**Masterpieces Project: Harvard Outline Sample 1**

Macondo : The Mystical Materiality of Marquez

1. Introduction
2. Biography
   1. Birth and Parents
      1. Father = college dropout + very Conservative + 4 illegitimate children
      2. Mother fell for his charm (serenades, love poems)
         1. Mother’s father, Colonel, finally agreed to let them marry (did not originally like)
         2. Mother/Father forced to move to Colonel’s hometown
      3. Inspiration for *Love in the Time of Cholera*
   2. Influence of Grandparents in story telling
      1. Raised by grandparents > parents, until he was 8 (grandfather dies and grandmother goes blind)
      2. Grandfather = Colonel Mejia = Liberal veteran and war hero w/ a lot of illegitimate children
      3. Grandparents help him develop his style of Magical Realism and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*
   3. “The Old Man” Child
      1. Begins formal education
         1. Draws cartoons = beginning of his love for visual images
         2. First experience in big city Bogota 🡪 Marquez connects more to his costeno identity
      2. Meets future wife, Mercedes Pardo, at age 13 = first time in love
   4. Becomes a journalist 🡪 wants to transition to literature after visiting hometown
      1. Turning Point for Macondo = 1965
         1. Marquez writes everyday for 18 months in brothel and sells everything
         2. Writes 100 Years of Solitude = immediate success
      2. Becomes leader of Latin American Boom
3. Thesis Statement = While often praised for his vivid imagination, Marquez’s actual strength lies in his ability to infuse a magical storytelling of history with a journalistic tone and level of detail that both reflects the beautiful solitude of Latin America and exposes its diseased political state.
4. Journalism/Literature fusion
   1. Became journalist due to sense of political responsibility
      1. Not a trace of imaginative storytelling that made him famous
      2. Even his short stories were intellectual
   2. Wants to write something more “real”
      1. Bogotazo = joins mob in looting after Gaitan is assassinated
      2. Realization that his writing is not connected w/ his reality
   3. Maintains this political commitment in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*
      1. “The soldiers left that same afternoon. A few days later, José Aracdio Buendía found a house for the magistrate’s family. The image of Remedios, the magistrate’s youngest daughter, who, because of her age, could have been his daughter, kept paining him in some part of his body. It was a physical sensation that almost bothered him when he walked, like a pebble in his shoe.” (44)
      2. Setting in *Love in the Time of Cholera* = only referred to as “City of the Viceroys”
         1. Literature analysis = setting is deliberately vague
            1. Can be anywhere and apply to anyone
            2. No name => no birthplace or death
         2. Journalistic = Can be inferred as Columbia (nearby towns/Marquez’s grandparents’ birthplace)
            1. Conservatives return to power= La Violencia (turbulent part of Colombian history that Marquez always eludes to)
            2. Connection can now be drawn between La Violencia as the “Cholera” or plague
5. Aracataca
   1. Accompanies mother to Aractaca and appreciates “literary value” of his childhood
      1. Surrounded by atmosphere that he finally feels he belongs in
      2. Self proclaimed “minority complex” (Pedoto)
         1. Writing style too drenched in Latin American sensibilities
         2. Can only write where he feels connected to history
   2. Realizes that his childhood experiences = more political and more real than his journalist work
      1. “...But no one paid any attention to him. They would answer him that they had been many years without a priest, arranging the business of their souls directly with God, and that they had lost the evil of original sin. He pleaded so much that he lost his voice. His bones began to fill with words.” (82)
         1. Personification = “bones fill with words”
            1. Internal war that cannot be articulated
            2. Plight of a spiritual man that cannot escape his mortality (symbol = bones)
         2. Juxtaposition of “arranging business” with “souls”
            1. Treating religion as a business transaction
            2. Cold, clinical tone = loss of human passion
         3. Reflects the two responses to colonization
            1. Priest = man who wants to hold onto his heritage more than ever
            2. “They” = the mass that would rather turn a blind eye to numb pain
      2. “If I have to be something, I’ll be a liberal,’ he said, ‘because the Conservatives are tricky.” (173)
         1. Irony 🡪 “tricky” = understatement
         2. Foreshadowing 🡪 deliberate understatement that hides a real fear
         3. Historical context of La Violencia
            1. Conservatives v. Liberals
            2. Strongest leaders were choosing whichever side they could control better – not fighting for specific cause
            3. Shows violence is worst when it is fought by ppl with no code (Abuenita)
6. Development of Magical Realism Tone
   1. Influence of his Abuela and her Spanish folk tales
      1. Portrayed the fantastic as if she truly believed it
      2. Brick faced tone
   2. “Caribbean reality resembles the wildest imagination” (Paris Review)
      1. Emphasizes that he sees himself as a realistic writer foremost but cannot help subject matter he is drawn to
      2. Beginning to infuse his heritage with his writing style
      3. Believes that because of oral history of Caribbean, literature is all around the land
   3. Grandma’s secret becomes his secret
      1. “Grandma used to say that the electrician would always leave the house full of yellow butterflies”
      2. Yellow detail = most important b/c it makes it believable
   4. “It rained for four years, eleven months, and two days. There were periods of drizzle during which everyone put on his full dress and a convalescent look to celebrate the clearing, but the people soon grew accustomed to interpret the pauses as a sign of redoubled rain.” (229)
      1. Statistical Evidence = crucial detail
         1. Creates ethos to the narrator (adds a godlike, biblical voice)
         2. Effect of a wildly fantastical number spoken w/ such certainty = strangely believable
      2. Symbol of drizzle as perseverance
         1. Drizzle brings out sides of human nature
         2. “Celebration” = optimism
         3. “Accustomed” = adaptability and realism
   5. “…she left the sheets to the mercy of the light as she watched Remedios the Beauty waving good-bye in the midst of the flapping sheets that rose up with her, abandoning with her the environment of beetles and dahlias and passing through the air with her as four o’clock in the afternoon came to an end, and they were lost forever with her in the upper atmosphere where not even the highest-flying birds of memory could reach her. The outsiders, of course, thought that Remedios the Beauty had finally succumbed to her irrevocable fate of a queen bee and that her family was trying to save her honor with that tale of levitation. “
      1. Remedios the Beauty
         1. Only character w/ name w/ an article
         2. Sense that she is not real 🡪 only exists in terms of her physical appearance and attractiveness
      2. Imagery
         1. Remedios the Beauty “waves” goodbye
            1. Specific way of farewell 🡪 very casual
            2. Sets a peaceful tone 🡪 unlike other instances, this is a friendly, innocent magic
         2. Beetles and dahlias
            1. Remedios the Beauty as product of nature
            2. Earthly beings that came from dirt finding new home
            3. Has extra meaning in Colombia as a religious ritual
      3. Statistic = “4 o’clock” = repetition of ethos (see previous paragraph)
      4. Diction 🡪 “Of course” of narrator
         1. Tone of inevitability
         2. Hints that people draw their own conclusions based on human nature of jealous EVEN when faced w/ magic
   6. Deliberate break from Western “logic” 🡪 his duty
      1. Teenage years = saw a lot of death and unbelievable tragedies
      2. Had to learn to adapt 🡪 realized people remain people despite what they have to overcome
      3. Deliberately uses “cultural codes” such as symbols (beetles and dahlias) (Aghaei)
         1. Gives story extra meaning and historical truth to his target audience
         2. Exclusionary to rest of world who cannot connect
7. Interest in plagues
   1. Marquez interest in plagues
      1. Destructive, decapitating nature but also mother nature correcting itself
      2. “Political violence in Colombia had same metaphysics as the plague”
   2. Insomnia plague in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*
      1. Insinuated that it is a byproduct of forced colonization
      2. “…then she saw Rebeca in the rocker, sucking her finger and with her eyes lighted up in the darkness like those of a cat. Terrified, exhausted by her fate, Vistiación recognized in those eyes the symptoms of the sickness. It was the insomnia plague. Those who wanted to sleep, not form fatigue but because of the nostalgia for dreams, tried all kinds of methods of exhausting themselves” (335)
         1. Insomnia as a “plague” 🡪 contradictory
            1. Insomnia = lonely affliction, spending the night alone while rest of world is asleep
            2. Plague = disastrous and contagious and infects the world, particularly the weak
            3. PROOF = Macondo (the town) has insomnia

