MAGICAL REALISM IN OVID'S *METAMORPHOSES*

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Abstract

This thesis explores aspects of magical realism in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It uses the *Cien años de soledad* of Gabriel García Márquez as a comparative tool, examining narrative devices common to both texts; each chapter analyses an important feature of magical realist theory or technique.

The first chapter studies the narrative methods that create magical realism, such as anachronism, hybridism and use of internal narrators. In the second chapter, the theory that magical realism arises from a clash of cultures is explored by analysing magical realist episodes in each text from a cultural perspective. The third chapter focuses exclusively on magical realism's connection to Latin America, while the fourth chapter uses case studies of characters from each text to examine how effectively the mode depicts reality. The final chapter investigates the representation of artists and creativity in each work.

By exploring Ovid's poem using a modern critical theory, this thesis provides fresh insight into magical aspects of *Metamorphoses* and broadens the scope of magical realism as a literary term.

Contents

Introduction

This thesis examines the role played by magical realism in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. I investigate various aspects of magical realism within the poem by comparing the devices it employs when handling magical occurrences with those used by Gabriel García Márquez in his most famous novel *Cien años de soledad*, a seminal text in the realm of magical realism. Magical realism is a modern literary movement, the history of which is summarised below; its startling mixture of ordinary reality and supernatural occurrences has caught the attention of many modern critics who have observed the genre in various post-colonial texts of the twentieth century. It might therefore seem anachronistic to apply the term to an ancient text such as *Metamorphoses*. Yet the fact that a term was not acknowledged at the time of a text's composition does not mean that the term cannot have any use or meaning for interpreting that text, however. Many modern critical movements still prove useful tools for interpreting earlier texts.[1] Ovid has consistently attracted writers desiring to interpret his work in modern and innovative ways. From the heavy moralising approach of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance reawakening of Ovidian studies and the very different translations of Arthur Golding, George Sandys and Samuel Garth, to the modern approaches of David Slavitt and Ted Hughes, many have tried their hand at reinterpreting Ovid for a modern age.[2] Scholars have also in the last few decades been analysing Ovid's *Metamorphoses* from new perspectives, using mythical, thematic and linguistic approaches to view his poetry.[3]

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[1] For discussions of the relevance of generic categories in Classical literature, see Griffin (1985) and Martindale (1997).
[2] For useful discussions of the various re-inventions of Ovid through the ages, see the essays of Lyne (2002); Dimmick (2002); Burrow (2002); Kennedy (2002). Brown (1999) explores the influence of Ovid in English literature.
[3] Solodow (1988); Galinsky (1989); Hardie (2002).

It is worth speculating what it is about Ovid that causes him to be so tirelessly reinterpreted for more modern audiences. The detached, ironic and ambiguous voice of the narrator in *Metamorphoses* is certainly very accessible for modern literary theories of narratology and postmodernism. Beyond that, the panoramic scope of his work and the charm of his tale telling are both likely to attract imaginative responses. The choice of magical realism as an interpretative tool entails particular difficulties, for the movement, as is shown below, is tied closely with recent post-colonial situations, and more specifically still, Latin America itself. The similarities between the writing style used by magical realist writers and that of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* leads me to believe that a comparative study using magical realism will prove illuminating. As magical realism is seen as such a historical and political movement, I believe that this will be particularly fruitful when applied to a text which lies so many centuries before magical realism became a literary phenomenon. The *Metamorphoses* is a poem that approaches magical events from many different angles. Sometimes a magical happening is mentioned without comment or description;[4] at others meticulous detail is used to depict a transformation.[5] The narrator will sometimes express astonishment or doubt at his own stories,[6] or will make his characters react with wonder and surprise;[7] but often the magical tale will be told with a straight face as if it were the most natural thing in the

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[4] E.g. *coniugis adventum praesenserat inque nitentum / Inachidos vultus mutaverat ille iuvencam* (1.610-1); *quam pater ut vidit (nam iam pendebat in aura / et modo factus erat fulvis haliaeetus alis)* (8.145-6); *at ille / senserat, et, tandem superis miserantibus, ambo / alite mutantur* (11.740-2).

[5] E.g. *vix prece finita torpor gravis occupat artus: / mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro, / in frondem crines, in ramos bracchia crescunt; / pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret* (1.548-51); *mater abit templo, sequitur comes Iphis euntem, / quam solita est, maiore gradu; nec candor in ore / permanet, et vires augentur, et acrior ipse est / vultus et incomptis brevior mensura capillis, / plusque vigoris adest, habuit quam femina. nam quae / femina nuper eras, puer es* (9.786-91).

[6] E.g. *saxa (quis hoc credat, nisi sit pro teste vetustas?) / ponere duritiem coepere suumque rigorem / mollirique mora mollitaque ducere formam* (1.400-2); *inde (fide maius) glaebae coepere moveri, / primaque de sulcis acies apparuit hastae* (3.106-7); *inperfectus adhuc infans genetricis ab alvo / eripitur patrioque tener, si credere dignum est* (3.310-1).

[7] E.g. *haec stipite crura teneri, / illa dolet fieri longos sua bracchia ramos; / dumque ea mirantur, conplectitur inguina cortex / perque gradus uterum pectusque umerosque manusque / ambit* (2.351-5); *fugit Autonoeius heros / et se tam celerem cursu miratur in ipso. / ut vero vultus et cornua vidit in unda, / 'me miserum!' dicturus erat* (3.198-201).

world. As shall be demonstrated in the course of the thesis, many of Ovid's techniques for handling the supernatural are very similar to those found in modern magical realist texts.

Before explaining how I use magical realism to study *Metamorphoses*, it is important to clarify what the term means, since it has certainly produced much debate. For this purpose I first give an overview of the emergence of the concept and subsequent debate. I then describe the methods I use to conduct my investigation and explain why I have chosen them.

1. A Brief History of Magical Realism

The term 'magical realism' was first coined in 1925 by an art critic named Franz Roh, in an essay exploring a recent movement in painting;[8] he was examining what he believed to be a Post-Expressionistic emphasis upon the innate marvellousness of the object as opposed to the Expressionists' preference for the fantastic, the exaggerated and the unearthly. In the preface to his book, he explains his use of the label: *With the word 'magic', as opposed to 'mystic', I wished to indicate that the mystery does not descend to the represented world, but rather hides and palpitates behind it.*[9] 'Magic Realism' was rapidly subsumed by the term 'New Objectivity'[10] in artistic circles. While Roh's term 'Magic Realism' tended to focus more upon the aesthetics, as opposed to Hartlaub's more politically weighted term,[11] both strove to capture the return to realistic depiction in their critical phrases, and the sense of objects as alienated and

[8] The term had already appeared in the context of German philosophy: Novalis wrote of a 'magical idealist' and a 'magical realist' in the eighteenth century. See Guenther (1995), p.34.
[9] Roh (1925).
[10] 'Neue Sachlichkeit' (New Objectivity) was the term created by Gustav Hartlaub, a German museum director. See Guenther (1995), p.33.
[11] Guenther (1995), p.34ff.

isolated inside still, enigmatic landscapes. The new phase in painting expressed the inherent wonder of actual things, as well as man's feeling of loneliness in the modern technological world. The artists and critics were keen to emphasise the distinction of this new movement from both Expressionism and old school Realism. The New Objectivity artist Grethe Jurgens wrote: *It is the discovery of a totally new world. One paints pots and rubbish piles, and then suddenly sees these things quite differently, as if one had never before seen a pot. One paints a landscape, trees, houses, vehicles, and one sees the world anew. One discovers like a child in an adventure-filled land. One looks at technological objects with different eyes when one paints them or sees them in new paintings.*[12] In Guenther's careful survey of the development of Magic Realism in the arts in the Weimar Republic, the word that keeps appearing is *Unheimlichkeit* (uncanniness). It describes the pervasive atmosphere of those paintings regarded as embodying this new way of painting. She writes: *De Chirico's bleak new world, with its appearance of objects isolated and mysterious, his pictorial vision of modern man's alienation and disorientation, were recognized by Franz Roh as extremely important in the development of Magic Realism...It is especially in de Chirico's evocation of* Unheimlichkeit, *his clarity of colour, his precision and ordering, his use of sharp contrasts, his ability to make 'the real appear unreal, the unreal real' that he most coincides with those tendencies of New Objectivity art which Hartlaub enumerated in his exhibition catalogue and with those artists Roh labelled Magic Realists.*[13] She observes the importance of the political, economic and social decline and depression of the times in the path these artists were now taking and clarifies how they channelled the dissatisfaction of the age into the clinical precision and meticulous detail of the new style: '*More exacting than the camera lens, the artist painted everything with equal*

[12] Guenther (1995), p.36.
[13] ibid., p.38-9.

sharpness, even the background. Virtually no brushstrokes were visible; the finish was smooth as enamel. Objects were scrutinized in their minutiae. Artists "painted inwards from the outside" to get to the invisible. With surgical probing, a deeper layer - the magic and the unheimlich *... behind the real - was revealed.*[14]

The transposition from artistic to literary spheres was complex; Guenther emphasises the difficulties inherent in such a procedure while observing the particularly accommodating qualities of the words 'magic' and 'realism' as a definite factor for its popularity amongst the literary community. An Austrian artist and writer, Alfred Kubin, who was fascinated with the concept of the *unheimlich* within the real, is viewed as an important precursor to the mode, influencing later writers, who then conflated his ideas with the artistic term.[15] Guenther observes that Roh's phrase was introduced to Latin America by the Spanish translation and publication of his book in 1927, and that the flight from Europe to the Americas by many cultural figures in the 30s and 40s probably aided the spread of the term. She states towards the close of her piece: *it is in Latin America that the concept was primarily seized by literary criticism and was, through translation and literary appropriation, transformed*;[16] and it is certainly true that it has been in Latin America that the movement has exploded with a feverish intensity.[17]

Many possible explanations have been proposed to explain the literary phenomenon, with prominent voices in Latin American literary circles jostling to express a viewpoint. At the heart of most of these arguments lies one difficulty: anxious to authenticate their credentials as world-class writers, the critics have cited the special nature of America as the inspiration for magical realism. It seemed clear, however, that it was from exposure to European literature such as Franz Kafka and the French

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[14] Ibid., p.53.
[15] See Kubin (1967); Sebba (1973); Raabe (1977); Rhein (1989).
[16] Guenther (1995), p.61.
[17] See Leal (1995) and Flores (1995) for the explosion of magical realism in Latin American literature.

Surrealist movement that at least some part of magical realism was created. This has led to contradictory arguments, which both cite European literature from the New World chroniclers onwards as influences and then leap to authenticating the genre as uniquely Latin American.

The Latin American literary explosion became known as the 'boom', and a number of important magical realist novels and short stories were published and have since achieved international prestige, especially Alejo Carpentier's *El reino de este mundo* (1949), Miguel Asturias's *Hombres de maiz* (1949), Carlos Fuentes' *Constancia y otras novelas para virgenes* (1989), Julio Cortazar's *Rayuela* (1963). Meanwhile, all around the world a proliferation of magical realist literature has appeared in response to this sudden literary flowering of an apparently new genre, including Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981), Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1988), Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* (1991). The particular frequency with which these novels have emerged from post-colonial societies has led many to assume that their political and historical backgrounds catalysed these writers and produced magical realism. Today the effervescent fervour of magical realism as a new and exciting movement has dwindled and faded. Julian Barnes' jaded reaction to its paradoxes and miracles discloses a sense that too much proud literary territorialisation has caused the genre to grow stale: *A quota system is to be introduced on fiction set in South America. The intention is to curb the spread of package-tour baroque and heavy irony. Ah, the propinquity of cheap life and expensive principles, of religion and banditry, of surprising honour and random cruelty ... Permit me to rap on the table and murmur 'Pass!' Novels set in the Arctic and Antarctic will receive a development grant.* [18]

[18] Barnes (1984), p.112.

2. A Definition of Magical Realism

Roh expressed his formulation of magical realism in the sphere of art, but since his initial exposition, there have been many brave attempts to categorise the notion in the literary arena. These were often Latin American essayists with an agenda of patriotism; Alejo Carpentier saw 'the marvellous real' as a vivid depiction of Latin American reality. He gives examples of *a world of monarchs crowned with the plumes of green birds, vegetation dating back to the origins of the earth, food never before tasted, drink extracted from cacti and palm trees.*[19] In effect, he regarded 'the marvellous real' in its true form as realistic literature representing startling events and places, in contrast to what he calls *(t)he marvellous, manufactured by tricks of prestiditigation, by juxtaposing objects unlikely ever to be found together ...the snail in a rainy taxi, the lion's head on the pelvis of a widow, the Surrealist exhibitions.*[20] Flores strove for a more thorough exploration of the literary style and devices which rendered a work magical realist, combined with an explanation of origins; in doing so he contradicted Carpentier's theory by emphasising the European literary precursors of Franz Kafka and the German Romantics, especially Dostoevsky. The *amalgamation of realism and fantasy* is his first characteristic of magical realist literature, followed by '*the cold and cerebral and often erudite storytelling.*[21] He describes the Latin American practitioners of this new mode of writing as *meticulous craftsmen* with *the same preoccupation with style and also the same transformation of the common and the everyday into the awesome and the unreal.* He claims that the plots were smooth and precise and the style was neat and lacking in lyrical profusion and needlessly baroque

[19] Carpentier (1995), p.83.
[20] Ibid., p.85.
[21] Flores (1995), p.112-3.

descriptions; characteristics that, conversely, Carpentier claims for the marvellous real in an essay entitled 'Baroque and the Marvellous Real'.[22]

Leal expressed disapproval of Flores' formulation, finding it too encompassing and ill-defined; he quotes Pietri's book, *Letras y hombres de Venezuela*: *What became prominent in the short story and left an indelible mark there was the consideration of man as a mystery surrounded by realistic facts. A poetic prediction or denial of reality. What for lack of another name could be called a magical realism.*[23] Leal devotes much of his essay to deconstructing Flores' arguments, and defining magical realism negatively, in terms of what it was not: excluding fantastic or psychological literature, surrealist or hermetic literature, literature that created imagined worlds or explained the actions of its characters. Finally some positive definitions emerge; he states magical realism to be an attitude towards reality, and as such, something that can occur in all manner of forms, be they elitest or populist, prolific or concise. He ultimately concludes with Carpentier that magical realism in literature is a response to the marvellous real that is inherent in the world.

Chanady is concerned to understand from an external perspective the drives of these Latin American essayists to explain magical realism as a uniquely Latin American phenomenon; in doing so she makes some salient observations about magical realist characteristics, falling short of any attempt at a systematic formulation. She highlights consensus between the apparently opposing works of Flores and Carpentier, by noting the basic similarity between Carpentier's rejection of Surrealism for being based on stock artifice and motif, and Flores' citing that magical realists *cling to reality as if to prevent 'literature' from getting in their way.*[24] She observes that magical realism challenged Western hegemonic philosophic and empirical paradigms by presenting

[22] Carpentier (1995), p.89-108.
[23] Leal (1995), p.120.
[24] Flores (1995), p.115.

other versions of truth. She uses as an example Carpentier's *El reino de este mundo* which rearranges normal chronology; she also notes that magical realist texts tend to present reality as *a constantly changing 'constellation' or group of figures that is the product of the individual imagination*[25] rather than an objective given. Finally, she notes the mingling of real and unreal in happy juxtaposition that occurs in such works, contrasting it to the horror and distress that often accompanies intrusions into reality of supernatural elements in fantastical texts.

Faris has attempted to identify in a more systematic manner the fundamental characteristics of magical realist texts.[26] She opens her piece with what she perceives to be the governing characteristic of magical realist literature: *Very briefly, magical realism combines realism and the fantastic in such a way that magical elements grow organically out of the reality portrayed.*[27] She then presents five primary characteristics: it must possess (a) an element of magic that cannot be explained away according to the laws of the universe as we accept them to be, (b) extensive descriptive detail of the world, which distinguishes it from much of fantasy and allegory, (c) a hesitation on the reader's part when deciding whether an event is explicable or miraculous, (d) a cross-over or merging of two realms, such as the living and the dead or fiction and fact, and (e) a shaking of our senses of time, space, history and identity. As well as these literary approaches there are critics who believe that the common concept of magical realism expresses a North American and European escapism and idealisation of Latin America,[28] and that in fact magical realism is underpinned by an ardent desire on behalf of its authors to present social realism and politics in a genuine and precise manner.[29]

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[25] Chanady (1995), p.139.
[26] Faris (1995), p.163-86.
[27] Ibid., p.163.
[28] Martin (1995).
[29] Cueva (1974).

3. Methods of Analysis

Although magical realism is a relatively modern term, this thesis demonstrates that its thematic devices and stylistic techniques can be identified frequently in Ovid's poem. In order to demonstrate that magical realism occurs in its passages and to explore the way in which it appears, I have chosen García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* as a comparative tool. This novel has been heralded as the definitive magical realist text since its publication. Critics and writers have frequently praised the way in which it combines magical and realist perspectives on the world in a uniquely perfect synthesis. Ortega stated that *the play of reality and fantasy is never dual in the novel*[30] and Oviedo similarly commented that it had *mixed the real and the fantastic in so perfect and inextricable a fashion that no one can tell where the frontier between them may lie.*[31] The similar blending of the magical and the real is not the only reason I have selected this text for comparison ahead of many other exemplars of the magical realist style. *Cien años de soledad*, like *Metamorphoses*, plots a world emerging from its earliest days and golden age to its present, and exploits all manner of myths, texts and notions along the way. Also both texts share a gleeful love of storytelling that captivates the reader with every episode. García Márquez's text is thus a fruitful point of comparison, from which to explore magical realism within Ovid's poem.

Five chapters focus on separate aspects of the texts that are especially important to magical realist theory and criticism. The first chapter establishes the ground rules for producing magical realism in a text. It observes how the effect is produced, and how the various devices function comparatively in the two works. Many of the aspects of style,

[30] Ortega (1969), p.125.
[31] Oviedo (1972), p.97.

language and theme that are covered here are re-examined in later chapters in greater detail and from a different perspective. As such, this chapter offers a general introduction to the many different ways in which the authors create magical realist effects in their works. It predominantly explores the techniques used by the narrator to confuse and astonish the reader and also studies the importance of the theme of storytelling to both texts. Both authors are interested in the powerful effect of telling stories and how these can become incorporated into how we perceive the world and define what is real and what is magical. Attitudes to believers and disbelievers are explored, and a study is made of the use of internal narrators. Ovid's poem in particular makes extensive use of narrators and their stories, even their stories within stories; and so this aspect of *Metamorphoses* provides fertile ground for this study.

The second chapter expands the concepts of belief and storytelling by exploring how the cultural backgrounds of each text are reflected in the way that certain magical events in both are interpreted. The significance of the magical realist theory that 'clash of cultures' is the catalyst for magical realism is explored. The context of each work, first century B.C. Rome and twentieth century Colombia, is considered in order to discover how each setting produces different ways of explaining the events that happen to the characters. These explanations often conflict with the views of the reader and, at times, the narrator and characters themselves. I observe how each author treats the superstitions of his characters, and how their beliefs are incorporated into the textual world. Attitudes to dominant forms of culture, such as rationalism and epistemology, are explored.

This leads naturally into my third chapter, where I investigate the claims of various Latin American writers including García Márquez, that magical realism arises from the specific cultural and historical conditions of Latin America. I examine two

instances of magical realism in *Cien años de soledad* and explore the influences of culture, history and political setting on each. Colombian history provides a vital source for understanding many aspects of the novel, and equally significant for providing insights into the making of the novel is García Márquez's recent memoirs (2003). These contain a wealth of information for understanding how magical realism functions in the novel. This chapter is unique in focusing exclusively on *Cien años de soledad*; given the traditional importance assigned to Latin America for the magical realist movement, I consider it essential to include an exclusive study of this question in the thesis.

My fourth chapter continues to explore the claims of Latin American writers, here examining the notion that magical realism textualises reality more effectively than traditional modes of writing. I select a number of passages in both texts which possess parallel themes and techniques, and analyse how each writer uses magical realism to document an aspect of reality. The ways in which Ovid handles magical events such as transformation into water or stone, and what effect these have upon the atmosphere of the text, are studied in detail and compared with similar passages in García Márquez's novel. The artistic theory from which magical realism takes its name is used to explore the phenomenon in the texts. Also questioned are the purposes of the author in employing these stylistic techniques: whether it has an aesthetic or mimetic function, and to what extent the two texts differ in their effects and posited intentions.

In the fifth and final chapter, I explore more deeply the notion of art and artistic intention by studying the important role of creative artists within both texts, and exploring their relevance to the magical realist method of writing. Various types of artists are observed to have peculiarly extended powers over their environments, and a number of important similarities occur between the depiction of creativity in each text. I examine examples of various types of creativity, musical, artistic, architectural and

scientific. Ovid includes many famous examples of artists in his poem -- Orpheus, Pygmalion, Daedalus, to name only a few -- and the powers and behaviours of these artists are explored in detail. Similarly, *Cien años de soledad* is heavily dominated by artistic individuals. By comparing similar types of artists in both texts, I examine the ways in which the author presents artistic endeavour, and what this might reveal about the author's own choice of writing-mode.

In my conclusion I explore the results produced by each chapter in turn. I use the evidence revealed by my research to identify a clear and meaningful presence of magical realism in Ovid's poem; I then categorise its forms. I state how Ovid's use of magical realism either differs from or almost parallels García Márquez's text. I then conclude that the specific way in which *Metamorphoses* uses magical realism illuminates aspects of the poem and also reveals important literary purposes within *Cien años de soledad.*

1. Telling Tales

Introduction

The theorists and writers who have tried to define and categorise magical realism have been keen to distinguish the mode of writing from fairy tales and other well-known vehicles for the fantastic and miraculous. Flores writes: *The practitioners of magical realism cling to reality as if to prevent 'literature' from getting in their way, as if to prevent their myth from flying off, as in fairy tale to supernatural realms.*[32] Leal likewise strives to separate magical realism from the common fantastical genres: *magical realism cannot be identified either with fantastic literature or with psychological literature, or with the surrealist or hermetic literature that Ortega describes.*[33] This eagerness to distinguish magical realism or its counterparts from fairy story and fantasy emerges from a literary snobbishness, which views these stories as childish or not worthy of serious attention;[34] despite this supercilious attitude, or perhaps because of it, fairy stories have always had associations with subversion against

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[32] Flores (1995), p. 115-6.

[33] *...Unlike superrealism, magical realism does not use dream motifs; neither does it distort reality or create imagined worlds, as writers of fantastic literature or science fiction do; nor does it emphasise psychological analysis of characters, since it doesn't try to find reasons for their actions or their inability to express themselves. Magical realism is not an aesthetic movement either, as was modernism, which was interested in creating works dominated by a refined style; neither is it interested in the creation of complex structures per se*, Leal (1995), p. 121. Jackson (1998), p.33, expresses similar ideas about fairy tale, although in her case she is contrasting them not with magical realism but with notions of fantastic as derived from Tzvetan Todorov: *The world of fairy story, romance, magic, supernaturalism is one belonging to marvellous narrative. Tales by the Grimm brothers, Hans Anderson, Andrew Lang and Tolkein all belong to this mode...The marvellous is characterised by a minimal functional narrative, whose narrator is omniscient and has absolute authority. It is a form which discourages reader participation, representing events which are in the long distant past, contained and fixed by a long temporal perspective and carrying the implication that their* effects *have long since ceased to disturb ...The effect of such narrative is a* passive *relation to history. The reader, like the protagonist, is merely a receiver of events which enact a preconceived pattern.*

[34] Such snobbishness among critics is alluded to in the prologue to Phaedrus' *Fabulae.*

dominating cultures.[35] The insistent separation of magical realism from fairy tales also, however, reflects that readers have a quite distinct response to magical realist texts[36]. This separation is especially pertinent for an understanding of where Ovid's poem lies with regards to the modern movement, for his task in *Metamorphoses* is in many ways very similar to that of the Grimm brothers and Hans Christian Andersen who all recast old stories in new forms and settings.[37] This chapter examines the appearance of magical realism in a text. It then continues by studying passages from *Cien años de soledad* and *Metamorphoses* in order to establish the various ways in which the narrators and their storytelling techniques create magical realist effects in each work. I compare methods of narration in both Ovid and García Márquez, such as the manipulation of reader responses by the external narrator; I also explore internal narrators, who often use similar methods of narration, and I discuss the attitudes to storytellers and their storytelling conveyed by the texts.

The best place to start is with analysis of an example of a standard episode of magical realism in García Márquez's novel. Such an analysis enables a clearer conception of magical realism to emerge, which is fundamental to identification of magical realist effects in Ovid's poem. One of the first examples of overt magic in *Cien años de soledad* occurs when the maddening turbulence of the gypsies' fair invades the streets of Macondo. José Arcadio takes his sons to see the marvels of the fair and to locate his friend Melquíades. They descend into an atmosphere of wonder: *Eran gitanos nuevos. Hombres y mujeres jóvenes que sólo conocían su propria lengua, ejemplares hermosos de piel aceitada y manos inteligentes, cuyos bailes y músicas sembraron en*

[35] For subversive use of fairy tales, see studies of Warner (1995) and Lamb (2000).
[36] A similar insistence on separation occurs in scholars with regard to fairy tale and fantasy; cf. Jackson (1998), p.33; Nikolajeva (2003).
[37] For the Grimm brothers, see Zipes (2002); for Hans Christian Andersen, Bredsdorff (1994).

las calles un pánico de alborotada alegría, con sus loros pintados de todos los colores que recitaban romanzas italianas, y la gallina que ponía un centenar de huevos de oro al son de la pandereta, y el mono amaestrado que adivinaba el pensamiento, y la máquina múltiple que servía al mismo tiempo para pegar botones y bajar la fiebre, y el aparato para olvidar los malos recuerdos, y el emplasto para perder el tiempo, y un millar de invenciones más, tan ingeniosas e insólitas, que José Arcadio Buendía hubiera querido inventar la máquina de la memoria para poder acordarse de todas. En un instante transformaron la aldea. Los habitantes de Macondo se encontraron de pronto perdidos en sus proprias calles (100-1).[38] This description is surreal and disorientating, evoking the jovial disarray of a fair. The machines and instruments are bizarre and the lengthy list of one extraordinary device after another explains the bewildered frenzy which the Buendía family encounter on first arriving.The bizarre instruments described can be assimilated into the usual paraphernalia of freak shows and trickery that one expects from such events. The strange, unstable world of the gypsy visit mirrors the idea of the carnival as formulated by Bakhtin, who writes: *The carnival life is life drawn out of its usual rut, it is to a degree 'life turned inside out', 'life the wrong way round'*.[39] Bakhtin traces fantasy writers back to the traditional genre of *menippea*, and sees this genre as directly connected to the idea of a carnival. Chanady lists the carnivalesque spirit as a secondary characteristic of many magical realist texts : *Language is used extravagantly, expending its resources beyond referential needs ...Either on the level of plot or of language – or both - they are linguistic analogues for*

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[38] *They were new gypsies, young men and women who knew only their own language, handsome specimens with oily skins and intelligent hands, whose dances and music sowed a panic of uproarious joy through the streets, with parrots painted all colours reciting Italian arias, and a hen who laid a hundred golden eggs to the sound of a tambourine, and a trained monkey who read minds, and the multiple-use machine that could be used at the same time to sew on buttons and reduce fevers, and the apparatus to make a person forget his bad memories, and a poultice to lose time...In an instant they transformed the village. The inhabitants of Macondo found themselves lost in their own streets* (21).

[39] Bakhtin (1973), p.101.

the kinds of primitive fiestas celebrated by Mauss, Bataille and Paz ...Their use of magic details, especially, details which are often not allegorically significant or clearly referential ...celebrate invention moving beyond realistic representation.[40] The notion of invention and extravagance of language taking priority over realistic depiction is present in the passage quoted above, where the most elaborately conceived mechanisms appear in the fair.[41]

José Arcadio Buendía encounters a fascinated crowd of onlookers watching a particular individual perform: *Por último llegó hasta el lugar donde Melquíades solía plantar su tienda, y encontró un armenio taciturno que anunciaba en castellano un jarabe para hacerse invisible. Se había tomado de un golpe una copa de la sustancia ambarina, cuando José Arcadio Buendía se abrió paso a empujones por entre el grupo absorto que presenciaba el espectáculo , y alcanzó a hacer la pregunta. El gitano lo envolvió en el clima atónito de su mirada, antes de convertirse en un charco de alquitrán pestilente y humeante sobre el cual quedó flotando la resonancia de su respuesta: 'Melquíades murió'* (101).[42] This event is separate from the carnival extravagance that was produced by the previous descriptions of the fair: it details quite specifically the transformation of a human being into a puddle. For the first time in the novel, there are blatant difficulties in incorporating an event into a realistic text. The presence of the internal observers increases the perplexities experienced by the reader,

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[40] Chanady (1995), p.182. The notion of invention over-riding the importance of realistic depiction is one I deal with at length in my fourth chapter, where it will be shown to be highly relevant also to the way in which Ovid uses invention in his descriptions of events.

[41] This inventiveness and extravagance of language recalls Carpentier (1995), wher he argues towards baroque being inextricably linked to magical realism. Galinsky (1989), p.73-4, notes that a baroque style of writing which has caused many scholars to classify Ovid as a Silver Age poet.

[42] *Finally he reached the place where Melquíades used to set up his tent and he found a taciturn Armenian who in Spanish was hawking a syrup to make oneself invisible. He had drunk down a glass of the amber substance in one gulp as José Arcadio Buendía elbowed his way through the absorbed group that was witnessing the spectacle, and was able to ask his question. The gypsy wrapped him in the frightful climate of his look before he turned into a puddle of pestilential and smoking pitch over which the echo of his reply still floated: 'Melquíades is dead'* (21).

for their role as eye-witnesses encourages us to anchor the event within a realistic frame-work.

The reaction of José Arcadio Buendía is startling: *Aturdido por la noticia, José Arcadio Buendía permaneció inmóvil, tratando de sobreponerse a la afflicción* (101).[43] There is no surprise or horror expressed at the miraculous metamorphosis; the man is troubled only by the sad and unexpected news of his friend's death. That a crowd has gathered to watch the event, and also its appearance as a carnival show, indicates that this kind of metamorphosis is not an ordinary event either, but one that merits surprise. The crowd is fascinated only for a few moments, though: *el grupo se dispersó reclamado por otros artificios* (101).[44] Their attitude is as towards a street magician performing tricks that might momentarily impress but do not threaten their sense of reality; they conclude there is a perfectly rational explanation for the 'miracle'. The narrator's description *artificios* likewise implies that this event is not real but some kind of trickery. This event for us is rather more dramatic than watching card tricks, or even a man eating fire; it is hard to see how this metamorphosis is part of a clever deception. However, this is how both the narrator and the characters treat the event, leaving the reader nonplussed.

Using character response as a barometer of magical realism poses some difficult issues, an example being the famous transformation of the salesman into a cockroach in Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*.[45] There, it has been observed by Leal that *in the prologue to* The Metamorphosis *Borges makes the astute observation that the basic*

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[43] *Upset by the news, José Arcadio Buendía stood motionless, trying to rise above his affliction* (21).
[44] *the group dispersed, called away by other artifices* (21).
[45] Franz Kafka was a profound influence upon García Márquez, who has said of this writer: *I thought to myself that I didn't know anyone was allowed to write things like that. If I had known, I would have started writing a long time ago.* He spoke of being inspired after reading a copy of *The Metamorphosis* by the way in which Kafka related fantastic events in an entirely natural voice, and also discovering that literature did not have to follow a conventional story line (Mendoza (1983)). The matter-of-fact tone in which the narrator of *Cien años de soledad* relates such events as an insomnia plague would appear to mimic Kafka's straightforward handling of the bizarre. See Hahn (1993) for a study on the influence of Kafka upon García Márquez' work.

characteristic of Kafka's stories is 'the invention of intolerable situations' ...if ...in Kafka's story the characters accept the transformation of a man into a cockroach, their attitude towards reality is not magic; they find the situation intolerable and they don't accept it.[46] The inhabitants of Macondo do not have an entirely magical attitude to the Armenian, however. They clearly find the event remarkable, but assume it to be trickery of some kind. It is the gap between their responses and ours that creates the possibility of magical realism, rather than any total dissimilarity in response, as Leal and Borges are suggesting. The unsettling feeling that the event produces clearly arises from the lack of obvious explanation. Most things that occur in a fair are within the realms of possibility as we might imagine them, but this transformation falls conspicuously outside of those limits. A lack of explanation is often stated as a key feature of magical realism.[47] While the liquid that appeared to precipitate the transmutation serves as a form of explanation, this is clearly not enough. A liquid that causes such transformations is scarcely credible, and requires explanation to assimilate it into our world-view[48]. No such explanation is supplied.

Cien años de soledad has so far contained some other markers of fantastic literature, that may have been overlooked by the reader up until this point. Darnton writes of fairy tales: *They have a distressing lack of specificity for anyone who wants to pin them down to precise points in time and place.*[49] The opening chapter of García Márquez's novel is certainly guilty of vague chronology and location.[50] For the first pages, the village is presented as if lost in the mists of time and place, and not until the

[46] Leal (1995), p.121.
[47] Leal (1995), p.123; Faris (1995), p.164.
[48] Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* famously includes food and drink which make its protagonist dramatically alter in size.
[49] Darnton (1999), p.289.
[50] Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* contains similarly vague chronology and topography in its detailing of various cities, producing a confusion within its readers.

narrator mentions Riohacha[51] is the reader alerted to the positioning of the story somewhere in the tropical regions of Colombia. Chronology is similarly vague and unspecific. The village seems to be located at the beginning of time, with the references to newness and lack of words : *El mundo era tan reciente, que muchas cosas carecían de nombre*(81).[52] Yet the very first line observes the existence of firing squads: *frente al pelotón de fusilamiento, el coronel Aureliano Buendía había de recordar aquella tarde remota en que su padre lo llevó a conocer el hielo* (81).[53] The narrator goes out of his way to confuse the reader with these paradoxical statements and vague depictions of time and place. However, whereas in a fairy tale there is rarely any questioning or confusion on behalf of the reader, in García Márquez's novel, the reader finds himself perpetually disorientated, a response which is the essential qualifier of the text as magical realist.[54]

The fair is brought to Macondo by Indian gypsies, who are presented to us as mysterious and foreign: *Hombres y mujeres jóvenes que solo conocían su propria lengua, ejemplares hermosos de piel aceitada y manos inteligentes* (100);[55] they make

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[51] *y al otro lado de la sierra la antigua ciudad de Riohacha* (92).
[52] *The world was so recent that many things lacked names* (9).
[53] *in front of the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía remembered that remote afternoon when his father took him to discover ice* (9). Jupp (2000), p.113-5, observes this mingling of very magical and explicitly historical codes to be the essential feature of García Márquez's magical realism.
[54] *It is predominantly an art of surprises. From the very first line the reader is thrown into a timeless flux and / or the inconceivable, freighted with dramatic suspense*, Flores (1995), p.114 ; *the reader may hesitate (at one point or another) between two contradictory understandings of events – and hence experience some unsettling doubts*, Faris (1995), p.171. Jackson (1998) talks extensively about this idea of hesitation, quoting Todorov and Dostoevsky, but uses it not to define 'magical realism' but her idea of the 'fantastic' which seems remarkably close to magical realism in all but name: *True fantasy, according to Dostoevsky, must not break the hesitation experienced by the reader in interpreting events ... 'The fantastic', writes Dostoevsky, 'must be so close to the real that you almost believe in it'*, p.27; [quoting Todorov] '*The fantastic requires the fulfilment of three conditions. First the text must oblige the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living persons and to hesitate between a natural and supernatural explanation of the events described. Second this hesitation may also be experienced by a character...Third the reader must adopt a certain attitude with regard to the text: he will reject allegorical as well as "poetic" interpretations*', p.28.
[55] *young men and women who knew only their own language, handsome specimens with oily skin and intelligent hands* (21).

the town strange for its own people: *Los habitantes de Macondo se encontraron de pronto perdidos en sus proprias calles, aturdidos por la feria multitudinaria* (101).[56] The gypsies represent a whole other culture, and a diverse perspective and way of being is introduced to the town, causing this hallucinatory spectacle. For the people of Macondo, the content of the fair is fantastical and unreal, but it would appear that the Indians are entirely at home with the bizarre paraphernalia.[57] So the events are both magical and real, and this dual perspective exists only in those moments where belief and astonishment are held in equilibrium. Slemon identifies this tension between belief systems as the fundamental characteristic of magical realism: *Although works of fiction are generically mixed in mode, the characteristic maneuver of magic realist fiction is that its two separate narrative modes never manage to arrange themselves into any kind of hierarchy ...the argument is often made that colonization, whatever its precise form, initiates a kind of double vision or 'metaphysical clash' into colonial culture, a binary opposition within language that has roots in the process of either transporting a language to a new land or imposing a foreign language on an indigenous population.*[58] Macondo certainly exists in a uniquely suspended belief system due to its isolation, caught between Western empiricism and Indian mysticism. When Macondo finally becomes connected to the outside world by the railroad, suddenly the inhabitants are swamped in new technologies: *Deslumbrada por tantas y tan maravillosas invenciones, la gente de Macondo no sabía por dónde empezar a sombrarse. Se trasnochaban contemplando las pálidas bombillas eléctricas alimentadas por la planta que llevó Aureliano Triste en el segundo viaje del tren ...Se indignaron con las imágenes vivas que el próspero comerciante don Bruno Crespi proyectaba en el teatro ... porque personaje muerto y sepultado en una película, y por cuya desgracia se derramaron*

[56] *The inhabitants found themselves lost in their own streets, confused by the crowded fair* (21).
[57] Jupp (2000), p.113-5, discusses this multiplicity of perspectives within the novel.
[58] Slemon (1995), p.410-1.

lágrimas de afflicción, reapareció vivo y convertido en árabe en la película siguiente (333).[59] Their responses to the films are not magical in the way that Leal espoused above, for they are reacting to these events with confusion and surprise; but to a modern Western perspective, they are magical, for they treat with awe and fascination something that is mundane and explicable to us. This dramatises the postcolonial theory of a tugging between two systems of thought that refuses to form a hierarchy, a theory which is likewise exemplified in the event of the fair itself in the opening chapter of the novel. Magical realism is produced by this failure of two systems of thought to form a hierarchy, as has been demonstrated by the passages quoted above. It is caused by a number of factors: the narrator's tone, the characters' responses and the description of the events are all central in creating magical realism. Below I explore various techniques of narration and the effects they produce. I begin by looking at various methods of storytelling in both *Cien años de soledad* and *Metamorphoses* and then go on to examine the role of internal narrators and storytelling within each text.

1. Methods of Storytelling:

i) Documenting the Magical

In the first amorous escapade of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Apollo is struck by Cupid's potent arrow and falls in love with the woodland nymph Daphne;[60]

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[59] *Dazzled by so many and such marvellous inventions, the people of Macondo did not know where their amazements began. They stayed up all night looking at the pale electric bulbs fed by the plant that Aureliano Triste had brought back when the train made its second trip ...They became indignant over the living images that the prosperous merchant Bruno Crespi projected in the theatre ...for a character who had died and was buried in one film and for whose misfortune tears of affliction had been shed would reappear alive and transformed into an Arab in the next one* (185).

[60] Ovid's depiction of this famous myth bears a close resemblance to *Amores* 1.1, where the poet is struck by a poisoned arrow for his arrogance towards Cupid. Here it signals a distinct change of tone for the poem. For scholarship on the tale in Ovid, see Otis (1970), p.379-89; Nichol (1980); Knox (1990); Anderson (1995); Hardie (2002), p.45-50 *et passim*. The story also appears in Classical literature in Paus. 10.7.8; Hyg. *Fab.* 203; Nonn. *Dion.* 33.210.

overwhelmed by his feelings, and unable to continue just fuelling his doomed passion by gazing at her, he approaches her. She flees and he chases, and there follows a vision of the love-struck god and the terrified girl racing through the woodland[61]. As Apollo is gaining on her and she is growing weary, she begs her father, a river-god, for help: *'fer, pater,' inquit 'opem, si flumina numen habetis! / qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram!'* (1.546-7). At that point, a very unexpected turn is taken by the narrative: *vix prece finita torpor gravis occupat artus, / mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro, / in frondem crines, in ramos bracchia crescunt; / pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret, / ora cacumen habet: remanet nitor unus in illa* (1.548-553). This is clearly an overtly magical event: people do not tend to turn into trees.[62]

However, Apollo's reaction to the event is matter-of-fact: *hanc quoque Phoebus amat positaque in stipite dextra / sentit adhuc trepidare novo sub cortice pectus / complexusque suis ramos ut membra lacertis / oscula dat ligno* (1.553-6). He shows no obvious surprise, and in fact, only his persisting love is noted as a response; he continues to act as one in love and embraces the tree just as if it were still a human body. The implication is that he loves the very essence of the girl, and this essence does not reside uniquely in her human form: this notion is supported by the narrator's observation that the gleam of her beauty remained (1.552).

The first piece of description informs us of a sensation experienced by the nymph: *torpor gravis occupat artus* (1.548). We have already been informed that she is shattered by her flight, *viribus absumptis expalluit illa citaeque / victa labore fugae* (1.542-3), so this sense of feeling weighed down is not necessarily surprising, although

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[61] This chase scene echoes the pursuit of Turnus at Virg. *Aen.* 12.903-18.

[62] Compare, however, the Heliades at 2.345ff and the Bacchantes at 11.67ff. Curran (1972), p.75, explores the transformation of Daphne into a tree from a very psychological aspect, citing the transformation as a subconscious attempt to seal herself off from the world. The fact that Daphne is a woodland nymph complicates the matter (cf. Cyane at 5.425-37, a water nymph who turns into a spring), but despite this, it is still not usual for wood nymphs to transform in this way.

the language is quite strong. However, we are then told: *mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro* (1.549). The word *torpor* is entirely changed: it is a vivid, brutal description of one's consciousness of being turned into wood. Now the narrator lists the details of the metamorphosis in a documentary form: *in frondem crines, in ramos bracchia crescunt/ pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret, / ora cacumen habet* (1.550-2). This analytically detailed accounting of a transformation recalls the artistic theory that lies at the roots of the magical realist movement.

As was stated briefly in the introduction, the term 'magic realism' was coined by the German art critic Roh, but it lost its bid for precedence to the other term that was around at the time, 'new objectivity'. Guenther writes of the new objectivist painters: *More exacting than the camera lens, the artist painted everything with equal sharpness, even the background. Virtually no brushstrokes were visible; the finish was smooth as enamel. objects were scrutinized in their minutiae. Artists 'painted inwards from the outside' to get to the invisible. With surgical probing, a deeper layer -- the magic and the 'unheimlich' ... behind the real -- was revealed.*[63] This precision recalls the detail present in Ovid's account of the transformation. Guenther also speaks of Jünger, the German essayist, poet and novelist who helped to translate the concept into literary terms: *Jünger's interest in art was also influenced by Franz Roh. Roh's 'magic', the uncanny inherent in or behind the object detectable only by objective accentuation, isolation, and microscopic depiction. Jünger translated into literary 'stereoscopy': the profound sense of the miniscule uncovered through precise examination, and 'magic rationalism'.*[64] The importance of meticulous depiction is clearly significant to the fore-runners of magical realism in art and literature.

[63] Guenther (1995), p.53.
[64] ibid., p.58.

Detailed, analytical narration of the magical is a trademark of *Metamorphoses*, where transformations are frequently vividly portrayed. The Tyrrhenian pirates' transformation by Bacchus into dolphins is documented meticulously:

> *primusque Medon nigrescere coepit*
> *corpore et expresso spinae curvamine flecti.*
> *incipit huic Lycabas: 'in quae miracula' dixit*
> *verteris?' et lati rictus et panda loquenti*
> *naris erat squamamque cutis durata trahebat.*
> *at Libys obstantes dum vult obvertere remos,*
> *in spatium resilire manus breve vidit et illas*
> *iam non esse manus, iam pinnas posse vocari.*
> *alter ad intortos cupiens dare bracchia funes*
> *bracchia non habuit truncoque repandus in undas*
> *corpore desiluit: falcata novissima cauda est,*
> *qualia dimidiae sinuantur cornua lunae* (3.671-82).[65]

Cyane's transmutation into a spring is likewise observed as a gradual process of melting:

> *inconsolabile vulnus*
> *mente gerit tacita lacrimisque absumitur omnis*
> *et, quarum fuerat magnum modo numen, in illas*
> *extenuatur aquas: molliri membra videres,*
> *ossa pati flexus, ungues posuisse rigorem,*
> *primaque de tota tenuissima quaeque liquescunt,*
> *caerulei crines digitique et crura pedesque:*
> *nam brevis in gelidas membris exilibus undas*
> *transitus est; post haec umeri tergusque latusque*
> *pectoraque in tenues abeunt evanida rivos;*
> *denique pro vivo vitiatas sanguine venas*
> *lympha subit, restatque nihil, quod prendere posses* (5.426-37).[66]

Ceyx's metamorphosis into a bird is plotted in stages of surprise as the woman realises that various parts of her are now bird-like:

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[65] Contrast a rare incidence of metamorphosis in Virg. *Aen.* 9.117-22, where the Trojan ships are turned into sea-nymphs. There is no detailed account of the event, which is explained in terms of divine intervention.

[66] Dissolution is a common occurrence for females in Ovid's poem: cf. Arethusa (5.632-6); Byblis (9.663-5); Hyrie (7.380-1). I discuss the phenomenon in detail in my fourth chapter.

insilit huc. mirumque fuit potuisse: volabat,
percutiensque levem modo natis aera pennis
stringebat summas ales miserabilis undas,
dumque volat, maesto similem plenumque querellae
ora dedere sonum tenui crepitantia rostro.
ut vero tetigit mutum et sine sanguine corpus,
dilectos artus amplexa recentibus alis
frigida nequiquam duro dedit oscula rostro (11.731-8).

Ovid's style of narration, while possessing common characteristics, in this instance differs from the Magic Realists of Roh's time. They painted the ordinary in a peculiarly precise and haunting manner, whereas Ovid describes the magical here by focusing meticulously on the ordinary within the magical. He applies the style of realistic narrative to a magical moment and the result is unsettling.[67]

Cien años de soledad uses similar methods for narrating some of its supernatural events. One prominent example is a four year rainstorm that appears shortly after the massacre of many striking local workers in the town square. The narrator introduces the flooding of Macondo gradually, so by the time it is clear what is happening, the sound of the rain has been drumming in our ears for a long while. The most obvious beginning for the rainstorm, which goes on to swamp the settlement for almost five years, occurs on the dark night that José Arcadio wakes up in a train full of dead bodies, after the massacre conducted by the banana company. He leaps off the train of death and begins to walk back to Macondo, shocked and horrified; and then the rains begin: *Después de medianoche se precipitó un aguacero torrencial* (423).[68] This seems an unremarkable event and its occurrence is kept in the background as the narrative continues, mentioned only as a passing description: *Las calles estaban desiertas bajo la lluvia tenaz ... por*

[67] Cf. the detailed description of the *Parcae* weaving human destiny at Cat.64.311ff.
[68] *After midnight a torrential cloudburst came up* (250).

dos policías locales que parecían de piedra bajo la lluvia ... Aureliano Segundo había dormido en casa porque allí lo sorprendió la lluvia (424-5).[69] The rain is quietly affecting the lives of people but remains a minor detail in the text, an event of the weather that requires no further explanation.

Long before this miraculous episode the rain falls through the novel with a symbolic quality that haunts the characters. Colonel Gerineldo Márquez says to Colonel Aureliano Buendía at the moment he feels his solitude encase him: '*Aureliano ... está lloviendo en Macondo.*' (266);[70] Prudencio Aguilar, whose death instigated the expedition that eventually brought about the founding of Macondo, was seen by José Arcadio Buendía to stare desolately through the rain with nostalgia for the living (108). This significant role of rain lends itself powerfully to the sudden storm that occurs so late in the novel. The people of Macondo find themselves both physically afflicted by the waters and psychologically drenched by the nostalgic reflection it brings upon them.[71]

At first even after the acknowledgement of the remarkable aspects of the rainfall, the narrative maintains the background role of the rain. The intensity of its impact can be seen to rise inside the text, but the waters affect and accompany, rather than dominate the events. Martial law is declared to deal with the emergency and soldiers wade through the streets playing boats with the children, a charming example of a practical and mundane response to a bizarre circumstance; but at night they knock on doors and drag away suspects and rebels (252). These victims are never returned to

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[69] *The streets were deserted under the persistent rain ... by two local policemen who seemed like stone statues beneath the rain ... Aureliano Segundo had slept at home because the rain had surprised him there* (251). In the midst of these texts which abound in concrete manifestations of metaphorical notions, the simile of the stone statues raises an important issue: that of the link between simile, metaphor and metamorphosis. Interestingly, Jackson (1998) summarises the writings of Irving Massey in her analysis of metamorphosis thus: *the fantastic is not metaphorical ... ' pleasure produces metaphor and fear metamorphosis ... (for) in fear the object attains full reality*', p. 82.

[70] '*Aureliano ... it's raining in Macondo.*' (138).

[71] For a study of García Márquez's use of rain as a theme in his works, see the book-length study of Blanco Aguigana (1973).

their homes, and the officers inform their families that nothing has happened. By combining these two strange events García Márquez is emphasising the ease with which reality can be stretched and assaulted until it is accepted by consensus, so that people finally believe the official version of events, just as José Arcadio Segundo becomes accustomed to the rain until *a los dos meses se convirtió en una forma nueva del silencio* (429).[72] The opening of the next chapter shifts the full focus onto the rain itself; in a phrase of biblical proportions, the narrator states: *Llovió cuatro años, once meses y dos días* (431).[73] The storm is a ferociously devouring one, which destroys fields, houses and the whole banana grove. Unlike its Biblical counterpart, this flood does not destroy human life. Instead, the community struggles with the environmental difficulties and the ensuing tedium that pervades the restrictive years of the storm.

García Márquez includes careful details of the legacy of the rains upon things: *las máquinas más áridas echaban flores por entre los engranajes si no se les aceitaba cada tres días ... La atmósfera era tan húmeda que los peces hubieran podido entrar por las puertas y salir por las ventanas ... cuando Santa Sofía de la Piedad descubrió que (Úrsula) tenía la espalda adoquinada de sanguijuelas* (432).[74] This recalls the great flooding in *Metamorphoses* where similarly surrealistic imagery is used to document the effects of the water:

> *ille supra segetes aut mersae culmina villae*
> *navigat, hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo;*
> *figitur in viridi, si fors tulit, ancora prato,*
> *aut subiecta terunt curvae vineta carinae,*

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[72] *after two months had become a new form of silence* (255).
[73] *It rained for four years, eleven months, and two days* (256). Cf. *Genesis* 7:10: *And rain fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights.*
[74] *the driest of machines would have flowers popping out among their gears if they were not oiled every three days ... The air was so damp that fish could have come in through the doors and swum out the windows ... when Santa Sofia de la Piedad discovered that Úrsula's back was paved with leeches* (257). The image of flowers popping out of machines recalls the galleon filled with flowers in chapter one of the novel; it is another example of nature overpowering man-made objects.

et, modo qua graciles gramen carpsere capellae,
nunc ibi deformes ponunt sua corpora phocae.
mirantur sub aqua lucos urbesque domosque
Nereides, silvasque tenent delphines et altis
incursant ramis agitataque robora pulsant' (1.295-303).[75]

The practical responses of the residents to the persisting downpour normalise the circumstances, while an infectious reflectivity settles upon the minds of many of the characters and creates an atmosphere of contemplation. The narrator describes the rain as unearthing memories like a pitchfork, and this striking metaphor, presenting nature in terms of human action, suggests the rain is sentient. As the rain continues, daily life does the same, under a much soggier guise: funerals, lessons, children playing overcome the long, rainy days. Fernanda, with her intransigent nature, expresses one side of the reaction to the rains with her insistence on custom against any odds: *No modificó los horarios ni perdonó los ritos. Cuando todavía estaba la mesa alzada sobre ladrillos y puestas las sillas sobre tablones para que los comensales no se mojaron los pies, ella seguía sirviendo con manteles de lino y vajillas chinas* (435).[76] Her hold on reality keeps the community afloat against the onslaught. The other side of the reaction is epitomised by Úrsula's declaration that she is waiting for the rains to stop before she dies. This accentuates the rains as a kind of shadowland where individuals dwell upon their pasts and contemplate their lives from a place apart from the usual flow of reality. As Aureliano Segundo notes to himself shortly after Úrsula's unsettling words: *no sólo Úrsula, sino todos los habitantes de Macondo, estaban esperando que escampara para*

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[75] Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 1.2.9-12. Similarly, a topsy-turvy response in nature as a result of grief at the death of Daphnis is expressed at Theoc. *Id.*1. Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* contains a passage that is remarkably reminiscent of Ovid's flood : *All the fish, big and small, slip in and out among the branches just the way the birds do up here in the air ...All day long they could play down in the castle in the great halls where living flowers grew out of the walls. The big amber windows were opened, and then the fish swam into them just as on land swallows fly in when we open our windows*, Andersen (1966), p.35-40.

[76] *She did not change her schedule or modify her ritual. When the table was still raised up on bricks and the chairs put on planks so that those at the table would not get their feet wet, she still served with linen tablecloths and fine chinaware* (259). Fernanda's tenacious grip on reality nicely mimics the narrator clinging to a recognisable reality in the midst of a magical event.

morirse ... cuando no podía hacerse nada más que contemplar la lluvia (438).[77] The rains literally cut off Macondo from the world by swamping the roads and stopping trains getting through with visitors and mail, but also psychologically cut off the community from their old lives; Aureliano Segundo thinks on his past, and discovers that old age has come upon both himself and his mistress, Petra Cotes: *Estaba envejecida, en los puros huesos, y sus lanceolados ojos de animal carnívoro se habían vuelto tristes y mansos de tanto mirar la lluvia* (437).[78] The rain has tamed Petra Cotes, indicating a shift of boundaries in the world. It recalls the effects of storm and flooding upon animals in *Metamorphoses*: *nat lupus inter oves, fulvos vehit unda leones, / unda vehit tigres, nec vires fulminis apro, / crura nec ablato prosunt velocia cervo* (1.304-6).[79] Although these examples are slightly different in terms of cause and effect than the example of Petra Cotes, the notion of creatures altered from their normal states by the perverse circumstances is the same.

The narrator does not, once the rains have stopped, allow the effects of the storm to magically vanish. He observes: *Macondo estaba en ruinas. En los pantanos de las calles quedaban muebles despedazados, esqueletos de animales cubiertos de lirios colorados, últimos recuerdos de las hordas de advenedizos que se fugaron de Macondo tan atolondradamente como habían llegado* (447-8).[80] He even envisages vividly the after-effects upon the inhabitants: *Todovía conservaban en la piel el verde de alga y el olor de rincón que les imprimió la lluvia* (448).[81] The event of the four year rainstorm is a fantastical one, even by Colombian standards, but it has been shown how García

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[77] *not only Úrsula, but all the inhabitants of Macondo, were waiting for the rain to stop to die ... when they were not able to do anything but contemplate the rain* (261).
[78] *She had aged, all skin and bones, and her tapered eyes of a carnivorous animal had become sad and tame from looking at the rain so much* (261).
[79] Cf. Hor. *Ep.*16.30-4.
[80] *Macondo was in ruins. In the swampy streets there were the remains of furniture, animal skeletons covered with red lilies, the last memories of the hordes of newcomers who had fled Macondo as wildly as they had arrived* (268).
[81] *They still had the green of the algae on their skin and the musty smell of a corner that had been stamped on by the rain* (269).

Márquez depicts the magical event by focussing on everyday details and effects on human lives. This is a feature of magical realist texts,[82] producing the essential tug-of-war between two narrative codes that is the defining characteristic of the genre.

ii) Making Strange

Magical realist effects are also produced by inverting the method examined above: so instead of focusing upon magical events in a realistic style, narrators seek for magical aspects of realistic things and events[83]. For example, in the fifteenth book of Ovid's poem, we are introduced to the philosopher Pythagoras, who then proceeds to give the longest speech in the entire poem (15.75-478).[84] The speech itself is spoken by an internal narrator, an older inhabitant relating it word-for-word to the curious Numa. Pythagoras begins his speech by expounding his views upon the slaughter of animals for food. It is his most famous doctrine, and so aptly begins and ends a lengthy diatribe which is stylistically redolent of Lucretius, a redolence that serves to highlight the very different arguments involved in this speech.[85] He initially declares it unnecessary due to the abundance of inanimate food sources and observes that only the wildest animals indulge in the habit of meat-eating; he describes the act graphically: '*heu quantum scelus est in viscera viscera condi / congestoque avidum pinguescere corpore corpus /*

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[82] Faris (1995) proposes that : *descriptions detail a strong presence of the phenomenal world – this is the realism in magical realism, distinguishing it from much fantasy and allegory...Realistic descriptions create a fictional world that resembles the one we live in, in many instances by extensive use of detail*, p.169.

[83] Cf. Hart (1983): *The consistency of the world that the Colombian novelist presents us with is suggested by the fact that, not only is the supernatural depicted as if it were natural, but the natural is presented as if it were supernatural*, p.47.

[84] For the speech of Pythagoras, see Otis (1970), p.296-302; Miller (1994); Hardie (1995); Galinsky (1998). For Pythagoras' teachings, see Kirk, Raven & Schofield (1983), p.214-38.

[85] Miller (1994), p.477, points out the traditional humorous attitude taken towards Pythagoras' vegetarianism in Classical literature. He sees the hyperbolic protestation of the philosopher against meat as part of a caricature of Lucretius here. He also notes the unreliability of Pythagoras' memory in this speech, a facet of internal narration that is examined later in this chapter with regard to Nestor's speech in book twelve.

alteriusque animantem animantis vivere leto!' (15.88-90).[86] The peculiarly abstract way of looking upon the act of eating meat, emphasised by its mirrored language, defamiliarises[87] carnivorousness. Something that is often not regarded, by its very instinctual and mundane nature, is being observed precisely and objectively, and the result is disorientation as the reader struggles to recognise this familiar act from this new description. This is the first of many disorientating passages which occur within the speech.

