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MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 60

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**Published**

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**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:**

Marks must be awarded in line with:

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- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

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- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:**

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Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

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## TOPICS

**1 EL CINE MEXICANO CONTEMPORÁNEO**

Film: *Roma* (Alfonso Cuarón)

Film: *La zona* (Rodrigo Plá)

Film: *Abel* (Diego Luna)

**A Analiza el retrato de los personajes masculinos en las películas que has estudiado.**

Men are problematic in *Roma*. Antonio's first appearance involves fastidious car-parking and complaints to his wife. She tries to pamper him but he is a perfidious husband and an indifferent father who does not provide for his family and whose claimed interest in his children is wholly insincere. His behaviour is juxtaposed with that of Fermín, whose first appearance (with Ramón) involves making Cleo and Adela abandon their half-eaten meal. Fermín's absurd martial arts display in the bedroom is accompanied by the story of his tough upbringing, but this does not redeem him for his subsequent abandonment of and threats towards Cleo. Even at the hacienda, male absurdity is on display in the shooting scene, complete with a joke about wife-beating, and in the brief appearance of a tertiary character, Billy, to molest Sofía. The clear message is that machismo cuts across all social classes. It does not bode well that Toño, on glimpsing his father cavorting with another woman, denies it was him. Professor Zovek emerges as a role model for the new-age cult he leads, empowering Fermín and his fellow martial arts aficionados: ironically, his only trick is a pointless balancing exercise which only Cleo – and none of the men at the training camp – is capable of emulating.

Among the gated community in *La zona* Rodrigo Plá establishes Andrea and Gerardo as the hardliners and Diego and Lucía as the more decent residents – thereby avoiding associating either gender exclusively with one tendency or the other. Within Alejandro's family, Mariana urges decency from the start, a position that Alejandro adopts after meeting Miguel, who is portrayed as a reluctant innocent caught up in the drama. At the end of the film we see that Daniel's collusion with corruption and vigilanteism has driven a wedge between him and his family and has undermined his humanity – though he seems to learn from the experience. Diego is glimpsed abandoning *la zona*, having earlier wondered how he would in future explain to his son why they live behind a wall. Ricardo only reluctantly hides his crime in shooting the guard. Comandante Rigoberto wins the audience's sympathy for withstanding pressure from the *zona* residents in his quest for the truth. However, both his assistant and his superior are corrupt, and in his frustration Rigoberto's inclination to brutality resurfaces. The ultimate villain is De La Garza, the authority figure whose venality and disregard for justice directly leads to Miguel's murder and the obstruction of justice. The slain thieves are cursorily sketched as opportunistic and violent. In summary, there are glimpses of hope in Rigoberto, Miguel, Daniel and Ricardo, and more clearly in Diego and Alejandro, but these are counterbalanced by Alejandro's feral schoolfriends, Gerardo and De La Garza.

The male characters in *Abel* compete for two positions: father of the household, and partner of Cecilia. The inspiration for Abel to usurp the role of father is portrayed as the Pedro Infante film he watches on television, featuring a conflict of authority between father and son. Abel's paternal persona quickly becomes overbearing and even dictatorial as he shouts at Selene and rips up her homework. However, the deeper roots of the dilemma become clear when Cecilia reveals that Abel's condition only set in after Anselmo abandoned the family. With regard to male-female relations, Fili is portrayed as floundering in his attempts to woo Cecilia, while Anselmo's boasting about his polygamous life-style is heartless and irresponsible. His hypocritical reaction to the news of Cecilia's love interest, the clumsy presents he delivers, the suitably demeaning critiques he receives from Abel and even his dentistry all reveal him to be an apology for a husband and father. Indeed, the return to the household of both major male characters – Abel and Anselmo – is portrayed as generating conflict and violence that even affects Clemente. It is therefore appropriate that Paul's absurd dance routine is entitled 'macho man'.

**B Evalúa el mensaje moral y/o social de las películas que has estudiado. ¿Es relevante solamente en el contexto mexicano, o es universal?**

*Roma* focuses on how individuals adjust to the lot they are dealt in life. Cleo enjoys the support of the family in her subordinate but vital role within the household. The unconditional love she receives compensates for her harsh treatment from Fermín. His community is portrayed as machista, a prototype of the drug gangs that afflicted Mexico in later years (hence his gun-wielding participation in factional violence). However, Cuarón gives him scope to refer to his harsh upbringing, thereby identifying him as victim as well as perpetrator. Broader events are observed at one remove: doña Teresa expresses sympathy for the student protest, but with that major exception the state is portrayed as functional and even benign (e.g. the hospital). The universal messages are perhaps that male perfidy crosses class boundaries; that female solidarity and love are the best counter-measures; that life for women can be good or better without a male; and that people of all classes are prone to strange pursuits (the woodland spirit and gun culture at the hacienda, Professor Zovek and martial arts in the shantytown). In the Mexican context Cleo's integration into the *criollo* household is positive. Social injustice abounds: change is needed, but there are grounds for hope.

*La zona* is set at the intersection of a vastly unequal society and a corrupted public security system that can no longer protect citizens. It is therefore particularly relevant to the Mexican situation, and the situation of many Latin American societies. Unlike the other two films, the class system is shown as playing a defining role in the lives of these characters. Indeed, one of the reasons why the residents of La zona take the law into their own hands is because the police officer is from outside their elite social group and therefore cannot be trusted to protect their vested interests. Thinking that their wealth sets them apart, they feel entitled to special consideration and even power over life and death. The result is that supposedly respectable people become a vigilante lynch mob while their teenage sons run feral, both determined to kill. Inspector Rigoberto tries to do the right thing, but his will is sapped by the corrupt conduct of other public officials. Alejandro's rejection of his father's values at the end of the film implies that the next generation may break free of the group pathology of the parents' generation, but, as Diego and Rigoberto have already discovered, it is difficult for one individual to stand against an ingrained mindset.

*Abel* looks at the theme of the damaged individual and the best way to treat such a person. It also assesses the question of responsibility both for the damage inflicted and for the appropriate treatment. Machismo is a recurrent theme of Spanish-language film and literature, and Anselmo's behaviour in abandoning his wife and children, breaking contact with them and establishing a new family unit makes him a major offender. *Abel* turns the spotlight on the gap left by the absentee father in the Mexican context (where fathers can be absent for legitimate migrant labour reasons as well as Anselmo-style abandonment). The psychological impact on the children is at the forefront of the film, but the question of the abandoned wife's right to form new attachments is also touched upon. The other question raised is the balance between the mother's desire to retain the afflicted child within the family unit, versus placing him in more specialised care where the stress generated by his condition does not fall on his family. The ending implies that Abel's re-institutionalisation – engineered by Anselmo – may in fact be a blessing for Selene and Paul. State education and health services are both portrayed as satisfactory.

**2 REPRESENTACIONES DE LA MUJER HISPANA DEL SIGLO 20**

Federico García Lorca, *La zapatera prodigiosa*

Laura Esquivel, *Como agua para chocolate*

Film: *Todo sobre mi madre* (Pedro Almodóvar)

**A ‘Las protagonistas de estas obras son víctimas de la violencia’. Discute dando ejemplos concretos.**

In *La zapatera prodigiosa*, the Alcalde, unlike the Zapatero is a model of the dominant male, violent, arrogant and authoritarian. Cloaked in a blue cape and armed with symbols of male authority, violence and death, his presence in the Zapatero's household is both threatening and absurd, acting as a reminder of his constant threat of violence to women and a ridicule of his need to exercise control at the expense of the well-being of the community around him. The Alcalde is the embodiment of violence against women in the play as he has abused and ultimately murdered four young brides. When, in the absence of her husband, the Zapatera is forced to turn her house into a tavern, the Alcalde doesn't hesitate to take advantage of her economic difficulties by proposing marriage in exchange for material gain. In the absence of any actual physical violence presented on stage, what makes *La zapatera prodigiosa* a *farsa violenta* is the force of the Zapatero's cruel trick played on his unsuspecting wife, whose only crime is a desire to be loyal to herself and keep her honour rather than to follow the dictates of the inflexible societal norms.

