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Future World Literature Readings

Future World Literature classes will most likely read many of the same texts that we read this semester. In my opinion, the two most important texts for them to always read in the class would be *The Book of Job* from the Hebrew bible and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* by Gabriel García Márquez. *The Book of Job* is about a man who has his faith tested and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* is about the impending death of a young man in a Spanish community. I would want future world literature students to read these two texts because they address the confusing and difficult ideas of honor, duty, and faith that we deal with every day.

*The Book of Job* is from the Hebrew bible and it discusses the idea of faith. In this story, Job is a servant of God that is being punished in the form of losing his family and all his possessions. The reader knows that this is because the Lord told Satan that “everything [Job] has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger”, but Job does not (Job 1:12). The majority of the story is Job arguing with his friends over what he did to offend God. Job knows that he did nothing wrong, but his friends insist he must have to be receiving punishment. In the end, the Lord speaks to Job and praises him for not speaking against God. However, he is angry with Job’s friends because they “have not spoken the truth about [God], as [his] servant Job has” (Job 42:7).

The faith aspect of this story that I admire is Job’s unwavering faith in something/someone bigger than himself. Despite all the horrible things he goes through, “Job did not sin in what he said” (Job 2:10). This unwavering faith is what caused me to pick this work as one I think future world literature students should read. Even if someone is not a religious person I still think it is important for them to have a faith in something that is bigger than themselves. This faith will give them the strength to get through the harder parts of life. *The Book of Job* demonstrates how powerful this faith can be in a way that I think all students should be able to read.

*Chronicle of a Death Foretold* is a novel that deals with ideas of honor and duty. This novel goes through all the tiny details and events that occur on the day of the murder of Santiago Nasar. Santiago is murdered by the Vicario brothers because they believe he slept with their sister before she was married. When their sister’s brand new husband realized she was not a virgin he sent her back home and ended their marriage. In the culture of the community in the novel, it is the duty of the brothers to kill Santiago Nasar in order to gain back their sisters honor. Throughout the novel the reader discovers that everyone in the town knew Santiago Nasar was going to be killed, but no one does much to stop it.

Despite no one stopping the murder, it is very clear that the Vicario brothers do not want to kill Santiago Nasar. They tell everyone they come across that they are going to kill him, almost as if they are hoping that someone will stop them. One of the people they tell is Clotilde Armenta who tries to get the sheriff to arrest them in order to “spare those poor boys from the horrible duty that’s fallen on them” (57). A contrasting reaction is from Prudencia Cotes who is Pablo Vicario’s fiancé. She tell the narrator that she knew exactly what was going on and she “never would have married [Pablo] if he hadn’t done what a man should do” (62). There were many other moments like these throughout the novel where characters realized the Vicario brothers had to kill Santiago Nasar and some tried to help stop them, but they did not try very hard.

This concept that it was the duty of the Vicario brothers to regain their sister’s honor is one that I think it is important for students to read about. The novel demonstrates that what is expected of you is not always right. Despite being expected to kill Santiago Nasar, the Vicario brothers should still have been able to make their own decision about what they were going to do. This is important for students to read because they could encounter a similar situation in their own lives. This situation would one where they know what is expected, and they know what is right, and are forced to make a choice between the two.

Both of these works deal with important ideals that everyone deals with in their lives. I think that reading them in a class allows students to gain a better understanding of each ideal. The two works also display drastic views of the ideals which helps to emphasize the points. *The Book of Job* and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* are both very important works for world literature students to read.