Pythagoras also in this speech explains the doctrine that everything changes. He does this by taking examples of things which appear immutable, such as mountains, lands and seas, and showing how they have shifted over time: '*vidi ego, quod fuerat quondam solidissima tellus, / esse fretum, vidi factas ex aequore terras; / et procul a pelago conchae iacuere marinae, / et vetus inventa est in montibus ancora summis*'(15.262-5). This description is not magical, but it evokes a surrealistic effect which approximates to magical realism. It is also reminiscent of the opening chapter of *Cien años de soledad* where José Arcadio Buendía makes a discovery with the magnet: *Lo único que logró desenterrar fue una armadura del siglo XV con todas sus partes soldadas por un cascote de óxido* (82).[88] The verb *desenterrar* emphasises the strangeness of the find: a man-made product is lodged within the earth, and not only that but it has been *soldadas* by rust, indicating how time itself has moulded the item in the manner of an artisan.

It is in Pythagoras' mention of natural events such as the butterfly emerging from the cocoon that the real is made to seem magical. After fourteen books depicting

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[86] Cf. Lucr. *DRN*. 5.993.

[87] 'Defamiliarisation' is a concept cited by Russian literary theorists in the early twentieth century to describe the way in which language is made strange in literature, resulting in a fresh perspective upon the world. I discuss this in detail in my fourth chapter.

[88] *The only thing that he managed to unearth was a fifteenth century suit of armour, with all its parts fused together by rust* (9-10). Cf. Virg. *Georg*. 1.493-7.

magical metamorphoses in a precise and detailed fashion, suddenly metamorphoses appear that actually happen but are not seen as magical occurrences by their mundane nature: '*quaeque solent canis frondes intexere filis / agrestes tineae (res observata colonis) / ferali mutant cum papilione figuram*' (15.372-4); '*nonne vides, quos cera tegit sexangula, fetus / melliferarum apium sine membris corpora nasci / et serosque pedes serasque adsumere pennas? / Iunonis volucrem, quae cauda sidera portat, / armigerumque Iovis Cythereiadasque columbas / et genus omne avium mediis e partibus ovi, / ni sciret fieri, quis nasci posse putaret?*' (15.382-388).[89] In much the same way that focussing closely on magical events results in disorientation and hesitation, this close observation of natural events describes them in such a way that they appear magical. It is a technique which Ovid can be seen to use in his later poetry, where he is describing the harshness of the winters at Tomi: *vix equidem credar, sed, cum sint praemia falsi / nulla, ratam debet testis habere fidem: / vidimus ingentem glacie consistere pontum, / lubricaque inmotas testa premebat aquas. / nec vidisse sat est; durum calcavimus aequor, / undaque non udo sub pede summa fuit* (*Trist.*3.10.35-40).[90] This recalls Roh's artistic theory mentioned earlier where painters made the real 'uncanny'. It is also reminiscent of one of Faris' secondary characteristics of magical realism, where she observes that narrative often appears childlike and fresh, hence defamiliarised.[91]

Cien años de soledad contains examples of this defamiliarising technique. In the first chapter, the expedition of José Arcadio Buendía and his men results in the discovery of a Spanish galleon in the middle of the jungle: *Frente a ellos, rodeado de*

[89] Cf. Lucr. *DRN.* 1.159-73, where the poet makes the notion that birds could be born without eggs seem quite absurd.
[90] Brown (1999), p.18-9.
[91] Faris (1995), p. 174.

helechos y palmeras, blanco y polvoriento en la silenciosa luz de la mañana, estaba un enorme galeón español. Ligeramente volteado a estribor, de su arboladura intacta colgaban las piltrafas escuálidas del velamen, entre jarcias adornadas de orquídeas. El casco, cubierto con una tersa coraza de rémora petrificada y musgo tierno, estaba firmemente enclavado en un suelo de piedras. Toda la estructura parecía ocupar un ámbito proprio, un espacio de soledad y de olvido, vedado a los vicios del tiempo y a las costumbres de los párajos. En el interior, que los expedicionarios exploraron con un fervor sigiloso, no había nada más que un apretado bosque de flores (95-6).[92] The descriptions of the overgrown galleon now beached in a woodland opening recalls Pythagoras' examples of the changing landscape quite distinctly. García Márquez adds a mysterious aura of timelessness to this forgotten and out-of-place relic, increasing the object's strangeness and imbuing it with magic.

This is not the first instance in the novel of this technique: the very opening paragraphs mark out the landscape by suggesting that there are no names with which to label and thus normalise things: *El mundo era tan reciente, que muchas cosas carecían de nombre, y para mencionarlas había que señarlas con el dedo* (81).[93] In a piece upon philosophical themes within fairy tales, Weissberg writes: *The uncanny objects become canny ones; they become 'heimlich' and more close to home. Language evolves with the child's or nation's development, and objects are named as they grow increasingly familiar. The human being's knowledge of these objects, and his trust in them provoke*

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[92] *Before them, surrounded by ferns and palm trees, white and powdery in the silent morning light, was an enormous Spanish galleon. Tilted slightly to the starboard, it had hanging from its intact masts the dirty rags of its sails in the midst of its rigging, which was adorned with orchids. The hull, covered with an armour of petrified barnacles and soft moss, was firmly fastened into a surface of stones. The whole structure seemed to occupy its own space, one of solitude and oblivion, protected from the vices of time and the habits of the birds. Inside, where the expeditionaries explored with careful intent, there was nothing but a thick forest of flowers* (17).

[93] *The world was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point* (9).

names. These names, in turn, are able to tame the objects.[94] García Márquez's nameless world is therefore uncanny, a central characteristic of magical realism. A good example of awe of the unknown and unlabelled is that of ice, which is seen as something marvellous and magnificent by the Macondians. It is described from the perspective of one who has never seen such a thing before: *Dentro sólo había un enorme bloque transparente, con infinitas agujas internas en las cuales se despedazaba en estrellas de colores la claridad del crepúsculo* (102).[95] As well as this detailed description, we hear the characters respond with wonder: *José Arcadio Buendía se atrevió a murmurar 'Es el diamante más grande del mundo'* (102)[96] and then some lines later the same character declares: '*Este es el gran invento de nuestro tiempo*' (103).[97]

As has been demonstrated then, defamiliarisation is a technique which promotes a magical realist effect in the narrative by challenging our usual perceptions of things.

iii) Narrating Disorientation

Defamiliarisation is just one example of how the narrator achieves disorientation in his text. Sometimes the storyteller will express specific doubt at what he is narrating which causes confusion for the reader. In the first book of *Metamorphoses*, after the floods have destroyed most of mankind, Deucalion and Pyrrha are the sole representatives of humanity.[98] Unusually for characters in Ovid's poem, it does not occur to them to repopulate the world in the customary way; instead they decide to consult an oracle for help, which duly instructs them to throw stones over their

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[94] Weissberg (1992), p.22.
[95] *Inside there was only an enormous, transparent block with infinite internal needles in which the light of the sunset was broken up into coloured stars* (22).
[96] *José Arcadio Buendía ventured a murmur: 'It's the largest diamond in the world'* (22).
[97] '*This is the great invention of our time*' (22).
[98] Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 9.64-7; Virg. *Ecl.* 6.41; Hor. *Carm.* 1.2.6. See Griffin (1992).

shoulder. After debating between themselves, they decide that they have nothing to lose and so comply. The narrator informs us of the event: *discedunt velantque caput tunicasque recingunt / et iussos lapides sua post vestigia mittunt. / saxa (quis hoc credat nisi sit pro teste vetustas?) / ponere duritiem coepere suumque rigorem / mollirique mora mollitaque ducere formam* (1.398-402).[99] This process of stones softening into human forms, expressed effectively by the abundance of 'm' sounds, is in this instance narrated as miraculous and startling; he interjects that only tradition could validate such an occurrence. This aside introduces distance and irony on behalf of the narrator. It is not clear that he believes the story; unlike the seamlessly woven metamorphosis of Daphne, perceptions here are disturbed by this authorial intrusion. The comment introduces doubt early in the poem. The narrator does not show the reactions of Deucalion and Pyrrha at this point, but their disbelief and uncertainty are manifest at the reception of the oracle: *Coniugis augurio quamquam Titania mota est, / spes tamen in dubio est: adeo caelestibus ambo / diffidunt monitis* (1.395-6). There are various layers of belief unfolding which inevitably complicate matters for the reader.

Further examples in the text indicate a similarly explicit ambiguity towards the magical. In book two, while the whole world burns as a result of Phaethon's disastrous chariot ride through the sky, we are told that this scorching of the earth effects a number of changes that were still seen in Ovid's time: *sanguine tunc credunt in corpora summa vocato / Aethiopum populos nigrum traxisse colorem. / tum facta est Libye raptis umoribus aestu/ arida* (2.235-8).[100] In this instance, Ovid is providing an explanation for a known feature of the real world and he qualifies the explanation with the cautious *credunt*. This kind of qualification, referring to anonymous tradition, occurs with

[99] Cf. Lucr. *DRN.* 5.1014, where the human form softens for a very different (and less magical) reason. Ovid uses this notion of stone softening into human form in his version of the Pygmalion legend in book ten. I study his handling of this myth in my fifth chapter.
[100] Such an explanation for Ethiopian skin colour appears in Strabo 15.1.24; Pliny *NH.* 2.80.189.

marked frequency throughout the poem.[101] It unsettles the narrative, introducing doubt where traditionally there is an overarching all-knowing and unobtrusive narrator who organises and relates his material unseen.[102] Ovid's primary contrast is with the traditional epic style of Homer and Virgil; however, it likewise fits with Jackson's remarks on the contrast between fairy tale and the fantastic: *The world of the fairy story...belong[s] to this mode ...we find that the voice is impersonal and that events are distanced well into the past ...The narrator is impersonal and has become an authoritative, knowing voice. There is minimum emotional involvement in the tale – that voice is positioned with absolute confidence and certainty towards events. It has complete knowledge of* completed *events, its vision of history is not questioned and the tale seems to deny the process of its own telling.*[103] Ovid's involvement with the tales he tells is manifest in these playful intrusions and perplexing asides, so out-of-keeping with the epic tradition he purports to be writing in. He comments cheekily on a groin wound during the fight of the Lapiths and Centaurs: *letifer ille locus* (5.133), and makes an aside about the extent of Tereus' lustful wickedness towards Philomela: *vix ausim credere* (6.561). He also remarks upon the silence of Procne in response to Philomela's woven message: *mirum posuisse* (6.583), and states Aegeus' upset at realising Minos was preparing for war: *usque adeo nulla est sincera voluptas, / sollicitumque aliquid laetis intervenit* (7.453-4). Finally, he intrudes upon the story of Scylla's cutting of her father's lock: *heu facinus!* (8.85).

[101] e.g. *si credere dignum est* (3.111); *ferunt* (4.266); *creditur* (5.49); *veteres ...vulgarunt* (7.392-3); *putant* (7.416); *fertur* (7.430).
[102] Cf. Bakhtin's emphasis on the distinction between epic which he views as having one voice and perspective, and the novel, which he sees as possessing many viewpoints and competing ideologies; see Bakhtin (1982), p.3-41.
[103] Jackson (1998), p.33.

Cien años de soledad also includes a number of incidents that the narrator, while not expressing open astonishment at, does not himself have full knowledge of. For example, when José Arcadio dies in the seventh chapter of García Márquez's novel, the narrator says enigmatically that it was: *tal vez el único misterio que nunca se esclareció en Macondo* (232).[104] In a novel full of mysteries and wonders that never seem to be explained this is a startling statement. As the narrator then says nothing to confirm or deny suspicion that it might have been his wife Rebeca, commenting only that: *nadie pudo concebir un motivo para que Rebeca asesinara al hombre que la había hecho feliz* (232),[105] the reader is left in some confusion over the matter. Likewise, at the time of the four year rainstorm, there is a similar ambiguity around the possible involvement of Mr. Brown with the storm. It is when Mr. Brown, the malevolent head of the banana company, is requested to set a date to improve workers' conditions, shortly after the whole bloody massacre has been covered over with lies, that the rain, which has been falling for a while, becomes sinister. The next few lines reveal a new dimension to the heavy and sudden downpour: [señor Brown] *miró a través de la ventana el cielo rayado de relámpagos ... 'Será cuando escampe' dijo. 'Mientras dure la lluvia, suspendemos toda clase de actividades'. No llovía desde hacía tres meses y era tiempo de sequía. Pero cuando el señor Brown anunció su decisión se precipitó en toda la zona bananera el aguacero torrencial* (425).[106] The narrator is vague, giving no direct indication that this rain was brought on by Mr. Brown. The implication is present, but the storm had already begun before he made his declaration and the consequent effects of the rain do

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[104] *perhaps the only mystery in Macondo that was never cleared up* (113).

[105] *no one was able to conceive a motive for Rebeca to have murdered the man who had made her happy* (113). This event originally appears in García Márquez's short story *The Day After Saturday*, where the mystery is likewise present.

[106] *he looked out the window at the sky crossed by lightning ... 'When the rain stops' he said. 'As long as the rain lasts we're suspending all activities. It had not rained for three months and there had been a drought. But when Mr. Brown announced his decision a torrential downpour spread over the whole banana region* (252).

not necessarily carry out the will of this powerful man. . The loss of the banana plants (*las últimas cepas de las plantaciones* (431))[107] might suggest the theory that Mr. Brown caused the flood to be an unlikely one, but then the narrator states of Aureliano Segundo: *Había ido a la casa por algún asunto casual la noche en que el señor Brown convocó la tormenta* (431).[108] The mystery remains unsolved, and the reader is confused by the ambivalence of the narrator towards his own story.

(iv) Anthropomorphism and Hybridism

Another common technique of disorientation is that of merging two realms usually kept quite distinct, such as life and death, or animate and inanimate.[109] There are many examples of this in Ovid's poem where he uses features such as anthropomorphism and depiction of hybrid forms. His retelling of the myth of the great flood depicts the agents of the storm in vividly anthropomorphic terms.[110] His account involves the action of two separate entities, *sub undis ... nimbos* (1.261-2), suggesting both rising ground waters as well as falling rain. These are inextricably related in our conception of meteorological behaviour, but Ovid ensures that they are presented as two quite distinct actions beneath the influence of two separate deities: *Nec caelo contenta suo est Iovis ira, sed illum/ caeruleus frater iuvat auxiliaribus undis* (1.274-5). There is no explicit statement of hierarchy here between the divine brothers; but it is certainly implied by the content. The description of the flood's instigation is depicted in terms of military imagery -- *perdere ... demittere / ...auxiliaribus* -- and both Jupiter and Neptune are portrayed as battle commanders ordering their troops. The South wind is

[107] *every last plant of the banana groves* (256).
[108] *He had gone home on some minor matter on the night that Mr Brown had unleashed the storm* (256).
[109] Faris (1995), p.172.
[110] Cf. Virg. *Aen.*1.82-6; Ov. *Trist.* 1.2.26-30; Hom. *Od.*5.291-6. None of these examples possess the developed anthropomorphic elements of *Metamorphoses*' account, however.

described as flying on dripping wings, and the rest of his depiction is in terms of anthropomorphic images: *vultum .../ barba ...capillis / fronte*. Neptune *convocat hic amnes* (l.276) and orders them: *vires effundite vestras/ ...aperite domos / ...totas inmittite habenas*, exhorting them as individual and sentient entities to assail the world. The effects are rapid and intense, heralded by much noise and sudden rain: *fit fragor: hinc densi funduntur ab aethere nimbi* (l.269). The personified wind carries out its usual tasks and causes the downpour; yet it is unclear whether the wind is conscious and obeying orders, or rather doing what it is accustomed to do.[111] This play upon personification of nature is a frequent element of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and its variant readings of the world of the text produce the kind of bewilderment inherent in magical realism. When Ceres is desperately seeking her stolen daughter Persephone, the girdle of the girl is sighted in the pool of Cyane, a recently liquified nymph: *venit et ad Cyanen; ea ni mutata fuisset, / omnia narrasset, sed et os et lingua volenti / dicere non aderant, nec qua loqueretur habebat; / signa tamen manifesta dedit notamque parenti / illo forte loco delapsam in gurgite sacro / Persephones zonam summis ostendit in undis* (5.465-70). Although Ovid clearly states here that it is the intention of the transformed nymph to display the girdle, one cannot help but note the alternative possibility that the girdle just happened to fall there and float on the surface.

One of the more confusing aspects of *Metamorphoses* is its representation of the minor gods such as Achelous and Inachus who combine their status as rivers with their anthropomorphic forms in peculiarly incongruous ways.[112] We first hear, for example, of Inachus, when he is absent from a meeting of rivers. A meeting of rivers, although a very human action, is acceptable as a metaphorical description; for a river to suddenly

[111] Cf. Envy (2.760-786); Sleep (11.592-615); Rumour (12.39-64). These extended personifications are studied in detail in my fourth chapter.
[112] For other depictions of humanised rivers cf. Call. *Hymn.* 4.75-8; Hor. *Carm.* 1.2.13-20; Hom. *Il.* 21.211ff; Soph. *Trach.* 508-10.

be missing due to its grief extends the metaphor beyond usual means: *Inachus unus abest imoque reconditus antro / fletibus auget aquas natamque miserrimus Io / luget ut amissam* (1.583-5).[113] This is a practical detail that Ovid inserts into the description here: he notes with a certain wry logic that if a river weeps it will inevitably increase its waters. However, weeping is a function of human bodies, not rivers, and so to apply the concept to a river creates some amusing and troubling difficulties. Ovid also plays with the dual form of Achelous when he writes of him: *clausit iter fecitque moras Achelous eunti / imbre tumens* (8.549-50). It is unclear whether Achelous prevents Theseus purposefully, or if it is simply the natural result of storm waters making the river impassable.

When Io is wandering in her pitiably transformed state, she is described as often going to her father's banks (1.639-40), an ambiguous statement in itself; however, a few lines later she is pictured following her father and sisters: *at illa patrem sequitur sequiturque sorores / et patitur tangi seque admirantibus offert. / decerptas senior porrexerat Inachus herbas: / illa manus lambit patriisque dat oscula palmis* (1.643-6). Inachus seems unavoidably human in form. He is described as *senior*, and Io also licks her father's hands, a seal of certainty for the imagination. This does not lessen the cheek of the man to lament that his daughter will have to be married off to '*de grege ...vir*' (1.660) given that he is at least occasionally an actual river.

This schizophrenic approach to river gods reappears in the story of Arethusa in book five, which forms part of the song of the Muses. There the once-nymph tells her story of rape to the returning Ceres; she first appears as Ceres is still frantically searching for her lost daughter: '*tum caput Eleis Alpheias extulit undis / rorantesque comas a fronte removit ad aures*' (5.487-8). Arethusa is a character who possesses both

[113] Cf. nature's response to the death of Orpheus: *lacrimis quoque flumina dicunt / increvisse suis* (11.47-8). Virgil has the river Hebrus weep for Eurydice at *Georg.* 4.463, but does not take this notion to its logical conclusion.

watery and human attributes.[114] She tells Ceres news of Proserpina, saying that she will reserve her own story for a more appropriate time. Ceres remembers and returns to hear Arethusa's account, an action suggesting the importance placed upon the telling and hearing of tales in *Metamorphoses*. The girl's story is a familiar one of a nymph and a lustful male, in this instance the river god Alpheus. Arethusa describes her approach to a beautiful spot by a river: '*aestus erat, magnumque labor geminaverat aestum. / invenio sine vertice aquas, sine murmure euntes, / perspicuas ad humum*' (5.586-8). Ogilvie observes that the Romans had a supernatural attitude towards such places: *Many natural objects in themselves provoke the kind of wonder that leads men to think of them as more than natural. In the hot, sunny climate of Italy, a spring of fresh water or a copse of trees inspires grateful respect. The Romans thought of them as sacred places in which a spirit dwelt.*[115] He then makes another interesting comment regarding early Roman thought: *it seems that the function of these places was thought of as supernatural and divine and that this primitive idea was changed -- under the influence largely of Greek ideas which thought of gods in human terms -- into the idea that they were the residences of gods whose function it was to preside over them.*[116]

Returning to the silent stillness of this particular scene, from the inherent supernatural atmosphere of the waters emerges a more personified sense of the divine: '*nescio quod medio sensi sub gurgite murmur / territaque insisto propiori margine fontis*' (5.597-8). An explicit change is stated, from a place '*sine murmure*' to the distinct sensation of a *murmur*; it is perhaps only barely perceptible to the girl, but this is enough to make her dart to the side of the spring. The next stage is the inescapably

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[114] Arethusa is appealed to as a divinity in Virg. *Ecl.* 10.1. The story of the nymph also appears in Paus. 5.7.2-3; Virg. *Aen.* 3.694-6; Pind. *Nem.* 1.1-4. She makes a fleeting appearance at Ov. *Fasti* 4.423.
[115] Ogilvie (1969), p.13. For examples of the sanctity of groves and woodland spots, cf. Virg. *Aen.* 7.172; Livy 1.1.; Ov. *Fasti* 3.295-6; Plin. *NH.* 12.3. For springs and water, cf. Ov. *Fasti* 3.275-6, 5.672-82; Plin. *Epist.* 8.8,20; Plin. *NH.* 31.6-12. For rivers, cf. Apul. *Met.*1.13; Tac. *Ann.* 1.79.
[116] Ogilvie (1969), p.13-4.

divine and personified intrusion of the god: '*quo properas, Arethusa?' suis Alpheus ab undis, / 'quo properas?' iterum rauco mihi dixerat ore* (5.599-600). The river god speaks to her directly, and yet there is the persistent ambiguity between river and god even here: the refrain of '*quo properas*' and Arethusa's description '*rauco ore*' actually evokes the sound of eddying waters. It could be imagined that she is conjuring a voice from the noise of the river, which is a possible reason why ancient people assigned divinities to inanimate things.[117]

However, at this point she flees and he runs after her; there is no room for doubt any longer: '*vidi praecedere longam / ante pedes umbram, nisi si timor illa videbat. / sed certe sonitusque pedum terrebat et ingens / crinales vittas adflabat anhelitus oris*' (5.614-7). She still refers to him as '*amnis*' (5.623; 637) which reflects a confused state of being. Of course, now that she is water, this same confusion accrues to her also.

A final revealing comment is made by the watery girl before her story finishes: '*sed enim cognoscit amatas / amnis aquas positoque viri, quod sumpserat, ore / vertitur in proprias, ut se mihi misceat, undas*' (5.636-8). A point of interest lies in the god being able to recognise the waters as her. In book one, Apollo is stated as continuing to love Daphne in tree form, but there he witnessed the metamorphosis. Here there is no hint that this is the case; the river god simply knows that the waters are in fact the girl he desires. It is hard to imagine what it is that distinguishes the waters as her, and this difficulty suggests the peculiar dual nature of the girl. The god's double-faced status is also interesting; Arethusa says that he puts down the attributes of a man, as if they were a costume, and returns to his liquid form.[118] Ovid's use of hybridism and

[117] Cf. Lucr. *DRN.* 4.572-94, where the poet debunks the positing of supernatural beings in solitary places, claiming that rather, people are deluded by echoes.
[118] A use of hybridism can be seen in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, where Gregor Samsa awakens to discover his new beetle form, but is then described as blinking, an action which cannot be performed by a beetle as it does not possess eyelids.

anthropomorphism, then, is seen to produce unsettling effects in the narrative which further confuse the reader.

The anthropomorphism in García Márquez's novel is far less specifically detailed and fantastical. In most cases the merging of two realms is suggested by simile alone: *[Amaranta e]ra liviana y acuosa como una lagartija, pero todas sus partes eran humanas* (116-7);[119] '*nosotros seguimos viviendo como los burros.*' (90).[120] The only incidence comparable to the kind of anthropomorphism observed in Ovid's poem is Death, who appears to Amaranta in the form of a woman: *la muerte le deparó el privilegio de anunciarse con varios años de anticipación. La vio un mediodiá ardiente, cosiendo con ella en el corridor, poco después de que Meme se fue al colegio. La reconoció en el acto, y no había nada pavoroso en la muerte, porque era una mujer vestida de azul con el cabello largo, de aspecto un poco anticuado, y con un cierto parecido a Pilar Ternera en la época en que las ayudaba en los oficios de cocina* (392).[121] However, the narrator adds a layer of doubt when he observes: *Fernanda estuvo presente y no la vio, a pesar de que era tan real, tan humana, que en alguna occasión le pidió a Amaranta el favor de que le ensartara una aguja* (392).[122] This personification is perhaps only a hallucination.[123] On a more general level, things in the

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[119] *Amaranta was light and watery as a newt, but all her parts were human* (32).
[120] '*we keep on living like donkeys*' (14).
[121] *death had awarded her the privilege of announcing itself several years ahead of time. She saw it on one burning afternoon sewing with her on the porch a short time after Meme had left for school. She saw it because it was a woman dressed in blue with long hair, with a sort of antiquated look, and with a certain resemblance to Pilar Ternera during the time when she had helped with the chores in the kitchen* (227).
[122] *Fernanda was present several times and did not see her, in spite of the fact that she was so real, so human, and on one occasion asked of Amaranta the favour of threading a needle.* (227-8). Interestingly, while Fernanda is portrayed here as entirely oblivious to the supernatural presence, she is shown later in the novel to be very much involved in an even more bizarre situation where invisible doctors perform an operation at her command (466-7).
[123] The fact that only Fernanda is able to see this presence of Death contradicts Hart (1983), who writes of the novel : *the supernatural is never absent from the magical realist universe and, indeed, it is always visible to all. In this particular world, nothing is supernatural or paranormal without being at the same time real, and vice-versa*, p.41.

world, whether they be canvas sacks, pots of water or time itself, all possess animate properties that are startling both in their appearance and acceptance into the flow of the novel. While this is far from the developed personification of Ovid's poem, it certainly partakes of the theme, and in doing so introduces insecurity into the reader's grasp of the events in the text.[124]

v) Confounding Chronology

A common way of producing magical realism is by altering, mingling or confounding chronological frameworks. The opening of Ovid's poem states: '*di, coeptis (nam vos mutastis et illa) / adspirate meis primaque ab origine mundi / ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen*' (1.2-4). This continuity is a form of historical framework, expressing the idea that everything that occurs in the poem is directly connected to Ovid's contemporary reality. It is a brave and provocative declaration, especially in the light of all that follows in the poem. It also invokes magical realism, by making the magical events that occur a prelude to the contemporary reality of Ovid's time.[125]

There are a number of techniques in the poem that convey interlocking or overlapping time frames. One example appears in book one where Jupiter is seen to present the crime and punishment of the wicked Lycaon to a council of the gods.[126] The Lycaon episode has strong allegorical elements; Ovid encourages this by his mischievous comparisons some lines before: *hac iter est superis ad magni tecta Tonantis / regalemque domum: dextra laevaque deorum / atria nobilium valvis*

[124] The animation in García Márquez's novel and Ovid's poem is studied at length in my second chapter.
[125] Cf. Jupp (2000), p.113-5, on the mingling of magic and history in *Cien años de soledad.*
[126] Councils of gods are familiar elements in Classical epic: cf. Hom. *Il.* 1.493 ; Hom. *Od.* 1.26 ; Virg. *Aen.* 1.223. Anderson (1989), p.92-4, examines how Ovid subverts the topos of the Council by presenting Jupiter as undignified and unreliable, and making use of anachronistic features.

celebrantur apertis, / plebs habitat diversa locis: hac parte potentes / caelicolae clarique suos posuere penates; / hic locus est, quem, si verbis audacia detur, / haud timeam magni dixisse Palatia caeli (1.170-6). Habinek observes the connection between Jupiter's presumptuous treatment of Lycaon and the behaviour of generals justifying their actions afterwards, and connects the whole thrust of the account of the flood with drastic foreign policy expanding empire in order to protect his own.[127] Ovid supports this reading with his conscious comparisons: besides the one quoted above, another equally blatant one appears some lines after: *sic, cum manus inpia saevit / sanguine Caesareo Romanum extinguere nomen, / attonitum tanto subitae terrore ruinae / humanum genus est totusque perhorruit orbis, / nec tibi grata minus pietas, Auguste, tuorum est, / quam fuit illa Iovi* (1.200-5). At a later point in the tale, where Jupiter is pondering how to destroy mankind, he seems especially concerned with how to avoid harming the various semi-gods who are not entitled to inhabit Olympus (1.192-5). It is possible that here too Ovid is suggesting some aspect of contemporary government snobbery concerning districts of Rome and who was regarded as acceptable for occupying them.[128]

Otis observes the callous and arbitrary acts of gods such as Juno and Diana in the poem, and interprets them as representing the behaviour of powerful men and women in Ovid's own time: *his avenging gods are to an appreciable extent images of arbitrary power very like that which he saw in the Augustan state.*[129] It is a fascinating interpretation, but such a perspective removes the necessary conditions for magical realism by reducing the elements of the text to a moral interpretation. To put it another way, it makes the poem seem like a puzzle that can be resolved. Leal observes that one

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[127] Habinek (2002), p.51.
[128] Anderson (1989), p.95, mentions this episode of what he calls *housing discrimination* in the context of casting a different kind of negative aspersion: here that Jupiter might be concerned to preserve these satyrs and nymphs so he can continue his habit of raping various unfortunate nymphs when he pleases.
[129] Otis (1970), p.133.

of the key characteristics of magical realism is that *key events have no logical or psychological explanation*[130] and Faris lists an irreducible element of magic as an essential feature of magical realist literature.[131] There is certainly a level of allegory in the Lycaon passage, but it is not sufficient to destroy the bewildering atmosphere by turning the episode into a simple case of symbolism.

It is possible to see allegory in *Cien años de soledad* also. It is already a novel far closer to its history than Ovid's poem, which makes it particularly suitable for these kinds of analyses; my third chapter deals extensively with the historical background of the novel, but here a couple of examples will suffice to demonstrate the point. Colonel Aureliano Buendía is described at the beginning of a chapter: *El coronel Aureliano Buendía promovió treinta y dos levantamientos armados y los perdió todos* (200).[132] The revolutionary -- and ultimately futile -- antics of Aureliano recall those of the Liberal general Rafael Uribe Uribe, under whom García Márquez's grandfather fought.[133] He is a man renowned for his leadership skills and personal following, and this is reflected magically in the immense power he comes to wield over those around him: *Sus órdenes se cumplían antes de ser impartidas, aun antes de que él las concibiera, y siempre llegaban mucho más lejos de donde él se hubiera atrevido a hacerlas llegar* (270).[134] The massacre of the strikers towards the close of the novel famously recalls the Ciénaga train station massacre which occurred in 1928, and the

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[130] Leal (1995), p.123.
[131] Faris (1995), p.164.
[132] *Colonel Aureliano Buendía started thirty-two armed uprisings and lost them all* (91).
[133] For useful discussions on the historical aspect of *Cien años de soledad*, see Taylor (1975); Janes (1981); Minta (1987); Janes (1991). These will be used and discussed in detail throughout my third chapter.

[134] *His orders were carried out before being imparted, even before he had conceived them, and always went much beyond what he would have dared them do* (140).

civil disturbances that led to the event appear accurately portrayed. In the midst of so many magical episodes, the overall effect is an unsettling ambiguity within the text.

Another example of the mingling of time frames is aetiology. After the grieving sisters of Phaethon have been transformed into trees, it is noted by the narrator that they continue their weeping in these new forms: *inde fluunt lacrimae, stillataque sole rigescunt/ de ramis electra novis, quae lucidus amnis/ excipit et nuribus mittit gestanda Latinis* (2.364-6). There are many other examples of aetiology within the poem: the majority of the stories Ovid retells involve aetiology on some level. Some, like the story of the sisters, involve the introduction of a new element in the world. The infamous vanity of the youth Narcissus produces a new flower, which tends to grow near rivers (3.402-510); the slaying of Argus produces the peacock (1.625-723). Others explain features of the world: the story of Echo explains the phenomenon that the nymph gave her name to (3.356-401); the Gorgon's head dripping blood explains why there are snakes in the desert (4.617-20). The way the modern world appears is explained in Ovid's poem by various magical stories[135], which therefore connect their wondrous events to reality in a concrete form.

García Márquez does not have a similarly vast stock of aetiologies in his novel; there are however many examples of continuity that appear. The most prominent connecting theme appears in the first line where Colonel Aureliano Buendía famously reminisces about discovering ice: *Muchos años después, frente al pelotón de fusilamiento, el coronel Aureliano Buendía había de recorder aquella tarde remota en*

[135] Myers (1994) discusses aetiology throughout her book-length study on the poem.

que su padre lo llevó a conocer el hielo (81).[136] The memory of ice recurs in the novel expressing moments of intolerable nostalgia for the various characters, and also suggests the connection of isolation and stagnancy that lies at the heart of the Buendía family. A connecting feature which reappears is the phrase *muchos años después*; it is an oral narrative device, and places obvious emphasis upon the important causal ties between the past and the future within the novel. Its appearance, in connection with Aureliano's memory of ice, asserts from the very outset the important role of past and present throughout. Sometimes it connects a lasting physical phenomenon: *Muchos años después, cuando Macondo fue un campamento de casas de madera y techos de zinc, todovía perduraban en las calles más antiguas los almendros rotos y polvorientos,*[137] *aunque nadie sabía entonces quién los había sembrado* (128).[138] This is not a magical explanation, but the sudden step into the distant future defamiliarises the town which produces a feeling of the uncanny.

2. Layers of Storytelling: Internal Narrators.

It is clear that storytelling is extremely important in both texts. In the first section of this chapter I have explored the ways in which the external narrators

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[136] *Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice* (9).

[137] *polvorientos* recalls the Spanish galleon of chapter one, similarly described as *polvoriento* (95). Both passages record an instant where time zones are being confounded. The style of the passage recalls Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*: *But there was no doubt that within (the coach) something great was seated: greatness that was passing, hidden, within reach of the common hands that for the first and last time found themselves so close to the majesty of England, the enduring symbol of the state that inquisitive archaeologists would identify in their excavations of the ruins of time, when London was no more than a street covered in grass, and when the people who were strolling its streets that Wednesday morning were scarcely a heap of bones with a few wedding rings, turned over in their own dust and the fillings of innumerable decayed teeth.* This sentence with its peculiarly unsettling perspective captures a glimpse of a possible future buried within the present time of the narrative; it presents the future and present as co-existent and it is this technique of taking the ordinary, the mundane, and making it seem extraordinary. García Márquez says of this extract: '*I would be a very different author if, when I was twenty years old, I hadn't read this sentence from* Mrs. Dalloway', Mendoza (1983).

[138] *Many years later, when Macondo was a field of wooden houses with zinc roofs, the broken and dusty almond trees still stood on the oldest streets, although no one knew who had planted them* (39).

manipulate their stories. There is a further level of narration in both texts, however, which presents a whole array of interpretive questions and challenges for the reader. There exist numerous examples of internal narrators in each work, and these narrators are often proven to be unreliable, biased and manipulative of their material in quite extreme ways. These behaviours are clearly going to have an impact on the text and how we respond to it, as we find that many of these internal narrators are seen to use similar techniques to those of the external narrators with which they affect their audiences.

These narrators are an especially prominent aspect of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[139] They appear in every book of the poem, relating stories to an individual or group of listeners in an array of different settings. In book four, the daughters of Minyas choose to shun the rites of Bacchus and spend the whole day inside with their weaving. To alleviate the tedium of this self-enforced seclusion, one sister has a suggestion: '*dum cessant aliae commentaque sacra frequentant, / nos quoque, quas Pallas, melior dea, detinet ...utile opus manuum vario sermone levemus / perque vices aliquid, quod tempora longa videri / non sinat, in medium vacuas referamus ad aures*' (4.37-41). There is an emphasis upon storytelling as a form of delusion in the implicit comparison with the '*commenta sacra*' and the goal of making the long hours pass unnoticed. For a story to be deluding in such a way, it needs to distract the listener, to fully absorb his or her senses, as the story told by Mercury dupes the many eyes of Argus to sleep in book one. *Cien años de soledad* includes a very similar notion when the insomnia plague has Macondo in its grip, and people are desperate to either evade boredom or fall sleep. There it was the repetition that was perceived as the vital ingredient for achieving this

[139] Ovid's *Fasti* makes similarly extensive use of internal narrators; Callimachus' *Aetia* appears to have been a likely model. See Cahoon (1996), Barchiesi (2002) and Keith (1992) for studies on internal narration in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Leach (1974), p.106, distinguishes between storytellers who simply tell one autobiographical tale, and those narrators who tell many stories.

end (although it notably failed); here the first sister to speak carefully selects her tale on account of its little-known status: *haec, quoniam vulgaris fabula non est,/ talibus orsa modis lana sua fila sequente* (4.53-4). The parallel image of weaving is also an influence upon our perspective of the storytelling: weaving invokes ideas of fabrication and intricate craftsmanship, therefore moving us even further away from the possibility of these tales being real or credible.[140]

The story begins with a very familiar theme: '*Pyramus et Thisbe, iuvenum pulcherrimus alter, altera quas Oriens habuit, praelata puellis*' (4.55-6).[141] They fall in love, but the parents forbid a union. Yet between their adjoining houses, there is a crack in the wall, unnoticed for years, through which the lovers can communicate. The first remarkable feature is the authorial intrusion regarding the discovery of the crack by the yearning lovers: '*quid non sentit amor?*' (4.68). It distracts from the small scene of the tale, but also presents some confusion as to who is speaking. It sounds like the voice of Ovid ironically commenting upon his narrator's story. It was noted earlier how Ovid frequently interrupts his own stories with playful asides and wry remarks. He has his internal narrators intrude upon their own stories in markedly similar ways: he has one of the Muses comment on her own story about Pyreneus' wickedness: '*vidit euntes / nostraque fallaci veneratus numina vultu / 'Mnemonides' (cognorat enim) 'consiste' dixit / 'nec dubitate, precor, tecto grave sidus et imbrem' / (imber erat)*' (5.278-82); the river god Achelous interjects his own narrative telling the story of Erysichthon to express his lack of sympathy: '*si non / ille suis esset nulli miserabilis actis*' (8.782-3); Ceyx makes an aside when telling the story of Daedalion: '*Forsitan hanc volucrem,*

[140] Cf. Catullus' use of weaving imagery in the language and theme of *Carmen* 64. Penelope is likewise an obvious comparison with her weaving motif in the *Odyssey*. See Scheid & Svenbro (1996) for an interesting study on weaving myths and motifs in antiquity.

[141] For a discussion of the various sources of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, see Duke (1971). Newlands (1986) observes that Ovid's version of the tale is modelled on Greek romance prose fictions, but observes how Ovid confounds expectations based on this model. See also Janan (1994) and Anderson (1995) for studies of Ovid's version of the story.

rapto quae vivit et omnes / terret aves, semper pennas habuisse putetis: / vir fuit et (tanta est animi constantia) iam tum / acer erat belloque ferox ad vimque paratus' (11.291-4). It is as if a ray of light has broken through the clouds and is falling momentarily upon a structure, revealing its composite elements.

At this point in the story of Pyramus and Thisbe the narrator takes the liberty of addressing the youths directly, expressing and creating a sense of tender engagement with the characters: '*primi vidistis amantes/ et vocis fecistis iter; tutaeque per illud/ murmure blanditiae minimo transire solebant*' (4.68-70). Elegiac features emerge in the details of the secret rendez-vous: two locked-out lovers[142] whisper to one another and rebuke the '*invide paries*' (4.73) for refusing them access. This warped perspective of the world as animate and potentially responsive demonstrates the internal characters' skewed world-views, but also recalls Ovid's elegiac poetry.[143] This provokes an increasingly slippery grasp of authorship and creation; Ovid crafts the poem, but there are many layers of refraction. Each level of the storytelling partially absorbs our interest, giving a sense of confusion and doubt that never overbalances into disbelief. The spell is not broken but its effect is diluted by consciousness of structure. The devices of construction are only semi-hidden in the narrative. Most obvious is the governing theme of love, developed by the persistent refrains of reference: '*tempore crevit amore*' (4.60); '*quid non sentit amor?*' (4.68); '*audacem faciebat amor*' (4.96). As with the elegiac pervasions, this obsessive awareness of the powers of love evokes the overarching narrator. Also evident is the cunning skill of the storyteller's shaping of the account. She carefully introduces details which prove central to the plot in covert phrases; for instance, she observes early on: '*arbor ibi niveis uberrima pomis*'(4.89).

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[142] For examples of the *exclusus amator* in elegy, see Ov. *Am.* 1.6; Ov. *Her.*18-19; *Prop.* 1.16.
[143] In *Amores* 1:13 Ovid animates and rebukes the Dawn for rising too quickly; in 1.6 he animates the wind; in *Heroides* 18 Leander animates the moon as he swims across the waters to Hero. Animation of nature is also a common theme of pastoral poetry, and can be found in abundance in Virgil's *Eclogues* and Theocritus' *Idylls*.

We know that this is a marker of what significant changes are to come, for Ovid has himself already forewarned us, the external readers, of the culmination of the story when depicting the sister musing over which story to tell: *an, quae poma alba ferebat/ ut nunc nigra ferat contactu sanguinis arbor* (4.51-2). Therefore it serves as an indication of structure to us to hear of the apparently passing detail of the white berries of the tree. The ensuing tragedy of misinterpretations is unexpected: the formula of Greek romance is a close brush with death and ultimately happy ending, so this is likely to catch Ovid's Roman readers unawares; the confusion that results in the double suicides of the young lovers is a subversion of the genre the tale has thus far aligned itself with.[144] The tale appears to be slipping into fairy tale and so losing its magical realism. However, in a curious and grotesque swerve, suddenly, at the point of Pyramus' death, there appears a foul description: '*ut iacuit resupinus humo: cruor emicat alte, / non aliter, quam cum vitiato fistula plumbo / scinditur et tenui stridente foramine longas / eiaculatur aquas atque ictibus aera rumpit*' (4.121-4). Newlands notes the sexual imagery of this simile, comparing it to the language used by Lucretius to describe love in book four of *De Rerum Natura*; her theory is that the female narrator, who is a reclusive virgin avoiding the revelry of Bacchic worship, is expressing her cynicism towards love in this unpleasantly graphic simile.[145] While her reading is ingenious and well argued, I believe that the overwhelming effect of the description is that its crass anachronism brings Ovid's reader back to the real world with the domestic familiarities of broken plumbing. It is a step out of the fairy tale, or an intrusion into that world by the modern and the real. The internal narrator, like the external narrator, purposefully confounds complacent expectations by mingling time frames and creating an atmosphere of unease for the reader.

[144] Newlands (1986), p.145.
[145] Newlands (1986), p.145.

i) Internal Responses to Magical Stories

As well as the added complexities invoked by using internal narrators, the obvious accompaniment of these figures is an internal audience, whose responses to stories provide a wealth of information for the role of magic and storytelling within the texts. With relative frequency Ovid will have his internal narrators and recipients express the same kinds of disbelief and surprise as the main narrator of the poem: *Dixerat, et factum mirabile ceperat aures; / pars fieri potuisse negant, pars omnia veros/posse deos memorant: sed non est Bacchus in illis* (4.271-4); *Amnis ab his tacuit; factum mirabile cunctos / moverat: inridet credentes, utque deorum / spretor erat mentisque ferox, Ixione natus / 'ficta refers nimiumque putas, Acheloe, potentes/ esse deos' dixit 'si dant adimuntque figuras.' / obstipuere omnes nec talia dicta probarunt* (8.611-6). In both these cases, the disbelievers are seen as blasphemous and wrong. In the first example, an enchanting scene ensues, as the looms of the Minyades turn to ivy and Bacchus turns the sisters into flitting bats. In the second case, it is the listeners themselves who do not approve of the disdainful disbelief expressed by the son of Ixion. His derision of Achelous' tales is absurd: the passage quoted begins *amnis ab his tacuit*, reminding us that these magical tales are being narrated by a character who is quite magical himself: a river god, both fully river and fully man. For Ixion's son to declare his disbelief in the face of a talking river is self-defeating. This example is interesting because it weaves a purely magical realist feature in the overarching narrator's text with the qualified magical realism of the internal narrator and his recipients' reactions. The fact that the river is a peculiar hybrid entity is passed over with no display of dismay whatsoever: *clausit iter fecitque moras Achelous eunti/ imbre tumens. 'succede meis,'*

ait 'inclite, tectis,/ Cecropida, nec te committe rapacibus undis' (8.549-51); *quem facta audire volentem/ mira deum innixus cubito Calydonius amnis/ talibus adloquitur* (8.726-8). Both these examples indicate very different (mutually exclusive) characteristics of Achelous, and we seem to be expected to accept the possibility of such a being; and yet, the idea that a god might transform a nymph into an island is treated as ridiculous by the son of Ixion.

This complexity of response to magic in the poem, as well as the negative treatment of the uninitiated or disbelieving within the community is sustained throughout. The response to Bacchus provides a number of examples of the latter phenomenon: time and again, characters who spurn the god with disrespectful unbelief suffer drastically as a result.[146] As mentioned above, the Minyades' sisterhood of tale telling ends calamitously: the women who would not believe the tales of other people receive their due punishment for their disbelief, a disbelief which causes them to ostracise themselves from the community.[147] The unfortunate women are turned into bats, a transformation which suits their obstinate seclusion: *tectaque, non silvas celebrant lucemque perosae/ nocte volant seroque tenent a vespere nomen* (4.414-5). Their penalty is to succumb to nature, to be part of the animal kingdom with its inability to speak and to believe or disbelieve in a deity. Pentheus is another conspicuous representative of this attitude. He derides Tiresias' prophecies: *spernit Echionides tamen hunc ex omnibus unus, / contemptor superum Pentheus praesagaque ridet/ verba senis* (3.513-5). It is not surprising then that he reacts to the new worship of Bacchus with arrogant words: '*quis furor, anguigenae, proles Mavortia, vestras/ attonuit mentes?' Pentheus ait, 'aerane tantum / aere repulsa valent et adunco tibia cornu/ et magicae fraudes, ut, quos non bellicus ensis, / non tuba terruerit, non strictis agmina*

[146] Euripides' *Bacchae* is an obvious source text of related themes upon the dangers of belief and unbelief with regard to Bacchus.
[147] The story appears first here; in later literature in Plut. *Quaest.Gr.*38; Ael.V.H. 3.42; Ant.Lib. 10.

telis,/ femineae voces et mota insania vino/ obscenique greges et inania tympana vincant?' (3.531-7).[148] Pentheus disbelieves even as Acoetes testifies to Bacchus' powers, and his sinful actions finally bring death upon him: he is torn to shreds by his own relatives in a scene that recalls both Actaeon and Orpheus.[149] Actaeon has metamorphosed and so is unrecognisable to his hounds and companions. It is explicitly Diana who has precipitated these changes of perspective, but she foregrounds issues of community belief and attitude when she declares spitefully: '*nunc tibi me posito visam velamine narres,/ si poteris narrare, licet*' (3.192-3). This remark raises the importance of belief and community; it is clear that Diana's reputation matters greatly to her. What people know and believe matters perhaps more than what is true. The power of communal belief is likewise displayed in the story of Pentheus: here his own aunt and mother are so infused by their tribal frenzy that they perceive their relative as a wild animal.

In Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* there is a dramatic scene where Saladin Chamcha, who has just survived a hijacked plane trip that culminated in a bomb exploding the vehicle mid-air, is captured by police who think he is an illegal immigrant. They begin pointing at Saladin accusatorially: *Saladin Chamcha, following the line of Popeye's pointing finger, raised his hands to his forehead, and then he knew that he had woken into the most fearsome of nightmares, a nightmare that had only just begun, because there at his temples, growing longer by the moment, and sharp enough to draw blood, were two new, goaty, unarguable horns* (141). Later in a hospital he

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[148] Lycaon is similarly arrogant and disbelieving of a divinity (1.221-3), and is transformed as an indirect result of this attitude (1.232-9).

[149] Actaeon strayed into Diana's grove as she was bathing and was punished by being ripped to pieces by his own hunting hounds; this occurred because of his transformation into a stag. As a result of his changed form, although he pleaded with his hounds, they did not recognise him: *clamare libebat, / 'Actaeon ego sum, dominum cognoscite vestrum' / ... et genibus pronis supplex similisque roganti / circumfert tacitos tamquam sua brachia vultus* (3.230-41). This is remarkably similar to Pentheus' situation at the close of book three: *non habet infelix quae matri bracchia tendat,/ trunca sed ostendens dereptis vulnera membris, / 'aspice, mater!' ait* (3.723-5).

discovers that he is not alone: *Standing in front of him was a figure so impossible that Chamcha wanted to bury his head under the sheets; yet could not, for what was he himself...?...It had an entirely human body, but its head was that of a ferocious tiger, with three rows of teeth* (167). This bizarre creature explains to Saladin: *There's a woman over that way ...who is now mostly water-buffalo. There are businessmen from Nigeria who have grown sturdy tails. There is a group of holiday makers from Senegal who were doing no more than changing planes when they were turned into slippery snakes* (168). It soon becomes clear what is happening to all these unfortunate people: '*But how do they do it?' Chamcha wanted to know. 'They describe us,' the other whispered solemnly. 'That's all. They have the power of description, and we succumb to the pictures they construct*' (168). Later in the novel, this theory is expanded upon by Jumpy: '*The central requirement ...is to take an ideological view of the situation ...Objectively ...what has happened here? A: Wrongful arrest, intimidation, violence. Two: Illegal detention, unknown medical experimentation in hospital ...And thirdly ...psychological breakdown, loss of sense of self, inability to cope. We've seen it all before*' (252-3).[150] The event of Chamcha's metamorphosis exploits the usual reader-text dynamic upon the characters within the novel; rather than having us succumb to the descriptions of the narrator and believing the character to have been transformed, it is the characters who are affected, leaving us with a confusing duality of perspective. Whether we believe or not is often a question of community and suggestion, and here the characters' dissection of their own existential states causes us to hover on the verge of disbelief.

The themes of community and belief are likewise paramount within *Cien años de soledad*, where the fear of a mutant hybridism in her offspring plagues a prominent

[150] Walker (1995) discusses this and other magical episodes in *Satanic Verses* from a variety of different perspectives.

character for most of her life. Úrsula, the wife of the founding patriarch of Macondo, has heard the story of a relative born with a pig's tail from an incestuous liaison; and she and her husband are cousins. Eventually, the pernicious incest endemic in the family does give rise to such abnormality; the persistence of the fear emphasises the community's abhorrence of incest, and their demonisation of those who commit such acts[151] is made concrete in the motif of the pig's tail. The tale of the hybrid relative is presented factually, but there is a suspicion that this is a case of a community exaggeration. This kind of embellishment is a familiar feature of all kinds of accounts, from anecdotes in local newspapers to war reports presented by broadsheets and television journalists. It is particularly associated with magical realism,[152] for its blurring of the distinctions of truth and falsehood mirror much of the efforts of magical realist literature to upset these rigid categories. It is an especially common feature of the internal narrators in both *Metamorphoses* and *Cien años de soledad.*

ii) Unreliable Internal Narrators

While community belief, usually propagated by internal narrators, is perceived in both texts as a powerful, frequently dangerous, force, capable of shifting reality in its audiences, it is notable that the internal narrators are frequently presented as biased, forgetful or outright mad. Ovid's poem contains many unreliable narrators and their presence can only encourage us to doubt what we are told. If we were not encouraged to doubt, the poem would slip irrevocably into fairy tale or legend: it is its untrustworthy

[151] Cf. Claudius and Agrippina in Tac. *Ann.*12.5. For the theme of incest in the novel, see the studies of Levine (1971) and Álvarez de Dross (1969).
[152] Faris (1995), p.184, comments on the carnivalesque spirit in magical realism: *Language is used extravagantly, expanding its resources beyond its referential needs ...Their use of magical details, especially, details which are often not allegorically significant or clearly referential at first glance (even if they become so on reflection), celebrate invention moving beyond realistic representation.*

or untrusting narrators who paradoxically keep us grounded in reality and thus caught in the borderline world of the magical real.

An important symbol of this unreliability appears in book twelve of *Metamorphoses*, where the news of the forthcoming Trojan War is spread by *Fama*, the personification of rumour.[153] As with all other personifications in the poem, the description of her abode imparts most of what we need to know about the character: *tota est ex aere sonanti, / tota fremit vocesque refert iteratque, quod audit* (12.46-7). This idea of repetition is augmented by another notion later in the passage: *mensuraque ficti / crescit, et auditis aliquid novus adicit auctor* (12.57-8). Here it is explicit that the teller is actually adlibbing and exaggerating what he has heard. It is unclear who these narrators are, people or personified forms of rumours: Ovid simply calls them *turba* (12.53). The ambiguity creates a sinister atmosphere which is increased by the similes he uses: *nec tamen est clamor, sed parvae murmura vocis,/ qualia de pelagi, siquis procul audiat, undis / esse solent, qualemve sonum, cum Iuppiter atras / increpuit nubes, extrema tonitrua reddunt* (12.49-52). The rumours are a strangely autonomous and impersonal entity, affecting and influencing powerfully but anonymously. Finally, the truth of these stories is openly undermined: *veniunt, leve vulgus, euntque / mixtaque cum veris passim commenta vagantur / milia rumorum confusaque verba volutant* (12.53-5). This little passage casts aspersions upon what has gone before: Ovid's many cautious asides of *ferunt* and *memorant* become yet more suspect. Some internal narrators in the poem have already raised these issues: Achelous assures us in his story of the contest with Hercules: '*siqua fides, neque ficta mihi nunc gloria voce / quaeritur, inposito pressus mihi monte videbar*' (9.55-6). It is interesting that he feels the need to

[153] Cf. Virg. *Aen.* 4.173-97. Otis (1970), p.282, and Due (1974), p.148-9, are both critical of Ovid's *Fama*, perceiving it as absurd and a marker of the ensuing parody of Virgil in books thirteen and fourteen of *Metamorphoses*. For an interesting discussion of *Fama* and its connection to the structure of book twelve, see Zumwalt (1977).

maintain belief that Hercules felt as heavy as a mountain, but not to support his claims that he changed into a snake. This is a magical realist device, foregrounding the different beliefs in societies and peoples.

Delbaere-Garant uses the term 'grotesque realism' and defines it as follows: *Grotesque elements are used to convey the anarchic eccentricity of popular tellers who tend to amplify and distort reality to make it more credible ...Magnified in each new retelling, such events come to assume epic proportions. I would suggest further that "grotesque realism" be used not just for popular oral discourse but also for any sort of hyperbolic distortion that creates a sense of strangeness through the confusion or interpenetration of different realms like animate/inanimate or human/animal.*[154] This phrase has clear implications for our understanding of metamorphosis and other overtly magical events as well as the frequently hyperbolic character of the texts.

The episode of the Wandering Jew in *Cien años de soledad* exhibits these issues. This character appears at the time of an intense heat wave. The narrator remarks upon the surprising phenomenon occurring during Úrsula's funeral: *ese mediodía hubo tanto calor que los pájaros desorientados se estrellaban como perdigones contra las paredes y rompían las mallas metálicas de las ventanas para morirse en los dormitorios* (462-3).[155] The inhabitants are both concerned and confused about the cause of the extreme weather conditions: *Al principio se creyó que era una peste. Las amas de casa se agotaban de tanto barrer pájaros muertos, sobre todo a la hora de la siesta, y los hombres los echaban al río por carretadas. El domingo de resurrección, el centenario padre Antonio Isabel afirmó en el púlpito que la muerte de los pájaros obedecían a la mala influencia del Judío Errante que él mismo había visto la noche anterior. Lo describió como un híbrido de macho cabrío cruzado con hembra hereje, una bestia*

[154] Delbaere-Garant (1995), p.256.
[155] *it was so hot that noon that the birds in their confusion were running into walls like clay pigeons and breaking through screens to die in the bedrooms* (278). Cf. *CAS*.234.

infernal cuyo aliento calcinaba el aire y cuya visita determinaría la concepción de engendros por las recién casadas (463).[156] Initially no one pays much notice to the rambling old man, but gradually the notion catches on in the public imagination: *una mujer despertó a todos al amanecer del miércoles, porque encontró unas huellas de bípedo de pezuña hendida. Eran tan ciertas e inconfundibles, que quienes fueron a verlas no pusieron en duda la existencia de una criatura espantosa semejante a la descrita por el párroco, y se asociaron para montar trampas en sus patios* (463).[157] The practical measure of setting traps to catch this unearthly creature reflects an attitude towards magical events in the characters of the text, whereby magic, if not fully assimilated, is certainly accepted as everyday fact. This helps to build the atmosphere of bewilderment in the reader which has been noted throughout this chapter.

The inevitable culmination of this mass hysteria is the location of a victim which inevitably occurs: *un grupo de hombres estaba desensartando al monstruo de las afiladas varas que habían parado en el fondo de una fosa cubierta con hojas secas, y había dejado de berrear. Pesaba como un buey, a pesar de que su estatura no era mayor que la de un adolescente, y de sus heridas manaba una sangre verde y untuosa. Tenía el cuerpo cubierto de una pelambre áspera, plagada de garrapatas menudas, y el pellejo petrificado por una costra de rémora* (463-4).[158] This poor afflicted creature is strung up like a criminal; the final statement is the most damning of all however in its

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[156] *At first they thought it was a plague. Housewives were exhausted from sweeping away so many dead birds, especially at siesta time, and the men dumped them into the river by the cart load. On Easter Sunday the hundred-year-old Father Antonio Isabel stated from the pulpit that the death of the birds was due to the evil influence of the Wandering Jew whom he himself had seen the night before. He described him as a cross between a billy goat and a female heretic, an infernal beast whose breath scorched the air and whose look brought on the birth of monsters in newlywed women* (278-9).

[157] *one woman woke everyone up at dawn on Wednesday because she found the tracks of a biped with a cloven hoof. They were so clear and unmistakable that those who went to look at them had no doubt about the existence of a fearsome creature similar to the one described by the parish priest and they got together to set traps in their courtyards* (279).

[158] *a group of men were already pulling the monster off the sharpened stakes they had set in the bottom of a pit covered with dry leaves, and it stopped lowing. It was as heavy as an ox in spite of the fact that it was no taller than a young steer, and a green and greasy liquid flowed from its wounds. Its body was covered with rough hair, plagued with small ticks, and the skin was hardened with the scales of a remora fish* (279).

tacit admission of unfounded scape-goating: *Nunca se estableció si en realidad fue por él que se murieron los pájaros, pero las recién casadas no concibieron los engendros anunciados, ni disminuyó la intensidad del calor* (464).[159]

The figure of the Wandering Jew is particularly apt as an exemplar of the tradition of tall-tales. The legend appears to have originated from the words in *Matthew* 16:28: *I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom*; its consequent development into legend resulted in sightings throughout Europe from the seventeenth century onwards.[160] In one version of the legend, it was claimed that the Jew lived to a hundred years and then shed his skin to become a thirty year old again in a constant cycle: it seems likely that García Márquez invokes this aspect of the legend when he uses it in this novel.

