Huhao Yang MFA Terminal Project
EL MITO OR THE MYTH OF MY PAIN SOUND DESIGN
Research Book

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Andrew Rincón, https://www.andrewrinconwrites.com/

Andrew Rincón is a Queer Colombian-American playwright and screenwriter. His work blends fantasy, modern Latine mythology and Queer fabulation.

His plays have been developed with Latinx Playwrights Circle, INTAR, The Austin Latino New Play Festival, The Amoralists Theatre Company, Pork Filled Productions (Seattle), Out Front Productions (Atlanta). He was a member of INKtank Lab for Playwrights of Color (2017) , 2017 Fornés Playwriting Workshop (Chicago). He is winner of the 2018 Chesley/Bumbalo Grant for writers of Gay and Lesbian Theatre and New Light Theatre Project's New Light New Voices Award (2019). He is a member of the Latinx Playwrights Circle, a Dramatist Guild Foundation Fellow (19-20), MacDowell Fellow (Winter 2020). He was Skidmore College's Visiting Playwright in Residence (21-22). His play I Wanna Fuck like Romeo and Juliet was recently published in Yale Theatre Magazine (Vol 52.1) and will have it's world premiere in Fall of '22 (produced by New Light Theatre Company in NYC).

Plays include, That Rhythm in the Blood, The Lonely (A Fictionally Non-Accurate Historical Kiki), and El Mito or The Myth of my Pain.

Portfolio: https://www.andrewrinconwrites.com/
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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: ANDREW RINCÓN
BY GEMMA SIEGLER AT SKIDMORE COLLEGE

Beginning this past Fall, Skidmore students have had the privilege to get to know playwright Andrew Rincón as not only an artist, but as a professor as well. Last semester, I had the incredible experience of being a part of Andrew's first class taught at Skidmore: Introduction to Playwriting. I've been writing for a long time, mostly prose and analysis (my English major coming out), but I'd never explored playwriting as a form of expression before this class.

The first thing I wanted to know was how Andrew got started in theater and why he ultimately chose that form of expression for his work. "I don't think I knew what a play was until high school," he told me, and coming from a first-generation American family, he had no familial or cultural attachment to theater as an art form at that point. Towards the end of high school, however, Andrew discovered acting. He had no idea what he wanted to do after high school ended, so he thought about moving out to Los Angeles to start auditions. "My mother pulled the ultimate Latina mother card," he told me, "she said: you'll break my heart, don't you dare." With this motivation, Andrew decided to attend the Theater BA program at Florida State University.

The BA program at FSU is very similar to our own program at Skidmore, Andrew told me, as they pushed him in his four years there to try a little bit of everything. This type of education helped branch his mind and ultimately led him to playwriting. "It was the college experience that we hope for all of you, that your brain gets broken open and you become a different person than you were when you entered."

When Andrew was 20 years old he took a class called Latinx Theater History with Dr. Irma Mayorga, a Latinx theater scholar. "It floored me,"he said, "my culture is such a big part of my childhood and my family, I had no idea Latinx theater was a thing, I remember thinking 'that doesn't exist. If it did I would know about it.'" It was after this class that Andrew started writing his own work.

Even though he hadn't written out any of his play ideas before college, Andrew was always a playwright from the beginning without realizing it. "I would watch X-Men and then play with my dolls as the X-men characters and create new plots for them to live in," he told me, and I laughed because I used to do the same thing. When he started writing, he began with monologues and practicing writing dialogue. He found that writing helped him to access

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emotions that acting or directing didn't allow. The first time he ever cried on stage, he told me, was reading a monologue that he wrote. Finding writing, for him, was "like finally fitting into your skin."

Then, I asked Andrew what it was like to write and stage his first play. It was called Friends in Equilateral, he told me,"the title is great but if anyone ever asked me to read them pages I'd probably stab them in the face."He staged it in his senior year in rep with one of his friends and collaborators (very similar to the dynamic of our Spring Black Box). It was a very emotional experience for him, as Andrew is a very emotionally driven writer. Watching his play and discussing the emotional response with audience members drives Andrew's creation of more work."I never had that with acting, but maybe that was because I never saw a Latino queer person out there."

That's what's so exciting about Andrew's current project, a workshop of his new play El Mito de Mi Dolor (The Myth of My Pain) happening at Skidmore later this semester. Andrew is bringing in four professional actors and two Skidmore actors to work with him on this new piece. It's still in the early stages, he told me, and he's still exploring the world with Teisha Duncan (who is directing the piece) and having dramaturgical conversations with Lisa Jackson-Schebetta."It's an all Latinx cast, which is really magical, and it's exciting to get to watch Latinx actors play roles written for them."

"What's your experience been like at Skidmore so far?" I asked him. "What if I said I hate it, especially Gemma,"he said jokingly and we laughed together for a little bit.

"It's actually been very healing." There's something powerful, for Andrew, about disseminating something he's been doing for so long down to its basic principles. Like many people working in theater, Andrew's life got derailed by COVID-19. The NYC debut of his play I Wanna Fuck Like Romeo and Juliet was supposed to happen in May of 2020. Around that same time, Lisa Jackson-Schebetta, the chair of our department, reached out to Andrew to see if he wanted to teach and work at Skidmore for the year. This is Andrew's first time teaching in a formal setting, which surprised me as a student of his. For Andrew, being around theater students who are still formulating the foundations of what storytelling means to them (or people who are"still daring to experiment,"in his words) has been refreshing. In the professional world, there are so many constricting things that happen for artists. We are constantly having to pitch and package ourselves to fit into other people's boxes, and we start to forget why we're doing it in the first place. This is why, for Andrew, teaching playwriting has been illuminating."There are about a thousand ways in to playwriting, and you all have been really amazing."

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Finally, I asked Andrew if he had any advice for Skidmore students (playwriting or otherwise). This is what he had to offer: "By the end of college, you're exhausted and it feels really hard and scary to jump into the world. Your life as artists will fluctuate and change. Try and think about the way theater touches all aspects of your lives, and where your impulse to create comes from, not just how to make money or get jobs. Embrace the art and the way it feels."

Siegler, Gemma. "Faculty Spotlight: Andrew Rincón." Skidmore College, 27 Mar. 2022, theater.skidmore.edu/2022/03/faculty-spotlight-andrew-rincon/.

1.3 REVIEW FOR ANDREW'S PLAY

New York Times Review: Star-Crossed Lovers in Need of a Divine Assist

Andrew Rincón's play about reigniting passions in the heavens and the bedroom is a jumble of genres at 59E59 Theaters.

Tired of digesting all the world's heartbreak, Cupid calls it quits in Andrew Rincón's"I Wanna F*ck Like Romeo and Juliet."The play, a New Light Theater Project production having its premiere at 59E59 Theaters, is experiencing a similar existential crisis. Despite appealing performances, smooth direction by Jesse Jou, and some touching moments, this cosmic look at the pains of love aims wobbly arrows at too many marks.

Seeing his friend Cupid (Jacqueline Guillén), the goddess of love, so distraught, Saint Valentine (Greg Cuellar) tries to remind her of affection's earthly charms by taking her to Hackensack, N.J., where a young couple in the middle of a breakup might provide the challenge she needs to get back in the spirit.

That couple, Alejandro (a sturdy Juan Arturo) and Benny (Ashton Muñiz, a soothing presence with comedic chops), have decided to separate after six years together, but Valentine thinks the relationship is worth saving. Cupid and Valentine each pick one to take on a journey of self-discovery, with the goal of guiding them back to each other. These pilgrimages, however, lead to hastily mentioned histories of internalized shame and sexual abuse that overburden the play's final 20 minutes.

Rincón dabbles in the poetic, mixing the mortals' sometimes self-help-sounding domestic discourse with grandiose statements of love everlasting from the divine duo, who are prone to endless arguments. (That said, it is Alejandro who speaks the childish title phrase, a romanticization of Shakespeare's text not meant to read as satire.) The clash highlights the play's confusion as to whether it wants to be a comedy about meddling powers, or a drama about a couple whose breakup undergoes divine intervention. Brittany Vasta's two-level set, nicely split between the heavens and the bedroom, makes a stronger case for this duality.

The same can't be said for the script, which is untidy in its overuse of Spanglish. Aside from a great joke when a character is shocked to discover the love goddess is a Latina ("Did you really think Cupid could be anything but?), the Spanish in the text, liberally sprinkled throughout, lacks cohesion because its significance hasn't been established. When it is used to convey

meaningful points, I wondered if non-speakers would be able to follow along, or what Hispanic viewers were supposed to gain. It's maddening when another tongue is used as a crutch, a substitute for personality that winds up exoticizing the language it sets out to exalt, or"normalize." If a sentiment lacks power when expressed without a show of bilingualism, it does not gain it through translation.

At times it seems as if the play could have revolved around Betti (Elizabeth Ramos), a romantically inexperienced dental hygienist Benny befriends and starts dating, somewhat platonically. Ramos's smallness during her first scene gives way to an explosive physical performance as Betti comes into her own and experiences first love (with Cupid, no less). Through sheer allure, the actress turns a character largely superfluous to the already jumbled story into the production's most valuable, displaying the irresistibility of earnest hope in a work that too often dips into its bathos.

Ramírez, Juan A. "Review: Star-Crossed Lovers in Need of a Divine Assist." Nytimes, 31 Oct.2022, www.nytimes.com/2022/10/31/theater/romeo-and-juliet-andrew-rincon-review.html.

AWARDS

Andrew Rincón Named Winner of 2019–2020 New Light New Voices Award

Rincón's winning play will be seen Off-Broadway in 2020.

BY OLIVIA CLEMENT
JANUARY 24, 2019

Andrew Rincón

Playwright Andrew Rincón is the winner of the 2019–2020 New Light New Voices Award, the annual literary prize awarded by New Light Theater Project. The Off-Broadway company will produce Rincón's winning play, *I Wanna Fuck Like Romeo and Juliet,* at the IRT Theater in 2020.

Described as a "queer love story of epic proportions," the play investigates God and mortals, realism and fantasy, and the shame and joy that exists within queer love of color. The world is thrown into chaos as Cupid rips off her wings and gives up on Love. But her old flame Saint Valentine has a plan to bring her spirits back up and it involves the relationship between two men: Alejandro and Benny.

"Rincón's script impressed readers with its blend of imaginative theatricality, piercing honesty, and vulnerable humor," says New Light Theater Projects Literary Manager Jacob Perkins. "New Light New Voices is committed to partnering with emerging writers in order to foster an ensemble-based approach to producing new work. Rincón's script embraces this ensemble-driven practice and maximizes its potential, creating an open discourse between artist and viewer."

Rincón's plays have been developed with Rising Circle Theatre Collective, INTAR, Amios, The Amoralists, Pork Filled Productions, and The 24 Hour Plays. His plays include *You Got That Same Kind of Lonely, That Rhythm in the Blood,* and, currently in development, *"I'll meet you outside the airport, ok?"*

The two finalists for the New Light New Voices Award are Ali Skye Bennet's *Rafetus* and Zora Howard's *Stew*. **Last year's winner, Ray Yamanouchi's** ***The American Tradition,*** will begin performances January 25 at 13 Street Repertory Company, where it is scheduled to run through February 16.

"Andrew Rincón Named Winner of 2019–2020 New Light New Voices Award."
Playbill, 2019,playbill.com/article/andrew-rincon-named-winner-of-20192020-
new-light-new-voices-award. Accessed 18 Aug. 2023.

2 THE CULTURE AND SOCIAL WORLD OF THE PLAY

2.1 IMMIGRANTS IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

1) Immigrants in the United States

The United States was built, in part, by immigrants—and the nation has long
been the beneficiary of the new energy and ingenuity that immigrants bring.
Today, 14 percent of the nation's residents are foreign-born, over half of
whom are naturalized U.S. citizens. Nearly 70 percent of all immigrants, who
come from diverse backgrounds across the globe, report speaking English
well or very well.

Immigrants make up significant shares of the U.S. workforce in a range of
industries, accounting for over two-fifths of all farming, fishing, and forestry
workers—as well as one quarter of those working in computer and math
sciences. The highest number of immigrants work in the health care and
social assistance industry, with over 4 million immigrants providing these
services. As workers, business owners, taxpayers, and neighbors, immigrants
are an integral part of the country's diverse and thriving communities and
make extensive contributions that benefit all.

One in seven U.S. residents is an immigrant, while one in eight residents is a
native-born U.S. citizen with at least one immigrant parent.

In 2019, 44.9 million immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 14
percent of the national population.

The United States was home to 22.0 million women, 20.4 million men, and 2.5
million children who were immigrants.

The top countries of origin for immigrants were Mexico (24 percent of
immigrants), India (6 percent), China (5 percent), the Philippines (4.5 percent),
and El Salvador (3 percent).

In 2019, 38.3 million people in the United States (12 percent of the country's
population) were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant
parent.

Over half of all immigrants in the United States are naturalized citizens.

As of 2019, 23.2 million immigrants (52 percent) had naturalized and 8.1
million immigrants were eligible to become naturalized U.S. citizens.

The majority of immigrants (69 percent) reported speaking English "well" or
"very well."

Immigrants in the United States are concentrated at both ends of the
educational spectrum.

A third of adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2019, while over a fourth had less than a high school diploma.

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	33	33
Some college	19	31
High school diploma only	22	28
Less than a high-school diploma	26	8
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.		

Millions of U.S. citizens live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

10.3 million undocumented immigrants comprised 23 percent of the immigrant population and 3 percent of the total U.S. population in 2019.

6.1 million U.S.-citizen children under the age of 18 lived with an undocumented family member as of 2018, including 4.4 million who lived with at least one undocumented parent.

16.7 million people, including 7 million born in the United States, lived with at least one undocumented family member between 2010 and 2014.

The United States is home to over 590,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

Approximately 590,070 active DACA recipients lived in the United States and its territories as of June 30, 2021, while DACA has been granted to approximately 832,881 people in total since 2012.

As of 2020, approximately 44 percent of DACA-eligible immigrants in the United States had applied for DACA.

An additional 384,000 people in the United States would satisfy all but the educational requirements for DACA, and another 14,000 would be eligible as they grew older.

One in six U.S. workers is an immigrant, together making up a vital part of the country's labor force in a range of industries.

28.5 million immigrant workers comprised 17 percent of the U.S. labor force in 2019.

Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following U.S. industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,174,133
Manufacturing	3,387,894
Accommodation and Food Services	2,970,435
Construction	2,948,808
Retail Trade	2,886,515

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

The largest shares of immigrant workers were in the following U.S. industries:

Industry	Immigrant Share (%) (of all industry workers)
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	26
Administrative Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	23
Construction	22
Other Services (except Public Administration)	20
Transportation and warehousing	19
Accommodation and Food Services	19

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

Immigrants are an integral part of the U.S. workforce in a range of occupations.
In 2019, immigrant workers were most numerous in the following occupation groups:

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Management Occupations	2,689,819

Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	2,665,709
Sales and Related Occupations	2,481,724
Construction and Extraction Occupations	2,476,967
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	2,382,252
Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.	

The largest shares of immigrant workers were in the following occupation groups:

Occupation Category	Immigrant Share (%) (of all workers in occupation)
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	41
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	31
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	25
Construction and Extraction Occupations	25
Healthcare Support Occupations	21
Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.	

Undocumented immigrants comprised 5 percent of the workforce in 2017. Immigrants in the United States contribute billions of dollars in taxes. Immigrant-led households across the United States contributed a total of $330.7 billion in federal taxes and $161.7 billion in combined state and local taxes in 2019.

Households headed by undocumented immigrants in the United States paid an estimated $18.9 billion in federal taxes and $11.7 billion in combined state and local taxes in 2019.

Households headed by DACA recipients and those meeting the eligibility requirements for DACA paid an estimated $3.4 billion in federal taxes and $2.7 billion in combined state and local taxes in 2019.

As consumers, immigrants add over a trillion dollars to the U.S. economy.

In the United States, residents of immigrant-led households had $1.3 trillion in collective spending power (after-tax income) in 2019.

Immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States generate tens of billions of dollars in business revenue.

3.2 million immigrant business owners accounted for 22 percent of all self-employed U.S. residents in 2019 and generated $86.3 billion in business income.

"Immigrants in the United States." *American Immigration Council*, 21 Sept. 2021, www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-the-united-states.

2) Colombian Immigration.

Like most Hispanic immigrants, Colombians coming to the United States did not start to appear in significant numbers until recent decades. In 1960, fewer than 3,000 Colombians immigrated to the United States, but by 1965, that number had grown to 11,000. Another 65,000 came during the late-1960s, followed by the peak years of Colombian immigration in the 1970s when up to 78,000 made their way to the U.S. In the 1980s, this wave started to taper off, and today a slow but steady stream of immigrant peoples still moves from Colombia to the United States.

While Colombian immigration today may be caused by the recent years of political turmoil and social unrest, the majority of Colombian immigrants came to the U.S. before the so-called "drug wars." Colombians have a deeply-rooted perception about economic and political opportunities in the United States, which is found to be an important factor for immigration here, more so than war or unemployment back home. Colombians have immigrated to traditional Hispanic destinations such as New York City, Florida and New Jersey, but also to peripheral areas such as Rhode Island, Massachusetts and even South Carolina.

The Colombian community of Rhode Island plays an important role in the history and growth of the City of Central Falls. For it is here that active recruitment of labor by local factories was influential in bringing the large Colombian population to the state. Research on this community shows that this migration to Rhode Island by the Colombians began in 1965, and the history of Colombians in Rhode Island is connected to factories and textile mills in Central Falls.

Central Falls is located in the Blackstone Valley. This area is often recognized as the birthplace of the American factory system. The first person to bring

industry to the region was Samuel Slater, who in 1790 opened the first American cotton-spinning mill in nearby Pawtucket. Like the Colombian workers who have worked in the textile mills during the past thirty years, Slater was also an immigrant to the United States. He had come to Pawtucket from England, after learning the working of the first cotton-spinning machinery as an apprentice to its inventor. When driving from Providence to Central Falls, one passes the old Slater Mill and is reminded of the long history of which the Colombian community has become a part.

Remarkably enough, almost all of the Colombians who live in Central Falls today come from one of two regions in Colombia: the Antioquia Province, in the central mountainous region, and Barranquilla, located on the Atlantic coast. Antioquia, of which the capital is Medellín, has historically been one of the most developed and industrialized areas of Colombia. As far back as the 1920s, textiles were the biggest manufacturing industry there, besides coffee processing.

The Colombian population in Rhode Island owes its beginnings to one gentleman who, in the early 1960s, had an insightful and innovative idea: Jay Giuttari, whose father owned Lyon Silk Works, Inc, a textile mill in Central Falls, was aware that his father, like other mill owners at that time were having a hard time attracting young people to work in textiles. At the turn of the century there were many textile mills and an abundance of workers in the textile business in Rhode Island, but by the early 1960s that was changing. Many of the workers at the mills in Central Falls were aging into their 60s and 70s, and it was rare to see a 20-year-old weaver. Weaving and loom fixing and working in the textile mill were very difficult jobs, and young people preferred jobs that were not so physically demanding.

In the early 1960s, Giuttari was living and working in Colombia and it was then that he saw first-hand the highly skilled work of the textile workers in Barranquilla. Because he understood his father's predicament and because he understood textiles, he knew where to find weavers and loom fixers in Colombia. He visited one of the mills across from his job site in Barranquilla and recruited three men to work in his father's mill back in Central Falls. The three men were Gustavo Carreño, Valentín Ríos both in their 20s, and factory supervisor *Horacio Gil (1916-1996). All three arrived in Rhode Island in March of 1965. The following August in 1965, Jay sponsored Fidel Díaz, who he knew in Barranquilla, met him at the airport in Boston, and brought him to work at Lyon.

Because all of these men were already skilled workers who had been working in the textile industry in Colombia, they proved to be excellent workers.

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According to Giuttari, the idea quickly caught on and many other mills in Central Falls and the Blackstone Valley began to recruit Colombian workers to fill the labor shortage in Rhode Island. In the years that followed, business owners from other mills, such as *Pontiac Weaving* and *the Cadillac Textile Mill* in Cumberland, traveled to *Medellín* and *Barranquilla* to recruit more workers.

It was these men and the families who followed that stopped the textile business in Rhode Island from fading away in the 1960s.

By the mid-70s, the textile factories stopped recruiting Colombian labor workers and many followed mill jobs that took them to warmer weather. However, a steady flow of family and friends from Colombia continued to make their way to Rhode Island for the next ten years. Many Colombians moved to Rhode Island from New York, like other immigrants, in search of a more peaceful life. Employment opportunities here were good and the promise of a good education, the opportunity to start a business and reunification with family were many reasons for coming to Rhode Island. The promise of jobs were always available to the Colombians who came to Central Falls, Pawtucket and Cumberland, and many of the mills employed generations of families because they proved to be hard working and dedicated workers.

In the mid-1980s, however, all that changed when most of the mills and factories began to slow production and the owners were forced to lay off hundreds of workers as they prepared for the businesses to shut down for good. This posed an especially difficult problem for Colombians employed at these factories. Many workers began moving to South Carolina, where it was rumored that the textile mills there were looking for workers. It was especially difficult for those who had come in the early years, because they did not feel like uprooting their families for a second time. Another issue they faced was the fact that despite having lived in America for almost 15 years before the factories began closing down, they still had not had the opportunity, nor did they feel it necessary to learn English. In the 1970s [Bernardo Chamorro](), a millworker, said that he spent so much time with other Colombians at work, at home, and socializing that he never felt the need to learn English. Anyone who walked through the mills on any given day could hear the buzzing of the Spanish language as the workers busied themselves with their daily tasks.

Many families did not, however, believe that their lives were over when the mills began to close. Instead, they saw this as an opportunity to seek new skills, including the learning of the English language. Many of today's Colombian families who grew up in Central Falls are now college graduates,

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are professionals, have opened their own businesses, purchased their own home, and are fully integrated into American society while embracing their Colombian roots.

In the 1980s and 90s, the Colombian community of Rhode Island continued to grow steadily, and Central Falls remained as their destination whether it be directly from Colombia, or from places like Florida, where a number of Colombians who were living there felt it was time to be reunited with families in Rhode Island. Businesses grew to the point where one could walk down Dexter or Broad Streets in Central Falls and find Spanish-language signs boasting Colombian-owned markets, restaurants, bakeries, record stores, beauty salons, and even a social service agency founded by Colombians. Cultural organizations such as the *Colombian-American Association* were formed, and the local Catholic and Episcopal churches began holding religious services entirely in Spanish.

The development of the Colombian community in Central Falls has brought a large increase in their numbers. While the early Colombian settlers came to Central Falls to make a living, they did not plan to establish an enclave. Today, however, the Colombians are very much an established part of Central Falls, and the children and grandchildren of the first families in the city are in a better position to organize their community and to promote their culture, while seeking a greater presence in the larger American society.

In the Fall of 2001, Latinos in Central Falls were instrumental in the election of Ricardo Patiño, the first Latino Council member (a Colombian) in City Hall. In 2012, after a very successful Census campaign which empowered Latinos in Central Falls and put the city on the national map, history was made when residents elected James Diossa, the first Colombian-American mayor in Central Falls.

Following Diossa's tenure, in 2020 Central Falls elected Maria Rivera, the city's first-ever Latina mayor, who is also the first Latina mayor in Rhode Island, whose parents came to Central Falls from Puerto Rico, by way of New Jersey.

This is indeed a message to the greater community of Rhode Island that Latinos have voting power in the City of Central Falls, and are definitely here to stay.

"Latino History in RI • Colombians." *Nuestras Raices | <em> Rhode Island </Em>*, nuestrasraicesri.net//ColombiansinRhodeIsland.html. Accessed 5 Sept. 2023.

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3) Colombian Immigrants in the United States

English Proficiency

Nearly all Colombian immigrants speak a language other than English as their primary language. Only 8 percent of those ages 5 and older reported speaking exclusively English at home, compared to 17 percent of the total foreign-born population. A greater share of Colombian immigrants reported speaking English less than "very well" than all foreign born: 53 percent versus 46 percent as of 2021.

Age, Education, and Employment

Like the foreign-born population overall, immigrants from Colombia are more likely to be of working age than U.S. natives. In 2021, 77 percent of Colombian immigrants were of working age (18 to 64 years old) compared to 59 percent of the U.S. born. The median age for Colombians was 49 years old, higher than that of all immigrants (47 years) and the U.S. born (37 years).

Age Distribution of the U.S. Population by Origin, 2021
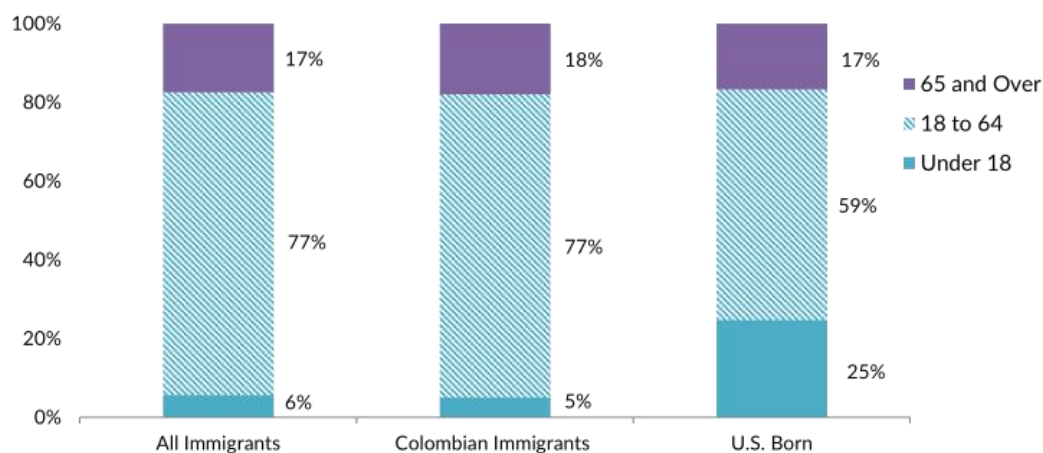
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 as they are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Source: MPI tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2021 ACS.

About 14 percent of Colombian immigrants ages 25 and older had less than a high school diploma as of 2021, versus 26 percent of all foreign-born adults and 7 percent of U.S.-born adults. At the same time, 35 percent of immigrants from Colombia had a bachelor's degree or higher, roughly similar to the rate for the total immigrant (34 percent) and U.S.-born (35 percent) adult populations. However, among Colombians who arrived more recently (between 2017 and 2021), 43 percent of adults held a college degree.
Educational Attainment of the U.S. Population (ages 25 and older) by Origin, 2021
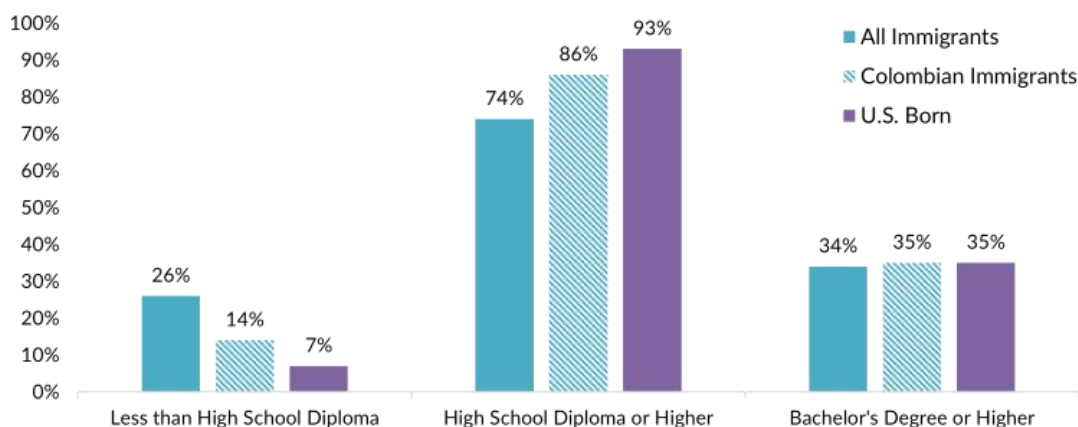
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 as they are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Source: MPI tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2021 ACS.

According to the Institute of International Education, more than 8,000 students from Colombia were enrolled in U.S. higher education institutions in the 2021-22 school year, comprising a small share of the total 949,000 international students in the United States. Colombians represented 19 percent of the nearly 44,000 students from South America, second only to those from Brazil (34 percent).

Colombian immigrants had a higher rate of labor force participation, at 69 percent, than both the overall foreign-born (66 percent) and U.S.-born (62 percent) populations. Similar to the overall foreign-born workforce, most Colombians were in management, business, science, and arts (37 percent) or service (21 percent) occupations (see Figure 6).

Employed Workers in the U.S. Civilian Labor Force (ages 16 and older) by Occupation and Origin, 2021
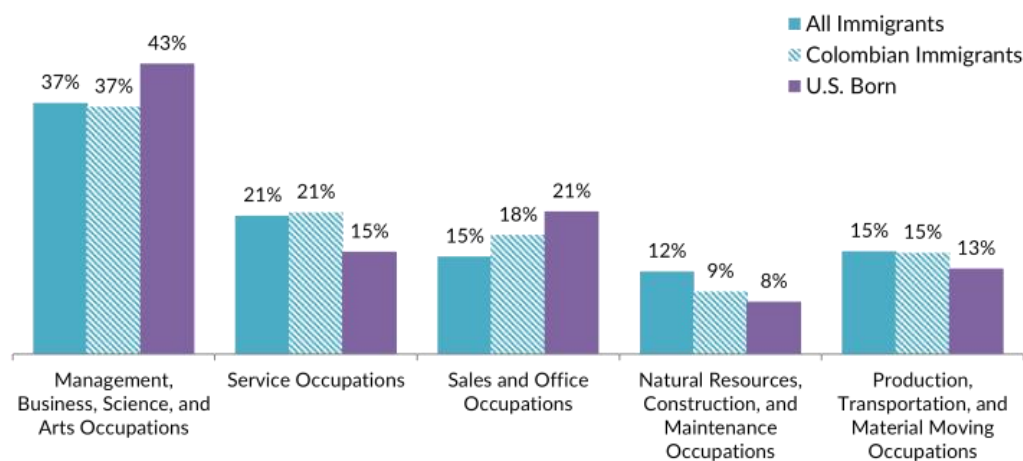
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 as they are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: MPI tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2021 ACS.