In *Como agua para chocolate*, violence is an important widespread motif in a narrative full of repression. The violence in the ranch, is almost always between women, and mainly inflicted by Mamá Elena on Tita. Tita's fear of her mother is the consequence of many years of physical and verbal abuse as the youngest daughter has not been allowed to marry following a family tradition. The matriarch breaks her daughter's nose when Tita talks back at her on finding out that Roberto has died. Tita is pushed to the edge of sanity by the violence that triggers her escape from the ranch. Mamá Elena's violence is not limited to Tita as she returns as a ghost to cause a lamp to explode on Pedro. The only real act of violence happens when a group of men attack the ranch unexpectedly and rape Chenchá. Rosaura's violent attitude towards Tita mirrors that of her mother, but this time it is purely verbal. Other references to violence outside the ranch are related to the Mexican revolution in which Gertrudis participates. Violence at the domestic level is thus a reflection of a warped society and culture, and is the opposite of the support and solidarity that characterise more benevolent environments.

Violence in *Todo sobre mi madre* appears for the first time after Manuela's return to Barcelona. Looking for Lola, she stumbles across her old friend Agrado who is being beaten up by a client in the sordid outskirts of Barcelona. Manuela's reappearance in Agrado's life means the healing of her injuries and a renewed stability in her life as she abandons the violent world of prostitution. Huma and Nina's affair is the story of their deteriorating relationship, in parallel to that of Stella and Kowalski's in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Furthermore, mirroring Stella and her husband's argument when he ends up hitting her, Nina and Huma have such a violent disagreement that both are hospitalised. Similarly, we learn that violence has played a key role in Esteban and Manuela's relationship following Manuela's confession to Sister Rosa. Esteban's abusive behaviour towards Manuela comes back to her memory as she cries whilst seeing the *Streetcar* performance with her son Esteban. She is then reminded of the reasons she had to leave her abusive partner behind in Barcelona and seek refuge in Madrid, protecting her son from the violent father and the world of excess in their friendship circles.

**B 'Las mujeres en estas obras tienen una lucha constante contra las convenciones sociales'. Discute esta afirmación dando ejemplos concretos.**

In *La zapatera prodigiosa*, the protagonist is viewed by the community as a negative influence as she turns the family household into a tavern out of necessity. Surprisingly perhaps, but reflective of historical realities, the most adamant defenders of the social order and incessant antagonists of the Zapatera are the Vecinas, the other female members of the cast that aim at perpetuating a male-dominated society where women are expected to stay at home and fulfil their husband's wishes. The arranged marriage acts as a reminder that women are not expected to be decision-makers in this rural society. The menacing presence of his neighbours, and their corresponding threat to his honour, are what finally unsettle the Zapatero emotionally. His wife's resentment towards him, and her apparent flirtation with other men, are unmanageable for him, and he can't cope with the rumours and public humiliation. Ironically, this obsession with reputation and social conventions pushes him to leave his wife as a way of teaching her a lesson. His departure exacerbates the Zapatera's need to have a man in the household or face slander.

Social conventions and traditions are central to *Como agua para chocolate*. Mexican women of this era were educated to become traditional housewives and serve their husbands. However, Tita has to endure the De la Garza family tradition dictating that the youngest daughter is not to marry and has the duty of looking after the mother in her elder years. This absurd tradition is criticised by Dr Brown, who calls it a *tontería*, but Mamá Elena's determination to fulfil her wish cannot be swayed. However, Tita's determination to subvert tradition brings her to finding ways to meet her lover Pedro, whom she cannot marry, transgressing the norms of decency in the ranch. Bound by social convention, Pedro still has to fulfil his marital duty to be a good husband in the eyes of society. Surprisingly, Rosaura is happy with the agreement to share Pedro with Tita as long as they are discreet and he remains her legitimate husband. The next generation of De la Garza's are freed from any obligation to care for their mother and remain single.

The characters in *Todo sobre mi madre* are anything but complicit with the perceived social conventions. Sister Rosa is the daughter of a disjointed family with an emotionally absent mother. Moreover, she has sexual intercourse with Lola, a transsexual infected with AIDS, falling pregnant and contracting the disease. She has become estranged from her hypocritical and judgemental mother, who forges works of art, so Manuela fills in to give her the motherly support she needs at this time of crisis. Huma and Nina's unstable relationship is far from conventional and Nina's addiction to heroin dooms any hope of having a future with Huma. Lola's transsexuality is the focus of Rosa's mother's attention when she sees her holding Rosa's baby. La Agrado finds acceptance from the theatre audience following her improvised monologue in which she humorously explains the person she has chosen to become. Manuela's unconventionality is seen in the adaptability of her concept of family: she starts the film as a single mother struggling to come to terms with her past; in Barcelona this becomes an acquired family of friends; she ends as a single mother, bringing up a son to whom she is not biologically related.

**3 LA CORRUPCIÓN MORAL Y POLÍTICA**

Carlos Fuentes, *La muerte de Artemio Cruz*

Film: *La historia oficial* (Luis Puenzo)

Film: *El reino* (Rodrigo Sorogoyen)

**A ‘Estas obras describen una sociedad donde la corrupción está normalizada’. Discute, dando ejemplos concretos.**

In *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* the protagonist, who has participated in many of its significant events, experiences Mexican history from the turn of the century until 1955, at which point both he and Mexico are thoroughly corrupt despite the Revolution. Outside influences have contributed to this pattern, but Fuentes points to the betrayal of the Revolution as the fundamental treason of which most successful people in the country are guilty. Artemio’s close relationship with President Alemán coincides with the presidential concessions of Mexican finance and capital to North American interests. Artemio’s actions as businessman and newspaper owner in Mexico City highlight the complicity of influential Mexicans in their collaboration with the corrupt government. Equally guilty within this corrupt process is Jaime Ceballos appearing towards the final stages of the novel as heir to Artemio’s fortune. Overall, Fuentes provides a critical perspective on Mexican society, flagging up the widespread corruption of a wealthy class of landowners that sells Mexican natural resources to their U.S. counterparts with the government’s assent.

In *La historia oficial* corruption is a feature of the dictatorship. Roberto and his cabal of shady businessmen smugly celebrate their comfortable life-styles at dinner parties which convey the impression that at the heart of the regime was a nexus of security/commercial interests with strong US links. It takes Ana’s return after seven years of exile to alert Alicia to the dictatorship’s legacy of torture and stolen babies. In parallel her students resent being taught the history that has been sanctioned by the dictatorship, raising questions of officially sanctioned distortion of the truth. These dual influences make Alicia increasingly curious about her daughter’s biological mother, and her investigation of the matter teaches her how much corruption has been around her. Her corrupt husband becomes increasingly irritated by her questioning, and he attempts to keep the truth away from her with a dismissive *deja de pensar*. Even the priest is aware of Gaby’s mother’s killing by the regime, but refuses to answer Alicia’s questions. His *todo fue la voluntad de Dios* makes him an accomplice and feeds Alicia’s disgust further. The Madres de la Plaza de Mayo’s demonstrations are the voice of conscience that has arisen against corruption and oppression.