The characters succumb to their own fearful demonisations, just as in Salman Rushdie's novel; however, also present is Delbaere-Garant's 'grotesque realism'. The priest retells a Biblical story, embellishing it with details scarcely believable. When the people find this creature, their experiences of it are different again: *al contrario de la descripción del párroco, sus partes humanas eran más de ángel valetudinario que de hombre, porque las manos eran tersas y hábiles, los ojos grandes y crepusculares, y tenía en los omoplatos los muñones cicatrizados y callosos de unas alas potentes, que debieron ser desbastadas con hachas de labrador* (464).[161] The Wandering Jew is perhaps not the only exaggerated aspect of this episode. Hundreds of birds hurtling to their death in an attempt to escape the heat are described without qualification; but the

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[159] *It was never established whether it had really caused the death of the birds, but the newly married women did not bear the predicted monsters, nor did the intensity of the heat decrease* (279).

[160] See Anderson (1965) and Hasan-Rokem & Dundes (1986) for studies on this mysterious lengendary figure.

[161] *unlike the priest's description, its human parts were more like those of a sickly angel than of a man, for its hands were tense and agile, its eyes large and gloomy, and on its shoulder blades it had the scarred-over and calloused stumps of powerful wings which must have been chopped off by a woodsman's axe* (279). Cf. García Márquez's short story *Un señor muy viejo con unas alas enormes*, where a very similar character appears to land in someone's courtyard.

internal narrators and recipients demonstrate their unreliability, and this knowledge interrogates the central narrator.[162]

Metamorphoses also incorporates grotesque realism. The battle of the Lapiths and the Centaurs occurs during the Trojan War in book twelve, after the absurd battle of Achilles and Cycnus. Here the mighty Greek warrior cannot believe that he is not able to wound the divinely protected youth: there is a humorous image of the blustering red-faced hero unable to stomach his failure. Finally, Achilles kills the man only by crushing the life out of him. It all seems a bit too much for the fighters who then retire for a while to drink and tell stories: *noctem sermone trahunt, virtusque loquendi/ materia est: pugnam referunt hostisque suamque, / inque vices adita atque exhausta pericula saepe / commemorare iuvat quid enim loqueretur Achilles, / aut quid apud magnum potius loquerentur Achillem?* (12.159-63). All this gives the impression of men showing off to one another, an occasion susceptible to tall stories being told, and Nestor's fable is no exception.[163] He tells the story of Caenis' metamorphosis into a man, and the subsequent battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs: *visum mirabile cunctis, / quod iuveni corpus nullo penetrabile telo / invictumque a vulnere erat ferrumque terebat. / Hoc ipse Aeacides, hoc mirabantur Achivi, / cum sic Nestor ait: 'vestro fuit unicus aevo / contemptor ferri nulloque forabilis ictu / Cygnus; at ipse olim patientem vulnera mille / corpore non laeso Perrhaebum Caenea vidi, / Caenea Perrhaebum, qui factis inclitus Othryn / incoluit, quoque id mirum magis esset in illo, / femina natus erat'* (12.165-75). Nestor seems bent on trumping the amazement caused by Cycnus with Caenis, who could not only bear a thousand strokes unharmed but was even born a woman. He confesses the potential inaccuracy of his tale: '*quamvis obstet mihi tarda*

[162] García Márquez's short story *The Day After Saturday* first tells the story of the birds crashing through screens to die, and a mad priest (whom no one believes) claiming to have seen the Wandering Jew. His unreliability in this story is emphasised by the descriptions of his internal confusion.
[163] Musgrove (1998) and O'Bryhim (1998) discuss some responses to Nestor's rambling speech about the Centauromachy.

vetustas,/ multaque me fugiant primis spectata sub annis,/ plura tamen memini' (12.182-4). Caenis' metamorphosis is depicted as being both instantaneous and seamless: '*graviore novissima dixit/ verba sono poteratque viri vox illa videri,/ sicut erat*' (12.203-5). The transition is presented as one of perception rather than actuality and it is granted a relative paucity of detail; it is the bloodthirsty battle that follows which really captures Nestor's attentions. After Eurytus and his band of centaurs had attempted to snatch away the bride and other women from the marriage feast, Nestor describes the escalating violence in increasingly lavish detail: '*sanguinis ille globos pariter cerebrumque merumque/ vulnere et ore vomens madida resupinus harena/ calcitrat*' (12.238-40). He is accused grumpily by Tlepolemus of omitting the vital role which Hercules played in the battle: significantly, Nestor does not deny his purposeful filtering and moulding of the story: '*quid me meminisse malorum/ cogis et obductos annis restringere luctus/ inque tuum genitorem odium offensasque fateri? ...quis enim laudaverit hostem?*'(12.542-8). As well as reflecting badly on Nestor himself as narrator,[164] presenting him not as a wise and venerable old man but a somewhat gore-obsessed individual, its foregrounding of themes of exaggeration and hyperbole reflect significantly upon the outer framework of the Trojan War and therefore, necessarily, the Homeric tradition.[165] The *Iliad* contains explicit descriptions of death in battle,[166] and there is little doubt that Ovid intends parody when he writes this account of the battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs.

Metamorphosis as a result of tall talk provides an effective tool for explaining many of the events of Ovid's poem. The first human transformation in *Metamorphoses* is Lycaon. The story is being related by Jupiter to a council of the gods, and at this point

[164] Johnson (1999) studies the inaccuracies of self-narration in the poem through Cephalus' tale-telling in book seven. There it is the memory of the old man that is seen as responsible for the apparent inconsistencies of his tale.
[165] Cf. Otis (1970), p.283.
[166] Friedrich (2003) explores the theme of death and wounding in the *Iliad* from various aspects.

Jupiter has not been degraded by the many amorous tales that ensue; he is presented as awesome and forbidding: *celsior ipse loco sceptroque innixus eburno / terrificam capitis concussit terque quaterque / caesariem, cum qua terram, mare, sidera movit* (1.178-80).[167] When he speaks he does so in grand, regal phrases and the other gods react with submission and admiration. Ovid never lets the other gods respond in word; their reactions are presented in murmurs and nods: *confremuere omnes* (1.199); *dicta Iovis pars voce probant stimulosque frementi/ adiciunt, alii partes adsensibus inplent* (1.244-5). This both emphasises the fearful reverence of the lesser gods and suggests the great oratorical power that Jupiter has wielded over them. Jupiter's account of Lycaon displays a strong sense of the dramatic, with its decisive and unrelenting opening answered by a similarly intransigent closure: '*Ille quidem poenas (curam hanc dimittite) solvit; / quod tamen admissum, quae sit vindicta docebo*' (1.209-110); '*in facinus iurasse putes; dent ocius omnes/ quas meruere pati, sic stat sententia, poenas*' (1.242-3). He declares that he will demonstrate the reasons for his decision, despite the fact that it is apparently already a foregone conclusion: this suggests that his explanation will have to be especially convincing. Jupiter does not fail to come up with the goods. First he emphasises his own descent to a lower, lesser world: '*quam cupiens falsam summo delabor Olympo/ et deus humana lustro sub imagine terras*' (1.212-3). The vision of him gliding down and donning human form, surveying the world with divinely critical and extended perspective, is compellingly austere. Also significant is his remarking upon the immediate worship of most of the people: '*signa dedi venisse deum, vulgus precari/ coeperat*' (1.220-1). Lycaon sneers at the worship and professes doubt and proposes rational tests to prove the nature of this 'god'. These comments are geared to incite rage and horror in the hearts and minds of the other gods: the two greatest threats

[167] Anderson (1989), p.94, observes Ovid's undermining of Jupiter's gravitas by contrasting the sombre nodding of Homer's Zeus with the frenzied shaking of Ovid's Jupiter here.

to their existence are cold, hard, empiricism and derision of worship. Jupiter's psychological techniques are right on target. Lycaon is presented as the cynical rationalist. Jupiter highlights the brutality of his victim in the treatment of a Molossian hostage: [168] '*missi de gente Molossa / obsidis unius iugulum mucrone resolvit / atque ita semineces partim ferventibus artus / mollit aquis, partim subiecto torruit igni*' (1.226-9). Jupiter assures us that he is in control of Lycaon's mental state, calling him '*territus*' as he flees through the countryside. He emphasises the animal qualities of Lycaon to the extent that the human and the animal are barely distinguishable: '*nactusque silentia ruris / exululat frustraque loqui conatur; ab ipso / colligit os rabiem solitaeque cupidine caedis / utitur in pecudes et nunc quoque sanguine gaudet*' (1.232-5). Jupiter's powers show him penetrating the mind of his victim, experiencing his fear and his futile attempts to speak. It seems that the line between objective fact and imaginative construction has been crossed by this statement. A reference to a physical metamorphosis is stated: '*in villos abeunt vestes*' (1.236). At this point a distinct boundary has been crossed from the emotional perspective of the narrator to his actual vision affected by his motives and attitudes. It recalls the episode quoted above from *The Satanic Verses* where two immigrants are discussing their mutated forms: '*They describe us ...They have the power of description, and we succumb to the pictures they construct*' (168). This is similar to Jupiter's account of Lycaon's transformation: with the important difference that we hear nothing of Lycaon's own account of his state. Jupiter's intentions and bias are clear from his persistent focus upon the continuing aggression that is manifest in Lycaon's new appearance: '*fit lupus et veteris servat vestigia formae; / canities eadem est, eadem violentia vultus, / idem oculi lucent, eadem feritatis imago est*' (1.237-9). These are the features he seeks and picks out for

[168] Ovid appears to have substituted a Molossian hostage for Lycaon's own children, making the sin a public, rather than private, affair. See *Apollod.* 3.8.1-2.

emphasis: this is *his* reading of Lycaon. It is the awareness of this being a story within a story that grants the possibility of scepticism, and often the narrator's skill is so effective that we lose sight of this fact, and succumb to these tall stories ourselves.

Conclusion

It has been shown how magical realism arises from confusion; when the reader is unsure how to interpret the text, there is a struggle between real and fantastic interpretations which produces doubt and disorientation.

The narrators use a variety of techniques to promote this response: detailed description of magical events and mundane events has the effect of making strange the world of the texts. This was demonstrated in episodes such as the depiction of Daphne's metamorphosis into a tree and Pythagoras' speech on the wonders of the natural world.

The use of humanisation is shown to produce surprising effects within each work, for example, Ovid's depiction of the South Wind in the flood account; similarly hybridity is employed to confound traditional norms of conceptual analysis. Rivers are assumed to be both human and river-like in form, and in *Cien años de soledad* a child is born with a pig's tail and regarded as a monster.

Doubt and unreliability are evidenced in both authors, and this ambiguity is also supported by the exaggerated and unreliable accounts given by various internal narrators. García Márquez at certain points conveys the impression of not having full knowledge of his own textual world, and internal narrators such as Nestor are proven utterly unreliable sources. Apocryphal versions of canonical texts are employed, notably in the episode of the Wandering Jew, further suggesting the inherent slipperiness of truth and fiction in storytelling, as well as highlighting the important point that the

realities that we accept are in fact contingent on groups of believers more than objective certainties about the world.

Techniques of mixing reality and fantasy are evidenced in varying degrees throughout both texts. García Márquez tends towards producing a realist response in his far closer engagement with recent Colombian history. It was shown how he uses figures such as Colonel Aureliano Buendía to allude to the actions of General Uribe Uribe, and likewise how he tells a version of the massacre of the Banana Company workers at Ciénaga in 1928.

Ovid, on the other hand, sets the majority of his stories in a distant past, and often encourages marvellous interpretations with his more extreme examples of devices such as personification and hybridism. He concludes *Metamorphoses* by connecting his mythological and fantastical corpus to Roman history in a seamless flow of events that culminates in Augustus' reign. However, only in the two final books does 'real' history begin to be told.[169] In *Cien años de soledad,* the intermingling of mythical and contemporary reality is manifest from the beginning right through until the end of the novel. In the very first line contemporary reality is openly evoked. Ovid's structure, although connecting magical past to contemporary reality, is less consistently magical realist than the continuous combination of the magical and the real that we find in García Márquez's novel.

Both texts do however frequently mix up the traditional categories of fantasy and reality as has been demonstrated. The varying degrees to which they carry this mingling is something which I analyse more extensively in later chapters. That both merge magical and realist methods of narration suggests that therefore they can be classed as using magical realism.

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[169] The assassination of Julius Caesar (15.762ff) is the one event in the poem that we can date. For the historical presence in Ovid's poem, see Hardie (2002).

An important theme that appears throughout this chapter is that of storytelling and its relevance for the two works. Telling stories is shown to be a very powerful tool for controlling people's beliefs; likewise, and connected to this, is the fact that disbelievers are frequently seen as malevolent and dangerous characters who are punished by the powers that be.

In the next chapter, I expand upon the idea of storytelling and its connection to cultures, and I explore the effect variant explanations of reality have within communities.

2. Points of View

Introduction

In my first chapter, I studied the various ways in which a narrator produces a magical realist effect in the text. One important point that emerged from the passages being analysed was the centrality of communal belief for adopting a perspective upon reality that is regarded as valid. Disbelievers are frowned upon while storytellers are seen to embellish and exaggerate their accounts on many occasions. The confusion that arises for the reader creates the impression that two points of view upon a given reality are battling with one another. In fact, there are frequent examples within both texts that events are described from conflicting perspectives, leaving the reader feeling bewildered by the tone of the passage under interpretation.

In the opening paragraph of García Márquez's novel, the gypsy Melquíades utters the first spoken words of the novel, which function as an explanation for the apparently magical properties of the magnets to the wide-eyed inhabitants of Macondo: *Las cosas tienen vida propria ...todo es cuestión de despertarles el ánima* (82).[170] This naïve and isolated community, we are told, is visited by a band of gypsies every year who bring a variety of magical gadgets and objects ranging from telescopes to flying carpets.[171] Preceding the gypsy's remark, the narrator presents the demonstration of the magnets from a surprising perspective. The effects of the magnetic field of the metal ingots are depicted in terms of mental responses: the beams creak from *la desesperación*

[170] *All things have a life of their own ... it is simply a matter of waking up their souls* (9).
[171] Martin (1995), p.105, uses the appearance of these gadgets to indicate that the characters are awakening into the late eighteenth century, the magnet and the telescope being *symbols of the two pillars of Newtonian physics.*

de los clavos y los tornillos tratando de desenclavarse (82);[172] lost items mysteriously emerge from places thoroughly searched and are dragged along *en desbandada turbulenta detrás de los fierros mágicos de Melquíades* (82).[173] The image presents objects as sentient beings beneath a spell. The narrator uses verbs of emotion and intent in communicating the event, and ambiguously describes the following as *desbandada turbulenta* : this suggests both the chaotic spectacle and also the mental state of the objects failing to understand their compulsion to chase the magnets. The narrator presents the account entirely from the perspective of the inhabitants, making no attempt to explain the event from a scientific point of view;[174] a closer look reveals that these magnets are quite remarkably powerful to the extent that they can lure lost and possibly buried objects right out of people's houses, and drag out nails that are embedded in wood.

Melquíades' words closely resemble those of the ancient Greek philosopher, Thales,[175] and therefore can be seen as mirroring early scientific understanding; they may also, however, be being used as a form of incantation, suggested by the following passage where José Arcadio Buendía is described as uttering words while using the magnets: *Exploró palmo a palmo la región, inclusive el fondo del río, arrastrando los dos lingotes de hierro y recitando en voz alta el conjuro de Melquíades* (82).[176] They also have clear parallels with animistic thought. Animistic belief, regarded by modern

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[172] *the desperation of nails and screws trying to emerge* (9).
[173] *in turbulent confusion behind Melquíades' magical irons* (9).
[174] Dorfman (1991), p.25, observes the inverse nature of Macondo's attitudes to magic and science: *It is, of course, the most remarkable feature of Macondo that its inhabitants live innocently immersed in the marvellous ... What seems strange and impossible to the people of Macondo are the inventions that come in from abroad, the capacity to transform nature through the use of technology.* Martin (1995), p.111, highlights the darker side of this naïve awe: *They are blissfully unaware of historical reality and know nothing of the world which has determined their destiny.*
[175] *Thales, too, to judge from what is recorded of his news, seems to suppose that the soul is in a sense the cause of movement, since he says that a stone (magnet or lodestone) has a soul because it causes movement to iron* (Arist. *De An.*405a20-2).
[176] *He explored every inch of the region, even the riverbed, dragging the two iron ingots along and reciting Melquíades's incantation aloud* (9). Merrell (1974), p.59-70, notes that while Melquíades has a purely animistic conception of nature, José Arcadio Buendía has a mechanistic conception, viewing the magnets, for example, as a means to an end.

world-views as quite magical, has been observed by anthropologists as a first step in primitive reasoning.[177] It is essentially a way of explaining the world and describing events in the world. Melquíades may be the character who openly propounds such an explanation, but it seems that the inhabitants of Macondo do not question it as a valid description of events. The conflict arises when the reader possesses a modern world view and tries to reconcile this with the deadpan narration of this community of people who read the world in a very different manner.

A similar tone is adopted by the narrator in *Metamorphoses*, which begins with the well-worn topic of creation. He starts by blending philosophical and mythological themes in his depiction of the complicated extrication and ordering of the elements involved in that anonymous first act.[178] On this occasion, Ovid emphasises the Stoic notion of god and nature being indistinct when he presents the actions of an unknown creating deity:[179] *Hanc deus et melior litem natura diremit* (1.21).[180] The actions of this mysterious god are reminiscent of Plato's *demiurge*: *For God desired that, so far as possible, all things should be good and nothing evil, wherefore he took over all that was visible, seeing that it was not in a state of rest but in a state of discordant and disorderly motion, He brought it into order and out of disorder* (*Tim.*30a); *quae postquam evolvit caecoque exemit acervo,/ dissociata locis concordi pace ligavit* (1.24-5).[181] Ovid also recalls the scientific poet Lucretius with phrases such as *discordia semina rerum* (1.9) and the technical details of 1.67-8. The whole account, steeped in philosophical,

[177] For more on animism, see Tylor (1924); Durkheim (1967); Bird-David (1999); Stringer (1999).
[178] The theme of creation has appeared already in Ovid's immediate literary predecessors: Virg. *Ecl.* 6.31-40; Virg. *Aen.* 1.740ff; Apollod. *Arg.* 1.476ff. Ovid himself uses the motif elsewhere: *Ars* 2.476ff; *Fasti* 1.10ff; 5.11ff. For Ovid's version of creation and its use of myth and philosophy, see Robbins (1913); Otis (1970); Mckim (1985); Wheeler (1995).
[179] Robbins (1913).
[180] Otis (1970), p.378, draws a parallel with this and Aristotle's *Protrepticus*. Ovid repeats the notion of this anonymous deity some lines later: *sic ubi dispositam quisquis fuit ille deorum* (1.32).
[181] Wheeler (1995), p.95ff, sees the distinct feature of Ovid's order arising out of chaos being its presentation of an artisan moulding the world.

scientific and literary allusions, suggests Ovid is employing these methods self-consciously, using their modes to form an ironic commentary upon themselves as mediums of knowledge.

The narrator's description of the disordered mass that existed before the known world emerged pulses with animistic language. He begins by stating that nature originally had *unus ... vultus* (1.6), and then notes the absence of *Titan ...Phoebe ...Amphitrite*, all personified forms of natural elements.[182] Similarly, the associated verbs express animated qualities such as *praebebat* (1.10), *reparabat* (1.11) and *porrexerat* (1.14). He pictures the random mix of things in terms of an inward strife, where warmth and cold, dryness and damp are all battling with one another like irritable children cramped together. Hence the nameless god is presented as settling a dispute, *litem ... diremit*,[183] and is presented as giving orders to the seas to swell, the valleys to sink and the mountains to rise. His attitude towards them discloses an assumption of sentience, which though implicit, is a pervasive feature of this opening passage. Some lines later the animism becomes explicit, as the winds are pictured as discordant brothers intent upon tearing up the world in their fury. The universe of *Metamorphoses*, every substance of its structure is alive and wilful;[184] The substitution of personified deities for such fundamental constituents of the earth as the sun, moon and ocean harks back to the genesis of mythology in primitive societies where physical phenomena were often explained in purely psychological terms.[185] Ovid's use of animism is far from unique amongst Classical authors; what is unique is the way in which his account of

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[182] These are also very literary nouns: cf. for 'Titan', Hes. *Theog.*371-2; Cic. *Arat.*589; Virg. *Aen.* 4.119; for 'Phoebe', Virg.*Georg.* 1.431; for 'Amphitrite', Hom. *Od.* 3.91; Cat. *Carm.* 64.11.

[183] Lucretius uses similar terminology to describe the behaviour of his atoms: cf. *genitali concilio DRN. 1.*182-3; *discidium DRN. 1.*220.

[184] Cf. *this Cosmos has verily come into existence as a Living Creature endowed with soul and reason owing to the providence of God ... For that Living Creature embraces and contains within itself all the intelligible Living Creatures* (Plato *Tim.*30b-c).

[185] In all the well-known mythological systems, the primal deities are personifications of such entities as the sun and moon, e.g. in Egyptian myth, Ra is the sun-god, Isis the moon-god, and Osiris the earth-god; see Spence (1931), p.144-7.

creation uses various systems of thought, weaving them together and presenting the resulting version as a reasonable description of the beginning of the world.

In both texts very different stories are told about the world and its constituents and the stories are presented by the narrators as valid ways of interpreting reality, which frequently causes a clash of perspectives between the reader and the characters within the texts. This chapter develops the themes of storytelling studied in the first chapter in order to observe this clash of perspectives from a cultural angle. *Metamorphoses* and *Cien años de soledad* are texts from dramatically different and complicated cultural backgrounds, where questions of what is real and what is magical are answered in very different ways by the different peoples inhabiting first century B.C. Rome and twentieth century Colombia respectively.[186] I explore the presence of different cultures in each text by observing the stories that are told to explain events and objects, and I observe how the influences of cultures effect the creation of a magical realist tone in the various passages discussed. The scope for such a study is clearly vast, impinging on anthropological, scientific, religious and sociological spheres. However, I have approached this research from a literary perspective, narrowing my study to how different cultural groups have been reflected in various linguistic and thematic concerns within the text.

1. Blood and Bones

I begin with the sudden appearance of a little Indian girl in the isolated community of Macondo. In the third chapter of *Cien años de soledad* the eleven-year-

[186] For a fascinating study of the emergence of magic as a concept in Ancient Greece and Rome, see Dickie (2001), p.18-46, 124-41.

old Rebeca arrives with a small trunk, a rocking chair and a canvas sack containing her parents' bones, which make a distinctive 'cloc-cloc-cloc' sound. This bag of bones recurs in the narrative as a somewhat baffling item; *durante mucho tiempo estorbaron por todas partes y se les encontraba donde menos se suponía, siempre con su cloqueante cacareo de gallina clueca* (131-2).[187] It is quietly implied here that the continual noise and mysterious relocation are its own doing, as the sound is *siempre* and the movements are unpredictable. The simile of the clucking hen is likewise suggestive of a level of self-will inherent to the bag, and perhaps evokes the displeasure of her unburied parents. Several pages later, a similarly ambiguous reference to the bones is made in the phase where the builders are busy reconstructing the house under Úrsula's persistent orders, and find themselves *exasperados por el talego de huesos humanos que los perseguía por todas partes con su sordo cascabeleo* (147).[188] It could be an oblique way of alluding to Rebeca trailing the workmen as they moved from room to room, but the previous reference suggests that the bag was no longer carried about by her, but placed in a corner for safekeeping. In this instance the emphasis upon the bones as human and the use of the verb '*perseguir*' to describe them furthers the sense that these objects possess a life of their own. The final mention of the bones appears when Rebeca seeks the clairvoyant aid of Pilar Ternera's cards. The notoriously misinterpreting reader of futures then announces to the girl: *No serás feliz mientras tus padres permanezcan insepultos* (169),[189] a statement which attributes a potential motive to the restless canvas sack. It is only then that it is disclosed that Rebeca herself never knew its contents so the prediction remains a complete mystery to her. José Arcadio Buendía, knowing exactly what it means, undertakes an investigation to find the sack of bones

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[187] *for a long time it got in the way everywhere and would be found where least expected, always with its clucking of a broody hen* (41).
[188] *exasperated by the sack of bones that followed them everywhere with its dull rattle* (52).
[189] '*You will not be happy while your parents remain unburied*' (68).

and discovers that one of the workmen had grown weary of its bothersome presence and walled it up in a bedroom. The next line conclusively confirms all growing suspicions about the bag: *con la oreja pegada a las paredes, percibieron el cloc cloc profundo* (170).[190] After so gradually implicating the animism of the bones, the narrator now achieves an apparently seamless integration of this magical circumstance into the text, expressed by the pragmatic response of those who discovered the bones. Without any external show of surprise or alarm, they simply accept the situation and bury the bones; nothing more is heard of them.

It is important to note that Rebeca is of Indian descent, and that she arrives with a set of peculiar habits and speaking the Indian language fluently.[191] She therefore clearly represents the intrusion of a different culture into the Macondo community. The persistent rattling of her parents' unburied bones expresses literally the unresolved remains of Indian beliefs that still exert power within the communities the Indians find themselves immersed in and overwhelmed by.[192] Often these beliefs are used as a way to cope within the changing face of their surroundings. Guajiro Indians believe fervently in a world containing spirits of the dead who returned to plague the living in various ways and for various reasons. This is a possible explanation for the relatively benign behaviour of the bones and also the unhappiness of Rebeca herself.[193]

José Arcadio Buendía's reaction to Pilar Ternera's words is scathing: *éste la reprendió por dar crédito a pronósticos de barajas* (170).[194] However, it is he who instigates the

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[190] *with their ears against the walls, they perceived the deep cloc-cloc* (69).
[191] *los indígenas ... descubrieron que a Rebeca sólo le gustaba comer la tierra húmeda del patio y las tortas de cal que arrancaba de las paredes con las uñas* (132); *ella alternaba con mordiscos y escupitajos, y que según decían los escandalizados indígenas eran las obscenidades más gruesas que se podían concebir en su idioma* (133).
[192] Watson & Watson-Franke (1997) examine the difficulties Guajiro Indian women feel when thrust into city life. He speaks of their fears and isolation, as it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain their old ways of living.
[193] Haberly (1990) connects the episode of the bones with the bones of the Indian in Chateaubriand's *Atala*.
[194] *he scolded her for believing in the predictions of the cards* (69).

search for the bones and reacts with no great surprise on hearing them rattling deep within a wall. The inhabitants of Macondo appear to exist in a peculiar hybrid reality where they are not fully immersed in but accept the beliefs of, for example, the Indians.[195] That the characters and the narrator react so matter-of-factly produces magical realism, so it would appear that partial blending of cultures is one mechanism that invokes the magical realist effect.

The mysterious power of bones is a theme that emerges more than once within the stories of *Metamorphoses*.[196] In book one, after the great flood, Pyrrha expresses distress at the goddess's command to cast behind *ossaque... magnae... parentis* (1.383); the narrator describes her as *pavetque / laedere iactatis maternas ossibus umbras* (1.386-7).[197] This anxiety reflects primitive Roman beliefs concerning the perils of offending the dead, which are reflected in the festivals of the Parentalia and the Lemuria.[198] It transpires that the goddess was enigmatically referring to stones inside the earth; the metaphor of the stones reflects a personification of the earth itself as a 'great mother'. Ovid elaborates upon this in book two, during the event of Phaethon's fiery destruction, by pictorialising the notion with detailed artistry. He imagines the evaporating rivers hiding inside earth's body in terror, and describes how *alma tamen Tellus.../ sustulit oppressos collo tenus arida vultus/ opposuitque manum fronti* (2.272-5). He is using a highly developed personification of the earth, depicting her with specifically human

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[195] Taylor (1975), p.105, observes the potential Jewish origin for Rebeca's name, and her signs of Spanish and Indian heritage; she also suggests that the bones recall the search of the Jews for a homeland. She concludes: *The multicultural heritages synthesized in the mysterious appearance of Rebeca suggest that the problem of historical consciousness is one faced in common by diverse cultural groups.*

[196] Phaethon's mother seeks her son's bones (2.337-8); Sciron's bones are shunned by land and sea (7.444-5).

[197] The story of Deucalion and Pyrrha is traditional: *hinc lapides Pyrrhae iactos* (Virg. *Ecl.* 6.41); also Pind. *Ol.* 9.64; Apollod. *Bibl.*1.7.2. See Griffin (1992).

[198] The Parentalia (or the Feralia) were the feasts in memory of the dead which were celebrated from 18th to 21st February (Ov. *Fasti* 2.533-616); the Lemuria were three days in May in which the dead were said to revisit their homes (Ov. *Fasti* 5.419-492). For fear of the dead in Roman belief, see Frazer (1929) *passim*; Laing (1931), p.80-1.

psychological and bodily characteristics such as speech, hands and face. To think of stones as part of Mother Earth's body is less specialised, but expresses the same perspective; it indicates a fundamental attitude towards phenomena as animate and constitutive of a personal being.[199] These stones, on being thrown over the shoulders of Pyrrha and Deucalion, gradually assume the form of human beings. It has been observed that certain tribal and animistic communities attribute animate properties to a stone: not necessarily, but only if they act towards people, for example if a stone appears to move or fall on its own.[200] The stones in *Metamorphoses* certainly manifest ample proof, as they change into human beings, and perhaps such a story developed from initial animistic beliefs such as this.[201] The sacred respect for bones also displays another aspect of animistic conception. As the bones of the Earth retain something of the powerful fertility of their owner, so the bones of Pyrrha's mother and Rebeca's parents possess a certain portion of the life and will of their owners.[202]

The narrators of *Metamorphoses* and *Cien años de soledad* present the beliefs of their characters, and incorporate these beliefs into the presentation of their respective worlds. So, for example, while it seems clear to us that the 'cloc-cloc' of the bones in Rebeca's bag is in fact simply the noise of them clashing together as the girl moves around, the characters believe that this sound represents the displeasure of the unburied

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[199] Harkness (1899), p.69, produces evidence of a living Roman belief in Mother Earth, listing sepulchral inscriptions which cite this goddess. Strong (1937) and Galinksy (1966) explore the figure in Augustan art, and discuss its symbolic importance for the era. Anderson (1960), p.6-7, examines Lucretius' extensive use of the figure throughout his poem. The notion of the earth as a nurturing human force has been shown to be very strong in Colombian rural communities by Gudeman & Rivera (1989).

[200] Bird-David (1999), p.574. For stone worship in antiquity, see Plin. *NH.* 28.33; Ov. *Fasti* 2.639-84; Hor. *Ep.* 2.59-60. See Fowler (1899) for Roman festivals involving stone worship.

[201] Cf. Ferguson (1982), p.26, who notes a myth of Cybele as the Great Mother where she is sleeping in the form of a rock when Zeus tries to rape her. He devotes a chapter to a discussion of the Great mother figure in Roman religion (p.13-31).

[202] This coheres with a belief discovered in rural Colombian societies whereby human beings partake of the 'force' of the earth by consuming its produce so it becomes part of them also; see Gudeman & Rivera (1989).

parents, and the narrator presents the bones in this light to the extent that they are heard by the inhabitants to be rattling inside the walls. *Metamorphoses* offers a more magically extreme example where the stones actually transform into people; but he relates the myth of origins as a matter of fact, offering credence to this story about the early world.

It is not only the bones of one's body that are imbued with special properties within the texts; other components are also seen to behave unusually. A striking event of magical proportions occurs in *Cien años de soledad* at the episode that narrates the death of José Arcadio in chapter six. The mysterious circumstances of the incident are stated by the narrator as *tal vez el único misterio que nunca se esclarió en Macondo* (232).[203] However he does state first how the victim returned as usual, greeted Rebeca in the dining room, before shutting himself into the bedroom; whereas he then notes that Rebeca insisted she had been locked in the bathroom when he came back to the house. The sinister nature of this discrepancy of story serves to build an air of discomforting strangeness in which the more remarkable feature of the passage is about to take place: the action performed by José Arcadio's blood. After a pistol shot was heard to echo through the house, a trickle of blood emerged from under the door and made its way carefully and precisely through the streets of Macondo to the Buendía house. It is never made clear whether this shot was what killed him, for his body had no wounds, only the trickle of blood running from his ear. This expresses the altered laws of causality within the novel, and emphasises the path of the blood as a specific and deliberate mission. Once inside it headed for Úrsula, diligently avoiding any violation of house rules before arriving in the kitchen. The description of its meticulous attention, *atravesó la sala de*

[203] *perhaps the only mystery that was never cleared up in Macondo* (113).

visitas pegado a las paredes para no manchar los tapices...y pasó sin ser visto por debajo de la silla de Amaranta (233),[204] indicates psychological behaviour reflecting the knowledge and intentions of the owner of the blood.

José Arcadio, on his return from travelling the world, was perceived by the family as a frequently antisocial and destructive force within the home of the Buendías,[205] and after the sudden marriage between him and Rebeca, Úrsula reacts particularly severely: *no perdonó nunca lo que consideró como una inconcebible falta de respeto, y cuando regresaron de la iglesia prohibió a los recién casados que volviera a pisar la casa* (189).[206] This extreme and emotional reaction has its ultimate reply in what could be taken as the final act of José Arcadio; his blood returns to the house, *por debajo de la puerta cerrada* (233),[207] literally and metaphorically, and treats the place with the greatest courtesy and respect. The blood perhaps performs these actions precisely because the man himself was incapable of the tasks involved. The blood expresses and embodies the ultimate will of José Arcadio and shares a portion of his person. It answers to a complicated family vendetta and gives a sense of reconciliation particularly demonstrated by Úrsula, who retraces the thread of blood with the solicitude of Theseus, and she finally escapes her personal labyrinth of grief. With a pleasing symmetry she is led back from the house that José Arcadio was banned from to the one that she never entered, straight to the body of her son.[208] This passage expresses

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[204] *[it] crossed through the parlour, hugging the walls so as not to stain the rugs ... and passed without being seen under Amaranta's chair* (113). Hart (1983), p.45, comments that the precise description of the blood's path *serves as investing the fantastic event ...with a sheen of verisimilitude.*

[205] *Pero en el fondo [Úrsula] no podía concebir que el muchacho que se llevaron los gitanos fuera el mismo atarván que se comía medio lechón en el almuerzo y cuyas ventosidades marchitban las flores ...Amaranta no podía disimular la repugnancia que le producían en la mesa sus eructos bestiales* (187).

[206] *never forgave what she considered an inconceivable lack of respect, and when they returned from the church she forbade the newly weds to set foot in the house again* (83).

[207] *under the closed door* (113).

[208] *modern novels disassemble the powerful scientific construct through which nineteenth-century Latin America was narrated by demonstrating the relativity of its most cherished concepts, or by rendering literal the metaphors on which such knowledge is based. The power of genealogy is literalized in* One

the belief that blood, like bones, can possess the will of its owner; in this instance, it seems that the blood is actually being controlled by its dead owner, which suggests an extended psychological power as opposed to a simply animistic conception of the blood. As with the episode with the bones, the narrator fully endorses this alternative way of viewing the constituents of the world.

2. Mind and Body

The concept of extended psychological powers is exhibited frequently by many of the transformations in *Metamorphoses*. After the tragic death of Phaethon in book two, his sisters immerse themselves entirely in their mourning for his loss.[209] Ovid emphasises the unceasing and unrestrained nature of their grief, commenting that *nocte dieque vocant adsternunturque sepulcro. / luna quater iunctis implerat cornibus orbem; / illae more suo, (nam morem fecerat usus)/ plangorem dederant* (2.343-5). He has drawn careful attention to the persistence of their behaviour over an impressive duration of four months, and this extended and intense response is the clue to consequent remarkable incidents. The futility of their actions is likewise referenced, with their tears described as *inania...munera* and their laments *non auditurum* (2.340-2). The first sign of something amiss is noticed by the eldest sister Phaethusa, who, while attempting to throw herself onto the floor, discovers that *deriguisse pedes*. Then, in a rapid succession, the other sisters notice strange physical hindrances: Lampetie is restrained by roots, and a third sister, unnamed, tries to tear her hair and plucks away leaves instead. This marks the first explicit indication that the bewailing sisters are turning into

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Hundred Years of Solitude *by, among other devices, the stream of blood that flows from José Arcadio's wound to Úrsula*, Echevarría (1995), p.85.

[209] The story of the grieving relatives of Phaethon is common in antiquity; cf. Hom. *Od.*17.208; Pliny *NH.* 37.31; Eur. *Hipp.* 738; Virg. *Ecl.* 6.62.

trees, and now the language hides nothing in ambiguity; suddenly the sisters have a new and inescapable torment, which at last diverts their attentions. Ovid depicts the gradual encasement of the sisters by bark, suggesting that they are covered over rather than transformed at first, but when their mother tries to pull away the branches they bleed and cry out in pain.[210] As the bark seals over the final words of the sisters, the narrator finalises the scene with a reference to the one unchanged and immortalised feature of the sisters: *inde fluunt lacrimae*. The sisters' metamorphoses into trees could be said to be the result of their persistent grieving, which as Ovid points out, has become an unhealthily hardened habit. A psychological willingness to mourn has extended its power over their external behaviour and caused their physical forms to adopt a shape as rigid as their mental obsessions. It is an exaggerated display of the common belief that the mind has a level of control over the physical body. It is apparent, however, that the sisters are not consciously causing this event: their own bewilderment and disturbance is manifest. In the same way, there is no obvious indication that José Arcadio intended his blood to make the journey back to his original home. There is a mysterious vagueness concerning who is in control. The metamorphoses enable the girls to do what they otherwise could not, which is to remain grieving forever. In their human forms, they would have eventually weakened and tired, and ultimately died. By becoming trees they can remain rooted to the spot, not even needing to move for nourishment, beside the tomb of their brother. This is similar to the behaviour of José Arcadio's blood passing underneath the closed door of his parental home. The narrator relates this account of the sisters' metamorphosis as if it is a likely explanation for the trees which weep amber into rivers. The story is an ancient one, and therefore lies far beyond the

[210] Cf. Polydorus at Virg. *Aen.* 3.27-9; Dryope at *Met.* 9.344-5.

sphere of modern proof criteria, but Ovid takes it at face value, assuming for the purposes of his poem that it really did happen.

There appears a far more gradual and implicit transformation some chapters into *Cien años de soledad* when José Arcadio Buendía first appears to go mad. After he starts smashing up the house, several sturdy village men manage to drag him to a chestnut tree in the courtyard and tie him down, and there he stays until he dies. The narrator comments: *Cuando llegaron Úrsula y Amaranta todavía estaba atado de pies y manos al tronco del castaño, empapado de lluvia y en un estado de inocencia total. Le hablaron, y él las miró sin reconocerlas y les dijo algo incomprensible. Úrsula le soltó las muñecas y los tobillos, ulcerados por la presión de las sogas, y lo dejó amarrado solamente por la cintura. Más tarde le construyeron un cobertizo de palma para protegerlo del sol y la lluvia* (173).[211] Nothing here is indicated beyond the man's obviously bewildered state. However, soon there are signs that he is actually becoming a part of his environment; it is a gradual occurrence but an irreversible one. We are informed of his state at the time of Remedios and Aureliano's wedding: *Amarrado al tronco del castaño, encogido en un banquito de madera bajo el cobertizo de palmas, el enorme anciano descolorido por el sol y la lluvia hizo una vaga sonrisa de gratitud y se comió el pastel con los dedos masticando un salmo ininteligible* (175).[212] That description *descolorido* is the initial marker of something strange occurring. Inanimate objects are described in this way, but seldom human beings. It is soon discovered by

[211] *When Úrsula and Amaranta returned he was still tied to the trunk of the chestnut tree by his hands and feet, soaked with rain and in a state of total innocence. They spoke to him and he looked at them without recognising them, saying things they did not understand. Úrsula untied his wrists and ankles, lacerated by the pressure of the rope, and left him tied only by the waist. Later on they built him a shelter of palm branches to protect him from the sun and the rain* (71).

[212] *Tied to the trunk of the chestnut tree, huddled on a wooden stool underneath the palm shelter, the enormous old man, discoloured by the sun and rain, made a vague smile of gratitude and ate the piece of cake with his fingers, muttering an unintelligible psalm* (73).

Úrsula that tying him to the tree is an unnecessary procedure - *porque un dominio superior a cualquier atadura visible lo mantenía amarrado al tronco del castaño* (205).[213] José Arcadio Buendía has become more inanimate: he is *indiferente* and *expuesto*, words of passivity, and held by a mysterious and invisible force. When an attempt was made to move him back to his bedroom, some startling changes emerge: *No sólo era tan pesado como siempre, sino que en su prolongada estancia bajo el castaño había desarrollado la facultad de aumentar de peso voluntariamente, hasta el punto de que siete hombres no pudieron con él y tuvieron que llevarlo a rastras a la cama. Un tufo de hongos tiernos, de flor de palo de antigua y reconcentrada intemperie impregnó el aire del domitorio cuando empezó a respirarlo el viejo colosal macerado por el sol y la lluvia* (240).[214] José Arcadio Buendía has taken on the characteristics of the tree, with its weightiness, fungal growths and outdoor smell. He is now *colosal*, and breathes *un tufo de hongos tiernos*. These details are distinctly tree-like. The bond between him and the tree is so strong that he is compelled to return: *Al día siguiente no amaneció en la cama...A pesar de su fuerza intacta, José Arcadio Buendía no estaba en condiciones de luchar. Todo le daba lo mismo. Si volvió al castaño no fue por su voluntad sino por una costumbre del cuerpo* (240-1).[215] This *costumbre del cuerpo* recalls the habitude of the Heliades (2.345).[216] José Arcadio Buendía's custom has caused him to become more tree-like than human: a form of metamorphosis has taken place.

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[213] *for a dominion superior to any visible bond kept him tied to the trunk of the chestnut tree* (94).
[214] *Not only was he as heavy as ever, but during his prolonged stay under the chestnut tree he had developed the faculty of being able to increase his weight at will, to such a degree that seven men were unable to lift him and they had to drag him to the bed. A smell of tender mushrooms, of wood-flower fungus, of old and concentrated outdoors impregnated the air of the bedroom as it was breathed by the colossal old man weather-beaten by the sun and the rain* (119).
[215] *The next morning he was not in his bed ... In spite of his undiminished strength, José Arcadio Buendía was in no condition to resist. It was all the same to him. If he went back to the chestnut tree it was not because he wanted to but because of a habit of his body* (119).
[216] Habitude affecting or indeed initiating metamorphosis is a common theme of Ovid's poem: cf. Lycaon's bloodlust *solitaeque cupidine caedis* (1.234); the customary shamelessness of the Propoetides (10.241-2); the continuing love of Alcyone and Ceyx (11.743-4).

The stories of José Arcadio Buendía and the sisters of Phaethon can be seen as expressing the yearning of a civilisation losing its roots as it comes into contact with a more 'advanced' world. The pastoral tradition, of which Virgil's *Eclogues* and Theocritus' *Idylls* are the most famous examples, expresses this kind of longing for nature in the midst of increasing civilisation.[217] It is interesting to note that in both these poets an organic connection between the poet-shepherds and their environments was prevalent.[218] José Arcadio Buendía was the archetypal man of science until his madness took hold of him,[219] and therefore it is particularly fitting that he is the one who makes this full reversion to nature. Whether or not he actually did become tree-like is impossible to say, but what matters here is that the community in which he lived saw him in these terms, and therefore the narrator reflects the perspective of his characters once again.[220]

Colonel Aureliano Buendía is an example of a character whose psychological behaviour has quite momentous effects on the world of the text. As a child, he is accompanied by markedly unusual incidents. It is his memory of a remote afternoon which instigates the entire novel: *Muchos años después, frente al pelotón de fusilamiento, el coronel Aureliano Buendía había de recordar aquella tarde remota en que su padre lo llevó a conocer el hielo* (81).[221] We are informed in the first chapter of the book that Aureliano was the first human being to be born in Macondo, and that he was silent and withdrawn. Also that he had wept in the womb and been born with eyes

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[217] For inter-relatedness of the human and natural world in pastoral poetry, see Pavlovskis (1971) and Alpers (1990).
[218] Tityrus teaches the wood to sing the name of his lover at Virg. *Ecl.* 1.4-5; when Daphnis dies the countryside wilts at Virg. *Ecl.* 5.6-41; the animals bewail the death of Daphnis at Theoc. *Id.* 1.71-5.
[219] For José Arcadio Buendía's love-affair with scientific advancements, see Merrell (1974).
[220] An interesting anthropological study exploring the role of trees in specific cultures the different ways in which cultures imbue their immediate environment with meaning can be found in Seeland (1997).
[221] '*Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice* (9).

open (99).[222] These details are unusual and they work towards building a full and coherent picture of this bewildering individual, but they give no explicit mark of the Colonel's mysterious powers. The first clear sign that Aureliano possesses some definite supernatural faculty comes with the incident of the boiling soup. He announces to Úrsula that the pot containing the soup is about to spill, a declaration that contradicts the fact that the item is placed firmly in the centre of the table. Nonetheless, just as soon as he has spoken, a startling phenomenon occurs: *inició un movimiento irrevocable hacia el borde, como impulsada por un dinamismo interior, y se despedazó en el suelo* (99).[223] The circumstances suggest an intrinsic animism of the pot rather than an exertion of mental influence on behalf of the boy. He is described as being perplexed when he makes his warning to his mother, and the language of self-motivated movement and will is clear in descriptions such as *un dinamismo interior* and *se despedazó*. As with José Arcadio's blood and the sisters' transformations there is a level of ambiguity concerning what is causing the bizarre behaviour of the physical material. A number of mysterious incidents happen towards the end of the second chapter that appear to support a purely animistic approach; the narrator describes how an empty flask becomes too heavy to move, and Amaranta's basket does a complete turn about the room (122-3). The basket is presented as moving *con un impulso proprio* which quite emphatically draws attention to animated properties within the object itself. Aureliano is present, observing with the same distress with which he watched the previous spectacle, but there is no clear link between these events and his attendance.[224]

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[222] Later in the novel it is noted that weeping in the womb is related to a number of superstitions, ranging from announcements of ventriloquism to a faculty for prophecy, but Úrsula concludes that actually it is an unmistakable sign of an incapacity for love (361).

[223] *it began an unmistakable movement towards the edge, as if impelled by an inner dynamism, and broke to pieces on the floor* (20).

[224] José Arcadio Buendía responds with the same pragmatic approach to the supernatural that he later displays when dealing with the sack of bones: he simply ties the basket to a table leg to prevent it wandering off.

As with so many instances in the novel, the narrator relates the events giving full credence to the superstitions of his characters. That the pot was far closer to the edge of the table than stated, or was shaking for some other reason like an unbalanced surface perhaps, is not even put forward as a potential explanation. The characters' very different ways of seeing events is presented to us as fact.

During the years of war in which he became a mighty and legendary figure, the influence of his will upon the world is blatant and powerful. He notices it first when a young captain who is extremely timid suddenly voices a particularly cold, calculating and bold proposition that anticipated his own thoughts by a few scanty seconds. Colonel Aureliano Buendía does not give the orders to carry out the proposition, but two weeks later it is carried out all the same and he gains the main command. It is at this point that his power over things runs riot, beyond his conscious control: *Sus órdenes se cumplían antes de ser impartidas, aun antes de que él las concibiera, y siempre llegaban mucho más lejos de donde él se hubiera atrevido a hacerlas llegar* (270).[225] This information reinterprets the strange childhood events as early manifestations of the immense power he is to yield over not just physical but mental phenomena. However, it could also be an example of childish animistic thought[226].

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[225] *His orders were being carried out even before they were given, even before he thought of them, and they always went much beyond what he would have dared have them do* (140). Cf. Lucian's *Philopseudes* 33-6 which tells the well-known story of the Sorcerer's Apprentice.

[226] Jean Piaget (1960) has diagnosed animism as an early stage in child development. Using various experiments conducted on children, he concluded that a young child does not distinguish himself from the external world properly, leading directly to animistic frameworks of processing. Jahoda (1970), p.103, summarises Piaget's theory: *It follows that the child is totally egocentric ... he is quite incapable of even conceiving of a perspective differing from his own. The child's thoughts, feelings and wishes are mixed up with what we would call the external reality to which they relate. Thus psychological processes are objectified and things endowed with psychological attributes. Dreams seem to come from the outside, words are indissolubly linked with the objects to which they refer, and speaking is felt to be a way of acting upon things. Conversely, the physical world is not sharply divided off as material and inanimate, but on the contrary regarded as though it were possessed of life, consciousness and will.* Tanner (1976), p.71, seems to touch upon a similar notion when writing on Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March*. He poses the question: *If the 'me' feeling expands unchecked it can lead to a state of solipsism which may prove to be a prison of mirrors in which the self gets drowned in its own reflections.*

In the midst of the carnage and glory of his wartime, he is suddenly seized by a crippling coldness that never leaves him until his death. He calls out in alarm for a blanket, and from that point in the novel he is never without the blanket that he huddles within to escape from the icy chill of his bones. Around that time the Colonel is depicted increasingly as being encased deep inside his solitude. It is described as bewildering and labyrinthine, and seeking solace in his warm memories of Macondo he discovers he is unable to escape the clutches of his solitude: *rasguñó durante muchas horas, tratando de romperla, la dura cáscara de su soledad* (273).[227] The emphasis on the material nature of his emotional condition is manifest: *rasguñar* and *romper* are forceful physical verbs expressing the stubborn substance of his solitude.[228] His psychological powers have produced a physical effect in the world, in much the way as the Heliades changed their bodies into trees. Although in both cases it is unclear whether the victims are consciously or even subconsciously causing these changes, the narrators' persistence on their obsessive habits strongly suggests this possibility. Years later on the rainy October day of his death, the Colonel is still suffering the cold in his bones and clinging to his blanket. He falls asleep and dreams of being the first human being ever to enter a building with white walls and feels a heavy and upsetting burden in this act. This dream perhaps provides the answer to the mystery of his deep solitude, the clue to which is provided in the first chapter of the book, where he is stated to be *el primer ser humano que nació en Macondo* (99).[229] He finally succumbs to nostalgia and he relives the afternoon of his childhood when he discovered ice. There appears to be a close and compulsive bond within the text between the ice memory and the irredeemable solitude into which the Colonel slips; it works as a mysterious

[227] *scratched for many hours, trying to break the hard shell of his solitude* (142).
[228] The connection between Colonel Aureliano Buendía and the ice motif is an especially complex one, and one which I return to on various occasions in this thesis.
[229] *the first human being to be born in Macondo* (20).

complement to the physical manifestation of his mental condition. The narrator never attempts to give any account for the icy chill which taunts Aureliano so perniciously, but it seems likely that we are meant to take it as the material form of his emotional state.

He is not the only character whose mental habits create physical effects; Amaranta suffers a fever from her fierce lonely feelings of love which she gradually emerges from only because she convinces herself that she will never allow Rebeca to marry the object of her passions.[230] Illness from love, particularly youthful love, is a commonplace. However, García Márquez embeds the event within a world that possesses already altered dynamics of mind and body, and exaggerates the traditional notions to remarkable extremes. When José Arcadio Buendía declares *El amor es una peste* (162) after Amaranta's love-sickness and Aureliano's decision to marry the child Remedios, in uttering what might elsewhere be simply a clichéd metaphor, he draws attention to the physical effects of love.[231] The word *peste* has already been used in the novel with reference to the insomnia plague, which itself is a strange dissolution of boundaries between the mental and physical; it is later used of the reason that birds come crashing down through people's windows much later in the text (463). Also, it is used to describe the flurry of newcomers and temporary wealth brought by the banana company (340). It is used indiscriminately, then, to refer to both traditionally physical afflictions as well as mental traumas. The narrator supports the characters' ascription of surprisingly strong effects of the mental upon the physical. When Pietro Crespi comes underneath her spell, Amaranta is portrayed as *urdiendo en torno al novio una telaraña invisible, que él tenía que apartar materialmente con sus dedos pálidos y sin anillos*

[230] For a discussion of Amaranta's peculiarly obstinate character, see Penuel (1983).
[231] A similar transgression of boundaries between metaphor and reality occurs in García Márquez's *Love in the Time of Cholera*, where the symptoms of love and cholera are apparently akin, and where there is a constant play on the physical effects and makeup of love.

(205).[232] She is later pictured as weaving an actual material, which she creates and dismantles again as an expression of her pact with solitude.[233] The tale of Penelope[234] weaving and dismantling to deceive the suitors as she waits for her husband is inevitably recalled by Amaranta's behaviour, and the contrast between the two characters imbues the latter with a bitter solitude. For Amaranta there is no returning husband, and her two suitors she rejects cruelly in exchange for loneliness and spinsterhood. The narrator extends the image of the weaving to a physical expression of her inner state, so it comes to represent in physical reality and concrete habit her deep isolation much as the Colonel's icy chill is a manifestation of his own solitude. Amaranta's mental state is translated to the physical sphere in a particularly remarkable manner: *sin fijarse siquiera ...en la impavidez de Amaranta, cuya melancolía hacía un ruido de marmita perfectamente perceptible al atardecer* (308).[235] The idea of her sadness bubbling and gurgling away on the porch is a charming notion, but more importantly it announces the definite influence of emotion within the physical world. Her melancholy can produce sounds in external reality to express itself, and it revisits the enigma that has been shown to be common to the various animistic and psychological powers in this novel and *Metamorphoses*: the puzzle of who or what is causing the impact upon material reality.

Finally, the conflation of two distinct realms of sense in the case of Amaranta's melancholy is also an example of the embodiment of a metaphor; it might seem perfectly natural to describe someone's mood as having a colour or fragrance, but here

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[232] *weaving an invisible web about her fiancé, which he had to push aside materially with his pale and ringless fingers* (94).

[233] Colonel Aureliano Buendía performs a similarly self-perpetuating task when he makes his little gold fish, only to melt them all down and start again. In his case also, it is seen as a pact with solitude. These tasks recall the perpetual tasks allotted to sinners in the underworld (see Virg. *Aen.* 6.595-607; Ov. *Met.* 10.40-5), suggesting these characters are in a hell of their own making.

[234] Hom. *Od.* 2.93. The idea of a lady weaving and furtively dismantling a fabric is said to be a common folk-tale motif: Carpenter (1956), p.165-6.

[235] *not even noticing ... the persistence of Amaranta, whose melancholy made the noise of a boiling pot perfectly perceptible at dusk* (166).

the language has crossed over the bridge and into reality.[236] This peculiarity of language within the novel recalls Brown's comment that the many transformations in Ovid's poem *could be described as metaphors made flesh.*[237] Müller viewed myth in primitive societies as a result of a form of linguistic disease, whereby myth turned concepts into stories and entities.[238] This is certainly an apt description for the many stories told and the many events described in both texts; the making concrete of mental states is a crucial example of this. It is a way of describing the world that is very different from modern perspectives, as it attributes very different powers to psychology than those we might feel comfortable with. Neither Ovid nor García Márquez has been seen to deride or belittle the beliefs of their characters, instead insisting on our adherence to the worlds they have created.

It has been shown that the worlds of both texts are perceived by the characters, and accepted by the narrators, to be governed by psychological forces. The worlds of *Cien años de soledad* and *Metamorphoses* are conceived as structured upon psychology. It was shown how Ovid observes the continuing weeping of the Heliades in their new forms; as they are now trees the tears are represented as drops of amber. The narrator notes how these amber tears are swept away to become jewellery for brides. The addendum mentioning the amber tears to be appreciated elsewhere is a significant feature in the poem, providing one of many aetiological explanations of a known phenomenon in the universe beyond the text. Another example appears in book thirteen

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[236]The metaphor-made-flesh that has been observed in the two works under observation is an important feature in magical realist literature; in most of the major magical realist texts, there are examples of the technique. In Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, Saleem, the narrator, can pick out *the old aroma of failure* (202); in Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, Milkman tries to walk down a street and realizes that everyone and everything is going in the opposite direction: a material manifestation of his mental awareness that his life is going the wrong way (78).

[237] Brown (1999), p.2.

[238] For more on Müller's life-long research into these areas, see Stone (2002).

where Aurora is described as being wrapped up in her grieving for her son Memnon: *luctibus est Aurora suis intenta piasque / nunc quoque dat lacrimas et toto rorat in orbe* (13.621-2). The phrase *nunc quoque* is a common one in *Metamorphoses*, and it presents an explanation of a known feature of the world, in this instance dew, construed not in terms of physical laws, but rather on people's psychological lives.[239] In book ten Orpheus sings of Pygmalion's love for his self-sculpted statue, and those amber drops appear again as adornments brought by the love-sick artist: *munera fert .../ liliaque pictasque pilas et ab arbore lapsas / Heliadum lacrimas* (10.260-4). Earlier in the same book, as Orpheus is singing his beautifully mournful songs, Ovid creates a catalogue of the trees which are drawn to listen, mentioning among their number, *non Chaonis abfuit arbor, / non nemus Heliadum* (10.90-1). With these kinds of allusions, the narrator presents his poem as a web of interconnected stories explaining the world.

There are similar examples to be found in García Márquez's text. On finding José Arcadio's body, Úrsula discovers an overpowering smell of gunpowder, which no amount of scrubbing and soaking will remove from his skin. The narrator uses this as a linking mechanism, as Ovid does with the amber teardrops, commenting: *el cementerio siguió oliendo a pólvora hasta muchos años después, cuando los ingenieros de la compañía bananera recubrieron la sepultura con una coraza de hormigón* (234).[240] The persistent phrase *muchos años después* appears throughout the novel usually at moments where a character is recalling a personal memory, such as Colonel Aureliano Buendía remembering his experiences of ice (81). Ice itself appears as a pervasive image throughout the text, sometimes as part of a memory as has been shown, and sometimes to describe the self-imposed solitude of a character; so Amaranta is

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[239] Eco (1995), p.130, quotes various psychologists who suggest that our worlds are in fact structured on narrativity: *history tells stories* Arthur Danto; *history as a literary artifact*, Hayden White; *narrativity is ... the organizing principle of* all *discourse*, A.J. Greimas.