Income and Poverty

Households headed by a Colombian immigrant had median income of $66,000 in 2021, lower than that of all immigrants and the U.S. born ($70,000 for each). Thirteen percent of Colombians lived in poverty, roughly similar to all immigrants (14 percent) and the U.S. born (13 percent).

Diego Chaves-González, Jeanne Batalova Diego Chaves-González and Jeanne Batalova. "Colombian Immigrants in the United States." Migrationpolicy.Org, 17 July 2023, www.migrationpolicy.org/article/colombian-immigrants-united-states.

2.2 COLOMBIAN - AMERICAN

True Story: My Family and I Immigrated From Colombia to the U.S.

I'm Annie, a 25-year-old Colombian-American currently living in Utah. I'm a Writing Tutor and do Marketing for some local businesses. I got two B.S.s (Psych & Marketing with a Rhetoric Minor) and am planning on attending grad school next year. I enjoy blogging, daydreaming, working out, watching TV, and mostly staying in.

What do you remember about life in Colombia?

I remember our home and my wonderful childhood. I wasn't/am not a spoiled brat but my parents always did give me what I wanted when it was appropriate. I got good grades and was one of the best at English – to the point where I sometimes corrected my teachers, who weren't fans.
I also remember my friends and our get-togethers, my crushes, our road trips to go see relatives at Christmastime-New Year's. I remember getting to grow up "with" Shakira, Juanes, and Sofia Vergara, watching American shows (we were big fans!). I rememer having a maid (like almost everyone else), and even starting to talk to myself in what I'm sure was broken English back then, haha.

Why did your parents choose to immigrate?

==Although it's much better now, 80s-90s Colombia wasn't an ideal place to live in. My parents did a good job of sheltering me from some things (though I'd randomly catch awful news reports). Once our family became personally affected by a particular situation, my parents knew it was time to consider moving.==
My dad had been an exchange student in Texas when he was a teen, we had all been to Orlando. My parents knew NY and Chicago from business trips, so we knew this country would be a great next home.

Do you remember anything about the immigration process?

It all started in Colombia, although the actual asylum process began with our lawyer soon after we arrived in Utah ('02). We were granted political asylum in 2006 after two trials (one for each of my parents).
That same year, we became residents and then we had to wait at least five years to apply for citizenship, which we did in 2011. Then we were given materials to prep for the Naturalization Exam and some months later took our

exams separately. We had to just answer a few questions right and prove that we could speak English.

A few weeks after that, were invited to the Naturalization Ceremony. There, we took the Oath of Allegiance, did some other things, and BECAME U.S. CITIZENS!

What was your first impression of America?

My parents, dog and I were pretty much on our own; we relied just on ourselves. My dad had done some research into SLC before moving and knew what neighborhoods were right (East) and which wouldn't be (West). That's how we knew of a local K-8 Catholic school, in which they enrolled me the day after we arrived. That's also how we learned about some condos nearby, which is where we moved upon our arrival.
My parents got jobs in Park City (30 mins away), and a couple years later we were able to buy a home just a couple blocks from my high school.

What were your first few years like here in the U.S.?

I loved my first years in this country. Because I had been taking English-language classes since I was six, I was able to assimilate successfully. I walked to/from all my schools, had friends, and was always super involved. Being a (happy) goody two-shoes, I did very well in school, although I was bullied for a bit soon after I arrived.

It also took me a while to learn that I needed to wear makeup at 13 because at my old school, which was all-girls, none of us did. And then there were guys! I was so smitten :). However, I don't know if I'd have my kids in co-ed schools because the opposite sex can be so distracting, haha!

My parents loved it here too (despite the stresses of the citizenship process). Though they were able to land good jobs in Park City soon after we arrived, they always regretted not having advanced degrees that they could have relied more on. That's why to us immigrants, education is such a BIG deal. They had successful businesses in Colombia, but here they had to become employees: my mom at an alterations shop and my dad as a surveyor and later restaurant manager. When that alterations shop closed, my mom decided to start her own and now it's the top alterations shop in two counties! Being a Renaissance man, my dad has been able to transition to other jobs and now he works in investment and retail trading. Together we're also looking to re-launch an organic/all-natural soap-making business.

How do you feel about America's immigration policies and the **DREAM Act**?

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At first I had mixed feelings about things like the DREAM Act and similar "pardons": We had done everything right and taken care of business the way we were supposed to, and then there are these families that didn't do it the right way and could nevertheless potentially get what we fought so hard to get? (My parents are actually less stringent than me about this.)

But I've slowly come to realize that the kids aren't at fault. There are SOOO many good families out there. I get sad when I see they haven't reached their full potential because of a single mistake (albeit a pretty big one). Most are outstanding members of their communities, and we'd be lucky to have them as actual legal residents.

While I don't rejoice in the grim circumstances that brought us here, I am fortunate that my parents were able to turn that situation into an opportunity. They also knew that they didn't want to come here illegally because that'd harm us more than benefit us, and that's why as a non-mom, I often am like, "WHY do others even sign up for that life??!!"

The reason is that they're beyond desperate and prefer giving their families relatively better lives here without documents than continue living miserably in their home countries. That bravery is commendable and it fits our American spirit.

You've never been back to Colombia and your parents have only been back twice. Has anyone ever hassled them/you about becoming 'too' American?

Not at all. And if they did, we wouldn't care because we love this country :). I tear up every time I hear the Star-Spangled banner and we're as happy as clams here. I think because they moved here as adults, my parents have been better able to maintain their "colombianness."

I was 13 when we moved, so I may have a greater chance of being labeled "too" American. (Which, again, I wouldn't really care about.) I enjoy merging the values I grew up with new things I'm learning. For example, I'm more accepting of gay marriage now. For many things, I'll forever be gladly "stuck in my old ways" – I'm not having sex until I get married.

And while I still enjoy some Latin media and we've always spoken Spanish at home (with a few phrases in English in between), the truth is that I love American TV, movies, and music. In fact, in a given week, I may listen to just one Latin song but hundreds of American ones. Culturally, our country's the most innovative, so why not embrace that? If that makes me too American, then so be it.

Your family has really put down roots here – owning businesses, attending school, volunteering. What do they love about most America?

The safety/security and the privacy. In Colombia, everyone knows everything about everyone. Or maybe we were just very well-connected?
Here, no one minds your business and (if you're in the right part of town) you can be out on your own at any time of day and be wearing lots of expensive stuff and no one'll give a da**. Better yet, no one'll try to steal it off you!

Bargen, Sarah Von. "True Story: My Family and I Immigrated from Colombia to the U.S. ." Yes and Yes, 6 Aug. 2021, www.yesandyes.org/2014/09/true-story-my-family-and-i-immigrated.html.

2.3 COLOMBIAN FAMILY VALUES

Colombia Culture - Family

One's family is the most important aspect of life for most Colombians. It tends to have a major influence on the individual, providing a sense of identity, community and support. It also forms the basis for many people's social circles. There is a general expectation placed upon Colombians to be loyal and committed to their family by putting the interests of the family above their own. People will often go out of their way to support their relatives. Close-knit family relations provide Colombians with a network of security and support, particularly in times of need. This is especially relevant to the lower classes as the extended family can act as an indispensable source of support for coping with hardships during difficult times. People from this social bracket tend to be more open about their family's personal problems so that others can aid them in their time of difficulty. Neighbours often play a large role in this way. Meanwhile, the elite class are generally more private about their personal issues in order to protect their reputation.

Most Colombians have a pair of godparents *(padrinos)* that are chosen at their baptism. This couple plays an important role in a child's life, acting as a second parental figure and providing advice. Parental authority from one's birth parents, godparents and grandparents generally continues throughout a Colombian's life, even after they have become a fully independent adult. This reflects the strong cultural respect for age and close familial relations. Elderly parents are usually looked after at home into old age.

Household Structure

The family dynamic and household structure varies between social classes. In the lower class, extended family members may live with the nuclear family in multigenerational households. Some children may move out of their parents' home at marriage, but it is common for Colombian families to live together continuously. People also tend to have many unplanned children, due to limited access to contraceptives and sexual education.

Wealth affords the upper class a more individualistic family structure. The nuclear family usually lives alone and they normally have one to two children that move out of the household when they have a job providing a solid income. Nevertheless, bonds between extended family members remain very close. Extended families will visit each other frequently and celebrate major occasions together, such as a wedding or birthday. Relatives will also visit each other regularly if they live in close proximity to one another.

Gender Roles

Colombia has made significant progress towards gender equality over the past century. Both men and women have equal rights and access to opportunities in law. However, broadly speaking, men are the primary income

earners for the family while women are expected to be the homemakers. While many women comfortably hold jobs in addition to their domestic role, men often find it very shameful for their wife to earn more than themselves. The set of ideal attributes belonging to males and females in Latin America are known as *'machismo'* and *'marianismo'* respectively. Under these cultural standards, men are expected to be masculine, self-reliant and dominant. Meanwhile, the ideal of women is heavily influenced by the iconography of Roman Catholicism. The Virgin Mary is often a symbol of the epitome of femininity that Colombian women are expected to follow and embody. In this way, the general cultural attitude towards women is quite paternal. A man's female family members are often seen as pure, moral and precious people – upholding respectability. Colombian men are often very proud and protective of their wives, mothers and sisters.

The difference of standards is seen in the way socialisation is viewed differently between men and women. Men have more freedom to socialise outside of their family and are often known to have two reputations – one in the home *(la casa)* and one on the street *(la calle)*. Meanwhile, a mother who socialises a lot is thought to be neglectful of her family. The machismo culture also expects men to have a large sexual appetite, so while infidelity is not accepted or encouraged, it is somewhat thought to be inevitable on their behalf. Women are heavily shamed for the same behaviour, sometimes to great consequence.

These gender ideals vary between families and socioeconomic backgrounds. Women from the upper class often have more independence to pursue activity outside of the domestic sphere. However, there is a great cultural pressure on women to get married and bear children quickly. This has restricted women's participation in certain jobs and activities. Nevertheless, Colombian women cannot be described as weak. They are generally taught to be independent and stand up for themselves. There are many Colombian stories with protagonists that encourage young girls to feel assertive and capable. The confidence and fortitude of Colombian women is often noticeable in this regard. As such, though some may be relegated to the domestic sphere, they often still have a lot of authority in decision making.

Relationships and Marriage

Partnership and marriage varies between the different classes and continues to be influenced by the Catholic Church. The legal age for marriage in Colombia is 18. However, children can marry over the age of 12 with parental consent.[1] Not many Colombians intend to be married early. People generally wish to experience life without a partner for as long as possible before settling down and building a family. Currently, only 20% of Colombians of reproductive age (18-49) are married.[2] More couples are choosing to live

together without getting married (30%), 33% are still single, 15% are separated and 2% are widowed.[3]

Despite the declining preference for marriage, Colombia has very high rates of young marriage. According to UNICEF, 23% of girls are married before they turn 18.[4] This is largely because social factors (such as the impacts of conflict, poverty and a lack of sexual education) has led to a prevalence of early pregnancy. As of 2010, roughly one in five women aged 15-19 were pregnant or had already had a child.[5] In these circumstance, people may marry quickly so they do not give birth out of wedlock (which is looked down upon by the Catholic Church). According to the World Factbook, the median age for women to have their first child is 21. Comparatively, Colombia has quite a low divorce rate. This is partly because the Catholic Church generally discourages it.

Marriage ceremonies and services usually follow the Roman Catholic tradition. However, some couples may choose to have a civil ceremony. There are a variety of cultural traditions for weddings; for example, the couple often has a candle ceremony whereby the bride and groom each light a candle which they use to light a third unity candle together, representing their union. The Colombian interpretation of Catholicism puts an emphasis on female purity through the idea of the Virgin Mary.

For some Colombians in the lower and middle classes, marriage is one of the only ways to achieve upward social mobility. When intermarriage across class or race does occur, it is more commonly between a man of higher social status and a woman of lower wealth/status/etc.

Pier. "Colombian Culture - Family." Cultural Atlas, culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/colombian-culture/colombian-culture-family. Accessed 18 Aug. 2023.

2.4 THE LATINO LGBTQ GROUP

1)Latina And Latino LGBTQ Organizations And Periodicals

LATINA AND LATINO LGBTQ ORGANIZATIONS AND PERIODICALS
Fear of homophobic rejection by families and communities of origin has kept many LGBT Latinas and Latinos from engaging in LGBT activism, while racism has reduced LGBT Latina and Latino participation in white-dominated LGBT organizations. This historical pattern tends to obscure the presence and contributions of those LGBT Latinas and Latinos who have created and/or participated in LGBT groups and projects. In addition, the lack of coverage of issues important to LGBT people of color in the mainstream LGBT press has exacerbated problems of Latino and Latina invisibility. According to Lydia Otero, *Unidad,* the newsletter of the Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos in Los Angeles, was created in part "because we can't rely on the [mainstream] gay and lesbian press to document our history for us," (Podolsky, p. 6).
Homophile, Gay Liberationist, and Lesbian Feminist Activism
As the process of uncovering the history of LGBT Latinas and Latinos in the United States has progressed, evidence of an LGBT Latina and Latino presence has been found in homophile-era organizations. The first homophile group, the Mattachine Society, was formed in Los Angeles in 1950. Its New York City chapter was cofounded in 1955 by Cubano Tony Segura. When ONE, Inc., was founded in 1952, Tony Reyes, an entertainer, was a signer of the articles of incorporation. The Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), the first known U.S. lesbian organization, was founded in San Francisco (1955) by four couples, including a Chicana and her Filipina partner.
In 1961, San Francisco Cubano drag show entertainer José Sarria ran for the city's board of supervisors as an out gay man, and although he lost, he received six thousand votes. In the 1960s, Cubana Ada Bello joined DOB Philadelphia and edited first the chapter's newsletter and later the newsletter of the Homophile Action League. In the DOB, Bello used a pseudonym because she did not want to jeopardize her application for U.S. citizenship. When the Cuban Revolution proved unfriendly to homosexuals, homophile activists gathered in front of the United Nations in 1965 and staged one of the earliest public LGBT protests.
The generational marker for many LGBT baby boomers was the 1969 Stonewall Riots, and at least one Latino actively participated in that historic event. Puerto Rican–Venezuelan drag queen and transgender activist Ray (Sylvia Lee) Rivera later recalled: "To be there was so beautiful. It was so exciting. I said, 'Well, great now it's my time. I'm out there being a revolutionary for everybody else, and now it's time to do my thing for my own people'" (Rivera, p. 191). Rivera and others later formed STAR (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries), and decades later Rivera was credited

with helping amend New York City's antidiscrimination statutes to include transgender people.

Following Stonewall, gay liberation and lesbian feminist groups proliferated, but few Latinas/Latinos (or people of color) actively participated in the new wave of white dominated groups. One exception was Gay Liberation Front Philadelphia; Kiyoshi Kuromiya, a Japanese American, recalls that 30 percent of the membership in 1970 was Latino. In Los Angeles the Lesbian Feminists, a radical political group of the early 1970s, counted a handful of lesbians of color (including several Latinas) as members. In Oakland, California, the Third World Gay Caucus (1976) included Latinos, who sponsored a Tardeada (afternoon social event). In 1972 a group of New York Latino gay men published a Spanish language literary magazine called *Afuera.*

Early LGBT Latina and Latino Organizations

==Beginning in the 1970s, LGBT Latina and Latino organizations were formed to deal with the specific concerns of Latinas and Latinos. LGBT Latina and Latino groups provide a support system and opportunities for socializing in a culturally sensitive environment as well as opportunities for learning organizing skills. Regardless of geographic location, most LGBT Latina and Latino organizations have engaged in a dual approach to activism, working on behalf of both Latina-Latino and LGBT causes.==

In Los Angeles, the organizing pattern for many Latina lesbians was to join Chicano movement groups and find them to be sexist and homophobic (1960s and 1970s); move into the LGBT community and find themselves facing sexism and racism (1970s); form Latina-specific groups and collaborate with activist groups of various ethnicities and sexual orientations (1970s); join Latino and Latina LGBT cogender groups (1980s); and form a new wave of Latina lesbian groups while collaborating with LGBT, people of color, and progressive groups (1980s–2000s).

The first known LGBT Latino group in Los Angeles was Unidos, organized by Chicano Steve Jordan (also called Jordon) in 1970. Other early groups include Greater Liberated Chicanos (cofounded by Rick Reyes as Gay Latinos in 1972) and United Gay Chicanos. In Puerto Rico, Rafael Cruet and Ernie Potvin founded Comunidad de Orgullo Gay in 1974. The group published a newsletter, *Pa'fuera,* and established Casa Orgullo, a community services center. The earliest known Latina lesbian group, Latin American Lesbians, met briefly in Los Angeles in 1974. Jeanne Córdova, a lesbian of Mexican and Irish descent, joined DOB Los Angeles and transformed the chapter newsletter in the *Lesbian Tide* (1971–1980), a national publication. Although it published little material on lesbians of color, *Lesbian Tide* is arguably the newspaper of record of the lesbian feminist decade of the 1970s. Most recovered LGBT Latina and Latino history is from urban areas. However, in the early 1970s two Latino gay men joined gay activists Harry Hay and

John Burnside to fight what archivist and writer Jim Kepner called a "water rip-off scheme" in New Mexico. During the 1970s, a group of Latina lesbians negotiated an agreement that permitted them to occupy a portion of white lesbian land in Arkansas, and they named the parcel Arco Iris. Juana Maria Paz, a welfare activist, lived on that and other "womyn's" land and later wrote about her experiences.

The Late 1970s

In the late 1970s, as more LGBT people of color activist groups formed, white-dominated groups and publications began to pay some attention to LGBT people of color issues. Organizers of the founding conference of the National Lesbian Feminist Organization (NLFO, 1978) invited few women of color as delegates, but white delegates insisted that those women of color who were present (mostly Latinas from San Francisco and Los Angeles) be credentialed as delegates. The reconstituted delegate body approved a measure declaring that half the seats on the NLFO Steering Committee must be lesbians of color of diverse class backgrounds. Five Latinas were elected to the Steering Committee. Although the NLFO did not last long, the ethnic parity policy set a precedent.

After the NLFO conference, lesbians of color in Los Angeles and San Diego formed groups with the same name, Lesbians of Color (LOC). In 1980, Latinas in Los Angeles Lesbians of Color formed a subgroup (Lesbianas Latina Americanas). Los Angeles LOC members also collaborated with white lesbian groups. For example, they led the antiracism workshop at retreats organized by the Califia Collective. In 1983, Los Angeles LOC organized the first National Lesbians of Color Conference. Over two hundred lesbians and progressive women of color attended this event in Malibu, California.

Toward the end of the 1970s, Latina lesbians in Seattle contributed to the single published issue of the *Lesbians of Color Caucus Quarterly* in 1979, and in the same year, Latinas and Latinos in Austin, Texas, formed what was probably the only LGBT chapter of the Brown Berets. In New York City, twelve lesbians and gays marched openly in the 1979 Puerto Rican Day parade. Ten years later, there were over fifty marchers.

Religion is a major theme in the psyches of many Latinas and Latinos. Some of those who felt uncomfortable with the homophobia of the Catholic Church found an alternative in pastor Fernando Martinez's Latin Church of Christian Fellowship, founded in Los Angeles in 1979. Others, including Vilma Torres, joined Troy Perry's Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), where Torres later served as a minister. Another alternative was Dignity, a Catholic LGBT organization formed in 1969.

As the 1970s came to a close, a lesbian and gay march on Washington was proposed. Several large mainstream LGBT groups felt that the time was not right for such a momentous event. Ignoring those concerns, grassroots LGBT activists met in Houston and began to plan for a 1979 march. They voted to

have lesbians of color lead the march, followed by men of color. Juanita Ramos (Juanita Diaz-Cotto), a member of COHLA (Comité Homosexual Latinoamericano), served on both the national planning committee and the New York committee and was a speaker at the March on Washington rally. Twenty-four years later, Lizbeth Menendez, an activist and labor organizer, was a regional coordinator for the 1993 March on Washington.

In conjunction with the first March on Washington, the first National <u>Third World</u> Lesbian and Gay Conference was held near Howard University. Latina/Latino groups participating included Latinos Unidos (Los Angeles), COHLA (New York City), Latins for Human Rights (Miami), Comité Latino de Lesbianas y Homosexuales de Boston, Gay Alliance of Latin Americans (San Francisco), and Houston Gay Chicano/a Caucus. Although elated about participating in this historical gathering, attendees also struggled over the lack of attention that the numerically superior Latina/Latino and African American groups paid to Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native American issues. Solidarity prevailed, however, as the People of Color contingent came together to participate in the march and rally.

The 1980s

In 1980 thousands of Cubans, including LGBT people, were allowed to leave their homeland, embarking from the port of Mariel (thus their name, Marielitos). Boston activists formed the Boston Area Coalition for Cuban Aid and Resettlement (BACCAR) and obtained funding for La Casa Amarilla, a halfway house for the immigrants. The Metropolitan Community Church, with parishes in many U.S. cities, also organized a network of MCC members willing to serve as host families.

During the early 1980s, the Gay Hispanic Caucus in Houston sponsored cultural and social activities and published a newsletter, *Noticias.* In <u>Long Beach</u>, California, Raices Latinas offered social and cultural events. In Los Angeles, Gay Latinos Unidos, later Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos (GLLU), was formed in 1981. The group became a significant political presence in Los Angeles LGBT activist circles under presidents like Roland (o) Palencia, Laura Esquivel, and Lydia Otero. In 1983, GLLU lesbians formed Lesbianas Unidas (LU) but remained affiliated with GLLU until the 1990s. LU's activities illustrate the dual political and cultural commitment of Latina/Latino LGBT groups: LU sponsored a popular annual retreat, participated in the planning of the first Lesbianas Feministas Encuentro (conference) in Mexico in 1987, marched against the Simpson Mazolli anti-immigration legislation in 1984, participated in the twentieth anniversary commemoration of the Chicano Moratorium march in 1990, and offered financial support to a hospital in Nicaragua.

LU women also participated in the Connexxus Women's Center/Centro de Mujeres (CX) in West Hollywood. At its peak (1984–1990), CX was a $200,000-a-year operation. Initially, few women of color were invited to

participate in planning the center. However, Latina lesbians called a meeting with key CX organizers Adel Martinez and Loren Jardine and, after negotiations, Latinas became an integral part of CX. (All three CX board presidents were Latinas.) CX sponsored a Latina lesbian outreach program in East Los Angeles at a Latino social services agency and cosponsored the first Latina Lesbian Mental Health Conference in 1987. It also sponsored photographer Laura Aguilar's groundbreaking Latina Lesbian Series.

In Texas, the Gay and Lesbian Tejanos Conference was held in 1986, and participating groups included the Gay Hispanic Coalition of Dallas, Gay and Lesbian Hispanic Unidos (Houston), and Ambiente (San Antonio). Also participating was ALLGO (Austin Latina/Latino Lesbian and Gay Organization), an organization formed in 1985, which continues to offer support groups, cultural events, and health education programs. In Washington, D.C., ENLACE was formed in 1987 as a Latino gay and lesbian political support group. Members marched in the District of Columbia's annual Hispanic Parade and set up Hola Gay, a Spanish language hotline. In Chicago, Lesbianas Latinas en Nuestro Ambiente was formed in 1988. In the same year, the Los Angeles–based, nationally circulated *Lesbian News* published a column of information and news of interest to Latinas ("La Plaza"). Since that time columns by comedian Monica Palacios and journalist Vicki Torres have appeared in *Lesbian News.*

The International Lesbian and Gay People of Color Conference was held in Los Angeles in 1986, and both Latinas and Latinos served on the steering committee. After the conference, a group met to found a Latino caucus, which eventually evolved into LLEGÓ, now the premier LGBT Latino organization in the United States. LLEGÓ's programs include lobbying, sponsoring national encuentros in the United States and Mexico, and organizing community capacity-building training programs. When Lesbianas Latinas de Tucson in Arizona organized the first Latina Lesbian Conference in the fall of 1994, LLEGÓ provided funding. LLEGÓ also provided a grant to Lesbianas Unidas to conduct interviews for the Latina Lesbian Oral History Project in Los Angeles.

In the 1980s, AIDS began to decimate the gay male community. In 1989, Los Angeles LGBT Latino activists were awarded a grant to address issues of neglect toward HIV/AIDS in the Latino community. Under the leadership of CEO Oscar de la O, the organization evolved into a multiservice organization with ten locations in southern California. Recently, it has sponsored LUNA (Latinas Understanding the Need for Action), a women's program. Other Latino HIV/AIDS programs and health services providers include PCPV (Proyecto Contra Sida Por Vida) in San Francisco, which offers health care outreach to the transgender community; GALAEI (Gay and Lesbian AIDS Education Initiative) in Philadelphia; and Mano a Mano, a coalition of New York City Latino gay organizations that uses HIV/AIDS funding to run

programs like SOMOS, which works against homophobia in the Latino community, and the Capacity-Building Project, which provides grants to gay Latino groups. The 1980s was also the decade when LGBT people began to address publicly the issues of substance abuse. Lapis, an outreach and prevention program aimed at Latina and African American lesbians, was funded in the late 1980s through the Alcoholism Center for Women in Los Angeles.

Recent Developments

During the last decade of the twentieth century and into the first decade of the twenty-first century, LGBT Latina and Latino organizations continued to emerge to address both the changing and ongoing needs of the community. Among these were SOL (Somos Orgullo Latino, Oregon, 1993); HOLA (Homosexuales Latinos, St. Louis, Missouri); GLACE (Gay and Lesbian Association of Cuban Exiles, Miami); ALMA (Association of Latin Men for Action, Chicago, 1993),which has marched in Chicago's Puerto Rican and Mexican Independence Day Parades; Amigas Latinas (Chicago, 1996), a support, education, and advocacy group; and Ellas en Acción (San Francisco, 1993), a lesbian advocacy, arts, and educational organization that played a role in the election of a Latina lesbian, Susan Leal, to the city's Board of Supervisors in 1993. LLUNA (Latina Lesbians United Never Apart, Boston, 1993) has organized an International Women's Day event and participated in gay pride and Columbus Day events. Las Buenas Amigas (New York City, 1993), an educational, cultural, political, and social organization, promotes safe space and visibility for Latina lesbians. Groups for monolingual Spanish speakers include Dos Espiritus, a support group for gay men in Elgin, Illinois, and a chapter of PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) in Tucson.

Progressive grassroots organizations with a strong Latina and Latino LGBT presence include the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center founded in 1987 in San Antonio by Graciela Sanchez. After homophobic pressures led the city to cut Esperanza's funding, the center sued and won. *La Voz,* Esperanza's magazine, is edited by Gloria Ramirez.

Arts advocacy organizations include Viva (founded in the 1980s in Los Angeles), which promotes the work of LGBT Latina and Latino artists; the MACHA Theatre Company (Mujeres Advancing Culture, History, and Art), also in Los Angeles; and QUELACO (Queer Latino/a Artists Coalition) in San Francisco, which promotes queer Latina and Latino art and produces an annual art, cultural, and performance festival.

In the 1990s, Colombiana writer, activist, and librarian Tatiana de la Tierra published three Latina lesbian magazines—*Conmoción, Esto No Tiene Nombre,* and *Telaraña.* In 2003, *Tongues* is an arts magazine and Web 'zine published by a Los Angeles lesbians of color group of the same name. Many of the active members are Latina lesbians, including artist Alma López, whose

image *Our Lady*— a controversial depiction of Our Lady of Guadalupe—
caused a furor in New Mexico in 2001. Two LGBT Latino publications with a
national readership are *QV,* established in 1997, and *Tentaciones,* created in
2000. In 2003, *Tentaciones* published a list of the sixteen most influential
LGBT Latinas and Latinos in the United States, which caused some
consternation in Chicago, since none of its longtime Latina and Latino
activists made the list. "En La Vida," the Latina/Latino section of
Chicago's *Windy City Times* (which is available online) promptly published a
list of Chicago LGBT notables.

LGBT Latinas and Latinos continue to struggle against homophobia and
racism, along with sexism, class oppression, linguistic discrimination, and
immigration status. Organizations and publications that focus on their issues
serve as a counter to prejudice and as a source of support, advocacy,
and *orgullo* (pride).

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almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/latina-and-latino-lgbtq-organizations-and-
periodicals.

2) The perplexing narrative about being gay in Latin America

Lutz argues that while more LGBT people have been coming out of the closet in Chile, some of the violence is a backlash to society's increasing acceptance of the LGBT community.
"That has made a lot of people that dislike (LGBT people) become more frustrated that our society is accepting us and considering us normal people," he says. "They are really angry and they want to express that."

[Lesbians' baby baptized by Catholic Church in Argentina](#)

Today, same-sex marriage is legal
in [Argentina](#), [Brazil](#), [Uruguay](#), [Colombia](#) and [in several Mexican states plus Mexico City](#). Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto signed a proposed measure in [2016 to make it legal](#) countrywide, but the congressional commission that deals with changes to the constitution voted to strike down Peña Nieto's proposal.
Chile and Ecuador allow same-sex civil unions.
Fourteen Latin American countries have also passed laws that prohibit discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation. Many countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay now allow same-sex couples to adopt.
In Bolivia, transgender and transsexual individuals are allowed to change their national ID cards, but the country – along with Paraguay – has instituted a constitutional ban on same-sex marriages.

Thousands participated in the gay pride parade in Mexico City on June 25, 2016. Same-sex marriage has been legal in Mexico City since 2010. It is also legal in some Mexican states. Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto has vowed to push for a countrywide law.

Advancement in LGBT acceptance is a spectrum

For Javier Corrales, a professor of political science at Amherst College, there are positive trends in the region. But he says it's hard to know whether violence is increasing or whether victims are simply more comfortable speaking out against their aggressors.

"Fifteen years ago, 20 years ago, the region probably looked somewhat hopeless – and yet we have seen progress, so one could draw lessons from it," he says.

Corrales adds that one of the most important lessons from the region "is that in Latin America, LGBT movements were able to connect with human rights defenders, and that alliance proved very fruitful."

Luis Larraín, president of the Chilean LGBT group iguales, says his country may not be as advanced as others in Latin America, but it has made progress. "In the last few years there has been a very notable shift by the people, with their support, and at the political level, with a government that has approved civil unions," he says.