In *El reino* it becomes apparent that political corruption is deeply rooted in Spanish society from the outset. In the first scene the political party leaders discuss each other’s illicit dealings with remarkable normality in a busy restaurant. Whilst the accountant jokes about his financial record keeping, they all discuss embezzlement options, feasting on a luxurious lunch charged to the taxpayer. Cabrera is one of many businessmen involved in financial scams, and tells Manuel that he has taken documentation out of the judiciary’s reach to Andorra using a police helicopter. The party’s involvement with corruption goes far beyond the regional borders since La Ceballos, one of the Madrid leaders, is fully involved with the corrupt network. Her enquiry is for appearances’ sake, but the party is glad to sacrifice Manuel to protect the powers behind its wider array of shady dealings. The media’s involvement becomes apparent following the publication of a financial scandal and Manuel’s visit to the newspaper editor who seems fully aware of his dealings. Furthermore, the film concludes with an unsettling climax when Manuel is interviewed on TV and turned into a scapegoat by Amaia, a journalist who has no intention of letting him incriminate the numerous politicians, businessmen and journalists involved in the scams.

**B 'La traición es un tema dominante en estas obras'. Discute esta afirmación dando ejemplos concretos.**

The theme of betrayal is an essential part of *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* since Artemio himself features as an arch traitor whose circumstances, which he has cleverly exploited, have made him one of the builders of modern Mexico. Artemio joins the Mexican Revolution determined to fight against the landowners and for the rights of the peasants who work the land, but after Regina's death, he becomes a selfish opportunist whose honesty rapidly fades away. Two years later, he is captured and, as he awaits execution, discusses the meaning of life and revolution with Gonzalo Bernal, saving himself by offering to turn traitor. As a soldier in the Revolution, Artemio had been cowardly, getting himself wounded whilst trying to desert the soldiers under his command. He was also a traitor, betraying both his fellow prisoners and the position of his army. Gonzalo feels that the Revolution has been lost because the rebels have sold out for their own self-interest, thereby betraying the people of Mexico. Artemio's marriage to Catalina is perceived as a symbol of betrayal since she sees herself as property given to Artemio by her father. Although Artemio claims that his love for her is genuine and honest, he has several mistresses during their marriage and stays with her only due to his expected financial gain.

In *La historia oficial* betrayal is present from start to finish. Roberto stands out as the focal point, embodying the shady dealing and cruelty of the outgoing regime. He betrays Alicia's trust as he hides from her the awful truth behind Gaby's adoption. He is morally desensitised to his wife's and daughter's emotions, and is confronted by his disgusted father and brother over his complicity with the dictatorial regime. He justifies his betrayal of their values (as refugees from Franco's Spain) by stating that he did not wish to be a *perdedor* like them. Eventually he is unmasked as a torturer through the practised way in which he inflicts physical harm on Alicia. Only when the net starts to close in on him and his fellow businessmen, and his wife and daughter have fled, does he begin to show regret. The film demonstrates how treason is not perpetrated by those who oppose such regimes as the Argentine junta, but rather by the junta against the people. Self-interest and ideological intolerance are shown as added factors in leading individuals to betray their values.

A government crackdown on corrupt political practices directly implicates Manuel in *El reino*. Despite all the careful planning, Manuel is caught on tape detailing his involvement in corruption. Pareja, another party member also involved in his dealings, exposes Manuel and negotiates a sentence reduction for himself before the secretly taped conversation makes its way to national media. As the scandal is made public friendships and loyalties start to crumble, and blackmail, threats and accusations emerge. Manuel turns the party against him as he refuses to be the scapegoat and wants to implicate others in the scandal. He lies to Cabrera in order to extract a compromising recording from him on the Persika affair. New arrival in the party and former judge Alvarado, who entered politics promising to wipe out corruption, is willing to betray La Ceballos for his own political gain. Manuel agrees to provide him with the right evidence linking her to Paco's illegal dealings, that would clear La Ceballos from his political path, in exchange for Manuel being sentenced by a 'forgiving' judge. Manuel's lawyer and Amaia's corporate approach in the TV interview are other examples of betrayal. Manuel's words *el poder protege al poder* sum up a culture where loyalties are constantly undermined.

#### 4 DICTADURA Y EL INDIVIDUO

Ariel Dorfman, *La muerte y la doncella*

Film: *El silencio de otros* (Almudena Carracedo, Robert Bahar)

Film: *Rojo* (Benjamín Naishtat)

##### A ¿Qué perspectivas sobre la justicia nos dan las obras que has estudiado?

Paulina and Gerardo bring different perspectives on justice to *La muerte y la doncella*. Gerardo is delighted to have been appointed to a Comisión Investigadora tasked to produce *un libro oficial en el que quede establecido lo que pasó* under the dictatorship. Paulina believes that any investigation should go further and bring criminals to justice – which the current dictatorship-appointed *tribunales* are incapable of delivering. Gerardo accepts that justice is beyond the Commission's remit: *Lo que al país le hace falta es justicia, pero si podemos establecer la verdad...* The dictatorship blocked access to justice, meaning that Paulina could never bring charges against her torturer: now that she has him at her mercy, she demands to know *¿Ante quién acuso a este médico?* Gerardo's sense of justice is so compromised that Paulina has to remind him of the oath they swore after her release that *algún día vamos a juzgar a todos estos hijos de puta* and must force him to name the crimes of torture and rape that she suffered. The framework Paulina establishes to *juzgar al Dr Miranda* produces a confession and his *arrepentimiento*. However, his continued insistence that he is innocent when Paulina has established proof to the contrary inclines her to mete out her own deadly *justicia*.

In *El silencio de otros* the human rights lawyer Carlos Slepoy points out the irony whereby Spain's justice system investigates individual murder cases but not a genocide. He evokes *la justicia universal* as a way of removing mass human rights abuses from the jurisdiction of individual states and treating them as *de lesa humanidad*. Five years into the Querrela Argentina he is optimistic that the victims will overturn the impunity that their abusers derive from the Ley de Amnistía. Judge Servini also recognises the need for a global effort, pointing out that amnesties in Latin America have gradually been overturned. One victim remarks that it is possible to forgive a perpetrator, *pero se exige justicia*. However, as Slepoy remarks, *hay intereses poderosos que no quieren que estos hechos se investiguen*: Judge Garzón is thwarted, Chato's *derecho a la justicia* is blocked by the Audiencia and María Martín goes to her grave without recovering her mother's remains. On the other hand, the justice system brings former torturers before a judge for the first time, and at a regional level laws are passed in support of victims' rights and exhumations. As the narrator concludes, cases may not reach the courts, but they can still *desencadenar cambios*.

Naishtat follows the trend of 21st century directors from Argentina and Chile who have used their work to grapple with the legacy of dictatorship. In *Rojo* he focuses on the way in which a corrupt society becomes a breeding ground for the values that make dictatorship possible. The film is set in a provincial town where the rule of law has given way and justice has ceased to be part of the social contract. Disappearances have become an accepted way of settling scores, to the extent that even teenagers carry out them out with impunity. Everyone who vanishes – the house's occupants, the stranger in the restaurant, the youth – does so to the advantage of the privileged class. Naishtat has said that in *Rojo* he wanted to tell a story of people choosing to do the wrong thing consciously, not just by nature. Thus Claudio, though a solicitor, plots to appropriate the abandoned house that others have quietly looted. Detective Sinclair declines to bring his investigation to a court of law or to help the mother of the missing teenager. In all cases, justice is ignored and self-interest predominates. As Sinclair admits, the country is becoming *una tierra sin ley, sin Dios*.