[240] *the cemetery still smelled of powder for many years after, until the engineers from the banana company covered the grave over with a shell of concrete* (114).

described as having ice in her heart (328), and the doomed Pietro Crespi, moments before Amaranta cruelly sends him to his suicide, is described proleptically as having icy hands (207). Martin sees these recurring and obsessive features as indicating the treacherous narrowness of the minds of the inhabitants, when he writes: *They are blissfully unaware of historical reality and know nothing of the world which has determined their destiny. Their only thoughts or memories are about things which relate to the structure of the novel; which is therefore the very fabric of their perceived social history. This explains the exoticism, for them, of phenomena which to us are quite normal.*[241] What he does not draw attention to, however, is the co-operation of the narrator in all of this. The narrator, as we have seen, condones the behaviour and perceptions of these characters at every step of the way. At one notable point in the novel, Remedios la bella, a very beautiful young member of the Buendía family, is described by the narrator as literally ascending to heaven while hanging out sheets; he even describes Fernanda's irritation that Remedios had taken the sheets up with her! However, he notes afterwards: *Los forasteros, por supuesto, pensaron que Remedios, la bella, había sucumbido por fin a su irrevocable destino de abeja reina, y que su familia trataba de salvar la honra con la patraña de la levitación* (348).[242]

What emerges, then, from the texts is both a sense of the increased importance of psychological activity, as we find people's thoughts and emotions affecting the world in ways not normally posited in our interpretations of reality; and also a bias on behalf of the narrator towards his characters' ways of telling stories about the world.

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[241] Martin (1995), p.111.

[242] *The outsiders, of course, thought that Remedios la bella had finally succumbed to her irrevocable fate of a queen bee, and that her family was trying to save her honour with that tale of levitation* (195).

3. God and Nature

While personal psychology is granted an unusually extended sphere of influence within both texts, there are, however, other dominating forces that govern events and these forces often appear to be the ultimate arbiters of events within the two texts. Ovid's poem includes many different explanations of why an individual transmutes into some other physical form.[243] Some appear to exercise a change upon themselves in response to some emotional event;[244] some request aid from a god or goddess, and gain their transformation in that way;[245] some are transformed by divine punishment[246] or magic herbs, charms or pools of water.[247] As such, metamorphosis has both a magical and supernatural aspect to its process, complicating distinctions between magic and religion within the poem.[248]

An interesting instance of metamorphosis for demonstrating this blurring of boundaries is Dryope in book nine. Iole is recounting the tale of her sister, turned to a lotus tree after plucking some flowers for her little boy. Unfortunately it transpired that the water-lotus shrub from which she made her culling was in fact the nymph Lotis who had been transformed after fleeing Priapus' lust. In a description which recalls the blood spurting from the branches in book two as the Heliades' mother tries to free her daughters, Iole explains: *vidi guttas e flore cruentas/ decidere et tremulo ramos horrore moveri* (9.344-6). The metamorphosis, although implicitly caused by a specific divinity (9.331-2), is depicted in terms of a mysterious transforming power acting autonomously: *haeserunt radice pedes. ... /... subcrescit ab imo,/ totaque paulatim*

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[243] For metamorphoses in the poem, see Galinsky (1975), p.43-70; Feldherr (2002).
[244] Cf. Echo (3.393-404); Cyane (5.427-443); Niobe (6.301-12); Byblis (9.655-65); Canens (14.420-32).
[245] Cf. Daphne (1.548-52); Arethusa (5.618-34); Arachne (6.136-45); Iphis (773-91).
[246] Cf. Actaeon (3.185-97); Minyades (4.405-15); Cerastae (10.230-37).
[247] Cf. Hermaphroditus (4.285ff); Glaucus (13.942-57), Scylla (14.42-67), Picus (14.387-96)
[248] For a discussion of magic, religion and how the two terms are connected and separated, see Dickie (2001).

lentus premit inguina cortex (9.351-3). Similarly, the episode of Lycaon possesses ambiguity concerning the agent of transformation. On one hand, Jupiter declares himself to have avenged Lycaon (1.209-10), and goes on to tell the tale of his revenge which includes a graphic description of the metamorphosis; on the other hand, the actual event seems to be a natural progression resulting from the man's nature: *territus ipse fugit nactusque silentia ruris / exululat frustraque loqui conatur; ab ipso / colligit os rabiem solitaeque cupidine caedis / utitur in pecudes et nunc quoque sanguine gaudet* (1.232-5).[249] This causal ambiguity at the heart of metamorphosis evokes the mysterious and nameless transforming deity in the creation episode. The ambivalence pervades and confounds the metamorphoses that occur with or without divine or human will. The elusive power behind creation is not directly implicated, but its identity with nature implies its involvement.[250]

The Dryope story is remarkable also for expressing an inverse account of metamorphosis, explaining the final resulting object rather than following the story to the event. This explains some of the animism of *Metamorphoses*: the objects in the world are alive because they are the changed forms of people, and so any plant or tree or stone or fish could be a human in another shape.[251] This is not to say that these events are the sole explanation for animism in Ovid's poem; it has been shown how the world was seething with animated objects in book one, and there are examples throughout of

[249] Cf. Feldherr (2002), p.169-72, who sees the transformation of Lycaon as the result of the man's violation of cosmic hierarchies.

[250] Some scholars have dwelt upon the fairy tale-esque redemptive function of metamorphosis in Ovid's text, and have failed to perceive the subtle pervasion of dissolution and chaos that in fact underpins the text. e.g. Jackson (1998), p.81, writes: *Fairy tales, allegories, medieval romance situate metamorphoses within a frame which gives it a teleological function. It serves either as a vehicle of meaning within the narrative, as concept, or metaphor, or symbol of redemption. Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' records Daphne's famous transformation from woman to tree, but the change is effected through divine intercession, fulfilling Daphne's desire to be free from her female body ... There are no delightful transformations of this kind from post-Romantic fantasy.* I do not view Daphne's transformation in such benign terms. The help she receives is hardly what she has in mind, and the metamorphosis itself has the same strangely autonomous feel as that of Dryope's in book nine.

[251] This is in fact an argument Ovid has his Pythagoras use to persuade others to become vegetarian (15.173-5), although in that instance the principle of change is metempsychosis rather than metamorphosis.

spontaneously animistic phenomena. The blood of the Gorgon, falling to the desert in malevolent droplets, becomes many different kinds of snakes (5.622ff), and the tongue of poor Philomela, brutally severed by Tereus, *palpitat et moriens dominae vestigia quaerit* (6.560).[252] These events possess the ambiguities discussed in the episode of José Arcadio's wilful blood where the line drawn between animism and psychological influences is indistinct; they stand apart from the more complicated logic of the metamorphosis stories which frequently attempt to account for an animistic conception. They in fact suggest an intrinsically animating force of nature.

Cien años de soledad has no pantheon of divinities but it does possess an equivalent. The closest that *Metamorphoses* ever comes to extensive character development is with its pantheon: these recur in the stories with enough frequency for us to glean an idea of their temperaments and foibles from their actions. Juno is frequently jealous, bitter and vindictive;[253] Jupiter is often foolish but sentimental.[254] In this respect, the gods correspond to the key characters that drive García Márquez's novel. The Buendía family are surrounded by supernatural phenomena and Colonel Aureliano Buendía actually becomes a legendary figure enshrouded in myth and mystery.[255] Echevarría views the Buendías as representing a theogony of the world of Macondo;[256] I am not suggesting that the family members are deities but that they form

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[252] Galinsky (1989) sees examples of baroque and mannered style such as these as possible evidence of Ovid's being a Silver Age poet.

[253] Juno's hatred of Ino causes her to have the woman driven to madness (4.420-31); jealous that Semele is pregnant by Jove, she wickedly encourages her to ask Jove to reveal his true self, knowing that it would kill the girl (3.260-72); she turns Callisto, who was raped by her husband and gave birth to his son, into a bear in an utterly undeserved revenge (2.471-88).

[254] Jove attempts to cover up his adultery by transforming Io into a cow. Eventually he has to plead with Juno to turn the unhappy girl back into human form (1.734-46); he foolishly but lovingly agrees to grant Semele anything she wishes from him. Sadly, as has been shown, he falls straight into his vicious wife's trap by these magnanimous words (3.295-309).

[255] *the aura of legend that glowed about his presence and of which even Ursula was aware, changed him into a stranger in the end* (175).

[256] Echevarría (1995), p.83.

a parallel to the gods in *Metamorphoses*, which does less to deify the Buendías and more to humanise the Classical pantheon. Much of what is recorded in the episodes of Ovid's poem depicts the loves, exploits and absurdities of the various divine characters; likewise much of *Cien años de soledad* is occupied with the loves and crimes and dramas of the Buendías. A feature that appears to set these two texts apart on another level in fact draws them together.

For the characters of *Cien años de soledad* every aspect of the world is perceived as a living, psychological entity that is liable to play tricks on its inhabitants or even make blunders that disrupt the course of things quite fundamentally. Just as Colonel Aureliano Buendía, being the first person born in Macondo, inherits and epitomises its ravenous solitude, so José Arcadio Buendía, who founds the community, expresses the mysteriously organic and fickle nature of the place through his many and fruitless attempts at scientific discovery and invention.[257] When this fixated character goes to look for the sea, he cannot find it; when he sets out for other purposes, he stumbles upon it. Many years later, he begins a descent into madness that is sign-posted by his sudden conviction that every day he wakes up in is in fact the same day.[258] It is later observed by other characters that in fact José Arcadio Buendía was correct in his observation that *tambien el tiempo sufría tropiezos y accidentes, y podía por tanto astillarse y dejar en un cuarto una fracción eternizada* (470).[259] Similarly, various other characters within the novel discover for themselves that time is behaving strangely; Úrsula realises that *el tiempo no pasaba, como ella lo acababa de admitir, sino que daba vueltas en redondo* (454).[260] Pilar Ternera's interpretation is perhaps more accurate and certainly more

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[257] Merrell (1974).
[258] Davis (2003) discusses the social meaning behind the apparent breakdown in time that is perceived by José Arcadio Buendía in his madness.
[259] *time also stumbled and had accidents and could therefore splinter and leave an eternalized fragment in a room* (283).
[260] *time was not passing, as she had just admitted, but that it was turning in a circle* (272).

imminently disturbing: *experiencia le había enseñado que la historia de la familia era un engranaje de repeticiones irreparables, una rueda giratoria que hubiera seguido dando vueltas hasta la eternidad, de no haber sido por el desgaste progresivo e irremediable del eje* (523).[261] Time, for us a linear and predictable concept, for García Márquez's characters is a protean thing which behaves like other beings in the world, in that it sometimes makes mistakes, sometimes goes in circles, and never conforms to the expectations the characters initially have of it.

Conclusion

Both texts adopt a sympathetic mode of observation when depicting the beliefs and behaviours of its characters. The self-conscious adopting of these, as has been demonstrated, complicates our responses to the texts.[262] The worlds of both texts are also at the mercy of forces beyond our usual conception of psychology and its mechanisms. *Metamorphoses* contains a highly refined animism where an entire pantheon has evolved to represent animated beings, as well as natural phenomena possessing certain autonomous powers, which seem to be related to the psychology of various individuals within the tales. *Cien años de soledad* exudes a more opaque animism, reflected in its characters' conceptions of time as a quite human entity,

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[261] *experience had taught her that the history of the family was a machine with unavoidable repetitions, a turning wheel that would have gone on spilling into eternity were it not for the progressive and irremediable wearing of the axle* (320). Much ink has been spilt on analysing the conception of time within the novel from social, political and mythological perspectives; the observations of Pilar Tenera and Úrsula quoted above have been of particular fascination. See especially Carrillo (1971); Housková (1973); Paoli (1984).

[262] Echevarría (1995), p.83, presents the notion that García Márquez is partially parodying anthropological approaches to Latin America throughout his *Cien años de soledad*; he does not, however, explore the idea in depth in his essay, as his interests lie primarily in arguing for the novel as archive of history. Fränkel (1956), p.87, likewise touches upon this idea, when he describes the narrator of *Metamorphoses* thus: *the poet pretends to accept the mythological view, only now and then interposing a slight indication of doubt ...For the sake of his narrative, he acknowledges miracles and indulges abundantly in the human interpretation of nature.*

making mistakes and turning in circles, and its conception of the rain as sentient and psychologically effective. It is possible that the animism within the latter is simply a less developed version of the kind manifested in *Metamorphoses*. Spence, for example, discusses the anthropological view that traces the evolution of divine beings from simple animated objects such as stones and stars, explaining the rules that govern the deification of items, which begin life as little more than fetishist objects.[263] Ovid was writing with a ready-made archive of myths in mind, largely played out by deities well developed in the ancient myth and literature. The magical realism emerges from his attitude toward the stories and his depiction of the internal characters' attitudes as accepting of the magical. García Márquez's novel uses some myth in its structure, but it is ultimately telling an original story with previously unknown characters. It has a primitive supernatural conception of the world as animate, but it lacks the anthropomorphic deities of Ovid's poem. This reflects the belief codes of many Indian communities that retain these so-called primitive conceptions of the world, and his matter-of-fact depiction, as with Ovid's poem, produces the uneasiness of a magical realist text. As recently as September 1999, a news report detailed the threats of the tribe of U'wa Indians near Bogotá against the Colombian government who had agreed to oil drilling near the Indian land: *According to the U'wa's long-established spiritual beliefs, drilling for oil on its tribal lands that span the cloud forest and plains of northeast Colombia, is tantamount to sucking the lifeblood out of Mother Earth.*[264] It is clear, then, that the cultural codes he presents are fully alive in modern Colombia alongside modern Western conceptions.

[263] Spence (1931), p.102-15.
[264] http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/americas/9909/22/colombia.oil.01/

This is an aspect of magical realism that has been foregrounded by many Latin Americans. Alejo Carpentier most famously spoke of the innate magic of the Americas,[265] believing that magical realism had emerged directly from the landscape and its histories. The Guatemalan writer Miguel Asturias explains the term 'magical realism' thus: 'I will try to tell you, as simply as possible, what 'magical realism' means to me. You see, an Indian or a mestizo in a small village might describe how he saw an enormous stone turn into a person or a giant, or a cloud turn into a stone. This is not a tangible reality but one that involves an understanding of supernatural forces. That is why when I have to give it a literary label I call it 'magical realism'. But there are other similar kinds of occurrences. Due to an unfortunate accident, a woman falls into a chasm while going for water, or a rider is thrown from his horse. Such affaires diverses, as they might be called, can also be transformed into magic events. Suddenly, for the mestizo, the woman didn't fall into the chasm, but the chasm grabbed her, simply because it needed a woman for a spring or for some other purpose ...In this way stories grow into legends. The old Indian literature, the Indian books that were written before the conquest of America by the Europeans, stories such as Popul Vuh or Los Anales de los Xahil gain a kind of intermediate reality this way. Between the 'real' and the 'magic' there is a third sort of reality. It is the melting of the visible and the tangible, the hallucination and the dream. It is similar to what the surrealists around Breton wanted ... 'Magical realism' of course, has a direct relationship to the original mentality of the Indians'.[266] It is clear that the Indians Asturias speaks of here have different ways of telling reality than we do. What García Márquez does is to incorporate these perspectives into his novel as if he believed them to be real. This is similar to how the

[265] Carpentier (1995).
[266] Extract from an interview with Miguel Asturias in 'Miguel Angel Asturias in the Nobel Prize' by Robert G. Mead Jr. (1968), p.330.

magical is presented in Ovid's poem; his pseudo-credulous[267] approach to the various myths he tells is what produces the magical realist tone of the poem; for it creates unresolved codes of interpretation within the text.

[267] Galinsky (1975) perceives Ovid's tone to ruin faith in the poem: *Ovid seems roguishly to suggest ... that neither the stories nor the author should be believed too readily ...Similarly deliberate in achieving the desired opposite effect are Ovid's pseudo-credulous appeals to the venerable age of a mythical tradition*, p.178.

3. The Genealogy of Fiction

Introduction

The previous chapter explored perspectives of causation; the communities of people in each text had different ways of explaining the world around them, which the narrator presented as valid. Where these clashed with the reader's perspectives, this produced the atmosphere we have come to label magical realist in literature.

Latin American scholars and writers at the first appearance of the genre in Latin American literature, towards the middle of the last century, construed a theory of magical realism in territorial terms, claiming that it was the specific circumstances of Latin America that produced magical realism. In an expanded version of the prologue to his novel *El reino de este mundo*, the Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier wrote the following: *Because of the virginity of the land, our upbringing, our ontology, the Faustian presence of the Indian and the black man, the revelation constituted by its recent discovery, its fecund racial mixing, America is far from using up its wealth of mythologies. After all, what is the entire history of America if not a chronicle of the marvellous real?*[268] Carpentier's formulation of magical realism, as a genre of literature emerging essentially from the largely untapped and baroque magnificence of his continent's geography, history, diversity and mythology, has been taken by many scholars as seminal in its field.[269] Gabriel García Márquez stated in his Nobel Lecture:

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[268] Carpentier (1995), p.88.

[269] It should be observed that Carpentier was not strictly formulating 'magical realism' but rather a phenomenon which he calls *lo maravilloso real*; however, for the purposes of this chapter I have taken the two terms to be interchangeable. See Hart (1983), p.41-4, for a discussion upon the meanings of these two terms.

'I dare to think that it is this outsized reality, and not just its literary expression, that has deserved the attention of the Swedish Academy of Letters. A reality not of paper, but one that lives within us and determines each instant of our countless daily deaths, and that nourishes a source of insatiable creativity...we have had to ask but little of our imagination, for our crucial problem has been a lack of conventional means to render our lives believable'.[270] Miguel Asturias, likewise, observes the shady borders of history and imagination in the foundational Indian texts of the continent: 'The reading of these documents is what has allowed us to affirm that, among the native Americans, history has more of the characteristics of the novel than of history. They are accounts in which reality is dissolved in fable, legend, the trappings of beauty and in which the imagination, by dint of describing all the reality that it contains, ends up revealing a reality that we might call surrealist'.[271]

Magical realism is still generally regarded, some decades after the words of these writers, as primarily a Latin American phenomenon, despite the international success of novels such as Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) and Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* (1977), amongst many others,[272] which are regularly cited as skillful examples of magical realist texts. However, Miguel Asturias' speech itself suggests a complication of the thesis that the continent is inherently marvelous, by referring to the inspiration of the literature of the Indians, and by using that label 'surrealist'. It shows at the very least that he is well aware of the European literary

[270] García Márquez (1983).
[271] Asturias (1967).
[272] A comprehensive list of recent successes in the genre would be difficult to provide, for both enormity of length and nebulousness of the term 'magical realism' itself; however, a useful and extensive survey of works can be found in the essays of Faris (1995) and D'haen (1995).

movements; but it also might reasonably imply an internal recognition of influence upon his writings.[273]

Flores attempted a territorialisation of magical realism in his paper 'Magical Realism in Spanish America';[274] however, he explicitly distanced himself from arguments using the ontology of American reality, and chose instead to emphasise a strictly literary analysis, heralding the works of Franz Kafka and Jorges Luis Borges as formative, and proposing 1935 as the birth year of magical realism. He plotted the gradual dissemination of the style of these two innovative writers into Spanish American literature, before concluding his essay with an optimistic flourish: *We may claim, without apologies, that Latin America is no longer in search of its expression ... we may claim that Latin America now possesses an authentic expression, one that is uniquely civilized, and, let us hope, perennial.*[275] The difficulties in his formulation of the genre have been well documented,[276] but what emerges as the crucial point of interest here is this possessiveness of a literary mode, that was also prevalent in Carpentier, García Márquez and Asturias, and the paradoxical assertion that European and North American literary traditions are also instigating factors in magical realism.

It is essential in a thesis which uses magical realism as an interpretive tool for analysing a Classical text that the claims of Latin American writers are thoroughly explored; a chapter-length study provides the opportunity to examine in detail the connection of magical realism to the continent. For this reason, this chapter does not include analysis of Ovid's poem, but instead focuses entirely on Latin American literature. In this chapter, I trace the influences of various factors, historical,

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[273] Surrealism and its connection to magical realism is a vast topic, and one that I do not handle in this thesis for that very reason; for studies upon surrealism, see Matthews (1966); Breton (1972); Nadeau (1989). For surrealism and magical realism, see Monegal (1977).
[274] Paper originally read at the Spanish 4 Group Meeting of the 69th Annual Meeting of the MLA, New York, December 27-29 (1954).
[275] Flores (1995).
[276] See Leal (1995), p.119-24, and Chanady (1995), p.125-44.

geographical and literary, upon two magical realist episodes in García Márquez's novel. The first of these is the appearance in Macondo of an insomnia plague. I initially summarise the events of this plague within the novel, before continuing to analyse the passages using Colombian history and culture; my sources range from documents and studies of historians and literary critics, to the recent autobiographical work of the author himself.

1. Sleepless in Macondo

In the third chapter of *Cien años de soledad*, a most extraordinary thing begins to happen. It first surfaces when an Indian woman and her brother arrive in Macondo. They are described as being *huyendo de una peste de insomnio que flagelaba a su tribu desde hacía varios años* (126).[277] This sounds like a very peculiar form of virus: generally insomnia is regarded as a symptom of something else, and certainly not something which is transmitted in viral or bacterial form. At this stage it could perhaps seem to be simply a metaphor for the tribulations of the tribe. Nothing else is said of the plague for a few pages, until Rebeca arrives. She is delivered to the Buendías, inscrutable and apparently unable to communicate. It is finally discovered that she speaks fluently (and foully) in the Indian language. Like Visitación and Cataure, the Indian brother and sister, Rebeca is described as bringing an array of strange habits to the household. We are told of Visitación and Cataure: *Ambos eran tan dóciles y serviciales, que Úrsula se hizo cargo de ellos para que la ayudaran en los oficios domésticos. Fue así como Arcadio y Amaranta hablaron la lengua guajira antes que el castellano, y aprendieron a tomar caldo de lagartijas y a comer huevos de arañas sin*

[277] *in flight from a plague of insomnia that had been scourging their tribe for several years* (38).

que Úrsula se diera cuenta (126).[278] The stealth and silence of the Indians is emphasised here in this remark that these goings on were occurring in her house without her realising. The sense of primitiveness, secrecy and witchcraft is likewise apparent in the portrayal of Rebeca's behaviour: *Nadie entendía cómo no se había muerto de hambre, hasta que los indígenas, que se daban cuenta de todo porque recorrían la casa sin cesar con sus pies sigilosos, descubrieron que a Rebeca sólo le gustaba comer la tierra húmeda del patio y las tortas de cal que arrancaba de las paredes con las uñas* (132).[279] Once again, it is clear that the Indians are perceived as secretive and almost sinister in the way they notice everything by going unnoticed themselves.

Visitación is therefore the first to spot the signs of the insomnia plague in Rebeca: *vio a Rebeca en el mecedor, chupándose el dedo y con los ojos alumbrados como los de un gato en la oscuridad. Pasmado de terror, atribulada por la fatalidad de su destino, Visitación reconoció en esos ojos los síntomas de la enfermedad cuya amenaza los había obligado, a ella y a su hermano, a desterrarse para siempre de un reino milenario en el cual eran príncipes. Era la peste del insomnio* (134).[280] Unlike her brother, Visitación reacts with sad resignation: *Cataure, el indio, no amaneció en la casa. Su hermana se quedó, porque su corazón fatalista le indicaba que la dolencia*

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[278] *They were both so docile and willing to help that Úrsula took them on to help her with her household chores. That was how Arcadio and Amaranta came to speak the Guajiro language before Spanish and they learned to drink lizard broth and eat spider eggs without Úrsula's knowing it* (38).

[279] *No one understood why she had not died of hunger until the Indians, who were aware of everything, for they went ceaselessly about the house on their stealthy feet, discovered that Rebeca only liked to eat the damp earth of the courtyard and the cake of whitewash that she picked of the walls with her nails* (41-2).

[280] *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, Visitación recognised in those eyes the symptoms of the sickness whose threat had obliged her and her brother to exile themselves forever from an age-old kingdom where they had been prince and princess. It was the insomnia plague* (43).

letal había de perseguirla de todos modos hasta el último rincón de la tierra (134).[281] Here an explicit connection is made by the Indian woman with herself and her people. This plague is apparently no indiscriminate bug, but a specifically targeted virus attacking her tribe. She warns the town of the symptoms: *lo más temible de la enfermedad del insomnio no era la imposibilidad de dormir, pues el cuerpo no sentía cansancio alguno, sino su inexorable evolución hacia una manifestación más crítica: el olvido. Quería decir que cuando el enfermo se acostumbraba a su estado de vigilia, empezaban a borrarse de su memoria los recuerdos de la infancia, luego el nombre y la noción de las cosas, y por último la identidad de las personas y aun la conciencia del proprio ser, hasta hundirse en una especie de idiotez sin pasado* (134).[282] José Arcadio Buendía reacts with characteristic self-assurance: he concludes that it is just a superstition and not to be taken seriously. However, several weeks later, the family notice that they cannot fall asleep. It starts with José Arcadio Buendía, who gives the reason for his insomnia to his wife as: '*Estoy pensando otra vez en Prudencio Aguilar*' (134),[283] a perfectly reasonable explanation for sleeplessness, for Prudencio Aguilar is the man he shot over a cockfight some years ago. However, it is not long before the whole family is affected by this insomnia, which Úrsula tries desperately to cure with various medicinal plant extracts. Then follows a significant passage: *Mientras tanto, por un descuido que José Arcadio Buendía no se perdonó jamas, los animalitos de caramelo fabricados en la casa seguían siendo vendidos en el pueblo. Niños y adultos chupaban encantados los deliciosos gallitos verdes del insomnio, los exquisitos peces*

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[281] *Cataure, the Indian, was gone from the house by morning. His sister stayed because her fatalistic heart told her that the lethal sickness would follow her, no matter what, to the farthest corner of the earth* (43).

[282] *the most fearsome part of the sickness of insomnia was not the impossibility of sleeping, for the body did not feel any fatigue at all, but its inexorable evolution toward a more critical manifestation: a loss of memory. She meant that when the sick person became used to his state of vigil, the recollection of his childhood began to be erased from his memory, then the name and notion of things, and finally the identity of people and even the awareness of his own being, until he sank into a kind of idiocy that had no past* (43).

[283] '*I'm thinking about Prudencio Aguilar again*' (43).

rosados del insomnio y los tiernos caballitos amarillos del insomnio, de modo que el alba del lunes sorpriendió despierto a todo el pueblo (135-6).[284] It appears that the insomnia is spread by the customary means of transmission of any other virus: contact with infected substances. It is a peculiar twist that the people of the town ascribe natural causes to an apparently magical plague; it is much more common to find people ascribing magical causes to a natural plague[285]. However, García Márquez's plague is complicated by having parallel explanations, and to return to José Arcadio Buendía's comment, we see that one of these is an issue of community history. Prudencio Aguilar was the reason that they all packed up and set out to found a village in the first place. Murdered by José Arcadio Buendía in a duel of honour, he comes back to haunt the family until they are driven to leave their homes. Prudencio is the part of the shared, pre-Macondo history of their people, just as eating earth and spider's eggs is that of the Indian peoples. It is carefully implied that these secret, guilty histories are inextricably bound to the insomnia plague.

As Visitación had predicted, the plague rapidly infects the minds of its victims, but in most peculiar ways: *no consiguieron dormir, sino que estuvieron todo el día soñando despierto. En ese estado de alucinada lucidez no sólo veían las imágenes de sus propios sueños, sino que los unos veían las imágenes soñadas por los otros. Era como si la casa se hubiera llenado de visitantes. Sentada en su mecedor en un rincón de la cocina, Rebeca soñó que un hombre muy parecido a ella, vestido de lino blanco y con el cuello de la camisa cerrado por un botón de oro, le llevaba un ramo de rosas. Lo*

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[284] *In the meantime, through an oversight that José Arcadio Buendía never forgave himself for, the candy animals made in the house were still being sold in the town. Children and adults sucked with delight on the delicious little green roosters of insomnia, the exquisite pink fish of insomnia, and the tender yellow ponies of insomnia, so that dawn on Monday found the whole town awake* (44).

[285] Of course, the fact that the insomnia plague is spread by natural means does not preclude it having a magical source, but my point here is that whereas often in history people have cited divinities as the cause of a virulent outbreak of a disease, in this instance no such ultimate cause is made explicit by either the characters or the narrator.

acompañaba una mujer de manos delicadas que separó una rosa y se la puso a la niña en el pelo. Úrsula comprendió que el hombre y la mujer eran los padres de Rebeca (135).[286]

These early stages of the plague appear to be projecting memories of individual history onto reality, but these times do not last for long. People begin to yearn for sleep, not because of tiredness, but rather nostalgia for dreaming. The lack of dreaming seems to be an essential factor of the plague; dreams are presented in Amerindian thought as connecting people to their tribal histories.[287] The insomnia plague disconnects the people from their past and they become in Visitación's words: *una specie de idiotez sin pasado* (134).

The town persists in attributing its spread to natural means, and treating it like any other virulent disease: *se acordaron medidas para impedir que el flagelo se propagara a otras poblaciones de la ciénaga. Fue así como se quitaron a los chivos las campanitas que los árabes cambiaban por guacamayas, y se pusieron a la entrada del pueblo a disposición de quienes desatendían los consejos y súplicas de los centinelas e insistían en visitar la población. Todos los forasteros que por aquel tiempo recorrían las calles de Macondo tenían que hacer sonar su campanita para que los enfermos supieran que estaba sano. No se les permitía comer ni beber nada durante su estancia, pues no había duda de que la enfermedad sólo se transmitía por la boca, y todas las cosas de comer y de beber estaban contaminadas de insomnio* (137).[288] We see how the

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[286] *they could not get to sleep and spent the whole day dreaming on their feet. In that state of hallucinated lucidity, not only did they see the images of their own dreams, but some saw the images dreamed by others. It was as if the house were full of visitors. Sitting in her rocker in a corner of the kitchen, Rebeca dreamed that a man who looked very much like her, dressed in white linen and with his shirt collar closed by a gold button, was bringing her a bouquet of roses. He was accompanied by a woman with delicate hands who took out one rose and put it in the child's hair. Úrsula understood that the man and woman were Rebeca's parents* (44).

[287] On the significance of dreams and visions to Guajiro Indians, see Goulet (1993). Cf. the dream of José Arcadio Buendía that causes him to found Macondo (110), and the dream of Abraham at *Gen.* 15.12.

[288] *they agreed on methods to prevent the scourge from spreading to other towns in the swamp. That was why they took the bells off the goats, bells that the Arabs had swapped for macaws, and put them at the*

narrator accepts the perspective of his characters, even though it might appear a highly flawed hypothesis to attribute the infection to food and drink. There is also an inversion of old practice of lepers to warn others of their illness:[289] rather than the sick advertising their infection with a bell, it is the healthy who must advertise themselves as so.

The next stage arrives, the most frightening one of all, when Aureliano one day realises that he cannot remember the word for something in his laboratory. He writes it down on a piece of paper and sticks it to the object in question. When this phenomenon becomes frequent, and José Arcadio Buendía confesses his alarm at forgetting the key events of his childhood, then a serious project is begun. Not just labels, but labels explaining the labels are pasted on all basic items of use, but the narrator notes the pitiful futility of it all: *Así continuaron viviendo en una realidad escurridiza, momentáneamente capturada por las palabras, pero que había de fugarse sin remedio cuando olvidaran los valores de la letra escrita* (138).[290] This comment suggests a profound existential concern: for all its apparently plague-like characteristics, the virus presents a threat not to the physical health of the community, or the corporeal life of an individual, but to what it is that makes a community and an individual: history and culture. Of course, these things can be recorded in literature, but as the narrator perceptively acknowledges, words cannot capture things truly, once the real experience of them has slipped away, and in the profound memory loss occurring here, the meanings of words themselves begin to slip from mental grasp.

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entrance to the town at the disposal of those who would no listen to the advice and entreaties of the sentinels and insisted on visiting the town. All strangers who passed through the streets of Macondo at that time had to ring their bells so that the sick people would know that they were healthy. They were not allowed to eat or drink anything during their stay, for there was no doubt but that the illness was transmitted by mouth, and all food and drink had been contaminated by insomnia (45).

[289] Wood (1990), p.39.

[290] *Thus they went on living in a reality that was slipping away, momentarily captured by words, but which escape irremediably when they forgot the values of the written letters* (46).

As the plague continues, the narrator observes some of the most absurd and humorous reactions that occur amongst the inhabitants: *En la entrada del camino de la ciénaga se había puesto un anuncio que decía Macondo y otro más grande en la calle central que decía Dios existe. En todas las casas se habían escrito claves para memorizar los objetos y los sentimientos. Pero el sistema exigía tanta vigilancia y tanta fortaleza moral, que muchos sucumbieron al hechizo de una realidad imaginaria, inventada por ellos mismos, que les resultaba menos práctica pero más reconfortante. Pilar Ternera fue quien más contribuyó a popularizar esta mistificación, cuando concibió el artificio de leer el pasado en las barajas como antes había leído el futuro. Mediante este recurso, los insomnes empezaron a vivir en un mundo construido por las alternativas inciertas de los naipes, donde el padre se recordaba apenas como el hombre moreno que había llegado al principio de abril y la madre se recordaba apenas como la mujer trigueña que usaba un anillo de oro en la mano izquierda, y donde una fecha de nacimiento quedaba reducida al último martes en que cantó la alondra en el laurel* (138-9).[291] This kind of popular superstition applied to one's past rather than one's future is quite startling to people who have always been secure of individual and community history; it conveys the sense of unknowing and rootlessness that emanates from a culture that has for some reason lost its grounding.

Just as the town has almost entirely lost itself in the delirium of insomnia, a stranger arrives. This stranger observes the chaos of labels pasted to walls with pity and appears to understand what has happened: *Le dio a beber a José Arcadio Buendía una*

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[291] *At the beginning of the road into the swamp they put up a sign that said MACONDO and another large one on the main street that said GOD EXISTS. In all the houses keys to memorising objects and feelings had been written. But the system demanded so much vigilance and moral strength that many succumbed to the spell of an imaginary reality, one invented by themselves, which was less practical for them but more comforting. Pilar Ternera was the one who contributed most to popularise that mystification when she conceived of the trick of reading the past in cards as she had read the future before. By means of that recourse the insomniacs began to live in a world built on the uncertain alternatives of the cards, where a father was remembered faintly as the dark man who had arrived at the beginning of April and a mother remembered only as the dark woman who wore a gold ring on her left hand, and where a birth date was reduced to the last Tuesday on which a lark sang in the laurel tree* (46).

sustancia de color apacible, y la luz se hizo en su memoria. Los ojos se le humedecieron de llanto, antes de verse a sí mismo en una sala absurda donde los objetos estaban marcados, y antes de avergonzarse de las solemnes tonterías escritas en las paredes, y aún antes de reconocer al recién llegado en un deslumbrante resplandor de alegría. Era Melquíades (140).[292] The administering of a drug to clear up the insomnia continues the motif of the sleeplessness as a disease.

2. A Historical Reading

The insomnia plague of *Cien años de soledad* has an almost entirely psychological manifestation,[293] startlingly magical, explicable in Western rational terms only by reference to some such phenomenon as mass hysteria. However, despite its apparently magical nature, García Márquez's characters in Macondo perceive the plague as a natural virus, transmitted via foodstuffs and to be lived with in view of no imminent cure, rather than prayed over. This matter-of-fact approach has been seen so many times in the novel already: Amaranta's basket doing circles around the room results in José Arcadio Buendía tying it down, the cloc-cloc of Rebeca's parents' bones irritates the builders and so they seal them into a wall, and Úrsula follows the blood of her son as it travels between two houses without any display of disbelief.

Visitación hints at something more fateful and magical about the plague, when she resigns herself to the belief that the disease will follow her wherever she goes. The plague of insomnia is first mentioned as a calamity which caused Visitación and her

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[292] *He gave José Arcadio Buendía a drink of a gentle colour and the light went on in his memory. His eyes became moist from weeping even before he noticed himself in an absurd living room where objects were labeled and before he was ashamed of the solemn nonsense written on the walls, and even before he recognised the newcomer with a dazzling glow of joy. It was Melquíades* (47).

[293] What I mean by this is not that there are no physical symptoms, for clearly insomnia itself (and its accompanying state of hyper-alertness) is a physical symptom. Rather, it is that the resulting effects of the insomnia are predominantly registered by mental aberrations such as lucid dreaming and memory loss.

brother to flee their homes, a reference that immediately associates the plague with the Indians. It was not Visitación and Cataure who brought the insomnia plague to Macondo but Rebeca;[294] either way, it is still inherently connected to the Indians. It manifests itself just after Rebeca is finally assimilated into the family and gives up her earth-eating and other distinguishing characteristics, such as talking in the Indian language. Also significant is that Rebeca's parents are unknown and unrecognisable characters; their daughter arrives on the scene with a collection of mysterious habits and a bag of bones. Although they send a letter to the Buendías, claiming to be relatives, none of the family has any recollection of who the parents are.

Colombian literature, like the literature of any given country, is frequently overtly historical. It is perhaps especially true for countries such as Colombia, however, where the official versions of historical fact are often a hostage to specific political conditions.[295] Rebeca,[296] Visitación and Cataure can be taken as representatives of the descendants of the Indians in contemporary Latin America: a people who have lost contact with their heritage, and therefore exist in a certain amount of confusion and sense of loss concerning their identity.[297] This fact is of great importance for understanding the insomnia plague, for it connects the insomnia that accompanies these characters with the Spanish descent upon the New World. It has been recorded by their

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[294] Janes (1991), p.122.

[295] Hart (1983), p.51, notes the suspicion raised by government reports released by Spanish American régimes generally. For Colombian history, and specifically its connection to García Márquez's work, an invaluable work is Minta (1987), who actually defines García Márquez in terms of his Colombian heritage in the title: *Gabriel García Márquez: Writer of Colombia.* For Colombian politics see Dix (1987).

[296] The character of Rebeca seems to be modeled upon a young girl called Margot who was taken into the household of García Márquez's grandparents when he was very young. He describes how she *would sit in her little rocking chair to suck her finger in the most unexpected corner. Nothing attracted her attention except the chimes of the clock, which she looked at every hour with her large, hallucinatory eyes. For several days she would not eat ...No one understood how she was staying alive without eating until they realized that she only liked the damp earth of the garden and the pieces of lime that she scratched off the wall with her nails,* García Márquez (2003), p.81.

[297] Blakemore and Smith (1974), p.206-8.

own chroniclers how they exploited and destroyed the empires that they found there.[298] In a more gradual process, centuries of culture were devastated, as the colonisers started to impose their language, religion and civilisation upon the peoples they found there. It would appear that initially the focus of the conquistadores was simply that of defeating the native peoples and settling; however by late colonial times, the integration of Indians, economically, culturally and genetically became an important goal for the Hispanic elite in Colombia.[299] Safford describes it thus in his article on Indian integration: *The goal of whitening and Europeanizing the population tended to be stated a little obliquely, though nonetheless quite obviously, in public documents, but more baldly in private*'; '*Quite obviously, the elite had in mind the inculcation of values, behaviour, and life patterns associated with Western Europe, the seat of the world. For many, to approach European models of work and consumption was an important ingredient of civilization and successful nationhood.*[300] The obvious consequence of these policies, which were not fully ratified until republican times, was the destruction (by slow attrition) of Indian culture. It is clear from the text quoted above that Rebeca was ashamed of her habits for she shrouded them in secrecy: the narrator makes that very observation. This reflects the shame of Indianness that resulted from the colonial and republican attitudes to Indians in Latin America generally.[301] The cause of this shame is evident when one reads accounts written by Spanish figures of the late colonial period; Father Joaquin de Finestrad, the Spanish Capuchin, wrote: *I believe firmly that... all the assistance and privileges that are conceded and poured over (the Indians) are not sufficient to extract them from the miserable state of their uselessness... I am*

[298] Diaz (1963).
[299] Safford (1991).
[300] Ibid., p.2.
[301] See Gould (1993), who discusses the shame felt by Indians at their Indianness in his article upon cultural assimilation in Nicaragua.

firmly persuaded that it is necessary to graft them so that imperceptibly their caste may be finished and they may pass to the legal condition of zambos and mulattos.[302]

As well as the cultural attrition that was occurring amongst the Indian population, another equally devastating force was at work on behalf of the European invaders: disease. Disease is regarded as being one of the key factors explaining the quite dramatic decline of the indigenous population after the Conquest. These diseases were introduced by the Europeans, and while they themselves had acquired some level of immunity to the infections, the Indians were entirely at the mercy of illnesses as apparently trivial as the common cold.[303] With this evidence in mind, it is possible to read a very historical symbolism into the event of the insomnia plague. Its voracious destruction of memory and ultimately identity represents the loss of Indian culture in colonial and republican times. The very magical manifestation of the occurrence reflects the surreal terror of the circumstances, and perhaps the perspective of the indigenous community who find their lives turned upside down by these foreigners with their technology and warfare. However, it is important to remember that it is not just the Indians who are affected by this plague, but also the entire town, which consists largely of creole inhabitants. Perhaps García Márquez was enjoying the inversion of history whereby the Indians decimate the creole community (albeit temporarily: Rebeca is never to know who her parents and people are).

This leads therefore to another reading. While the Indians represent an exploited and dominated segment of the Colombian population, there is also a second layer of repression and exploitation that is plausibly being referred to: that of Latin America as a continent at the hands of Europe and North America. Much later in the novel, a mass

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[302] Safford (1991), p.7. See also Applebaum (1999) for a discussion of regional 'whitening' and negative attitudes to Indians in nineteenth century Colombia.

[303] See Newson (1985) for a perspective on disease and its role in Indian population patterns in Latin America during colonial times. Also Blakemore and Smith (1974), p.206.

loss of memory occurs that is entirely unrelated to a lack of sleep. Here the loss of memory corresponds to just one specific event: the massacre of the Banana Company workers. The North American fruit company achieves an almost total erasing of this event from the minds of the inhabitants of Macondo: the only person who remembers anything is José Arcadio who consequently becomes a total recluse, deeply haunted by the memory of what he has seen. Although a very different set of events from those of the insomnia plague, the parallels between the two situations are pronounced. In both cases, it is never made explicit what causes the forgetfulness, and in both cases it has a profound effect upon the community. The massacre of the workers in *Cien años de soledad* is clearly based upon a massacre of striking workers that occurred at a town called Ciénaga on the fifth of December 1928, the year that García Márquez was born.[304] He speaks of the great importance and frustration which the massacre brought into his life at an early age, when he discovered the impossibility of recovering the truth: *My mother's version had such meager numbers and a setting so abject for the imposing drama I had imagined that it caused a sense of frustration in me. Later, I spoke with survivors and witnesses and searched through newspaper archives and official documents, and I realized that the truth did not lie anywhere. Conformists said, in effect, that there had been no deaths. Those at the other extreme affirmed without a quaver in their voices that there had been more than one hundred, that they had been seen bleeding to death on the square, and that they were carried away in a freight train to be tossed into the ocean like rejected bananas. And so my version was lost forever at some improbable point between the two extremes. But it was so persistent that in one of my novels I referred to the massacre with all the precision and horror that I had*

[304] A documentary anthology *1928: La masacre en las Bananeras* (Bogotá) provides the 1929 parliamentary debates including eye-witness accounts, and notes the suppression perpetrated by Colombian governments. For the United Fruit Company in Colombia, see Brungardt (1987); LeGrand (1994); Bucheli (2003). See also Green (1996) who talks briefly about the massacre in the context of its connection to what he terms *Gaitainismo*.

brought for years to its incubation in my imagination.[305] It has been considered that the massacre is the most important event in the novel, and that the text can be interpreted according to this historical moment;[306] if this is the case then the insomnia plague not only foreshadows but is a crucial metaphorical model for this secrecy and deceit. Colombia has a culture of disappearances and a control of history textbooks,[307] and this is reflected by the insomnia plague. The reality of confusion and paranoia, one in which one feels that the boundaries of fact and fiction are established arbitrarily, is expressed powerfully in the magical realist event of the virus of sleeplessness.

3. A Cultural Reading

It has been posited that Colombian literature frequently expresses a dichotomy between the written intellectual literature of the highlands and metropolitan areas such as Bogotá, and the oral culture and literature of the lowlands and coastal regions.[308] The Costa region, where García Márquez spent most of his early childhood, is often said to be 'tri-ethnic' in culture,[309] very receptive to external influences due to its coastal position, and containing a strong presence of oral culture. Indeed, García Márquez's novel has been shown to contain a large number of oral culture themes and structural devices. If high culture writing tradition is characterised by self-consciousness and self-reflexiveness, such as that epitomised in José Eustasio Rivera's *The Vortex* (1935),[310] then the characteristics of oral culture are those of repetition of images and themes (such

[305] García Márquez (2003), p.62-3.
[306] Martin (1995), p.112.
[307] Minta (1987), Bushnell (1993).
[308] Williams (1991) speaks extensively of this dichotomy, using many detailed examples, in his book upon the Colombian novel and literary tradition.
[309] See Williams (1991) and Fiddian (1995). The three cultures involved in this melting-pot are Indian, African and European.
[310] Williams (1991).

as ice)[311], epithets (such as *la bella*)[312] and exaggerated characters (such as José Arcadio and Colonel Aureliano Buendía).[313] García Márquez's work can be seen to hold in tension these two different oral and written cultures; it is certainly evident that, while the earlier parts of the novel display distinctly oral elements,[314] the later parts of the novel exhibit many aspects of the Highlands writing culture.[315]

Aureliano's notion of writing everything down on bits of paper could be read as representing the passing of an oral culture to a written one.[316] Once the insomnia plague is out of the way, Macondo begins to enter a different phase as 'civilisation' and all its ambiguous gifts sift in mysteriously like those yellow flowers at José Arcadio Buendía's funeral (242) and alter the whole town.[317] The time of transition is marked by this mass loss of sleep and consequently memory. The notion of a plague of insomnia is itself a part of the thought of oral culture: Ong describes this: *In the absence of elaborate analytic categories that depend on writing to structure knowledge at a distance from lived experience, oral cultures must conceptualize and verbalize all their knowledge with more or less close reference to the human lifeworld, assimilating the*

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[311] The ice of course famously appears at the opening of the novel in Colonel Buendía's memory (81); it is also extensively described at the close of the opening chapter (102). It recurs in the novel as a repeated theme tied to individual memory (273).

[312] Remedios, a fatally beautiful and eccentric member of the Buendía family, almost always appears with the epithet *la bella* (303, 304, 305, 309 etc.). This recalls the Homeric use of (metrically convenient) epithets to describe his characters: for instance, Odysseus is frequently 'wily' (*Il.* 1.311; *Od.* 2.173; *Od.* 7.302), and Achilles is often 'divine' (*Il.* 1.7; *Il.* 1.292; *Il.* 9.209).

[313] Williams (1991) gives examples of the kind of techniques one finds in oral culture literature. For oral culture from a Classical perspective, see Kirk (1976); Finnegan (1997).

[314] The pre-language state of the village is a very obvious example, and the description *prehistoricos* (81) to depict the stones likewise conjures a world set before written history. The lack of external connection leading to the extreme solitude of the community suggests a pre-civilised state.

[315] The wise Catalan, his bookshop and his circle of literary friends appear late in the novel, but there is increasing external control, the lawyers dismissing reality with their mystifying papers, and the increasing importance of Melquíades' scripts.

[316] Fuentes (1987) examines the labeling method of the Buendía household as a representation of a debate in literary theory regarding the role of names, exemplified in Plato's *Cratylus* where Socrates saw words as part of the unstable and changing world. See also Plato's *Phaedrus* 274b-277a for discussion of writing and memory.

[317] First the *corregidor* Don Apolinar Moscote appears, and accompanying him all the deceit and corruption of the elections; then the lawyers, the train connecting Macondo to the outside world, cinemas, light-bulbs and many other things.

alien, objective world to the more immediate, familiar interaction of human beings.[318] Here the strange and alien experience of a culture being warped is conceptualised as a virus invading the memories of people; hence an oral cultural perspective causes the passage to be magically real. One observation of particular importance on behalf of the narrator confirms this interpretation of the insomnia plague: *Francisco el Hombre, así llamado porque derrotó al diabló de improvación de cantos, y cuyo verdadero nombre no conoció nadie, desapareció de Macondo durante la peste del insomnio* (142).[319] Francisco the Man is a key representative of oral culture in the novel, a wandering minstrel character who spreads news around villages of the swamp by singing songs containing current affairs. He is a figure from Colombian legend,[320] supposed originator of the vallenato,[321] a type of music that combined a peculiar blend of folklore, miracle, love-song, travelogue and every day happenings. His disappearance at the time of the insomnia plague cannot be anything other than a very symbolic marker of the passing away of oral culture.

García Márquez has said that the first years of his life were the ones that left the most profound impact, when he was living in his grandparents' house in Aracataca. He recalls in the first book of his recent memoirs that this town was a place that his

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[318] Ong (1982), p.42-3.

[319] *Francisco the Man, so called because he had once defeated the devil in a duel of improvisation, and whose real name no one knew, disappeared from Macondo during the insomnia plague* (49).

[320] As recently as 2003, in an interview with Alex Wolfe, the Colombian accordionist Lisandro Meza said: 'The first accordion arrived in Colombia ... bought by a man named Pisarro ... Later they sold the accordion to Francisco El Hombre, whose real name was Francisco Moscote. They gave him the name 'Francisco El Hombre' because he lived in Machovallo, and most of the men in that region were away working in the banana plantations when a plague came and killed many of the children. But there were no men to bury the children. Francisco said, 'I am the man who will bury the children', so they called him 'Francisco El Hombre' ... The legend is that he was the first great accordionist.' (http://www.afropop.org/multi/interview/ID/43/Lisandro+Meza-2003).

[321] The name literally means 'valley-born', and could possibly refer to Valledupar, the main musical centre of the Magdalena area. However, another explanation is that the rural areas along the banks of the Cesar River were very poor, and many of the people there suffered from a disease that caused their skin to flake and discolour, reminding people of newborn whales -- *pintaos* or *vallenatos*. Hence *vallenatos* became a derogatory name for the river-based poor, amongst whom the musicians were regarded as the most unsavoury. For a background to the vallenato, see Wade (2000).

grandparents had hoped would be an escape from their guilty history,[322] but had turned out to be a town full of new trials and torments. He tells of his mother's memories of plagues of locusts, droughts and seemingly interminable rainstorms,[323] all of which were to appear in variously transmuted forms in his most famous novel. Notably, García Márquez marks out one particular plague as having a tremendous impact: *The most sinister of the plagues, however, was the human one. A train that looked like a toy flung onto the town's burning sands a leaf storm of adventurers from all over the world who took control of the streets by force of arms.*[324] He describes the consequences of this influx, the social disorder as well as the benefits of prosperity, but he then relates an eerie effect upon the old inhabitants: *In the midst of that blizzard of unknown faces, of tents on public thoroughfares and men changing their clothes in the street, of women sitting on trunks with their parasols opened and mules and mules and mules dying of hunger in the hotel's stables, those who had arrived first became the last. We were the eternal outsiders, the newcomers.*[325] It is possible that this experience of confusion and loss of identity which the town and its inhabitants experienced at that time is the instigating factor in the fictional creation many years later of the insomnia plague that overcomes Macondo.

He has spoken of the importance of his grandmother's way of seeing the world and this appears to have been an absolutely vital influence upon his manner of storytelling. He describes her behaviour towards the daily aspects of the world: *my grandmother Tranquilina, the most credulous and impressionable woman I have ever*

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[322] García Márquez recounts the fatal duel of honour between his grandfather and Medardo Pachecho in his autobiography (García Márquez (2003), p.39); it appears in *Cien años de soledad* as the duel between José Arcadio Buendía and Prudencio Aguilar (107).
[323] García Márquez (2003), p.40-1.
[324] Ibid., p.41.
[325] A very similar feeling is experienced by the inhabitants of Macondo when the gypsies sweep into town: *Los habitantes de Macondo se encontraron de pronto perdidos en sus proprias calles, aturdidos por la feria multitudinaria* (101).

known, because of the terror the mysteries of daily life caused in her... For she saw that rocking chairs rocked alone, that the phantoms of puerperal fever were lurking in the bedrooms of women in labour, that the scent of jasmines from the garden was like an invisible ghost, that a cord dropped by accident on the floor had the shape of the numbers that might be the grand prize in the lottery, that a bird without eyes had wandered into the dining room, and could be chased away by singing La Magnífica.[326] He tellingly observes his conception of life in that house of his childhood in the following phrase: *Money as cash came to an end because it had no meaning in the oral tradition of the house.*[327] This idea of the house being governed by an oral tradition seems to me to be very important, for García Márquez frequently talks about his mourning for those childhood days, especially when he was forced to attend a very prescriptive school once he had left Aracataca and the world of his grandparents. At that point, presumably he lost the magic and wonder both of early childhood and also the very bizarre world of his grandmother. It is possible with this in mind to read yet another meaning into the insomnia plague: that of his sense of loss at the passing from his childhood world to a more 'civilised' world, and in his conception the passing from oral to literary tradition. Importantly here then lies an explanation for the setting of the insomnia plague in this 'magical' atmosphere: he uses magical realism to portray the oral culture mindset of both his grandmother's world, and to some extent the world of small children. However, as the plague itself represents, there is a clash of perspectives and so no single view is entirely assimilated into the passage.

Memory is very important to García Márquez's fiction; he speaks of his writing as a quest to recapture this childhood: *Y llegamos a Aracataca y me encontre con que todo estaba exactemente igual pero un poco traspuesto, poeticamente. Es decir, que y*

[326] García Márquez (2003), p.75.
[327] García Márquez (2003), p.77.

veia a través de las cosa que todos hemos comprobado; como aquellas calles que nos imaginabamos anchas, se volvían pequenitas, no eran tan altas como nos imaginabamos; las casas eran exactemente iguales, pero estaban carcomidar por el tiempo y la pobreza, y a traves de las ventanas veiamos que eran los mismos muebles, pero quince anos más viejos en realidad ...En ese momente me surgió la idea de contra por escrito todo el pasado de aquel episidio.[328] It is clear that *Cien años de soledad* is firmly rooted in his memories of his grandmother's house[329] (the working title of the novel was for twenty odd years *La Casa*)[330]. Stavans writes of the author: *Memory, in García Márquez's view, is synonymous with redemption: to remember is to overcome, to defeat the forces of evil.*[331] The result of this is that the novel is swamped in themes of memory and perils of forgetting; most of the characters bear a burden of obsessive memorising or intolerable nostalgia.[332] The insomnia plague also represents García Márquez's fascination with memory, and his urgent desire to record in writing these memories before they are lost forever. However, he expresses a cynicism towards even this venture, when the narrator observes: *Así continuaron viviendo en una realidad escurridiza, momentáneamente capturada por las palabras, pero que había de fugarse*

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[328] Llosa (1971): *And we went to Aracataca and I discovered that everything was exactly the same but a little transposed, poetically. That is to say, that I saw through the windows of the houses a thing that we all verified; as those streets that we imagined wide, had become small, they were not so high as we imagined; the houses were exactly the same, but they were decayed with time and poverty, and through the windows we saw that there was the same furniture, but fifteen years older in reality ...In that moment the idea arose in me to tell through writing all the past of that time.*

[329] García Márquez (2003), p.62ff. provides extensive evidence to support this.

[330] Janes (1991), p.36.

[331] Stavan (1993), p.64.

[332] Amaranta obsesses over Rebeca who had once won the love of the man Amaranta herself was in love with for almost all her life: *La única que no habiá perdido un solo instante la conciencia de que estaba viva, pudriéndose en su sopa de larvas, era la implacable y envejecida Amaranta. Pensaba en ella al amanecer, cuando el hielo del corazón la despertaba en la cama solitaria, y pensaba en ella cuando se jabonaba los senos marchitos y el vientre macilento, y cuando se cambiaba en la mano la venda negra de la terrible expiación* (328); Colonel Aureliano Buendía suffers terribly after his return from the wars with a burden of nostalgia that never leaves him: *Muchos anõs depues, frente al pelotón de fusilamiento, el coronel Aureliano Buendía habia recorder aquella tarde remota en que su padre lo llevó a conocer el hielo* (81); *Aquella noche interminable, mientras el coronel Gerineldo Márquez evocaba sus tardes muertas en el costurero de Amaranta, el coronel Aureliano Buendía rasguño durante muchas horas, tratando de romperla, la dura cáscara de su soledad. Sus únicos instantes felices, desde la tarde remota en que su padre lo llevó a conocer el hielo* (273).

sin remedio cuando olvidaran los valores de la letra escrita (138).[333] There pervades a sense of deep insecurity at his own chosen vocation of recording history, the fear that even the hope of permanence offered by literature is in fact illusory, for ultimately words written on a page can be as fragile as memories inside one's head.[334] Dorfman makes an interesting observation about memory and its connection to García Márquez's magical realism: *Things are marvelous in Macondo because along with their hard, incontestably fact-ridden intractability, the villagers are simultaneously living the instantaneous retelling of those events, their conversion into legends, that which will be ledgered -- read, registered. The immediate exaggeration of what is happening to us forces those circumstances into memory, ensures that they will not be forgotten, that a 'plague of insomnia' will not attack our descendants.*[335] The plague of insomnia itself could be part of this 'instantaneous retelling', an exaggerated version of a real event designed to make it memorable. There is frenzy, perhaps arising from a sense of belatedness on behalf of the writer and his nation's quest for independence, that makes it necessary to create an epic text from scratch, speeding up the gradual magicalising process of storytelling that would usually occur.[336] Echevarría puts forward the idea that García Márquez is trying to create a foundational mythology for Colombia and indeed Latin America as a continent, by mingling many mythic themes and stories with references to the histories of Latin America.[337] In fact, I think that García Márquez's use of 'magicalising' events that has been detailed above also reflects this same desire. Finally, there is an important passage in García Márquez's biography where he

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[333] '*They continued living in a reality momentarily captured by words, but that would escape without remedy when they forgot the values of the written letter*'.
[334] Cf. Ov.*Met.*15.871-9 for awareness of both the relative permanence and ultimate destructibility of the written word. Also Ov.*Trist.*4.10.125-32; Hor.*Od.*3.30.
[335] Dorfman (1991), p.27.
[336] Certainly García Márquez (2003) speaks of the urgency he felt to record his memories of the Aracataca from his childhood when he had returned many years later shocked by how much it had altered.
[337] Echevarría (1987).

describes his perennial fear of the night: *I never could overcome my fear of being alone, above all in the dark, but it seems to me that it had a concrete origin, which is that at night my grandmother's fantasies and premonitions materialized. At the age of seventy I still glimpsed in dreams the ardor of the jasmines in the hallway and the phantom in the gloomy bedrooms, and always that same feeling that ruined my childhood: terror of the night. Often I have had a forboding, in my worldwide attacks of insomnia, that I too carry the curse of that mythical house in a happy world where we died every night.*[338] It would appear also that the insomnia plague might be a fictional manifestation of that very fear borne of his childhood years in that house which has condemned the author to seventy years of insomnia.