On the other hand, Venezuela tops the list when it comes to the lack of rights for same-sex couples or members of the LGBT group, says Omar Encarnacion, a political scientist at New York's Bard College and author of Out in the Periphery: Latin America's Gay Rights Revolution.

The traditionally leftist-leaning government has made almost no significant progress in recognizing or protecting members of the LGBT community. The situation "dismisses this idea that the farther to the left you are the more likely you are to be pro-gay," Encarnacion says.

Same-sex couples have no protections or rights under Venezuelan law, and there are currently no mechanisms for a transgender or transsexual person to change their name and gender on their legal documents.

A [2015 report prepared by Venezuelan LGBT associations for the United Nations](#) said members of the community "constantly live situations of discrimination," and that lack of protection for LGBT citizens "makes them defenseless citizens in an atmosphere of alarming growth of homophobia and transphobia."

In December 2016, Isabella Saturno and her partner were reprimanded at a Tony Roma's restaurant in Caracas for being "overly affectionate."

"The manager brought us our check and asked us to not be so affectionate. My partner and I were behaving like a normal couple, a hug or a small kiss. A normal level of affection for a couple in love."

Saturno's experience spurred protests and [Tony Roma's Venezuela hit back](#), saying the type of actions that led to the incident "are inappropriate in public places and go against morality and respect to others." They added the restaurant "proudly serves people of all races, religions and sexual preferences."

"Venezuela unfortunately is in the back of Latin America," says Ana Margarita Rojas, who works for an LGBT organization in Venezuela. "The situation is very bad. We are always in limbo."

Rojas' group, [Reflejos de Venezuela](#), aims to change that by educating and creating a census of LGBT people living in Venezuela. She says she hopes her efforts will help change people's perceptions.

But, she tells CNN, despite all the marketing and effort that her organization and others throughout Venezuela have put in the past few years, they have very little to show for it.

"My partner and I are a lesbian couple with a child looking for recognition," she explains, adding there are very few other couples that make themselves known because they fear retaliation against them or their children.

Cultural, religious roots

Catholic and evangelical churches also play a large role in shaping societal and political opinion in the region.

"If you look at religion as a variable, what you find is that the more Catholic the country, the more likely they are to be accepting of homosexuality and vice versa," Encarnacion says. "The more Protestant they are, the less likely they are (to be) accepting, and the less likely they are to have an active gay rights legislation."

Encarnacion adds that LGBT people living in countries dominated by evangelical churches tend to be the ones that have the hardest time.

The Catholic and evangelical churches have similar views on homosexuality, although there are notable differences.

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While both oppose homosexuality, "the Catholic clergy tends to be less opposed to anti-discrimination statutes than the evangelical clergy," explains Corrales. "Sometimes, the Catholic clergy has come out in favor of civil unions while still opposing gay marriage."

A protester against homophobia at a march in Brasilia, Brazil holds a sign that reads: "The problem is not being Catholic or being Evangelical, but being intolerant."

Beto Barata/AFP/Getty Images

Crissthian Manuel Olivera Fuentes, who works for MHOL, the Homosexual Movement of Lima, says some evangelical priests in Peru have come out strongly in the past few months preaching that homosexuality is a disease that can be cured.

Activists who spoke to CNN say Latin American LGBT youth also continue to struggle with a culture of "machismo" and sexism. Boys and men are pushed to be manly and have an exaggerated masculine pride. Women are pushed to be submissive to their husbands and act very feminine.

Regional outlook: Still work to be done

According to analysts, the picture as a whole in Latin America is encouraging, but there is still plenty to worry about.

Marin says that regardless of the outcome of his case at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, he will never stop fighting.

"We all should be treated equally," he says.

The activists CNN spoke to all say they would like to see more recognition of same-sex partnerships as well as the legalization of marriage across the continent. They would also like to see less impunity for crimes against LGBT people and broader access to health care and counseling for members of the LGBT population.

In the region, public opinion seems to be shifting toward tolerance. A survey by ILGA showed that 81% of people in the Americas have no concerns about their neighbors' sexuality.

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LGBT activism is also on the rise. More and more activists have taken to the streets to stand up for their rights and demand investigation and punishment for crimes against LGBT people.

But activists say changing the law alone isn't enough.

Alex Bernabe, founder of Igualdad in Bolivia, says even though there have been some strides in creating anti-discrimination laws, those are not always enforced.

"You have to have educational campaigns, sensitization campaigns and education or else your progressive laws will sit in the drawer, unused."

Brocchetto, Marilia. "The Perplexing Narrative about Being Gay in Latin America." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 4 Mar. 2017, www.cnn.com/2017/02/26/americas/lgbt-rights-in-the-americas/index.html.

2.5 THE MYTHS AND FOLKLORE

1) Colombian myths

It should be noted that these Colombian myths are influenced by Spanish culture, this occurred during the time of the conquest, where Spain undoubtedly leaves its vestiges in this South American country. These myths make a lot of reference to all the indigenous traditions and cultures in the pre-Columbian era where they lived in past centuries.

The majority of Colombian legends and myths originated in some rural areas of Colombia, there are stories that crossed borders, that is, they not only spread throughout Colombia but also spread throughout Latin America. Most of the creatures that are narrated in these fantastic stories are represented in festivities and even in the carnivals of this country, which further enhances its culture and traditions.

On the other hand, mention must be made of the various Colombian myths for children, which are used to teach the smallest of the house a large number of values such as love, respect and tolerance, thanks to their contexts that have a moral. Many locals affirm that the characters used in these stories are real, that is, they existed, in fact many claim that they saw them.

Likewise, it is very significant that the difference between a myth and a legend is known, because this will help us a lot to better understand these fantastic stories, which have extraordinary characteristics. In this way we can give a lot of value and meaning to these Colombian myths. We also invite you to learn about the Ecuadorian legends.

A myth is a daily narrative that people usually tell and that are based on ancient beliefs of different localities, where they explain some supernatural events and even natural phenomena, where some monsters and fantastic characters come to life to bring them to reality, myths integrate the religious system and within its cultural roots, people assume that these stories are all true.

The myth comes from Greek *μῦθος, mythos,* which means story or tale, where its protagonists are beings that possess powers that are supernatural, among its characteristics it can be found that they have many versions of the same story, where each person puts a magical touch on it, because these narrations are made orally , which are transmitted from generation to generation, which is why many times some details that are forgotten are replaced with other details, thus obtaining several hypotheses in the same story.

What are myths for?

The myths (like the Colombian ones) represent the cultures that are important for the regions of the different countries and they have three main functions, which are:

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- **Explanatory function:** because it informs, explains about a fact or problem, about something that happened but its origin is doubtful, but the purpose is to transmit what happened, and that this information is transmitted to the listeners
- **Pragmatic function:** because language is studied, taking into account many linguistic factors that vary and transfigure its use. This makes the plot being narrated influence how the listener interprets the meaning of what they are hearing.
- **Meaning function:** in the stories that are narrated, a relief is given, a relief to the people of a community, where that myth arose, who generally take it as a reference for the things they do on a daily basis and that often give them comfort in a moment given, reducing their anxieties. They also allow demonstrating or substantiating customs or indigenous facts of the area from which the myth arises.

Types of myths

According to their origin or the information they contain, myths can be classified into types, as described below:

- **cosmogenic myths**: they are narratives that seek to provide answers on how the universe and human life were formed, this myth comes from the time of prehistory, where the origin of civilization unfolds.
- **The Theogonic Myths**: This myth is based on a work called Hesiod, where they explain how the gods and their lineages originated.
- **anthropogonic myths**: It is a religious myth where they explain how man originated. These narratives relate that man is born from the earth; in other stories such as the Sumerian ones, where they narrate how the gods made man so that they would make him temples, clothes. All religions and cultures describe the narratives of the origins of man, and these range from Greek, Christian, Scandinavian mythology, among others.
- **The aetiological myths**: they are narrations of how plants and animals originated, some of these myths can have the form of a fable.
- **moral myths**: It is a mythological summary of all humanity, among the representations of its characters is the eternal dispute of good against evil or between angels and demons.
- **The founding myths**: these myths narrate how was the origin of the great cities, which were a mandate of the gods.
- **eschatological myths**: These myths warn and notify the end of the world, that is, the apocalypse. This ending is always the indomitable hand of nature, for example, that ends by means of an earthquake, fires, tsunamis, etc.

Difference between myth, legend, fable and tale

Many times we do not understand the differences between a myth, a legend, a fable or a story. But it is very important that you know how to recognize them, many times we use these words wrongly as synonyms and this occurs due to some similarities in their fundamental characteristics, for example, both myth and legend are inventions loaded with a lot of imaginary fantasy and have extraordinary characters. , which are narrated orally from generation to generation.

In the legends some of the protagonists were common and authentic people who existed. And in the myth these characters were gods or titans. The legend describes a country, a place or a specific community, that is, it speaks of local beliefs and the myth speaks of universal themes where man is immersed.

The difference between myth and fable lies in the fact that the first has heroes and/or monsters as characters, that is, fantastic characters; and in fables, the protagonists are animals that behave like humans and have a moral, that is, they provide a lesson to the people who read it.

Palabra, Creciendo en la. "Meet the Colombian Myths for Children and Adults ." *Postposmo*, 11 May 2020, www.postposmo.com/en/mitos-colombianos/.

2) Mythology

Myths are a part of every **culture** in the world and are used to explain natural phenomena, where a people came from and how their **civilization** developed, and why things happen as they do. At their most basic level, myths comfort by

giving a sense of order and meaning to what can sometimes seem a chaotic world.

Mythology (from the **Greek** *mythos* for story-of-the-people, and *logos* for word or speech, so the spoken story of a people) is the study and interpretation of often sacred tales or fables of a culture known as myths or the collection of such stories which deal with various aspects of the human condition: good and evil; the meaning of suffering; human origins; the origin of place-names, animals, cultural values, and traditions; the meaning of life and **death**; the afterlife; and celestial stories of the gods or a **god**. Myths express the beliefs and values about these subjects held by a certain culture.

Myths tell the stories of ancestors and the origin of humans and the world, the gods, supernatural beings (satyrs, nymphs, mermaids) and heroes with super-human, usually god-given, powers (as in the case of the Greek myth of Heracles or **Perseus**). Myths also describe origins or nuances of long-held customs or explain natural events such as the sunrise and sunset, the cycle of the moon and the **seasons**, or thunder and lightning storms. Scholars Maria Leach and Jerome Fried define mythology along these lines:

[A myth is] a story, presented as having actually occurred in a previous age, explaining the cosmological and supernatural traditions of a people, their gods, heroes, cultural traits, religious beliefs, etc. The purpose of myth is to explain, and, as Sir G.L. Gomme said, myths explain matters in "the **science** of a pre-scientific age." Thus myths tell of the creation of man, of animals, of landmarks; they tell why a certain animal has its characteristics (e.g. why the bat is blind or flies only at night), why or how certain natural phenomena came to be (e.g. why the rainbow appears or how the constellation **Orion** got into the sky), how and why rituals and ceremonies began and why they continue. (778)

ACCORDING TO PSYCHIATRIST CARL JUNG, MYTH IS A NECESSARY ASPECT OF THE HUMAN PSYCHE WHICH NEEDS TO FIND MEANING & ORDER IN THE WORLD.

Mythology has played an integral part in every civilization throughout the world. Pre-historic cave paintings, etchings in stone, tombs, and monuments all suggest that, long before human beings set down their myths in words, they had already developed a belief structure corresponding to the definition of `myth' provided by Leach and Fried. According to twentieth century psychiatrist Carl Jung, myth is a necessary aspect of the human psyche which needs to find meaning and order in a world which often presents itself as chaotic and meaningless. Jung writes:

The psyche, as a reflection of the world and man, is a thing of such infinite complexity that it can be observed and studied from a great many sides. It faces us with the same problem that the world does: because a systematic study of the world is beyond our powers, we have to content ourselves with

mere rules of thumb and with aspects that particularly interest us. Everyone makes for himself his own segment of world and constructs his own private system, often with air-tight compartments, so that after a time it seems to him that he has grasped the meaning and structure of the whole. But the finite will never be able to grasp the infinite. (23-24)

The infinite Jung references is the numinous quality of the mysterious, holy, and powerful which provides the underlying allure of mythological tales and themes because it gives a final meaning to human existence. The concept of something greater and more powerful than one's self gives one the hope of direction and protection in an uncertain world. According to Leach and Fried, the mysterious, holy, and powerful is "a concept of the human mind from earliest times: the basic psychological reaction to the universe and environment which underlies all **religion**" (777).

[Ra Travelling Through the Underworld](#)
[Unknown Artist (Public Domain)](#)

What one calls "mythology" in the present day, it should be remembered, was the religion of the ancient past. The stories which make up the corpus of ancient mythology served the same purpose for the people of the time as the stories from accepted scripture do for people today: they explained, comforted, and directed an audience and, further, provided a sense of unity, cohesion, and protection to a community of like-minded believers.

Types of Myth

Scholar Joseph Campbell, who famously advocated for the study of myths, notes how mythology is the underlying form of every civilization and the

underpinning of each individual's consciousness. In his seminal work, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, he discusses what he calls the "monomyth", the similarities in theme, characters, purpose, and narrative progression of myths from different cultures, at different times, around the world and throughout history. Campbell writes:

What is the secret of the timeless vision? From what profundity of the mind does it derive? Why is mythology everywhere the same, beneath its varieties of costume? And what does it teach? (4)

Campbell's answer, ultimately, is that myths teach meaning. Mythology explains, empowers, stabilizes, and elevates the life of a believer from a mundane existence to one imbued with eternal meaning. On the most basic level, a myth explains a phenomenon, tradition, place-name, or geological formation but it can also elevate a past event to epic and even supernatural significance and, most importantly, provide a role model for one's individual journey through life.

There are many different types of myth but, essentially, they can be grouped into three:

- Etiological Myths
- Historical Myths
- Psychological Myths

Etiological myths (from the Greek *aetion* meaning `reason') explain why a certain thing is the way it is or how it came to be. This type of myth is usually defined as an origin story. For example, in **Egyptian mythology** the sycamore tree looks the way it does because it is home to the goddess **Hathor**, the Lady of the Sycamore. In **Norse mythology**, thunder is recognized as **Thor**'s **chariot** racing across the heavens. Etiological myths can offer explanations for why the world is the way it is – as in the story from **Greek mythology** of **Pandora**'s Box which explains how evil and suffering was released into the world – or how a certain institution came to be – as in the Chinese myth of the goddess Nuwa who kept creating human beings over and over and over until she grew tired and instituted the practice of marriage so humans could reproduce themselves. Characters in myths always serve a definite purpose whether they are explaining marriage or an epic mission or decisive **battle**.

[Pandora About to Open Her Box](#)
[Lawrence Alma-Tadema (Public Domain)](#)

Historical myths retell an event from the past but elevate it with greater meaning than the actual event (if it even happened). One example of this is the story of the Battle of Kurukshetra as described in the Indian epic ***Mahabharata*** in which the Pandava brothers symbolize different values and provide role models, even if they are occasionally flawed. Kurukshetra is then presented in microcosm in the ***Bhagavad Gita*** where one of the **Pandavas**, **Arjuna**, is visited on the battlefield by the god **Krishna**, avatar of **Vishnu**, to explain one's purpose in life. Whether the Battle of Kurukshetra ever took place is immaterial to the power of these two stories on a mythological level. The same can be said for the religious myths of the Abrahamic narratives of the **Bible** or the Siege of **Troy** and its fall as

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described in **Homer**'s *Iliad* or **Odysseus**' journey home in the *Odyssey* or **Aeneas**' adventures in the work of **Virgil**. Psychological myths present one with a journey from the known to the unknown which, according to both Jung and Campbell, represents a psychological need to balance the external world with one's internal consciousness of it. However that may be, the story of the myth itself usually involves a hero or heroine on a journey in which they discover their true identity or fate and, in so doing, resolve a crisis while also providing an audience with some important cultural value.

Probably the best-known classical myth of this type is that of **Oedipus** the prince who, seeking to avoid the prediction that he would grow up to kill his father, leaves his life behind to travel to another region where he unknowingly winds up killing the man who was his actual father who had abandoned him at birth in an attempt to circumvent that same prediction.

Oedipus & the Sphinx of Thebes
Carole Raddato (CC BY-SA)

The Oedipus tale would have impressed on an ancient Greek audience the futility in trying to escape or change one's fate as decreed by the gods and would have inspired fear and awe of those gods in the people, thus instilling a desirable cultural value. On a personal level, the story could also encourage a hearer to accept whatever trials he or she was enduring at the time since

even a royal personage like Oedipus suffered and, further, whatever one was dealing with was probably not as bad as killing one's father and inadvertently marrying one's mother.

TO THE ANCIENTS THE MEANING OF THE STORY WAS MOST IMPORTANT, NOT THE LITERAL TRUTH OF THE DETAILS OF A CERTAIN VERSION OF A TALE.

Famous Myths of These Types

One of the best-known etiological myths comes from **Greece** in the form of the tale of **Demeter**, goddess of grain and the harvest, and her daughter **Persephone** who became Queen of the Dead. In this story, Persephone is kidnapped by **Hades**, god of the underworld, and brought down to his dark realm. Demeter searches desperately everywhere for the maiden but cannot find her. During this time of Demeter's sorrow, the crops fail and people starve and the gods are not given their due. **Zeus**, king of the gods, orders Hades to restore Persephone to her mother and Hades obliges but, because Persephone has eaten a certain number of pomegranate seeds while in the underworld, she has to spend half the year below the earth but could enjoy the other half with her mother in the world above.

This story explained the changes of the seasons in Greece. When it was warm and the fields were bountiful, Persephone was with her mother and Demeter was happy and causes the world to bloom; in the cold and rainy season, when Persephone was below the earth with Hades as his queen, Demeter mourned and the land was barren. Since, in the course of the tale, Demeter teaches the people of **Eleusis** the secrets of **agriculture**, the myth would also serve to explain how people first learned to cultivate the earth and, further, as she also teaches them the correct way of recognizing and worshiping her, proper veneration of the gods.

The most famous historical myth in the west is Homer's epic 8th century BCE tale of the *Iliad* which tells the story of the siege and fall of the **city** of Troy. **Helen**, the wife of the Achaean king **Menelaus**, runs off with the Trojan prince **Paris** and Menelaus, swearing to bring her back home, enlists the aid of his brother **Agamemnon** who then calls on the kings and princes of the various city-states for aid and they sail off to attack Troy. The great Achaean hero **Achilles**, who is invincible in battle, feels insulted by Agamemnon and refuses to fight any longer resulting in the death of his beloved **Patroclus** and many others of the Achaean host. Although there are many different stories told in the *Iliad*, this central theme of the dangers of pride is emphasized as a cultural value. A certain amount of pride in one's self was considered a virtue but too much brought disaster.

In **China**, this theme was explored in another way through the tale of Fuxi (foo-shee), the god of fire. As a god, Fuxi had many responsibilities but when

his friend, the goddess Nuwa, asked for his help, he did not refuse. Nuwa had created human beings but found they did not know how to do anything and she did not have the patience to teach them. Fuxi brought humans fire, taught them to control it, and how to use it to cook food and warm themselves. He then taught them how to weave fishing nets and draw food from the sea and, afterwards, gave them the arts of divination, **music**, and **writing**. Fuxi is thought to be based on an actual historical king who lived c.2953-2736 BCE and possibly provided the order necessary for the rise of the **Xia Dynasty** (c. 2070-1600 BCE), the first historical dynasty in China. In this story, Fuxi sets aside his pride as a god and humbles himself to the service of his friend Nuwa and humanity.

The oldest myth in the world is, not surprisingly, a psychological myth relating to the inevitability of death and the individual's attempt to find meaning in life. *The Epic of **Gilgamesh*** (written c. 2150-c.1400 BCE) developed in **Mesopotamia** from **Sumerian** poems relating to the historical Gilgamesh, king of **Uruk**, who was later elevated to the status of a demi-god. In the story, Gilgamesh is a proud king who is so haughty that the gods feel he needs a lesson in humility. They groom the wild man Enkidu as a worthy opponent to the king and the two fight but, when neither can get the best of the other, they become best friends. Enkidu is later killed by the gods for affronting them and Gilgamesh, grief-stricken, embarks on a quest for the meaning of life embodied in the concept of immortality. Although he fails to win eternal life, his journey enriches him and he returns to his kingdom a wiser and better man and king.

Joseph Campbell has famously called the best-known psychological myth type "the Hero's Journey" in which the story begins with a hero or heroine, usually of royal birth, separated from their true identity and living in a chaotic world or kingdom. The hero goes through various stages in the story, which usually takes the form of a journey, until they find out who they really are and are able to right some great wrong which re-establishes order. This narrative progression is best known in the modern-day as the plot of *Star Wars* and the overwhelming success of that film franchise attests to the enduring power of mythological themes and symbols.

Conclusion

Every culture in the world has had, and still has, some type of mythology. The classical mythology of the ancient Greeks and Romans is the most familiar to people in the west but the motifs found in those stories are echoed in others around the world. The Greek tale of **Prometheus** the fire-bringer and teacher of humanity is echoed in the Chinese tale of Fuxi. The story of Nuwa and her creation of human beings in China resonates with another from the other side of the world: the story of creation from the *Popol-Vuh* of the **Maya** in which humans are created who can do nothing and prove useless but, in the Maya

story, are destroyed and the gods then try again. This same motif appears in the mythology of Mesopotamia where the gods struggle in creating humans who keep coming out poorly.

THE PURPOSE OF A MYTH WAS TO PROVIDE THE HEARER WITH A TRUTH WHICH THE AUDIENCE THEN INTERPRETED FOR THEMSELVES WITHIN THE VALUE SYSTEM OF THEIR CULTURE.
The same types of stories, and often the very same story, can be found in myths from different parts of the world. African myth, Native American myth, Chinese, or European all serve the same function of explaining, comforting, and providing meaning. The creation story as related in the biblical Book of Genesis, for example, where a great god speaks existence into creation is quite similar to creation stories from ancient **Sumeria**, **Egypt**, **Phoenicia** and China.

The story of the Great Flood can be found in the mythology of virtually every culture on earth but takes its biblical form from the Atrahasis myth of Mesopotamia. The figure of the Dying and Reviving God (a deity who dies for the good of, or to redeem the sins of, his people, goes down into the earth, and rises again to life) can be traced back to ancient Sumeria in the tales of Gilgamesh, the poem *The Descent of Inanna* and others and to the **Egyptian** myth of **Osiris**, the Greek stories of **Dionysus**, of **Adonis**, and of Persephone, the Phoenician *Baal* Cycle, and the **Hindu** Krishna (among many others) down to the most famous of these figures, **Jesus Christ**. The biblical Book of Ecclesiastes 1:9 claims that "there is no new thing under the sun" and this is as true of religious-mythological systems, symbols, and characters as of anything else. Joseph Campbell notes:

Throughout the inhabited world, in all times and under every circumstance, the myths of men have flourished; and they have been the living inspiration of whatever else may have appeared out of the activities of the human body and mind. It would not be too much to say that myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation. Religions, philosophies, arts, the social forms of primitive and historic man, prime discoveries in science and technology, the very dreams that blister sleep, boil up from the basic, magic ring of myth. (3)

Mythology tries to answer the most difficult and the most basic questions of human existence: Who am I? Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? To the ancients, the meaning of the story was most important, not the literal truth of the details of a certain version of a tale. There are many variations on the birth and life of the goddess Hathor of Egypt, for example, and no ancient Egyptian would have rejected one of these as 'false' and chosen another as 'true'. The message of the myth contained the truth, not the specific details of the story, which is evident in the genre known

as **Mesopotamian Naru Literature** in which historical figures are featured out of their historical context.

It was understood in the ancient world that the purpose of a myth was to provide the hearer with a truth which the audience then interpreted for themselves within the value system of their culture. Apprehension of reality was left up to the interpretation of the individual encountering the values expressed in the myths instead of having that reality interpreted for them by an authority figure.

This remains the essential difference between a sermon and an individual experience with religious mythology; within one's cultural belief system a sermon can only encourage or reinforce common belief while a myth, though it might do the same, has the potential to elevate and transform individual understanding through the potency of symbolic landscape, character, image, and theme. The ancient myths still resonate with a modern audience precisely because the ancient writers crafted them toward individual interpretation, leaving each person who heard the story to recognize the meaning in the tale for themselves and respond to it accordingly.

Mark, Joshua J. "Mythology." *World History Encyclopedia*, https://www.worldhistory.org#organization, 2 Apr. 2023, www.worldhistory.org/mythology/#:~:text=Myths%20are%20a%20part%20of,sometimes%20seem%20a%20chaotic%20world.

2.6 COLOMBIA MYTHOLOGICAL CHARACTER

2.6.1 La Patasola

La Patasola Is the Vengeful Protector of the Andes

Atlas Obscura and Epic Magazine have teamed up for Monster Mythology, an ongoing series about things that go bump in the night around the world—their origins, their evolution, their modern cultural relevance.

IMAGINE YOU ARE ON YOUR own, deep in Colombia's central Andean region. Perhaps you are cutting down lumber in the lush forests, or prospecting for gold and platinum in valley creeks. Making camp at dusk, amidst the cooing of rare birds and the crackle of a fire, you hear a blood-curdling scream—unmistakably human. You set off through the dark forest to help, and then encounter the source of the horrible wail: a beautiful woman, impossibly pale, standing alone in the wilderness. Approaching, you suddenly realize: She's standing on only one leg.

It was your distinct misfortune to see La Patasola or, as her name roughly translates, "the one-legged woman," and it would, according to legend, be your last sight. Though she appears in various iterations and under numerous names, La Patasola is a recognizable legend, from Colombia's Pacific coast in the north to Ecuador in the south, with details of her appearance and deadly allure largely consistent.

In some renditions of the tale, La Patasola is not merely a supernatural huntress, feasting on the blood of solitary men unlucky enough to encounter her, but also a tragic figure. In an account captured by the University of Southern California's Digital Folklore Archives, Bogota native Ines Elvira Ortiz says La Patasola has vengeance in mind:

The Single Footed Woman was beautiful and she cheated on her husband, so he cut her leg off. She escaped into the jungle and swore revenge against all men. She appears in the nighttime, singing with a celestial timbre that captivates men, old and young alike. Sometimes, she screams for help so they come to save her. That's when she traps them. She sucks out their blood and then she heads back into the jungle to hide.

There are few landscapes as ripe for such storytelling as the northern reaches of the former Inca Empire in which she is believed to dwell. Colombia, inhabited by at least 87 ethnic and Indigenous groups and enormously influenced by European and African migrants, ranks among the world's few naturally "megadiverse" countries, as it is home to some of the most

biodiverse ecosystems on Earth. Predictably, Colombia's folkloric traditions—including the variations on La Patasola herself—are similarly rich.

"There's no question that European elements have infiltrated and influenced and maybe combined with some of [her] indigenous elements," says John McDowell of Indiana University's Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology. "In English, we might call her the old hag… She's a female presence in the spiritual landscape. She's very threatening. And she's very widespread across much of the territory where I've worked."

McDowell, in his extensive fieldwork throughout Latin America, has seen how the rich cosmologies of the Andean region actively invoke spirits, monsters, and destiny in the course of daily life. In this way, a run-in with La Patasola is not so much a matter of luck as fate. "The concept of accident really isn't operative in some of these communities," says McDowell. "Instead, [everything] happens for a reason. And the reason has to do with your spiritual protection, your spiritual health."

Through these tales, elders sustain customs and beliefs centered around harmony with the natural world.
In a world where personal misfortune can carry greater cosmic significance, La Patasola offers a lesson in humility and respect for one's environment. Just as native cosmology imbues Indigenous Colombians with a deep respect for their surroundings, La Patasola represents a powerful and humbling protector of nature for modern times. The violent experience of European settlement and brutal violation of the rights of Indigenous people are reflected in La Patasola's favored targets: lone men, usually seeking to despoil the landscape for their own gain. The lesson she teaches is what the Quechua people call sumak kawsay—roughly translated, "living in the correct way."

"I've been involved in many storytelling situations where elder people were telling these mythical narratives, these stories of spiritual figures, to younger people around them," says McDowell. "There is this sense that if we can steer our lives and guide our lives according to the example laid down in ancestral times, then we will be moving in the right direction."

Through these tales, elders sustain customs and beliefs centered around harmony with the natural world. And these stories are warnings that persist, in part, because they are great fun to tell. "They create this magical universe where all kinds of incredible things happen," says McDowell. "And you can see that most clearly in the trickster elements. All of the Indigenous people where I've lived—they love the trickster stories."

O'Sullivan, Dan. "La Patasola Is the Vengeful Protector of the Andes." *Atlas Obscura*, Atlas Obscura, 21 Mar. 2022, www.atlasobscura.com/articles/monster-mythology-la-patasola.

The Legend of La Patasola

La Patasola, the vengeful protector of the Andes, the destructive femme fatale of South American jungles, the hideous one-legged vampire driven by hatred—she's called a lot of things based on what she is now, but let's look at the legend of how La Patasola came to be.

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful woman named Maria. She provoked envy from women and desire from men. Eventually, Maria married a hard-working man named Henri. Henri's boss, Horacio, had a wife, but like every other man in town, he was jealous of Henri and wanted Maria for himself. Horacio couldn't stop himself from flirting with Maria, going out of his way to visit her and bring gifts to her and her children. Henri was surprised but only thought that Horacio was a kind man.

After some time, Maria began to flirt back with Horacio. She found him more charming than her husband, and the two fell in love. One day, Maria passionately kissed Horacio, but the two were seen by a woman in town who warned them against infidelity. It didn't matter, though, as temptation drew them both toward each other. Day by day, Maria succumbed more and more to her whims. She flirted more with Horacio, passionately kissed him every time she saw him, and started wearing tight clothes and makeup. Looking in the mirror, she was unrecognizable to herself; her own demons had taken over.

Poor Henri didn't suspect a thing at first, oblivious to the other man—his boss. But, after a few months, Maria's strange behavior and sudden change in looks made him think she was hiding something. Henri asked Maria about Horacio, and she couldn't help but blush while denying anything was going on between them.

