**Reflective Statement**

The interactive orals have significantly developed my cultural and contextual understanding of Gabriel García Márquez’s *‘Chronicle of a Death Foretold’*. Initially, the cultural consideration of how the virginity of unmarried females are regarded as their utmost important “asset”, and how machismo is regarded as an indispensable male attribute in traditional Hispanic customs enabled me to comprehend the Vicario twins’ extreme actions in the novel. The fact that ritualistic honor killings fueled by machismo still happen today in Latin America made me realize that *Chronicle of a Death Foretold’* is intended to be an exposition of the Hispanic machismo tradition rather than a dramatic piece of fiction.

Furthermore, I learned through the interactive orals that the character Santiago Nasar in the novel is based on Márquez’s childhood friend, Cayetano Gentile, who was killed on 22nd January 1951 by Victor Manuel and Jose Joaquin Chica Salas for taking the virginity of their sister Margarita Chica before marriage. Márquez as a journalist did personally interview those who witnessed the murder, but was frustrated by the obscurity of the responses he obtained, which eventually inspired him to write *‘Chronicle of a Death Foretold’* as a tribute to Cayetano’s death. The fact that most characters in the novel are based on Márquez’s interviewees in reality provided the insight that the unnamed narrator of the novel acts as the surrogate of Márquez himself, which explains why the narrator so relentlessly tries to find out what happened to Santiago Nasar on the day of his he murder.

Moreover, the interactive orals have also provided crucial biographical information on Gabriel García Márquez that enhanced my understanding of the text. Although Márquez stated during an interview that that journalism has allowed him to maintain contact with reality, he was critical of the ability of journalism to tell the full story. He suggested in one of his published articles on journalism, that the voice of the interviewee is not necessarily the voice of truth, which justifies why Márquez refuses to follow an exclusively journalistic narrative in ‘*Chronicle of a Death Foretold’*. The interactive orals also mentioned that Márquez was a committed leftist who had an intimate friendship with Fidel Castro. Hints of his socialist belief could be seen in many of his works including *‘Chronicle of a Death Foretold’*, in which he criticizes the traditional Hispanic machismo culture that the more conservative Colombians prides themselves in.

Word Count: 396

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