4. A Literary Reading

Cien años de soledad draws heavily on Biblical material, with frequently parodying intent.[339] Plagues in the Old Testament are of course well-known features: much of Exodus is spent listing the plagues inflicted upon the Egyptians by the angry God of the Hebrews.[340] It therefore seems likely that, to at least some extent, García Márquez is alluding to Biblical material when he incorporates his insomnia plague into the early Macondo days. Unlike the Biblical plagues, there is no obvious punishment being exacted; or if a punishment function is to be construed, it seems to be affecting the oppressed and exploited, which is a reversal of the situation in Exodus. Pertinent also are the similarities of context. Both the Bible and García Márquez's version

[338] García Márquez (2003), p.82.
[339] In the section below, I will explore extensively his use of the Biblical earthly paradise theme; another obvious example is the four year rainstorm (*Llovió cuatro años, once meses y dos dias* (431); cf. *Gen.* 7:4: *I will send rain for forty days and forty nights*). For a succinct discussion of the use of Biblical themes in this novel, see Janes (1991), p.117-21. See García (1977) for a extensive discussion of the subject of intertextuality in this novel.
[340] *Exodus* 7:14 – 11:30. Cf. also the pestilence sent by Apollo to torment the Greeks at Hom. *Il.* 1.10ff.

involve a migration of peoples and the consequent founding of a new community. However, García Márquez inverts the Biblical notion of the promised land by calling Macondo *la tierra que nadie les había prometido* (108).[341] The Biblical allusions are significant, and refer to something that was mentioned earlier, the notion that García Márquez is aiming to create a foundational mythology for Latin America. The inversion reflects a self-consciousness regarding his project, and a wry awareness that myth and history are distinct and cannot be reconciled. There were no psychological plagues however in the Bible, and therefore the insomnia plague does not arise as a direct descendent of the plagues of locusts, boils and frogs. Different also is the atmosphere created by García Márquez's plague.

The Bible is a very ancient work, composed of many ancient other texts.[342] It also intends to persuade its reader that the magical occurrences are indeed miraculous, and their nature is explained by divine intervention. García Márquez does not explain his plague by reference to an angry god. Rebeca is identified as the vector, but otherwise the manifestation of this pestilence is mysterious. The characters respond with customary practicality in the face of the bizarre: there is no supplication or sacrifice. This lack of explanation is a typically magical realist feature.

The Bible is not the only text which features the motif of a plague. In Classical literature, Thucydides, Lucretius, Virgil and Ovid all include versions of plagues.[343] Albert Camus' *La Peste* (1947) is a famous novel-length example of the motif in more recent literature; there the author studies in detail the reactions of a community to such devastation. Likewise Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924) uses disease as a central theme. However, while it is undoubted that García Márquez knows of these (and other) accounts, it seems most likely that the Biblical account is the one most relevant

[341] *the land that no one had promised them* (26).
[342] For the problematic history of canonical scripture, see Wescott (1870); Bruce (1988).
[343] See Finnegan (1999) for a study of plagues in Classical literature.

for the insomnia plague, given the Biblical allusions which pervade the novel, and the point raised earlier concerning the desire of the author to flag this novel as a form of foundational text for his continent.

5. Heaven on Earth

My second example of magical realism in García Márquez's text is the use of paradisial, Arcadian and utopian themes. These appear in the opening chapters of *Cien años de soledad*, and I include a study of them here for their overwhelming significance for Latin America as a continent on so many levels. As will be shown in the section below, it can be argued that the roots of Latin American magical realism emerges as a direct result of these very themes being employed to depict its landscapes, and any examination of the mingling of the magical and the real in its literature cannot afford to omit this line of inquiry.

On the very first page of *Cien años de soledad*, the narrator describes an idyllic habitat: *Macondo era entonces una aldea de veinte casas de barro y cañabrava construidas a la orilla de un río de aguas diáfanas que se precipitaban por un lecho de piedras pulidas, blancas y enormes como huevos prehistóricos. El mundo era tan reciente, que muchas cosas carecían de nombre, y para mencionarlas había que señarlas con el dedo* (81).[344] There is something distinctly ancient and mythical in his portrayal of the early Macondo that harks back to an Edenesque world of innocence and

[344] *At that time Macondo was a village of twenty adobe houses, built on the bank of a river of clear water that ran along a bed of polished stones, which were white and enormous like prehistoric eggs. The world was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point* (9).

unblemished natural beauty.[345] Sparse population and clear flowing water are conspicuous symbols of a lost paradise[346] particularly in these modern times of sprawling cities and pollution; the simile of the stones as being like prehistoric eggs is likewise a prominent insertion that emphasises the primeval quality of this setting, invoking the notions of ancient and new in the fecund symbol of the egg. The most obvious linking to a mythic beginning is the narrator's observation that the newness of things meant that words had not yet been invented for them. A problematisation of art and nature, which runs as a theme throughout the first paragraphs of the novel, expands upon these implied parallels: the stones are described as *pulidas*, a word that suggests the conscious effort of an artistic demiurge as much as the natural and incidental actions of the environment upon the stones.[347] This confusion foregrounds the concept of a 'freshly minted' world forged perhaps by a creating divinity, with a nod towards the creating powers of the author himself. It is a world thus far steeped in mythical themes, which give a universal and momentous tone to the opening descriptions.

The careful crafting of a newly emerged environment has already been undermined by the very first line of text, however: *Muchos años después, frente al pelotón de fusilamiento, el coronel Aureliano Buendía había de recordar aquella tarde remota en que su padre lo llevó a conocer el hielo* (81).[348] Less than a lifetime later, firing squads and armies are in currency, a fact that questions the permanence of the paradisial land that follows the opening statement. It also suggests the realities of the

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[345] *Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the Lord God made all kinds of trees out of the ground - trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food ...A river watering the garden flowed from Eden* (*Genesis* 2.8-10).

[346] Cf. Theoc. *Id.* 1.1-8; Virg. *Ecl.* 5.45-7; 10.42-3; Ov. *Met.* 2.454-7; 3.155-64.

[347] Later examples of this conflation of nature and artistry are the fifteenth century suit of armour *soldered together with rust* (82), and the Spanish galleon *adorned with orchids* (94). Interestingly, both these examples are cases of nature asserting its power over the creations of men; the notion of nature as a powerful force is an important theme, encapsulated by the earlier highland Colombian author José Rivera in *La Voragine*, where the last words of the novel formed the now famous line: *and the jungle devoured them.*

[348] *Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice* (9).

decline of mankind in terms of the negative developments of increasing civilization, a decadence that is made more startling by its close proximity to humanity's mythical primordial existence. This new world appears to be a facade, hiding a much longer ancestry than its innocently idyllic atmosphere suggests. It is also a distinctive signifier of the status of the text as magical realist: it portrays a mingling of ancient and mythical elements with a world that is otherwise apparently the reader's own.

6. Literary and Historical Readings

The nameless world that is recorded by the narrator in the first few lines is an important place to start, for it is a remark full of meaning; it inevitably invokes the Biblical topos of God naming the world, and granting man the gift of naming each living creature.[349] It is notable that the nameless state of many things that appears at the opening of García Márquez's novel is markedly similar to words written to Charles V by Hernan Cortes stating: *As I do not know what to call these things, I cannot express them ... There is no human tongue that can explain its grandeurs and peculiarities.*[350] When the Spaniards first came to the New World, they chronicled their discoveries and perceptions in awe-struck and wondrous terms, astonished at the peoples and places they were seeing for the first time[351]. Europe was then in the Renaissance years, an era of increased literary freedom from the strait-jacket of religious dogma, and the Classical writers were championed and greatly imitated by writers, rather than plundered for potential Christian allegory or rejected entirely.[352] Poets were frequently effusive in their allusions to these texts and they created the notion of an idyllic place known as

[349] *Genesis* 1:3-27; 2:19-20.
[350] Carpentier (1995), p.105.
[351] Diaz (1963); Chiappelli (1976).
[352] Burrow (2001).

'Arcadia', constructed from the landscapes and atmospheres of Virgil's *Eclogues* and sections of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; these poems were seen as expressing a bygone ideal age of culture and beauty that Europe in the fifteenth century strove to resurrect.[353]

The discovery of the New World had greatly fueled the cultural atmosphere of the time, and the language of the Chroniclers echoes the ideals of the Classical golden age as they sought to verbalise their new experiences and locate their romantic ideals in a spatial rather than chronological framework.[354] This often led to quite fantastical notions appearing in their accounts; it has been observed that Columbus appears to have exaggerated and incorporated fantastical notions into his account in order to impress the Queen and attain his requested nobility.[355] This cited embellishment of the truth also seems to be paralleled by José Arcadio Buendía's imaginative teachings and mappings in the first chapter of *Cien anos de soledad*: *La idea de un Macondo peninsular prevalió durante mucho tiempo, inspirada en el mapa arbitrario que dibujó José Arcadio Buendía al regreso de su expedición. Lo trazó con rabia, exagerando de mala fe las dificultades de comunicación* (96);[356] *José Arcadio Buendía ...(t)rató de seducirla con el hechizo de su fantasía, con la promesa de un mundo prodigioso donde bastaba con echar unos líquidos mágicos en la tierra para que las plantas dieran frutos a voluntad del hombre, y donde se vendían a precio de baratillo toda clase de aparatos para el dolor* (97-8).[357]

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[353] For an extended survey of the Classical influences upon the Renaissance ideal of 'Arcadia', see Snell (1955) and Levin (1972). For interesting discussions of Virgil's pastoral poetry and their reception see Jenkyns (1989); Martindale (1997).

[354] See especially Palencia-Roth (1995) for a discussion of how Christopher Columbus used literary ideals in his depiction of the New World. Also O'Gorman (1972) discusses how the New World originated as a literary convention.

[355] See Palencia-Roth (1995), p.147, and Fuentes (1987).

[356] *The idea of a peninsula Macondo prevailed for a long time, inspired by the arbitrary map that José Arcadio Buendía sketched on his return from the expedition. He drew it in rage, evilly, exaggerating the difficulties of communication* (18).

[357] *José Arcadio Buendía ... to seduce her with the charm of his fantasy, with the promise of a prodigious world where all one had to do was sprinkle some magic liquid on the ground and the plants would bear*

A few pages into the first chapter of the novel, the narrator comments: *Desde los tiempos de la fundación, José Arcadio Buendía construyó trampas y jaulas. En poco tiempo llenó de turpiales, canarios, azulejos y petirrojos no sólo la propria casa, sino todas las de la aldea ...La primera vez que llegó la tribu de Melquíades vendiendo bolas de vidrio para el dolor de cabeza, todo el mundo se sorprendió de que hubieran podido encontrar aquella aldea perdida en el sopor de la ciénaga, y los gitanos confesaron que se habían orientado por el canto de los pájaros* (91-2).[358] This passage evokes the most wistful passages of the journals of Columbus, where he recorded the intense music of the songbirds in the regions he came upon:[359] he even claimed to have seen and heard nightingales amongst them, a declaration which ornithologists have since tried to demystify by producing examples of similar birds indigenous to the Canary Islands, where he reported their presence. García Márquez realizes and exaggerates the report, by having such an abundance of birdsong that one inhabitant is forced to resort to putting beeswax in her ears (92).

The world which Columbus created in his writings is strongly reminiscent of early Macondo; the descriptions of orderly houses, *swept clean and near to running fresh water, twelve to fifteen in a village* (36), recalls the twenty mud and cane houses and their nearby stream in Macondo. In fact, the arrangement of the houses in García Márquez's village has another literary precedent in its symmetrical perfection. The narrator describes: *Puesto que su casa fue desde el primer mmento la mejor de la aldea, las otras fueron arregladas a su imagen y semejanza. Tenia una salita amplia y bien*

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fruit whenever a man wished, and where all manner of instruments against pain were sold at bargain prices (19).

[358] *Since the time of its founding, José Arcadio Buendía had built traps and cages. In a short time he filled not only his own house but all of those in the village with troupials, canaries, bee eaters and redbreasts ... The first time that Melquíades' tribe arrived, selling glass balls for headaches, everyone was surprised that they had been able to find that village lost in the drowsiness of the swamp, and the gypsies confessed that they had found their way by the song of the birds* (15).

[359] *The nightingale and other small birds were singing as they do in that month in Spain, and he says it was the greatest delight in the world* (97).

iluminada, un comedor en forma de terraza con flores de colores alegres, dos domitorios, un patio con un castaño gigantesco, un huerto bien plantado y un corral donde vivían en comunidad pacífica los chivos, los cerdos y las gallinas ...desde todas podía llegarse al río y abastecerse de agua con igual esfuerzo, y trazó las calles con tan buen sentido que ninguna casa recibía más sol que otra a la hora del calor (90-1).[360] These details mirror the image of an orderly ideal community that was trademarked by Thomas More's *Utopia*, a work written in 1516, around the time of the New World's discovery. This text both expressed and parodied the hopeful fervour of the times, whilst displaying clear debts to the Classical golden age in many self-conscious allusions.[361] In *Cien años de soledad* the dream of a perfect commune of existence, that so many of the colonists perceived among the native Indians or attempted themselves to establish,[362] is expressed in concrete form. This ideal is represented clearly in the first chapter: *En pocos años, Macondo fue una aldea más ordenada y laboriosa que cualquiera de las conocidas hasta entonces por sus 300 habitantes. Era en verdad una aldea feliz donde nadie era mayor de treinta años y donde nadie había muerto* (91).[363] A remarkably Virgilian feature occurs in this same chapter that can be traced from a passage in the *Georgics*, where in the pastoral utopia envisaged there, Virgil imagines the ancient armour of a soldier being discovered, overgrown by nature and representing the decay and redundancy of by-gone wartime (*Georg.* 1.493-7). When the founder of

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[360] *Since from the first moment his house was the best in the village, the others had been built in its image and likeness. (Each) had a small, well-lighted living-room, a dining-room in the shape of a terrace with gaily-coloured flowers, two bedrooms, a courtyard ... and a corral where goats, pigs and hens lived in peaceful communion ... from all of (the houses) one could reach the river and draw water with the same effort, and he had lined up the streets with such good sense that no house got more sun than another during the hot time of the day* (15).

[361] Plato, Seneca, Herodotus, Tacitus and Homer have all been cited by various scholars as clear influences. For an excellent guide to discussions of all sources of More's novel, see Lakowski (1996).

[362] Columbus describes the peaceful natives as being all under thirty and bearing no arms, and being entirely unaware of the value of things. Hence they were viewed as being easy targets for colonisation and conversion to the Christian faith.

[363] *Within a few years Macondo was a village that was more orderly and hard-working than any known until then by its three hundred inhabitants. It was a truly happy village where no one was over thirty years of age and where no one had died* (15).

Macondo attempts to use magnets to locate gold, he uncovers a calcified skeleton in its rusted armour, a symbol of the past days of the Spanish Conquest (82). It is a further indicator that the people of Macondo are depicted as actually occupying the Classical utopia which Renaissance writers dreamed up and relocated. It seems no mere coincidence that the founding patriarch of Macondo was called José Arcadio Buendía, for Arcadio alludes compellingly to the notion of Classical Arcadia which had been propagated by the Renaissance writers.[364]

It becomes apparent that García Márquez is invoking Classical literary themes primarily by alluding to the writings of the Conquest in his creation of early Macondo, writings which themselves reflect a continuous tradition of influence from such texts as the *Georgics*, *Metamorphoses* and the Bible. A comment by another literary figure in Latin America sheds some light upon these allusions; the Mexican poet Octavio Paz has described Latin America as *a chapter in the history of European utopias* in his study of the Mexican mindset *The Labyrinth of Solitude*.[365] García Márquez's construction of Macondo based upon inherited literary ideals seems to acknowledge this disconcerting sense of being a pawn in someone else's dream: by invoking these previous literary interpretations the novel both reflects and subverts their notions. This sense of being colonised and controlled is disclosed as the primary experience of the Latin American, and it explains the bewildering reality that we encounter in the first chapter of *Cien años de soledad*. So the magical realism can be said to emerge from the confounding sensation that one is living another's fantasy.[366]

[364] In his work upon the history of the Colombian novel, Williams (1991) perceives the Arcadian and Utopian themes as two dominant creative themes that fought to supersede one another.
[365] Paz (1985).
[366] Martin (1995).

7. Geographical and Cultural Readings

Colombia has been described as *a nation in spite of itself*,[367] an observation which alludes to the regionalism of the country. Geography and politics have led to a lack of infrastructure and hence communication between regions so that they have become quite autonomous and disconnected from one another.[368] This has been given as one of the reasons why it is not reasonable to cite an organic Colombian novelistic tradition, the others being the undervalued status of the novel as a genre there and the connection of class values and literature generally.[369] This lack of communication between regions has been coupled, in the case of the Costa region of Colombia, with a greater influence from the outside as a result of its coastal location, so on a literary level, García Márquez professes to be far more indebted to writers like Faulkner than to native Colombian authors.[370] The resulting atmosphere is one of isolation. This isolation is certainly felt acutely by some of the characters in the novel, especially (although not uniquely) José Arcadio Buendía, who makes many desperate attempts to reach the outside world, but persistently fails. It is however the resulting isolation which can be said to engender the atmosphere of paradise in the opening pages: for the isolated community is caught in its own time.

Early in the first chapter, the primary instance of the word *soledad* appears when describing the remains of the Spanish galleon that the explorers discover: *Frente a ellos, rodeado de helechos y palmeras, blanco y polvoriento en la silenciosa luz de la*

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[367] Bushnell (1993).
[368] Williams (1991). He observes that the country has been sadly lacking in road and rail links, with the two main cities, Bogotá and Medellin, unconnected until 1960 by direct rail service.
[369] Williams (1991), p.21.
[370] García Márquez himself states the importance of Faulkner to his literary career; however, it is also clear that the Latin American novels have been read voraciously by him. He writes: *The truth is, at that moment, with my fever of 104 degrees for the sagas of Mississippi, I was beginning to see the seams in our native novel* (García Márquez (2003), p.29). This implies that it is not lack of knowledge but lack of esteem that fuels his imitation of Faulkner rather than the Latin Americanists. For a study of García Márquez and Faulkner, see Delay & de Labriolle (1995/6).

mañana, estaba un enorme galeón español. Ligeramente volteado a estribor, de su arboladura intacta colgaban las piltrafas escuálidas del velamen, entre jarcias adornadas de orquídeas ...Toda la estructura parecía ocupar un ámbito proprio, un espacio de soledad y de olvido, vedado a los vicios del tiempo y a las costumbres de los pájaros.[371] There is an important symbolism in the discovery of the galleon[372] which is expressed most prominently by the word *soledad* and the phrase *Toda la estructura parecía ocupar un ámbito proprio*. The sense of isolation and being locked in one's own time mirrors the Colombian regionalist separateness.[373] This can produce a sense of permanent unreality where one fails to engage with the rest of history that is happening just beyond the horizon. As José Arcadio Buendía remarks to his stubborn wife, '*En el mundo están ocurriendo cosas increíbles ...Ahí mismo, al otro lado del río, hay toda clase de aparatos mágicos, mientras nosotros seguimos viviendo como los burros*'(90);[374] and later '*Nunca llegaremos a ninguna parte ...Aquí nos hemos de pudrir en vida sin recibir los beneficios de la ciencia*'(97).[375] This is exemplified in the first paragraph of the novel: that astonishing juxtaposition of firing squads with a preliterate world. The golden age imagery is employed to indicate how delusory and ultimately destructive the isolation that produces this atmosphere is.

It is clear that García Márquez intends for us to see a clear connection to his childhood town of Aracataca. He describes it in his memoirs in phrases lifted from his

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[371] *Before them, surrounded by ferns and palm trees, white and powdery in the silent morning light, was an enormous Spanish galleon. Tilted slightly to the starboard, it had hanging from its intact masts the dirty rags of its sails in the midst of its rigging, which was adorned with orchids... The whole structure seemed to occupy its own space, one of solitude and oblivion, protected from the vices of time and the habits of the birds* (17).

[372] There is also a strongly subversive element present in the depiction of this overgrown galleon, for the galleon is a symbol of one culture imposing (usually violently) upon another.

[373] Lawrence (1974) interprets the use of *soledad* in the novel as an example of the Marxist concept of alienation.

[374] *Incredible things are happening in the world ...Right there across the river there are all kinds of magical instruments while we keep on living like donkeys* (14).

[375] *We are hemmed in on all sides ... We're going to rot our lives away here without receiving the benefits of science* (18).

own novel: *I remembered it as it was: a good place to live where everybody knew everybody else, located on the banks of a river of transparent water that raced over a bed of polished stones as huge and white as prehistoric eggs.*[376] To a great extent, whether or not it is true, the author wants us to see Macondo as a symbol for a town in the real world of Colombia.

The sense of dislocation and bewildering newness is frequently connected to the presence of cultures of people with very different perspectives on the world. When Melquíades astonishes the inhabitants of Macondo with his magnets (82), the reader is made to see a perfectly explicable phenomenon[377] in magical terms. Amongst the characters, there are clear dichotomies of thought: José Arcadio Buendía and his wife Úrsula both at certain points express dismissive attitudes towards the beliefs of the Indian gypsies.[378] They are viewed as superstitious and subversive in turn, and Úrsula makes every effort to prevent her children from acquiring Indian habits and language, demonstrated most dramatically in her efforts to break Rebeca's stubborn behaviour (132-3). In his memoirs, García Márquez depicts his grandmother engaging in just this kind of behaviour: *fragments of the Goajiro language ...filtered into ours, drop by drop. My grandmother would use to conceal things from me, not realizing I understood it better than she because of my direct dealings with the servants.*[379] The arrival of the fair with all its tumultuous mystery and magic confounds the inhabitants, who find themselves lost in their own town (100-3). The Indian gypsies are seen as representing the illusion of civilisation and knowledge with their bizarre and entirely useless

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[376] García Márquez (2003), p.5.
[377] It is true that these magnets are peculiarly powerful, able to drag pots and pans out of houses and along the streets after them, but the point I am making here is that the concept of an object attracting metal items to it is not a magical one for us.
[378] *Cuando colvieron los gitanos, Úrsula había predispuesto contra ellos a toda la poblacíon* (89); *José Arcadio Buendía, muerto de risa, consideró que se trataba de una de tantas dolencias inventadas por supersticón de los indígenas* (134).
[379] García Márquez (2003), p.64.

contraptions: flying carpets, alchemy laboratories and potions for turning people into puddles of pitch. But their superstitions and ways of thinking filter into the world of Macondo much as the Goajiro language filtered into García Márquez's vocabulary. When Visitación warns of the insomnia plague, Úrsula immediately takes the precaution of quarantining Rebeca (134), and despite José Arcadio Buendía's reprimanding of Rebeca for believing in cards, he still takes the measure of searching for the bones of Rebeca's parents and burying them (170). There is not an entire dismissal of the beliefs of the colonised culture but a partial absorption,[380] and it is this state of semi-absorption that results in magical realism, where two systems of thought fail to form a hierarchy within the text. It is a direct result, not of the presence of many cultures in one place, which after all can be witnessed in any large international city, but of the isolated regionalism of Colombia which causes communities to be more credulous when they encounter other cultures, so accustomed are they to their own ways of thinking.

All these examples of the strange atmosphere arising from the mingling of two cultures and provoking responses of prejudice and distrust amongst communities reflect the memories which the author retains from his early childhood in the Colombian town of Aracataca. It has been noted how Úrsula's attitudes reflect those of his grandmother, both in her antagonism towards the Indians and her contradictory succumbing to so many superstitious ways of thinking that she associates with them. Perhaps finally it should be observed how the nostalgic golden age with which García Márquez imbues early Macondo is likely to express, at least to some extent, the memories of childhood that are often remembered as a lost paradisial existence. The preliteral world of childhood is reflected in the unnamed and astonishing world of Macondo; but of course,

[380] Palencia-Roth (1995) talks about this idea of the colonizer acquiring some of the aspects of the civilisations of the colonised, in his case with specific examples of Columbus gradually absorbing Indian words and concepts into his journals.

like the inhabitants of Macondo who discover that civilisation and devastation are just across the swamps, all children grow up to realise that the new and marvelous world has been discovered and explored many times over, and is not that new at all.

Conclusions

Both the insomnia plague and the golden age episodes of García Márquez present a number of potential explanations for the prevalence of magical realism. The aim of this chapter was to respond to the many Latin American voices citing their own nation, its history, landscape and cultural mixing, as the specific cause of magical realism. I will now respond to these claims in the light of the readings explored.

It is clear in the insomnia plague episode that cultural mingling has played an important role in the attitude of the characters and narrator. Although José Arcadio Buendía expresses cynicism towards the Indian's superstitious habits, he reacts not with shock and disbelief but practicality at the onset of the plague; and his wife Úrsula goes one step further by actually secluding the 'infected' Rebeca straight away. This indicates a strange point in cultural assimilation where neither mode of thought has supremacy, and one of the responses, as has been demonstrated, is magical realism. Also relevant is the oral culture of the Costa region, and its way of assimilating and conceptualising events that is markedly different from the intellectual writing cultures of the Highlands. Oral culture, it was noted, relates a given experience to its nearest human experience, so a phenomenon of mass hysteria that might result in insomnia is read as a virus. Both these readings reflect a very cultural root at the heart of the insomnia plague.

It is undeniable that García Márquez is using the plague as an effective metaphor for the destruction of the Indian culture at the hands of the Hispanic and Creole populations. It is also a metaphor for the loss of oral culture that occurred for him quite suddenly as he had to leave the weird and wonderful world of his grandparents in Aracataca and go to school in the Highlands. This coincides also with the loss of oral culture's ways of thinking that are symptomatic of leaving early childhood. This reading demonstrates historical events that have an innate (and horrific) magic about them, for the process of loss of culture is so unnatural. Thus history also provides an explanation for the magically real event.

The insomnia plague acts as a symbol for García Márquez's deep concern over the fragility of memory. It expresses also his cynicism towards writing's ability to be able to record the memory for posterity. Human identity and community are perceived as highly corruptible things. This was shown to connect vitally with the event of the Banana Company massacre that occurs much later in the novel: there a similarly rapid process of forgetting takes place, but for one specific event. The insomnia plague and the massacre represent one and the same thing, if a connection is presumed, which is the Colombian environment of fictional 'truth' and truthful fiction, which has been the strange and bewildering world which the inhabitants of the country have experienced for some time: a magical realist reality of the worst kind.

Finally there are the literary plagues which haunt fictional history. The Bible was demonstrated to be an obvious and overwhelmingly important source. García Márquez appears to be making a myth of foundations for Latin America, but in the same breath he undermines such an attempt by his inversions of Biblical material. The Bible lends something of a sense of magical realism to it, but the recentness of García Márquez's text is what really makes it magically real. Ancient historical documents of

wondrous happenings are necessarily accompanied by a deep skepticism, but *Cien años de soledad* is that rare (perhaps unparalleled) example of a mythic foundation occurring in only one remove from present day but presented in the same matter-of-fact way that one expects from foundational texts.

The golden age / paradise theme possesses a very strong historical precedent: that is, the superimposition of a literary myth. The conquistadores described the New World in terms and notions taken directly from Biblical and Classical literature, so in effect they refound the myth of the Biblical Eden or Classical golden age inside Latin America. García Márquez reuses these recreations only to seriously undermine them with the parallel presence of firing squads and incest. The resulting magical realism reflects the eerie feeling of living someone else's dream. This connects with the notion of the unnamed world that occurs in the opening paragraph of the novel. As Fuentes observes many times in his article on García Márquez,[381] to name is to invent, but to name and invent should not fool one into believing that he really knows and comprehends the thing he is naming. All perception is necessarily limited by the conceptual tools that an individual already possesses; and all history is a history of colonisation and cultural assimilation. However, in Latin America these processes are the foundational texts of their history, and they are full of the wonder and imaginings fuelled by centuries of idealistic and visionary literature.

The golden age theme expresses a failure on behalf of the Creole inhabitants of Macondo to connect to history in any useful way. In effect, they return to their innocent golden age state towards the novel after the four year rainstorm (yet another reversal, this time a chronological one, of the Biblical text). This failure is what causes the

[381] Fuentes (1987).

magical realist sensation, for they exist in a different time from the rest of the world. García Márquez has José Arcadio Buendía finally understand this in his madness: *tambien el tiempo sufria tropiezos y accidents, y podia por tanto astillarse y dejar en un cuarto una fraccion eternizada.*[382] To regard this effect as a 'splintering' of time is an example of the thinking of oral culture, and a magical realist expression itself.

Finally, of course, the golden age theme expresses the magical realist world in which all young children reside. At an early age, no single belief system governs thought; the world and its possessions are largely unnamed and fascinatingly new. The world of Macondo, it has been shown, is strongly intended by the writer to be read as his childhood world. The wondrous discovery of ice that occurs for José Arcadio Buendía at the end of the first chapter appears also in García Márquez's early youth: *There I discovered red snapper, and placed my hand on ice for the first time and was shaken to discover that it was cold.*[383] The theme could then be taken as an expression of childhood reality, as if all children inhabit a world akin to the primitive state of mankind, no matter into what century they are born.

Literature proves to be very important to the matter of magical realism here. The adaptations of Biblical themes and his incorporation of the Hispanic conquistadores' accounts are major elements of the magically real. Although the journals and the Bible were both written as historical documents, they are often barely distinguishable from the open fantasy of the other texts mentioned. The journals of Columbus especially invoke as much fantasy as they do reality in their descriptions of the New World. It became clear when Columbus hallucinated nightingales into his account that the literary

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[382] *time also stumbled and had accidents and could therefore splinter and leave an eternalized fragment in a room* (283).

[383] García Márquez (2003), p.87. Cf. *José Arcadio Buendía los pagó, y entonces puso la mano sobre el hielo, y la mantuvo puesta por varios minutes, mientras el corazón se le hinchaba de temor y de júbilo al contacto del misterio CAS*, p.102.

fantasies he had long harbored were being projected onto his perceptions; in the same way, I suspect that García Márquez has come to rewrite his own childhood using the images of *Cien años de soledad* for his recent memoirs abound with quotes and phrases which appear letter for letter in the novel.

4. Case Studies in Realistic Depiction

To depict realistically is not to portray or copy but rather to build rigorously, to construct objects that exist in the world in their particular primordial shape ...it is a question of representing before our eyes, in an intuitive way, the fact, the interior figure, of the exterior world.[384]

Parecía como si una lucide penetrante le permitiera ver la realidad de las cosas más allá de cualquier formalismo.[385]

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I examined the claims of Latin Americanists that magical realism emerged from their continent due to its unique history, geography and racial mixing. It was demonstrated by the analysis of two key passages in García Márquez's novel that there are many factors that can explain the use of magical realism, not least literary traditions and their development and functions through the ages. In this chapter, Ovid reappears as I continue to examine the claims of Latin Americanists, in this instance, focussing upon the aesthetic effect of magical realism, rather than the reasons for its appearance.

When Roh first coined the term 'magic realism' in his 1925 essay on Post-Expressionistic art,[386] he was striving to define the essence of what he saw as a return to

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[384] Roh (1995), p.24.
[385] *It seemed as if a penetrating lucidity permitted her to see the reality of things beyond any formalism, CAN*, p.305.
[386] Roh's work was originally published in *Nach-Expressionismus, Magischer Realismus: Probleme der neuesten europäischen Malerei* (Leipzig, Klinkhardt and Biermann, 1925).

the object, the thing in itself, after the flight of fancy and abstract imagination that was the Expressionistic era in painting. He spoke of the new style of painting as a movement which sought to capture the beating heart of reality, and one which recognised that *the mystery does not descend to the represented world, but rather hides and palpitates behind it.*[387] Fundamental to his argument was the belief that traditional Realism was a dead-end road for painting, for technology such as photography had already proven itself to be infinitely more effective at the act of copying the world. On the other hand, abstract idealism in painting was likewise unsatisfactory, as it went beyond reality and experience into realms of sheer fantasy. In the midst of these profound oscillations, he saw the Magic Realist painters[388] as treading a new path and one which he believed would liberate the object from both the hyperbole of imagination and the ailing mode of realism. The specialness of their new form of realism lay in its attitude of wonder at the world, a way of regarding reality as innately miraculous; *the unending miracle of eternally mobile and vibrating molecules. Out of that flux, that constant appearance and disappearance of material, permanent objects somehow appear ...Post-Expressionism faithfully raises a pane of glass in front of a light and is surprised that it doesn't 'melt', that it doesn't inevitably transform itself, that it is accorded a brief stay in eternity.*[389] Roh spent much time exploring this astonishment at the world in this essay, but he did not pry significantly into the workings that might produce such effects. One theory which is mentioned but not expanded is that of creation in magic realism; he writes *Painting now seems to feel the reality of the object and of space, not like copies of nature but like another creation.*[390] There seems to be room for an act of poetic

[387] Roh (1995), p.16.
[388] At the close of the book from which this essay was taken, Roh included examples of paintings by the Magic Realists; amongst whom, he included Carrà, de Chirico, Citroen, Schrimpf, Mense, Schott, Spies, Borje, Gros, Dix, Picasso et al.
[389] Roh (1995), p.22.
[390] ibid., p.23.

invention inside this new realism,[391] which is twinned with what he calls *attempting to locate* infinity *in small things*.[392] Such seductively mysterious phrases proliferate throughout his piece,[393] but for all their allure they do not reveal the inner mechanisms of these paintings: the secret of magic realism's recipe remains intact.

As the phrase 'magical realism' was captured and then colonised by writers and literary theorists,[394] Roh's vague descriptions of a spiritual mimesis that could more truly depict reality, were translated into a more specific set of textual characteristics which categorised a text as magical real. These have been outlined in the introduction to this thesis so do not require reiteration here;[395] it suffices to say that the continuing debate upon magical realism's 'true' manifestation shows no signs of abating, and the thing itself persists in slipping away. In this chapter I am primarily interested in studying what kind of reality magical realist texts produce, how they effects this, and whether this reality is in fact a closer likeness of our own than that borne of realist fiction. García Márquez states of his own magical realist style of writing: *I was able to write* One Hundred Years of Solitude *simply by looking at reality, without the limitations which rationalists or Stalinists through the ages have tried to impose on it to make it easier for them to understand.*[396] He suggests this distrust of traditional methods of thinking about things in *Cien años de soledad*, in a passage which is perhaps a note of caution sounded to the ambitious reader. Two days before the party inaugurating the

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[391] Chanady (1995) uses the Aristotelian concepts of 'mimesis' and 'poiesis' in elucidating the contrast between 'realism' and 'magical realism'.
[392] Roh (1995), p.27.
[393] cf. *It continues to approach the ultimate enigmas and harmonies of existence through a hidden stereometry'*,p.23; '*Only when the creative process achieves its goal from the inside out can it generate new views of reality, which is at most built in pieces, never imitated as a whole*, p.25; *the latest painting wants to offer us the image of something totally finished and complete, minutely formed, opposing it to our eternally fragmented and ragged lives as an archetype of integral structuring, down to the smallest details. Someday man too will recreate himself in the perfection of this idea*, p.30.
[394] This translation of the artistic term into literary spheres is a difficult one to trace: Guenther (1995) gives a rough outline of its transferral; Hart (1983) discusses the emergence of magical realism from its early surrealist routes in France.
[395] Flores (1995); Leal (1995); Faris (1995); Chanady (1995).
[396] Mendoza (1983), p.59-60.

completion of Úrsula's house renovations, José Arcadio Buendía is thoroughly distracted by Pietro Crespi's pianola: *José Arcadio Buendía renunció a la persecución de la imagen de Dios, convencido de su inexistencia y destripó la pianola para descifrar su magia secreta. Dos días antes de la fiesta, empantanado en un reguero de clavijas y martinetes sobrantes, chapuceando entre un enredijo de cuerdas que desenrollaba por un extremo y se volvían a enrollar por el otro, consiguió malcomponer el instrumento* (154).[397] The inevitable moment of disaster occurs when it is put to the test in its newly reconstructed form. It does not work at first but when it finally does play, what it produces is not musical harmony: *la música salió primero a borbotones, y luego en un manantial de notas enrevesadas* (155).[398] The implication here can be taken on two levels: both that the quest to unpack magical realism is doomed from the outset, for its essence will escape us, and that in fact the quest to capture reality itself, the very quest which magical realism is heralded as forerunning, likewise eludes us for it is far too subtle a thing for us to grasp.[399] On this note of pessimism, I begin my study.

1. Solidification: Niobe and Colonel Aureliano Buendía

The fate of Niobe in book six of *Metamorphoses* was a tale famous to Classical antiquity,[400] and its potential for harrowing calamity had already caught the

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[397] *José Arcadio Buendía stopped his pursuit of the image of God, convinced of his nonexistence, and he took the pianola apart in order to decipher its magical secret. Two days before the party, swamped in a shower of leftover keys and hammers, bungled in the midst of a mixup of strings that would unroll in one direction and roll up again in the other, he succeeded in a fashion in putting the instrument back together* (57).

[398] *the music came out, first in a burst and then in a flow of mixed-up notes* (58).

[399] Merrell (1974) reads this passage as demonstrating José Arcadio Buendía's flawed mechanistic approach to reality, which in turn represents the flaws of eighteenth and nineteenth century European rationalism.

[400] See Hom. *Il.* 24.602; Diod. 4.74; Paus. 1.21.3, 2.21.9, 5.16.4, 8.2.5, 8.2.7; Hyg. *Fab.* 9,11. Voit (1957) details Ovid's sources for this story.

imaginations of the great tragedians Sophocles and Aeschylus, both of whom had composed plays about her, though only fragments of these plays remain today[401]. Its potency lies in the old but perpetually relevant theme of great pride precipitating a terrible fall. Niobe is presented by Ovid in the style of an epiphany: *ecce venit comitum Niobe celeberrima turba/ vestibus intexto Phrygiis spectabilis auro* (6.165-6).[402] Her beauty is praised and her wealth highlighted, but Ovid introduces an aside of observation that conveys a hint of the ensuing story: *et, quantum ira sinit, formosa* (6.167). It seems that he is emphasising external appearance in order to set up a contrast with inner nature at this early stage in the episode. The extent of her proud and fierce nature is expressed fully by her diatribe against the worshippers of Leto; she hymns her own majesty and abundance of children, and contrasts her state with the paucity of Leto's offspring, two children (compared to Niobe's fourteen), finally offered a birthplace by the wandering island of Delos. The reader has been freshly sensitised to the crippling effects of haughtiness and blasphemy, as the story of Arachne lies directly before this fable (6.5-146), and each new insult to Leto increases our discomforting suspense at the expected outcome. Sure enough, Leto consults her children Apollo and Diana, and they begin to kill her sons and daughters, one by one. The slaughters are described individually with a grotesque and absurd realism;[403] two brothers are depicted as struck down by a single arrow as they were straining together (6.242-7), another pulls out the arrow with a piece of his lung attached (6.248-253). Niobe's proud spirit refuses to be quelled, even after all her sons are dead: *mirantem potuisse irascentemque, quod ausi/hoc essent superi, quod tantum iuris haberent* (6.269-70) is her immediate reaction

[401] For Sophocles, see Pearson (1917); for Aeschylus, see Smyth & Lloyd Jones (1957).
[402] Cf. Ov.*Am.*1.5.9, where Corinna first appears to Ovid: *ecce, Corinna venit.* This allusion imbues Niobe with the imagined divinity of the elegiac mistress, except in this case Niobe applies the exaggerated praise to herself.
[403] The grotesque details of the deaths recall (and perhaps parody) the epic tradition of Homer, where deaths of heroes were graphically and gorily depicted; e.g. Hom. *Il.* 4.524-6; 6.9-11.

to their deaths, and even now she taunts Leto that the remaining seven children still outnumber hers. *illa malo est audax* (6.288) comments the narrator, but this kind of boldness seems stonily inhuman to us. As Niobe loses her last remaining child, the suffering that had made her bold now stiffens her: *deriguitque malis* (6.303). This theme of rigidity is continued as Ovid observes how her hair is not stirred by the breeze, nor are her eyes moving. Her face drained of blood gives her the appearance of an inanimate statue. These details recall the description of Andromeda's appearance in book five; there it appears to Perseus that *nisi quod levis aura capillos / moverat et tepido manabant lumina fletu, / marmoreum ratus esset opus* (4.673-5).[404] This animometer that registered Andromeda as living, here indicates that Niobe is no longer animate. It also reminds us of the streaming haired vision of Niobe that first appeared to us only forty lines ago. There, Niobe was distinguished with verbs of motion and dynamism: *venit ...movens ... constitit ...circumtulit* (6.165-9); now a string of words for frozen stillness characterise her: *inmota ...nec flecti ...nec ... motus ...fixa* (6.305-11). As the descriptions continue, the text passes fluidly from what could be simply metaphor into reality, and it is not until the clear statement by the narrator -- *intra quoque viscera saxum est* (6.309) -- that we can be entirely certain that it is not just an extended metaphor for her debilitating mental state.[405] As the suspicion of transformation increases, so the depiction of stoniness spreads deeper into Niobe's body: first it is her hair, her face, then her tongue and finally her very bowels. This narrative technique evokes the creeping solidification through Niobe until she is entirely stone; the rigidity of her proud disposition is perfectly expressed in her petrified exterior.

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[404] Solodow (1987) discusses the importance of art as a tool for interpreting Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; he notes the ways in which the narrator draws attention to the finished product of transformation as a work of art. This description of Niobe seems to fit Solodow's argument very well.

[405] Otis (1970) observes the importance of the different treatment by Ovid of Niobe whereby he does not make her petrification a punishment.

This making external of internal realities is a feature of magical realist art that Roh spoke of in his essay when he wrote: *The new idea of 'realistic depiction' as it is rigorously conceived wishes to make such forms concretely evident in nature rather than in the abstract ...representing before our eyes, in an intuitive way, the fact, the interior figure, of the exterior world ... The point is ...to discover objects beginning with spirit.*[406] This is exactly what happens in the case of Niobe, where her transformed state embodies her psychological makeup, and so the interior world is revealed on the outside and brought to the surface. This makes the world, in one way, much more easily readable for everything lies on the surface to be seen. However, it is not as simple as all that: one of the notable things that occurs parallel to the transformation into stone of her body is the reversal of her inner state from bold assurance to a permanent weeping. The only active events she is capable of instigating now are the very soft capacities of weeping and trickling: *liquitur, et lacrimas etiam nunc marmora manant* (6.312). The gentle sounds created by the repetition of 'l's and 'm's reflect a meeker, more tender nature; in fact the external appearance here no longer reflects the character of the inner being, for Niobe is a broken woman. The only part that represents her now is the continuing tears that she was unable to shed in life. It is easy to understand how this magical realist depiction can be seen to be an effective portrayal of the immense psychological impact upon such a proud spirit as Niobe's of the destruction of her cherished offspring. By making her literally become stone as her response to the events is a striking and dramatic way of expressing her intransigent character; if Ovid were just to leave the stony imagery as simile rather than realised metaphor the impact on our senses would be weakened. It performs an alienating effect, which heightens our focus upon the event, forcing us to look at both Niobe and the stone through different eyes. To

[406] Roh (1995), p.24.

make a human being actually transform into a mineral object asserts a more fluid boundary between animate and inanimate than empirical thought would allow us, and allows us to interpret a person through a medium other than their human body.[407] This to some extent frees our consciousness from its normative categories of conceptualisation. The parallel processes of bodily rigidifying and spirit softening are also able to be displayed in this particularly remarkable way, encouraging us to explore the suggestion of a connection between outward manifestation and inner reality which is variable: for instance, is it that by expressing a latent characteristic in physical form the internal person then changes accordingly to fill the void left behind by the transition from psychological to ontological existence? On a realist level, this idea is not easily raised or explored, but in magical realism, the possibilities of the metamorphic condition raise just these kinds of issues in its defamiliarising effects.

'Defamiliarisation' was a notion propagated by a circle of literary theorists known as the Russian formalists, who emerged in the early twentieth century.[408] They believed that one should not look for any mystical extratextual meaning inside texts: that texts ought to be analysed in terms of what techniques they used. They saw defamiliarisation or estrangement as the distinguishing characteristic of literary discourse.[409] Eagleton explains the idea: *What was specific to literary language, what distinguished it from other forms of discourse, was that it 'deformed' ordinary language*

[407] Turning into stone is not uncommon in the poem: cf. Aglauros (2. 825-32); the guests at Perseus' banquet who look upon Medusa's head (5.177ff) ; Scylla (14.73-4) ; Anaxerete (14.755-8). Of these examples, Aglauros and Anaxerete both manifest their inward nature in their new stony form: *sic letalis hiems paulatim in pectora venit / vitalesque vias et respiramina clausit, / nec conata loqui est nec, si conata fuisset, / vocis habebat iter; saxum iam colla tenebat, / oraque duruerant, signumque exsangue sedebat;/ nec lapis albus erat, sua mens infecerat illam* (2.827-32); *paulatimque occupat artus,/ quod fuit in duro iam pridem corpore, saxum* (14.757-8).

[408] The movement was headed by Roman Jakobson (1896-1982) and Victor Shklovsky (1893-1984), but others involved were Yurii Tynianov, Vladimir Propp, Mikhail Bakhtin et al. See Erlich (1981).

[409] Shklovsky (1965) introduced the idea of estrangement as a method of avoiding passive reception of texts: *Habitualisation devours words, clothes, furniture, one's wife, and the fear of war ... Art exists that one may recover the sensation of life, it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone* stony. *The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects 'unfamiliar', to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process is an aesthetic end in itself must be prolonged*, p.12.

in various ways. Under the pressure of literary devices, ordinary language was intensified, condensed, twisted, telescoped, drawn out, turned on its head.[410] It was this deforming which causes readers to view the words in a new, refreshing way. Eagleton later observes the similarity of the concept of defamiliarisation to Barthes' 'double sign': *Barthes' 'double sign' ...is the grandchild of the 'estranged' language of the Formalist and Czech structuralists, of the Jakobsonian 'poetic' word which flaunts its own palpable linguistic being. I say 'grandchild' rather than 'child', because the more direct offspring of the Formalists were the socialist artists of the German Weimar Republic...who employed 'estrangement effects' to political ends.*[411] Although Roh does not mention them specifically, the artists whom he labelled magical realist fall under this heading; but, conversely, Roh saw the estrangement techniques they used as important because they tapped into the magic that lay hidden behind the world. This notion is entirely the reverse of the aims of the Russian Formalists, who, as we saw, were entirely dismissive of questions of meaning. It is a tricky business to trace a concept through literary history, and therefore unwise to fully subscribe to Eagleton's inheritance theory here. What is certain is the fundamental similarity between Russian Formalist defamiliarisation and magical realism's alienating effect. However, magical realism differs radically in its emphasis upon an objective reality that its texts refer to; the object was not important to formalism but only the internal reality of the text itself. The importance of this difference will be developed in the course of this chapter.

Many of the events and characteristics we have found to be connected to Niobe find surprisingly close parallels in a particular character of García Márquez's novel. Colonel Aureliano Buendía became a figure of legendary proportions in Macondo when

[410] Eagleton (2000), p.2.
[411] ibid., p.118.

he left with a small band of men to fight for the liberals after watching a woman being beaten to death by conservative officials who had taken the town. He fought many wars and slept with countless women, eventually fathering seventeen sons, and returned a fierce and angry man.[412] At one point in *Cien años de soledad* the Colonel makes a profound admission to his friend Colonel Gerineldo Márquez: '*Yo, por mi parte, apenas ahora me doy cuenta que estoy peleando por orgullo*'(237).[413] It is a revelation which Úrsula confirms many years later in her extreme old age as she ponders over her son: *Vislumbró que no había hecho tantas guerras por idealismo, como todo el mundo creía, ni había renunciado por cansancio a la victoria inminente como todo el mundo creía, sino que había ganado y perdido por el mismo motivo, por pura y pecaminosa soberbia* (361).[414] Colonel Aureliano Buendía's pride gradually hardens him until he recognises his own resistance to compassion and nostalgia; he loses all sense of humanity and begins to behave like a monster, killing and destroying without a qualm. Although it is clearly the events of the war which precipitate the full extent of this emotional hardening, there are signs from very early on in his life that he is a man at odds with his own feelings, and incapable at comprehending and therefore handling them in any reasonable way. When his child wife Remedios dies suddenly and tragically, he is still a young man, before the feverish rebellions of war had affected him: *La muerte de Remedios no le produjo la conmoción que temía. Fue más bien un sordo sentimento de rabia que paulatinamente se disolvió en una frustación solitaria y pasiva* (191).[415] Later, he experiences this same feeling again in response to the sudden and mysterious

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[412] Llosa (1995), p.59, comments that the Colonel is *a hero who is a direct descendant from the crusades in books of chivalry*, emphasising his exaggerated character and behaviour.
[413] '*As far as I'm concerned, I've come to realise only just now that I'm fighting because of pride*' (116).
[414] *She sensed that he had fought so many wars not out of idealism, as everyone had thought, nor had he renounced a certain victory because of fatigue, as everyone had thought, but that he had won and lost for the same reason, pure and sinful pride* (203-4).
[415] *The death of Remedios had not produced the despair he had feared. It was, rather, a dull feeling of rage that gradually dissolved in a solitary and passive frustration* (84).

murders of all but one of his seventeen sons in a single night. The manner in which these bizarre exterminations are described is sinister and absurd; the narrator describes: *En el curso de esa semana, por distintos lugares del litoral, sus diecisiete hijos fueron cazados como conejos por criminals invisibles que apuntaron al centro de sus cruces de ceniza* (350).[416] The event which appeared to instigate this spate of extraordinary and brutal killings is the Colonel growing angry at witnessing the gruesome murder of a little boy and his grandfather by the authorities, and shouting '*Un día de estos ...voy a armar a mis muchachos para que acaben con estos gringos de mierda!*'(350).[417] Another freakish event that precedes this one, but becomes central to it, is an Ash Wednesday service some time ago, to which all seventeen sons had gone, where the traditional ash crosses marked on the foreheads of the worshippers could not be washed away from the foreheads of the sons. Although no one is able to understand at the time, it is clear in retrospect that they are indicative of the fact that the boys are future targets for these mysterious deaths that ensue. The narrator's grotesque realism in the descriptions of these deaths is strongly reminiscent of the sudden and surreal deaths of Niobe's children. *Aureliano Triste salía de la casa... cuando un disparo de fusil surgido de la oscuridad le perforó la frente. Aureliano Centeno fue encontrado en la hamaca ...con un punzón de picar hielo clavado hasta empuñadura entre las cejas. Aureliano Serrador había dejado a su novia ...cuando alguien que nunca fue identificado entre la muchedumbre disparó un tiro de revólver que lo derribó dentro de un caldero de manteca hirviendo* (350-1).[418] These graphic descriptions and bizarre, farcical deaths -

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[416] *During the course of that week, at different places along the coast, his seventeen sons were hunted down like rabbits by invisible criminals who aimed at the center of their crosses of ash* (197).
[417] '*One of these days ...I'm going to arm my boys so we can get rid of these shitty gringos!*' (197).
[418] *Aureliano Triste was leaving the house ... when a rifle shot came out of the darkness and perforated his forehead. Aureliano Centeno was found in the hammock ...with an icepick between his eyebrows driven up to the handle. Aureliano Serrador had left his girlfriend ...when someone in the crowd who was never identified fired a revolver shot which knocked him over into a cauldron of boiling lard* (196).

such as an ice pick between the eyebrows and tumbling into a vat of boiling lard - recall similarly absurd death sequences of Niobe's children noted earlier.

Like Niobe, Colonel Aureliano Buendía is presented as a man attended by glory and ferociously proud. His return to Macondo highlights the degree of arrogant delusion that has come to govern his behaviour: *embriagado con la gloria del regreso, por las victorias inverosímiles, se había asomado al abismo de la grandeza. Se complacía en mantener a la diestra al duque de Marlborough, su gran maestro en las artes de la guerra, cuyo atuendo de pieles y uñas de tigre suscitaban el respeto de los adultos y el asombro de los niños* (267-8).[419] Niobe had likewise been described as moving in an adoring crowd and dignified by her rich robes: *vestibus intexto Phrygiis spectabilis auro* (6.166). The arrogance of Niobe's speech belittling Leto and glorifying herself is akin to the detail that the Colonel had insisted that no human being could come closer to him that ten feet, and had ordered his aides to draw a chalk circle around him wherever he stopped. The stern coldness of Colonel Aureliano Buendía begins to become concrete for him on the night when his supreme authority is recognised by the rebel commands: *despertó sobresaltado, pidiendo a gritos una manta. Un frío interior que le rayaba los huesos y lo mortificaba inclusive a pleno sol le impidió dormir bien varios meses, hasta que se convirtió en una costumbre'*(269)[420]. From then on, he goes nowhere without this blanket, which represents for us the habitual continuation of this state of physical discomfort. He tries desperately to break out of this icy grip: *el coronel Aureliano*

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[419] *intoxicated by the glory of his return, by his remarkable victories, he had peeped into the abyss of greatness. He took pleasure in keeping by his right hand the Duke of Marlborough, his great teacher in the art of war, whose attire of skins and tiger claws aroused the respect of adults and the awe of children* (138-9).

[420] *he woke up in a fright, calling for a blanket. An inner coldness which shattered his bones, and tortured him even in the heat of the sun would not let him sleep for several months until it became a habit* (140). The notion of habitude inducing a concrete state is one which is often pivotal for the metamorphoses in Ovid's poem: cf. the sisters of Phaethon (2.340-366); the Propoetides (10.240-2).

Buendía rasguñó durante muchas horas, tratando de romperla, la dura cáscara de su soledad (273).[421]

The recurring memory in the Colonel's mind, and the one with which we come to associate him, is that of his first encounter with ice. This encounter is described in the very first chapter from the perspective of the Colonel's memory (*frente al pelotón de fusilamiento, el coronel Aureliano Buendía había de recordar aquella tarde remota en que su padre lo llevó a conocer el hielo* (81)),[422] and on the day he dies it recurs a final time (*pisó conscientemente una trampa de la nostalgia, y revivió la prodigiosa tarde de gitanos en que su padre lo llevó a conocer el hielo* (380)).[423] The ice is an object in the narrative which, while never overtly connected with the icy chill that taunts Aureliano Buendía's bones, is designed to alert us to some kind of essential bond. The ice in his body materialises his hard-hearted pride, and is a symbol that differs from Niobe's stoniness only in that it is perceived through the Colonel, rather than directly observed by us. The parallel symbol of the ice as object is something more mysterious to decode. It is described in detail towards the end of the first chapter: *Dentro sólo había un enorme bloque transparente, con infinitas agujas internas en las cuales se despedazaba en estrellas de colores la claridad del crepúsculo* (102).[424] This focus upon the ice as an object recalls Roh's belief that magical realism seeks to locate infinity in small things, but it remains a mysterious presence until a spiritual significance is suggested by the development of Colonel Aureliano Buendía's character and eventual partial metamorphosis into ice. In Niobe's case, the stone was seen to spread inward from the

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[421] *Colonel Aureliano Buendia scratched for many hours trying to break the hard shell of his solitude* (142).
[422] *in front of the firing-squad, he was to remember that remote afternoon in which his father took him to discover ice* (9).
[423] *he knowingly fell into a trap of nostalgia, and relived the prodigious afternoon of the gypsies in which his father took him to discover ice* (218).
[424] *Inside there was only an enormous transparent block with infinite internal needles in which the light of the sunset was broken up into coloured stars* (22).

outside, until she was fully stone. In this case, however, the metamorphosis starts and ends in the Colonel's bones, but the ice as object has a separate but connected existence in the text.

The absurd treatment of the deaths of the children of these two extraordinarily proud individuals, as well as the extreme pride of the characters themselves, cannot be said to be strictly magical real; however, exaggeration and grotesque detail are certainly common features of magical realist texts,[425] and therefore are important to the mode, if not actually uniquely defining qualities. There is something of the magical about the deaths themselves, for there is a sense of unseen agency in both sets of murders.

The question of their function and effectiveness can be tackled by comparing a modern magical realist text, Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. A Bangladeshi housewife describes her experience of racial hatred in London: *they had a demon city in which anything could happen, your windows shattered in the middle of the night without any cause, you were knocked over in the middle of the street by invisible hands.*[426] Walker describes this magical realist passage as *a way of rendering her experience of a world in which all usual expectations of happiness are undermined by disguised threats and hidden dangers.*[427] This explanation could equally fit the case of Colonel Aureliano Buendía, occupying himself a world of random killings and unpredictable violence. The use of magical realism could be said to express in a more startling way the feeling of uncertainty and paranoia that pervades a troubled society; to describe in a realistic way the murder of a son at the hands of rebels, for example, does not seem to convey so

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[425] eg. Danow (1995), p.65: *A 'poetics of excess' that typifies magical realist texts, extends within a broadly delineated typology, from the fantastic to the hyperbolic and from the improbable to the possible*; Faris (1995), p.184: *A carnival spirit is common in this group of novels. Language is used extravagantly, expending, expending its resources beyond its referential needs*; Delbaere-Garant (1995), p.256: *The magic realism of Hodgin's* The Invention of the World *combines 'magic' occurences à la García Márquez ... and is complemented by ... 'grotesque realism', a combination of North American tall tale, Latin American baroque, and Bakhtinian 'carnivalesque'. Grotesque elements are used to convey the anarchic eccentricity of popular tellers who tend to amplify and distort reality to make it more credible.*

[426] Rushdie (1988), p.250.