Sometime later, Henri was working on Horacio's estate, and because he was such a diligent worker, Horacio's own wife let Henri go home early. He bought flowers for Maria on the way home. When Henri arrived at his house, he gently opened the door to surprise his wife. Henri heard strange sounds coming from upstairs, so he walked up to the second floor carrying the flowers. He entered the bedroom, only to find his wife Maria and his boss Horacio locked in the throes of passion. Stunned and angry, Henri watched, speechless for a moment, before grabbing a knife. Maria spotted him and began to beg forgiveness, but Henri took the knife and stabbed Horacio dead.

Maria knew she was next. She took off down the stairs but tripped and fell, tumbling down. Maria sat at the bottom of the stairs, begging for forgiveness and telling Henri that she was happy with him. Henri followed her and decided not to kill her. Instead, he took the knife and cut off one of her legs. He left Maria and went to fetch their children, deciding that he should kill them. Was it revenge? Spite? Madness he was feeling? Henri picked up the kids from school, told them Maria was sick, and took them back home. He poisoned them, bringing them in front of Maria and waking her as they died so she could watch. Henri, not yet done, retrieved his gun. He pointed it at his head and said, "You were the most beautiful lie in my life," then pulled the trigger. His skull blew up into pieces and all over the room and Maria.

No one in town heard a thing, and it was weeks before anyone thought to check on the family. Maria, though mutilated, survived by feeding on the human blood of her family, though her soul left her. She became a demon, forgot her own name and history, and only thought of one thing—revenge. La Patasola, as they call her now, roams the forests, luring men out alone in the jungle, where she kills them and drinks their blood.

This is an abbreviated version of the story of La Patasola that I found from Andrea Vera in Colombia. If you'd like to read the full version translated into English, check it out here—La Patasola: The Transformation of a Woman Victim of the Cholera of Love. There are some oddities in the translation, but a huge thank you to Andrea Vera for making this available for free to English speakers.

According to some accounts, the story may originate in the region of Tolima in Colombia. Folklore like this usually doesn't trace back to such a specific region, so there may be some real-life events from a town in Tolima that inspired the legend. Or, perhaps it is entirely real, and La Patasola is stalking the jungles, seeking revenge. I'm not ruling anything out.

La Patasola now inhabits mountain ranges and dense forests, and at the edges of these places, at night, she lures males deep into the wilds to kill them. During the day, she occupies herself by making trouble for travelers: blocking shortcuts, disorienting hunters with strange noises, and throwing dogs off scent trails. She's said to be a protector of nature, the forest, and animals, and she's unforgiving toward humans who enter her domain and hurt the natural environment.

"La Patasola of South American Folklore: Into Horror History: J.a. Hernandez." La Patasola of South American Folklore | Into Horror History | J.A. Hernandez, www.jahernandez.com/posts/la-patasola-of-south-american-folklore. Accessed 18 Aug. 2023.

2.6.2 El Silbón

The Legend of El Silbón

El Silbón (The Whistler) is a spirit found in Colombian (and Venezuelan) legends, specifically in the Los Llanos region of Colombia. A tropical grassy plain in the Orinoco basin spread between Colombia and Venezuela.

The legend states that El Silbón was once a spoiled child, born to very loving parents. They wanted to provide and give him anything he wanted; little did they know that this behavior was toxic and would end him. One night the boy demanded venison for dinner and would not stop crying and screaming. To please him, the father went out hunting for a deer.

After hours of searching, the father came back empty-handed. When the son saw this, he was infuriated. How could his father not bring back the deer as requested? In the son's eyes, this was unacceptable, and he took matters into his own hands. The son took the knife from the father and killed him. The mother and grandfather saw what had happened, and the grandfather punished the boy.

As punishment, he was tied to a tree, beaten, and left with chili on his wounds; some say lemon and salt. Eventually, he is released from the tree, and his grandfather gives him a sack full of his father's remains, curses him, and sends him to walk into the plains. As the boy walked away from his grandfather, he began to whistle. Shortly after the attack dogs were released and killed him. The grandfather's curse ¨You should not have done that to your father; your soul is damned for eternity¨.

El Silbón is described as a tall thin ghost wearing a big-rimmed farmer hat. He carries a bag of bones from his victims, or it could be only his father's bones; it will rattle as he walks. Many think he is a death omen; if you wander the plains at night, you might be next. He slowly stalks his victims, and often his whistling can grow louder and softer to confuse his victim. It is because the Silbón is already close if you can hear its whistle. However, if you can not hear the whistle any longer, it is because he is already upon you.

Many say he looks for those who do bad things against the family, for he uses their souls and sins to feed himself. But, on the other hand, some say he does not pursue any victim except the closest one.

B, Sara. "The Legend of El Silbón: Sara B." NewsBreak Original, NewsBreak Original, 26 Sept. 2022, original.newsbreak.com/@sara-b-1598241/2760175837929-the-legend-of-el-silb-n.

El Mohàn

Perhaps the most famous Colombian legend, male or female, is that of el Mohan. El Mohan, like most creatures depicted in myths and legends is dual spirited and is equal parts gruesome and kind. The Mohan is described as a stout man with long hair and golden skin. He takes on the appearance of a neanderthal with large hands and feet yet he has long nails that resemble claws.

He resides near rivers in a large cave complete with a secret underwater entrance. Why does he need a secret entrance you may ask. Well, it's to guard his treasure of course! El Mohan is a mischievous fellow who collects gold rings, bracelets, gems, the works. He uses these fine items to lure women towards him and it is said those that follow him are never to be found again.

Some whisper that these women are trapped in his cave and are used as concubines. He particularly goes after recently engaged women who innocently clean dishes and clothes near the river. Aside from snatching women, he is also known for stealing bait hooks and scaring away fish inhibiting local fishermen from coming home with a good catch of the day.

But aside from those gruesome qualities, El Mohan also helps return lost love

ones to their families. If anyone drowns in the river and his or her body is later found, it is suggested that he is the one that made it possible.

So how do you protect yourself from El Mohan? Make sure to have tobacco and salt with you as salt will turn him into a gold statue and tobacco smoke will prevent him from getting too close and tracking you.

"Historias de Viajes." Uncharted Colombia | Dissecting the Top Two Colombian Male Legends, www.unchartedcolombia.com/es/community/travel-stories/dissecting-the-top-two-colombian-male-legends/#:~:text=El%20Mohan%20is%20a%20mischievous,and%20are%20used%20as%20concubines. Accessed 18 Aug. 2023.

Top 5 Spooky Colombian Myths and Legends

La Bola del Fuego

Another frightening llanero myth involves a 2-meter ball of fire rapidly rolling across the landscape on dark nights, said to carry the spirit of a cursed mad woman. Years ago, a beautiful but quick-tempered wife became enraged when her husband asked her to make lunch for 60 other cowboys (that is a little excessive if you ask me).

To make matters worse, when she went to collect the firewood her husband was supposed to chop, he hadn't done a thing! Now furious, she heard her son crying, so she marched back in a rage and, with the hatchet, chopped off the head of poor innocent little Juan. She immediately turned insane and was cursed to turn into a ball of flames, just like her wretched heart.

She now roams the plains looking for her son Juan and stalking lone walkers. She only prays on Juans and Don Juans (i.e. sleazy men) so if that's not your name or game you should be safe. Just in case though, if she appears, you are to start swearing and cursing toward her evilness off!

"Top 5 Spooky Colombian Myths and Legends." Colombia Travel Blog by See Colombia Travel, 6 Sept. 2021, seecolombia.travel/blog/2021/07/top-5-spooky-colombian-myths-and-legends/.

Top 5 Spooky Colombian Myths and Legends

El Hombre Bufeo

There's more than meets the eye when it comes to the majestic Pink Dolphin of the Colombian Amazonas. The indigenous myth goes that a strong, handsome warrior was condemned to become a pink dolphin by the gods, who were jealous of his good looks. However, he has the ability to convert into a man when he comes out on land with a straw hat covering his only dead giveaway, that pesky blowhole.

He is said to be one smooth operator and no woman can resist his charms. So he chooses a beautiful lady, they dance the night away, and then he takes her for a romantic walk along the river. Sounds like a nice date, right? Wrong! The next day the woman remembers nothing but within no time, she finds herself pregnant! In fact, many children without known fathers in the Amazon actually have "Dolphin Man" registered as their father on official records!

"Top 5 Spooky Colombian Myths and Legends." Colombia Travel Blog by See Colombia Travel, 6 Sept. 2021, seecolombia.travel/blog/2021/07/top-5-spooky-colombian-myths-and-legends/.

2.7 YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIFE IN MIAMI

1) Growing Up a Teen in the Greater Miami Area

My name is Martand. I'm a well-traveled teenager with ties to local social scenes. I intern for the All In Miami Group, an esteemed real estate team at COMPASS based in South Florida. I complete differing projects to service the company and expand my business knowledge, specifically pertaining to real estate.

Often referred to as Greater Miami, the Miami Metropolitan Area includes the regions of Palm Beach County, Broward County, and Miami-Dade County. I have spent the majority of my life in Palm Beach County.

A few of our illustrious towns/cities include Boca Raton, Delray Beach, West Palm Beach, and Palm Beach.A casual tourist might believe that these areas were selected at random to be considered a part of Greater Miami as a whole.

However, the Atlantic-coast communities of the Miami Metropolitan Area are vastly interconnected.

Five Notable Things About Life in South Florida

(1) The Variety of Entertainment

The miscellaneous disposition of the county, as a whole, offers access to any type of amusement one could dream of. Young children are surrounded by entertainment goldmines, including extreme theme/action parks. Loxahatchee, a city known for its wildlife, is home to Lion Country Safari. This is, quite literally, a drive-through Zoo. Its innovative design allows people to drive their cars through a designated path slowly.

Throughout this path, you will encounter and selectively interact with free-roaming wild animals. There are also many botanical/butterfly gardens for a more relaxed alternative.

Teenagers and young adults have a vast amount of nightlife activities. High school and college students across our cities often organize parties and venues. If properly organized, these parties can score the organizers a great deal of money. I know this from first-hand experience.

(2) The People

Residents in areas such as New York City have a stigma of frequent rudeness.Other cities, such as Toronto, are known to be quite friendly. While the diverse demographic of South Florida can not entirely be categorized, residents tend to act on the friendlier side. People are generally willing to lend a helping hand, especially in communal areas (gyms, parks, public places, etc).

(3) The Opportunities

For those with visions of living the "American Dream, Miami is the right place for you. It is common to come across highly-driven and business-minded people here. Residents are highly-social and often host charity/purposed events. There is also an abundance of celebrities and public figures in cities such as Boca Raton and Miami.

Due to our musically-feverish culture, South Florida entertains music events/concerts featuring superstars. With just a few of the right connections, it's not uncommon to obtain access to VIP/backstage passes. With refined networking skills and a driven headspace, the possibilities here are endless.

(4) The Tropical Climate

One of the more notable features of South Florida is its warm and tropical climate. Almost every summer day can be a "beach day" here.

The Florida sun can be enjoyed in countless ways, including our extreme versions of water parks. One of my favorite activities is beach football in the early evening; the temperature at this time is ideal for activities of both leisure and adrenaline.

Additionally, there is a cool breeze and an inimitable ocean smell. From the months of May to October, we experience higher amounts of rainwater, which can provide a light and cooling contrast to the sun. Our climate also allows for federal nature preserves, where anyone can take designated trails through protected wildlife habitats.

(5) The Aesthetics

South Florida is home to an innumerable amount of scenic, beautiful locations. There are guided boat rides through the Everglades, where passengers can experience close encounters with alligators and other wild animals.
Every night, unique and alluring sunsets are often composed of pink and orange hues. Come nighttime, many teenagers and young adults love to

explore our luxury nightlife streets. These include Atlantic Avenue in Delray and Palm Beach's Worth Avenue. East Delray's Atlantic Avenue was once a quite low-income area.

Extending all the way to the ocean, there are occasional bonfires at "The Ave" (a term used to reference the lively portion of Atlantic Avenue). The Ave includes an extensive lit-up street with eclectic restaurants and bars. This is due to the fact that many low-income areas across South Florida have been undergoing large-scale gentrification processes.

Many times in the past, I have gotten the opportunity to play at open mics at spirited bars on The Ave. The vibes are immaculate.

"Growing up as a Teen in the Greater Miami Area." Growing Up as a Teen in the Greater Miami Area, www.allinmiami.com/blog/growing-up-as-a-teen-in-the-greater-miami-area. Accessed 18 Aug. 2023.

2) Making sense of Miami: what America's refuge city says about the US's future

The dizzying blend of accents entices some visitors and alarms others. But as the US gets ever-closer to Cuba, long-time Miami resident Michael Deibert asks: what can the rest of America learn from its own multicultural metropolis?

Just off Miami's busy Calle Ocho, the thoroughfare that is the beating cultural heart of the city's Cuban community, there rises a splendid ceiba tree whose roots erupt from the ground like waves from the sea, and whose vast branches throw shade far to either side.

All around the gnarled roots and tucked into the tree's hidden crevices, one finds the offerings of the faithful: candles, bags of food, feathers, bones. In this modern metropolis, whose vaulting skyscrapers a mile away reflect the near-blinding sun, the saturnalia surrounding the ceiba attests to the lifeblood of the Afro-Cuban religion of santería, and Miami's eternal place in the imagination of el exilio, as the Cuban community is often referred to.

I've lived in Miami off and on since the mid-1990s. As much as anywhere in the United States – my native country with which I have an often conflicted relationship – it counts as home. Landing back in Florida from Haiti, Paris or elsewhere, Miami always seems to offer the singular trick of providing some of the efficiency and convenience of living in the US while never seeming entirely a part of it.

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Miami has long been a kind of quasi city-state that evokes strong reactions from visitors, especially those from more anglicised parts of the country who cannot make themselves understood in English to a large part of the local population – an experience that annoys and alarms them.

The strangest city in what is perhaps America's strangest state, Miami is now home not just to Cubans but to thousands of Argentines, Brazilians, Colombians, Haitians, Jamaicans, Mexicans, Nicaraguans, Venezuelans and practically every other Latin American nationality, with sizeable populations of Russians, Indians, Persians and Orthodox Jews as well.

It's a unique case in the history of the US where the identity of a city was born, in a sense, in another country.

Armando Valladares

Miami is now home to thousands of Latin Americans, with sizeable populations of Russians, Indians, Persians and Orthodox Jews as well. The city has become so micronised that what is commonly thought of as "Miami" in the popular imagination is, in fact, a series of semi-independent small cities – some only a few blocks long – within the urban sprawl of Miami-Dade County (population 2.6 million). It fronts a long sweep of the blue-green Atlantic to the east and finally peters out in the miasma of the Everglades swamp to the west and the necklace of the Florida Keys to the south.

A young city (it was only incorporated in 1896 in what was then mostly wilderness), Miami is often said to have been founded on bootleg liquor and built its skyline on an infusion of cocaine money in the 70s and 80s (at the height of its cocaine wars in 1980 to 1981, the city had the world's highest murder rate). Nearly 30 years ago, the crime writer Edna Buchanan wrote that Miami had been "a sleepy resort" that had transformed to attract "year-round ... concentrations of everything corrupt, bizarre or dangerous from everywhere in the world".

Above all, Miami is a place of exile where newcomers try to construct a new life. Upon arriving from Cuba in 1980, the author Reinaldo Arenas – who as a teenaged barbudo had fought with Castro's forces but was then imprisoned and tortured both for being an independent intellectual and gay – declared Miami "a barren and pestiferous peninsula ... trying to become for a million exiles, the dream of a tropical island".

No fan of the city, Arenas quickly decamped to New York, where he committed suicide in 1990. Miami, however, continued to percolate like a

spoonful of Café Bustelo coffee from the cafe colada that residents traditionally drink every afternoon at 3:05 (the city's area code). And it has become something more interesting than many had thought possible.

In his office in West Miami near the city's airport – a few blocks away from a branch of the city's El Palacio de los Jugos Cuban eateries where the pan con lechón hints at the divine – Armando Valladares sits surrounded by photos of himself with political leaders: Ronald Reagan, George HW Bush, Florida senator (and Miami native and presidential candidate) Marco Rubio. Now white-haired, bespectacled and elegant, Valladares spent 22 years in Cuban prisons for – among other perceived offences – refusing to put an "I'm with Fidel" sign on his desk at the Ministry of Communications in 1960. Upon his release in 1982, he became a United States Ambassador to the United Nations. After residing in Washington for many years, he moved to Miami about 15 years ago.

"The Cubans have demonstrated their ability and their quality of work here," Valladares says. "It's a unique case in the history of the United States where the identity of a city was born, in a sense, in another country."

The Cuban aspects of Miami's identity appear to be far less monolithic than they once were, though. Many younger Cuban-Americans support the easing of relations with Cuba that US president Barack Obama has been pursuing with the island's rulers. Events such as the O' Miami poetry festival bring Cuban cultural groups such as Omni Zona Franca (from eastern Havana's housing estates) to Miami on a regular basis, demonstrating that the city's Latin vibe is more than Hoy Como Ayer (Today Like Yesterday), as one long-standing club wistfully calls itself.

If Miami represents a refuge for Cubans, it serves as no less of one for Haitians who, fleeing a downward economic spiral and the tyranny of some of the country's leaders, have made a profound impact on Miami's cultural life over the last several decades.

Along a once-neglected stretch of Northeast 2nd Avenue in the heart of the Haitian immigrant community, a cultural flowering has taken place that has seen the opening of the Little Haiti Cultural Center and its Caribbean Marketplace – a replica of the famed Marché en fer (Iron Market) in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince. Exuberantly coloured murals by local artists adorn walls, and every Friday night the Rara Lakay band marches through the neighbourhood, beating on drums and blowing on plangent bamboo vaksin trumpets, whose bleat more evokes the deep Haitian countryside than an American city.

"I have seen this city grow culturally," says the Haitian painter Edouard Duval Carrié, who arrived in Miami from Paris in 1992. "When I moved here it was really a [cultural] desert. That has changed."

A woman holds a 'With liberty and justice for all?' sign as people blocked the I-195 freeway in Miami during Art Basel to protest the killings of Mike Brown, Eric Garner, and Israel 'Reefa' Hernandez in Miami Beach.

Carrié maintains his studio in Little Haiti. Famous for his painting of Haitian dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier in a wedding dress (an image that did not endear him to the regime), his space now seems a precursor of the area's renaissance. What was once a district many outsiders approached with trepidation now attracts hundreds of people to the outdoor concerts of its monthly Big Night in Little Haiti.

"This is the doorway to the United States," Carrié says. "The particularity of Miami is that it has this very ebullient immigration that makes it quite fascinating."

But Miami's growth into the multicultural metropolis it is today has had a sinister side, too. In the 1960s, the city built the southern extension of Interstate 95 directly through the heart of the Overtown district, an area that had been a cultural mecca for black culture in the south. "Overtown was a very pleasant place," says Enid Pinkney, the 83-year-old daughter of an immigrant from the Bahamas (one of the first non-indigenous communities to settle in Miami).

Dispersed to other areas of the city, black residents often found themselves met with hostility. After the 1980 acquittal of four white and Latino police officers for the murder of black businessman Arthur McDuffie, at least 18 people died in rioting and property destruction topped $100m. Fatal police shootings touched off riots in the city at three other points during that decade.

Police departments throughout the county gained a reputation for violence and corruption that intervening years have done little to diminish, with Miami Beach police famously fatally tasering teenage Colombian-American graffiti artist Israel Hernandez in 2013. That same year, a report by the US Justice Department found that City of Miami police had "engaged in a pattern or practice of excessive use of force through officer-involved shootings in violation of the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution" and that the department was tainted by "deficient tactics, improper actions by specialised

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units, as well as egregious delays and substantive deficiencies in deadly force investigations".

Outside observers often remain mystified by Miami. Three years ago, the author Tom Wolfe attempted to capture it as he had 1980s New York in The Bonfire of the Vanities, and instead spewed forth a right-wing caricature titled Back to Blood that showed no grasp of the place the city has become. Such misconceptions are helped along by gaffe- and scandal-prone local politicians, whose peccadillos include everything from floating the idea to shut down all the city's libraries to close a budget gap, to the by-now standard (for Miami) cash-for-favours schemes.

In some areas, things have gone over the top. In South Beach – once a slum for retirees and poor immigrants, now a gay mecca and nightlife hotspot – crass commercialisation has resulted in a kind of Vegas-by-the-sea ambiance, with even the famed Lincoln Road, once a redoubt of local restaurants and retailers, now housing little more than chain stores and the bewildered tourists they prey upon. The preponderance of "juniors" (a derisive term for the rich scions of Latin America's economic elite) in the city can be somewhat off-putting, as it seems not only the language and music of that elite is being imported, but their class system, as well.

The city has blossomed and has a new cultural heritage

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But the city has blossomed from the place that Reinaldo Arenas despised. The great Cuban poet and anthropologist Lydia Cabrera, who was during her lifetime one of the world's foremost authorities on Afro-Cuban religion, spent the latter part of her life based in Miami, and donated her abundant collection of papers to the university here. It was home, too, for one of Haiti's greatest poets, Félix Morisseau-Leroy, for the last 17 years of his life. And, as testament to the city's new cultural heritage, a new major institution, the Pérez Art Museum Miami, opened next to the waters of Biscayne Bay in 2013; the Art Basel festival attracts thousands to the city every year; and the Miami Book Fair is an autumn staple of the literary calendar.

Perhaps more representative of the city than South Beach today are the northern reaches of Miami Beach, an area that is still home to many working-class residents despite spiralling property prices, where the lilting, almost Italianate sound of Argentine Spanish mixes with the caressing sounds of Brazilian Portuguese in the bodegas and on the beach. The Buenos Aires Bakery & Cafe – an establishment on Collins Avenue, only steps away from the sea – sells a variety of pastries that would make any porteño misty-eyed with nostalgia as well as several different kinds of the leafy, highly caffeinated mate beloved in South America, and does a brisk business.

When one drives south towards the Florida Keys – where the last island, Key West, is a mere 90 miles from Cuba – the county begins to descend into farmland. It was here that, in the early part of the 20th century, a Latvian-born eccentric named Edward Leedskalnin created an extraordinary structure known as the Coral Castle, out of coral-formed limestone. As he worked alone and without advanced equipment, just how Leedskalnin created his "castle" remains something of a mystery – with explanations ranging from some secret mastery of the Earth's magnetic field to telekinesis.

Today, other dreams are played out in Miami-Dade's fields, and exist in the imaginings of the many immigrant workers who toil here, scant miles from the glittering high-rises of downtown Miami. Surrounded by fields of squash, okra, beans and tomatoes, the community of Homestead, despite its tropical locale, evokes the somnolent Midwestern communities of a Ray Bradbury story. Low-rise buildings, train tracks and empty playground swings greet the visitor, and in the street one hears the melange of accents and dialects from the agricultural workers here: Mexican, Guatemalan, Haitian, Jamaican.

In the offices of the immigrant support group WeCount! just off of North Krome Avenue (which shares its name with one of the US's most infamous immigration detention centres located nearby), the connection between

Homestead's rural lushness and the city rising only a few miles away seems obvious.

"The Mexicans are the ones that put the food on Miami's table," says Catalina Santiago, an 18-year-old high school student who came to the US with her agricultural-worker parents from the Mexican state of Oaxaca a decade ago. "But they are always spoken of in a condescending manner."

Miami coastline

Miami, the great world city, is drowning while the powers that be look away. On the street below, where Santiago sits with her brother and a number of other immigrants, dusk falls and Homestead sees Mexican families gathering for Sunday-night dinner at restaurants such as Casita Tejas. When they rise for work early the following morning, some will be met by Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers and local police, who will be waiting to check their immigration status and arrest them for probable deportation if they are undocumented (as many are, a state of affairs on which Florida's agriculture depends).

Perhaps it is impending apocalypse, natural and man-made, that makes Miami's frivolity all the more poignant. If climate change predictions are to be believed, large parts of Miami – Miami Beach, Key Biscayne, Virginia Key – will be under water in coming years, a phenomenon helped along by the fact that many Florida politicians, including Governor Rick Scott and the aforementioned Senator Rubio, deny that climate change can be linked to human activity.

Driving home north along US1, the skyline of Miami rises above the flat land, its concrete and steel wrapped in the warmth of the tropical sunset. A city of outsiders, refugees and immigrants that – in its reflection of present-day America's diversity – feels in many ways more "American" than the 1950s small-town Americana that some politicians and commentators are perpetually nostalgic for.

"Making Sense of Miami: What America's Refuge City Says about the US's Future." The Guardian, Guardian News and Media, 2 July 2015, www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jul/02/miami-florida-cuba-multicultural-metropolis-diversity-hispanic-haiti.

2.8 IMPACT OF FAMILY TRAUMA ON CHILDREN'S GROWTH

The impact of childhood trauma on children's wellbeing and adult behavior

1. Background

Trauma is any event that does not correspond with everyday situations and can give rise to feelings of severe stress and unhappiness (Wicks-Nelson & Israel, 1997). Emotional struggles as a result of interpersonal trauma could steer emotional vulnerability as feelings of violation and betrayal reside within the sufferer (Lilly & London, 2015). Such feelings can disrupt an individual's emotional response system and lead to internal regulation difficulties at a later stage (Barlow, Goldsmith-Turow, & Gerhart, 2017). If trauma has been inflicted on a child by their parent(s), their core belief system recognizes that a secure attachment style has not been formed and is deficient in protection, prompting emotional hesitation. A sense of safety and support is paramount in the early years to encourage a child to explore their environment confidently and independently, despite any possibility of failure (van Rosmalen, van de Horst, & van der Veer, 2016).

In the case where a child becomes familiar with traumatic events, the onset of behavioral issues increases (Galletly, Van Hoof, & McFarlane, 2011; Connell, Pittenger, & Lang, 2018) because the victim's neurological structure changes in accordance with the adversities experienced or witnessed. Therefore, resulting in the risk of psychopathology development (Dye, 2018).

This research examines trauma in terms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and uses this to understand future consequences and management strategies following personal hardship. This study researches the link between three consequences of childhood trauma that have appeared in previous literature: 1. Depression and anxiety. 2. Sleep disturbance. 3 Low self-esteem. Alongside three coping mechanisms: 1. Denial. 2. Alcohol and drug abuse. 3. self-isolation. The reason for this selection was to identify if similarities and differences existed between previous research and this study.

1.1. Consequences of childhood trauma

1.1.1. Depression and anxiety

Childhood trauma has been linked to the development of anxiety and depression in later life (Hovens et al., 2010) and a history of abuse may be more identifiable by adulthood as emotional and behavioral patterns have evolved by this period. As of this, various disorders are likely to arise among childhood abuse victims (Lindert et al., 2014).

More specifically, the connection between depression, anxiety and childhood trauma could be related to the individual's neurological response system. Repeated childhood exposure to severe stressors causes excessive

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transmission of stress hormones in the body, as a way of responding to the event(s) that are happening around them (Heim et al., 2008). Regular exposure to toxic conditions in childhood can distort the biological makeup of the body's Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) axis. This neurological system sends signals to the brain to alert the body of dangerous circumstances. When the HPA axis is over activated the secretion of stress hormones creates a surplus and the body remains alert in preparation to react to perceived harmful situations through the fight-flight-freeze system (Butler et al., 2017; Maack et al., 2015). If a state of readiness through this system occurs frequently, it permits over activation throughout childhood and later promotes the risk of depressive and anxiety disorders due to heightened cortisol levels following traumatic episodes (Klassens, 2010; Chrousos, 2009).

1.1.2. Sleep disturbance

Overcoming trauma can take its toll on a survivor's mindset and consequentially, rumination over distressing experiences is likely. Sleep issues can lead to poor physical and mental health and exacerbate post-trauma symptoms (Belleville, Guay, & Marchand, 2011).

Sleep disturbance is arguably a troubling factor for childhood trauma victims as this routine is associated with comfort and safety and once it has been interfered with during childhood, these associated feelings have been removed from the child's night-time regime (Noll, Trickett, Susman, & Putnam, 2006). Children who have experienced physical and sexual abuse in the bedroom may struggle to fall asleep and maintain a full night of sleep because they have been personally violated in a typically secure setting (Swanson, Hamilton, & Muzik, 2014; Greenfield, Lee, Friedman, & Springer, 2011). Mirroring this, research indicates that children who have experienced trauma, display signs of sleep disturbance almost instantly and report having nightmares as their most dominant post-trauma symptom (Wamser-Nanney & Chesher, 2018).

This being the case, nightmares and sleep disturbance following trauma can represent subconscious feelings of conflict held by the individual. Therefore, responding to and accepting the incident(s) may help minimize the influence it has on one's life. Particularly, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) could guide the sufferer in overcoming negative emotions towards past adversities. Some CBT approaches can help an individual to re-imagine their nightmare but create their desired ending. This allows the individual to feel empowered and in control which may diminish previous emotions and reduce the number of nightmares they are having about their past (Casement & Swanson, 2012).

1.1.3. Low self-esteem

If a child's primary caregiver is the purveyor of their trauma, the child could battle with self-esteem problems by adulthood as a result of inadequate relationship and attachment formation (Yumbul, Cavusoglu & Geyimci, 2010). Precisely, abuse can produce feelings of fear and vulnerability within the

victims and can drive self-esteem issues following instability in current or previous relationships (Silvern et al., 1995). For children, abusive trauma destructs self-worth and self-identity because unhealthy relationships in the early years depict uncertainty and poor self-belief (Teague, 2013). This implies that traumatic experiences from interpersonal relationships contribute to a child's general self-knowledge. From this, they may adopt relationship patterns derived from childhood if the appropriate measures are not utilized to surpass the negative effect of their adversities (Crowley, 2019).

1.1.4. Coping with trauma

Coping is the behavior and thoughts a person uses to deal with challenging circumstances (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Coping styles can be regarded as active or passive. Active coping methods are implemented when the survivor takes direct action to heal from their experiences, whereas passive coping means minimal or no effective action is taken to overcome adversities, as they are deemed inevitable to the survivor (Olff, Langeland, & Gersons, 2005).

1.1.5. Denial

Denial can be regarded as a defence mechanism rather than a coping strategy because the victim refuses to reflect on an experience in order to protect their wellbeing. On the contrary, coping mechanisms persuade the survivor to engage in a specific activity to combat the influence of the adversities, because they are aware of how it makes them feel. In some cases, traumatic ordeals can provoke feelings of shame which can discourage survivors from seeking support (Tapia, 2014). They can also take responsibility for the abuse, making it harder to mentally revisit the incidents (re-traumatization) (Frazier, 2000).