**B Evalúa la representación de las autoridades y los funcionarios del estado en las obras que has estudiado.**

Two of the three protagonists of *La muerte y la doncella* were or will soon be government officials. Miranda's confession, though shaped by Paulina's memories, exposes the inhumanity of the dictatorship and those who served it. While Miranda professes *arrepentimiento* to gain his freedom, his continued protestations of innocence incline Paulina to impose her own brand of justice, reflecting her lack of confidence in a judicial system whose judges were appointed by the dictatorship. Taking the task of *juzgar al Dr Miranda* into her own hands also reflects her scepticism about Gerardo's capabilities and the effectiveness of the Comisión which he is to serve. Paulina is ironically more effectual and far-sighted in matters of justice and reconciliation than either of the government officials with whom she shares the stage. Miranda draws on the common value of machismo that he and Gerardo share to ask whether Gerardo is *incapaz de poner orden en [su] propio hogar*. He even appeals to him in his official capacity: *usted es la sociedad, no ella; usted es la Comisión Presidencial, no ella*. Gerardo's response *A los locos con poder hay que consentirlos* is an ironic reflection on those who served the state in the era of dictatorship.

*El silencio de otros* highlights continuity in the Spanish state from Franco through his chosen successor Juan Carlos to the present day Felipe VI, who is shown calling for *viejos rencores* to be abandoned. In María Martín's home town her relatives reckon she did not even notice the Transition, given that the town's institutions and mayor remained unchanged. Archive footage shows Transition politicians supporting *el olvido* as *la única manera de poder darnos la mano sin rencor*. Former prime minister Rajoy warns against *dar vueltas continuas al pasado*, while his PP predecessor Aznar is shown callously mocking the exhumation of victims. The Audiencia Nacional and Spanish diplomacy both prioritise legality over justice in blocking the proceedings initiated by Judge Servini, the victims' champion once Judge Garzón has been neutralised. She warns that progress will be difficult, but adds quietly that she considers this her most important case. Likewise, when she travels to Madrid, she comments that her approach has to be *frío y objetivo* – while also subtly indicating her empathy for her clients. At the other end of the scale is 'Billy', the unrepentant torturer now at last made to face the court but unwilling to offer any word of remorse.

In *Rojo* authority is personified in Claudio the lawyer and Sinclair the detective, two flawed characters in a darkening environment. In an allegory for Argentina's descent into dictatorship, Claudio's superficial respectability hides a damaged conscience. The way in which his indifference becomes complicity is a focal point of the film. He has no misgivings about benefitting from other people's misfortune, on the basis that if he doesn't, someone else will. Sinclair, for his part, is a superficially religious man who nonetheless collaborates with the emerging society that is, in his words, both *sin ley* and *sin Dios*. By allowing a crime to pass unpunished, he nourishes the culture of impunity. Even so, he manages to dent Claudio's self-image as a man of high moral stature. Naishtat has said that the middle-class, while ostensibly not driving the repression, provided the justification for it (e.g. the teacher's recital of nationalist slogans at the school dance performance). *Rojo* thus looks at how middle-class quiescence, corruption and a shared desire to avoid trouble provided fertile ground for the tyranny to come. Claudio and Sinclair contribute to that trend through their collusion with the emergence of a morally compromised society.

**5 CANTANTES ICÓNICOS DEL MUNDO HISPANO**

Film: *Violeta se fue a los cielos* (Andrés Wood)

Film: *Chavela* (Catherine Gund, Daresha Kyi)

Film: *Camarón* (Alexis Morante)

**A Analiza el equilibrio entre la tradición y la innovación en las obras de los/las cantantes que has estudiado.**

*Violeta Parra se fue a los cielos* shows how the singer, in seeking *otra música*, turned for inspiration to the traditional songs of rural Chile. In these *canciones viejas*, as her sister calls them, Violeta paradoxically discovers the inspiration for the *nueva canción* movement that she founded. She regarded *la gente* as the inspiration for her efforts, and wanted the *nueva canción* to offer a fresh perspective on them and their suffering. The socially committed folk songs she composed were innovative in their spare, pared down style, in which the strong vocal line is predominant. She insisted that her lyrics should be sung in a voice formed by lived experience, rather than one that has been tutored. Her interest in song as a form of popular expression stayed with her throughout her life, and was reflected in her foundation of the *universidad del folklore*, as she called the tented *peña* to which she devoted her last years – an innovative performance space and artistic collective. Potentially her most innovative project was *El gavilán*, a sung ballet mixing folk and orchestral instrumentation that was never performed, whose lyric features a symbolic representation of the struggle between male and female.

*Chavela* portrays the singer blending tradition and innovation in her repertoire. The tradition on which she draws is *ranchera*, albeit without the mariachi accompaniment. Her innovation is the *verdad* she brought to her art, expressed through the emotional commitment of her performance. This was a contrast to the traditionally more measured (or even banal) *ranchera* style, represented in the film by footage of JA Jiménez's performances. The audience sees Chavela transform Jiménez's ballads of loneliness and longing into emotional *tours de force*. Her *llorona* style, according to Almodóvar, created *una comunicación muy profunda* with her audience. According to Eugenia León, Chavela *rompía todo el esquema de cantantes de ranchera: le quita las ornamentaciones y lo vuelve el canto del alma herida*. León further observes how Chavela strips the festive veneer from *la canción mexicana*, revealing its true identity as a *canto desesperado*. In addition to Chavela's innovative singing style, her androgynous stage presence was also unprecedented, and was an early indication of her championing of artistic freedom and gay rights.

In the context of *Camarón* the debate between tradition and innovation centres on the manner in which flamenco is recorded and performed. The film establishes early on that Camarón, as a gypsy, has the *duende* required for *el flamenco puro*: as he observes, *la pureza no se puede perder nunca cuando uno la lleve dentro*. Juan Peña remarks on the need to present flamenco *de una nueva manera* if it is to reach *la masa grande*. Journalist Perez Orozco points out that, before Camarón, ninety percent of flamenco was heard live among enthusiasts, but in future ninety percent will be heard as a recording. As the narrator comments, *es ahí precisamente donde apuntaba Camarón*. The narration explains that Ricardo Pachón *canaliza las ansias de libertad de Camarón del flamenco puro*, arguing that *bulería* or *soleá* had an inherent affinity for blues or rock. His collaboration with Camarón produced *La leyenda del tiempo*, which became a *referente del nuevo flamenco*. The main innovations were the use of electronic instruments, which Camarón justified by stating that he needed *salirme un poco*. He later took flamenco to new audiences outside Spain, and recorded with an orchestra. The newspaper photograph of him outside Abbey Road is captioned *renovador y polémico*.

**B ¿Piensas que era importante para estos cantantes proyectar valores morales y/o políticos en sus obras?**

Although Violeta Parra's best-known work (*Gracias a la vida*) celebrates universal human experience, she recognised that *la vida no es una fiesta* and set her moral and political compass accordingly. *Violeta Parra se fue a los cielos* demonstrates her values at both macro and micro levels, making it clear that her writing is inspired by, and takes the side of, the people in their implicit struggle with capitalism and the elite. She is untroubled by performing in communist countries, creates pacifist tapestries as a protest against the *caos* of Chilean politics, reacts against elitist milieus such as the congressional reception and composes *El gavilán* as an anti-capitalist allegory. Her songs expose hypocrisy on the part of political and religious office-holders and identify with the exploited working class. She visualises her *Peña* as a people's university for folkloric traditions. She urges the young to be free of traditional (patriarchal) restraint – to love chaos, live life to the limits, etc. She refuses to hear the singing of *Cumpleaños feliz* because it is a *yanquí* tradition. These positions place her in line with other socially conscious artists of the Cold War period for whom a political stance was a moral obligation.