People in Macondo suffer from plague

Macondo becomes a character of its own

Entire novel is a search to remember past

* + - 1. Imagery
         1. “Sucking on finger….”

Primal = baby searching for mother

Mother = mother country that has been invaded

* + - * 1. “Eyes lighted up…like those of a cat”

Simile 🡪 animalistic instinct for survivial

Intelligence is there but body is shutting down as if in shock

* + - 1. Thesis/Antithesis (Sleep not from fatigue…)
         1. Sleep from fatigue = instinctual thought
         2. Antithesis = nostalgia from dreams

Pain is not physical but emotional

Brains need escape more than body

* 1. Cholera in *Love in the Time of Cholera*
     1. “There was no one else: the woodcutters had abandoned their trails, fleeing the ferocity of the lords of the earth, fleeing the invisible cholera, fleeing the larval wars that governments were bent on hiding with distracted decrees.” (439)
     2. Love as a plague
        1. Analogy = humans spread plagues but most animals know how to avoid it
        2. Scene takes place after Florentino throws up after trying to eat flowers that remind him of Fermina
           1. Actual mental illness = delusions
           2. Causes him physical sickness
     3. Repetition of “fleeing”
        1. Fleeing = sense that the bird is running away from something dangerous
        2. Proof that love is contagious, but not always in a good way
        3. Animals that want to survive avoid love

1. Solitude
   1. Positive 🡪 Wants culture of Latin America to be outside sphere of influence of more “powerful” countries
      1. Believes Latin America has been degraded that they need Western world’s approval
      2. Effect of Cuban Revolution on Latin American Boom
   2. Negative 🡪 long term solitude can lead to pain
      1. “Because races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on Earth” (655)
      2. Call to action 🡪 Latin America has been in internal solitude so long they forgot what they used to be
         1. Wants to break cycle of destruction before it is too late
         2. Diction = “condemned”
            1. Their race has been cursed
            2. Cursed = they have to atone for their sins
2. Power of the Writer / Conclusion
   1. Believes people eventually believe writers over the government
   2. Immortalizes story of his grandparents’ love
      1. Many others in Latin America will now think back to this time similarly
      2. Details his grandmother told him show up which makes it real
   3. *One Hundred Years of* Solitude famous banana scene
      1. Fruit truck is attacked by soldiers and 3000 farm workers die
      2. Inspired by when he witnessed this as child 🡪 thought that there must have been “3000 people killed”
   4. 12/6 = Cienaga Train Station = real situation
      1. Fruit farm workers were killed by troops
      2. Incident is not in most Colombian history books
      3. Only around 750 people died 🡪 Marquez’s book is an exaggeration
   5. Government officials in Congress now refer to this incident as “banana massacre” and “the 3000s” = even if it is wrong statistics
   6. Proof of his theory that literature = journalism
      1. Renaissance formula
      2. “Using myth to create what then became history while it transformed existing history into a form of myth” (Spiller)
      3. Creates a cyclical history rather than linear 🡪 what marquez believes is necessary for Latin Americans to remember their past