[427] Walker (1995), p.352.

effectively the feelings of insecurity and terror that taunt anyone in such an environment, as this magical realist representation of unseen and savage agencies targeting ruthlessly and systematically an entire set of siblings.

Ovid's Niobe story cannot be so easily explained by historical-political discourse; and yet the sinister and ruthless atmosphere conjured by the tragic tale is very similar. It could be argued that Ovid's version of Niobe captures a more universalist reading of the sense of human life being affected in often terrible ways by forces beyond our control and far in advance of our powers. The extreme and uncanny relation of the circumstances causes us to conceptualise them in a new and disturbing way. Kearney makes an interesting observation when he writes of the phenomenological movement: *all its variations share the virtue of inviting us to think again, to go back to beginnings, to question anew. This has the methodological advantage of enabling us to ask what things* mean -- *as if we were asking for the first time. We no longer take 'things themselves' for granted. We enter an attitude of methodic unknowing where things cease to be facts, data, objects, possessions, and become* questions. *So doing, we acquire what Paul Ricoeur has termed a 'second naivete', capable of conducting old enquiries in new ways.*[428] This seems also to be an apt description of the way in which magical realist techniques such as the ones we have looked at above affect our usual perceptions of reality: we are given the opportunity of seeing things once again as if we had never encountered them before, which enables us to absorb them in a way disallowed by traditional modes of thinking, deepening our insight into the nature of their being.

Niobe and Colonel Aureliano Buendía's experiences are just two examples of many magical realist happenings that occur in the two texts; I am now going to pass on

[428] Kearney (1998), p.5.

to other passages, which provide some pertinent contrasts and comparisons with these two bleak figures of torment.

2. Disintegration: Cyane and Rebeca

Cyane is a tricky case for the study of metamorphosis, for she is a water nymph to begin with,[429] implying that her identity already partakes to a great extent of wateriness; to this extent, her situation possesses some of the ambiguity of the Colonel's, who partakes of ice before he becomes it by association with the external object that reappears in his memory. She appears at a crucial point in the story of the rape of Persephone, when Dis has seized the object of his desire and is flying away with her. Cyane attempts to intervene, but the god grows angry and plunges his sceptre into her waters, creating a way to Tartarus, towards which he heads with his chariot, leaving Cyane in a state of humiliation and grief for the stolen goddess.[430] The water-nymph is described as sustaining an *inconsolabile vulnus* (5.426) which *mente gerit tacita lacrimisque absumitur*[431] *omnis* (5.427). These seem to be fairly natural reactions and in some ways reminiscent of Niobe's, who affects both silence and tears; however, the differences are significant. Cyane is silent immediately, just as her tearful reaction comes straight away: Niobe is silent only through her almost instantaneous metamorphosis, and her tears do not flow until her external nature is stone - the two things seem to be intimately connected. The next line reveals the path which Cyane will

[429] In other sources, Cyane appears not as a nymph but as a fountain of water created when Pluto cleaves a way into the earth with the stolen Proserpina (Diod. Sic. 5.4.1-2; Ov. *Fasti* 4.469). The *Homeric Hymn* does not refer to any such story.

[430] Sharrock (2001), p.97, reads the story of Cyane as using phallic imagery and thus referring to the rape of Cyane by Pluto, which might perhaps elucidate her otherwise quite extreme response to the instance; Hinds (2001), p.134, similarly raises the notion of rape in connection with this scene, focusing on the landscape as a symbol of the event.

[431] Pliny the Elder uses this verb *absumere* in the context of something transforming into another thing: *NH.* 11.7.45ff.

now take: *et, quarum fuerat magnum modo numen, in illas/extenuatur aquas* (5.428-9). In the context of a more realist narrative, we might take this as a powerful metaphor, but experience teaches us to take all metaphor literally in this poem. The narrator tries to draw us right inside the mysterious happening by addressing us: *molliri membra videres, / ossa pati flexus, ungues posuisse rigorem, / primaque de tota tenuissima quaeque liquescunt, / caerulei crines digitique et crura pedesque* (5.429-32).

Just as happened to Niobe, the metamorphosis acts upon her outermost components first; for Niobe this was a creeping petrification, but for Cyane an almost opposite reaction is taking place: the nymph is melting away in her grief. Ovid again takes great care in detailing the event in minutiae, realising the traditional metaphor of one 'dissolving into tears'[432] to an absurd extreme. Whereas Niobe's neck grew to resist being bent: *nec flecti cervix* (6.308), Cyane's very bones bend: *ossa pati flexus* (5.430), both examples of their bodies not conforming to their usual habits, and these are the first symptoms of transformation with more visual manifestations occurring soon afterwards. By using these examples of the body's ability to perform its normal tasks he is conveying something of their mental state to us: the internal awareness of change for the owners of the changing bodies. The external physical changes for Cyane are presented in a rapid list of limbs which reflects the swift vanishing into water, until finally her veins are filled and she is entirely liquid. Niobe and Cyane are both noted for their bloodless state: Niobe's veins are frozen in marble, whereas Cyane's blood in replaced by water. The common perception of pallor induced by shock[433] is taken to a far more disturbing level, where there occurs a realisation of an old metaphor of realist texts.

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[432] Cf. Val. Fl. 3.395; Ter.*Heaut.*2.3.65. In Biblical literature, cf. *Ps.119:25-32*. In English literature, cf. Shakespeare *Rich.*II. 3.2.106-8; Henry King *Exeq.* 6, 19-20.

[433] In a version of the Niobe legend, Meliboea, a daughter of Niobe who escaped the mass culling, turned pale with fear at the slaughter of her siblings, and so received the name of Chloris (the pale woman). See Paus. 2.21.9; 5.16.4.

This magical realist technique is fresh and evocative in a way that stale old metaphors no longer are, and this was true even of Ovid's time. But is this a full explanation of the greater effectiveness of magical realism - that it is simply less hackneyed? It seems a less than satisfactory conclusion, not least because fantasy in narrative has been around since the beginnings of literature. If we look at the act of dissolution in its context, it is possible to begin to see why it is appropriate that Cyane melted in her grief.[434] The type of grievance she suffered was not one as profoundly horrifying and tragic as Niobe's: it was a mocking of her waters and her point of view on a situation. Cyane does not present herself as a powerful and fearsome woman as Niobe does, but rather a naïve and ineffectual young girl: Ovid himself comments mid-metamorphosis, *nam brevis in gelidas membris exilibus undas/ transitus est* (5.433-4), a remark which foregrounds the essential similarity between the nymph and the waters she dissolved into. This appears to be an important aspect of this magical realist use of transformation -- the clarifying of essences. A realistic account of the humiliation of the feckless Cyane or the immeasurable grief of the disdainful Niobe might accurately reproduce the superficial reality of the event, but the reader is always aware in the act of reading that something essential is lost from the account. Hardie, writing on illusion in artistic representation, observes: *The photograph miraculously achieves the artist's desire to counterfeit reality, but at the same time intensifies the viewer's awareness that the image is an absent presence: the uncanny awareness that what has been captured is a past instant of time, is itself a sharp reminder that the presence of which the*

[434] Dissolution is an entirely feminine response in *Metamorphoses* and is usually a result of shame, flight from rape or rejection: cf. Echo: *sed tamen haeret amor crescitque dolore repulsae: / attenuant vigiles corpus miserabile curae, / adducitque cutem macies, et in aera sucus / corporis omnis abit; vox tantum atque ossa supersunt: / vox manet; ossa ferunt lapidis traxisse figuram* (3.395-9); Arethusa: ' *occupat obsessos sudor mihi frigidus artus / caeruleaeque cadunt toto de corpore guttae; / quaque pedem movi, manat locus eque capillis / ros cadit, et citius, quam nunc tibi facta renarro. / in latices mutor*'(5.632-6);Canens: *illic cum lacrimis ipso modulata dolore / verba sono tenui maerens fundebat, ut olim / carmina iam moriens canit exequialia cycnus; / luctibus extremum tenues liquefacta medullas / tabuit inque leves paulatim evanuit auras* (14.428-32). Also Hyrie melts through her grief at 7.380, and Byblis through shame at 9.663-4.

photograph is a certificate is no longer there.[435] This comment can be applied to realist narrative efforts to access a reality which has gone, or one that was never there in the first place. The way to validate the efficiency of the act of writing at reproducing a reality is to use it as a tool for uncovering and illuminating timeless essences. To say that a woman *became* a statue or a pool of water concretises the essence of the character and her responses, so that the inner world becomes outer in a surprising and permanent way.[436]

Cyane is described at the instant preceding her metamorphosis as suffering from an inconsolable wound and the implication is that her subsequent transformation is a consequence of this wound; there seems no other way forward for her and so she reacts by side-stepping reality and becoming water. In the same book of *Metamorphoses*, and within the same outer frame of the rape of Persephone, a very similar dissolution happens to Arethusa, when she is desperately trying to escape from Alpheus's advances.[437] She describes for Ceres her terror, her flight and her disguise of a cloud, which failed to fool him; the intensity of her panic is evoked in a trio of similes from the hunting of animals by other animals (5.626-9).[438] It is the point at which she feels entirely cornered and with no other means of escape that she begins to experience the changes in her body. At first, these manifest themselves as the usual symptoms of acute panic: '*occupat obsessos sudor mihi frigidus artus / caeruleaeque cadunt toto de corpore guttae*'(5.632-3). As with Cyane and Niobe, what could initially be taken as poetic licence with language becomes an unavoidable shift into the supernatural, as it

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[435] Hardie (2001), p. 208.
[436] Cf. Solodow (1987) who perceives transformation in the poem as often performing a 'clarification of essences'.
[437] Arethusa appears at Virg. *Ecl.* 10.1 and Ov. *Fasti* 4.423. Her story appears in Paus. 5.7.2-3; Virg. *Aen.* 3.694-6; Pind. *Nem.* 1.1-4.
[438] These similes recall the examples used by Phoebus in book one in his vain attempts to persuade Daphne not to be terrified: *sic agna lupum, sic cerva leonem, / sic aquilam penna fugiunt trepidante columbae* (1.505-6).

becomes clear that she is quite literally dissolving: '*quaque pedem movi, manat locus eque capillis/ ros cadit, et citius, quam nunc tibi facta renarro,/ in latices mutor.*'(5.634-6). The magical aspect emerges fluidly from its realist setting,[439] and encourages us to regard the hackneyed metaphor afresh as a way of reacting to an emotional state that has no conceivable resolution. However, the metamorphosis itself does not appear to provide any genuine resolution, but rather a swerve into an alternative system, avoiding the tortures of irresolution by a piece of surreal trickery. One of the difficulties of this kind of metamorphosis that freezes someone within one particular instant is that it necessarily reduces them, a point raised by Solodow: *metamorphosis does not take place without loss...they preserve only one aspect, occasionally a few aspects, of their character. They no longer possess it in its rich, complex entirety. Clarification means simplification.*[440]

In Macondo, there are two notable examples of disintegration which occur: one is that of the town itself as it starts to become overrun by ants before being entirely swept away by an apocalyptic whirlwind. The other is that of Rebeca. After the mysterious death of her husband, José Arcadio, Rebeca retreats entirely inside herself for the rest of her life: *Tan pronto como sacaron el cadáver, Rebeca cerró las puertas de su casa y se enterró en vida, cubierta con una gruesa costra de desdén que ninguna tentación terrenal consiguió romper ...El pueblo la olvidó* (234-5).[441] Like the examples in *Metamorphoses*, the initial poetical phrases could, in a more realist text, be taken as linguistic play: however, the description of a 'thick crust of disdain' in *Cien años de*

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[439] This fluid emerging of magic from realism is one of the features noted by Faris (1995), p.163, as essential to magical realist literature: *magical realism combines realism and the fantastic in such a way that magical elements grow organically out of the reality portrayed.*

[440] Solodow (1988), p.189.

[441] *As soon as they took the body out, Rebeca closed the doors of her house and buried herself alive, covered with a thick crust of disdain that no earthly temptation was ever able to break...The town forgot about her* (114-5).

soledad suggests the kind of realised imagery that appeared in Colonel Aureliano Buendía's partial solidification into ice. The evidence that the town has forgotten her is demonstrated by the omission of any mention of her for several chapters; she is only rediscovered on the day that Aureliano Triste decides that he wants to live in the apparently empty house on a corner of the square. He has been told that the solitary widow and her pitiless servant were only known for their habit of throwing the carcasses of dead animals into the street to rot in the sun. Since the last dead animal had decayed long ago, it was assumed that they had both died. The narrator describes what was left of the house: *Los goznes desmigajados por el óxido, las puertas apenas sostenidas por cúmulos de telaraña, las ventanas soldadas por la humedad y el piso por la hierba y las flores silvestres, en cuyas grietas anidaban los lagartos y toda clase de sabandijas...[Aureliano Triste e]mpujó con el hombro la puerta principal y la carcomida armazón de madera se derrumbó sin estrépito, en un callado cataclismo de polvo y tierra de nidos de comején* (327).[442] It seems as if the entire house is structured on agents of decay, and that nature is also a key element of the ruination. The building is almost immaterial in its disintegration, a notion suggested by the noiselessness of its collapsing doorframe. Its disintegration reflects its owner Rebeca, once a vibrant and beautiful woman,who is finally seen by Aureliano Triste in her current state: *vio en el centro de la sala a la escuálida mujer vestida todavía con ropas del siglo anterior, con unas pocas hebras amarillas en el cráneo pelado y con unos ojos grandes, aún hermosos, en los cuales se habían apagado las últimas estrellas de la esperanza*

[442] *The hinges had crumbled with rust, the doors were held up only by clouds of cobwebs, the windows were soldered shut by dampness, and the floor was broken by grass and wildflowers and in the cracks lizards and all manner of vermin had their nests...(Aureliano Triste) pushed on the main door with his shoulder and the worm-eaten wooden frame fell down noiselessly amid a dull cataclysm of dust and termite nests* (180-1).

(327).[443] The largeness of her eyes evokes the tiny shriveled form of her head; she is a pitiful figure and her form vigorously represents the disintegration of her soul.

Later in the novel, Rebeca finally dies: *la encontraron en la cama solitaria, enroscada como un camarón, con la cabeza pelada por la tiña y el pulgar metido en la boca* (464).[444] Her aloneness is emphasised and her retreat to childhood is suggested, signaling a failure to develop and grow as an individual: instead her grief has eaten her up. While Rebeca's disintegration is less extreme and more gradual than any in *Metamorphoses*, it is nonetheless an example of the same technique applied to a different degree. Úrsula's imminent death is depicted as a diminishment that recalls Rebeca's infantile characteristics at the point of her own death: *Poco a poco se fue reduciendo, fetizándose, momificándose en vida, hasta el punto de que en sus últimos meses era una ciruela pasa perdida dentro del camisón ...Parecía una anciana recién nacida*(461).[445] Hart, in her study of what she labels 'magical feminism' in the works of Isabel Allende, uses the extreme shriveling of Úrsula as an example of how magical realism is used to reveal deep truths about reality. She writes: *Her shrinkage to the size of a football is at the very least hyperbolic, yet when her great-grandchildren play with her like a doll, forgetting her in drawers and corners, the 'magical' event is really no more than a literal expression of a figurative truth about aging -- that descendants of the elderly drag them around like dolls or inanimate objects.*[446] Many of Ovid's metamorphoses express exactly this mechanism of literal presentation of figurative

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[443] *he saw in the center of the room the squalid woman, still dressed in clothing of the past century, with a few yellow threads on her bald head, and with two large eyes, still beautiful, in which the last stars of hope had gone out* (181).

[444] *they found her in her solitary bed, curled up like a shrimp, with her head bald from ringworm and her finger in her mouth* (279).

[445] *little by little she was shrinking, turning into a foetus, becoming mummified in life to the point that in her last months she was a cherry raisin lost inside of her nightgown...She looked like a newborn old woman* (277).

[446] Hart (1989), p. 27.

truths;[447] Ovid in fact includes an example of magically extreme old age in his description of the Sibyl in book fourteen of his poem.[448] In this instance, a fairy tale wish motif has ocurred whereby her suitor Apollo offers her whatever she wants.[449] She foolishly wishes for '*quot haberet corpora pulvis, / tot mihi natales contingere*' (14.137-8). Forecasting her grim future as an immeasurably old and decrepit spinster, she imagines herself in pitiful terms: '*tempus erit, cum de tanto me corpore parvam/ longa dies faciet, consumptaque membra senecta/ ad minimum redigentur onus: nec amata videbor*'(14.147-9). Something of the misery and loneliness of old age is captured and illuminated by this most bizarre of situations. Hart's fundamentalist reductionism misses the significance of inexplicable wonder that characterises magical realist writing, but there is undoubtedly a large amount of truth in its formulation.

Rebeca's decrepitude later proves to be a figure for the whole of Macondo as the town shows the inevitable signs of deterioration in language very similar to that which described Rebeca's home.[450] After the deluge of four long years, as might be expected, the place is in tatters: *Macondo estaba en ruinas. En los pantanos de la calles quedaban muebles despedazados, esqueletos de animales cubiertos de lirios colorados, últimos recuerdos de las hordas de advenedizos que se fugaron de Macondo tan*

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[447] Cf. the brutal Lycaon's transformation into a wolf at 1.232-9; the stubborn Aglauros' metamorphosis into stone at 2.820-33; the vain Narcissus' transmutation to a flower that gazes into rivers and ponds at 3.504-10; the anti-social and hermit-like Minyades are turned into bats at 4.405-15.

[448] Virgil's Sibyl at *Aen.* 6.44-54 is by contrast frenzied and awesome, far from the old and homely character of Ovid's poem. The story of Sibyl and Apollo appears only here, but bears some resemblance to the story of Apollo and Cassandra, whom he condemns never to be believed for going back on her word (Aesch. *Ag.* 1202-12). The condemnation of Sibyl to extreme old age recalls the story of Tithonus, husband of the Dawn, who requested immortality for him but forgot to ask for perpetual youth also (Hom.*Hymn.*5.218-37; Quint. Smyrn. 6.1; Prop. 2.18B; Ov. *Met.* 9.420).

[449] Cf. Sol's foolish offer of wish-fulfilment to Phaethon at 2.44-6; Jupiter's similarly misguided offer to Semele at 3.289-91. In both these intances an oath is sworn by the Styx which is unbreakable (cf. Hom. *Il.*15.37-8). Nikolajera (2002) discusses the motif of wish-fulfilment in the former Soviet Union, and its political implications.

[450] For discussions of this disintegration of Macondo, see Martin (1995) and Zamora (1995), who both analyse the demise of the town in political and historical terms.

atolondradamente como habían llegado (447-8).[451] From this point onwards, disintegration and deterioration are dominant themes in the novel as many aspects begin to mirror the sad demise of the town. Fernanda's increasingly disordered and confusing perceptions of reality reflect a more existential breakdown of things, as she starts to find that physical reality is no longer conforming to its own rules. References to the voracity of the red ants and the chewing of termites appear here and there in the text, sustaining a background of gradual but irreversible destruction: in Úrsula's mad ramblings she is heard to give practical advice: *para que las hormigas coloradas no tumbaran la casa* (462);[452] when Aureliano visits the Catalonian's bookstore, he observes: *los estantes mellados por el comején, en los rincones amelazados de telaraña* (489).[453] The house of the Buendías also reflects the general desolation of Macondo: *era casi imposible dormir por el estruendo de las hormigas coloradas...[Amaranta Úrsula] vio las hormigas devastando el jardín...Perdieron el sentido de la realidad, la noción del tiempo, el ritmo de los hábitos cotidianos* (532-3).[454] The regression of Amaranta Úrsula and Aureliano in their passionate love for one another to an almost animal existence is depicted, but their apathy to the external world and the broader picture is mirrored by the rest of Macondo: *El pueblo había llegado a tales extremos de inactividad...La ciudad de la compañía bananera ...era una llanura de hierba silvestre ...mientras los lagartos y las ratas se disputaban la herencia del templo vecino* (531-2).[455]

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[451] *Macondo was in ruins. In the swampy streets there were the remains of furniture, animal skeletons covered with red lilies, the last memories of the hordes of newcomers who had fled Macondo as wildly as they had arrived* (268).

[452] *to stop the red ants from bringing the house down* (278).

[453] *the shelves chewed by termites, in the corners sticky with cobwebs* (296).

[454] *it was almost impossible to sleep because of the noise of the red ants ...[Amaranta Úrsula] watched the ants devastating the garden, sating their prehistoric hunger with the beams of the house...They lost their sense of reality, the notion of time, the rhythm of daily habits* (326-7).

[455] *The town had reached such extremes of inactivity ...The banana company's city ...was a plain of wild grass...while the lizards and rats fought over the inheritance of the nearby church* (325-6). There is almost a reverse process whereby animals and insects are humanised - presented as 'disputing' over an inheritance while the humans behave like mindless animals.

This taking over by nature recalls José Arcadio Buendía first discovering the Spanish galleon filled with poppies (94): it is finally revealed that this galleon was a portent of what was to come for Macondo, a warning for the characters which they failed to heed at their own peril. Later, as Aureliano is becoming lost in a labyrinth of nostalgia, he recalls the days of the flooding: *el paraíso perdido del diluvio, chapaleando en los pantanos del patio* (537).[456] This irresistibly evokes the jungle expedition: *Los hombres de la expedición se sintieron abrumados por sus recuerdos más antiguos en aquel paraíso de humedad y silencio, anterior al pecado original, donde las botas se hundían en pozos de aceites humeantes* (94).[457] To return to the beginning is not necessarily a negative thing; however, the narrator makes it starkly bleak by his inclusion of a significant difference this time around: *En aquel Macondo olvidado hasta por los pájaros* (532).[458] One of the peculiarly charming ideas in the first chapter was that of the excessive birdsong, and it is this profusion of birdsong that causes Macondo to be discovered by the gypsies, who symbolise progress and civilisation from the outside world. This time, there are no birds, implying that Macondo is now doomed to remain *perdida en el sopor de la ciénaga* (92),[459] never to be rescued by history and civilisation again. The culmination of these strands of disintegration, which become more conspicuous and intertwined as the novel approaches its final pages, is the miraculous whirlwind which sweeps Macondo entirely from the face of the earth: *Estaba tan absorto, que no sintió tampoco la segunda arremetida del viento, cuya potencia ciclónica arrancó de los quicios las puertas y las ventanas, descuajó el techo de la galería oriental y dessarraigó los cimientos ...pues estaba previsto que la ciudad de los espejos (o los espejismos) sería arrasada por el*

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[456] *the lost paradise of the deluge, splashing in the puddles in the courtyard, killing lizards* (329).
[457] *The men on the expedition felt overwhelmed in that paradise of dampness and silence, going back to before original sin, as their boots sank into pools of steaming oil* (17).
[458] *In that Macondo forgotten even by birds* (326).
[459] *lost in the drowsiness of the swamp* (15).

viento y desterrada de la memoria de los hombres (546-8).[460] This marks the end of the novel and the ultimate degree of disintegration.

The disintegration of Macondo textualises a feeling of impotence; the powerful sense of being at the mercy of European and North American economies and culture haunts them incessantly and produces a persistent insecurity and feeling of unreality, which is conveyed here in the literal blooming and wilting of Macondo. The Buendías are depicted as failing to engage with history which finally leads to their destruction as a people at the hands of the red ants and lizards. The supernatural device of the whirlwind concretises the negative forces at work in Latin American communities and expresses the sense of futility and inevitability that is also conveyed strongly by the last line of the novel: *que todo lo escrito en ellos era irrepetible desde siempre y para siempre, porque las estirpes condenadas a cien años de soledad no tenían una segunda oportunidad sobre la tierra* (548).[461] The word *condenadas* suggests punishment, but also helplessness in the face of great powers. The whirlwind captures symbolically the complexity of the predicament: its associations of divine agency carry a sense that this is a judgment upon the characters, who are after all depicted as flawed and lacking insight on many occasions; yet an awareness of victimhood is likewise borne by this mighty wind which is also a natural phenomenon beyond human powers to control.[462] A play upon the mythological dilemma of wind as animate and wind as natural effects these dual readings and portrays the mystery without offering any solution.

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[460] *he was so aborbed that he did not feel the second surge of wind either as its cyclonic strength tore the doors and windows from their hinges, pulled off the roof of the east wing, and uprooted the foundations ...for it was foreseen that the city of mirrors (or mirages) would be wiped out by the wind and exiled from the memory of men* (335-6).

[461] *that everything written on them was unrepeatable since time immemorial and forever more, because races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth* (336).

[462] Martin (1995); Zamora (1995).

Ovid's more frequent and overtly magical metamorphic instances produce a more striking and instantaneous defamiliarisation which makes it effective at catching our attention and forcing it down new paths of conceptualisation; however frequency and scale also run an increased risk of the reader becoming immune to the effects. In an essay on the strategies of magical realism in supplementing reality, Simpkins writes: *there is undoubtedly something unsatisfactory about the strategy of magical realism. Even the naïve inhabitants of García Márquez's Macondo eventually become indifferent to flying carpets.*[463] To use transformation into stone or dissolution into water to express a situation is a powerful device but perhaps it is too blunt a tool to catch something as complicated as grief, isolation and its actions upon a particular individual.

In one story Ovid presents Aglauros, a character who melts and solidifies, in his attempt to depict her mental state. Aglauros has contracted an acute case of envy, and in the throes of this agonisingly self-destructive condition, she is described: *quibus irritata dolore / Cecropis occulto mordetur et anxia nocte, / anxia luce gemit lentaque miserrima tabe / liquitur, ut glacies incerto saucia sole* (2.805-8). As with Cyane, she is smitten with an inconsolable emotion and so her recourse is to literally melt -- *liquitur*. Ovid uses a rather beautiful simile to convey the more gradual nature of this change, and it does indeed convey appropriately the slowly undermining erosion that envy inflicts upon a person, most particularly when that person is a family member. As her affliction increases, she is eventually transformed into stone by Mercury, the lover of her sister, Herse. The metamorphosis is envisaged as a creeping numbness that weighs her body and spreads like a cancer, until *signumque exsangue sedebat* (2.831). The word *signum* expresses her current form as a statue, but also as a sign or marker. This implies that her fate is not intended to be recorded in a profound and encompassing

[463] Simpkins (1995), p.154.

way, but instead is the symbol of a particular event, necessarily therefore disclosing its narrowness of expression. The accumulation of transformations does not ultimately extend or deepen the effectiveness of Ovid's technique.

3. Personification: Envy and Amaranta

The technique of personification is an especially common technique in literature, and something which occurs to differing degrees. Fairy tales tend to use the technique in its most extreme form, presenting fully humanised beings who are difficult to take seriously. Realistic narrative, on the other hand, tends to avoid such intrusive devices, preferring to stick to a more analytic method of storytelling. Both the texts studied in this thesis exhibit frequent and consistent themes of personification and I look here at some of the most prominent examples of this device in each work. As with the other techniques I have been studying in this chapter, I am again interested in their effectiveness at portraying an aspect of reality and also their accuracy in doing so.

Personification in *Metamorphoses* is a topic that can be approached on many different levels and tackled in virtually all parts of the text; to avoid becoming overly vague or broad, I am restricting my analysis here to a specific type of personification. I am interested in examining the ways in which abstract concepts, such as emotional states or human categorisations in thought, are made into flesh-and-blood representations in the text.[464] Very obvious examples of these are the anthropomorphising of Rumour, Hunger and Sleep, all of which receive extended

[464] Personifications of abstract concepts are common in Classical literature: e.g. Terror, Hate and Fear at Hom. *Il.* 4.440; Love at Virg. *Aen.* 1.689; Grief, Cares, Diseases, Age, Fear, Death and Distress at Virg. *Aen.* 6.274-7. For discussions of personification in antiquity, see Padel (1992), p.157-9, 163-4; Smith (1999); Stafford (2001).

passages of description within the poem. The personification of Envy is the earliest such characterisation, occurring in book two, and it is this unsightly individual that I deal with first. The human embodiment of envy, *Invidia*, becomes the subject of the narrative when Minerva grows angry at Aglauros' greedy attempts to get money out of Mercury.[465] Her anger is compounded by the remembrance that Aglauros had previously betrayed Minerva herself by disobeying her orders and uncovering the secret of the motherless child of Hephaestus, a story alluded to at 2.553. As if in preparation for the emotionally intense states that ensue, Minerva's anger is depicted as particularly powerful: *vertit ad hanc torvi dea bellica luminis orbem / et tanto penitus traxit suspiria motu, / ut pariter pectus positamque in pectore forti / aegida concuteret* (2.752-5). It suggests an anger almost separate from the goddess and controlling her mentally and physically: these are ideas that will be more fully developed in the passage to come. Minerva resolves to find Envy.

The abode of Envy is described in detail as a fittingly grim place: *Protinus Invidiae nigro squalentia tabo / tecta petit; domus est imis in vallibus huius / abdita, sole carens, non ulli pervia vento, / tristis et ignavi plenissima frigoris et quae / igne vacet semper, caligine semper abundet* (2.760-4). Rather as the house of Rebeca reflected her deteriorated state, the house of Envy seems to partake of the unpleasant qualities of its occupant. The lack of light and comfort embodies the mental state of one consumed with envy, who would persist in seeing their specific predicament as bleak and negative. The sense of barrenness and stagnancy is emphasised by the repetition of *semper* and the windless, sunless environment, bereaving its abode of change. This is the self-sealed world of a fixated mind. The first sight of Envy causes Minerva to turn

[465] The story of Minerva visiting *Invidia* recalls the furious Juno invoking the aid of Allecto in *Aeneid* 7. Allecto is described there in similarly grotesque terms (*Aen.* 7.324-9). However, unlike Ovid, Virgil focuses not on a pictorially graphic depiction of the Fury, but rather on the insidious and devastating effects upon its human victims. Other possible literary antecedents are Hesiod's *Eris* (*Theog.* 225ff) and Ennius' *Discordia* (*Ann.* 266-7).

away: a response that influences the reader's imagination more effectively than grotesque description, although grotesque description follows nonetheless. She is depicted as feasting on snake meat, with decayed teeth, entrenched pallor, poisoned tongue and wasted body. She moves sluggishly and slowly and her gaze is crooked. Her reaction to the goddess's beauty and wealth is, predictably, to groan with envy. To some extent, she shares the disintegrating properties of Cyane or Aglauros, as she is portrayed as literally wasting away when she looks on others' successes: *sed videt ingrates intabescitque videndo/ successus hominum* (2.780-1). However, the situation is subtly different as she is to be regarded as a personification of an emotion, rather than a human consumed by an obsessive emotion. Ovid makes much out of highlighting the potential paradoxes of her behaviour, using linguistic structure to convey this state: *carpitque ut carpitur una/suppliciumque suum est* (2.781-2); *vixque tenet lacrimas, quia nil lacrimabile cernit* (2.796).[466] Both the physical repulsions of her body and the mental torments of her mind are used to express the personification.

When Minerva speaks, it is apparent that she can barely force herself to speak to such a despicable creature as this, and so she says only a few words of command: '*inflice tabe tua natarum Cecropis unam, sic opus est; Aglauros ea est*'(2.784-5). The idea of infection which is expressed here becomes a central aspect of the affliction of envy suffered by Aglauros; in the following account, Envy is depicted as literally breathing envy into her body, and also affecting her mind by imposing specific images of her sister: *neve mali causae spatium per latius errant* (2.802). Not just this, but Envy is apparently so noxious that she infects cities and countryside in her wake. The personification is working on different levels then: the home of Envy, her physical body and mental state, and the infection that she spreads with her breath and footsteps all

[466] Cf. his exploitation of the paradoxes of Narcissus' tragic situation: *se cupit imprudens et, qui probat, ipse probatur,/ dumque petit, petitur, pariterque accendit et ardet* (Ov. *Met.* 3.425-6).

embody the ugly virulence of the emotion.[467] Finally, the effect upon Aglauros herself shares in the personification of envy. The infected girl begins to exhibit all the symptoms that Envy herself appeared to suffer from also; she groans, she is gnawed away and melts with a gradual dissolution.[468] Finally she is turned to stone.
To personify envy is very effective in a variety of ways. The most obvious is the peculiar hold it has over a person: the line between self-infliction and autonomy of the emotion is a difficult one to draw. Presenting it as an infection certainly encourages us to view Aglauros more favourably to some extent; however, it ought to be remembered that she was already greedy and envious. It seems likely that she was particularly susceptible to the infection, and this is perhaps Minerva's reason for selecting this form of punishment.

Amaranta is one of the most infuriating characters in *Cien años de soledad* in many respects,[469] but especially her tendency to fixate on situations. The most obvious example of this is her profoundly disruptive resentment and envy towards Rebeca who gains the love of Pietro Crespi, the man they are both in love with. Her parents make the mistake of believing that a holiday will take Amaranta's mind off her immediate disappointment and that things will then settle down: *Úrsula llevaría a Amaranta en un viaje a la capital de la provincia, cuando tuviera tiempo, para que el contacto con gente distinta la aliviara de su desilusión ...Amaranta fingió aceptar la decisión y poco a poco se restableció de las calenturas, pero se prometió a sí misma que Rebeca se*

[467] Cf. Solodow (1988), p.202: *To understand Envy we need only to look at her. She simply is what she seems to be. In no ordinary sense of the word then can we call her and similar figures "allegories", for there is no "other" that they refer to, no meaning or significance that does not lie on the surface alone as means of representation, is not unlike a painter.* I would disagree with this proposition that Envy lacks inner life, for her emotional responses to the things she sees around her are clearly a vital part of her personified being, and receive careful treatment by the poet.
[468] Cf. Lucretius who uses the language of disease to describe emotion graphically, portraying love as a terrible physical and mental affliction (*DRN.* 4.1037ff). Cf. also Soph. *Trach.*544-45, 442; Eur. *Hipp.*317. For rivalrous and powerful emotions in the ancient world, see Padel (1992); Konstan & Rutter (2003).
[469] Penuel (1983).

casaría solamente pasando por encima de su cadáver (162-3).[470] The word '*calenturas*' demonstrates what a physical form Amaranta's jealousy has taken. She persists in her quiet loathing towards Rebeca; even when the rest of the town have entirely forgotten about her, Amaranta remembers, dwells and festers on her resentful feelings: *Amaranta pensaba en Rebeca, porque la soledad le había seleccionado los recuerdos, y había incinerado los entorpecedores montones de basura nostálgica que la vida había acumulado en su corazón, y había purificado, magnificado y eternizado los otros, los más amargos* (328).[471] The description of *soledad* suggests she is being controlled, at least to some extent, and the intensity of focus recalls the effect that Envy has upon Aglauros when she summons Herse before her eyes. Not just this internal world of torment, but also Amaranta's external appearance manifests her baneful emotional burden: *Pensaba en ella al amanecer, cuando el hielo del corazón la despertaba en la cama solitaria, y pensaba en ella cuando se jabonaba los senos marchitos y el vientre macilento , y cuando se ponía los blancos pollerines y corpiños de olán de la vejez, y cuando se cambiaba en la mano la venda de la terrible expiación* (328).[472] These descriptions of a thin, withered old woman with ice in her heart are akin to the figure of Envy; even Amaranta's name suggests the word *amargura*. Also Amaranta's environment reflect her: her lonely bed and icy heart embody the bitter mental state of this woman. There is a very real sense in which we might view Amaranta herself as a personification of bitterness or envy. This personification is not presented as a given, as

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[470] *Úrsula would take Amaranta on a trip to the capital of the province when she had time, so that contact with different people would alleviate her disappointment...Amaranta pretended to accept the decision and little by little she recovered from her fevers, but she promised herself that Rebeca would marry only over her dead body* (64).

[471] *Amaranta thought about Rebeca, because solitude had made a selection in her memory and had burned the dimming piles of nostalgic waste that life had accumulated in her heart, and had purified, magnified and eternalized the others, the most bitter ones* (182).

[472] *She thought of her at dawn, when the ice of her heart awakened her in her solitary bed, and she thought of her when she soaped her withered breasts and her lean stomach, and when she put on the white stiff-starched petticoats and corsets of old age, and when she changed the black bandage of expiation on her hand* (181-2).

in *Metamorphoses*, but a transformation into a feeling; she has ultimately let her envy entirely overcome her so that there is nothing about her that is separable from it. The obsessional nature of her thought is demonstrated by the repeated *pensaba ...pensaba ...* and the ice and the bandage are concrete relics of her bitter rage.

To see Amaranta as a personification of her governing emotional state raises some interesting issues: it provides, as might be expected from a novel, a deeper study of the device than that found in Ovid, demonstrating it not as simply personified grief, but a woman with a history that explains the end result. It lets us view personification as metamorphosis into an abstract. It is notable that Amaranta is the character who in turn experiences a rather unusual personified form. At around the time that Meme is befriending the Americans from the compound and Fernanda is establishing her rigid authority over the house, Amaranta sees death: *La vio un mediodía ardiente, cosiendo con ella en el corredor, poco después de que Meme se fue al colegio. La reconoció en el acto, y no había nada pavoroso en la muerte, porque era una mujer vestida de azul con el cabello largo, de aspecto un poco anticuado, y con un cierto parecido a Pilar Tenera en la época en que las ayudaba en los oficios de cocina* (392).[473] Unlike the personification of Envy in *Metamorphoses*, this personification of death gives no clues of its nature in external appearance, and this adds a creepy quality to the text.[474] Perhaps one oblique hint lies in the fact that she is pictured as weaving, which evokes the well-known imagery of the three *Parcae* weaving the threads of destiny for humankind.[475]

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[473] *She saw it on one burning afternoon sewing with her on the porch a short time after Meme had left for school. She recognized it in the act, and had no fear of death, because she was a woman dressed in blue with long hair, with a sort of antiquated look, and with a certain resemblance to Pilar Tenera during the time when she had helped with the chores in the kitchen* (227).

[474] Cf. Carroll (1994) for a modern magical realist novel's depiction of Death which likewise lacks any traditional associations in its appearance. Death in personified terms appears very frequently in Homer in the form of creatures: e.g.*Il.*2.302, 5.22, 8.70; *Od.*11.171, 14.207. For an extended description of these creatures, see Hes. *Sc.* 248.

[475] *veridicos Parcae coeperunt edere cantus./ ...laeva colum molli lana retinebat amictum; dextera tum levitur deducens fila supinis/ formabat digitis, tum prono in pollice torquens/ libratum tereti versabat turbine fusum*, Cat. 64.306, 311-4; also Hes. *Theog.* 217-222; Hes. *Sc.* 248-69; Virg. *Ecl.* 4.46-7; Apollod.

Another important distinction is the psychological existence of this personification: it is observed by the narrator that only Amaranta sees her. No such doubt is cast upon the reality of Ovid's Envy. The effect of this weakened presence does not dull the impact of this strange spectacle, for the strange and important thing is that Amaranta sees it at all, and as with any hallucinatory state, particularly in a human being who is not 'mad' in any obvious way, it is difficult to entirely dismiss its relevance. Ovid's envisaging Envy as a bitter and wretched woman is a pictorially impressive device, and the vileness of her appearance is convincingly horrific yet this more extreme personification lack this psychological (and therefore uncanny) dimension. The woman's speech gives her identity away, but as in a dream Amaranta recognises her with intuition: *La muerte no le dijo cuándo se iba a morir ni si su hora estaba señalada antes que la de Rebeca, sino que le ordenó empezar a tejer su propia mortaja el próximo seis se abril. La autorizó para que la hiciera tan complicada y primorosa como hizo la de Rebeca, y le advirtió que había de morir sin dolor, ni miedo ni amargura, al anochecer del día en que la terminara* (392).[476] Death appears to improve Amaranta's life, giving her the opportunity to prepare: in effect she gives Amaranta the traditional role assigned to the *Parcae*, by telling her to sew her own shroud. Amaranta subsequently dedicates herself to sewing the shroud in intricate detail, and feels at last a form of inner peace: *El mundo se redujo a la superficie de su piel, y el interior quedó a salvo de toda amargura* (393).[477] This description is remarkably close to the one which Solodow uses to

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1.3.1. Weaving carries various connotations for Classical literature: Penelope, Helen, Odysseus, the Parcae are just a few examples of characters associated with the weaving motif. For a study of weaving terminology and imagery in Greek and Roman literature, see Scheid & Svenbro (1996).

[476] *Death did not tell her when she was going to die or whether her hour was assigned before that of Rebeca, but ordered her to begin sewing her own shroud on the next sixth of April. She was authorised to make it as complicated and as fine as she wanted, but just as honestly executed as Rebeca's, and she was told that she would die without pain, fear or bitterness at dusk on the day she had finished it* (228).

[477] *The world was reduced to the surface of her skin and her inner self was safe from all bitterness* (228). Cf. Zamora (1995), p.68: *As she painstakingly stitches her shroud, she understands why Colonel Aureliano spent his last years making little gold fishes, melting them down, and maing them again. She*

describe the personifications in Ovid's poem, in which he proposes that such devices display everything on their surfaces and have no inner life. In this respect, he sees them as like paintings. However, in the same way that this formula was too simplistic for *Metamorphoses*, it is likewise ill-fitting for Amaranta: it is clear that she does still have inner life, but it lacks the intensity of black emotions that it had known before.

It is clear that personification enables us to regard mental states and concepts from a different point of view which illuminates features not captured by more normative approaches. To envisage envy as a human being enables its more peculiar and elusive features to be expressed: its infectious and fixative qualities are those of Envy herself, and they are imparted to the afflicted individual by the personified form. This does not remove culpability, but in fact complicates it, and this is both a fuller and more useful way of textualising the emotional state. For the afflicted individual, to conceive of her affliction as another entity, enables the sufferer to focus their energies more easily on controlling and understanding the emotion. This latter example is not an argument that demonstrates the effective textualisation of reality which personification performs; rather it comments on how useful such a textualisation might be in handling reality. The argument is not unconnected however, for any mental technique that proves itself to be very effective at dealing with a given situation must itself therefore express some intrinsic truth about that situation. Amaranta's gradual personification is more understated than Ovid's dramatic and pictorially graphic examples, as we have seen. This subtlety ultimately leads to a closer expression of reality, for it allows the character breathing room and refuses to come down explicitly on the side of personification: the clues are there and the reader may draw them out or not as he wishes. Ovid's text does

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understands that the vicious circle of little gold fishes, like the intricate embroidery of her shroud, reduces the world to a surface and protects the inner self from suffering.

not offer many chances for extended studies of a single character; this makes the difference to some extent a question of form affecting the intensity of magical realist effect. It is not just form however. The personifications which occur in *Metamorphoses* are more elaborate and visual: there is far more emphasis on surface level. Ovid does not deal with the inner life of his characters by long and careful studies of inner monologue but presents them in at most a few hundred lines. He is purposefully aiming for a panoramic effect. In a picture, our eyes pass over the images, linger for a few moments, and then move on. The poem uses magic to encourage a sympathetic detachment, and this is demonstrated in the narrator's use of personification.

4. Animalisation: Lycaon and the Tail of a Pig

Personification is a way in which magical realist texts attempt to depict the nature of things more effectively; a related way that is very frequently used is that of animalisation, whereby the animal aspects of a human or other kind of being are brought to the fore in a startling way. Ovid and García Márquez frequently use animalisation to different degree in their texts; sometimes by simile, sometimes by metaphor and even by full-blown metamorphosis. In this final section of the chapter, I analyse the effectiveness of the technique in its differing manifestations. As with personification, it is a common feature of literature and language,[478] and there are likewise ways of using it as a magical realist device which avoid the pure magic of a fairy tale.

[478] See Bradley (2000) for an interesting example of the technique in classical antiquity.

Ovid has a particularly extreme form of the animalising technique in his various transformations between the human, divine and animal world. The first straightforward metamorphosis of a human being occurs in book one of the poem where Lycaon is transformed into a wolf.[479] It takes place within a narrative spoken by Jupiter at a council of the gods where he is describing how wicked the world has become. The king of the gods speaks in suitably self-supporting and lordly terms, emphasising both the vast gulf he perceives between humankind and the divinities, a gulf which Ovid's poem consistently undermines, and the brutal animal savagery of Lycaon and the rest of his kind. '*quam cupiens falsam summo delabor Olympo / et deus humana lustro sub imagine terras*' (1.212-3) expresses Jupiter's sense of superiority in a number of ways: the juxtaposition of *deus humana* exposes the posited otherness of the divine; the notions of gliding down and surveying the whole land are likewise illuminations of the god's powers and superiority not just morally but literally.[480] Lycaon's hostility is anticipated in Jupiter's descriptions of his kingdom: '*Arcadis hinc sedes et inhospita tecta tyranni/ ingredior*'(1.218); it is greatly elaborated in the ensuing details of Lycaon's behaviour: '*nocte gravem somno necopina perdere morte / me parat ...missi de gente Molossa / obsidis unius iugulum mucrone resolvit/ atque ita semineces partim ferventibus artus / mollit aquis, partim subiecto torruit igni*'(1.224-9). Jupiter declares how he vents his wrath upon the house of Lycaon, and this destruction causes its owner to flee: '*territus ipse fugit nactusque silentia ruris/ exululat frustraque loqui conatur*'(1.232-3). The first animal connotation is introduced in the powerful evocation produced by the words *silentia ruris exululat*: the effect of the proximity and contrast of the silence of the countryside and the sudden howling that bursts into the line is

[479] For this episode, see Anderson (1989); Feldherr (2002). I have examined this episode elsewhere in the thesis, from the perspective of narratology and allegory (see my first chapter). Here I focus upon a purely aesthetic approach.

[480] Cf. *Genesis* 18.21: *I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.*

peculiarly chilling, recalling the classic werewolf imagery of modern horror films. It is a clearly animalistic note, supported by Lycaon's inability to speak. Inability to speak is a quintessential feature of the metamorphosis experience,[481] and its appearance here in the first of all human transformations suggests it to be a programmatic presence. It is not unique to animalisation, for trees and stones are not known for their linguistic abilities, but it is unique in that animals alone provide the possibility for some form of vocal communication, here expressed in Lycaon's howl. In this respect, animals are the closest model of all to which human beings are turned, and their closeness is particularly emphasised by the narrator in this story.

The following line increases the imagery of brute savagery: '*ab ipso/ colligit os rabiem solitaeque cupidine caedis/ utitur in pecudes et nunc quoque sanguine gaudet.*'(1.234-5). There are several more key features of metamorphoses involved here that become pivotal to our concept of transformation. The first few words suggest the mechanism of metamorphic instances, for they express the notion that the physical manifestation of animal bloodlust is caused by an inner characteristic of Lycaon, and not just any characteristic, but the one by which he is to be defined forever more. The reference to habit is important, likewise, for its allusion to the importance of one's customary mental state, and *nunc quoque* indicates the continuity of this essential feature in the transformed state. One particularly pertinent idea conveyed here is that of the altered mental state that appears to work inversely with the actual physical

[481] Virtually all the metamorphoses in the poem involve loss of speech. However, there are specific examples where this loss of speech is drawn attention to as a source of trauma, frustration and confusion for the transformed individual: cf. Io: *et conata queri mugitus edidit ore, / pertimuitque sonos propriaque exterrita voce est* (1.637-8); the Heliades: '*iamque vale...* ' *cortex in vera novissima venit* (2.363); Callisto: *adsiduoque suos gemitu testata dolores/ qualescumque manus ad caelum et sidera tollit* (2.486-7); Chariclo: *talia dicenti pars est extrema querelae / intellecta parum, confusaque vera fuerunt. / mox nec vera quidem nec equae sonus ille videtur* (2.665-7); Actaeon: *clamare libebat / 'Actaeon ego sum, dominum cognoscite vestrum.' / verba animo desunt ...gemit ille sonumque, / etsi non hominis, quem non tamen edere possit / cervus* (3.230-9); Echo: *corpus adhuc Echo, non vox erat; et tamen usum / garrula non alium, quam nunc habet, oris habebat, / reddere de multis ut verba novissima posset* (3.359-61); the Minyades: *conataeque loqui minimam et pro corpore vocem / emittunt peraguntque leves stridore querellas* (4.412-3).

transformation. At the opening of the sentence, Lycaon is described as *territus*, but by the end he is rejoicing, *gaudet*; this is a very similar process to the one noted earlier in the Niobe passage. It is as if the inner character of the victim is able to emote freely in its newfound form. As a human, Lycaon's savagery is inappropriate and disjointed, but as an animal, he is finally free.[482] A fairly detailed description of the actual process of transmutation now follows, and the principle of continuity in change is emphasised: '*fit lupus et veteris servat vestigia formae; / canities eadem est, eadem violentia vultus, / idem oculi lucent, eadem feritatis imago est*'(1.237-9). The narrator confusingly places the statement of completion and the persistence of humanness within the same sentence, collapsing any easy distinctions between the human and the animal version of Lycaon. The phrase *feritatis imago* appears to represents the animalisation of ferocity, but it is a little more complex than this; for the very features which Jupiter draws out to represent ferocity are the ones which are shown to be the traces of the human Lycaon which remain in the animal.

The metamorphosis is the act of making something into the pictorial image of itself, exhibiting the essence of a person; in this case it is ferocity, in Niobe's case, intransigent pride. An obvious way of presenting an attribute such as savagery is to use animal imagery. Unlike the more complex personalities of human beings, animals are usually captured by one dominant characteristic: lambs are meek, lions are proud, wolves are savage. Humans could be seen as being 'reduced' to these simplifying depictions in their post-metamorphic state.[483] However, in this account the animalness and humanness are slippery concepts, for Ovid (through Jupiter) is playing with their precise meanings. He mingles the two basic formulations until it is difficult to tell where

[482] Feldherr (2002), p.169-72, views this an an ideological and Roman perspective: Jupiter, representing Augustus, assures his people that the cosmos is now becoming stable, with all things in their rightful place.
[483] Solodow (1987).

ingenium est, quod eget moderamine nostro; / tu vires sine mente geris, mihi cura futuri;...tu tantum corpore prodes, / nos animo ...nec non in corpore nostro/ pectora sunt potiora manu: vigor omnis in illis'(13.361-5). This speech makes it clear that not outer forms but inner selves determine humanness. Of the many transformations from human to animal in the text, very few of the animalised humans truly become animal in nature: Lycaon is a notable exception but Jupiter emphasises his already animal heart. This suggests that the world of the text becomes littered with peculiar hybrid forms that are a more accurate representation of human character than a purely human or purely animal form.

Cien años de soledad uses animalisation as one of its ostensibly underpinning themes.[485] Early on in the novel, we are told how Úrsula's fear of producing a child with a pig's tail prevented her from consummating her marriage for some time: *Aunque su matrimonio era previsible desde que vinieron al mundo, cuando ellos expresaron la voluntad de casarse sus proprios parientes trataron de impedirlo. Tenían el temor de que aquellos saludables cabos de dos razas secularmente entrecruzadas pasaran por la verguenza de engendrar iguanas. Ya existía un precedente tremendo. Una tía de Úrsula, casada con un tío de José Arcadio Buendía, tuvo un hijo que pasó toda la vida con unos pantalones englobados y flojos, y que murió desangrado después de haber vivido cuarenta y dos años en el más puro estado de virginidad, porque nació y creció con una cola cartilaginosa en forma de tirabuzón* (105).[486] This obsession is later

[485] García Márquez said to Rita Guibert: 'I merely wanted to tell the story of a family who for a hundred years did everything they could to prevent having a son with a pig's tail, and just because of their very efforts to avoid having one they ended by doing so' (see Janes (1991), p.31). Janes comments cynically upon this explanation: *Anyone who has read* One Hundred Years of Solitude *knows that this innocent explanation does not hold water*; Cf. Wood's comment on the same remark (1990), p.24: *This is a good joke because the pig's tail is both much worried about and really a diversion ...It is a lure, an instance of what Roland Barthes called 'a narrative enigma'.*

[486] *Although their marriage was predicted from the time they had come into the world, when they expressed their desire to be married their relatives tried to stop it. They were afraid that those two*

one ends and the other one begins. As we as a species are part of the animal kingdom, it is not hard to envisage a sliding scale of conceptualisation between the two realms; in the Lycaon passage Ovid also shades aspects of the divine world into human and animal terminology. This is hinted at in the similarity between Lycaon's howl breaking through the silence of the countryside and Jupiter ripping through the silence of the council some lines earlier: *Juppiter hoc iterum sermone silentia rupit* (1.208). Jupiter has savage and animal aspects of his own, which are made manifest in many of the forthcoming tales; at one point Jupiter even disguises himself as a bull in order to deceive and capture Europa.[484] Ovid speaks of the great majesty of the god and the dramatic transformation he then undergoes in the name of lust: *sceptri gravitate relicta, / ille pater rectorque deum, cui dextra trisulcis / ignibus armata est, qui nutu concutit orbem, / induitur faciem tauri mixtusque iuvencis / mugit et in teneris formosus obambulat herbis* (2.847-51). However, the apparent antithesis is actually illusory, for, as the continuity of features indicates, the external differences reveal internal parallels between Jupiter the god and the bullock. In fact, in the form of the bull, Jupiter's customary ferocious visage becomes mild and pleasant: *nullae in fronte minae nec formidabile lumen; / pacem vultus habet* (2.857-8). Once again, the external metamorphosis seems to cause an internal transformation, which in this case, as often, neutralises the essence that is being embodied.

Metamorphoses tends to present animalisation in a striking and literal way; however there is evidence of more subtle characterisation of such qualities in human beings. One example occurs in the long speech of Ulysses in book thirteen where he defends the gift of eloquence over that of might in body: '*tibi dextera bello / utilis,*

[484] Arachne subversively depicts the gods turning themselves into animal forms: *Maeonis elusam designat imagine tauri / Europam; ...fecit et Asterien aquila luctante teneri, / fecit olorinis Ledam recubare sub alis; / addidit ut satyri celatus imagine pulchram / Iuppiter implerit gemino Nycteida fetu, / Amphitryon fuerit cum te, Tirynthia, cepit* (6.103-12).

buried in the steady flood of events that fills their lives, but when in the final chapter Amaranta Úrsula gives birth to the child of her nephew the legacy appears to have finally resurfaced: *Sólo cuando lo voltearon boca abajo se dieron cuenta de que tenía algo más que el resto de los hombres, y se inclinaron para examinarlo. Era una cola de cerdo* (541).[487] García Márquez attributes to it a pseudo-mythological status in his closing paragraph: *Sólo entonces descubrió que Amaranta Úrsula no era su hermana, sino su tía, y que Francis Drake había asaltado a Riohacha solamente para que ellos pudieran buscarse por los laberintos más intrincados de la sangre, hasta engendrar el animal mitológico que había de poner término a la estirpe* (547).[488] Here the pig-tailed child is called an animal, a description that seems unsuitable for what is in all other aspects a human being. It raises the question of how we form our definitions, a question that is suggested by the events leading up to the birth of this deformed baby. It is apparent that Amaranta Úrsula and Aureliano themselves sink into a condition that is close to animal as they spend their final weeks together satisfying their mutual lusts and abandoning their duties: *Perdieron el sentido de la realidad, la noción del tiempo, el ritmo de los hábitos cotidianos. Volvieron a cerra puertas y ventanas para no demorarse en trámites de desnudamientos, y andaban por la casa como siempre quiso estar Remedios, la bella, y se revolcaban en cueros por los barrizales del patio, y una tarde estuvieron a punto de ahogarse cuando se amaban en la alberca* (533).[489]

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healthy products of two races that had interbred over the centuries would suffer the shame of breeding iguanas. There had been a horrible precedent. An aunt of Úrsula's, married to an uncle of José Arcadio Buendía, had a son who ...had been born and had grown up with a cartiliginous tail in the shape of a corkscrew (23-4).

[487] *Only when they turned him on his stomach did they see that he had something more than other men, and they leaned over to examine him. It was the tail of a pig* (332).

[488] *Only then did he discover that Amaranta Úrsula was not his sister but his aunt, and that Sir Francis Drake had attacked Riohacha only so that they could seek each other through the most intricate labyrinths of blood until they would engender the mythological animal that was to bring the line to an end* (335-6).

[489] *They lost their sense of reality, the notion of time, the rhythm of daily habits. They closed the doors and windows again so as not to waste time getting undressed and they walked about the house as*

Throughout the novel the concern with creating animal offspring is coupled with an anxiety about the animal qualities of the Macondians. José Arcadio Buendía remarks in the first chapter: '*al otro lado del río, hay toda clase de aparatos mágicos, mientras nosotros seguimos viviendo como los burros*'(90).[490] His wife uses this same argument to reproach him for neglecting his parental and civic duties: '*En vez de andar pensado en tus alocadas novelerías, debes ocuparte de tus hijos ...Míralos cómo están, abandonados a la buena de Dios, igual que los burros*'(98).[491] Many characters in the novel exhibit strong animal characteristics and tendencies. Rebeca's habit of eating earth which tends to resurface at moments of acute stress in her life seems animalistic, and Amaranta has reptilian qualities as a baby: *Era liviana y acuosa como una lagartija* (116-7).[492] Although Úrsula is then relieved that *todas sus partes eran humanas*, she soon comes to realise that being an animal is something that comes from within, and she later reprimands Colonel Aureliano Buendía for his barbarity by saying: '*Es lo mismo que habría hecho si hubieras nacido con cola de puerco*'(273).[493]

Both authors use their magical realist animalisation to encourage the reader to probe the modes of perception that govern thought. Animal and human can no longer be taken as distinct categories defined by specific physical criteria, for much that is animal and much that is human transgresses these boundaries. Darwin may have done much to alter our myths of origin and shake our sense of unique self-importance on the planet, but our fundamental attitudes towards ourselves and our distinctness remain entrenched

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Remedios the beauty had wanted to do and they would roll around naked in the mud of the courtyard, and one afternoon they almost drowned making love in the cistern (326-7).

[490] '*Incredible things are happening in the world ...Right there across the river there are all kinds of magical instruments while we keep on living like donkeys*' (14).

[491] '*Instead of going around thinking about your crazy inventions, you should be worrying about your sons ...Look at the state they're in, running wild just like donkeys*' (19).

[492] *She was light and watery, like a newt* (32).

[493] '*It's the same as if you'd been born with the tail of a pig*' (142).

in our ways of thinking and speaking. The texts we are looking at, separated by so many centuries of time, both indicate a desire to interrogate traditional beliefs and look at reality through less inhibited eyes.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored four common techniques of magical realism which occur in both texts. Solidification, dissolution, personification and animalisation were all examined in detail, wth a view to judging how effective such devices are at capturing reality.