Chavela Vargas is depicted as having needed to be *más macha que los chavales* in creating a livelihood for herself in the homophobic world of Mexican cabaret at the start of her career. Her life story is one of struggle to assert her sexual and artistic identity in a *sociedad profundamente hipócrita*, and she remarks in the film that *mi canto es siempre dedicado a todas las mujeres del mundo*. This framework to her story implies a certain moral purpose, and reflects a progressive social position. Ultimately, however, her struggle was not political, but rather with suffering at an individual level. The roots of both her alcoholism and solitude go back to a childhood where rejection by her family for her lack of conventional femininity made it *difícil quererse a una misma*. The moral of her story is perhaps encapsulated in her closing remark that *con tu verdad sales adelante: cuesta mucho, sufres mucho...* Her triumph is perhaps summed up by her late-career resurgence, and by the former senator crediting her for opening the way for lesbians of future generations to be accepted.

*Camarón* makes clear that the singer saw his *gitano* origins as a fundamental part of his life and work, and was determined to honour that heritage. This was not merely a clan identification: it was an assertion of solidarity with the community spirit of the gypsy people and with the economically disadvantaged in his home area. Flamenco is central to that culture: indeed, there is some debate in the film about whether non-gypsies are able to perform flamenco – and indeed whether Camarón could adapt flamenco to the instruments of the rock era without losing its *pureza*. The sense of economic injustice pervades a song like *Te lo digo por tu bien*, or the *Fandangos* description of his widowed mother's struggle to raise her family. The narrator is sympathetic to these factors, commenting that gypsies *llevan la persecución prácticamente escrita en el ADN*. With regard to Camarón's songs, he points out that *cuando otros cantaores recurren a letras con temática social, la voz desaladora de Camarón evoca por sí sola la desolación de su pueblo*. Nonetheless, in a song like *Las doce acaban de dar* he explicitly protests against discrimination (*Y porque he nacido gitano/No crean que soy malo, / Que habemos malos y buenos,/Y también somos cristianos*). Significantly, Camarón's best-known song is an affirmation of solidarity with the gypsies: *Soy gitano*.

## TEXTS

**6 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Los empeños de una casa***

- A Comment on the following extract, explaining its context and how it reflects the main themes in the play. Add any other comments on content or style you consider of interest.**

This extract comes from the first scene when Don Rodrigo finds out that Doña Leonor has fled the family home to avoid the arranged marriage with Don Pedro. Having had his honour compromised by the offence, Don Rodrigo delivers a misogynistic speech in which he curses all women as he desperately aims to find a way to settle the matter. He considers some form of revenge as a solution and forcing her to marry Don Pedro, but at no time does he reflect on his daughter's wellbeing. Don Rodrigo hence becomes the archetypal self-interested father whose sole concern for his daughter is to provide him with honour and financial gain. At a later stage in the play Sor Juana deploys Castaño to undermine the patriarchal conventions as they assume Doña Leonor will have the last word on who to marry. Don Rodrigo's code of honour becomes more flexible as his plans to avenge his honour by duelling the alleged raptor of his daughter, who is likely to be younger and stronger, are brushed away. He settles for a marriage arrangement as a solution to have his honour restored and keep up appearances as he selfishly disregards his daughter's happiness again.

- B '*Los empeños de una casa* parodies cloak and dagger comedies.' Discuss, making reference to characters and themes in the play.**

*Los empeños de una casa* parodies aspects of cloak and dagger comedies. Sor Juana explores identity through a complex web of hierarchical relations typical of the traditional *comedias*. At the beginning of the play, Don Pedro's armed men foil Don Carlos and Doña Leonor's plot to run away together, permitting Pedro, with his sister's cooperation, to lock the would-be bride in his home. As a result, both the pursued and the pursuing are locked inside Don Pedro's house, an unusual setting in which to resolve the chain of love triangles and restore social order. When Castaño becomes involved on behalf of his master Don Carlos, he penetrates the home and transforms himself into a fake Leonor. His transvestisism interrupts sexual, textual and dramatic flow continuities and when he reveals his manipulation of a feminine gender identity, the unhappy love triangle is broken up, allowing the real Doña Leonor and Don Carlos to marry. Castaño's role is key to confusing the positive and negative moral strategies of Don Pedro, and Don Carlos and Doña Leonor respectively parody the traditional orderly closure through marriage in comedies. Sor Juana thus pays tribute to Calderón de la Barca and simultaneously satirises his generic norms, changing a single letter from Calderón's *Los empeños de un acaso* in her plays title.

- C Discuss the significance of the setting in *Los empeños de una casa*, making reference to characters and themes.**

Both characters and actions are conditioned by the setting in *Los empeños de una casa*. Sor Juana uses this spatial distribution as a reflection of gender-designated roles in a patriarchal society. The house is a space traditionally designated for women, and it is here that most of the action happens. Following Doña Leonor's escap from her family household and kidnapping in the streets, the Arellano household becomes the comedy's focal point. Fathers, husbands, and other male heads of household provide protection and security for the female members of the family, resolving their differences outdoors as Don Juan and Don Carlos engage in a violent duel in the streets of Toledo. Doña Ana and Celia take full advantage of the conventional space mapped out for females and additionally attempt to usurp masculine control by taking extraordinary liberties in Doña Ana's attempt to win the affection of Don Carlos. The intense activity that they generate indoors rivals the events that supposedly took place in the street, while parodically transforming a cloak and dagger play into a comedy.

- 7 César Vallejo, *Selected Poems* by Stephen M Hart and César Vallejo, Bristol Classics Press (Bloomsbury): *Los heraldos negros* (pages 1–14), *Trilce* (pages 15–34), *Poemas en prosa* (pages 35–41)**

**A Analyse this passage, giving its context and discussing its significance in the collection. Include any comments on content or style that you consider significant.**

This poem, *Trilce III*, is immediately evocative of childhood. The poet refers to *las personas mayores* in the third person, and to himself and his siblings in the first person plural, reminding them of adult strictures on their behaviour. There is also an evocative sense of place (*el silencioso corral, el pozo de agua*) which transports the reader to a rural childhood home. However, this setting is subverted from the start by the child/poet's barely concealed anxiety over the adults' absence as darkness falls, despite their mother's assurance that she would not be long. *Dobladoras penas* move among them (an image typical of Vallejo's innovative use of language): in response, the child/poet seeks to cheer his companions by focusing attention on the toy boats, and the *dulces para mañana* – although this attempt to hide their fears turns to ruefulness at the way children can be victims of adult neglect. Then comes the awful realisation that his siblings are not answering the child/poet's call, and his incredulity that they have left him alone in the dark. The child's anxiety is poetically transformed into an experience of existential disorientation that spans both past and present for the poet. The sense of abandonment becomes as traumatic for him now as it was in his childhood past. The poem's structure is free-form, with the child's uneasy thought processes the only determinants of the length of each stanza.