In spite of this, trained professionals could motivate survivors to tackle their trauma symptoms by maximizing their client's self-capabilities (Knight, 2015). Professionals should focus on reminding the survivors that they are capable of defeating difficulties through their own will power. This informs the client that they can self-manage negative circumstances without fearing or denying them (Levit, 2018), which helps them to progress through life and respond to future challenges in a healthy manner.

1.1.6. Alcohol and drug abuse

Alcohol can also be used to distract oneself from thoughts of previous childhood adversities. Emotional abuse has been linked to alcohol-related issues, including binge-drinking and Alcohol Use Disorders (AUD). The literature signals that young people who have suffered trauma reportedly felt compelled to consume alcohol and those who were sexually abused tackled AUD earlier in life, in comparison to non-victims (Shin, Lee, Jeon, & Wills, 2015). A study carried out by Schafter et al. (2009) examined the needs of alcohol dependent clients with a history of sexual abuse. On average, males who encountered childhood sexual abuse were reported to consume up to

170g more alcohol than non-abused males and another study demonstrated that traumatized men consumed significantly more alcohol than traumatized women (O'Hare & Sherrer, 2011). Correspondingly, males who present with substance abuse problems are more likely to have experienced physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect, contrary to males who do not engage in such behavior (Ekinci & Kandemir, 2015).

It has been suggested that women with a history of childhood abuse may become substance-dependent to emotionally sedate themselves (Grabbe, Ball, & Hall, 2016), while severe cases are predominantly linked to emotional neglect and sexual abuse (Lotzin, Haupt, von Schonfels, Wingenfeld, & Schafer, 2016). Research conducted by Hammersley et al. (2016), reported 25 of 55 study participants (38 male, 17 female), who were recovering from drug dependency, revealed they had been consistently neglected or abused in childhood, which they believe contributed to their reliance on drugs in adulthood.

1.1.7. Self-isolation

Since trauma can deteriorate a person's wellbeing, survivors may seek to isolate themselves in response to the severity and complexity of their emotions and thoughts following a distressing event (Brand, Schielke, & Brams, 2017). Self-isolation can feel like a protective barrier from past adversities, allowing for some survivors to find comfort in it. Nevertheless, failing or unwilling to address a traumatic experience can hinder one's chances of tackling future negative experiences, compared to those who accept and confront their negative encounters (Shallcross, Troy, Boland, & Mauss, 2010).

Trouble regulating negative emotions could increase the risk of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms as unpleasant outcomes may be more probable for those who have not developed skills to maintain emotional balance within afflicting situations (O'Bryan, McLeish, Kraemer, & Fleming, 2015).

1.2. The role of social-class background in resilience building

Conflict-related trauma has not been largely associated with any socio-economic background, but PTSD is however, correlated to those facing underprivileged circumstances (Jarl, Cantor-Graae, Chak, Sunbaunat, & Larsson, 2015). In terms of children and youth, those who are neglected or mistreated are more at risk of experiencing traumatic situations, including community violence (Rosen, Handley, Cicchetti, & Rogosch, 2018).

If a child witnesses their social disadvantage through substance abuse in the home, the incarceration of their parent(s), or mental health problems in their surroundings, they may experience trauma due to the insufficient fulfilment of their developmental needs (Keane, Magee, & Kelly, 2016). Thereby, increasing the risk of additional unfortunate events disrupting their mental wellbeing (Wiese, 2010). In the United States it is also believed that

individuals from disadvantaged communities have higher chances of experiencing emotionally disruptive issues linked to housing problems and physical violence (Brown, 2008).

Campbell-Sills, Forde, andStein (2009) claim that social support and resources distributed by advanced education, alongside financial stability are protective barriers against stressful circumstances and improves trauma-resilience. Beyond this, it is argued that social support is the most effective tool for resilience building, as intervention and treatment plans assist individuals in their healing process (Steele & Kuban, 2014; Murray et al., 2015).

Children who have built resilience against trauma reportedly portray positive social skills, less emotional problems and a satisfactory reading ability. Not only are resilient children excelling in all these aspects compared to non-resilient children, but they are equally capable as children who have not been mistreated (Jaffee et al., 2017). Consequently, if a child learns to build trust, self-worth and feel emotionally grounded, their resilience levels improve (Nader, 2011). Thus, we argue that social support may be more effective in resilience building than factors affiliated with social class background. It is also hypothesised that social support acts as a mediating factor over level of trauma endured.

2. Methods

2.1. Ethics

Ethics approval was granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee at University College Dublin. The application outlined the purpose of the research and how data would be collected and managed by the primary researcher (first author), before approval was authorized. The research was under surveillance by the second author and monitored for the duration of the study. All methods were carried out in accordance with appropriate regulations and guidelines.

2.2. Study design

This study employs a qualitative design using recorded semi-structured interviews to ensure that understanding and consideration is established between the participant(s) and the primary researcher. The semi-structured interview questions were developed by the primary researcher and were not inspired by other interview frameworks. The personal narratives shared by professionals in this study, provide insight into client experiences following traumatic scenarios. Excessive dependence on quantitative approaches for sensitive issues has been reported as methodologically deficient (Woodhall-Melnik, 2018). Merely, impacting the potential to comprehend the importance of personal childhood trauma experiences. As a result, the choice to exclude a quantitative and mixed methods approach was based on the desire to inspect the subjective details of traumatic circumstances through compassionate and transparent reporting of participant narratives.

The fostering of a qualitative method generated space for logical subjective reasoning in alignment with the conditions of a distinct social matter (Lingard, Albert, & Levinson, 2008). Hereby, the implementation of this approach enabled the use of thematic analysis to complement the inclusion of semi-structured interview questions. This in turn endorsed the research findings and helped elucidate the severity of childhood mistreatment and its negative impact on a person's life.

2.3. Participants

The study recruited participants through convenience sampling and snowball sampling. Initially, connecting with some personal contacts (gatekeepers) in the field, meant that a snowballing method could later be applied to invite participants to be reached through word of mouth. The inclusion criteria consisted of participants having previous or ongoing professional work experience with those who endured childhood trauma, holding a professional qualification to work with vulnerable populations and being able to provide informed consent. Seven participants were contacted through word of mouth and the final two participants were contacted purposely through an online local forum. Convenience sampling was necessary due to the limited time frame of the research and the need to select appropriate participants before the deadline. The nine participants were invited to partake in the study by a written consent form and an information leaflet via email.

Once consent was obtained, all participants were emailed a copy of the ten semi-structured interview questions that was designed to guide the interview process. The primary researcher made the decision to circulate the interview questions prior to the interviews as the goal was to encourage interviewees to provide a sufficient amount of data without feeling anxious during the conversation (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Hence, sharing the questions with the participants promised understanding and comfortability before and during the interviews as it gave them an opportunity to address any questions they had with the researcher prior to interviews commencing. Thus, building rapport and trust with the researcher.

The cohort consisted of seven females and two males. This sample includes a number of qualified professionals in the field of psychology, psychotherapy, social/support care, and counselling. Participants work in different regions across Ireland. Including Dublin, Louth, Mayo and Sligo. This created a varied sample of working professionals in Ireland for the study.

2.4. Data collection and interview procedures

All interviews commenced once consent forms were obtained, any queries concerning the study were answered when approval was granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee at University College Dublin. All participants' real names were replaced with pseudonyms to protect their identity throughout the study, and they were given permission to withdraw any information provided up until the write-up period.

Any details accidently shared during the interview by participants were removed upon request immediately and not included in their transcript. Six semi-structured interviews were carried out over the phone and three were carried out face-to-face. The interview process lasted from early March to early May 2019. Questions were listed in ascending order from 1-10 and follow-up questions were added to enhance the conversational flow of the interviews. Once the interviews terminated, participants were thanked for their participation and checked on at a later date to detect how they were feeling post-interview.

2.5. Data analysis

Following data collection, thematic analysis was conducted to highlight the recurring patterns identified during the analysis of the interview transcripts. The use of thematic analysis assisted the first author to identify recurring patterns concerning the participants' experiences, outlooks and assumptions as this methodological design portrays their internal belief system and how their experiences are shaped (Clarke & Braun, 2017). The primary researcher coded all transcripts to distinguish both similarities and differences between the data and shared it with the second author for review. Once codes were reviewed twice, they were assigned to themes chosen by the primary researcher (Table 2). Although all participants were asked the same 10 pre-selected questions, each interview fostered additional improvised questions to facilitate the flow of the conversation. As a result, each transcript was closely revised for codes separately and lastly compared to develop appropriate themes.

3. Results

Themes were selected based on repeating patterns present in all or most transcripts that were produced after each interview (Table 2). The following section shows that in support of previous research, childhood trauma victims can present self-esteem issues, dismiss the personal impact mediated by their childhood trauma and engage in poor coping techniques such as alcohol and drug misuse. Moreover, the creation of a false-self to prevent adversities from further affecting life-quality was notable.

3.1. The consequences of childhood trauma on an adult's life and on a child's wellbeing

3.1.1. A low self-esteem can manifest in childhood trauma victims

Depression and anxiety are linked to low self-esteem. Tom was asked about his opinion on the self-esteem of a trauma survivor and discussed that he has interacted with clients who: *"present as being very high self-esteem"* but he would view a survivor's self-esteem as: *"nearly always poor".* He explained that traumatized people can learn to build a stable character to mask their vulnerability, suggesting feelings of depression and worthlessness are held by victims. He considers that they are: *"almost like a very good actor."* However,

he is convinced that this approach does not possess long-term sustainability because: *"when you chip at that character, the whole lot just...falls under."* Furthermore, David established that sufferers of childhood trauma have: *"no self-esteem"* and create a false self-image to cope. Tara confirmed these claims when she noted that they rely on a false self-image, especially if their primary caregiver had failed to meet their developmental needs:

"The way they cope with it is that they create maybe a false self for themselves because...when we're kids, we-we want our parents to love us and take care of us. So, if they don't do that we try and become the kind of child we think they'll love."

Christine supported this by indicating that childhood trauma victims prove they have a low self-esteem when they seek: "*validation and approval"* as this is their: *"calming strategy."* Mary explained that the reason for this (commonly in children) is because: *"they're craving something that they just can't get from their parents."* For her, a low self-esteem in children is easy to recognize but children themselves are: *"not processing their traumas",* which brings them to: *"think everything's quite normal."*

Similarly, Ava and Anne reported that trauma victims do not always acknowledge the severity of their traumatic history or their personal attitudes because it makes them depressed. Both participants have proposed that their low self-esteem can encourage them to excuse their circumstances or deny that their past has scarred them:

"Oh my God, I didn't know it was that bad or some of them will tell us that: "oh I knew, I knew that my mom had experienced it." (Ava)

"It's simply too painful to look at." (Anne)

All participants reported drug/substance abuse as a common coping mechanism amongst childhood trauma victims. David summed up that the reason for this is because: "*drugs block the pain, block the consciousness."*

3.1.2. Childhood trauma victims can create a false self rather than self-isolate

David hinted that the false self is born because the trauma sufferer was: *"annihilated as a human being"* and has: *"lost trust in all humanity."*

To highlight the extent of this, Ava discussed that domestic abuse survivors can experience anxiety and suicidal ideations. She shared the brutality endured by a young woman in her 20s, who was tied down and raped for days by her partner. She revealed that her client confessed:

"I can't see myself living a normal life. I can't see myself being okay. He has destroyed me."(sic)

From Ava's experience working as a refugee support worker, she disclosed her experience of children at the refugee centre displayed a tendency to exhibit problematic behavior linked to trauma infliction. She noted that some appear anxious and: *"are just glued to their mothers; they won't let her go!"* and stressed that: *they are fearful of being left alone (sic)."*

Christine proposed that accumulative or developmental trauma: *"really wreaks havoc at an individual."* This permits the growth of depression and anxiety disorders as when sufferers build self-confidence there is a chance that confidence: *"is always quite fragile."* To support this, Anne reported that her male childhood trauma victims: *"like to be seen as kind of cocky"*, but in her view it is an act of grandiosity to hide their true self.

All participants made clear that the construction of a false-self is derived from self-hatred or [shame](#) and upset. Samantha pointed out that her clients would not: *"see themselves as liking themselves very much."* and in Tara's view self-hatred and a false self-image is linked to the emotional baggage survivors carry from childhood: *"into adulthood."* For David, self-blame, hatred and shame following trauma is: *"the sickest mind frame you can have; that it's your fault that this happened to you."* This theme hints that the false-self can be decomposed through self-compassion and understanding.

3.1.3. Denial or lack of insight into childhood trauma can be connected to intergenerational trauma

Intergenerational trauma appeared as a theme in all interviews when the nature of childhood abuse was discussed. Participants deemed trauma inflicted by parents as severely harmful to a survivors' wellbeing. It was enforced that intergenerational trauma teaches family members [behaviors](#) and routines that do not embody positive outcomes:

"I think when it's repeated and when it's been given by the primary caregiver, it's a lot worse." (Samantha)

"A lot of the heroin addicted clients' parents, their parents would be alcoholics and they would be quite aggressive alcoholics." (Anne)

To add, participants outlined that it is vital that intergenerational habits are broken to prevent trauma-related issues from continuing. Ava affirmed that domestic abuse should not be tolerated, and victims (especially mothers) should do their best to seek help as they may be accidently: *"modelling abuse for their children"* and this is a way of: *"telling their children that it's okay, it's normal to be abused."*

Samantha also remarked that some of her clients (who are parents) see no wrong in physical abuse, even if their child is humiliated as they reckon it is: *"acceptable to use as an adult."* She then argued the fact that they: *"see it as maybe normal parenting skills"* could be the root of this belief.

The data makes evident that abuse inflicted by parents leaves both children and adults alike emotionally wounded. These wounds were described as perpetuating over time and in some cases, victims were seen to endure strong, loyal attachments to their parents, albeit the perpetrators of their abuse:

"I mean they're still mad and angry and whatever, but they still have a loyalty to their parents." (Mary)

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"Even if their parents are long dead, they're constantly repeating the same messages that they heard in childhood." (Tara)

"Generally, they still believe or, they'll still hold the truths that they were told in childhood." (Christine)

Rosie verified that it is good for her clients to carry out: *"therapeutic work on themselves"*, because it helps themselves and their family members to terminate negative past teachings and live a happier life:

"It is actually a good thing for you to be open with them and say to people: this happened to me and it's affected who I am as an adult, but I'm doing work on it now and I'm trying to work on it."

In summary, participants have declared that intergenerational trauma progresses when trauma is unresolved. Once survivors of childhood maltreatment recognize the previous wrongdoings, they can break traditional cycles and recover from them through support.

3.1.4. Social support is needed to conquer the damage of childhood trauma

Social support emerged as a theme in the data to insinuate its need to assist individuals in overcoming the long-term impact of adversities. The results showed that trauma can happen to anyone irrespective of their social class background. However, differences were detected in the quality and availability of support services across different social class backgrounds:

"I do believe trauma can happen to everybody. It's equal opportunity." (Samantha)

"I think there's a difference in the way people receive the support. As opposed to the trauma, trauma is trauma." (Tom)

This theme unveiled that financial struggles could prevent some trauma sufferers from seeking and obtaining necessary support from mental health services in Ireland. David declared that money controls when one can avail of support. He said: *"If you have money, you get a service"* but for those who are financially restricted, he argued that: *"there's no help whatsoever."* David continued to emphasize the importance of support services and admitted that lack of aid puts survivors at risk of more suffering and stated:

"So, I face the-the individual thing that destroyed my life...destroyed me as a human being and I'm told the service, it exists, but I ring them and you'll get an assessment within a short period of time and your first appointment for counselling, in my experience would be a year later."

Tara also commented on these conditions, stating that in her fee-paying workplace, she does not often manage clients from impoverished backgrounds: *"not because they don't experience trauma"* but rather because: *"they're not in a position to pay for counselling."* To which she added they are required to go to their doctor and be placed on a waiting list.

On the other hand, participants reported that not only does money determine support-service availability for those facing issues of socio-economic adversity, but fears of social stigmatisation may prevent victims from accessing services.

In saying that, those who are 'well-off' are considered to be more concerned about receiving judgment from their own 'community,' whereas disadvantaged cohorts worry about external judgement:

"If you're disadvantaged, like people you know, and I hate to say it can look down on you." (Mary)

Ava reported that, from her knowledge people from wealthier communities worry that if they come forward in accessing services, they put their social status and lifestyle at stake. As a result, Ava believes they: *"don't want to talk about it."*

On that topic, Tom, Samantha and David exercised the vitality of customized treatment plans for clients. Tom clarified that tailored treatment is essential depending on the emotional impact the trauma caused. For example, Samantha said that some clients' trauma has their brains: *"stuck on it"* and they keep revisiting their history. This differs for other individuals, as David recalled that one of his clients reported feeling worse after counselling due to their mental revisitation episode(s) (re-traumatization).

4. Discussion & Conclusion

This study aspired to investigate whether denial, self-isolation and drug and alcohol abuse were coping mechanisms adopted by childhood trauma victims. Another objective was to clarify if low self-esteem, depression and anxiety and sleep disturbance were consequences of childhood trauma. The data suggested that some sufferers deny their adversities and refuse to acknowledge their experiences in fear of its negative impact on their wellbeing. Research from Tapia (2014) and Frazier (2000) support these claims by highlighting that reflecting on trauma can produce feelings of shame within the individual, making it harder for them to seek professional assistance and accept their history. Furthermore, the results indicated that instead of self-isolating, childhood trauma victims may choose to construct a false self-image in order to hide the impact their adversities have on their wellbeing. Although, this finding differs to those expressed by Shallcross, Troy, Boland, and Mauss (2010), who state that trauma victims may self-isolate to emotionally shield themselves from their past, it can be argued that the motive to embrace an insincere character is also a way for one to protect themselves from their previous mistreatment. With that said, the findings illustrated that victims who were neglected by their parents can create a false self because they have a low self-esteem and feel that others will approve of them if they alter their personality. This reinforces conclusion drawn by Yumbul, Cavusoglu, and Geyimci, (2010) who declare that poor parent-child relationships can produce internal conflict within the child by adulthood.

The research implied that drug and alcohol misuse can be coping mechanisms of childhood trauma victims as it was reported that all participants mentioned that clients use alcohol and drugs to cope (however, not all statements could be included in this article). Nonetheless, it was

summed up that this strategy is oftentimes used to block out emotional wounds caused by trauma exposure. In light of these statements, findings from Shin, Lee, Jeon, and Wills (2015) found similar results; showing that youths who endured trauma felt impelled to engage in alcohol abuse. Similarly, research by Hammersley et al., (2016) outlined that individuals who were wrongly treated in childhood faced drug dependency issues and argued that their abusive history contributed to their drug addiction in adulthood.

Our research also proposed that symptoms connected to depression and anxiety can surface in childhood trauma victims. Participants emphasized that some clients struggle to overcome their trauma by adulthood. Some sufferers are convinced that they cannot live normally or believe that they are worthless if they were constantly told so in childhood. This study along with research by Teague (2013) underpins that this can negatively contribute to interpersonal relationships and general self-concept. In addition, research by Klassens (2010) and Chrousos (2009) established that if an individual grapples with their past and cannot move past it, stress hormones become overactivated in the body causing depression and anxiety related disorders. Unfortunately, this research did not announce sleep disturbance as a central consequence of childhood trauma and therefore could not support previous literature. Lastly, the findings shared that social support, financial aid and professional guidance could minimize the effects of childhood trauma on one's wellbeing. Thus, supporting data offered by Steele & Kuban (2014) and Murray et al. (2015) who proclaim that such resources could build resilience against trauma and stressful situations.

4.1. Limitations and future directions for additional research

The recruitment of professionals from various wellbeing backgrounds based in four counties across Ireland was a strength in the study as it offered unique perspectives on childhood trauma and surrounding issues. The study is limited in size due to the time constraints and resources available. Despite this, it does reflect a relatively expansive geographical spread within the Irish context of perspectives from professionals from a broad range within the fields of mental health and wellbeing, as well as social support services.

Due to geographical location only 3 out of 9 semi-structured interviews were carried out face-to-face and the remaining 6 were conducted via phone call. This proved to be a slight challenge as the scarcity of social cues meant that conversations were prone to verbal interruptions and network connections difficulties.

Maintaining a gender-balance among participants was also challenging as only 2 male participants agreed to contribute to the study. When attempting to address this, one professional speculated that it could be because the field of care and wellbeing is predominately female orientated. Further investigation into this could ameliorate this disparity.

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Regardless of the study's constraints, in depth professional narrations were submitted by participants about the lives of those who have endured childhood trauma from an abusive standpoint. These expressions from the Irish mental health, well-being and social care practice sectors have acknowledged the impact of childhood trauma on children's wellbeing. Clear correlations were outlined by these professionals between adult behavior and the existence of a survivor's vulnerability. Moreover, this study has provided a valuable contribution by highlighting the pitfalls in service provisions for those lacking in the financial resources to access private care. This reiterates the need for further research around the disparities between private and public health and well-being sectors in Ireland and the impact this may have on trauma victims.

It is recommended that future research proceeds with face-to-face semi-structured interviews to bypass any interruptions and audio complications. The data generated large volumes of information about traumatic abuse and therefore could not assiduously cover all consequences of childhood trauma, including PTSD and sleeping problems. However, following on from the research trajectory, other academics are encouraged to inspect these elements in a comprehensive manner at another stage.

Another recommendation for future studies is to narrowly investigate the correlation between professional perspective on trauma and gender- a finding that could not be secured due to the gender-imbalance present in this study. This is advised as it is possible that gender variations may exist in perceptions of client experience(s), thus, influencing the professional support available.

It is lastly suggested that additional research explores potential links between financial status and access to resources, as this research declared that support and interventions may reduce the severity of trauma symptoms. Moreover, the time constraints within the study, did not facilitate an in-depth social analysis. Future research of this kind could further unveil the possible nuances which may exist for victims, not only across social class, but across gender, ethnicity and (dis)ability (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of participants.

Name (pseudonym)	Gender	Occupation	Location
Anne	Female	Psychologist	Dublin
Mary	Female	Youth support worker	Sligo
Rosie	Female	Psychotherapist	Sligo
Tara	Female	Psychotherapist	Sligo
Samantha	Female	Social care worker	Mayo
Christine	Female	Social care worker	Dublin
Ava	Female	Refugee support worker	Louth

Name (pseudonym)	Gender	Occupation	Location
Tom	Male	Social care worker	Dublin
David	Male	Addiction Counsellor	Dublin

Table 2. Common themes and codes found in interviews.

Low self-esteem	False self-image	Intergenerational trauma	Social support
Shame	Sex addiction	Craving love	Financial issues
Depression/Anxiety	Relationship instability	Lack of parental teachings	Fear of social stigma
Fear/Anger	False confidence	Recollection	Emotional support
People-pleasing	Denial	Relationship with the primary caregiver	Relationship building
Drug and alcohol use	Self-hatred	Self-doubt in adulthood	Resilience building
Lack of insight	Excessive engagement in activities	Re-traumatization	Lack of trust

Cheyenne Downey a, et al. "The Impact of Childhood Trauma on Children's Wellbeing and Adult Behavior." European Journal of Trauma & Dissociation, Elsevier, 30 June 2021, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2468749921000375.

3   THE MAGICAL REALISM

3.1 START OF MAGICAL REALISM

Magic World in *Song of Solomon*: A Return to Black Culture

ABSTRACT

Magic realism, originated from Latin America, manifests mainly three artistic principles in *Song of Solomon*: first, confusing the boundary between reality and fantasy to create a magic world, where man and ghost coexist and co-communicate. Second, employ mythological archetypes to endow reality with fabulous meanings. It helps to show how American black women fight against cultural oppression and keep their cultural heritage and traditional values. Lastly, *Song of Solomon* also uses some techniques such as allegory and symbolism to convey the themes. A "Solomon's song" reveals the miserable fate of American black women and their role and function in their men's journey.

1. Introduction

Toni Morrison is one of the most famous writers in American literary field. As an excellent novelist, she also achieves global reputation. Since the publication of the *Bluest Eye* in 1970, she has steadily produced six more novels such as *Sula, Song of Solomon, Tar Baby, Beloved, Jazz*, and *Paradise*. Starting with her first novel, she has captivated audiences with such magic worlds as Medallion and the Bottom where blackbirds appear unexpectedly, Darling and Not Doctor Streets where dead father's bones are kept indoors unburied, Isle des Chevaliers where warrior spirits gallop on horseback, and 124 Bluestone Road where a ghost becomes flesh and blood. By presenting these magic elements in her novel, Morrison guides readers to probe into the black-cultural world which has been neglected for a long time by the main stream white culture. She was valued highly by readers all over the world. Besides the honorary degrees from Ivy League colleges such as Harvard, Yale, and Columbia, Morrison has won many other honors including a National Book Critics' Circle Award and the Pulitzer Price. In 1993, she was granted the Nobel Prize.

Song of Solomon is Toni Morrison's third novel which is always regarded as one of the masterpieces of Morrison and is the only novel which uses a black male as the protagonist of the novel. It is chiefly on the strength of this book that Morrison has gained the Pulitzer prize and the National Book Critics's Circle Award. The novel tells about a story of a young black man Milkman Dead. At the age of 32, he leads an idle and skimble-skamble life in the society in which the white culture is the main cultural stream. Later, under the guidance of his aunt Pilate, he starts his life journey of searching for "gold" – his family history, racial identity, and cultural heritage. Through the journey, he

associates with his folks and his traditional culture and finally finds out the deep meaning of the *Solomon's song*, which conveys the story of his ancestors and the history of African-American people.

2. The origin and development of magic realism

It is generally said that the earliest mention of "magic realism" is found in Franz Roh's work of painting and sculpture that was popular following the Expressionist movement in 1925. The term referred to a style of painting that emphasized minute aspects of an object and in which real forms were combined in a way which did not conform to daily reality.

In 1948, the term came to use as a narrative technique. It is first employed by a writer named Arturo Uslar Pietri. He wrote in *The Literature and Men of 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 a poetic denial of reality. What for lack of another name could be called a magical realism. (CitationUslar Pietri 13)

Two elements function during the process. On one hand, many Latin American writers were attracted to Paris where the Surrealist movement greatly influenced them during the period of 1920s and 1930s. On the other hand, most of them were aware of their native countries' abundance of writing materials, and they turned back to write their own continent. On the continent full of such historical and social contrasts where the frontiers between the real and the imaginary were so close, this made it difficult to distinguish one from another, and it seemed natural that its writers used this style as a means of expressing Latin American complexities as well as showing the need for questioning and affirming cultural identity. Aware of how literature could derive from dreams and the unconsciousness, they marry the artistic principles of surrealism to the magic realities of their own continent. Thus, a new literary genre, which was later called magic realism, was created. This later use of the term was quite different form Roh's and it emphasized the importance of belief in the magic nature of the phenomena. "Latin American Literature Boom" reached its climax during the 1950s and 1960s, and more and more Latin American writers turned toward the trend of magic realism and developed its techniques to maturity. Among them, Garcia Marquez is considered as the leading practitioner. His masterpiece *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is a perfection of Latin American magic realism.

Despite the debate and the criticism of magic realism, few people would deny that this mode had played an important role in the development of international literature in the twentieth century. Expressing powerful sociopolitical sentiment within a rich imaginative form, the mode not only became extremely popular among Latin American writers and readers but also gained an international following. Magic realism becomes a vehicle for

the exploration and assertion of cultural, social, and political identity. Writers in America as elsewhere borrow the stylistic and thematic elements from their Latin American forerunners but make some alterations according to their specific purposes.

3. The meaning and main artistic principles of magic realism

Magic realism is a literary form that combines fantasy with raw physical or social reality in a search for truth beyond the surface of people's daily life. It attempts to create "new reality" or to treat the existing reality with a different perspective as a way of presenting the mystery inherent in writing. Its definition was clarified as the following:

[…] magical realism cannot be identified either with fantastic literature or with psychological literature, or with the surrealist or hermetic literature that Ortega describes. Unlike superrealism, magic 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 emphasize psychological analysis of characters, since it doesn't try to find reasons for their actions or their inability to express themselves. Magic 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. (CitationParkinson Zamora and Faris 121)

Unlike surrealism, magic realist writers do not try their efforts to find the values of their creation from the world of dreams or aim at the pursuit of the characters' absolute spiritual freedom by reconstructing their dreams and subconsciousness (or even unconsciousness). Instead, they never avoid the objective world. Magic realism is not licensed for any arbitrary distortion of reality for its own sake, just as Garcia Marquez pointed out:

You can't invent or imagine just whatever you fancy because you run the risk not telling the truth…. Even the most seemingly arbitrary creation has its rules. You can throw away the fig leaf of rationalism only if you don't then descend into total chaos and irrationality. (CitationGarcia Marquez 87)

In fact, it actively turns the natural into some sort of the supernatural or the magic "reality" through their narrative discourse. Although there are some similarities between the two, magic realist works are not equal to the fantastic fictions as Angel Flores says they are in his *Magic Realism in Spanish American Fiction* because the latter usually twists the reality or create a fantastic world. Magic realism is, in Leal's words, "an attitude towards reality" (CitationFlores 121) and further, "the magic realist does not try to copy the surrounding reality (as the realists did) or to wound it (as the surrealists did) but to seize the mystery that breathes behind things" (CitationFlores 123). It never avoids the real world by creating a fantastic or imaginary world, and it even faces the real world directly, reflects the reality profoundly, and presents the mystery existing in everything, every life, and action of humankind.

