ENGL 362 / C LIT 252 Global Magical Realism

You may write on the following primary works:

Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of This World*

Juan Rulfo, *Pedro Páramo*

Gabriel García Márquez, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”; “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World”

Rudolfo Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima*

Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban*

Below you’ll find paper prompts. You are welcome to adjust them to your interests.

* If in the midterm you chose a single-text prompt as essay topic, please do not write about the primary work that you discussed in your midterm. (If you chose a comparative prompt, you may write on any primary work of your choice.)
* More generally, do not write about the same topic as in your mid-term essay
* Magical Realism in [any of the works above]
* Naturalizing the Supernatural in [any of the works above]

**Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of This World***

1. Is Voodoo a force of liberation or a force of oppression in *Kingdom*?
2. *Kingdom* as illustration of the concept of the “marvelous American real”
3. Narrative techniques and shifting focalization in *Kingdom*
4. Ti-Noel as the representative of the oppressed
5. Ti-Noel as unifying thread that ties up the loose ends in *Kingdom*
6. The Caricature of European elite culture in *Kingdom*
7. *Kingdom’s* Vision of History as Repetition: Cycles of violence and rebellion

**Juan Rulfo, *Pedro Páramo***

1. Fathers and sons; the quest for the father
2. The portrait of Pedro Páramo: unmitigated evil?
3. Supernatural beliefs as a tool of oppression rather than liberation
4. The multiplicity of viewpoints and polyphony of voices in *Pedro Páramo*
5. The Catholic folk myth of *ánimas en pena* in *Pedro Páramo*
6. Comala: from paradise to waste land; life to death
7. Portraits of power and corruption in *Pedro Páramo*

**Gabriel García Márquez, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”; “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World”**

1. Do GGM’s stories belong to what Warnes calls the faith-based anthropological or irreverent variety of magical realism?

**Rudolfo Anaya, *Bless Me, Ultima***

1. *Bless Me, Ultima* as bildungsroman: what is the result of Antonio’s development?
2. The role of Ultima in Antonio’s spiritual quest
3. Conflicts between Anglo-American modernity (WW II; barbed wire; highways; atom bomb; school) and *nuevomexicano* tradition
4. The struggle between opposing forces in *Bless Me, Ultima*: is there reconciliation?
5. Cosmic conflicts within the sacred in *Bless Me, Ultima*
6. Antonio’s visionary dreams
7. Antonio’s dual identity and the divided self: internal psychological struggle between conflicting selves
8. Uses of Spanish in Anaya’s English-language novel

**Cristina García, *Dreaming in Cuban***

1. The del Pino family as a microcosm of the divided Cuban nation
2. Pilar’s development: does she negotiate an independent “third” way for herself beyond the cultural conflicts she is born into?
3. Symbolism: the ocean, fire, shells, the color blue etc.
4. Generational conflict in *Dreaming in Cuban*
5. Is *Dreaming in Cuban* a feminist novel?
6. Three generations of Women: what difference does *Dreaming in Cuban’s* focus on matrilinearity rather than patrilinearity make?
7. Where is Cuba?
8. Multiplicity of viewpoints and polyphony of voices in *Dreaming in Cuban*