**B 'Vallejo's contradictory ideas and linguistic ambiguity make it hard to distinguish coherent themes in this collection.' Do you agree? Illustrate your answer with examples from the poems.**

There is no shortage of coherent themes in this collection: e.g. Vallejo's exploration of the individual's place in the world (existentialism), the solace of family relationships, or the longing for religious certainty. The mix of themes varies in each section, reflecting Vallejo's journey through Marxism to disillusion to what Hart calls Christian Marxism – an example of a 'contradictory idea'. Hart also describes different phases in Vallejo criticism, one of which emphasised his use of 'linguistic paradox'. In *Los heraldos negros*, the *heraldos, golpes, potros, charco de culpa* are some of a series of metaphors that illustrate the poet's outlook on life. In *Trilce* (a made-up word that fuses *triste* and *dulce*) Vallejo uses neologisms, provincialisms, archaisms and slang to encourage the reader to see the world from a new perspective, e.g. *Trilce I* describes time as both *tarde* and *temprano*. In making language more expressive Vallejo aims to give it scope beyond the confines of dictionary classification and bring it closer to the way people speak. Ambiguity is sometimes part of this process, but for Vallejo such ambiguity reflects a fundamental characteristic of the universe.

**C 'It is through pain and struggle that the hope for a better future emerges.' Discuss how this view (attributed to Vallejo) is reflected in this collection of poems.**

The view expressed reflects the traditional Catholic concept of suffering and redemption that characterises the poet's experience in a number of these works. Thus, in *Los heraldos negros*, the bewildered poet feeling battered by *golpes como del odio de Dios. Cristos del alma* and the *fe adorable* are discernible, but inaccessible while the blows are raining down upon him. In other poems of the collection the poet's pain is the result of his sense of loss, e.g. in *Trilce XXVIII*, the loss of his mother. In *Trilce LXI* an *adorada infancia* is a prerequisite before reaching a state in which *todo está muy bien*. Both family and religion offer hope, and in some poems in the collection the two become conjoined (e.g. *Trilce XXIII*, where the mother's *pan inacabable* becomes *hostias ricas*; and in *LXV* the mother herself becomes, like Mary, the *muerta inmortal*). In *Trilce XVIII* the incarcerated poet finds hope through religious transcendence and the memory of his mother. However, there is no clear happy ending in this collection: in the prose poem *Voy a hablar de la esperanza*, the poet's suffering is unfathomable and solitary. *Hoy sufro solamente*, he asserts, and the text gives no glimpse of the *esperanza* to which the title refers.

**8 Juan Rulfo, Pedro Páramo**

**A Comment on the following extract, explaining its context and how it reflects the main themes in the novel. Add any other comments on content or style you consider of interest.**

This extract is located halfway through the novel and marks the reader's realisation that Juan Preciado is dead. It opens up the possibility that Juan has been dead all along, since he was able to converse with Abundio and Eduviges from his arrival in Comala. In the dialogue between Juan and Dorotea, Juan retells his own death and the feelings he experienced from the moment when he left Eduviges' house. 'No estaba muy en mis cabales' at the start of the extract suggests he was lacking self-control as he was taken to the plaza by 'el bullicio de la gente'. Juan's weakness is apparent throughout the extract and increases as he is incapable of escaping the *murmillos* that finally cause his death. The recurrent references to *frío* suggest an imminent death that is ultimately caused by fear. Arguably, Juan's increasing cold emanates from the loneliness he feels after having found his origins and realising that, like the whole of Comala, he was also abandoned by Pedro Páramo. Rulfo uses alliteration linking the recurrent reference to *murmillos* with *rumor*, *emjambre*, *miedo* and *alma* to illustrate the buzzing sound resonating in Juan's mind.

**B 'The Church fails to provide moral standards to the people of Comala.' Discuss, making reference to characters and themes in the novel.**

Rulfo portrays the Church in Pedro Paramo as an institution that fails in its main responsibility of providing moral standards to the townspeople of Comala. The novel features characters that have sinned and yet show little or no remorse, but under a priestly class that demands payment in exchange for absolution, the poor are left oppressed by their own belief systems. Despite the extensive cruelty that Pedro and Miguel have inflicted on the people they both find the Church's forgiveness in exchange for gold. The rural Mexico of Comala is haunted by a version of Christianity that makes citizens beholden to hypocritical priests such as Father Renteria, who becomes the personification of these oppressive forces. As he falls into a system of greed rather than grace, Father Renteria is himself denied consecration by the priest in Contla for his misdeeds. It could be argued that he is the reason why Comala is populated with ghosts: he failed to absolve the poor before their deaths, turning the town into a type of purgatory. Only Susana, who abstains from these belief systems, is able to maintain an aura of contentment in the novel without needing to subjugate herself to the hypocrisy of institutionalised Catholicism.

**C Discuss the oppression of women in the novel.**

The novel implicitly criticises a world that oppresses women. They are consistently treated like objects in a patriarchal society, not only as commodities but also as means of sexual fulfilment. Obviously, Pedro and Miguel are the most recurring offenders, but the oppression is widespread. Both men see women as objects, for either their tactical value or their sexual value. Women have little control over their own existence and their lack of power is evident in a wide range of events, from Dolores Preciado's failure to postpone her wedding with Pedro to Donis's sister's rape by Miguel. The lack of financial options explains Donis's sister or indeed Susana's inability to escape the incestuous situations they find themselves in. Only Susana, trapped in her own fantasy, is able to transcend male domination, but at the price of her sanity. Women's oppression leads to much heartbreak, pain, and ultimately depression. Unlike the other men in the novel Juan enters the story influenced by his mother, Dolores, and almost all the voices he hears are those of women, suggesting that women continue to be oppressed and punished after life for having been the main bearers of Comala's guilt. Conversely, it is through Juan that the female voices of the spirits are honoured.

**9 Laura Restrepo, *Dulce compañía*****A Comment on the following extract, explaining its context and how it reflects the main themes in the novel. Add any other comments on content or style you consider of interest.**

This extract comes from the beginning of the third chapter immediately after Mona's first encounter with the Angel. The first half of the passage focuses on Mona's narration of her own overwhelming emotions. The use of language recurrently suggests she is not in control and she is attempting to come to terms with the previous night's events. *Traté de incorporarme, me quedé dormida* or *me tomé por sorpresa* imply the mystical effect the Angel has had on her. This is reinforced by poetic language as she compares the Angel to the ocean waves. In the second half of the passage Mona has regained her journalistic perspective. She regrets her tendency towards emotional involvement as a reporter, acknowledging her lack of professionalism. Her previous involvement with the *sandinistas*, for whom she ended up fighting, or her sheltering of an old lady who had lost her house in a natural disaster, present a socially-minded protagonist who is willing to transgress Colombia's rigid social structures.

**B 'The setting of the novel illustrates Bogotá's social division.' Discuss, making reference to characters and themes in the novel.**

Restrepo's *Dulce compañía* is mainly set in Galilea, a slum neighbourhood located in the mountainous outskirts of Bogotá which contrasts with the middle-class city centre where Mona, the protagonist, lives. The neighbourhood of Galilea, made up of a jumble of rickety dwellings, has no paved roads, electricity installations or reliable phone lines, isolating its inhabitants from the centre of the city and stressing their poverty and marginalisation. The journalist's recurrent visits to Galilea denote a movement from the privileged, self-contained middle-class to the isolated slum. She arrives by her own means, her access to private transport contrasting sharply with the inhabitants' lack of mobility. The restricted movement of the Galileans also symbolises their scant opportunity for social mobility. They are confined to their world of poverty, which highlights Mona's privilege as she moves between the two social and physical spaces at will. The militarisation of the outskirts of Bogotá towards the end of the novel exacerbates further this social division.