However, literature is not a pure reality. It needs processing and refinement to become the literature reality. The magic or marvelous in the works is not mere the writer's imagination, but the narration and processing of the really existing magic things or from the sources of the local myth, legend, religion, and tradition. Although the magic serves only as subordinating plots and details without ruining or corrupting the accordance of the main plot with the objective reality and the logic development, it is indeed part of the reality of Latin America consisting of the objective reality and the subjective reality in people's minds. As a mature and successful literary form, magic realism possesses its unique artistic principles. A number of critics have attempted to define this protean style in various ways, but all seem to agree on the following artistic principles as being basic to the genre:

First, the contradiction inherent in the description of magical events in the most prosaic manner and of realistic happenings presented as something extraordinary and supernatural. The practice aims at forcing the reader to participate in the construction of the meaning in the work. Its most common form is to turn reality into the magic without losing its realness. That is, blending the reality and the non-reality by creating extraordinary figures, describing ridiculous plots and adapting miraculous narrative techniques to achieve "another sense" of the reality. It reflects the incredible miracles and the absolutely real life in Latin America, which impresses on the reader an extremely strong sense of ridiculous realness through esthetic appreciation. Magic realism tries to dim the boundary between reality and fantasy, and the confusion of the real and the magical, of the possible and the impossible creates or reflects a magic world by which truth beneath the marvels is revealed. Second, the representation of the supernatural is a particularly forceful means of asserting a given "reality" because it can bring into images, characters, and roles (from myth to fairy tale, etc.) that appear to reflect a collective unconscious. Archetypes are common within the examples of magic realism. They carry the weight of centuries of common belief. Magic realism employs mythological archetypes (from Greek myths to western traditional folklores) to convey or emphasize what kind of truth of reality would be revealed in the work of magic realism. Lastly, in creating these new realities, magic realist texts regularly employ a number of techniques, which can generally be found in most works of this mode, while not specific to them. Magic realist texts abound in ambiguity and ambivalence, in doubles, in repetitions and in dualities. Repetition and multiplicity are basic to the meaning of magic realism in general. The ambiguity that is implicit in the combination of the magic and the real is repeated in almost every aspect of the mode.

In the world's literary field, magic realism has gained a high reputation for its unique and marvelous artistic techniques and has been highly praised by both critics and readers. In the meanwhile, magic realism has opened the door for

many writers to explain their national and ethnic identities in a different and more original way. Toni Morrison is one of them. With the mysterious African mythological and techniques of magic realism, she wove a magic coat for her themes that her novels want to convey. From the first *The Bluest Eyes* to the late *Paradise*, she shows her excellent craftsmanship of employing magic realistic sills by presenting natural cycles, mythic archetypes, bizarre events, and narrative technique. In almost all her novels, her interest in mysticism and the supernatural is obvious. Examples are abundant. There are Pecola who gets her desired blue eyes from a spiritualist with magic power named Soaphead Church in *The Bluest Eyes*, Ajiax's conjuring mother in *Sula*, the headless Knights' visits in *Tar Baby*, and the navelless shaman Pilate who is always carrying her dead father's bones in *Song of Solomon.*

However, in all these novels, magic realism is with her and constantly communicates with him in *Song of Solomon*, not the only way to convey themes. Morrison just employs some of these artistic principles of magic realism. Since *Song of Solomon*, her third novel, was enthusiastically and widely received after its publication, Morrison was promoted into the rank of the most revered contemporary writer, and her skills of employing magic elements were developed into maturation. The magic atmosphere permeates the whole text. The themes of the novel are built up on the basis of magic realism, and the three artistic principles are demonstrated to a full length. Thus, in the article, I will discuss magic realism in this novel and also its functions in building up the themes.

4. Coexistence and communication of man and ghost

In African religion, death, like birth, is only a form of life transforming into another form of life. The living dead are always present during the period of Sasa, in which as long as their names are remembered, their individual immortality is guaranteed. If no one is left alive to remember them personally, they enter Samani, the period of collective immortality, the community of spirits, and the realm of myths and stories. The world of living and the world of death are believed to be able to communicate and exchange information. This ancient view of death and living is applied to magic realistic works to describe the life, producing a unique magic effect. Pilate's father, Macon Dead I, who is killed by a white, is still with her. To Ruth, she says: "I see him still. He is helpful to me, real helpful. Tells me things I need to know" (CitationMorrison 142). Also under his deceased father's mysterious guidance: "but you can't fly on off and leave a body" (CitationMorrison 142), she goes back to the cave and carries the bones with her all her life. Later, the bones are proved to be not the bones of others, but the remains of her beloved father. Giving the dead voice is the consignation of the interpretations of the author's deep intention, the works' deep meanings, and the nation's deep

souls. Hidden in the odd, mysterious, and marvelous figures and plots, ghost conveys profound realistic meanings.

5. Names, naming, and misnaming – a return to black culture

Morrison emphases two things in *Song of Solomon*: flight and name, which can be traced back to the lines before the chapters start: "Ancestors could fly/Children may know their names." (1) African people are sent to America as slaves and cut off all the connections with their ancestors – their true names. The absence of names haunts their life. As Morrison explains:

Among blacks, we have always suffered being nameless. We didn't have names because ours are those of the masters which were given to us with indifference and don't present anything for us. It's become a common practice, among the community, to give a name to someone according to their characteristics: it's life that gives you a name, in a way. (CitationPasquier 12, my translation)

Appropriate to the mood of mystery, the establishment of a sense of subjectivity and representation, the novel begins with a masquerade. As we go on, it takes us some time to straighten out the characters. The several main characters, however, soon emerge as the story begins. Among the audience watching Robert Smith's suicidal flight, a pregnant woman who drops her covered basket, spilling red velvet rose petals is Ruth Forster, and her unborn baby is Milkman. The two half-grown daughters with her are Milkman's two sisters, Only Magdalene and First Corinthians. The poorly dressed singing woman at the back of the crowd is Milkman's aunt, Pilate. The little boy sent to the emergency office by the white nurse is Milkman's close friend and later his enemy, Guitar. In the disguise of "namelessness," almost all the main characters are put on the stage. The nameless state of blacks symbolizes the painful oppression they suffer and their miserable life of slavery and even after their liberation. The conflict of the white and the black is conveyed in the naming of this fiction. The name "No Doctor Street" is given by the local black people to Main Avenue, which "gave Southside residents a way to keep their memories alive and please the city legislators as well" (CitationMorrison 4). And they also call the charity hospital at its northern end "No Mercy Hospital." The nature of naming is the form of power and authority. For Toni Morrison, power is the power of naming.

Naming – so essential in African tradition – is a representation of a traditional belief which is accepted as part of the black cultural heritage. Bernard W. Bel in "The Afro-American Novels and Its Traditions" points out that as soon as a child is born, he should be named by his father and called by this name. What's more, only by this way, can he become "Muntu" (an integrated human). Otherwise, he remains as a substance called "Kintu." Even after his death, he cannot be mourned by people or get a rebirth and will be soon forgotten by people. Thus, to American black people, name means divinity, ancestors, and

the witness of their root and history. Though important it is to them, they have no power to name as they wish. The white bestow names upon them. The conflict between the two races also lies in the white's misnaming of blacks. The misnaming of this fiction is about the story of the origin of "Macon Dead" (Macon is Dead). The name is bestowed on them by a drunken Yankee registrar who mistakenly writes down the information given by Macon's father: that his hometown is Macon and that his father is dead. He wants to change it, but his wife, Sing, insists in keeping it because it means wiping out the past of slavery. This misnaming symbolizes three meanings: (1) the white's indifference attitudes toward blacks (the drunken white registrar); (2) the white's power to control blacks (register and naming); (3) the white's abuse of the power mentioned above (misnaming). A black is misnamed "Dead" by a white registrar the moment he just gets freedom and hopes to begin a new life! Circe's words occur to readers: "White people name Negroes like race horses" ([CitationMorrison](#) 243). The name "Macon Dead" forebodes black people's newly obtained freedom is doomed to end with death in the world of the while where God is also a white.

Blacks are "nameless" because given names cannot recover a pre-slave past, both as Circe tells Milkman in the novel. Names carry no meaning for the black ex-slaves in the new world, and as Morrison herself states: "If you come from Africa, your name is gone" ([CitationLeClair](#) 375). The only names which carry meaning are the nicknames, such as Milkman, Guitar, Porter, and so on. Milkman's journey to the south has one central purpose: to give back all these African ex-slaves their names, their real names. Kimberly Benston explains this practice of renaming as a way of reestablishing a historical self-identity and racial identity. For the Afro-American, he notes:

Self-creation and reformation of a fragmented familial past are endlessly interwoven: naming is inevitably enealogical revisionism. All of African American literature may be seen as one vast genealogical poem that attempts to restore community to the ruptures or discontinuities imposed by the history of black presence in America. ([CitationMorrison](#) 152)

Toni Morrison' fiction displays an extensive concern with the erasure of African cultural consciousness and cultural history. The cultivated lack of cultural historical consciousness and the displacement of "peoplehood" which it generates are a central theme of *Song of Solomon*. Naming becomes a means of bridging the violent gaps left by history. One such gap presents itself to Milkman after his journey to south. There Milkman finally knows the importance of names. The power to name is the power to mark, the power to locate and identity. People get names "from yearnings, gestures, flaws, events, mistakes, weaknesses. Names that bore witness" ([CitationMorrison](#) 330). His surname "Macon" witnesses his grandfather's slavery, and "Milkman" reveals his mother's breeding and love for him. On his way back to the north, he reads the road signs with interest, thinking:

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How many dead lives and fading memories were buried in and beneath the names of the places in this country. Under the recorded names were other names, just as "Macon Dead," recorded for all time in some dusty file, hid from view the real names of people, places, and things. Names that had meaning. No wonder Pilate put hers in her ear. When you know your name, you should hang on to it, for unless it is noted down and remembered, it will die when you do. ([CitationMorrison](#) 329)

Milkman recognizes that only by knowing what lies beneath the names of people, places and things, can he find his self-identity. Name is the carrier of history and culture after people's death, and the surrealistic myth of "Solomon's flying back to Africa" guides the origin of the black culture back to the ancient Africa – the black's hometown. Therefore, name helps black people find not only their self-identity but their sense of spiritual belonging. After the discovery of his family name and his ancestors' story from the song, children are always singing, and Milkman is full of pride and love for his race, which lead to his genuine freedom. At the end of the fiction, he can "ride" the air, and the ability of flying refers to his completed union with his race and his real return to the black culture.

Some names adopted from Bible take an ironic and sometimes absurd but symbolic and allegoric in *Song of Solomon*. In fact, since childhood Morrison is greatly influenced by Bible. Once in a conversation she frankly admits that Bible is part of her life. Pilate is one of examples. Her father chooses her name by pointing to a word in Bible that he cannot read. When he is told that it is a man's name and what's more, "the name of the man that killed Jesus," he stubbornly keeps the name by saying "I asked Jesus to save me my life." "Pilate" has double meanings. The name of the murderer of Jesus allegorizes her inherent prowess and power to make defiance with the society to achieve her own freedom and also help others to achieve their freedom. Having the same pronunciation as "pilot," it symbols her sacred duty to guide Milkman to search the family identity and finally learn "If you surrendered to the air, you could ride it." Similarly, the other biblical names in the novel have nothing to do with their original bearers. Magdalena who is called Lena hates and distains men and First Corinthians refuses to abide by his father and brother and "sees a man" ([CitationMorrison](#) 214). Reba (Rebecca) has neither a husband nor sons and indulges in herself and in her promiscuity. *Song of Solomon*, the name of the book itself, is obviously taken from Bible, but even the "Book of Books" has different interpretations under different cultures.

6. Exaggeration and absurdity – unavoidable elements to reconstruct mythic archetype

During the course of reconstructing the mythological archetype, exaggeration is naturally used by magic realist writers. Exaggeration is the frequently used expression technique in literary creation. Based on reality and under the help

of imagination, writers grasp some certain features of objects and make them exaggerated or emphasized so as to maximize their characteristics of nature as well as achieve artistic effect. In *Song of Solomon*, this skill of displacement is used more common, bolder and more marvelous. In fact, Toni Morrison does not stop here, and she tries an extreme exaggeration and displacement, that is, absurdity. Her fiction extremely maximizes the melting of the limits of time and space of the universe and exaggerates the oneness of dream and reality to greatly strengthen the artistic effect of transformation. Although many plots and characters have a great distance away from the archetypes of life, they never go beyond the limits of reality. They are still a reflection of reality, but a transformative and subjective one. There is such a description:

But the water mark, hidden by the bowl all these years, was exposed. And once exposed, it behaved as though it were itself a plant and flourished into a huge suede-gray flower that throbbed life fever, and sighed like the shift of sand dunes. But it would also be still. Patient, restful, and still. ([CitationMorrison](#) 12–13)

This passage can respond to what Carl G. Jung calls a "psychic" truth: "Physical is not the only criterion of truth. There are also psychic truths which can neither be explained nor proved nor contested in any physical way" ([CitationJung](#) xi). The purpose of the absurdity here is ostensibly to tell us the origin of the nickname "Milkman," but actually to imply Ruth's dull, desperate, and miserable life. "Almost as tall as he was," Pilate is suddenly "shorter," and when standing there in the receiving room of the jail, "she didn't even come up to the sergeant's shoulder – and the sergeant's head barely reached Milkman's own chin" ([CitationMorrison](#) 206). At the police station, Pilate thus frees Milkman and Guitar, outwitting his brother who teaches Milkman that his money can settle all the matters. Another example is the magical power of Milkman's urine that can kill a plant. Urine is more ordinary than anything else in people's daily life, but under the pen of Morrison, it is endowed with a magical power and turns into something supernatural that implies Milkman's inherent magic power that later helps him to search his family identity, and also the national and cultural identities.

7. Solomon's song – a song belonging to black women

Folktales, myths, and legends are communal property of the African-American people and so are the Blues and jazz. The folk songs, one of the main structural elements in *Song of Solomon*, express the archetypal collective consciousness of African-Americans – their aspirations for freedom and their struggles for wholeness, which are deeply rooted in black cultural values. Songs are carriers of black culture and history and the story both begins and ends in the song. The magic tales of flying and tunes are interwoven together to situate readers within that folk tradition and its African roots.

In the fiction, the folk song *Solomon's song* has appeared many times, and each time has a close connection with Milkman. His mother is suffering from birth pangs and gives a birth to him the next day on the company of the powerful contralto:

O Sugarman done fly away
Sugarman done gone
ugarman cut across the sky
Sugarman gone home…. ([CitationMorrison](#) 6)

The song and Smith's suicidal flight are doomed to drop Milkman into a "flying" complex of his whole life. The person who loves to sing the song is Pilate, and it is just from her Milkman that for the first time hears the song which has a predestined relationship with his whole life:

Pilate began to hum as she returned to plucking the berries. After a moment, Reba joined her, and they ummed together in perfect harmony until Pilate took the lead:

Sugarman don't leave me here
Cotton balls to choke me
O Sugarman don't leave me here
uckra's arms to yoke me

When the two women got to chorus, Hagar raised her head and sang too.

O Sugarman done fly away
Sugarman done gone
Sugarman cut across the sky
Sugarman gone home. ([CitationMorrison](#) 49)

This time the song is chanted by Pilate, her daughter and granddaughter, and the words of the song are more complete. The song is sung as a song to lead Milkman home. Milkman of that moment is a puzzled and confused black young man, who lives in the world where "God is also a white" and every moment feels a sense of brink. He notices that "one of his legs was shorter than the other" ([CitationMorrison](#) 62) and his face "lacked coherence, a coming together of the features into a total self" ([CitationMorrison](#) 69) when he looks himself at the mirror. The former implies his lack of the understanding of his culture while the latter is the manifestation of his incompetence of understanding himself. Here at Pilate' house, when hearing the song, he experiences family's harmony, warmth, care, and love which he has never had. It is also the song that leads him back to his "home," where the whole piece of song is sung by Shalimar's children in the game everywhere:

Jake the only son of Solomon
Come booba yalle, come booba tambee
Whirled about and touched the sun
Come konka yalle, come konka tambee
Left that baby in a white man's house
Come booba yalle, come booba tambee

Heddy took him to a red man's house
Come konka yalle, come konka tambee
Black lady fell down on the ground
Come booba yalle, come booba tambee
Threw her body all around
Come konka yalle, come konka tambee
Solomon and Ryna Belali Shalut
Yaruba Medina Muhammet too.
Nestor Kalina Saraka cake.
wenty-one children, the last one Jake!
O Sugarman don't leave me here
Cotton balls to choke me
O Sugarman don't leave me here
Buckra's arms to yoke me
Solomon done fly, Solomon done gone
Solomon cut across the sky, Solomon gone home. ([CitationMorrison](#) 303)

The song has reached its climax here, and so has the story. After experiencing so many "baptisms," Milkman gets an epiphany here: it is the song of his family history! "Solomon" in the lyrics is his grand grandfather, the flying African in the legend, who is sold from Africa to America as a slave and later flies back to Africa, and only his wife Ryna and twenty-one children are left. It is the children's song that helps him to find his family name "Solomon" and family history and also to reach his spiritual grown-up. All the different parts of the story Milkman hears from Pilate, Circe, and the women of Shalimar fall together in this children' song, and it reminds him of Pilate's song where Solomon has been changed into Shalimar and then altered into Shalleemane and Pilate's sugarman. The metaphorical connection between the several different pronunciations, in Bonnie Barthold's words, is the sweet and spicy scent of ginger, the odor of an African market. Songs are magic: it can cut across time and place, pass on history from one generation to another, and let children remember their ancestor's sweat and blood. Thus, in the preface of the book, Morrison puts "Daddy – Fathers can fly, and children may know their names."

Morrison depicts a black man's growing of her mind. As to her, two things mark a black man's grown-up: one is his understanding of his native culture; the other is his understanding of the women of his race. As for Milkman, "Women are the main source of knowledge." That's to say, he should mainly learn from women. In the fiction, Milkman is always surrounded by some ordinary or extraordinary women and his growing and the journey to search his root begin and end in women. He owns his life to two women: his aunt Pilate and his mother Ruth. Milkman's father marries Ruth for the money she inherits from his father, and feeling only contempt and hatred for her, he stops making love with her for as long as almost 20 years. Under the help and

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conspiracy of Pilate, Ruth can conceive again and successfully gives a birth to Milkman.

The folk song, in the book, reveals an important motif: flying. It implies a "spiritual channel," a spiritual success. However, the lyrics reveal the negative effect of flying: The personal success of flying is often at the cost of his wife, his children and even others else. Just as Morrison once says in one of her conversations, the archetype of "flying man" in black culture tells about a kind of solemn and stirring resplendence, and this heroic behavior does leave some consequence and pity, that is, the abandoning of others. In the song, Solomon flies away, abandoning his wife Ryna and his 20 sons for her to raise. The loss of her beloved husband has put Ryna in great agony. She, while watching Solomon's Leap at the Ryna's Gulch, screams and screams, loses her mind completely. In fact, this is a song wife sings for his leaving husband. What conveys through it is the wife's endless sadness and despair, but inside the endless sadness and despair is her deep love for him, a sort of love that is doomed to be unilateral forever and can never get a return. Ryna is the archetype of the women who are thirsty for love and happiness but gets nothing. Ryna dies, but many new Rynas come up one after another. Their lovers never give them their love and even maltreat them although they don't have to fly away because they don't live in slavery like Ryna's husband. New Rynas are more miserable than the old one. Ruth and Hagar, Milkman Girlfriend, are among them. Ruth wastes her valuable youth on her miserable life resulting from her tragic marriage. Hagar is more unfortunate. She is more like Ryna, a sort of woman who would mad, die, or something when her man leaves. Milkman is once infatuated with her, but once she falls love with him, he is getting tired of her like an eaten chewing gum and calls her as "the third beer" (CitationMorrison 91), not the first one "which the throat receives with almost tearful gratitude" (CitationMorrison 91), nor the second one which "confirms and extends the pleasure of the first" (CitationMorrison 91), but the third one which "you drink because it's there, because it can't hurt" (CitationMorrison 91). Women, to him, are mere tools to satisfy himself. Later, in order to get rid of her, he even refuses her love mercilessly, which leads to her final decay. When he is in the forest by himself during the hunt, he recalls Hagar and feels remorseful for all the bad things he has done to her. It is Hagar who makes him realize the importance of loving others and regain his ability of loving. Hence, later he returns to Sweet's each expressions of love: She put salve on his face. He washed her hair. She sprinkled talcum on his feet. He straddled her behind and massaged her back. She put witch hazel on his swollen neck. He made up the bed. She gave him gumbo to eat. He washed the dishes. She washed his clothes and hung them out to dry. He scoured her tub. She ironed his shirt and pants. He gave her fifty dollars. She kissed his mouth. He touched her face. She said please come back. He said I'll see you tonight. (CitationMorrison 258)

In Milkman's journey to the south from Michigan to Denville and down to Shalimar, from Pilate to Grace and Susan, they guide him one by one, making him come more and more close to his ancestors, understand his native culture, and finish his spiritual maturation: from a dedicatee to a dedicator. So in the last page of the book, when the dying Pilate asks him to "sing a little somethin" (CitationMorrison 336) for her, he who knows no songs and has no singing voice sings for the lady: "Sugargirl don't leave me here/Cotton balls to choke me/Sugargirl don't leave me here/Buckra's arms to yoke me" (CitationMorrison 336). It is from women that Milkman who never sings gets the singing voice. It is true that he finally succeeds in finding his family story, but his mother would never have conceived him without Pilate and it is Pilate who guides him to find himself, mainly through her singing.

In *Song of Solomon*, Morrison has retold the folk tale of the flying Africans. Besides paying tribute to their supernatural power, their cunning wit, and their desire for freedom, she has celebrated those who are left behind: the crying women. They are left behind not only to weep and to perish but to keep the song alive. Similarly, the success of Milkman's journey is based on female sacrifices for male identity, and the women, including Pilate, are victims. Pilate is the most powerful character in the story. She is calm, confident, and independent; she is kind and sympathetic; she is able to find her right place between the nature and the society and lead a life in her unique way; she is bestowed with magic power which enables her to talk with her dead father and get out from her dead mother's belly without a navel. Her crucial role as trickster and conjure woman becomes evident once more the night she gets Milkman and Guitar out of jail. Pilate shows the typical image of black women – "an immortal, an Eros, a street lamp and an incarnation of God of Protection for other people." For Milkman, Pilate is so. She still cares about him even before his birth; she lets him feel being loved and teach him how to love; she protects and saves him from the danger … and even in the end of the story, when she follows Milkman back to hometown, at Solomon's Leap, she uses her own body to protect him and is shot to death by Guitar. When she is dying, she says to Milkman: "I'd wish I'd a knowed more people. I would of loved 'em all. If I'd a knowed more, I would a loved more" (CitationMorrison 336). Pilate gives her dear nephew the last lesson, making him finally realize that it is by *love* that life makes sense, and from her he gets the "voice" to sing out the song at the end of the story. Pilate is the singer of life. She always sings. She sings when Mr. Smith jumps off Mercy hospital; she sings when Macon sneaks to her house, yearning for the past; she sings when Milkman is drawn to her place. She sings Solomon's song. Solomon's song is Pilate's song, black women's song, and the song is the tale of the African ancestor, Milkman's "great-granddaddy," who "lifted his beautiful black ass up in the sky and flew on home" (CitationMorrison 327), leaving behind the women with his children to pass on the story.

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Magic World in Song of Solomon: A Return to Black Culture, www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/25723618.2017.1387979. Accessed 16 Sept. 2023.

3.2 MAGICAL REALISM IN THEATER HISTORY

1) What is Magical Realism?

Defining Magical Realism

Magical realism — related to and sometimes conflated with magic realism, marvelous realism, and magico realism — is a term used to describe literature in which supernatural or magical elements coexist with the ordinary and the mundane. As Louis Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris write in their introduction to *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community*, in magical realist texts.

While the term magical realism seems to emphasize the dichotomy between its elements (magic and reality), magical realism would not view itself as oxymoronic. Within magical realism, Zamora and Faris write, "magic may be real, reality magical; there is no need to label them as such" (1995).

Magical realism is difficult to concisely define thanks to the term's complicated origins (discussed later in this guide) and disagreement over its status as a genre, mode, or form of writing — or, more broadly, a concept of reality. Magical realism is probably best described as a literary or narrative mode. Amaryll Beatrice Chanady distinguishes "genre" from "mode" in *Magical Realism and the Fantastic*.

Key Elements of Magical Realism

Faris offers this succinct definition of magical realism in the book chapter "Scheherazade's Children: Magical Realism and Postmodern Fiction":

Very briefly, magical realism combines realism and the fantastic in such a way that magical elements grow organically out of the reality portrayed. (1995)

She provides a list of five **primary characteristics** of magical realism:

1. There is an **irreducible element of magic** that cannot be explained by rational laws of the universe — and it "really" happens in the text. The magic refuses to be assimilated into or dismissed by realism and often disrupts logic and order. Magical elements and logical reversals make reality as we know it seem amazing or ridiculous because "the reactions of ordinary people to these magical events reveal behaviors that we recognize and that disturb us" (1995). Magic can thus be used for the purposes of satire or political commentary.

2. **Detailed descriptions** create a fictional world that resembles our own, and they demonstrate the strong presence of the phenomenal within it. This attention to sensory detail is a continuation of the realist tradition. But when such detail is applied to magical phenomena, it frees a style of detailed, realist writing from needing to reflect "real life." Actual historical events are often woven into magical realism in unexpected and specific ways, and objects take on a life of their own, reappearing

and gradually accumulating meaning.

3. The reader is positioned **between two contradictory understandings** of events, potentially causing **unsettling doubts**. Faris cites Todorov's understanding of the fantastic, which is found when a reader hesitates between the uncanny (when an event can be explained according to the known laws of the universe) and the marvelous (which requires an alteration to those laws). Is the event a hallucination or a miracle? This hesitation is a tricky element in magical realism: it disturbs the irreducible element of magic, and some readers hesitate more than others.

4. There is a **closeness or near-merging of two realms**. Magical realism takes place at an intersection of two worlds, fantasy and reality, so it often transgresses other seemingly fixed categories like life and death, fact and fiction.

5. Received ideas about **time, space, and identity are questioned**. The reader's sense of time and space is unmoored by magical realist texts. The concept of the "subject" — in fiction, in history, in life — is interrogated, a contestation which Faris believes is more convincing "because it comes from within": "the magic contests but it contests from within a realistically rendered historical fiction and a realistically conceived character," even as it questions those very ideas (1995).

Other characteristics of magical realism which are common but less core to defining the mode include:
- metafictional elements
- "verbal magic" — metaphors made real, intertextual play
- an almost childlike matter-of-factness
- repetitions, mirroring, and reversals
- metamorphoses
- magic as resistance to the established social order
- critiques of totalitarian regimes
- incorporation of ancient belief systems or local folklore
- rural settings (though there are significant magical realist works set in cities)
- a Jungian rather than Freudian perspective — the magic seems to emanate from a sense of collective relatedness rather than individual memories, dreams, or visions
- a carnivalesque spirit and a sense of excess

With these key elements in mind, we can now explore magical realism in greater depth.

Magical Realism and Realism

Magical realism responds to another literary mode: realism. Although the idea that art should mirror reality dates back to Aristotle's writing on *mimesis*, or imitation, realism emerged as a term in literary criticism during the mid-nineteenth century. Its principles arise from the conviction of Enlightenment philosophers like Descartes and Locke that reality's truths are discoverable through reason and rational inquiry. Realism as a literary mode is most associated with novels of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries that aimed to represent life as it "truly" was, to depict realistic characters and situations within a recognizable world that mirrors the reality of their readers. Some critics, including Catherine Belsey in *Critical Practice*, argue that realism's "truth" or "recognizability" lies not in the world it depicts but in *how* it depicts that world. Belsey writes, "Realism is plausible not because it reflects the world, but because it is constructed out of what is (discursively) familiar" (1980, [2003]). It is this approach that realism and magical realism share: magical realism presents extraordinary and marvelous events as if they were real, constructing a narrative that provides a realistic context for unreal elements. As Maggie Ann Bowers writes in *Magic(al) Realism*:

Magical realism does not simply stretch realism; it rebels against it. Literary realism operates with a universalizing impulse, intending its "objective" depiction to stand as a singular version of nature, society, reality — in short, as Zamora and Faris write, "realism functions ideologically and hegemonically" (1995). Magical realism also "functions ideologically" but "less hegemonically," creating "space for interactions of diversity" through a program that is "not centralizing but eccentric":

In magical realist texts, ontological disruption serves the purpose of political and cultural disruption: magic is often given as a cultural corrective, requiring readers to scrutinize accepted realistic conventions of causality, materiality, motivation. (1995)

Magical realism thus shares with the realist mode an investment in exploring the nature of reality and its depiction. At the same time, magical realism resists the basic assumptions held by literary realism and post-Enlightenment rationalism. Writers often use magical realism to counter dominant narratives developed in Europe and thrust upon the world, represented by the realist novel. Through magical realism, writers can recuperate "non-Western" worldviews and forms of storytelling, self-consciously departing from European traditions of prose writing, geographical settings, and stereotypes of the irrational or mystic as "primitive," "effeminate," and "unenlightened."

Magical Realism versus Surrealism, Fantasy, Science Fiction, and the Fantastic

To clarify what magical realism *is*, it is helpful to understand what it is *not*. We have already discussed what distinguishes magical realism from realism, but magical realism is not the only mode/genre of literature which resists realist impulses.

In Alejo Carpentier's essay "On the Marvelous Real in America" (1967, [1995]), a foundational text in the development of magical realism, he distinguishes the "marvelous real" from other genres incorporating the magical and extraordinary, including Surrealism. (Largely, the marvelous real is considered to be an early theorization of magical realism, though Bowers addresses this relationship in more depth and distinguishes the two terms in *Magic(al) Realism*.)

Predating magical realism, Surrealism also reimagined standards of realism in both art and literature. After World War I shattered a sense of the world as rational and ordered, the surrealists turned to unbelievable images and occurrences in their art. Carpentier describes how the surrealists "manufactured" the marvelous "by tricks of prestidigitation, by juxtaposing objects unlikely ever to be found together" (1967, [1995]). In other words, the magical elements of Surrealism felt forced, intentionally chosen in order to create a sense of shock or disbelief.

Carpentier felt Surrealism was constructed and formulaic: "The result of willing the marvelous or any other trance is that the dream technicians become the bureaucrats" (1967, [1995]). Magical realism, on the other hand, drew upon magic that was not manufactured but latent, raw, and omnipresent, especially in America.

