virgen. (...) Nadie dirá nada*'.¹² This shows that Bernarda is embarrassed that her daughter destroyed the family honour by becoming pregnant. Due to this she refuses to let anyone know what has happened and even pretends to herself that her daughter is still a virgin.

In conclusion, '*Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada*' shows the extreme contrast in today's view of honour and the honour explored in that period. As argued previously, honour played a large part in the lives of those in the novel, which was largely exploited through women and the views of that time which restricted women to a boxed idea of self-respect and prestige. This shows the contrast to now, where women are shown in varied, more open-minded roles

⁹ Gabriel García Márquez, '*Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada*', 1981- pg 17

¹⁰ Gabriel García Márquez, '*Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada*', 1981- pg 18

¹¹ Gabriel García Márquez, '*Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada*', 1981- pg 18

¹² Federico García Lorca. '*La Casa de Bernarda Alba*', 1998- Act 3

not only in books and media, but in reality, too. Furthermore, we see how honour itself has developed over time, playing a less vital role in our social hierarchy. Likewise, family honour is almost non-existent now, as we have a much equal status between women and men, an important building block in moving away from the idea of family honour. However, in some modern-day societies, especially in the middle east, honour still plays a vital role. In Pakistan women are often targeted for disgracing their religion or family name. for example, in 2012 in Abbottabad, Pakistan five women were killed after video footage of them dancing and clapping at a wedding was revealed. The entire village grouped together in order for the murders to be covered up, however a man by the name of Afzal Kohistani exposed what had happened to the girls.¹³ As a result, he was tracked down and held at gunpoint. It is uncommon for people to step forward after hearing about events like this taking place, as it is custom to handle family matters by blood in these areas. Furthermore, many are pressured to stay silent after these tragedies happen in order to preserve their honour, dignity and often times, life. This shows a blatant failure of change in some societies as women continue to be held responsible for the honour they bring to families, religions, and society as well as reflecting parts of '*Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada*' in today's society.

Word Count: 1209

¹³ Constable, Pamela. "A Pakistani Man Told Me He Feared He'd Be Killed for Exposing 'Honor Killings.' His Worst Fear Just Came True." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 7 Mar. 2019, www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/a-pakistani-man-told-me-feared-hed-be-killed-for-exposing-honor-killings-his-worst-fear-just-came-true/2019/03/07/fb19e4ba-40ed-11e9-85ad-779ef05fd9d8_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.300af9b3857f.

Bibliography

Gabriel García Márquez, '*Crónica de Una Muerte Anunciada*', 1981

Biblio3.url.edu.gt. (2019). <http://biblio3.url.edu.gt/Libros/cromuerte.pdf>.

Federico García Lorca, '*La Casa de Bernarda Alba*', 1998

Bradecki, Tadeusz, et al. *The House of Bernarda Alba*. 2002.

"La Casa De Bernarda Alba Summary | Supersummary". *Supersummary*, 2019, <http://www.supersummary.com/la-casa-de-bernarda-alba/summary/>.

Scholarlycommons.Pacific.Edu, 2019, https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2751&context=uop_etds.

"A Socially Acceptable Form Of Murder: Honour Killings In Russia'S North Caucasus". *The Independent*, 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/a-socially-acceptable-form-of-murder-honour-killings-in-russias-north-caucasus-a8812576.html>.

'Honour Killing' Whistleblower Shot Dead". *BBC News*, 2019, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-47480597>.

Constable, Pamela. "A Pakistani Man Told Me He Feared He'd Be Killed for Exposing 'Honor Killings.' His Worst Fear Just Came True." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 7 Mar. 2019, www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/a-pakistani-man-told-me-feared-hed-be-killed-for-exposing-honor-killings-his-worst-fear-just-came-true/2019/03/07/fb19e4ba-40ed-11e9-85ad-779ef05fd9d8_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.300af9b3857f.

To be completed by the candidate

The grid below allows entries to be made covering the options detailed on the previous page.

Please tick (✓) the option chosen and note the portfolio title. A tick (✓) should also be entered to confirm the inclusion of the bibliography, and the word count should be indicated.

Portfolio option (please tick (✓) <u>one</u> option only)		
Literature	✓	
Media		
Language in Work		
Portfolio title	<p>To what extent does the theme of honour in 'crónica de una muerte anunciada' by Gabriel García Márquez contrast with today's perception of honour?</p>	
Bibliography enclosed (please tick) (✓)	✓	
Word count (excluding quotations and bibliography)	1209	

If you are producing a handwritten portfolio piece, you must use blue or black ink.