It has been shown that Ovid's use of the technique tends to be more extreme and magical than García Márquez's. For example, whereas Colonel Aureliano Buendía becomes associated with the motif of ice within the novel, Niobe is literally turned into stone. A similar difference in level of magic can be located within the episodes of Cyane and Rebeca. Both women appear to dissolve, but whereas Rebeca disintegrates over many years into a decrepit old woman, Cyane transforms rapidly into a pool of water. The effects produced are therefore different; solidification was found to be in some ways a very effective technique at expressing grief, for its innovative and surprising imagery cause one to think afresh about a situation. Dissolution was found to be effective for the same kinds of reasons. However, it was also noted that Ovid's adoption of the most extreme form of the device often became a rather blunt tool for transmitting an emotional response in the text. It sometimes tended to narrow the presentation of a character at the expense of realism, so while one aspect of an individual is presented very effectively, the rest is left out and hence the ultimate effect is unsatisfactory. This was not found to be such a recurring problem in *Cien años de*

soledad where magical effects tended to be more subtly portrayed. Personification and animalisation were found to produce the same kinds of conclusions. Ovid often elaborated upon his personifications to the extent that they overbalance into allegory. García Márquez kept his use of personification within limits, and did not allow it to overwhelm a given character such as Amaranta. Animalisation and personification were both shown to be effective tools for interpreting reality in new ways and enabling us to loosen our minds a little from the shackles of traditional realism.

An important point that emerges from the studies of these four devices is that the approach used does not fully explain the magic we find in these texts. There remains a sense in which the magic in magical realism is irreducible to literary strategems. Roh strove to voice what he felt when encountering the new style of painting that he thought to be emerging: *This calm admiration of the magic of being, of the discovery that things already have their own faces, means that the ground in which the most diverse ideas in the world can take root has been reconquered – albeit in new ways.*[494] Salman Rushdie captures Roh's notion strikingly, near the beginning of *The Satanic Verses*, where he writes of his protagonist Gibreel Farishta: *Sometimes when he looked around him, especially in the afternoon heat when the air turned glutinous, the visible world, its features and inhabitants and things, seemed to be sticking up through the atmosphere like a profusion of hot icebergs, and he had the idea that everything continued down below the surface of the soupy air: people, motor-cars, dogs, movie billboards, trees, nine-tenths of their reality concealed from his eyes.*[495] This idea is encapsulated also in the ice that recurs so persistently throughout *Cien años de soledad* where there is a mysterious connection between Colonel Aureliano Buendía's icy state and the ice as a

[494] Roh, 1925 (1995), p.20.
[495] Rushdie (1988) p.21.

separate entity.[496] The connection should not lead us to a simplifying reductionist tendency. Fowler addresses the importance of the object-in-itself over and above its links to the work as a whole: *To relate description in this way is to accept its poor-relation status but to give it a limited form of social mobility: the more radical move is to free description from the chains of slavery and to give it true autonomy. The vanguard of this approach was the 'nouveau roman', particularly in the theorizing of Robbe-Grillet, with its cry that 'instead of this universe of 'significations' (pyschological, social, functional), one must try to construct a world more solid, more* immediate *in which objects are given a role outside of any metaphorical or metonymic system of reference'*.[497] Although he was talking about the specific Classical literary topos of ekphrasis, these words undoubtedly have great pertinence for magical realism and its emphasis upon the ultimate irreducibility and impenetrability of the object.

The suggestion is that there is a magic that will not yield its secrets to our rational selves, and it is precisely this element that magical realism seeks to express.[498] Ovid's remarkable metamorphoses certainly say something about psychology and conceptualisation, but they also convey an innately magical world. Something was said

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[496] Lois Parkinson Zamora alerted me to the importance of the object in her paper 'The Visualizing Capacities of Magical Realism: Objects and Expression in Borges and García Márquez', given at a conference on Magical Realism in November 2002.

[497] Fowler (2000), p.70.

[498] Leal (1995), p.122, quotes an example from Latin American literature that supports this idea: *In Rómulo Gallegos' novel* Cantaclaro *(1934) we find a young man from Caracas who is attracted to the plains and who soon becomes disillusioned. During one significant scene he confronts the old plainsman Crisanto Báez, whom he considers his inferior, and dares to insult him. The plainsman says to him with great dignity: 'Look, young man. I don't know how to explain myself very well, but you'll manage to get my point ... You keep trying to understand what is beyond your grasp ... You hear the buzzing of the bees -- since you mention them -- and, moving up the social scale, you hear us too, but you will never listen to the prayer of the Lonely Soul because your intelligence suppresses it'*; a similar notion seems to be present in *The Carpathians* as quoted by Delbaere-Garant (1995), p.259: *What is at stake in* The Carpathians *is nothing less than the survival of mankind ... [it] prophesies the apocalyptic end of an electronic culture that has penetrated the most remote places of the earth but is totally disconnected from organic reality. The last stage of Mattina's initiation takes place on a Maori farm or 'marae' where an old woman answers her inquiry about weaving flax by saying that first she must 'know flax,' for flax is alive: 'it* knows *about you ... [Y]ou must have a special feeling about flax to be able to grow it, cut it without making it bleed, scrape it without hurting it, and weave it without going against its wishes'*.

about this in my study of the Niobe episode, where Ovid had avoided a divinity beng involved in her transformation. Joseph Solodow described this reduction of the supernatural as a 'flattening effect', and it is true that Ovid and García Márquez both ignore the notion of other divine and supernatural dimensions; but, I think that this phrase underplays the repercussions this omission of a separate supernatural kingdom produces. A better way of expressing the effect would be a 'deepening' of the actual world, an acceptance and reverence of the 'magic of being'. Magical realism strives to reproduce this by its irreducible magical events and its effectivity lies, as we have seen, in its ability to make us view the world anew.

5. Poets and Sorcerers

Introduction

In the preceding four chapters of this thesis, I have explored various manifestations of magical realist technique within two texts. I have examined the way in which narration and narrotors are manipulated, the influence of cultural beliefs, and I have also studied the effects produced by magical realist styles of writing, and whether these approach a more accurate presentation of reality.

At many points in these chapters the themes of artistic creativity have been touched upon; in this final chapter I focus fully upon the important aspect of artistic endeavour. The handling of art and artistic themes in a text can often say a great deal about the intentions of its author, and therefore has the potential to shed further light upon the use of the magical in both texts. García Márquez once said in an interview: 'I would rather be a magician than a writer';[499] these words probably echo the sentiments of many magical realist writers, who seem to delight in bewitching their readers with wonders of all kinds.[500] His words also dislodge an ancient memory from its resting place -- the mysterious connection of divinity and poetry that lies at the very beginnings of literature. Poetry was described in Classical myth as being created by the gods: there is the famous story of Hermes inventing the lyre and granting it to Apollo,[501] and the

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[499] Mendoza & García Márquez (1983).

[500] Patrick Chamoiseau's magical realist novel *Texaco* (1992) repeatedly emphasises the narrator's notion that his words can be magical; cf. *It was from Monsieur Gros-Joseph himself that I would develop the taste for the books-to-read, devoid of pictures, in which writing becomes the sorcerer of the world* (216).

[501] Hom. *Hymn.* 4.20-60; 420-510. Here Hermes is presented as inventing a particular type of lyre, with seven strings and made from a tortoise-shell. In this and other accounts, it is apparent that Apollo is already familiar with another type of lyre: Hom. *Hymn.* 4.514-5;Diod. Sic.1.16.1, 5.74.5; Call. *Del.* 253ff. For more on the story of Hermes' invention of the lyre, see Franklin (2002).

tale that Athena invented the flute out of deer-horn to mimic the sound of the dying Medusa.[502] At an early stage emerged the notion that poets and musicians themselves were inherently connected with the divine:[503] in the Bible King David the harpist used his gift to soothe Saul's divinely-wrought woes;[504] Homer calls bards and their songs divine on several occasions;[505] Hesiod and Pindar both express a connection between poetry and the gods.[506]

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* includes a notable accumulation of tales involving artist figures; well-known are those of Orpheus and Pygmalion, fables that have consistently captured the imagination of artists, sculptures and writers for the very reason of their fixation with artistry.[507] They are far from unique in their apparent validation of creative skill within the poem: Arachne, Daedalus, Canens, Pan, Apollo, the Muses and even Ulysses also partake of this theme of artistry, and numerous references to the significance of creativity permeate the text. In *Cien años de soledad* the figure of the artist is likewise omnipresent. Most of the central characters display artistic tendencies and these tendencies eventually become central to their interaction with events inside their world. Pietro Crespi and Melquíades are defined by their artistic endeavours; Aureliano and Amaranta express their frustrated introversion in their artistic pursuits

This chapter explores the peculiar significance that magical realist texts place upon artist figures and examines their presentation as key protagonists and as people who possess a special power that affects the external world beyond usual means. In each subsection, I examine artists within each text who mirror one another: songsmiths,

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[502] Pind. *Pyth.* 12.6ff.
[503] See Green (1918); Sperduti (1950); Tigerstedt (1970); Murray (1981). For a more general and modern perspective on these issues, see Calasso (2001).
[504] *Whenever the spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul: he would feel better, and the spirit would leave him* (1 Samuel 16:23). David was chosen by Yahweh to be King of Israel, demonstrating that this musical man is special to God.
[505] Hom. *Il.* 2.484ff; Hom. *Od.* 22.330-56; Hom. *Od.* 8.44, 64, 488, 498; Hom. *Od.* 17.518.
[506] Hes. *Theog.* 40ff, 51; Pind. *Ol.* 3.5ff.
[507] Leach (1974); Lateiner (1974).

architects and sculptors are focused upon in the first two sections, and in the final section, I look at the unusual role of Melquíades as an author and narrator of texts. I believe that these investigations will illuminate the role of magical realism within both works.

1. In the Name of Love: Orpheus and Pietro Crespi

Orpheus[508] first appears in book ten of Ovid's poem, where he is the bridegroom at a luckless wedding. Before any other details of this character are revealed, the summoning power of his voice is alluded to as the narrator describes Hymen leaving the happy wedding of Iphis for the land of the Ciconians: *Ciconumque Hymenaeus ad oras/ tendit et Orphea nequiquam voce vocatur* (10.2-3). The repetition of *voc-* creates the hypnotic resonance of the singer's voice, disclosing the significance of Orpheus' gift for the story. Orpheus' wedding is described in words steeped with doom and misery (10.4-7), words that are especially stark in contrast to the joyous wedding that closed book nine (9.795-7). The happy miracle of Iphis' transformation into a boy is conveyed by the narrator's ecstatic declarations: *femina nuper eras, puer es. date munera templis, / nec timida gaudete fide!* (9.791-2). The external world then takes on these happy characteristics as the morning rises with radiant sunshine: *postera lux radiis latum patefecerat orbem, / cum Venus et Iuno sociusque Hymenaeus ad ignes / conveniunt, potiturque sua puer Iphis Ianthe* (9.795-7). The bright cheerful world of Iphis darkens the shadows cast over Orpheus' world. A string of negatives initially characterises events: *nec sollemnia verba / nec laetos vultus nec felix attulit omen* (10.4-5); a gloomy

[508] For the fame of Orpheus' legend, cf. Sim. fr.62, Hor. *Ars.* 391-3; for Orpheus as being on a par with Hesiod and Homer, cf. Ar. *Frogs.*1032ff, Plat. *Apol.* 41a; for Orpheus as being on board the Argo, cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.171-7; Apoll. *Arg. passim.* Robbins (1982) provides a broad discussion of Orpheus' prehistory in art and myth, and explores his differing roles of priest, poet and lover. Segal (1978) discusses in detail the presentation of Orpheus in literature through the ages.

atmosphere is suggested by the description of the failing torch and the smoke: *fax ...lacrimoso stridula fumo / usque fuit nullosque invenit motibus ignes* (10.6-7). The description of *lacrimoso* for the smoke expresses both its opaque and irritant qualities and also the idea that the traditionally inanimate constituents of the environment feel emotion for the wretchedness of the wedding. This pathetic fallacy has been observed to be a favourite theme of Hellenistic poetry, and it has been claimed that Ovid's (and Virgil's) version of Orpheus is based upon a lost Hellenistic original, and the pathetic fallacy inherent in these later accounts descend directly from this missing poem.[509] It is my aim here to demonstrate how this technique acquires a new meaning in the context of Ovid's version of Orpheus' powers, expressing not a different way of interpreting reality, but a manifestation of the animating capacities of poetry and song; thus Orpheus' mere presence appears sufficient to affect his immediate environment, and stir emotion within it.[510]

After the sudden and tragic death of his bride, Orpheus is described lamenting to the upper world, and the narrator refers to him here as *vates*. This description appears again as Orpheus is singing on the hill where the narrator describes him as *dis genitus vates* (10.89). *Vates* is generally used in *Metamorphoses* for seers, prophets and priests,[511] but it is also used of poets. It was during the Augustan age that the word was claimed by poets for its religious connotations and granted a new and brilliant lease of life.[512] Ovid's extensive use of the word for Orpheus[513] together with his emphasis upon Orpheus' divine heritage recalls the ancient connection of poetry and prophecy inherent

[509] Bowra (1952), p.117.
[510] Segal (1978) connects this aspect of the Orpheus myth with the pastoral ideal of an organic connection between nature and man.
[511] e.g. 3.348, 3.511, 3.527, 7.761, 9.407, 11.249, 13.774.
[512] Sperduti (1951), p.218-221.
[513] Of the 29 appearances of the word in Ovid's poem, 10 are applied to Orpheus: 10.12, 82, 89, 143, 11.2, 8, 19, 27, 38, 68.

in the label '*vates*'. It is notable that the instances of the word when applied to prophets are events where the seer is proven to be correct in his vision.[514]

Orpheus is depicted as travelling to the underworld where he sings such a mournful and beautiful lament that the spirits weep, and doomed mythological figures pause for a moment in their perpetual tortures, captured by that haunting sound of human pain: *talia dicentem nervosque ad verba moventem / exsangues flebant animae; nec Tantalus undam / captavit refugam stupuitque Ixionis orbis, / nec carpsere iecur volucres, urnisque vacarunt / Belides, inque tuo sedisti, Sisyphe, saxo* (10.40-4).[515] The power of Orpheus' song here is mesmeric, disclosed by the verbs *captavit ...stupuitque*; the song is so potent that it captures the hearts of the meanest Underworld residents. The fact that these are condemned individuals who are moved to pity heightens the pathetic effect; even the savage vultures cease the tearing of Tityus' liver in their wonder at the sound.[516] Orpheus' song is called a *carmen* and, like *vates*, this is a label of particular signifying power.[517] Later in the same book, the word is used of healing charms: *carmine sanet* (10.397), and the foreboding call of an owl: *letali carmine* (10.453). These examples bring out the magical and therefore sinister connotations of words and song when used as spells and incantations, and allude to a deep-seated sense of their latent powers.[518] In *Metamorphoses* the word is overwhelmingly used with religious or magical connotations: Medea and Circe between them clock up a

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[514] 3.527, 13.774.
[515] Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 3.11.17-24. Anderson (1982), p.25-50, takes a rather different perspective of this song, and Ovid's Orpheus in general. He believes that Ovid's purpose is to demonstrate Orpheus to be a shallow, ineffectual, selfish lover and poet, and that the reaction of the Underworld to his song demonstrates this, for whereas Virgil focused on the shades that swarmed to hear the song, Ovid emphasises the fabulous mythical sufferers, and even adds the ridiculous touch of Sisyphus sitting on his stone. It is certainly true that Ovid injects a touch of humour into the proceedings, but his humanisation of Orpheus makes him a character more easily empathised with than Virgil's intense portrayal. Cf. Ovid's treatment of the Sibyl (14.120-57) as compared to Virgil (*Aen.* 6.42-103).
[516] Segal (1972), p.473-94.
[517] Sperduti (1951).
[518] Dickie (2001) includes interesting discussions of the use of songs and incantations in magic; Segal (1978), p.114, also speaks of the magic attributed to song, especially when connected to eroticism.

remarkable number of instances with their furtive witchcraft;[519] there are also several examples of *carmen* being employed to describe inscriptions, themselves markers of the attempt to immortalise with this supernatural potential what has occurred or perished.[520]

Orpheus' song to the shades is one of lost love; he declares that the sole purpose of his journey to that grim place is for one time-honoured motive.[521] '*vicit Amor*' (10.26) he proclaims,[522] before using a rhetorical argument common to Ovid's own poems of love: *sed et hic tamen auguror esse, / famaque si veteris non est mentita rapinae, / vos quoque iunxit Amor*'(10.27-9).[523] Throughout this lament, he uses various motifs traditional in love elegy; the dramatic statement '*certum est / nolle redire mihi: leto gaudete duorum*'(10.38-9) recalls the notion that one life or mind resides in two bodies, a frequent concept in the worlds of star-crossed lovers,[524] and an obsessive awareness of death pervades (an awareness not altogether unreasonable given his current circumstances; in Hades and trying to win back his dead wife). The plaintive phrase: '*omnia debentur vobis paulumque morati/ serius aut citius sedem properamus ad unam*'(10.32-3) echoes and evokes the haunting sadness of Catullus 5, where the poet tells his beloved Lesbia: *soles occidere et redire possunt: / nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux / nox est perpetua una dormienda* (5.4-6).[525] The intrusion of love elegy into Orpheus' song is hardly surprising or unusual: for most of the poem, the

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[519] Medea's witchery: 7.148, 167, 203, 208, 253, 424; Circe's equally brutal spells: 14.20, 34, 44, 58.
[520] The burial of Phaethon at 2.252; the offerings at the temple at 9.793; 14.442.
[521] Robbins (1982), p.15, notes that this aspect of the Orpheus myth -- the story that he went to the Underworld to redeem his wife -- was emphasised by the Roman imagination: *The love story of Orpheus and Eurydice, so important to the Romans and to us, seems quite clearly the tail-end of a centuries-old tradition that knew Orpheus, shaman and Argonaut, as traveller to the world beyond and master of its mysteries. Romantic love was of little interest to the early Greeks. It was essentially a creation of the Alexandrian Age and forms part of its legacy to Rome.*
[522] Cf. *omnia vincit Amor: et nos cedamus Amori* (Virg. *Ecl.* 10.69).
[523] Cf. *at si, quem mavis, Cephalum conplexa teneres, / clamares: 'lente currite, noctis equi!'* (Ov. *Am.* 1.13.37-8).
[524] Cf. *ei mihi! cur animis iuncti secernimur undis, / unaque mens, tellus non habet una duos*? (Ov. *Her.* 18.125-6).
[525] Cf. *dum nos fata sinunt, / oculos satiemus amore: / nox tibi longa venit, nec reditura dies* (Prop. 2.15.23-4); *omnes eodem cogimur, omnium / versatur urna serius ocius / sors exitura et nos in aeternum / exsilium impositura cumbae* (Hor. *Carm.* 2.3.25-8).

themes of love and desire are paramount, and act as governing forces over all realms, mortal and divine. It is further endorsed by the string of love stories that Orpheus sings after he has lost his wife for the second time.[526] At this point he takes to a hill, and with the sound of his lyre he draws the sympathetic ears of many trees that were once people.[527] The magic of his skill is demonstrated by the speed with which shade appears to arrive: *umbra loco deerat; qua postquam parte resedit / dis genitus vates et fila sonantia movit, / umbra loco venit* (10.88-90). Also significant are the trees that are drawn to listen: Cyparissus' transformation into the tree of that name is as a result of an immoderate grieving for a loved one and the Heliades' story has already been narrated by Ovid in book two. This is a world filled with the victims of immoderate passions. He lures much of the animal kingdom as well with his song: *Tale nemus vates attraxerat inque ferarum/ concilio medius turba volucrumque sedebat* (10.143-4). They appear to be drawn by an irresistible and elemental impulse that recalls Melquíades' magnets.[528] His ability to mesmerise and lure with words and song is consistently illuminated by Ovid;[529] also significant is that Orpheus himself has been stupefied by his wife's second death: '*non aliter stupuit gemina nece coniugis Orpheus* (10.64).[530] The astounded singer consequently astounds his audience. Unlike the mantic frenzy of inspiration

[526] For discussion of the unhappy ending of the Orpheus story, see Robbins (1982); Heath (1994); Kingsley (1996), p.226.
[527] Hinds (2002), p.127. Cf. Canens' ability to move rocks and wood with her singing (Ov. *Met.* 14.337-9); Amphion's powers to build the walls of Thebes with music (Hor. *Carm.* 3.11.1-2; Virg. *Ecl.*2.24); Arion's gift of lyre-playing causing running water to stand still and animals to cease their hunting and chattering (Ov. *Fasti* 2.4-94).
[528] *CAS.*, p.82. Cf. China Miéville's magical realist interpretation of the fairy tale figure of the Pied Piper in his novel *King Rat.*
[529] This is in clear contrast to Virgil's account, for although it mentions Orpheus' mesmerising musical talents it does not elaborate (*Georg.* 4.509-10). See Bowra (1952), where it is clear from his discussion of sources that the charming effect of Orpheus' song was a crucial element of the myth, however.
[530] Heath (1996) explores the similes used to describe Orpheus' stupor here, citing the cynicism he perceives to be central to Ovid's depiction of Orpheus throughout.

however,[531] it is a personal grief which Orpheus channels into his song rather than a religious experience.

Orpheus invokes the Muse at the beginning of his extended song about homosexual and inappropriate love: '*ab Iove, Musa parens, (cedunt Iovis omnia regno) / carmina nostra move. Iovis est mihi saepe potestas / dicta prius: cecini plectro graviore Gigantas / sparsaque Phlegraeis victricia fulmina campis. / nunc opus est leviore lyra, puerosque canamus / dilectos superis inconcessisque puellas / ignibus attonitas meruisse libidine poenam*'(10.148-54). He also flaunts his own divine ancestry, emphasising the important connection between the poet and divinity. It appears that Orpheus has already consciously chosen his topic, and is now requesting aid for his performance, something which Murray cites as an essential aspect of the poet's quest for divine support. She also cites memory and knowledge as key aspects of the Muses' aid, and these also are perhaps part of Orpheus' request, although it is not made explicit in his invocation. In his initial song to the Underworld, however, there is no indication of an invocation. Perhaps this is because his inspiration is already clear, and restated during the performance of his song that was stated above : '*vicit Amor*'(10.26). Plato's *Ion* describes the poet's creativity: *For all good epic poets say their beautiful poems not by skill, but because they are inspired and possessed, and in the same manner, the lyric poets do likewise. And as the Corybantians when they dance are not in their right mind, so the lyric poets are not in their right mind when they make their beautiful songs. Yet when they fall under the power of melody and rhythm, they are inspired and possessed* (533-4). Later it elaborates upon this form of possession: *For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him. When he*

[531] The Sibyl at Virg. *Aen.* 6.42 and Ov. *Met.* 14.106-7 is portrayed as seized by the divine frenzy of prophecy. Cf. Cassandra in Aesch. *Ag.* 1214ff. For discussions of mantic frenzy, its accompanying mental states and its relation to poetic inspiration, see Smith (1965); Tigerstedt (1970); Maurizio (1995).

has not attained to this state, he is powerless and is unable to utter his oracles... God takes away the minds of poets, and uses them as his ministers, as he also uses diviners and holy prophets, in order that we who hear them may know them to be speaking not of themselves who utter these priceless words in a state of unconsciousness, but that God himself is the speaker, and that through him he is conversing with us (534).

The extremity of Orpheus' behaviour reinforces his altered mental state. To attempt access to the Underworld is something that transgresses the normal rules of the universe for mortals. It has been shown how Ovid consistently calls Orpheus *vates*, foregrounding his divine connections. It is as if 'Amor' is the divinity that has possessed him and inspired him, and it is to 'Amor' that he is connected as a priest-figure in Ovid's eyes.[532] Another key passage of Plato is the following: *Do you know that the spectator is the last of the rings which, as I am saying, receive the power of the original magnet from one another? The rhapsode like yourself and the actor are intermediate links, and the poet himself is the first of them. Through all these the God sways the souls of men in any direction which he pleases, and makes one man hand down from another. Thus there is a vast chain of dancers and masters and undermasters of choruses, who are suspended, as if from the stone, at the side of the rings which hand down from the Muse. And every poet has some Muse from whom he is suspended, and by whom he is said to be possessed, which is nearly the same thing; for he is taken hold of* (536). This notion of a causal chain down through which travels divine energy can be used to explain Orpheus who, inspired by love, thus instils the divinity he experiences in his listeners by moulding his own experience into a thing of beauty. This recalls words written by Kingsley of Empedocles: *(Empedocles) considered his words capable of acting, of having an effect; as someone who considered himself divine it is perfectly*

[532] Cf. Ov. *Am.* 1.2.8; 2.19.36; Prop. 1.1.4; 1.9.12. For Amor as a divinity, see Wlosok (1975).

understandable that he attributed to them the magical properties of the divine word which typically has a life of its own, is 'a living thing, a natural reality that sprouts and grows'. In the first instance, as he carefully explains, these words of his had the power to affect and transform the person who absorbs them. Later it was only inevitable that the same power could be used by the transformed person to affect and change the world around him.[533]

Ovid elucidates the stupor of Orpheus from which his music emerges by a string of comparisons. The first is a story of a man turning into stone through his profound fear on seeing Cerberus; Ovid describes the event: *quam tria qui timidus, medio portante catenas, / colla canis vidit, quem non pavor ante reliquit / quam natura prior, saxo per corpus oborto* (10.65-7). The fear here is caused by seeing a supernatural being of the Underworld, and this fear then produces a need and irresolution that is only solved by transformation of state.[534] It has been shown that Orpheus' extreme love is akin to the intensity of a religious experience; also the music Orpheus produces causes an irresolution that transfixes the senses of his listeners. The simile here makes explicit these aspects of Orpheus' story.

Orpheus strikes a self-righteous and indignant note in narrating many of the ensuing tales; he even introduces them with the harshly judgmental words: '*puerosque canamus / dilectos superis inconcessisque puellas / ignibus attonitas meruisse libidine poenam*'(10.152-4). Despite these words and his initial horrified pronouncements upon

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[533] Kingsley (1996), p.231. The fragment of Empedocles on which Kingsley is specifically commenting is as follows: '*And all the remedies that exist as defence against sufferings and old age: / These you will learn, because for you alone will I make all these things come true. / And you'll stop the force of the tireless winds that chase over the earth / And destroy the fields with their gusts and blasts; / But then again, if you so wish, you'll stir up winds as requital. / Out of a black rainstorm you'll create .....Tree-nurturing floods that will stream through the ether. / And you will fetch back from Hades the life-force of a man who has died*', fragment 111 in Diel's collection.

[534] This thesis has encountered many examples of extreme emotions provoking metamorphosis in the poem: Cyane's *inconsolabile vulnus* seems to lead inevitably to her liquidation (5.425-37); the grieving sisters of Phaethon likewise become trees through excessive grief (2.340-66); Niobe becomes stone through her stubborn pride and profound anguish (6.301-12).

the story of Myrrha (10.300-7), Orpheus proceeds to tell the tale with humanity, perceiving the events through Myrrha's eyes and hence describing her painful predicament insightfully: '*felices, quibus ista licent! humana malignas / cura dedit leges, et quod natura remittit, / invida iura negant*'(10.329-30). More pertinent still is the echo of Orpheus' own predicament in these phrases: laws have separated him from his wife and he feels them to be spiteful and jealous also. Orpheus clearly, although unintentionally, sympathises deeply with his characters for the immoderate nature of their passions mirror his own extreme love.[535] Immoderate and persistent emotion is the province of the religious devotee, the lover and the poet, and Lee captures this idea: *Amor is beyond human control, irrational, antisocial, invading the personality and compelling his victim to act, feel and think like a madman, but at the same time giving his life its full meaning. Love is a religion whose seers and prophets are the poets and whose complicated code of observances ensures for the faithful a final reward.*[536] In the magical universe of *Metamorphoses* love has the ability to inspire poetry that produces a religious awe in those who hear.

The opening of book eleven sees the end of Orpheus' song, and the destruction of his life. This time a new member of his audience is mentioned: *Carmine dum tali silvas animosque ferarum/ Threicius vates et saxa sequentia ducit* (11.1-2). He is described as leading them as if he is wandering around, and traditionally inanimate stones and trees are apparently behaving in the same manner as the wild animals he has attracted. At this point, a frenzied group of wild women see him, and in hysterical anger at his celibacy with regards to women,[537] descend upon him with weapons of stones,

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[535] Cf. Canens (14.420-32) and Clytie (4.256-70), who both grieve with a intensity approaching that of Orpheus.
[536] Lee (1962), p.151.
[537] Segal (1972), p.477, observes upon the introduction of homosexual love in Ovid's account: *The homosexual adventures of Ovid's Orpheus have a necessary structural function ... Yet they are also, possibly, an ironical comment on the absolute devotion of the Virgilian Orpheus to his Eurydice.*

spears and branches. At first, his hypnotic power over the stones prevents them from hitting him, for they pause in the air on hearing his voice, and fall harmlessly at his feet (11.10-3). Likewise, a spear fails to wound him for foliage hurriedly covers over the spear-head (11.7-9). However, the uproar of the women eventually overwhelms the sound of Orpheus' lyre, and therefore destroys his spell; the rocks are described as growing red with the singer's blood: *tum denique saxa/ non exauditi rubuerunt sanguine vatis* (11.18-9).[538] The residue of his charm sustains its hold over the animals and birds who are unfortunately torn to shreds as they remain *attonitas* (20), but finally his voice holds no sway as he pleas vainly to the Maenads while they tear him to shreds. In grief, his powers remain, for the birds, stones, trees and wild beasts are depicted as expressing their sadness in surprisingly human ways: *te maestae volucres, Orpheu, te turba ferarum / te rigidi silices, tua carmina saepe secutae / fleverunt silvae, positis te frondibus arbor / tonsa comas luxit; lacrimis quoque flumina dicunt / increvisse suis* (11.44-8).

Ovid is inverting Virgil's account here, for Virgil applies this notion of nature weeping to Eurydice's initial death: *at chorus aequalis Dryadum clamore supremos / implerunt montis; flerunt Rhodopeiae arces / altaque Pangaea et Rhesi Mavortia tellus / atque Getae atque Hebrus et Actias Orithyia* (4.460-3). Ovid has nature grieve for the poet, expressing the importance of his gift, and he also makes the grieving far more human and magical. One of the features which is most striking about the effect of Orpheus' voice is his ability to broaden the perceptions of things; so objects

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Certainly they are likely to be a typically Ovidian response to Virgil's Orpheus; however, I do not think they lighten the intensity of Orpheus' plight. The point remains that he never loved another woman after his wife.

[538] Segal (1972), p.488, writes: *The details of stones turned aside by his song at times verge upon a grotesque blend of fantasy and bloodthirsty horror... Yet these details place the pathos of Orpheus' end above the justice of natural laws.* His remarks here are also appropriate for the examples of grotesque realism and fantasy that occurred in the Niobe passage in my fourth chapter.

traditionally deaf to the world can suddenly hear: *auditum saxis* (42),[539] and animals, conventionally unthinking, can understand: *intellectumque ferarum / sensibus* (42-3).[540] It seems from these examples that the attributed qualities of the singer enable him not just to communicate with the animal and mineral kingdoms but to grant them a heightened sensitivity to things, if only for a brief spell of time.[541] As we can see from this account, the spell lasts while the music can be heard; once this is blotted out then the magic rapidly falls away. This is one of the most significant departures from Virgil's text where the powers of song are comparably underplayed. Virgil's spirits are *cantu commotae* (4.471) rather than Ovid's more potent *stupuit* (10.42)[542] and *victarum...Eumenidum* (10.45-6); and after Eurydice's second death Orpheus is simply described as '*et gelidis haec evolvisse sub antris,/ mulcentem tigris et agentem carmine quercus*'(4.509-10). There is no elaborate description of stunned birds and listening rocks. Even the suggestion that trees were brought into his presence is very ambiguous, compared to Ovid's explicit details of the gathering trees.

Orpheus in *Metamorphoses* intoxicates with his musical poetry, rather than moving listeners to sympathy with his grief. Anderson makes an interesting point about the power of words in *Metamorphoses*: '*Names possess a formal quality and define a*

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[539] Cf. *non canimus surdis, respondent omnia silvae* (Virg. *Ecl.* 10.8).

[540] Ovid himself reminds his readers of the customary important distinction between men and animals through the mouth of eloquent Ulysses in *Metamorphoses* 13: *nec non in corpore nostro / pectora sunt potiora manu: vigor omnis in illis* (13.368-9).

[541] Noll (1985), p.454, states this to be a feature of shamanism: *As did the early literates such as the Homeric Greeks and the Hebrew patriarchs of 'Genesis', most nonliterate people think of the universe in anthropomorphic terms. Everything has the same sort of consciousness that humans have... Since the knowledge held by animals, plants, and other natural phenomena is inaccessible to man in his normal waking consciousness, the wise man develops states in which he can communicate directly with the nonhuman world.*

[542] Ovid uses the verb *stupeo* in *Metamorphoses* only at instances of profound mental disturbance or physical change in the characters: for example, Astyages *stupet* (5.205) on discovering that his opponent has been changed to stone, and at that precise moment he is in fact being changed himself; Pygmalion's astonishment is captured as he realises his beloved statue is a living woman at 10.287. Other instances are: 2.191, 3.381, 4.676, 5.509, 10.42, 10.62, 11.539, 15.553. Numerous examples of the compounds *adstupere* and *obstupere* also appear frequently, notably in many occasions of astonishment at beauty or disbelief: 1.384, 2.726, 3.418, 3.644, 7.322, 7.727, 8.219, 8.616, 8.765, 10.580, 10.666, 12.18, 13.940, 14.350.

person or thing in a way similar to outward shape. Changing names, changing the meaning of words can therefore produce results as drastic as those caused by changing forms'[543]. He is talking explicitly of the tormenting mental debates of characters such as Byblis and Medea as they struggle to escape the necessary connotations of their titles of sister and daughter. However, the idea can also be applied to the handling of words by poets such as Orpheus; so his musical poetry causes the listener to redefine his experience of a word by giving it a deeper dimension. An analogous example is the way in which an every day object can become imbued with a deep and sacred significance when used as part of a religious ritual. J.P. Vernant speaks of this idea when he says: '*{religions} just like tools and language, they are an integral component of the machinery of symbolic thought. Despite their diversity, they all perform the double, and mutually reinforcing, function of both giving to things a fullness of meaning which in themselves they appear to lack, and uprooting the human beings from their isolation and embedding them in a reassuring and transcendently important community*'[544]. This then causes a form of metamorphosis in the hearer. Anderson believes that mental metamorphosis is more significant to Ovid than physical change, and that often the same vocabulary exhibited in physical metamorphosis used to describe a person falling in love or experiencing beauty; this is exactly what happens when Orpheus sings. Music, like love, fear and religion, transfigures the world.

A flourish of magic is flamboyantly displayed as his head and his lyre drift downstream, continuing to murmur mournfully: '*caput, Hebre, lyramque/ excipis et (mirum) medio dum labitur amne,/ flebile nescio quid queritur lyra, flebile lingua/ murmurat exanimis, respondent flebile ripae*'(11.50-3). The animating powers of his

[543] Anderson (1963), p.20.
[544] J.P. Vernant in an interview with J.P. Enthoven and J. Julliard in the Parisian independent weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 5 May 1980, quoted by Louise Bruit Zaidman & Pauline Schmitt Pantel (1992), p.22.

music affect the banks of the river even beyond his death, causing them to respond to his doleful lament. This is a validation of the poet's influence, as his creation acquires a form of immortality, which enables his spirit to continue long after his body has died. Immortality is an absolutely central part of a poet's pursuit, bound inextricably to his creation: Ovid expresses this in his defiant gesture of independence at the end of the poem: '*ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama,/ siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam*'(15.878-9). This grants the poem a spiritual significance; it relates to the examples of the use of '*carmen*' noted above as an inscription or epitaph. Ovid calls his own poem a '*perpetuum carmen*' in the prologue. Segal observes of this grand finale to Ovid's poem that '*{h}uman and personal life wins out. The individual 'I' has the last word:* vivam'[545]. Ovid himself will be immortalised by his poetical expression. The final validation of Orpheus the poet emerges in the ultimate happy ending granted him in this version of the myth. He is presented in the last instance as walking together in the Underworld with Eurydice, and being able to look back safely at his wife (11.65-6).

The figure of Orpheus has many parallels with a certain tormented individual from *Cien años de soledad*, the Italian pianola tuner Pietro Crespi. We are introduced to this man when Úrsula is busy renovating the house, importing all kinds of fanciful furniture ready for the inaugural dance. He has been sent along with the imported gifts to explain the workings of the pianola and to teach the family how to dance to its music. He is thus immediately associated with artistic creativity. He is described as an elegant, refined man with clear artistic talents and dedicated to his work: *Pietro Crespi era joven y rubio, el hombre más hermoso y mejor educado que se había visto en Macondo, tan escrupuloso en el vestir que a pesar del calor sofocante trabajaba con la almilla*

[545] Segal (1969), p.292.

brocada y el grueso saco de paño oscuro. Empapado en sudor, guardando una distancia reverente con los dueños de la casa, estuvo varias semanas encerrado en la sala, con una consagración similar a la de Aureliano en su taller de orfebre (152-3).[546] His fevered commitment to the task is an important aspect of his allegiance to artistry, and it is a feature apparent in all figures of creativity in the two texts. A dominating aspect of this commitment is its necessary subordination of other things, most notably, love. Aureliano's dedication to the laboratory is presented as a substitute for his unfulfilled desires, Amaranta's shroud expresses amongst other things her stubbornly virgin state, Orpheus rejects the love of women and turns to lament in song instead, and Pygmalion turns to artwork to compensate for his disgust with womankind. Pietro Crespi is emphatically connected with the artistic: when José Arcadio comes to break the news that he is to marry Rebeca he finds the delicate man giving a music lesson in a room *atiborrado de instrumentos músicos y juguetes de cuerda* (189).[547]

Another description occurs when he is introduced which suggests an unearthly quality to his presence: *Rebeca y Amaranta, sirviendo la mesa, se intimidaron con la fluidez con que manejaba los cubiertos aquel hombre angélico de manos pálidas y sin anillos* (153).[548] This recalls that ancient connection between the poet and the divine and is confirmed when Úrsula later says to Arcadio: '*De algún modo que ni usted ni yo podemos entender, ese hombre era un santo*'(208).[549] During his grief at Rebeca's choice to marry José Arcadio, Amaranta comforts him with meticulous care, luring him into her trap exuding love and comfort, before crushing his hopes in one cruel

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[546] *Pietro Crespi was young and blond, the most handsome and well-mannered man who had ever been seen in Macondo, so scrupulous in his dress that in spite of the suffocating heat he would work in his brocade vest and heavy coat of dark cloth. Soaked in sweat, keeping a reverent distance from the owners of the house, he spent several weeks shut up in the parlour with a dedication much like that of Aureliano in his silverwork* (56).

[547] *crowded with musical instruments and mechanical toys* (82).

[548] *Rebeca and Amaranta, serving the table, were intimidated by the way in which the angelic man with pale and ringless hands manipulated the utensils* (56-7).

[549] '*In a way that neither you nor I can understand, that man was a saint*' (96).

sentence:[550] '*No seas ingenuo, Crespi ...ni muerta me casaré contigo*'(207).[551] Pietro Crespi reacts with an intensity akin to the grief of Orpheus: *perdió el dominio de sí mismo. Lloró sin pudor, casi rompiéndose los dedos de desesperación ...agotó los recursos de la súplica. Llegó a increíbles extremos de humillación. Lloró toda una tarde en el regazo de Úrsula, que hubiera vendido el alma por consolarlo. En noches de lluvia se le vio merodear por la casa con un paraguas de seda, tratando de sorprender una luz en el dormitorio de Amaranta ...Pasaba el día en la trastienda, escribiendo esquelas desatinadas, que hacía llegar a Amaranta con membranas de pétalos y mariposas disecadas, y que ella devolvía sin abrir* (207-8);[552] *Una noche cantó. Macondo despertó en una especie de estupor, angelizado por una cítara que no merecía ser de este mundo y una voz como no podía concebirse que hubiera otra en la tierra con tanto amor* (208).[553] The reference to divinity, and the inducement of a form of hypnosis recalls Orpheus who likewise stupefied his listeners: *Pietro Crespi vio entonces la luz en todas las ventanas del pueblo, menos en la de Amaranta* (208).[554]

Pietro Crespi has already been shown to be able to transfigure reality when he brings postcards and stories for Amaranta: *A veces, ante una acuarela de Venecia, la nostalgia transformaba en tibios aromas de flores el olor de fango y mariscos podridos*

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[550] For a harsh analysis of the bizarre cruelty of Amaranta's behaviour, see Penuel (1983).
[551] '*Don't be simple, Crespi ...I wouldn't marry you even if I were dead*' (95).
[552] *Pietro Crespi lost control of himself. He wept shamelessly, almost breaking his fingers with desperation...(he) exhausted all manner of pleas. He went through incredible extremes of humiliation. He wept one whole afternoon in Ursula's lap, and she would have sold her soul to comfort him. On rainy nights he could be seen prowling about the house with an umbrella, waiting for a light in Amaranta's bedroom ...He would spend the day writing wild notes, which he would send to Amaranta with flower petals and dried butterflies, and which she would return unopened* (95-6).
[553] *One night he sang. Macondo woke up in a kind of angelic stupor that was caused by a zither that deserved more than this world and a voice that led one to believe that no other person on earth could feel such love* (96). Cf. Lonyon in Patrick Chamoiseau's *Texaco*: *Lonyon was in love with music. This was probably a secret fever, for on my sleepless nights ... I would hear beads of guitar modulations glistening from his room. The first time, I thought I was perceiving a miracle, so pure was the music, so sad was it* (205-6).
[554] *Pietro Crespi then saw the lights go on in every window in town except that of Amaranta* (96).

de los canales (205-6).[555] This idealised reality that is created by the artist and its comment upon nostalgia is of overwhelming thematic importance for the novel. It is clearly an essential part of his artistic powers, for even Amaranta falls under his spell: *Amaranta suspiraba, reía, soñaba con una segunda patria de hombres y mujeres hermosos que hablaban una lengua de niños, con ciudades antiguas de cuya pasada grandeza sólo quedaban los gatos entre los escombros* (206).[556] However, just as Orpheus suffered and died, so the same fate awaits Pietro Crespi. In a tragic culmination to his disastrous love affairs, his brother enters the store one day and finds him dead: *en medio de aquel concierto disparatado encontró a Pietro Crespi en el escritorio de la trastienda, con las muñecas cortadas a navaja y las dos manos metidas en una palangana de benjuí* (208).[557] In contrast to Orpheus in Ovid, there is no attempt at an happy ending envisaged for Pietro. His grief and death seem futile and terribly destructive.

Another young artist is Aureliano, who on falling in love with the child Remedios, finds himself compelled to write poetry: *La casa se llenó de amor. Aureliano lo expresó en versos que no tenían principio ni fin. Los escribía en los ásperos pergaminos que le regalaba Melquíades, en las paredes del baño, en la piel de sus brazos, y en todos aparecía Remedios transfigurada* (158-9).[558] Here the magical power of art to alter reality is again highlighted: it is implied that it is not Remedios herself but an idealised version of her that Aureliano conveys in his fevered poetry. The compulsion to write poetry is expressed dramatically in the young man's habit of

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[555] *Sometimes, over a watercolour of Venice, nostalgia would transform the smell of mud and putrefying shellfish of the canals into the warm aroma of flowers* (94).

[556] *Amaranta would sigh, laugh and dream of a second homeland of handsome men and beautiful women who spoke a childlike language, with ancient cities of whose past grandeur only the cats and the rubble remained* (94).

[557] *in the midst of that mad concert he found Pietro Crespi at the desk in the rear with his wrists cut by a razor and his hands thrust into a basin of benzoin* (96).

[558] *The house became full of love. Aureliano expressed it in poetry that had no beginning or end. He would write it on the harsh pieces of parchment that Melquíades gave him, on the bathroom walls , on the skin of his arms, and in all of it Remedios would appear transfigured* (61).

writing on his arms. Aureliano is a mysterious individual, who spends his time alone in the workshop, and this solitary trait recalls many of the artists presented in these two texts, as is shown in the following sections.

In summary, García Márquez's and Ovid's poets and musicians, are intense young men tormented by love and capable of transfiguring the world with their art. There are two important contrasts, however. Ovid's presentation of Orpheus is more magical than the parallel figure in *Cien años de soledad*, with Orpheus capable of stilling missiles in the air. Pietro Crespi's skills do not reach these extremes. Secondly, Orpheus achieves some form of happiness in the end, whereas Pietro Crespi is granted no such respite from his grief.

2. Alchemy and Aviation: Daedalus and José Arcadio Buendía

Creativity has many different outlets. In the previous section, the creativity of poet-singers was explored, and it became apparent that both texts handled this type of creative figure in a similar manner. Orpheus and Pietro Crespi possessed divine connections, and an uncanny ability to move the external world beyond usual means. They both died tragically as a direct or indirect result of their doomed passions. As well as singers and poets, the texts include examples of inventors and architects. This is clearly a very different type of creativity, and this section focuses upon the presentation of these types of characters, and their relevance to the handling of the artistic in magical realist texts. I begin with that famous example of an architect, Daedalus.

Daedalus's labyrinth was built to house the half-man half-bull offspring of Pasiphae's perverse lusting.[559] We are first informed of Daedalus when the narrator, noting that he was the creator of the labyrinth, pauses to mention his fame as an artist: *Daedalus ingenio fabrae celeberrimus artis* (8.159)[560]. Above all, it would appear, Daedalus is a creator, and his immense skill is emphasised in the complexity of the labyrinth's structure. The narrator describes his remarkable labours: *ponit opus turbatque notas et lumina flexu/ ducit in errorem variarum ambage viarum* (8.161-2). The verse is cleverly structured to mimic the intricate sense of disorder created by the labyrinth: *variarum... viarum* are similar and yet subtly different, reflecting the disorientating effects of the meandering building, and the descriptions are littered with words for confusion, ambiguity and blindness: *caecisque ...tectis /...in errorem ...ambage*. The whole passage wanders and twists bewilderingly until the reader is left with an impression of perplexed bafflement. It is made clear that Daedalus intends to create this confusion: *turbatque notas et lumina flexa/ ducit in errorem*. His labyrinth is filled with misleading paths and signs.

As ever, one of the most important places to look in order to gain an understanding of Ovid's intentions is at Virgil. In the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, he marks out a very different aspect of Daedalus: *Daedalus, ut fama est, fugiens Minoia regna* (6.14). Virgil's version of the labyrinth itself is here brief and underplayed. He writes

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[559] The myth of the Cretan labyrinth is recorded with its various permutations in several Classical writers: Plin. *NH*. 36.19, Diod. Sic. 4.4.77, Apollod. 3.1.3, 15.8, Virg. *Aen*. 5.588, 6., Cat. *Carm*. 64 and *Met*. 8.159. On the labyrinth in literature, see Matthews (1970) and Reed (1994).

[560] Anderson (1972) comments that *fabrae artis* is an adjective created by Ovid, referring to Daedalus' outstanding architectural abilities. These abilities appear to have been widely known: Apollod. 3.15.8; Paus. 2.4.5. Smith (1884) conducts a very rigorous survey of the emerging Classical conceptions of Daedalus, in which he observes that Daedalus was said to have been both a magnificent plastic artist and scientific inventor. In particular, he notes that Daedalus was held responsible for making statues appear animate: *In statuary, the improvements attributed to Daedalus were the opening of the eye and of the feet, which had been formerly closed ...In consequence of these ancient improvements, the ancient writers speak of the statues of Daedalus as being distinguished by an expression of life and even divine inspiration (Paus.11.4.5; Plato, passim and particularly Men.p.97 ed. Steph; Aristot.Politic.1.4)*. Finally, he comes to the notion that Daedalus, rather than being a literal character, represented for the writers of antiquity the personification of the birth of the fine arts.

only one line of direct description: *hic labor ille domus et inextricabilis error* (6.27). His emphasis upon Daedalus is entirely different from Ovid's initial conception: *Daedalus, ut fama est, fugiens Minoia regna / praepetibus pennis ausus se credere caelo* (6.14-5). Of primary importance is Daedalus' status as an exile in flight from his home, and his skill as an architect and inventor is of secondary importance to this fact. The situation of Virgil's text is far more complex than is the case in *Metamorphoses*. Daedalus has depicted an autobiographical set of images, and amongst these is of course the labyrinth story. Putnam observes of the works of Daedalus that appear on the temple doors in *Aeneid* 6: *This is the only occasion in ancient literature where an artist is described as constructing his literal, which in this case is also to say his spiritual, or psychic, biography. As such I take it as a metaphor for the progress of any artist, for his imaginative diary, as it were.*[561] This supports the reading of Ovid's Daedalus as the type of an artist mentioned above; it also adds a layer of interpretation absent from Ovid. Daedalus's exilic status is of overwhelming importance to the *Aeneid*, rather than being a pointless literary folly, for it connects directly with Aeneas' own migrant condition. Another reason for Virgil's lack of interest in book six about the structure and construction of the labyrinth is a simile that occurs in the previous book: *ut quondam Creta fertur Labyrinthus in alta / parietibus textum caecis iter ancipitemque / mille viis habuisse dolum, qua signa sequendi / frangeret indeprensus et irremeabilis error: / haud alio Teucrum nati vestigia cursu / impediunt texuntque fugas et proelia ludo, / delphinum similes, qui per maria umida nando/ Carpathium Libycumque secant luduntque per undas*'(5.588-95). In this passage Virgil writes of the structure of the maze, emphasising the same deceptive and disorientating qualities which Ovid notes in his version.

[561] Putnam (1987), p.173-4.

Words like *error* and *irremeabilis*, *caecis* and *dolum* are common not just to Ovid and Virgil's conceptions of the labyrinth, but also their literary predecessor Catullus, who writes of the legend in his famous *Carmen* 64: *inde pedem sospes multa cum laude reflexit / errabunda regens tenui vestigia filo, / ne Labyrintheis e flexibus egredientem / tecti frustraretur inobservabilis error* (64.114-5). Both Catullus and Virgil use the labyrinth as an artistic device. In the case of Catullus, it is depicted on a coverlet at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis; with Virgil, we have seen how in *Aeneid* 6 it forms part of an autobiographical illustration. In book 5, it is a simile designed to elucidate the weaving intricacy of the Trojan youths at the funeral games of Anchises.[562] It is clear that the Labyrinth is an important abstract symbol for these Roman poets. The *Aeneid* passage quoted above discloses the features of chaos and order; in one respect the formation seems confusing and unfathomable, but in another, it is a design of perfection and concise order. By using the labyrinth in this simile, Virgil connects it with the grand and noble themes of Rome's founding. It has a message of hope and civilisation. Likewise, in *Aeneid* 6, the importance of the labyrinth lies in its connection to Aeneas' position. Aeneas is about to penetrate the mystical and gloomy depths of the Underworld when he comes across the depiction of the labyrinth.[563] Jackson Knight observes that the labyrinth was a common feature in mythic systems on tombs and ceremonies concerning death. The point was generally to learn the labyrinth structure so one might be able to navigate safely to the Underworld.[564] It is very possible that Virgil was picking up on a folktale motif with his use of the maze on the temple doors in

[562] Matthews (1970), p.98, notes that Pliny in his *Natural History* drew a sharp distinction between the Egyptian and Cretan labyrinths, and the others formed on pavements and fields for entertaining children. He observes that the simile in *Aeneid* 5 has been often used to support the distinction.
[563] Reed (1994) devotes a chapter of her book to the exposition of her notion that the whole of the *Aeneid* is modelled on labyrinth thematics. She traces the concept through each book and concludes that Virgil used the concept of the labyrinth to structure and imbue his work with its meaning.
[564] Jackson Knight (1967).

Aeneid 6. In such a context, the labyrinth, despite all its bewildering complexity, offers hope.

Ovid, unlike both Catullus and Virgil, foregrounds the creative role of Daedalus. To some extent, this demystifies the labyrinth, for it was created by a mere mortal, thus stripping it of some of the deeper mythological and spiritual undertones that might inhere in its complicated meandering. However, looked at from another perspective, it creates another mystification: that of the human creator. The narrator makes the surprising observation that *vixque ipse reverti / ad limen potuit; tanta est fallacia tecti* (8.167-8). This is an interesting remark, for it indicates a level of autonomy inherent in the creation of the artist: he is no longer entirely in control of its enigmatic properties if its dark ways are confounding him.[565] In fact, Ovid has already used a very similar notion in the first book of his poem, where the lovelorn Apollo is misled by his own oracles: *suaque illum oracula fallunt* (1.491). Ovid is unique in depicting Daedalus as baffled by his own labyrinth to the extent that he almost loses his way. In the previous section, it was shown how musicians like Orpheus and Pietro Crespi had the ability to baffle and mesmerise listeners with their songs. Unlike Orpheus, Daedalus is not of divine parentage,[566] nor does Ovid emphasise any specific divine connections. Orpheus' song moves the gods of the Underworld, but Daedalus' labyrinth does not appear to impact upon any divinity. However, his creativity in itself connects him with the

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[565] Reed (1994), p.17-8, sees this humorous little comment of Ovid's as representing an aspect of the labyrinth which she believes to be central to its conception. She says of Pliny, Virgil and Ovid: *Each in his own way expressed one major paradox inherent in the labyrinth image: its status as simultaneously a great and complex work of art and a frightening and confusing place of interminable wandering -- the labyrinth as order and chaos, depending on the observer's knowledge and perspective.*

[566] Smith (1884) gives an extensive survey of Daedalus' parentage: *The ancient writers generally represent Daedalus as an Athenian, of the royal race of the Erichtheiadae (*Paus. *vii.4.15;* Plut. *Thes.18). Others called him a Cretan, on account of the long time he lived in Crete (*Auson. *Idyll.12;* Eustath. *ad.Hom.Il. xviii.592;* Paus.*viii.53~3). According to Diodorus, who gives the fullest account of him (iv.76-9), he was the son of Metion, the son of Eupalamus, the son of Erechtheus (*Comp. Plat. *Ion, p.553;* Paus.*vii.4~5). Others make him the son of Eupalamus, or of Palamaon (*Paus. *ix.82;* Hygin. *Fab. 39, corrected by 274). His mother is called Alcippe (*Apoll.*ii.15~9) or Iphinoe.*

gods,[567] and it makes him a channel for a creative force that he himself does not fully control.[568] Putnam highlights Daedalus' success at solving the labyrinth in his exploration of the story as it occurs in Virgil,[569] and it is a standard feature of the myth that Daedalus tells Ariadne how to solve the labyrinth with a piece of thread. Ovid entirely ignores Daedalus's intervention, saying only: *utque ope virginea nullis iterata priorum / ianua difficilis filo est inventa relecto* (8.172-3). He thus removes the solution of the labyrinth by its creator, an absence which strengthens the sense that the creator is not entirely in control of the product he creates: as noted above, the creative process remains a mystery to himself.

A simile between nature and the artistic creation appears in Ovid's labyrinth story, where this confusing building is compared to the river Maeander.[570] The simile is quite beautiful in its evocation of the river's waters eternally fluctuating: *non secus ac liquidis Phrygius Maeandrus in undis / ludit et ambiguo lapsu refluitque fluitque / occurrensque sibi venturas adspicit undas / et nunc ad fontes, nunc ad mare versus apertum / incertas exercet aquas* (8.162-6). The river Maeander was often described by writers, for its winding sinuous course attracted their imaginative powers. Pliny mentions it many times in his *Natural History*, twice pausing to elaborate on its wandering ways: *Lydia autem perfusa flexuosis Maeandri amnis recursibus super Ioniam procedit* (5.110.1); *amnis Maeander ortus e lacu in monte Aulocrene plurimusque adfusus oppidis et repletus fluminibus crebris, ita sinuosus flexibus ut*

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[567]The connection between creativity and the gods was discussed in the previous section. The gods were also known to display special care towards artistically talented humans; a good example appears at the end of the account of Daedalus' murder of his nephew Perdix: *Daedalus invidit, sacraque ex arce Minervae / praecipitem misit, lapsum mentitus; at illum / quae favet ingeniis excepit Pallas, avemque / reddidit et medio velavit in aere pennis* (*Met.* 8.250-3).

[568] Cf. Leach (1974), p.118.

[569] Putnam (1987), p.179: {Daedalus} *becomes undoer of his own trickery, an undoing we can hear in the sound of line 29: Daedalus ipse dolos tecti ambagesque resolvit... Daedalus who reprojects his artistic self through 'se dolos', the labyrinth's wiliness, now straightens its windings and lightens its darkening ways.*

[570] Curran (1972), p.84, compares this simile between the river and the labyrinth with the fluidity of Arachne's weaving.

saepe credatur reverti (5.113.2).[571] The repeated notion of the river turning back on itself to the extent that it is even believed to flow backwards demonstrates both its potential for a simile with the Cretan labyrinth, and also a certain trickery or magic. Ovid includes this deceptive idea in his simile by using the word *ludit* (8.163). He describes its *ambiguo lapsu*, both in the sense that it literally changes, and the sense that it is unclear what is really happening. Nature here might be fooling us, rather as Daedalus fools the maze-treader with his elaborate pathways. The result is a feeling of profound uncertainty, a sense of the uncanny, that was noted earlier in Orpheus' song.

One of the most interesting uses of the river Maeander is in Seneca's *Hercules Furens*: '*Intus immense sinu / placido quieta labitur Lethe vado / demitque curas; neve remeandi amplius / pateat facultas, flexibus multis gravem / involvi amnem, qualis, incerta vagus / Maeander unda ludit et cedit sibi / instatque dubius litus an fontem petat*'(679-85). Theseus is describing the gloom-laden, mysterious path to the Underworld, and using the river Maeander as a simile to demonstrate the perplexity and murky confusion of the journey. This use is reminiscent of Virgil's use of the labyrinth story of the doors of the temple at *Aeneid* 6, where the maze represents the grim path Aeneas must take to the world of the dead. Although Seneca does not use the Cretan labyrinth in his simile, it is clear that it is the same deceptive and ambiguous labyrinthine properties he is emphasising in this passage. Whether or not there is actually an ancient mythological link between labyrinths and the underworld being alluded to by these authors, the important fact remains that clearly the labyrinth, whether humanly wrought or naturally occurring, retains an uncanny quality, a sense of the supernatural. Daedalus and the Maeander play with our senses, introduce doubt and confusion around our own perceptions and hint that we are being intentionally tricked.