Faris explains that magical realism is part of Surrealism's legacy, inheriting its defiance of realism and logic, its exploitation of the "fullest magic of metaphor," and its sense of "defamiliarization" (1995). "However," she continues,

In contrast to the magical images constructed by Surrealism out of ordinary objects, which aim to appear virtually unmotivated and thus programmatically resist interpretation, magical realist images, while projecting a similar initial aura of surprising craziness, tend to reveal their motivations — psychological, social, emotional, political — after some scrutiny. (1995)

Bowers points to another key difference between Surrealism and magical realism: while Surrealism often concerns itself with dreams, magical realism rarely presents the extraordinary through "a psychological experience because to do so takes the magic out of recognizable material reality and places it into the little understood world of the imagination. The ordinariness of magical realism's magic relies on its accepted and unquestioned position in tangible and material reality" (2004).

Magical realism is also distinguished from two other genres employing marvelous elements, fantasy and science fiction. In works of fantasy, the

world we encounter is separate from our own, built on its own structures and conventions of reality. Magic appears everywhere; it is part of the world and never seems out of place. In works of science fiction, as Chanady writes, the extraordinary is also integrated into the larger order of the text, but the work's "norms of logic are based on existing scientific discoveries and theories. [...] What would obviously be regarded as supernatural in a different context, is considered normal in the world of science fiction" (1985, [2019]).

In works of magical realism, the world resembles our own but punctuated by seemingly incongruous marvelous elements. These elements are often treated matter-of-factly, present as realist occurrences even as they are clearly extraordinary.

Magical realism is often discussed in conversation with another literary mode incorporating marvelous elements into an otherwise realist world: the fantastic. Critics disagree about the extent to which magical realism and the fantastic overlap. Neil Cornwell argues in *The Literary Fantastic: From Gothic to Postmodernism* that, in works utilizing the fantastic, marvelous elements are presented by the narrator to the reader as *extraordinary events* within a realist tale; in a magical realist interpretation, these elements are presented as *ordinary* within a realist story. In her study of the fantastic and magical realism, Chanady differentiates the two modes in this way: "In contrast to the fantastic, the supernatural in magical realism does not disconcert the reader [...]. The same phenomena that are portrayed as problematical by the author of a fantastic narrative are presented in a matter-of-fact manner by the magical realist" (1985, [2019]).

Because the magical elements are presented as ordinary occurrences, the readers are encouraged to accept the phenomena at face value. On the other hand, Tzvetan Todorov defines the fantastic by its ability to elicit a constant waffling between belief and nonbelief in the reader: is this event supernatural, or is there a logical explanation? This indeterminacy produces an unsettled feeling in the reader and the characters; the protagonist is often surprised or terrified. The fantastic interrupts realism and reason by puncturing it with the abnormal and keeping the reader questioning; magical realism similarly resists realism and reason, but by presenting similarly abnormal events *without* question.

This precise differentiation is contested within the scholarship. As we see in the "Key Elements of Magical Realism" section below, Faris lists the element of doubt as one key element in magical realism, interpreting the fantastic as a tool that can be used by magical realism.

In order to further illustrate the differences between these literary modes, a series of examples may be helpful.

In a fantasy novel, an otherwise human person with large wings would likely be presented as a particular type of creature found in the novel's world — like faeries in Sarah J. Maas' *A Court of Thorns and Roses* series. In a science

fiction novel, the wings could be explained as the result of scientific experimentation — such as in James Patterson's *Maximum Ride* series. In magical realism, the appearance of a person with wings seems out of place in a world that otherwise resembles ours. Take Gabriel García Márquez's short story "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings" (1968). A married couple, Pelayo and Elisenda, find a winged man lying in their backyard. Although they are at first startled by his appearance, they "soon overc[o]me their surprise and in the end [find] him familiar" (1968). The characters search for an explanation and conclude that the man must be an angel, though the parish priest finds him "much too human: he had an unbearable smell of the outdoors, the back side of his wings was strewn with parasites and his main feathers had been mistreated by terrestrial winds, and nothing about him measured up to the proud dignity of angels" (1968).

In this short story, we see the way magical realism presents the marvelous materially and matter-of-factly: there really is a man with wings in Pelayo and Elisenda's house. The story lingers on realist elements — the bureaucratic process of determining if the man is an angel, the physical details of his haggard appearance, the worldly motivations of Pelayo and Elisenda, who make money off those visiting the supposed angel. The old man becomes something material and recognizable even if he is understood as extraordinary. He is treated "as if he weren't a supernatural creature but a circus animal" (1968). This short story is thus more in the mode of the magical realist than the fantastic, if the terms are viewed as separate. We are not disturbed by the fact that this extraordinary figure is *in* a realist world; we are more disturbed by how he is treated.

The History of Magical Realism
Although the term magical realism was first used in the twentieth century, one can argue that magical realism attempts to reconnect with a style of writing predating realism's dominance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Zamora and Faris endow magical realism with a long history, "beginning with the masterful interweavings of magical and real in the epic and chivalric traditions and continuing in the precursors of modern prose fiction — the *Decameron*, *The Thousand and One Nights*, *Don Quixote*" (1995). They continue:

Indeed, we may suppose that the widespread appeal of magical realist fiction today responds not only to its innovative energy but also to its impulse to reestablish contact with traditions temporarily eclipsed by the mimetic constraints of nineteenth- and twentieth-century realism. (1995)

The term "magical realism" was first introduced by the German art critic Franz Roh. Aiming to describe the new style of Post-Expressionist painting, he deployed the term *Magischer Realismus* (usually translated "magic realism"), though he never provided a concise definition. In his 1925 publication *Nach-*

Expressionismus, Magischer Realismus: Probleme der neuesten Europaïschen Malerei (Post-Expressionism, Magical Realism: Problems of the Newest European Painting), Roh describes the goals of magic realist painting: "To depict realistically is not to portray or copy but rather to build rigorously, to construct objects that exist in the world in their primordial shape" (1925, [1995]). Magic realist artists depict "a purified world, a referential world" coldly, statically, meticulously (1925, [1995]). They believe that, through an attention to the exteriors of objects, the juxtaposition of near and far, and the depiction of things minute and infinite, a spiritual understanding of reality can be captured.

In the preface to his book, Roh writes that he chose the word "magic" rather than "mystic" to "indicate that the mystery does not descend to the represented world, but rather hides and palpitates behind it" (1925, [1995]). Although the style of magic realist art seems disparate from the literary mode of magical realism, this idea of magic palpitating behind the represented world shares something with magical realism's approach to literature.

At the same time that Roh described Post-Expressionist painting with the term magic realist, German museum director Gustav Harlaub used the term *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity). It was Harlaub's term that largely stuck and eventually subsumed magic realism.

Alejo Carpentier was the first to describe the literary movement that would become magical realism, using the term *lo real maravilloso* (the marvelous real). In his writings and lectures, Carpentier emphasized the particularly American nature of the marvelous real, distinguished from European Surrealism. Rather than following a manifesto or constructed artistic goal, the American marvelous real amplified reality as it truly appeared in Latin American nature and culture; it captured a true, rather than manufactured, mystery.

For Carpentier the marvelous real emerges from the very history, geography, and folklore of Latin America. He points to Latin America's lush vegetation, continued appreciation for the ritual of folk dancing, hybridity of mixed races and ethnicities, and extraordinary historical events, "from those who searched for the fountain of eternal youth and the golden city of Manoa to certain early rebels or modern heroes of mythological fame from our wars of independence" (1949, [1995]). When the conquerors encountered America, they could not find the words to describe what they had seen. Carpenter writes, "to understand and interpret this new world, a new vocabulary was needed, not to mention — because you can't have one without the other — a new optic" (1975, [1995]): "Here the strange is commonplace, and always was commonplace" (1949, [1995]).

The concept of "magical realism" became fully realized by the critic Angel Flores in his 1955 essay "Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction." Both Carpentier and Flores root magical realism in Latin America, and many of the

writers considered innovators of the mode have Latin American origins —
Jorge Luis Borges, Gabriel García Márquez, Carlos Fuentes, Isabel Angélica Allende Llona, to name only a few.

Since the 1950s, magical realism has continued to develop and critics have grappled with the difficulty of defining the mode as it spread throughout the globe and took new forms. It has become a truly global literary mode; other writers often associated with magical realism or interpreted through that lens include Salman Rushdie, Milan Kundera, Haruki Murakami, Toni Morrison, and Ana Castillo.

Magical Realism Examples: *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *The Satanic Verses*

Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) and Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988) are two of the most significant works of magical realism.

One Hundred Years of Solitude is considered a core text of the Latin American literary "boom" of the 1960s and '70s, an exemplary work of magical realism, and one of the most widely acclaimed novels of all time. The novel takes place in a small village resembling the writer's hometown, Aracataca. Many of the book's events are based on historical fact, such as the 1928 workers strike of the United Fruit Company and the Thousand Days' War, a Colombian civil war that took place between October 1899 and November 1902. Within this reality resembling our own, supernatural elements manifest — the village priest levitates when he drinks hot chocolate, a traveler transforms into a puddle of tar, flowers rain when a character dies. The story has a mythic quality common in works of magical realism.

The Satanic Verses is another significant work of magical realism, not only for its literary merit but also for the vehement response it provoked. Rushdie's novel interweaves the story of Saladin and Gibreel, Indian expatriates to England whose lives are transformed after they survive the hijacking of a plane, with an imaginary account of the early days of Islam. The novel features visions depicting the life of the prophet Muhammad, a peasant girl, and a contemporary imam. The book references the Satanic Verses of the Quran: legend says that three verses were spoken to Muhammad but later withdrawn on the grounds that they were actually spoken by the devil under the guise of God.

The book's references to the Satanic Verses and unorthodox incorporations of Muslim names and religious figures were seen by some as blasphemous. In 1989, Ruhollah Khomeini, Supreme Leader of Iran whom Rushdie parodied in his novel, issued a fatwa, or a binding legal ruling, for Rushdie's assassination. Numerous killings, attempted killings (including against Rushdie himself), and bombings were perpetrated by extremists outraged by the book and its perceived dishonoring of Muhammad and Islam.

Magical Realism and Postmodernism

Both magical realism and postmodernism have similar histories as terms in criticism. Each only gained wide usage in the 1960s and were applied to artistic movements in the 1980s. Both are often used to describe literature, but have expanded beyond those bounds to describe other works of art and even perspectives on reality. Both are terms that are frequently used by critics while evading precise definition, accumulating meanings and attributions to the point where critics question their utility.

Theo L. D'haen argues (in "Magical Realism and Postmodernism: Decentering Privileged Centers") that the following features are characteristic of postmodernism: self-reflexiveness, metafiction, eclecticism, redundancy, multiplicity, discontinuity, intertextuality, parody, the dissolution of character and narrative instance, the erasure of boundaries, and the destabilization of the reader. All of these features are also commonly seen in magical realism, allying the mode with the postmodernist impulse.

For D'haen, magical realism is part of postmodernism, particularly because of the sense that magical realism does not speak from a privileged center for culture or politics: "It is precisely the notion of the ex-centric, in the sense of speaking from the margin from a place 'other' than 'the' or 'a' center, that seems to me an essential feature of that strain of postmodernism we call magic realism" (1995). Magical realism attempts to break from a literary tradition "starting with realism and running via naturalism and modernism" to a kind of postmodernist writing that, subversive as it might seem to the movement before it, still originates from a "privileged center" (1995). D'haen argues that magical realism appropriates the techniques of the "center" (such as realist description) and then uses them,

Not, as in the case of these central movements, 'realistically,' that is, to duplicate existing reality as perceived by the theoretical or philosophical tenets underlying said [central] movements, but rather to create an alternative world *correcting* so-called existing reality, and thus to right the wrongs this 'reality' depends upon. Magical realism thus reveals itself as a *ruse* to invade and take over dominant discourse(s). (1995)

Magical realism is a tool for writers who do not speak from privileged centers to "access the main body of 'Western' literature" while avoiding "the adoption of the views of hegemonic forces together with their discourse" (1995). At the same time, writers speaking from those privileged centers can diverge from those discourses of power. D'haen discusses specific magical realist novels that directly respond to or rewrite colonist, misogynist, oppressive narratives, like J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986) — which rewrites *Robinson Crusoe* through the perspective of a woman shipwrecked on the island and centers Friday's story — and Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* (1984) — which references Homeric myths, particularly the rape of Leda by Zeus in the form of a swan.

Both novels utilize magical realism to resist the way stories of women and "non-Western" peoples have historically been told in "Western" literature. For D'haen, the cutting edge of postmodernism is magical realism because it blends the boundaries between and ultimately subverts the possible and impossible, reality and parody, fact and fiction, relevant and irrelevant. By questioning realism through the techniques of realism, magical realism disrupts hegemonic narratives — the ways we tell stories, who we tell them about, and what they tell us. Magical realism not only shocks the realist system with the appearance of the fantastical or unusual, but it causes us to consider how our own reality is itself marvelous and extraordinary, home to unimaginable horrors, mind-boggling absurdities, and fantastic miracles.

Allen, Paige. "Magical Realism: Definition, Examples & Analysis: Perlego." *Perlego Knowledge Base*, www.perlego.com/knowledge/study-guides/what-is-magical-realism/. Accessed 14 Sept. 2023.

2) Examples of Magical Realism in Theatre

Magical realism is a genre that has captivated readers and audiences for decades. While most commonly associated with literature, magical realism has also made its way onto the stage in the form of plays and musicals. We'll explore some of the most popular examples of magical realism in theatre.

1. "The Glass Menagerie" by Tennessee Williams
First performed in 1944, "The Glass Menagerie" is a classic play that uses elements of magical realism to explore the inner lives of its characters. The play tells the story of the Wingfield family, and particularly of the protagonist, Tom, as he struggles to come to terms with his family's past and his own identity. Through the use of haunting music and dreamlike sequences, the play creates a sense of otherworldliness that draws the audience in and leaves them questioning the nature of reality.

2. "Into the Woods" by Stephen Sondheim
"Into the Woods" is a beloved musical that combines elements of fairy tales with a modern, meta-theatrical sensibility. The show follows a cast of characters as they journey into the woods in search of their desires, only to find that their wishes come with unexpected consequences. The show's use of magical realism is perhaps most evident in the character of the Witch, who is able to transform herself and others through the use of her magic.

3. "Angels in America" by Tony Kushner
Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1993, "Angels in America" is a sprawling, two-part play that uses magical realism to explore the AIDS crisis in America in the 1980s. The play tells the stories of a group of characters, including a gay man with AIDS, a Mormon couple, and a drag queen, as they struggle to come to terms with their own mortality and the changing world

around them. The play's use of fantastical elements, including angels and ghosts, serves to heighten the emotional intensity of the story.

4. "The Pillowman" by Martin McDonagh

"The Pillowman" is a darkly comic play that tells the story of a writer who is interrogated by police over the content of his stories, which often feature elements of magical realism. The play is set in a dystopian world in which creativity and imagination are seen as dangerous, and the writer must confront the consequences of his own work. Through its use of surreal imagery and unsettling themes, the play challenges the audience to question the power of art and the nature of censorship.

5. "The Light in the Piazza" by Adam Guettel

"The Light in the Piazza" is a romantic musical that tells the story of a young American woman who falls in love with an Italian man while on vacation in Florence. The show uses magical realism to explore themes of love, family, and cultural identity. The show's dreamlike sequences and lush score create a sense of enchantment that draws the audience in and leaves them spellbound.

Magical realism is a genre that has found a natural home on the stage, with a number of plays and musicals using its elements to explore complex themes and create unforgettable experiences for audiences. Whether you're a seasoned theatre-goer or a newcomer to the world of live performance, these five examples of magical realism in theatre are sure to captivate and inspire.

Theatre Haus. "Magical Realism in Theatre: A Beginner's Guide." *Theatre Haus*, 8 Sept. 2023, www.theatrehaus.com/2023/04/exploring-popular-examples-of-magical-realism-in-theatre/.

3.3 THE FEATURES OF MAGICAL REALISM WORKS

1) What is Magical Realism — Fantasy vs Reality in Art & Literature

Let's define Magical Realism

On its face, the term "magical realism" might seem like an oxymoron, but its definition is actually quite straight forward. What is Magical Realism? For more, check out our index of art styles covering more specific and noteworthy movements.

MAGICAL REALISM DEFINITION

What is Magical Realism?

Magical Realism is a genre of fiction which depicts a setting rooted in realism, but which has elements of fantasy. In other words, the world in which the story takes place is almost entirely identical to ours, but one or a few other worldly beings or traits are added to the mix. Often in in this genre, the mechanics and rules of the magical element are left unexplained, a divergence from much of the fantasy genre. This is because magical realists are less interested in how the magic works than they are in what it represents and how it affects characters.

Important Figures in the Magical Realism Art Movement

- Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Author)
- Isabel Allende (Author)
- Toni Morrison (Author)
- Salman Rushdie (Author)
- Frida Kahlo (Painter)
- Guillermo del Toro (Filmmaker)

WHAT IS MAGICAL REALISM ART MOVEMENT

A history of Magical Realism

While there is a long lineage of writers putting fantastical elements into their otherwise grounded stories, Magical Realism as we know it today originated in Latin America. Of course, however, it didn't come out of nowhere.

The term Magical Realism was coined by German critic Franz Roh in 1925, though he was referring to a movement within Germany called New Objectivity, popularized by authors like Franz Kafka. Like much of Kafka's work, much of New Objectivity was rooted in philosophy and differs slightly from what we would call the Magical Realism art movement today.

Roh's term and its definition made its way to Latin America via authors like Alejo Carpentier, who were traveling back and forth between Europe and their home countries. These authors were influenced by Roh's ideas and by the Surrealist movement in Europe, and began to develop their own angle on these ideas back in Latin America.

By 1940, Magical Realism had exploded in Latin America, and remained popular through the 1950s. The genre was not just limited to literature; artists

like Frida Kahlo used it in their paintings. Notice how Kahlo used realistic portraits mixed with fantastical elements:

"The Two Fridas" by Frida Kahlo, 1939

In the 1960s, the style got attention on the global stage. The Cuban Revolution in 1959 turned the international community's attention to Latin America, a region bursting at the seams with political and cultural revolutions. This turmoil was digested by many Latin American authors (like Gabriel Garcia Marquez) through magical realism – critiquing American imperialism, corporate greed, and governmental corruption through fantastical allegories.
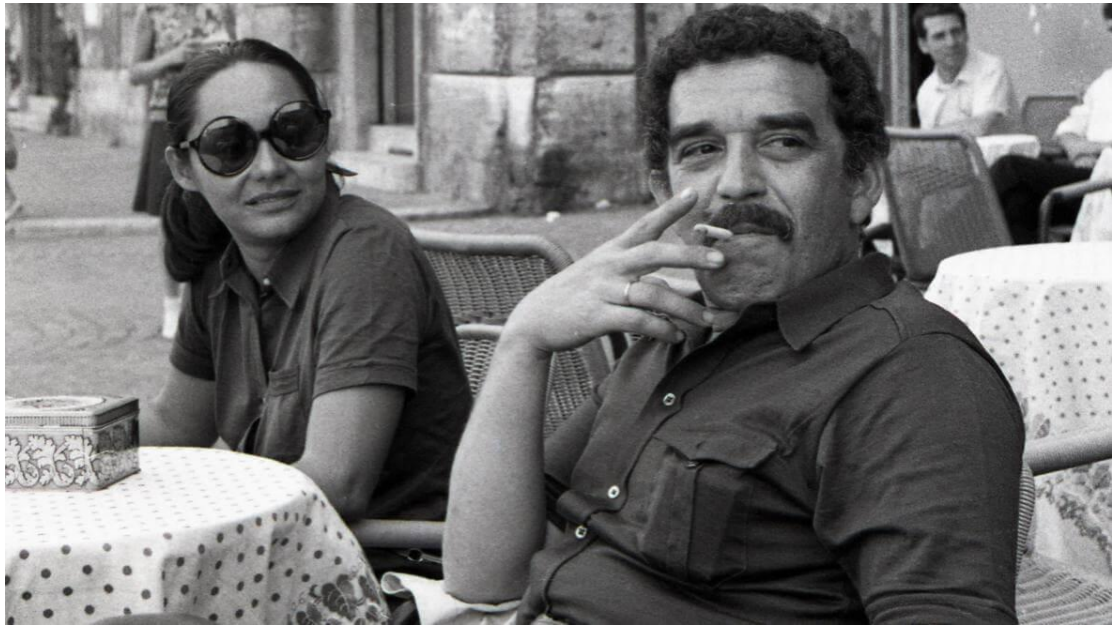
Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Magical realism became a popular genre among marginalized communities around the world. In the United States, for example, African American authors like Toni Morrison used the style to depict the horrors of racism. The genre continued to evolve and expand beyond the boundaries of just literature and painting: Magical Realism [tropes] reached into film, photography, and more.

WHAT IS MAGICAL REALISM VS FANTASY?

Magical Realism examples

Magical Realism has created some of the most enduring artistic works of the past century. Its universal popularity makes it one of the most diverse genres, shining light on drastically different communities and characters. Still, there's similarities that can be learned from all of these examples.

One Hundred Years of Solitude, Gabriel Garcia Marquez (1967)

You can't talk about magical realism without talking about Gabriel Garcia Marquez. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is not just one of the finest examples of the genre, it's one of the greatest works of literature, period. The novel follows several generations of the Buendia family, a member of which founded the fictional town of Macondo.
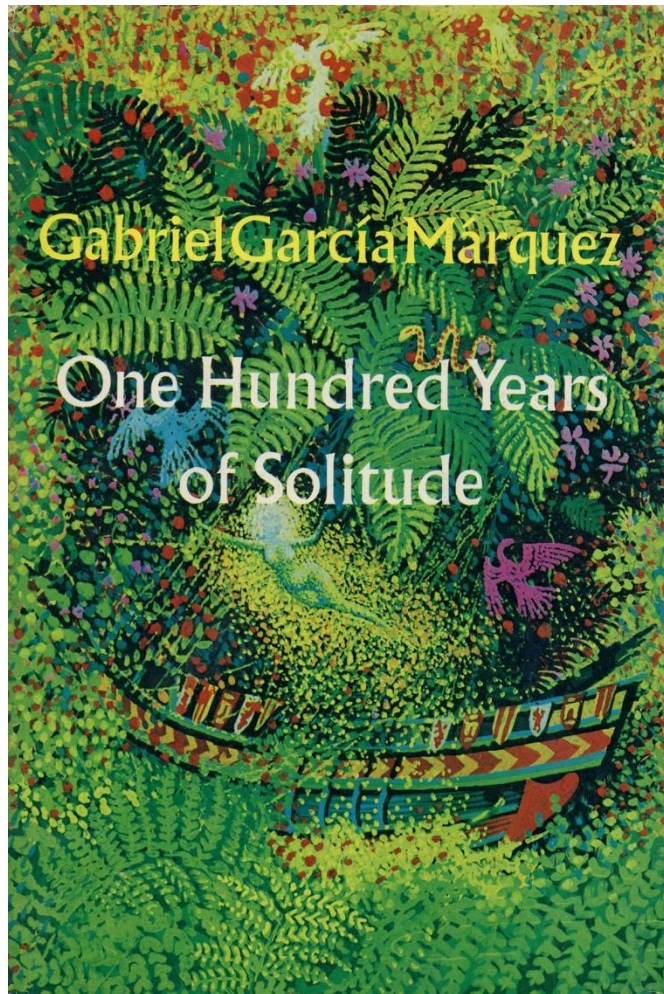
Magical Realism literature examples

Marquez uses Magical Realism in a variety of ways. One of which is the bending of time and the appearances of ghosts.

These fantastical elements inform one of the main [themes](#) of *Solitude*: the past is impossible to escape and must be reckoned with.

WHAT IS MAGICAL REALISM EXAMPLES

WHO IS GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ?

Gabriel Garcia Marquez is a Colombian author who is considered one of the greatest writers of the 20th century.

Marquez started as a journalist who showed no inhibitions in criticizing the Colombian government, and his politics carried into his novels. By the time of his death, he was one of the most beloved figures in Colombia, referred to affectionately as Gabo and called "the greatest Colombian who ever lived" by Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos.

Beloved, Toni Morrison (1987)

Beloved is a fantastic example of why authors often turn to use this genre. In the novel, Toni Morrison sets out to depict how the specter of slavery continues to haunt the United States after its abolition. To do this, Morrison has her main character, a former slave, literally haunted by a ghost.

Magical realism literature examples

The result is a stunning, personal depiction of a subject which otherwise could feel abstract to audiences in 1987. The scars and horrors of slavery are very real in *Beloved*, and the novel stirs readers to this day.

Pan's Labyrinth, Guillermo del Toro (2006)

Guillermo del Toro is a modern master of this magical form of storytelling, having made multiple fantastic films that fall into the genre. Don't be fooled by the different medium; del Toro's uses the characteristics for ends similar to that of Morrison and Marquez.

In *Pan's Labyrinth*, del Toro, like Toni Morrison with *Beloved*, attempts to digest trauma through fantastical allegory. Instead of slavery, however, del Toro tackles fascist Spain, mirroring the horrors of the very real war with the horrors of the underworld Ofelia discovers. The result is a powerful portrait of what it felt like to live through 1940s Spain.

Birdman, Alejandro Inarritu (2014)

Another great example is Alejandro Inarritu's *Birdman*, which follows an over-the-hill actor trying to gain respect as a legitimate actor in spite of being known for his role as the superhero Birdman.

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Magical Realism movies

In the film, the actor is beleaguered by his Birdman character and persona, which is represented by either seeing the character or his occasional transformation into the character. This fantastical touch highlights his inability to let Birdman go.

MAGICAL REALISM DEFINITION

The many uses of Magical Realism

As you can probably tell from the aforementioned examples, magical realism, while seemingly narrow in its definition, can be applied to a variety of settings, stories, and media.

There are an endless variety of uses for it, but in a nutshell, it is a great tool to **describe the indescribable**. There's a reason why Magical Realism became so popular among marginalized or war-torn communities: the genre can help depict unspeakable tragedies and traumas through allegories and allusions. Thus helping a reader understand something that might be difficult to truly wrap their heads around.

In a similar vein, Magical Realism is also a favored genre for those looking to **critique power structures or cultural norms**. Fantastical elements can be a type of hyperbole, taking things that exist in everyday life and heightening them to new levels of absurdity in order to shed light on the absurdity that's already there.

Magical realism can also be **escapism rooted in reality**. Instead of fantasy, which takes place in a totally unrecognizable world, it can help a reader feel

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like their own world is magical. *Harry Potter* uses magical realism tools to inspire wonder in an audience while also allowing them to feel like they could be in the world themself.

So even if you're not setting out to make something that is strictly in this genre, the ideas from the movement are helpful to everyone.

It's just another approach towards a storyteller's ultimate goal: to craft a world that an audience cares about.

Provost, Rex, et al. "Magical Realism - Fantasy vs Reality in Art & Literature." *StudioBinder*, 9 Feb. 2023, www.studiobinder.com/blog/what-is-magical-realism-definition/.

2) The 4 Pillars Of Magic Realism

Magic Realism has proven difficult to define because there are so many theories about what its characteristics are. Should we call it Magic Realism? Magic**al** Realism? Marvellous Realism? Is there a crossover between the literary genre Magic Realism and the movement by the same name within the visual arts? Did Magic Realism start in Germany? Or did it begin in Central and South America? Can only folks from certain cultures be Magic Realist writers? I was more overwhelmed than enlightened by the amount of scholarship available on the subject. I won't attempt to unravel any of that here; that's for the academics. Instead, I'll describe the most fundamental elements of the **genre**, as I have observed them in two representative works of Magic Realism.

The Metamorphosis by **Franz Kafka** and *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* by **Gabriel Garcia Marquez**. Also, I'll contrast and compare Magic Realism with two other genres often confused with it. Surrealism and Urban Fantasy. This should help clarify the nuances of Magic Realism.

What Is Magic Realism?

First off, let me give my own definition.

Magic Realism is a genre wherein one or more unexplainable, unprovoked magic things happen in the real, contemporary world.

Two Examples

Now, to summarise each of the exemplar stories.

***The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka**

A young salesman, Gregor Samsa, wakes up to find that he has been transformed into a giant bug (a beetle). He tries his best to get to work without revealing his horrifying new form to his concerned, prying family. Eventually, though, they see his changed form and realise he can no longer work to support them. At first, the other family members pity Gregor and try to care for him, but they soon lose patience and see him as a nuisance. When Gregor realises this, he becomes so depressed that he stops eating and dies from starvation. After being freed from their 'burden', Gregor's family lives happily ever after.

***A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez**

One day, a farmer notices a horrible smell on his property. Following the smell, he finds an ancient man with enormous wings, wallowing in filth. When the farmer tries to help the old man, he discovers he speaks an unintelligible dialect. Unsure of what else to do, the farmer locks the old man in a chicken coop. Miraculous things happen, like the farmer's baby being healed from an illness. Because of the old man's appearance and the miraculous healing, some believe he is an angel. The townspeople treat the old man like a cross between a holy man and a circus animal. They visit his cage, hoping to witness another miracle. Things continue this way until a woman transformed into a spider captures the townspeople's attention, instead. Seizing his opportunity, the old man escapes, flying away.

The 4 Pillars Of Magic Realism

Pillar 1: Real, Contemporary Setting

Despite never stating it outright, each story contains subtle hints that they were set during their authors' lifetimes. Kafka's story was set in early 20th century Europe, and Marquez's story was set in mid-20th century Colombia.

Setting fantastical elements in the real world lets Magic Realist authors lend their work credibility. This way, readers can buy into those fantastical elements.

So, when writing a Magic Realist tale, you don't have to worry about complex **worldbuilding**! Set it in your own time and place. Phew!

Contrast & Compare:

Magic Realism shares this first pillar with both Urban Fantasy and (most) Surrealism. It is also this commonality that causes these three genres to be confused with one another so often. As we explore the next three pillars, the differences will become clearer.

Pillar 2: Magical Phenomena & Creatures

The defining characteristic of Magic Realism, as its name implies, is that something unexplainable happens in otherwise realistic circumstances.

In *The Metamorphosis*, this is a phenomenon. Gregor transforms into a giant bug. In Marquez's story, the unexplainable is the discovery of an apparently mythical creature. The farmer discovers an old man with enormous wings, or an angel—as some believe him to be.

Contrast and Compare:

Urban Fantasy and Magic Realism both share the first two pillars in common. They both share a real-world, contemporary setting, and fantastical creatures and phenomena. Yet, it is in this second pillar that Magic Realism and Surrealism are revealed as opposites.