**C Discuss maternity in the novel.**

Restrepo's treatment of maternity in *Dulce compañía* demonstrates an unorthodox attitude to it and to child-raising that challenges the norms of society. La Mona bears a child conceived with the angel in a ceremony orchestrated by the four neighbourhood women who form the self-appointed administrative council of the angel, and who have nominated La Mona as the chosen bride. The angel's lineage is disrupted since their child turns out to be a female, and thus she is unsuitable for carrying on her father's role as saviour of the people. La Mona undertakes to raise her daughter on her own with the support of Doña Ara, who is at the same time the girl's grandmother and the mother of the angel. Mona also has the support of the other women of Galilea, creating an all-female nurturing environment for the child and undermining the necessity for a paternal figure.

**10 Gabriel García Márquez, *Del amor y otros demonios***

**A Analyse this passage, giving its context and discussing its significance in the novel. Include any comments on content or style that you consider significant.**

A This passage comes from chapter 3, just after the Bishop has asked Delaura to take charge of Sierva María's (SM's) case. The opening two lines highlight Delaura's unease with women and *la razón*. In this, he seems a typical product of the Spanish Catholic Church of his time. However, he also displays a sensibility to both literature and dreams, reflecting perhaps what the Bishop calls his *inspiración*. Another mysterious feature is his *nostalgias heredadas* – a sense of loss or disinheritance from Spain from which the Bishop and the Marquis also seem to suffer. Delaura's fascination for Garcilaso is described as *un culto casi religioso* – ironic, given that he will ultimately turn away from *la opresión del mundo cristiano* in favour of his Garcilaso-inspired love for SM. Another irony in the passage is the reference to *el sudor de las manos* – prefiguring his *perspiración* when first meeting SM. The '*Fue así...*' opening of the last paragraph strikes a rhetorical tone, denoting a milestone in the narrative. However, the paragraph has melancholy associations: when Delaura's relationship with the Bishop founders he and his *raros valores* are consigned to obscurity at the leper hospital and his dream of Salamanca – a world he will never see again – becomes SM's dying vision.

**B 'Sierva María is as much a victim of parental neglect as of institutional oppression.' Do you agree?**

Although Spanish colonial oppression and the Church's cruelty are the dominant themes of *Del amor...*, Sierva María's (SM's) cruel fate is rooted in her upbringing. Her parents loathe each other and, by extension, her: her father is ignorant of her age or birthday, and her mother, when reminded of her existence, dismisses her as *un engendro*. It is left to Dominga de Adviento to raise her in the Yoruban tradition: as the narrator observes, SM's *verdadera casa y su verdadera familia* are found in the slave quarters. Her plight is summed up in Delaura's report to the Bishop: *lo que nos parece demoníaco son las costumbres de los negros, que la niña ha aprendido por el abandono en que la tuvieron sus padres*. The Marquis belatedly bonds with her in chapter two, but nonetheless colludes in her incarceration, lacking the character to question the Bishop's order. In the convent she is victimised by the cruel *tornera*, the *novicias* and an *abadesa* characterised by *el rigor de sus prejuicios*. Influential figures in the institutional hierarchy, including the new Viceroy, realise her predicament, but are unable to free her from subjugation to the Catholic authorities, which have branded her demonic in order to justify their oppression.

**C Discuss the use of magical realism in *Del amor y otros demonios*.**

García Márquez's electrifying use of magical realism is a hallmark of his writing, and provides a thrilling incentive to readers. In the case of *Del amor...*, magical realism brings to life the characters' pre-modern outlook on demonic possession and other abnormal phenomena, subtly implicating readers in that outlook and thus adding potency to the narrative. It is also used to illustrate the dark side of the encounter between the New and Old Worlds, e.g. the *horda de macacos luciferinos (que) irrumpieron en la catedral*. It serves to highlight character traits, such as the Marquis' terror over a *gallina aumentada al tamaño de una vaca*, or when we learn that Bernarda *se había borrado del mundo por el abuso de la miel fermentada y las tabletas de cacao*. Sierva María's hair at the end of the novel, gushing *como burbujas* over her rejuvenated skin, could be interpreted as indicating her triumph over oppression and death. At times magical realism reflects the dissonant nature of the society, e.g. the *insoportable coro de las locas*, or the swallows' *nevada de añil nauseabundo*. The cry of *se está volviendo perro* and the 100-year-old horse are examples of how magical realism can generate humour, without offering escape from the novel's oppressive world.

**11 César Aira, *La villa*****A Analyse this passage, giving its context and discussing its significance in the novel. Include any comments on content or style that you consider significant.**

In this extract, from early in chapter 5, the narrator ponders Maxi's motivation for helping the *cartoneros* – a topic analysed in detail since the start of the novel. The narrator's concern with the issue is a reminder that he is not omniscient, and that he, like the reader, is beguiled by such aspects of the story as the *misterio de la caridad*, the dream-like nature of *la villa*, and the *ambigüedad* which makes Maxi an intriguing protagonist. The narrator's comment on the *cartonero* phenomenon (*habría bastado un pequeño cambio socioeconómico...*) remind us that the novel passes no overt judgement on the *villa's* existence or on poverty more generally – making this observation all the more striking in its matter-of-fact simplicity and the questions it raises about Argentine society. Three sentences later the double *quizás* followed by *debían de* is again typical of the bewildered narrator, searching for meaning in the world of the novel. The next paragraph continues the search for *significado*: *ninguno* and *la nada* indicate that there is none, prompting the narrator into a theory of time and history of the type with which he teases the reader throughout the novel. The image of *extensas playas semivacías del tiempo real* could be haunting or existentially troubling: however, in *La villa*, the unthreatening style and calm, thoughtful prose induce a wistful tone.

**B What factors divide characters in *La villa*, and what factors bring them together?**

Survival needs bring the *cartoneros* together. Maxi acts as an additional *enlace solidario* between them. He is brought to their side by his lack of friends (the result of his solitary nature and *ceguera de noche*) and his desire to fill his time productively. The *confianza* he inspires in them enables him to bond with them – though the narrator also cites the *misterio de la caridad* as part of the process. Maxi's intimate encounter with Jessica comes fittingly just after a reflection on chance, and seems to bring them together only fleetingly. Jessica and Vanessa have been driven apart by Jessica's insecurities. The curious mirror effect of the apartment blocks they inhabit has also been a factor, although it helps to bring them together again, as does their shared *privilegio de la burguesía*: inhabiting a *mundo de las madres* and the *reaseguro* that entails. Love and Maxi's kindness reunite Adelita and Alfredo after the latter's fear of an unreliable justice system had driven him into hiding. Adelita's loyalty to his memory and humility are crucial in achieving this, the novel's most positive outcome. *La doctora Plaza* is Cabezas' nemesis: they are similar types – driven, ruthless and trigger-happy. However, their different trajectories divide them: he is *destruido por el fracaso* and alienated from human society, whereas she knows how to manipulate it and prosper.