[571] Other examples of Maeander's windings being exploited by writers are not uncommon; cf. Prop. 2.30b.16-8; 2.34-35; Sen. *Phoen.* 605-7.

If the Maeander is an example of a naturally occurring labyrinth, then Daedalus could be said to be mimicking nature, and it seems likely that Ovid had this in mind when he used the simile to supplement Daedalus' creation. Certainly this is shown to be one of his important talents shortly after the labyrinth has finally been solved by Ariadne's thread. Daedalus now decides that he will finally escape the harsh servility of his life in Crete. His status as an exile is one of many traits which singles him out as an artist. The extremities of love and hate are the instigators here of his creation: *Daedalus interea Creten longumque perosus / exilium, tactusque loci natalis amore* (8.183-4). These emotions are fuelled by Minos' fearful rule, preventing him from leaving by sea or land; but as with Orpheus, intensity of feeling provokes the nerve (and the ability) to attempt the humanly impossible. Whereas Orpheus descended to the depths, Daedalus aspires to the heavens, but both ascent and descent are a means to attain the object of desire, something which is stressed by both of the characters: '*terras licet ...et undas / obstruat, at caelum certe patet; ibimus illac*'(8.185-6); '*non huc, ut opaca viderem / Tartara, descendi, nec uti villosa colubris / terna Medusaei vincirem guttura monstri*'(10.20-21). This recalls the criteria which Plato used to differentiate types of divine inspiration in *Phaedrus*. He establishes four categories, and of them all he cites the inspiration of the philosopher to be the noblest and best: *Mark therefore the sum and substance of all our discourse touching the fourth sort of madness: to wit, that this is the best of all forms of divine possession, both in itself and in its sources, both for him that has it and for him that shares therein; and when he that loves beauty is touched by such madness he is called a lover. Such a one, as soon as wings begin to grow; then he is fain to lift his wings and fly upward; yet he has not the power, but inasmuch as he gazes upward like a bird, and cares nothing for the world beneath, men charge it upon him that he is demented* (249d). The distinction lies in the fact that, whereas poets and

listeners take pleasure in the divine outpouring for its own sake, the philosopher uses it as a means to reach heaven, to return home: *This understanding is a recollection of those things which our souls beheld aforetime as they journeyed with their god, looking down upon the things which now we suppose to be, and gazing up to that which truly is* (249d). Daedalus is driven purely by his desire to reach home. The fabulous invention of his counterfeit wings is subsidiary to this cause.[572]

Ovid however is fascinated by Daedalus' innovation of nature: *ignotas animum dimittit in artes/ naturamque novat* (8.188-9).[573] Perhaps Ovid sees in Daedalus a kindred spirit, for the proem to *Metamorphoses* expresses not dissimilar intentions, although clearly the artists themselves function in very different mediums: *In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas / corpora* (1.1-2). Ovid goes on to speak in admiring terms of the development of Daedalus' invention: *nam ponit in ordine pennas/ a minima coeptas, longam breviore sequenti, / ut clivo crevisse putes. sic rustica quondam / fistula disparibus paulatim surgit avenis. / tum lino medias et ceris alligat imas / atque ita compositas parvo curvamine flectit / ut veras imitetur aves* (8.189-95). Ovid seems to be fascinated in the workings of a genius, and the mechanisms of a creative product that transcends nature. Similarly it has been seen how he describes the words that Orpheus sings to the Underworld where Virgil had pointedly remained silent on the matter. Ovid also consistently reminds us that Daedalus is mimicking nature: *ut clivo crevisse putes* (8.190); *ut veras imitetur aves* (8.195). Daedalus' imitation and renovation of nature is successful: *motaque pependit in aura* (8.202). It is quite a startling line in its matter-of-fact description of the hovering man. As he and his

[572] For thorough discussions upon the myth of Daedalus and Icarus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, see Hoefmans (1994); Davisson (1997); Riemer (1998).
[573] Cf. *sunt mihi naturae iura novanda meae* (Ov. *Ars.* 2.42). In fact, the account that appears in *Metamorphoses* follows his previous account very closely, often lifting whole lines from the elegiac version. The difference here is that Daedalus speaks these words himself, suggesting that he is proud of his undertaking, something which is not carried through to the *Metamorphoses* account.

doomed son fly overhead, people below gaze up in wonder: *hos aliquis tremula dum captat harundine pisces, / aut pastor baculo stivave innixus arator / vidit et obstipuit, quique aethera carpere possent, / credidit esse deos* (8.217-20). Ovid uses the verb *obstipuit* which was shown to be so important in the previous section. Its implication of a religious awe is supported by the fact that the onlookers are fooled into believing that the two humans are gods. Ovid emphasises the falseness of Daedalus' wings as he depicts the flight of the pair; a clear contrast lies in a simile that occurs as the two humans set out on their perilous journey. Daedalus is compared to a bird leading out its offspring from a high nest: *pennisque levatus / ante volat comitique timet, velut ales, ab alto / quae teneram prolem produxit in aera nido* (8.212-4). This simile implicitly draws attention to the vast gulf of difference between a real bird and the situation of Daedalus, which leads to the tragic consequences of Daedalus' success in physics: his failure in fatherhood.

Yet there is a very famous character in *Metamorphoses* whose quest for the more-than-perfect imitation of nature is an entirely successful one.[574] Orpheus sings that Pygmalion was so disgusted by the Propoetides, who had been prostitutes before they succumbed to a stony fate, that he chose to live alone. He places emphasis on their wicked ways as being a fault of nature immediately in his description of Pygmalion's response to them: *Quas quia Pygmalion aevum per crimen agentis / viderat, offensus vitiis, quae plurima menti / femineae natura dedit* (10.243-5). His ability to surpass nature is also stated as Orpheus comments on Pygmalion's sculpture: *interea niveum mira feliciter arte/ sculpsit ebur formamque dedit, qua femina nasci / nulla potest* (10.247-9). Throughout the ensuing passage, a problematisation of art and reality

[574] For an extreme interpretation of the Pygmalion story in Ovid, see Bauer (1962), who sees the whole poem as orbiting this one fable. For other discussions of the Pygmalion episode in Ovid, Segal (1972); Griffin (1977); Elsner (1991); Sharrock (1991). Arnobius (*Adv. Gen.*6.22) states that the original story of Pygmalion, which appeared in Philostephanus, was rather less pleasant than Ovid's adaption; there Pygmalion was a king who had sex with a statue.

occurs, as we are constantly reminded both of the effectiveness of the sculpture, *virginis est verae facies, quam vivere credas* (10.250) and its inherent falseness, *simulati corporis* (10.253). Pygmalion falls in love with his work, and begins to bring it gifts and adorn it with jewels as though it were an actual woman. His attitude towards it is as towards a human being: *et credit tactis digitos insidere membris/ et metuit, pressos veniat ne livor in artus* (10.257-8). That verb *credit* is significant for the events that follow, for he returns from the altar where he has just paid tribute to Venus to discover an amazing thing: *corpus erat: saliunt temptatae pollice venae* (10.289). Segal has observed that the message of this passage is a triumph of art over nature: *the story of Orpheus closely parallels that of Pygmalion... Both men abstain from intercourse with women. Both, through the magical power of their art, animate inert nature and break through the division between matter and spirit...In intertwining the two myths Ovid provides a metaphorical reflection of the creative and restorative power of his own art ...and the poet suggests 'that of all human enterprises only the fine arts are capable of performing such miracles'*.[575] It is certainly true that the story of Pygmalion is a happy validation of artistic enterprise and its capacities to enhance reality. For when Pygmalion returns home and begins to caress his statue, his experience of its ivory suddenly yielding to his fingertips is compared to wax melting: *ut Hymettia sole / cera remollescit tractataque pollice multas / flectitur in facies ipsoque fit utilis usu* (10.284-6). Here the image is a positive and truly joyous occurrence for the sculptor: the created reality has become true for him and he has succeeded in his artistic quest.

Tragically divergent is Icarus' association with melting wax: disaster ensues as the wax that binds Icarus' wings begins to melt after he has flown too near the sun: *rapidi vicinia solis/ mollit odoratas, pennarum vincula, ceras* (8.225-6). The melting

[575] Segal (1972), p.491.

wax is nicely evoked in the allusion to its pungent fragrance, but in his case, the art that was bound by the wax, *pennarum vincula* (8.226), dissolves to reveal the unendurable reality of his situation. The stark vision of him desperately flapping bare arms in the air suggests a psychological inability to cope with the truth that art has thus far concealed. At an earlier point in the tale a definite symmetry in the situations of the two characters is implied, when Icarus' playful antics are described: *flavam modo pollice ceram mollibat* (8.198). This foreshadows Pygmalion's happy discovery: *temptatum mollescit ebur positoque rigore / subsidit digitis ceditque* (10.283-4). Pygmalion succeeds because art manages to alter reality; Icarus fails because art does not. However, the Pygmalion tale, it must not be forgotten, is being narrated through Orpheus. It is not surprising that one so idealistic might project his fantasies upon this story about art, and thus represent art's redemptive abilities through the actions of Pygmalion. Perhaps what is really being demonstrated is the artist's wish-fulfilment fantasies about his art, rather than any truly happy ending brought about by sculpting.

Just as Ovid's poem possesses examples of innovators of nature, so there are frequent examples of this kind of creativity in *Cien años de soledad.* Nearly all the major characters are involved in some form of manufacturing imitations of nature: Úrsula makes candy animals; Pietro Crespi has his mechanical creatures; Aureliano makes his gold fishes with a tireless determination from his youth to his old age.[576] However, the candy animals of Úrsula are ultimately blamed for spreading insomnia through the town, and Aureliano's fish seem a futile and pointless distraction from the bitterness of his life, similar, as we have seen in previous chapters, to Amaranta's shroud. The patriarch, José Arcadio Buendía, is a tireless inventor and improver: *José*

[576] Merrell (1974) see these behaviours as representing the rise of capitalism and mechanistic approaches to reality.

Arcadio Buendía, cuya desaforada imaginación iba siempre más lejos que el ingenio de la naturaleza (82).[577] Like Daedalus, José Arcadio Buendía envisages enabling men to fly, a scheme he never manages to embark upon due to his descent into madness. José Arcadio Buendía has an unusual attitude to new things he encounters. The first few chapters are a document to his extraordinary investigative and imaginative fervour: from alchemy to navigation to war-strategies and back again, he endorses each new path with the same frenzied enthusiasm. Despite the amusing absurdities of his behaviour, he is certainly no fool. He discovers for himself that the world is round and organises the village of Macondo with a keen eye for community harmony and practical expediency. Even in his insanity he speaks fluent Latin and manages to engage in the complexities of theological debate with the local priest; it is these signs of intelligence and insight that make all the more surprising the instances of delusion and stupidity that accompany other actions. He makes the peculiar error of thinking that he can prove the existence or non-existence of God by attempting to capture him in a photograph, displaying a failure to understand the psychological and spiritual dimension of human faith. He seeks to penetrate the mysteries of the universe rather than simply accept and admire them. This is disclosed in his response to the pianola, where the narrator observes Pietro Crespi setting up: *Una mañana, sin abrir la puerta, sin convocar a ningún testigo del milagro, colocó el primer rollo en la pianola, y el martilleo atormentador y el estrépito constante de los listones de madera cesaron en un silencio de asombro, ante el orden y la limpieza de la música* (153).[578] Pietro Crespi's music has a mesmerising effect upon his surroundings; the noise of the builders almost magically ceases and the silence is described as *startled.* The event is called a *miracle.* However, José Arcadio Buendía has

[577] *José Arcadio Buendía, whose unbridled imagination always went beyond the genius of nature* (9).
[578] *One morning, without opening the door, without calling anyone to witness the miracle, he placed the first roll in the pianola and the tormenting hammering and the constant noise of wooden lathings ceased in a silence that was startled at the order and neatness of the music* (56).

a very different response to the music: *José Arcadio Buendía pareció fulminado no por la belleza de la melodía, sino por el tecleo autónomo de la pianola e instaló en la sala la cámara de Melquíades con la esperanza de obtener el daguerrotipo del ejecutante invisible* (153).[579] He is captivated by the mechanics of the procedure, rather than moved by the music itself.[580]

When Melquíades introduces alchemy to Macondo in the form of his intricate laboratory, José Arcadio Buendía and his son Aureliano are transfixed by its mysterious potential[581]. The quest to transform base metals into gold proves an abysmal failure from the start, and the narrator observes the effect with a wry amusement: *la preciosa herencia de Úrsula quedó reducida a un chicharrón carbonizado que no pudo ser desprendido del fondo del caldero* (89).[582] It is abandoned, but a strange impulse draws father and son back to their attempts one day, and at that point that unnatural things start to occur: *Hasta Amaranta, acostada en una canastilla de mimbre, observaba con curiosidad la absorbente labor de su padre y su hermano en el cuartito enrarecido por los vapores del mercurio ...empezaron a suceder cosas extrañas. Un frasco vacío que durante mucho tiempo estuvo olvivado en un armario se hizo tan pesado que fue imposible moverlo. Una cazuela de agua colocada en la mesa de trabajo hirvió sin fuego durante media hora hasta evaporarse por completo* (122).[583] José Arcadio

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[579] *José Arcadio Buendía was as if struck by lightning, not because of the beauty of the melody, but because of the automatic working of the keys of the pianola, and he set up Melquiades' camera with the hope of getting a daguerrotype of the invisible player* (56).

[580] Cf. José Arcadio Buendía's response to the photographs which Melquíades shows them how to take: *mute with stupefaction* (47). The vocabulary which elsewhere is applied to individuals reacting to art of some form, is applied to this man's responses to mechanics. Merrell (1974) discusses José Arcadio Buendía's mechanistic approach to reality by connecting it to scientific and political revolutions in the Western world.

[581] For an extended study of Melquíades and alchemy within the novel, see Halka (1981).

[582] *Úrsula's precious inheritance was reduced to a large piece of burnt hog cracklings that was firmly stuck to the bottom of the pot* (14).

[583] *Even Amaranta, lying in a wicker basket, observed with curiosity the absorbing work of her father and her brother in the small room where the air was rarified by mercury vapours...strange things began to happen. An empty flask that had been forgotten in a cupboard for a long time became so heavy that it could not be moved. A pan of water on the worktable boiled without any fire under it for a half hour until it evaporated* (36).

Buendía interprets these as predictions that the alchemist experiments will bear fruit; but in fact, they do not. The phenomena are never explained. He is a failed alchemist, but his failure is qualified by a revelation that occurs when at that time his wife returns at last from her wanderings: *en sus prolongados encierros, mientras manipulaba la materia, rogaba en el fondo de su corazón que el prodigio esperado no fuera el hallazgo de la piedra filosofal, ni la liberación del soplo que hace vivir los metales, ni la facultad de convertir en oro las bisagras y cerraduras de la casa, sino lo que ahora había ocurrido: el regreso de Úrsula* (123).[584] Alchemy is a fine example of José Arcadio Buendía's mad absorptions; it is also a symbol of human creativity in its attempt to create something rare and precious from something base and mundane, and its quest for immortality.[585] José Arcadio Buendía, like so many of the creative figures studied in the texts, does not die a happy man. He spends his last years in a state of madness, terminally perplexed by the complexities of the universe.

It would appear that the inventors and plastic artists of *Cien años de soledad* are no more successful as human beings than the singers and poets. José Arcadio Buendía descends rapidly and irreversibly into madness, Aureliano and Amaranta express their unhappiness in their repetitive pursuits. The inventors of *Metamorphoses* are rather more successful: Daedalus manages to fly away, and Pygmalion brings to life his perfect woman. These two figures are more fortunate therefore, in life at least, than their musical counterpart Orpheus.[586]

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[584] *during his prolonged imprisonment as he manipulated the material, he begged in the depth of his heart that the longed-for miracle should not be the discovery of the philosopher's stone, or the freeing of the breath that makes metals live, or the faculty to convert the hinges and the locks of the house into gold, but what had just happened: Ursula's return* (36).

[585] For a description of alchemy, see Dubs (1947), who gives an account of its origins and traditions as it emerged from early Chinese philosophy.

[586] Segal (1978), p.114, notes that Orpheus has been regarded in most of Western literature as embodying *an anti-rational, anti-Promethean strain in our culture*; in this respect he could be seen as representing an opposing force to the type of artist portrayed in Daedalus and José Arcadio Buendía.

3. Melquíades' Scripts: What The Sanskrit Said

In this final section, I analyse one of the most mysterious figures in García Márquez's novel. As the closest representation in either text of a writer, with the possible exception of the Wise Catalonian who is also studied here, Melquíades can be seen to represent the role of author in a clear way. It is undoubtedly true that valuable information about the intentions of the author can be extrapolated from a study of this elusive character. Melquíades[587] is introduced to the reader in the opening paragraph of the novel: *Un gitano corpulento, de barba montaraz y manos de gorrión, que se presentó con el nombre de Melquíades, hizo una truculenta demostración pública de lo que él mismo llamaba la octava maravilla de los sabios alquimistas de Macedonia* (81-2).[588] His first spoken words are mysterious: '*Las cosas tienen vida propria ...todo es cuestión de despertarles el ánima*'(82).[589] This proclamation is famously attributed to Thales, a Greek philosopher in the sixth century B.C. from the Ionian city of Miletus. Thales held that there was a single unifying and primary substance of the universe and that this substance was in fact water, but many of the sayings attributed to this early scientist are spurious.[590] The misty figure of Thales helps create a sense of the

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[587] Melquíades' mysterious presence in the novel has of course attracted the fevered attentions of scholars. All book length studies upon the novel attempt to identify the function of this character. Four very useful studies are Mena (1976); Mena (1979); Farías (1981); Echevarría (1995). Echevarría interestingly sees Melquíades as *a figure of the Argentine writer. Old beyond age, enigmatic, blind, entirely devoted to fiction, Melquíades for Borges, the library and keeper of the Archive*, p.89.

[588] *A heavy gypsy with an untamed beard and sparrow hands, who introduced himself as Melquíades, put on a public demonstration of what he himself called the eighth wonder of the learned alchemists of Macedonia* (9).

[589] '*Things have a life of their own ...It's simply a matter of waking up their souls*' (9).

[590] In fact, the achievements and philosophies attributed to Thales are particularly dubious, not least for the reasons that anything which he may have written has been lost, and what is said by other writers (many of whom write many centuries after his death) is ambiguous. The three writers nearest his time who wrote of him epitomise this nebulousness. Herodotus speaks of his reputation as predicting an eclipse and diverting the river Halys, although he expresses disbelief in the latter story (1.75). Plato uses Thales as the type of an ingenious technician (*Rep.*10.600a). Aristotle relates Thales' business mind in buying up all the olive presses before a particularly good olive crop (*Pol.*A, 1259a5). Aristotle also reports that Thales said that water was the primary substance and that all things are full of gods. Dicks

mysterious and ancient to this early history of Macondo, reminding that Melquíades himself is likely to be largely a product of the inaccurate and exaggerated memories of a community of people. At around the time of his death, Melquíades says enigmatically: '*Somos del agua*'(166).[591] It seems no coincidence that Melquíades name takes the form of a Greek patronymic, given these references to early Greek thought.

There are aspects of Melquíades' person that suggest divine connection. When he finally dies, his body is found *varado en un recodo luminoso y con un gallinazo solitario parado en el vientre* (166-7).[592] This recalls the fate of Prometheus, the trickster hero in Greek mythology who stole fire for mankind.[593] Melquíades is likewise the bringer of knowledge to early Macondo. From the divining rod to alchemy, navigation and the telescope, he consistently astounds and delights the ignorant inhabitants with his gifts of scientific discovery.[594] He is also a figure of trickery and deception. One day he turns up in the village looking several decades younger: *todo el mundo se fue a la carpa, y mediante el pago de un centavo vieron un Melquíades juvenil, repuesto, desarrugado, con una dentadura nueva y radiante. Quienes recordaban sus encías destruidas por el escorbuto, sus mejillas flácidas y sus labios machitos, se estremecieron de pavor ante aquella prueba terminante de los poderes sobrenaturales del gitano* (89).[595] The inhabitants of Macondo are afraid and astonished

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(1959) has much to say about the inadequacy of typical assumptions regarding Thales, and cites Aristotle's passage as being especially misinterpreted.

[591] '*We come from the water*' (66).

[592] *washed up on a bright bend in the river and with a solitary vulture sitting on his stomach* (66).

[593] The story of Prometheus has of course been portrayed differently in various sources, but the fire-stealing, the sacrificial trickery and the torment of the eagle plucking out his liver appears to be a consistent feature of the myth (Apollon. *Arg.*2.147ff., 3.853; Hyg. *Fab.* 2.15; Aesch. *Prom.* 1015ff.). Smith (1884) observes his key position as a bringer of knowledge to mankind: '*He further taught them the use of fire, architecture, astronomy, maths, art of writing, treatment of domestic animals, navigation, medicine, art of prophecy, working in metal and all other arts*'. The similarity to Melquíades, who brings many of these things to Macondo, is clear.

[594] Merrell (1974) notes that many of the inventions brought to Macondo by the gypsies are Arabic in origin.

[595] *everyone went to the tent and by paying one cent they saw a youthful Melquiades, recovered, unwrinkled, with a new and flashing set of teeth. Those who remembered his gums that had been*

but we, as modern readers, are of course let in on the trick and know that it is just that. He is also described as cheating death on many occasions in his life (86-7).

The single most important thing which Melquíades does is write his scripts, that are finally successfully decoded and understood by Aureliano at the close of the novel.[596] They are first mentioned not long after the end of the insomnia plague: *Melquíades profundizó en las interpretaciones de Nostrodamus. Estaba hasta muy tarde, asfixiándose se dentro de su descolorido chaleco de terciopelo, garrapateando papeles con sus minúsculas manos de gorrión, cuyas sortijas habían perdido la lumbre de otra época* (145).[597] There is a sense, here, in which Melquíades finally begins to grow frail and old: his vest is *descolorido* and his rings have aged. This recalls Patrick Chamoiseau's *Texaco*, where an explicit connection is made between the act of writing and the act of dying.[598] Close to his death, Melquíades is described as becoming disconnected from the world and interested only in his scripts: *Sólo iba al taller de Aureliano, donde pasaba horas y horas garabateando su literatura enigmática en los pergaminos que llevó consigo y que parecían fabricados en una materia árida que se resquebrajaba como hojaldres* (165).[599] There is an emphasis upon the physical existence of the scripts, *una materia árida*, and consequently their frailty, *como hojaldres*. Melquíades intense efforts are evident, but the scripts appear to be little more than the ravings of a delirious man: *en cierta ocasión creyó entender algo de lo que*

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destroyed by scurvy, his flaccid cheeks, and his withered lips trembled with fear at the final proof of the gypsy's supernatural power (14).

[596] See Zamora (1995) and Echevarría (1995) for similar views on the significance of Melquíades's scripts to the novel. Zamora, however, observes that Aureliano misunderstands the permanence of the scripts by assuming that Mocondo will be forgotten once it is destroyed (p.71).

[597] *Melquíades got deeper into his interpretations of Nostradamus. He would stay up until very late, suffocating in his faded velvet vest, scribbling with his tiny sparrow hands, whose rings had lost the glow of former times* (51).

[598] *It's around that time, you know, that I began to write, that is : to die a little ...The feeling of dying became even more present when I began to write about myself, and about Texaco. It was like petrifying the tatters of my flesh. I was emptying my memory into immobile note-books without having brought back the quivering of the living life which at each moment modifies what's just happened* (321-2).

[599] *He only went to Aureliano's workshop, where he would spend hours on end scribbling his enigmatic literature on parchments that he had brought with him and that seemed to have been made out of some dry material that crumpled like puff paste* (65).

decía en sus bordoneantes monólogos, y le prestó atención. En realidad, lo único que pudo aislar en las parrafadas pedregosas fue el insistente martilleo de la palabra equinoccio equinoccio equinoccio, y el nombre de Alexander Von Humboldt (165).[600] 'Alexander von Humboldt' is an important name here: a German scholar who studied botany, zoology, cartography and many other things, and paid an especial interest in the Americas, where he spent some years researching, naming and recording his discoveries.[601] It is possible that we are to view Melquíades as analogous with this tireless traveller.

The manuscripts possess their own magic, for years after Melquíades' death they remain in perfect condition, as does the rest of his room: *En los anaqueles estaban los libros empastados en una materia acartonada y pálida como la piel humana curtida, y estaban los manuscritos intactos* (289-90).[602] The comparison with human skin imbues them with the notion of an organic life.

Aureliano Segundo sets out to decipher the manuscripts, devoting most of his time to studying them. At this point, Melquíades begins to appear in the room and talk to Aureliano, but he refuses to translate the scripts, saying '*Nadie debe conocer su sentido mientras no hayan cumplido cien años*'(291).[603] Aureliano also discovers that only he can see Melquíades. Next it is José Arcadio Segundo's turn to become hooked on deciphering the parchments: *José Arcadio Segundo se dedicó entonces a repasar muchas veces los pergaminos de Melquíades, y tanto más a gusto cuanto menos los entendía ...devorado por la pelambre, indiferente al aire enrarecido por los vapores*

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[600] *on one occasion {Aureliano} thought he understood something of what Melquíades was saying in his groping monologues, and he paid attention. In reality, the only thing that could be isolated in the rocky paragraphs was the insistent hammering on the word* equinox, equinox, equinox, *and the name of Alexander von Humboldt* (66).

[601] See Stoddard (1859) for his life's works.

[602] *On the shelves were the books bound in a cardboard-like material, pale, like tanned human skin, and the manuscripts were intact* (153). Echevarría (1995), p.88, interprets Melquíades' room as representative of human history, and calls the room the 'Archive'.

[603] '*No one must know their meaning until he has reached one hundred years of age*' (154).

nauseabundos, seguía leyendo y releyendo los pergaminos ininteligibles. Estaba iluminado por un resplandor seráfico (429-30).[604] Illuminated here is the ultimate pointlessness of José Arcadio Segundo's pursuit, which reflects the introverted nature of the Buendía family as a whole. Eventually he dies in the room with the parchments before him, still unsolved, and Aureliano takes up the baton: *Aureliano no abandonó en mucho tiempo el cuarto de Melquíades ...Un mediodía ardiente, poco después de la muerte de los gemelos, vio contra la reverberación de la ventana al anciano lúgubre con el sombrero de alas de cuervo como la materialización de un recuerdo que estaba en su memoria desde mucho antes de nacer. Aureliano había terminado de clasificar el alfabeto de los pergaminos. Así que cuando Melquíades le preguntó si había descubierto en qué lengua estaban escritos, él no vaciló para contestar. 'En sánscrito' dijo* (477-8).[605] It is clear that Melquíades, and the scripts with which he surrounded and aborbed himself in life, possess a magical quality which affects the world with unusual force. The traditional power of writing is presented magically. Also, Melquíades' continuing existence is clearly bound up with the presence of the scripts, and hence presents magically the immortality (or at least increased life-span) of the writer.[606] Aureliano is led to another prolific writer in the novel. Towards the end of *Cien años de soledad* we are introduced to a new group of characters, when this bookish and reclusive individual pays a visit to the local bookstore to find a Sanskrit primer.[607] Here

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[604] '*José Arcadio Segundo dedicated himself then to peruse the manuscripts of Melquíades many times, and with so much more pleasure when he could not understand them... devoured by baldness, indifferent to the air that had been sharpened by the nauseating vapours, {he} was still reading and rereading the unintelligible parchments. He was illuminated by a seraphic glow*' (255).

[605] *Aureliano did not leave Melquíades' room for a long time ...One burning noon, a short time after the death of the twins, against the light of the window he saw a gloomy old man with his crow's-wing hat like the materialisation of a memory that had been in his head since long before he was born. Aureliano had finished classifying the alphabet of the parchments, so that when Melquíades asked him if he had discovered the language in which they had been written he did not hesitate to answer. 'Sanskrit,' he said* (288).

[606] Cf. Ov. *Met.* 15.875-9.

[607] Martin (1995) discusses the four friends in the bookshop who are often seen by scholars as representing García Márquez's literary contemporaries.

the young man discovers the bookseller who is always described as *el sabio catalán* and *cuatro muchachos despotricadores, encarnizados en una discusión sobre los métodos de matar cucarachas en la Edad Media*'(512-3).[608] Aureliano José had approached literature with a deep and reverential respect, wishing to learn and interpret it as meticulously as possible; suddenly in the course of a single afternoon, everything is overturned by a single revelation: *No se le había ocurrido pensar hasta entonces que la literatura fuera el mejor juguete que se había inventado para burlarse de la gente* (514).[609] The bookshop owner is both a writer and reader of literature, and combines an intense commitment to his pursuits with a frivolous and intimate attitude: *Estuvo media vida en la calurosa trastienda, garrapateando su escritura preciosista ...los puso a leer a Séneca y a Ovidio*[610] *cuando todavía estaban en la escuela primaria. Trataba a los clásicos con una familiaridad casera, como si todos hubieran sido en alguna época sus compañeros de cuarto, y sabía muchas cosas que simplemente no se debían saber ...Su fervor por la palabra escrita era una urdimbre de respeto solemne e irreverencia comadrera* (527).[611]

When the Catalonian finally leaves Macondo and returns home, he maintains contact with the boys in letters that are initially light-hearted and chatty but soon begin to convey a gloomier countenance. In a passage that is one of the bleakest in the whole novel, the narrator summarises his final letter to the boys: *En las noches de invierno,*

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[608] *four ranting boys in heated argument about the methods used to kill cockroaches in the Middle Ages* (313).

[609] *It had never occurred to him until then to think that literature was the best plaything that had ever been invented to make fun of people* (314).

[610] The reference to Ovid here demonstrates García Márquez's familiarity with the Classical writer, but unfortunately I have been unable to unearth any more fruitful evidence of specific influences or allusions to Ovid. The narrator informs us that the wise Catalonian was a *former professor of classical literature* (316), which explains his fondness for these Classical authors.

[611] *He spent half his life in the back of the store, scribbling in his extra-careful hand in purple ink and on pages which he tore out of school notebooks ...he set them reading Seneca and Ovid while they were still in grammar school. He treated the classical writers with a household familiarity, as if they had been his room-mates at some period, and he knew many things that he should not have known ...His fervour for the written was an interweaving of solemn respect and gossipy irreverence* (322-3).

mientras hervía la sopa en la chimenea, añoraba el calor de su trastienda, el zumbido del sol en los almendros polvorientos, el pito del tren en el sopor de la siesta, lo mismo que añoraba en Macondo la sopa de invierno en la chimenea, los pregones del vendedor de café y las alondras fugaces de la primavera. Aturdido por dos nostalgias enfrentadas como dos espejos, perdió su maravilloso sentido de la irrealidad, hasta que terminó por recomendarles a todos que se fueran de Macondo, que olvidaran cuanto él les había enseñado del mundo y del corazón humano, que se cagaran en Horacio y que en cualquier lugar en que estuvieran recordaran siempre que el pasado era mentira, que la memoria no tenía caminos de regreso, que toda primavera antigua era irrecuperable, y que el amor más desatinado y tenaz era de todos modos una verdad efímera (530).[612] The mentor of all things literary has turned his back in a disgusted disenchantment upon words and books, because he perceives that all they really do is construct false versions of an ultimately unrecapturable reality.[613] The falsified versions of reality are described as *mirrors*, a word which appears frequently in the novel. Ludmer observes the paradoxical nature of the passage, which declares literature as unable to capture reality; for literature is in fact the only possible way in which an ephemeral love or a beautiful Spring can be captured. It is in fact both the futility and the power of literature that are emphasised.[614]

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[612] *One winter nights while the soup was boiling in the fireplace, he missed the heat of the back of his store, the buzzing of the sun on the dusty almond trees, the whistle of the train during the lethargy of siesta time, just as in Macondo he had missed the winter soup in the fireplace, the cries of the coffee vendor, and the fleeting larks of springtime. Upset by two nostalgias facing each other like two mirrors, he lost his marvellous sense of unreality and he ended up recommending to all of them that they leave Macondo, that they forget everything that he had taught them about the world and the human heart, that they shit on Horace, and that wherever they might be they always remember that the past was a lie, that memory has no return, that every spring gone by could never be recovered, and that the wildest and most tenacious love was an ephemeral truth in the end* (324-5).

[613] This idea that has already been used in relation to the insomnia plague: *they went on living in a reality that was slipping away, momentarily captured by words, but which would escape irremediably when they forgot the values of the written words* (138).

[614] Ludmer (1972), p.207.

Aureliano José, despite being warned about literature and its deceptive charms, does not heed this warning. In the closing paragraphs of the novel, his girlfriend (and aunt) dies in childbirth, and he consequently gives himself over to a wild grief that entirely fogs his mind. Only after awakening does he realise that he has forgotten all about their baby. He goes in search of his child and discovers it dead, chewed mercilessly and thoroughly by a swarm of ants: *Aureliano no pudo moverse. No porque lo hubiera paralizado el estupor, sino porque en aquel instante prodigioso se le revelaron las claves definitivas de Melquíades, y vio el epígrafe de los pergaminos perfectamente ordenado en el tiempo y el espacio de los hombres. El primero de la estirpe está amarrado en un árbol y al último se lo están comiendo las hormigas* (544-5).[615] It is only at this terrible moment that Aureliano finally decodes the scripts which Melquíades had spent his old age writing, and there is a suggestion that at this point he becomes locked into a fate that may have been avoidable up until this point. He is described as being unable to move, as if frozen in the act of reading about himself, which reflects the way in which writing does freeze reality. So instead of learning from the mistake of self-absorption, Aureliano José repeats it: *Aureliano no había sido más lucido en ningún acto de su vida que cuando olvidó sus muertos y el dolor de sus muertos, y volvió a clavar las puertas y las ventanas con las crucetas de Fernanda para no dejarse perturbar por ninguna tentación del mundo, porque entonces sabía que en los pergaminos de Melquíades estaba escrito su destino* (545).[616] Aureliano is swept away for eternity by the wind that whips up with a gradual but powerful fervour,

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[615] *Aureliano could not move. Not because he was paralysed by horror but because at that prodigious instant Melquíades' final keys were revealed to him and he saw the epigraph of the parchments perfectly placed in the order of man's time and space: The first of the line is tied to a tree and the last is being eaten by the ants* (334). Joset (2000), p.545, observes that here we have proof that the text we are reading is not the script of Melquíades, as this novel does not open with this line.

[616] *Aureliano had never been more lucid in any act of his life as when he forgot about his dead ones and the pain of his dead ones and nailed up the doors and windows again with Fernanda's crossed boards so as not to be disturbed by any temptations of the world, for he knew then that his fate was written in Melquíades' parchments* (334).

spending his final moments on earth reading about himself.[617] Martin perceives this moment as an optimistic one: he notes that it is the younger characters who finally receive the gift of being able to decipher their own labyrinthine history. He also sees the apolocalypse as signifying the end of neocolonialism within Latin America.[618]

In a moment of surreal magnificence, Aureliano catches up with himself in the parchments: *Macondo era ya un pavoroso remolino de polvo y escombros centrifugado por la cólera del huracán bíblico, cuando Aureliano saltó once páginas para no perder el tiempo en hechos demasiado conocidos y empezó a descifrar la última página de los pergaminos, como si se estuviera viendo en un espejo hablado* (547).[619] Once again, the narrator highlights the pointless reflexivity in the act of attempting to catch up with oneself in a text. The mirror imagery reappears in the final sentence of the novel: *estaba previsto que la ciudad de los espejos (o los espejismos) sería arrasada por el viento y desterrada de la memoria de los hombres en el instante en que Aureliano Babilonia acabara de descifrar los pergaminos, y que todo lo escrito en ellos era irrepetible desde siempre y para siempre, porque las estirpes condenadas a cien años de soledad no tenían una segunda oportunidad sobre la tierra* (547-8).[620] The futility of the creators and readers in the novel appears complete. Melquíades' scripts may have turned out to be more than merely mad ravings, and he may have achieved a form of immortality through that, but the self-absorbed introspection of the receivers of his text, that is, the

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[617] Zamora (1995) discusses the use of this apocalyptic myth in connection with Kermode and his theories upon fiction, as fulfilling the human need for endings which provide alleviation from the crushing weight of a potentially meaningless eternity. See also Carrillo (1976) for use of this Biblical myth in the novel.

[618] Martin (1995), p.114-5.

[619] *Macondo was already a fearful whirlwind of dust and rubble being spun by the wrath of that biblical hurricane when Aureliano skipped eleven pages so as not to lose time with facts he knew only too well, and he began to decipher the instant he was living, deciphering it as he lived it, prophesying himself in the act of deciphering the last page of the parchment, as if he were looking into a speaking mirror'*

[620] *'it was foreseen that the city of mirrors (or mirages) would be wiped out by the wind and exiled from the memory of men at the precise moment when Aureliano Babilonia would finish deciphering the parchments, and that everything written on them was unrepeatable since time immemorial and forever more, because races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth* (336). See Clark (1995) and Martin (1995) for interesting interpretations of the imagery of this passage.

Buendía family, has destroyed everything by producing carelessness and short-sighted self-interest.

Conclusion

In this chapter, various types of artist in the two texts have been studied, and there are a few predominant themes which emerge from the depiction of these artists. In *Metamorphoses* it was seen how Orpheus moved the natural world with his music, causing rocks to be stupefied in mid-air and trees to follow him. Pygmalion is described by Orpheus as producing the miracle of life with his art, and Daedalus constructs a maze so complex that he nearly loses himself inside, and wings that allow him to escape Knossos, but cause him to accidentally lose his only son. Firstly, and most prominently, then, we can observe the ability of these artists to alter the world in quite startling ways.

The powers of their various arts are in some ways akin to those of gods. Orpheus manages to persuade the terrifying and inhumane underworld deities to return Eurydice, and Pygmalion creates a statue which comes to life through his care and devotion. To create life is perceived as the domain of a god, and yet here art is capable of wielding the same powers. However, Daedalus does not achieve anything quite so momentous, and this is perhaps because his artistry lies in a different area; whereas Orpheus and Pygmalion are aesthetic artists, producing art for the sake of art, Daedalus possesses a more practical approach to art. His labyrinth is intricate and artistic but exists for a purpose, as do the wings he constructs. For Ovid, artists who create for art's sake alone seem capable of producing life in things. Another common feature of these creative figures is their exilic or loner status. Daedalus is in exile from his own country (8.183-5) after the murder of his nephew, a story told by Ovid at 8.236-59; Pygmalion has

ostracised himself from the company of women after witnessing the shameless behaviour of the Propoetides (10.244-6); Orpheus took to a hill in his grief, where he sang songs which were heard by trees and wild beasts (10.86ff).

Overwhelmingly, Ovid's treatment of creative artists promotes the powers of art. Music, sculpture and architecture all possess magical capabilities. Ovid in fact attributes such a power to himself at the end of the poem where he remarks that his poetry will make him immortal (15.871-9). It is fair to say that Ovid validates art in his poem, and esteems artists as uniquely talented individuals who are able to do quite remarkable things. That is not to say that they do not suffer, but their suffering is qualified by success on an artistic and personal level. Even Orpheus's story has a wistfully happy ending in Ovid's poem. It must be noted that this chapter has not aimed to give a comprehensive survey of all artist within the poem; however, the characters selected for analysis are of such importance and prominence within the poem, that their presentation can be fairly taken to be representative of the poem's attitudes to artists.

The handling of artists in *Cien años de soledad* has many themes in common with Ovid's poem. Pietro Crespi's singing is depicted as supernaturally powerful, capable of awakening a whole town of people. Likewise he has an exceptional ability in invoking images for Amaranta with his various postcards of Italy. However, as Orpheus suffered and died, so the same fate awaits this young man who cannot bear the burden of his broken heart and takes his life. Aureliano is another intense young artist; he falls in love with a young girl and starts writing fevered love poetry on everything he can find: Melquíades' paper, walls, even his own arms (158-9). Aureliano, like Pietro Crespi, has the magical ability to transfigure the world. However, although he does not take his life, Aureliano likewise does not see a happy outcome for his love as his young

wife dies in childbirth. He goes on to live a deeply unhappy life, and grows old with the persistent habit of making gold fishes which he then melts down only to start all over again, a task which has no beginning and no end, rather as his poetry is described as having no beginning and no end (159). Amaranta is depicted as performing a similarly self-perpetuating task with her shroud.

There is a strong sense of futility inherent in García Márquez's presentation of art, which differs from Ovid's more positive affirmation of the artistic. Unlike Ovid's poem, the novel also centres around a dominant figure, in this instance Melquíades, who appears to have written the very history of the Buendía family that appears in the novel; as such he can be seen to represent the figure of the writer within the text. Melquíades possesses magical abilities beyond those possessed by Pietro Crespi and Aureliano. His room and his scripts remain intact, and Melquíades himself appears to escape the clutches of death many times. However, when the scripts are finally decoded by Aureliano Babilonia at the close of the novel, this marks the destruction of Macondo forever, and Aureliano is far too absorbed in himself and his reading to have noticed or cared for the horrific death of his baby and the ultimate destruction of his world. Neither of these things suggests that art here is regarded as a good or worthy thing. In fact, it acts as a destructive force. Is there a message here from the man who declared his desire to be a magician; that his novel with its irresistible magic should not beguile and lead us astray too far into realms of unreality? The narrator describes the *cólera* of that hurricane that sweeps Macondo away and calls the wind *bíblico* (547). Both these details suggest that a judgment is being cast by the ultimate creator of this world. Its inhabitants are guilty in their refusal to engage with external realities in any practical way. It is true that many of them prove themselves deft manipulators of natural resources: José Arcadio Buendía forges a community in the wilderness almost single-

handedly, Colonel Aureliano Buendía sets off to defeat the conservatives with a small band of men, and returns a legendary hero. As a community, however, they fail, and they fail miserably. The reason for this failure is reflected in the self-absorption of the final Aureliano. *Soledad* is the single characteristic that unites them all, and their solitude emanates from introspection and delusion, both territories of artistic pursuit.[621]

Despite the clear cynicism of the text with regards to art, remarks which García Márquez made at the end of his Nobel Prize speech seem to contradict the negative stance we have seen in the novel: 'we, the inventors of tales, who will believe anything, feel entitled to believe that it is not yet too late to engage in the creation of the opposite utopia. A new and sweeping utopia of life, where no one will be able to decide for others how they die, where love will prove true and happiness be possible, and where the races condemned to one hundred years of solitude will have, at last and forever, a second opportunity on earth'.[622] Even given the failure of art and artists in *Cien años de soledad*, it is undeniable that they possess very special powers and these remarks explain the magical abilities of the artists in the novel. García Márquez clearly believes that there is hope for redemption through art, even if the failure rate is so persistently high.

Both authors' faith in the powers of art is reflected in their presentation of artists and art in their texts. The magical abilities of the artists recall also the magical powers of the external narrators, who create magical worlds and people them with magical characters. This transfigures reality, and reflects also their dissatisfaction with the world as it is, casting artists as subversive characters striving to change the status quo. The artists may not be successful this time round, but as long as they continue to challenge,

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[621] Lawrence (1974) interprets the persistent solitude of the characters as representative of the Marxist concept of alienation. His political reading of the novel provides a compelling perspective.
[622] García Márquez (1983). Cf. Lawrence (1974), p.57: *The reader is not merely to be left with memory, but with a sense of the real possibility for transforming the world through the active use of imagination.*

there remains the hope that one day the world really will improve. This is not to see that magical realism is a form of wish-fulfilment, for the past five chapters have demonstrated many complex aspects to the mode, but certainly the desire of the authors to use their art to redeem the real world around them is reflected clearly in the episodes studied in this chapter. However, as this conclusion has shown, Ovid has a more consistently optimistic attitude to art in his poem, and this is reflected both in the increased magical powers of his artists, and also their higher instance of success on a personal and artistic level. García Márquez perceives many negative forces at work in the attitudes of artists: their self-absorption being the most prominent, but also the deep suffering they bring upon themselves and others. This is reflected in their high failure rates and magical powers that are quite diminished when compared to those of the artists within Ovid's poem.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the use of magical realism in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, using García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* as a comparative tool. Chapter one examined how magical realist effects were produced by manipulating aspects of narration; cultural perspectives were explored in chapter two, specifically how and to what effect these were incorporated into the texts by the authors. The third chapter analysed the influences of Latin America upon García Márquez's novel, exploring political, historical and cultural spheres. Case studies were used in chapter four to examine realistic depiction, and how magical realism can supplement the failings of the realist mode in expressing reality. The final chapter explored the role and depiction of artistic figures, and examined attitudes to creative art within the texts. It now remains to use the evidence considered in the previous chapters to offer specific conclusions regarding the role of magical realism in Ovid's poem.

1. Chapter Analysis

The first chapter was primarily concerned to analyse how the narrator of the text produces a magical realist effect; it explored the various techniques involved and the ways in which these devices act to invoke a magical realist tone. I began by studying the first overtly magical instant from García Márquez's text, the transformation of a gypsy into a puddle, and isolated the features that produced its magical realist effect. I noted the careful manipulation of the reader by the narrator through characters' unsurprised responses to magical events, and the narrator's own deadpan response. Both these

effects confuse the reader and leave uncertainty about which interpretive code to use for the novel. This produces magical realism.

Having noted the ways in which magical realism is produced, I proceeded to analyse other methods of narration which produce similar effects. Either using documentary style language to explain a magical transformation, or conversely, looking at a familiar and everyday event in a magical way, are two techniques used extensively by the narrators of both texts to create magical realism. The narrator's aporia at an event is very much a feature of Ovid's style of storytelling, and its bewildering effect can also be considered to produce magical realism. The narrator of García Márquez's novel is shown to have similarly ambivalent responses to the events in his text. Devices such as anthropomorphism, hybridism, anachronism and confused time frames are shown to be effective at producing a magical realist effect, and finally, the way in which both authors use internal narrators to complicate potential responses to the narrative, also enhances magical realism. Therefore, magical realism is demonstrated to be a central feature of Ovid's narrative technique.

As well as the techniques involved in producing a magical realist effect, I also focused upon storytelling as a device for controlling perceptions of reality. The disrespect for disbelievers of stories is particularly noteworthy in *Metamorphoses*, and the power of storytelling to promote community beliefs is a prevalent theme in both texts. This raises at an early stage the exaggerated importance of stories that is expressed by each text, and revisited in detail in the final chapter.

The second chapter continued and developed the theme of storytelling by focusing on its connection to community belief systems. It analysed the notion that magical realism can be produced by a clashing of cultures and their accompanying

cultural codes. Different cultures presented by Ovid and García Márquez tell stories to explain reality, and where more modern approaches to reality appear in a culture saturated with older belief systems, there arises a battle between ways of reading events. Animistic conceptions of the world were found to be pervasive and contradicted the empirical approach to reality that the modern reader is likely to adopt. An example of this is the magnets of Melquíades which are described by the narrator as luring metal objects to follow them. Both texts include elements of local belief systems, and narrated in a similar manner, frequently presenting as valid the superstitions of their characters. So Ovid depicts Deucalion and Pyrrha throwing stones over their shoulders in accordance with an oracle. The effect of this style of presentation in the text is a magical realist one, for the reader is encouraged to believe the characters despite potential contradictions with their own views about the world.

Different conceptions of such central concepts as mind, body and nature were all shown to be prevalent. For example, in *Metamorphoses* the grieving sisters of Phaethon, through their persistent weeping, transformed into trees. A less extreme version of this idea was shown to occur in *Cien años de soledad*, where José Arcadio Buendía spent so long sitting outside underneath a tree that he began to take on strangely tree-like properties. In all these instances, both texts allow these very challenging conceptions of events in the world to be considered as somehow 'normal'.

Finally, an important difference between the two works emerged in this chapter. Ovid's text makes use of a ready-made archive of myth, whereas García Márquez constructs his own original myth with his story of the Buendías. This suggests the importance of Latin America to García Márquez's work, for it shows that his intention is *mythopoetic*.

The notion that magical realism emerges not just from cultural syncretism, but from Latin America's specific background, is explored in my third chapter, which differs from all others in this thesis in its exclusive focus on García Márquez's novel. The common claim of Latin Americanists, that magical realism is a genre emerging from unique cultural and geographical circumstances, has been prominent in critical responses, so it was crucial to explore magical realism from this angle in a thesis which uses magical realism to interpret a text from a different background. I examined these claims by choosing two prominent magical realist passages in the text, and exploring the various sources for these passages. Historical, political, cultural and literary avenues were all investigated, and I found that many different influences produce the magical realism within the two episodes examined.

The insomnia plague had many possible sources. The destruction of Indian culture was shown to be represented magically by this disease; also the covering-up of the brutal events of the Banana workers' strike, narrated later in the novel, was seen to be prefigured in this plague of forgetting. García Márquez's own childhood memories, and the memories his grandmother related to him as a child, had a marked influence. Biblical allusion and parody was also shown to be a feature of the insomnia plague's appearance. Finally, a writer's obsession with recording the past for posterity was an important instigator.

The use of a 'golden age' motif in the opening chapter of the novel was also analysed. European literary tradition, from Classical motifs to the conquistadors and their hallucinatory accounts, was shown to be a powerful influence. The Bible was demonstrated once again to be a significant source text, both for García Márquez directly, as well as indirectly through the European writers who were themselves influenced by it. The isolation of many communities in Colombia due to its terrain is

expressed by the Edenesque atmosphere; similarly, the failure generally of Latin America to engage with history as it occurs beyond the continent's waters is conveyed magically by the bizarre golden age that occurs in the late nineteenth century of García Márquez's novel.

Literary tradition's burden upon a writer and its inevitable associations of dominant culture are demonstrably very important to *Cien años de soledad.* By presenting as real various magical literary motifs within his novel, García Márquez is seen to be inserting himself into those traditions with defiance. Likewise, the Biblical allusions and inversions show the writer to be interested in invoking the authority of the Bible as a foundational text by including parallel features – such as a promised land, a plague and an original state of paradise; yet in the same breath the author mocks its authority by parodying these Biblical themes – the promised land is never reached, the plague is one of sleeplessness, and paradise is already sullied by firing squads.

In my fourth chapter, I explored the claims of Latin American (and other) magical realist writers; that the mode is a more effective means of translating reality to the page than traditional realism. I picked four important magical realist techniques used by both texts: solidification, dissolution, personification and animalisation and explored how each functioned, what effect it produced, and whether this effect might approach a more accurate depiction of reality.

Niobe's transformation into stone was shown to express her trauma and disbelief in a quite startling way by making concrete the metaphor of someone freezing in shock. Similarly, Cyane's melting expressed dramatically her emotional turbulence at Pluto's violation of her waters. However, Ovid's dramatic representation of these events had the literary result of reducing human beings to one particular form which is too simple.

García Márquez's more subtle techniques proved to be more effective. For example, Colonel Aureliano Buendía develops an icy inner shell that plagues him until his death; this materialises his stubborn pride but does not reduce him to this single defining concept. To this extent, García Márquez's magical realism is shown to be a better tool for realistic depiction. Both writers create an element of irreducible magic in their magical realism, which promotes an atmosphere of mystery; these effects recalled Roh's descriptions of the movement in art. Ultimately, magical realism was shown to be most effective in its ability to make us see the world anew through its estrangement effects.

The fifth and final chapter explores magical realism by observing how each text handles the theme of art and artists. Artistic characters are common to both works, and they frequently possess magical powers. The magical abilities and tragic lives of Orpheus and Pietro Crespi, both musicians, were shown to be especially useful in setting up a discourse between the works of Ovid and García Márquez. Both men enchanted the external world in a way that was quite magical, moving all to listen with their music. Orpheus's powers are more extreme then Pietro Crespi's; Orpheus visited the underworld and moved the gods, and almost succeeded in reclaiming his wife for the world of the living. Orpheus also is given something approaching a happy ending : he is depicted as walking with his Eurydice in the underworld. Pietro Crespi's terrible fate is unqualified by any attempt at a happy ending. He kills himself after Amaranta has cruelly rejected him and that is the last that is heard of his angelic music.

The achievements of Pygmalion, Daedalus and José Arcadio Buendía reveal similarities. Pygmalion is presented by Ovid (through Orpheus) as creating a statue that magically comes alive. Daedalus' success in flight is heavily qualified by the loss of his son, but the fact remains that he does achieve his goal in invention. That he almost loses

himself in his own creation, the labyrinth, demonstrates how his creativity is presented as something over which he does not have full in control.

Melquíades, the enigmatic writer of the scripts of the Buendía's lives, shows how the magic of the written word can be interwoven with the destructive self-absorption produced by commitment to literature; also the illusions and futility of literature are strongly emphasised. The novel ends on this very theme. Both Ovid and García Márquez view artists as endowed with special abilities to affect the world around them, but the much higher failure rate of art in García Márquez suggested a cynicism and negativity concerning the potential for art as a redemptive agent. However, García Márquez's Nobel speech expresses a more hopeful perspective upon art as capable of improving the world of Latin America.

2. Ovid's Use of Magical Realism

It is clear from this thesis that Ovid does include many examples of magical realist effects in his *Metamorphoses*. The bewilderment arising from a confusion of two interpretive codes was shown to be present in many places in the text; metamorphosis is often presented as an event which grows organically from the natural order of the text, and magical powers are readily assimilated to more ordinary details about the world.

However, the magical realist effects were shown in chapter one and four to be often significantly more dramatic, and therefore more intrusive, than those found in *Cien años de soledad.* This sometimes has the effect of causing the thing depicted to appear as purely fantastical; an example of this is Ovid's use of personification of abstracts, when depicting creatures such as *Invidia* and *Fama.* The extreme personification of these creatures causes them to appear as allegorical figures, whereas

García Márquez's more subtle personifications allow the individuals or things to maintain an autonomous existence separate from their personifying characteristics.

Different levels of magical realism in Ovid can be clarified through García Márquez's use of the mode. An important factor that emerged from all of the chapters was the sense in which storytelling was regarded as so powerful a tool for controlling people. This was demonstrated to be horrifyingly true to reality in chapter three where in actual history the United Fruit Company becomes itself a rather magical realist entity, its actions surrounded by confusion. It was also shown in chapter three how García Márquez tells magical stories for political purposes. In a country where the dominant cultural codes are imposed by external forces, the effort needed to assert one's cultural perspective is immense. Under the heavy weight of European utopian and pseudo-historical documents, as well as centuries of Classical tradition, it is hardly surprisingly that Latin Americans feel as if they live in a reality that has been constructed for them by foreigners. By presenting a more inherently magical world that contradicts Western norms, García Márquez can be seen to be using magical realism subversively.

Ovid's markedly different cultural and historical background raises the question of whether any comparison of purpose can be found in the Roman poet. Ovidian scholars have in the past perceived Ovid as a poet caught between two time frames at a uniquely complex point in history. Fränkel and Galinsky both use this perspective for interpreting the poet, and Ted Hughes introduces his free translation of passages of *Metamorphoses* with similar observations. Ovid's Rome was a very different place from the perilous situation of Colombia in the mid-twentieth century; this could well account for the more gratuitously magical version of magical realism that emerges from Ovid's poem. The different approach is also reflected in the handling of artists and the artistic in both works. While both writers attribute magical powers to their artistic characters,

Ovid has a tendency to validate art as capable of redeeming reality, whereas García Márquez often presents it as a dangerous distraction which expresses and encourages the self-absorption that eventually destroys the Buendía family.

There is, however, one very significant point on which both texts are in agreement with regards to their use of magical realism. It was observed in chapter three how part of García Márquez's use of magical realism is a response to the burden of European literary tradition. By fully incorporating magical features of the Spanish chroniclers' accounts of Latin America, he is inserting himself into their traditions as well as asserting his authority over them. This recalls Ovid's handling of Virgil's *Aeneid* in books thirteen and fourteen of his poem where he skips over the serious issues of the story and instead focuses upon the more magical and less grandiose aspects. It seems likely that Ovid in part also uses magical effects here competitively to assert his validity as a poet beside Virgil. Similarly his handling of the creation story was shown in chapter two to be a bold mixing of previous authors and authorities on the subject. There, Ovid puts Lucretian scientific terminology to use in his description of an inherently magical universe. This subversive use of the magical expresses here his awareness of belatedness and his literary competitiveness.

Two clear conclusions can be drawn, then, from the investigation conducted by this thesis. The first is that magical realism is being used at different levels by each author. Some passages in Ovid display a different balance of the magical and the real than others, and generally a more magical weighting is found in the Roman poet than in the Colombian writer. The second conclusion, connected to the first, is that magical realism is present for different reasons and used for different purposes in the two texts. In *Cien años de soledad* there is frequently an overtly political meaning for the use of

magical realism. Such a reading is not immediately evident from Ovid's poem. That is not to say that political expression is lacking, but it is certainly not such a dominating concern; many of the examples of magical realism do not, when studied, reveal political motivation. Both texts use magical realism as a form of literary competition (and in the case of García Márquez this is connected to the political).

3. Further Avenues

There are many fruitful avenues that could follow from this thesis. Lines of inquiry include exploring whether categories can be constructed within magical realism, which might enable one to distinguish between the different levels of magical realism used by authors; for example, phrases such as 'poetic realism', 'mythic realism', 'grotesque realism' and other have often appeared in the papers of magical realist theorists, but these are seldom developed. These would benefit greatly from being analysed in detail, so a more consistent set of categories could be developed.

A detailed study of magical realism in other genres of Classical literature would also provide useful material. The Homeric epics offer enormous scope, with their inclusion and manipulation of magical themes, and their varying attitudes towards the magical. The *Iliad* tends to underplay magical features, so that when they do intrude, they are quite startling; this attitude is starkly divergent from the treatment of the magical found in the *Odyssey*. Magical realism would therefore be a particularly effective tool for analysing magical passages in these texts. Epic literature has always included magical elements, and using magical realism to explore this aspect of their form would provide some fascinating results.

The ancient novel also provides fruitful material for a study of magical realist techniques. Apuleius' *The Golden Ass* famously includes magical metamorphosis presented in the first person, and the fact that it is in the form of a novel makes it a particularly suitable subject for a critical study involving magical realism.

It is without doubt that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* will continue to attract innovative interpretations, and this thesis has demonstrated that a new and exciting movement in modern literature, that appears to be very specifically connected to its time and place, can be successfully applied to an ancient text.

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