**C Is *La villa* a realist novel?**

*La villa* straddles the borderline between realism and the surreal, or even the psychedelic. This duality can be seen, on the one hand, in Aira's insightful, realistic depictions of the *cartoneros* and the urban environments through which they move, while on the other hand he portrays their *villa* in terms of irrational geography and quasi-magical illumination. Likewise, the urban tower blocks become distorting mirrors that undermine their inhabitants' grip on reality: Jessica feels that she and her neighbour Vanessa *en el fondo eran lo mismo* – though this dizzying thought makes her feel *fuera de sí*. A realist plot evolves around Maxi's benevolent interest in Alfredo and, in parallel, Cabezas' malign interest in Maxi and the girls. However, as the novel progresses, these are superseded by Judge Plazas' more operative hunt for Cabezas, who by then has become a demonic composite of two different people. Their surreal confrontation in the magical, spun wheel of the *villa* during an apocalyptic downpour contrasts with the more prosaic television reportage. Aira's esoteric digressions on, for example, human agency and the workings of time, sometimes as seen from the characters' perspective, suggest an urge to explore reality beyond conventional perception. By the end of the novel the *villa* has been redefined as a dream world, while in a moment of self-effacing irony the girls in the pizzeria allude to the temporal inconsistencies of the novel's closing events.

**12 Joaquín Sabina, lyrics to the 21 tracks on the live album *Nos sobran los motivos***

- A Analyse this lyric, with reference to any stylistic features that you consider of interest. Include any comparisons or contrasts with other lyrics in this collection that you consider significant.**

This lyric (*Pacto entre caballeros*) comprises a number of distinctive stylistic features and genres. Firstly, the story is told succinctly (and at breathless pace), reflecting the suddenness and disorientation of the experience of being mugged and effectively abducted. Secondly, there is a striking mix of genres – comedy, crime drama and autobiography – with Sabina himself as the protagonist. Thus the description of him and his companions resembling a *cuadrilla de la muerte* in their photo-booth picture is a strong visual image that adds both characterisation and humour. Other comic touches include the glimpse of Maruja and the nonsensical *mucha, mucha* of the closing line, repeated to comic effect in performance. The muggers fit into the Spanish *pícaro* tradition, in that they live through thieving and yet exhibit a certain charm (e.g. the *trago para celebrarlo* and the *guiño* with which the money is returned). Above all, the lyric is imbued with irony. This is most notable in the song's title and also in the choice of language, whether *subvencionar* to refer to robbery, *cogieron prestado* to describe car theft, or the phrase used when the gang recognise their victim (*te pareces al Sabina, ese que canta*). Sabina's empathy for the low-life ways of these ruffians reinforces and reflects his edgy public image, as does his conclusion that sometimes *el diablo... se pone de tu parte*.

- B 'Love is primarily a source of conflict and disillusion in Sabina's lyrics.' Do you agree?**

There is much evidence in this collection to support this assertion, though these lyrics also reflect more diverse responses to love and desire. Machismo undermines love in *Y sin embargo*, with the author's compulsive womanising resulting in a recurrent *guerra fría* with the partner he truly loves. Machismo also underpins the very different tone of *19 días y 500 noches*, where the comically arrogant male persona reflects with unconscious irony how *tanto la quería / Que, tardé, en aprender / A olvidarla, diecinueve días / Y quinientas noches*. Disillusion is perhaps at its strongest in *Nos sobran los motivos* – the embittered farewell of a bruised heart directed at the former lover. On the other hand, in *Medias negras* even the realisation that he has been robbed by his seductress is not sufficient to disillusion the lyricist – he still craves her. *Donde habita el olvido* is a bittersweet and philosophical 'morning after' reflection on love gone wrong in which the author accepts the inadequacy of his emotional response. *Ruido* takes a dispassionate, third-person view of how even a love affair with an idyllic start can be undermined by incompatible expectations, the petty but corrosive *ruido* of daily life becoming a metaphor for the lovers' disillusion. However, the more upbeat tone of *Rosa de Lima* conveys the positive side of love.

- C Which matters more to Sabina in these lyrics: compassion or comedy?**

Sabina ranges across genres in this collection. The comedy primarily derives from irony: e.g. *Pacto entre caballeros* (see above) or *19 días y 500 noches*, where the humour derives from the jilted protagonist's hand-wringing hyperbole and improbable self-justifications. In *Y nos dieron las diez* Sabina plays up the humour of the singer's frustration rather than evoking compassion for his distress: references to the *banco hispanoamericano* and the *municipales* add both irony and bathos to the narrative. Likewise, the story of Princesa's demise is strikingly short of compassion for the way her life has been diminished by her *gurú*. By contrast, in *La Magdalena* the female protagonist is treated with great compassion, underlined by the evocation of Jesus' respect for her biblical namesake. *¿Quién me ha robado el mes de abril?* is a compassionate study of the plight of ordinary people who suffer as a result of the selfishness of others. In summary, therefore, Sabina demarcates certain topics for fully comedic or fully compassionate treatment, but it is a feature of the *noir* Sabina universe that compassion is not guaranteed for all who endure hardship. On balance, comedy seems to be the more important of these two genres.

**13 Javier Cercas, *Soldados de Salamina***

- A Comment on the following extract, explaining its context and how it reflects the main themes in the novel. Add any other comments on content or style you consider of interest.**

This extract comes from *Cita en Stockton*, the final chapter in the novel where Cercas' investigation comes to a conclusion. The extract narrates part of the conversation between Javier Cercas and Roberto Bolaño, two writers of fiction discussing the historical matters around Miralles, the presumed soldier who spared Sánchez Mazas' life in the dawn of the Spanish Civil War. Miralles is presented as a true hero by Bolaño's account of the epic feats achieved in Africa by the former Republican soldier after volunteering to fight against the Nazis in the Second World War. As such, he converts defeat into victory, and what is more (the book claims) we are all in his debt. Cercas imagines him marching to join up with Montgomery's forces in Libya, carrying the flag of a country not his own, of a country that represents all countries and also the country of freedom which only exists because of Miralles and the *patrulla D'Ornano*. Stylistically, the extract is written as a historical account, giving details about the North African campaign in the Second World War to reinforce the reader's perception that the events described are factual.

- B 'The tragedy in *Soldados de Salamina* is that the actions of the true heroes have been forgotten.' Do you agree?**

*Soldados de Salamina* functions as testimony to the unsung hero and his fallen comrades, none of whom (unlike the fascist Sánchez Mazas) would ever have a street named after them. The story begins as journalistic research into the failed execution of Sánchez Mazas and the events that followed, setting up the theme that only the victors write history and are glorified. Cercas' investigation gradually uncovers the truth, revealing the inaccuracy and unreliability of the official historical account of the Civil War. Paradoxically, the closer the journalist gets to identifying the soldier who spared Sánchez Mazas' life, the greater the author's need to resort to fictional characters such as Miralles. *Soldados de Salamina* pays homage to forgotten heroes like Miralles. Just as the last veterans of the Civil War are coming to the end of their lives, Cercas gives literature the function of ensuring that their memory lives on. The real tragedy would be to lose the *memoria histórica* and forget the personal sacrifice of the conflict's protagonists.

- C Discuss the role of the narrator in the novel.**

One of the key components of *Soldados de Salamina* is its unreliable narrator, whose name is also Javier Cercas. This narrator-protagonist is a novelist and journalist portrayed as punctilious, fastidious and also error-prone. An inconsistent individual with several internally contradictory features, his personality contrasts with the various pronouncements made by the real Cercas about his fictional self. These traits interact with the notion of the *relato real* favoured by the narrator, and ultimately contribute to the sense of contingency and uncertainty that permeate the novel. The narrator tells the story of the writing of the book, thereby making the novel a metafictional text. It ends as the narrator, looking at his own reflection, envisages the completed book. The metafictional elements of the narration enhance its realistic elements, transforming the text into a self-reflective experience.