While in a Magic Realism work the fantastical events are real, in a Surrealist work, the events result from a character's altered perception. The character may hallucinate because of traumatic stress, or mental illness. They may even be experiencing drug-induced hallucinations. The appearance of the fantastical in a Surrealist piece might be the audience getting a glimpse into the character's imagination or dreams.

If our exemplar stories were Surrealist, it would turn out that Gregor's transformation and the old man's enormous wings were imaginary. They would turn out to by-products of some character's altered perceptions.

Pillar 3: Magic's Unknown Origins & Lore

This, to me, is the Pillar that sets Magic Realism apart from other fantastical genres.

In Fantasy, high or low, with **magic systems** hard or soft, the

author **attempts** to give some hints about the world's lore on both its magic and creatures. Even if the author never shares the means and mechanisms underlying the fantastical happening, they will give the impetus for it. They will share what caused it.

In Magic Realism, this is never so. We are never offered an explanation.

Why did Gregor turn into a giant bug? We never find out. How did he turn into a giant bug? No clue.

What was the old man with enormous wings—an angel or mutant? Dunno. And where did he come from? Who knows? Were the miracles surrounding his appearance real? And—if so—did he have anything to do with them, or was the fact they coincided with his arrival happenstance?

Okay, you get the idea. In Magic Realism, Mum's the word on such subjects.

Contrast and Compare:

Alright, so this is one Pillar where Magic Realism and Urban Fantasy part ways. In the Urban Fantasy version of Marquez's story, the old man might be a literal angel.

He arrived to warn the villagers of the coming end times. Something hurt him. He was performing miracles to assure them of his noble intentions. Unfortunately, they couldn't understand him because he spoke a heavenly tongue beyond human comprehension. While this might also be an interesting story, we know too much about it to be a work of Magic Realism.

I have a theory about why the fantastical is unexplained in Magic Realism. I wonder if Magic Realists intend these fantastical circumstances as literalized metaphors to explore the truth of emotional experience.

Yes. A story wherein someone loses their job because of a physical handicap and is thus alienated from family until they commit suicide illustrates how a person can feel like a mere bug. A nuisance. But this is not only less dramatically compelling, it's also a bit on the nose in its didacticism.

C.S. Lewis said of Fairy tales, '… paradoxically enough, [Fairy tales] strengthen our relish for real life. The excursion into the preposterous sends us back with renewed pleasure to the actual.' *

I would suggest something similar for Magic Realism. An excursion into literalized emotional metaphors leaves us with a fresh perspective on them.

Pillar 4: Realistic Presentation

In both of our exemplar stories, the emphasis is not on the fantastical event itself. Nor is the emphasis on the possibilities these events open.

Rather, it is on how the characters try to navigate the mundane consequences of the fantastical event. We don't find Gregor and his family exploring the implications of spontaneous human transformation—how it could be monetised and weaponised. Nor is the small Colombian community interested in unravelling the mystery of the angels' origins.

In both stories, the characters accept the fantastic event and try to get on with their lives.

Contrast and Compare

We already discussed, implicitly, how Magic Realism differs from Urban Fantasy—after all, Fantasy is all about exploring possibilities. So, we won't get into that much here.

The difference between Magic Realism and Surrealism seems obvious in this category, as well. Surrealism is about getting as far as possible from an accurate representation of life as lived and into the life of the mind.

Here, the ideal genre to contrast with is Literary Realism. As Literary Realism looks for the magic in the mundane, so Magic Realism finds the mundane in the magical.

Writers Write. "The 4 Pillars of Magic Realism." *Writers Write*, 8 Feb. 2022, www.writerswrite.co.za/the-4-pillars-of-magic-realism/.

3.4 MAGICAL REALISM IN LATIN AMERICA

1) Magical Realism and Latin America

2.1. Definition of the Term There are several definitions of Magical Realism and various terms can be confused with it. Primarily one confuses it with Surrealism, less often with Expressionism, Post-Expressionism and the Marvelous Real. Here follow general explanations of these and other terms. Expressionism: A movement in the fine arts during the latter part of the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries that emphasized subjective expression of the artist's inner e~~eriences.~ Expressionism is also an art style of the twentieth century widely utilized in Germany, Europe and Latin America. Through it one communicates very strong human feelings or emotions, especially those of pain, horror, fear, and the reaction when faced with death. Some artists of that period used their art as a protest against the danger of the poor prior to and after the First World War. Among them are; Kathe Kollwitz with her painting " Death and the Mother," 1934; Eduard Munch with his paintings " The Sick Child," 1896, "The Scream," 1893. The Argentine Alejandro Solari (Xul-Solar,) who lived in Germany for many years, painted some works in this style; he was concerned with a mystical and mysterious world. He returned to Buenos Aires to become part of the group called "Martin Fierro." The group also founded the magazine Martin Fierro periddico quincenal de arte y criteria libre. "Expressionism," American Heritage Dictionary, 2"d College Ed. 199 1. 4 The members believe in the importance of the intellectual contribution of the Americas and whose lading writer was Jorge Luis Borges.) Solari, at that time, made drawings for Borges' books, such as El Idioma de 10s Argentinos. In some works of Expressionism one can see other styles superimposed. For example, we can cite Picasso's painting "Guernica," 1937. In this, one can see Expressionism in the horror, the facial gestures, the destruction, death and the effects of the Spanish Civil War. One can also see the style of Cubism in the same painting. Another work of Picasso is " The Blind Man's Meal," 1903. In this one, he expresses the poverty and the suffering of a blind man, very sensitive and human. This painting has elements of Expressionism as well as Magical Realism. In this painting one can see some small figures and other large ones (in one large one is the body of the blind man). The color of this painting is entirely blue. We have here an example where the expressionistic style became Post-Expressionism. Among these types of paintings we see art works of European painters as well as Latin American artists, such as Botero. According to some art critics, Botero's painting "La Mona Lisa" has characteristics of Post-Expressionism. Also in his painting "Mujer que Llora, (Crying Woman)" 1949, one can see elements of Expressionism, as well as characteristics of Post-Expressionism. Post-Expressionism: This movement immediately followed Expressionism. A movement, which held the idea that art, was no longer just

art; it became sort of a gesture.s Surrealism: (as defined in an encyclopedia) A movement in art and literature using art as a weapon against the evils and restrictions of society, it derived much from Freudian psychology. Surrealists create images not by reason but by unthinking impulses, blind feeling or accident. They shock viewers or readers into realizing that our "normal" realities are arbitrary, whimsical, or tyrannical. They believe that alternative realities are just as valid and more beautiful, although much of the beauty sought is 9 violent and cruel and they consider [it to be] the deeper, truer part of human nature. Surrealism was popular in France in the 1920's and 1930's. Opposed to the established aesthetic tradition, it sought to blend unconscious perceptions with external realities. Andr6 Breton led the Surrealism movement in 1924. He referred to the "prison of rationalism" and believed that ideal reality was available in childhood innocence and in dreams. Andr6 Breton was [the foremost] surrealist writer. Masson, Magritte, Dali, 10 Mir6 and Ernst were leading artists [who also created using other styles as well]. Surrealism: (a dictionary definition) (super realism) A modern art movement intending to express subconscious mental activities by presenting images, without order or sequence, as in a dream. The blending of unconscious perceptions with external 11 realities. Magical Realism: To some it is Expressionism which may be defined as "The free expression by objective means of the subjective feelings of an individual or group, as through art, music, poetry, dancing etc. Painting where real forms are combined in a way 12 that does not conform to daily reality." 9 Stephen Foster, "Surrealism," World Book Encyclopedia, 1998 Ed. 10 David Galloway, "Surrealism," Encyclopedia Americana, Deluxe Library 1992 Ed. 11 "Surrealism," Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1977 Ed. 12 "Magical Realism," Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1977 Ed. 6 The Marvelous Real, as proposed by Carpentier, was a genuine, unadulterated, spontaneous, extraordinary event, experience or object found frequently in Latin American native cultures: So we should establish a definition of the marvelous that does not depend on the notion that the marvelous is admirable because it is beautiful. Ugliness, deformity, all that is terrible can also be marvelous. All that is strange is marvelous. Now then, I speak of the marvelous real when I refer to certain things that have occurred in America, certain characteristics of its landscape, certain elements that have nourished my work.13 The Marvelous Real that Carpentier presents is the best definition of Magical Realism that one can identify in the works of Garcia Miirquez, Garro, Kahlo and Botero. 2.2. Brief History There are several people who could have been the creator of the term. We can go back as far as the time of the discovery of America and the Conquistadors. We find the chronicles of Americo Vespucci, CortCs, Cabeza de Vaca, Columbus and others who wrote about the marvelous reality they found in the newly discovered world. Writing about Columbus, Tzvetan Todorov, in his book The Conquest of America noted that on October 16, 1492, Columbus wrote, "I saw

many trees very unlike ours, and many of them have their branches of different kinds and all on one trunk, and one thing is of our [i.e. European] kind and the other of another, and so unlike that it is the greatest wonder 14 of the world". Some of the texts describe America as a marvelous, fantastic and miraculous world. As we have seen, the ordinary world appeared mystical and magical to l3 Zarnora, Faris 102. 14 Tzvetan Todorov, The Conquest of America, (Translated by Richard Howard from French. Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1984. New York City, NY) 18. 7 them. It was like a marvelous fairy tale produced by magic. It must be considered that the Spaniards had preconceived ideas about what they would see. When they came to America some of them had been under the influence of "literatura caballeresca" [literature dealing with the Age of Chivalry] and also the influence of Arabian legends. Christopher Columbus, had been influenced by various travel narratives, including Marco Polo's seemingly fantastic tales. According to his journals, Columbus thought he saw men with animal heads, mermaids, and beautiful Amazon women. Also he said that the Amazon women were not as beautiful as he expected, that they were rather masculine and not nearly as attractive as he thought they would be. The term Magical Realism has been used in Europe, Africa, Australia, the United States and Latin America for many years; however, the first "official" use of the term was in 1925, by the German Franz Roh an art critic who applied the term to some of the paintings he studied. In Germany there arose a large number of artists in this new 'movement,' which was referred to as the New Objectivity. Among them were Carl Franz Radziwill, Otto Dix and George Grosz, who expressed many political themes of the time, and Adolf Ziegler, Hitler's favorite artist and President of the Third Reich's Chamber of Fine Arts. Ziegler was on Roh7s famous list of artists of Magical Realism. This new art style in Europe was not just Post-Expressionism, nor was Roh content with the terms Ideal Realism, Verism or Neo-Classicism, because each of those terms indicates a part of the whole. He said "In opposition to Expressionism, the autonomy of the objective world around us was once more to be enjoyed; the wonder of matter that could crystallize into objects was to be seen anew"15 Also Roh said about the new l5 Franz Roh, German Art in the 2dh Century, (English translation of Geschichte der Deutschen Kunst, 1968) 113. 8 objectivity, "The charm of the object was rediscovered."16 He apparently gave a precise definition of what was not Magical Realism. Later he listed twenty-two characteristics in his book Nach-Expressionismus, Magischer Realisms of 1925. He refined these to fifteen characteristics in 1958 in his book Geschichte der Deutschen Kunst von 1900 bis zur Gegenwart in which he studied the "New Objectivity" Post-Expressionist art [i.e. Magical Realism] and contrasted it with Expressionism. This comparison is shown in the following table: Roh's Elements of Magical Realism New Objectivity [i.e. Magical Realism] Sober subjects Ecstatic sub~ects Suppression of the object The

object clarified Rhythmical Representational Extravagant Severe Dynamic Static Loud Quiet Summary Thorough Close up view Close and far view Monumental Miniature Warm (hot) Cold Thin paint surface Thick color texture Rough Emphasis on the visibility of the painting process Centrifugal Smooth :ffacement of the painting proces; Centripetal Expressive deformation 3xternal purification of the object (The information in this table has been formatted to more clearly demonstrate the point of view of this project): Roh talks about the new direction that the art was taking. He was comparing Italian Arte Metafisica i.e., (Constructivism) to Expressionism in Germany. Roh said that to better understand this new art form, it is best to compare it to Expressionism using the fifteen elements of his criteria. Roh's long list of more than one hundred artists whose work he included in the category of Magic Realism has since shrunk to about thirty important ones according to the present day definition of this art term. Several of them are now classified under different categories such as Surrealism, Futurism, and Cubism. These reclassified artists include Pablo Picasso, Andr6 Derain, Carlo Carrh, Joan Mir6, and Max Ernst. During the period from 1886 to 19 10, the French artist Henri Rousseau explored the concept of Magical Realism, although his paintings were in the style of Neoprimitivism. The critic Werner Hartman states that Rousseau's painting was in the style of Magical Realism and that it reflected the new century's philosophy that rejected thought based on purely scientific facts: "When Cubism entered its analytical phase (1906-1907), the aesthetic avant-garde discovered Rousseau because the magic realism of his Neo-Primitive 17 thinkers." This term genius corresponded to the new vision of things achieved by modern was also used in Austria. In her article "Magic Realism, New Objectivity, and the Arts during the Weimar Republic," Guenther suggests that by following the development of this term one can observe that in Austria, the Australian artisvwriter Alfred Kubin provided a "link between literary narrative and graphic art." Already, in 1909 he was seen as a "precursor of traits found in Magical Realism" Kubin 17 Seymour Menton, Magic Realism Rediscovered 1918-81,(Philadelphia: The Art Alliance Press, 1983) 57. 11 also illuminated the other side in his disquieting illustrations in order to render the duality of existence and thereby achieve a unified double vision, a conjunction of the invisible 18 essence of reality. There are other artists with a similar technique, such as the Catalonian Joan Mir6. In 19 18 he painted "Vegetable Garden with Donkey," "House with Palm Tree," and "The Trail," all with the characteristics of Magical Realism of "sharply defined objects" whose "noonday brightness" produced the "magic effect." They are ndive and have a "bewitching charm."19 Mir6 went to Paris and continued to paint in the style of Magical Realism through 1922. Mir6 did not paint dreams and never worked under the influence of hypnosis, drugs or alcohol. His masterpiece of this period is "The Farm." Later he abandoned this style. Perhaps due to the atmosphere of dreams that characterizes Mir6's pictures,

Andr6 Breton also included Mir6's work in the 1930's in the works of the Surrealist painters. Perhaps, and in accordance with Roh, the most important Italian Magical Realist was Giorgio de Chirico (1888-1978), who pioneered the Magical Realism movement of the 20's with his "clarity of color, his precision and ordering, his use of sharp contrasts, his ability to make the real appear unreal, the unreal real."20 Most of his paintings from 1910-14 are considered to be examples of Magical Realism. His ultra-sharp focus technique is one of the most dominant elements of Magical Realism painting, and produces a strange effect on the viewer. Reacting against the Cubists, "Menton observes I8 Zamora, Faris 56. 19 Menton 48. 20 Zamora, Faris 38 that the Italian painter sought the magic effects associated with dreams and children," but he wanted to "relight the painter's world" by "suggesting scenes and objects," wanting 21 more than what the eye can see. The Chirico's art had a strong influence on Geman art. In the decades from 1920-1950's in Italy, a number of artists were seen as displaying characteristics of Magical Realism in their works. Among these artists were Felice Casorate, Ottone Rosai, Ricardo Francalancia, and Piero della Francesca. It also became known through the campaign that the Italian Massimo Bontempelli made promoting artistic and literary Magical Realism, which crossed Europe and took root in America, never to leave. One such characteristic was objectivity, giving equal importance to animatelinanimate objects, people, and landscapes on the canvas. Also, in some cases, the presence (the trademark style, subject or focus) of the artist was eliminated from the painting. This movement at the time rece6ived some support from the Fascists and even appeared in other countries. In France Magical Realism was known and used by artists between 1918 and 1933. Apparently it disappeared in Paris when surrealism came into the limelight. Later it seems that the term was used in 1931 when the French painter Pierre Roy was declared a Magical Realist along with other French painters from the art critics of that time. In Gemany the artists of this era wanted to express themselves in a different way. They wanted to create a new style, to break away from realism and impressionism only to intensify them, to focus on subjects found in ordinary life, and to have the power of their 21 Menton 47. works emanate from within the focus of their work. In 1933, in Hitler's era of political turmoil and cultural cleansing, the artists expressed in their paintings the best and worst of Germany. A few of these artists continued to work in this same style during the Nazi regime, but the majority of them were declared "degenerate" by the Nazi party. According to Franz Roh, " In 19234 Hitler spoke out on the subject for the first time, rendering the situation even more acute." In addition "Hitler declared that art must be comprehensible to the people." Roh also affirms that "Hitler forbade painters to use colors that the normal eye could not apprehend."22 During this time Magical Realism also grew in popularity in other countries. Magical Realism was also noticed in America. Edward Hopper, according to art

historian Robert Arnason, wrote in his History of Art (1968) that Hopper is considered the first and one of the finest representatives of Magical Realism during the 1920's in United States. Among his works of 1923 are found such themes as deserted streets and night bars sharply illuminated by artificial light with lonely figures passing by. His works reflect influences by the Italian artist Giorgio de Chirico. Hopper really captured the essence of New England life and houses. In his own words and referring to the artistic styles of the time, he expressed something that Franz Roh and Joan Mir6 previously experienced: "There will be, I think, an attempt to grasp again the surprise and accidents of nature, and the more intimate and sympathetic study of its moods, together with a renewed wonder and humility on the part of such as are still capable of these basic 23 reactions". At exactly the same time Grant Wood of the United States was using miniature, toy-like naive techniques in his paintings. He also used precisionism, hard edges, and sharp focus in his farm landscapes, as one can see in his "American Gothic" (1930). Among North Americans in 1931 who already were working in the genre of Magical Realism are Hopper and Sheeler. It is in 1940's that Andrew Wyeth became perhaps the best-known Magic Realist from United States with his painting "Christina's World (1948). In this painting he wants to depict emotion. The scene portrayed contains fantasy and reality. One can see a girl who seems to be enjoying resting on the grass, but in reality she is a polio victim, with crippled arms and fingers, lying motionless. We find confusion of reality. We question the real meaning of this painting. The use of Magical Realism transcended both cultural lines and artistic categorization. In 1943 at the Museum of Modem Art in New York City there was an exhibition of "American Realists and Magic Realists" that exemplified this. In it were the works of Charles Sheeler, who suffered a stroke after which his painting style from 1931-1946 became more definitely a part of Magical Realism; Grant Wood, whose scenes contain a common style of primitive painting characteristics of Magical Realism; the works of Pierre Roy, who helped to spread Roh's concept of the cool, analytical approach, matter-of-factness and sobriety, sentimentalism and nahe style; and the works of George Schrimpf and Carlo Mense. Painters like George Grosz used themes from daily life. These artists painted with precision and smoothly. In their work the technique progressed inwards from the outside 24 in order to reveal the invisible, the magic that is behind the real. 24 Zamora, Faris 53. They wanted to portray the mysterious aspects that evolve from the focus, and which captivate the eye of the viewer. The term Magic Realism began to be known in Latin America with the introduction of the partial translation of the book Post-Expressionism, Magic Realism of Roh published in the Spanish magazine Revista de Occidente in 1927. By 1930 there were many artists (men and women) in Latin America. In Brazil we find the artist Tarsila do Amaral (1886-1973). The works of Amaral are widely recognized as belonging to Magical Realism. Some of the characteristics of

Amaral's images are their huge arms, tropical images in landscapes, smooth figures with strong colors, such as intense oranges, reds and greens applied in a flat manner, and sociaVpolitical ideas. Her "Black Woman" (1924), is the most closely linked to Magical Realism. Another painter from South America, the Argentinean Lino Spilimbergo (1896- 1964), painted typical landscapes of Argentina in the Magical Realism style, as well as a series of figure portraits with emphasis on the large eyes and hands. Hector Giuffre from Argentina is also considered an example of the category of Magical Realism. His work reflects real life, figures with sharp contours, and airless space. The Peruvian Bill Caro created paintings with characteristics of Magic Realism: sharply defined and precise paintings of Lima with a magical landscape. Another Magic Realist is the Colombian Santiago Ckdenas. He admired Sheeler's Self-portrait (1923), and, like Sheeler, Ckdenas depicted everyday objects. His canvases have a quality of mystery about them and his paintings include cardboard boxes, window shades and Venetian blinds, clothing on hangers. There are artists from Colombia also, such as Dm'o Morales, who lived in Paris. He painted with the same precision as his compatriot Ckdenas, his main subject being room interiors and nude 16 women. Another Colombian, Fernando Botero of Medellin, expressed political criticism in his painting. He utilized Magical Realism techniques to express a socio-political message. Many of his figures have a nai've, toy-like quality: his trademarks are obese men or women, animals, prostitutes, and bishops, all with fat faces but with miniature noses, eyes and lips. Many of his pictures have a centripetal quality. Botero painted many still- lives in his own unique style. Botero is one of the most famous of all contemporary Latin American painters. In addition to this group, there are women's artworks that can be classified within Magic Realism. In 1940, as women gained access to education, more and more women became professional artists. These talented artists focused their expression using exaggerated forms and often reflected social and political beliefs, culture and tradition. Georgia 07Keeffe is recognized as one of the best American painters of the twentieth century. She painted flowers evocative of the image to the female body. The forms she used are mysterious, and also one can see many elements of Magical Realism. In the 1920's Georgia O'Keeffe also painted animal bones she found in New Mexico in such a way that her work can be seen as reflecting both reality and magic. In the 1940s there was a group of exiled painters and writers mostly from Europe in Mexico. Among these was Leonora Carrington English painter and writer born in 1917, already known as a professional artist. The works she produced in Mexico are Magical Realism. In them one can see miniatures, fairy tales, stories from the Bible, mystery, magical birds and animals with the forces of nature, figures with sharp contours. Remedios Varo was born in Spain in 1908. Her works were exhibited in 1954; some are reminiscent of Chirico7s work. However, it is Frida Kahlo from MCxico who stands out as the

best female contemporary painter whose many works show elements of Magical 17 Realism, although according to Andd Breton some of her work is considered to be part of Surrealism. Certainly, there is a long list of contemporary artists and writers who use elements of Magical Realism in their work. In order to place a painter in the category of Magical Realism, one must consider the specific work under discussion, because according to Roh, there are many artists who have produced works of Magical Realism who did not necessarily continue in that style. The works of art belonging to that category should contain at least some of the components of Roh's list of characteristics. However, in the Latin American paintings of this genre we can add other components that have evolved in the application of this term to the Latin American 'school,' such as the mingling of writing and painting in a complementary way. An example is Frida Kahlo's diary. Also, in some of her pictures she wrote messages: "Frida and Diego Rivera," 1931; "A Few Small Nips," 1935; "The Suicide of Dorothy Hale," 1938139; "Self-Portrait," 1940; "Self-Portrait with Cropped Hair," 1940. In all of these works there are elements of Magical Realism. Another component can be the use of special painting techniques such as the bright colors commonly seen in the art of Kahlo and Botero, e.g. Fernando Botero's paintings "El zurdo y su cuadrilla," 1987 (The left-handed men and his men;) "Virtuo," 1989 (Virtue;) "Una pareja," 1999 (A couple;) "La plaza," 1999 (The town square.) Although Roh used the term in reference to paintings, he also expanded its use to the writings of Zola and Rimbaud. In his book, Degenerate Art, later republished as Magical Realism, Post-Impressionism the aforementioned concept of Magical Realism was translated into Spanish. These concepts of Roh were also applied to literature and subsequently influential in Latin America especially in literary criticism. The use of Magical Realism is worldwide. It started in 1928 with the translation of Roh's book into Spanish by Fernando Vela. In Germany it appeared as escapist and reactionary in the 1940's and its use waned during World War 11, apparently because of its suppression by the Nazis. It is now even being applied anew to a genre of contemporary literature and art criticism. This term appeared in Belgium in 1943 in the writings of Johan Daisne, a Belgium writer (1912-1978) and the concept was rapidly spreading not only through Europe but also in Latin America due to the arrival of many European immigrants during the 30's and 40's. As Argentina was one of the first Latin American countries to open its doors to these Europeans, the existing intellectual group of the country was greatly enriched. Throughout the 1940's and 50's and up to today many writers and artists continued to explore themes approaches related to Magical Realism. In 1940, Jorge Luis Borges wrote about the "FantBstico." Alejandro Carpentier from Cuba wrote about the Real Maravilloso Amencano (American Marvelous Real) in 1949. Also, in 1955 Angel Flores used the term Magic Realism. Among other famous Latin American artists, writers, and critics whose work contains

elements of Magic Realism are beside those the focus of this paper Miguel Angel Asturias, Gabriel Garcia Miirquez, Enrique Anderson Irnbert, and Isabel Allende.

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2) An Ever-Expanding World Literary Genre: Defining Magic Realism

Abstract

Magic realism is a disputed genre in world literature scholarship today. While many Latin American critics have advocated for its historical and geographical significance, others see it as an inherently postcolonial aesthetic formation, a worldwide literary trend, and even a global commodity. Indeed, since its emergence in the first half of the 20th century, magic realism has remained an attractive and active category, as new artworks are classified as such worldwide. To address these tensions, this essay engages with definitions, general information, and lists of authors and literary works classified as magic realists on Wikipedia. To do so, we compile a thorough database of all writers mentioned in Wikipedia's entries for magic realism in fifty-six different languages. We visualize this data and close-read Wikipedia entries to understand better which writers are most often identified as magic realists, to which literary and linguistic traditions they belong, and how definitions of magic realism in different languages interact. We trace how the narrow and broad definitions of magic realism tend to both compete and overlap on Wikipedia. We argue that magic realism on Wikipedia can be better understood as a glocal phenomenon. In this sense, we reflect on what the worldliness of magic realism means in a non-academic context and ask how the broad circulation of magic realism can inform our understanding of world literature.

The popular US crime drama *Narcos*, set in Colombia, revolves around the world of the drug trade. Yet it opens with affirmations bound to spike literary scholars' interest—they problematize the relationship between reality and fiction and define one of the most disputed literary genres, magic realism. If we turn on S1E1: *Descenso*, we first read on a black screen:

This television series is inspired by true events. Some of the character names, businesses, incidents and certain locations and events have been fictionalized for dramatic purposes. Any similarity to the name, character or history of any person is entirely coincidental and unintentional.

While, on the one hand, it is a pretty standard statement of non-responsibility, on the other hand, it is striking, as it is at once a claim and a disclaimer. The events are true. They are also fictionalized. And any connections to reality are coincidental. Probably it is not a joke or provocation but a delicately crafted legal construction. In any case, this opening appeal to both fact and fiction becomes more interesting when we read the following phrase.

The plain black screen turns into a misty landscape, in which we might believe to make out mountains and trees. As we hear the blowing wind, another sign appears, this time in a fancier font: "Magical realism is defined as what happens when a highly detailed, realistic setting is invaded by something too strange to believe." After a few seconds, most of the passage disappears,

leaving just the four last words that ominously turn red: "too strange to believe." It is not just wind that we hear now, but intensifying background music. This music turns into "Latin guitar music" (as the captioning specifies) when another red sentence appears in place of the previous one: "There is a reason magical realism was born in Colombia."[1]

The series proposes a short and straightforward definition of magic realism–it abides by the genre's rules of realistic representation until it suddenly incorporates extraordinary and unbelievable elements. The birth of magic realism in Colombia is a reference to Gabriel García Márquez, whose famous novel *Cien años de soledad* (*One Hundred Years of Solitude*) is widely considered the genre's example par excellence. But why, then, would the writers of *Narcos*–a gruesomely realistic representation of the world of drug cartels– choose to associate the show with a literary genre like magic realism? In this essay, we aim to unpack this broad appeal of magic realism by looking into how it is presented, discussed, and exemplified on Wikipedia.

From *Narcos*'s definition, it might seem that there is a consensus on what magic realism refers to and what its roots are. Academic debates, however, would suggest otherwise. For decades scholars have been asking what magic realism can and should mean, and today it is still a disputed genre in both area studies departments and world literature scholarship. In this sense, what we could call "narrow" and "broad" definitions of magic realism compete against each other. While many Latin American scholars have advocated for its historical and geographical significance, others see it as an inherently postcolonial aesthetic formation, a worldwide literary trend, and even a global commodity. At the same time, despite the time that has passed since its emergence in the first half of the 20th century, magic realism is still an attractive and active category, as new works of literature and visual arts are classified as such worldwide.

To address these tensions, this essay engages with definitions, general information, and lists of authors and works classified as magic realists on Wikipedia. Hube et al. argue that the study of Wikipedia can provide insightful responses to a rather complicated issue—how to measure the global significance of an author or literary work, that is, how to determine what works pertain to world literature. Rather than focusing on aspects such as the number of translations of a particular literary work or author or their sales worldwide, they consider it is productive to consider "Wikipedia data as a representation of world literature from the point of view of expert or non-expert editors and readers" (Hube et al. 2).

But while Hube et al. focus their analysis on particular writers, we see world literature as a perspective and framework of critical literary analysis, rather than a corpus of texts and authors. Still, we agree that Wikipedia can provide valuable insights into the different ways in which magic realism functions as a world literary genre. As Mariano Siskind argues, "genre" as a literary analysis

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category fell into disgrace during the second half of the 20ᵗʰ century, with opponents as prominent as Maurice Blanchot and Jacques Derrida. However, following in Wai Chee Dimock's footsteps, Siskind claims that genre "could still be a compelling traveling vehicle for the realization of world literature as an interpretative project" (Siskind, "The Genres of World Literature" 346). Neither Siskind nor Dimock thinks of genre in a traditional sense, in any case. Instead, Siskind hypothesizes that "world literature produces new genres, or rather new generic formations, constellations of texts whose identity is defined in accordance with new needs and new critical and aesthetic desires translated into new organizing principles" (Siskind, "The Genres of World Literature" 347). Magic realism would be one of these new world literary generic configurations, conceived by Siskind as "a taxonomic constellation aggregated by contingent scholarly endeavors in reading literature from around the world" (Siskind, "The Genres of World Literature" 349). To complement this view, here we propose to look at magic realism as a constellation of contingent definitions and classifications aggregated by Wikipedia readers and editors and to compare their definitions and classifications to those provided by literary scholars.

To do so, we first review how magic realism has been defined in recent scholarly debates and its main controversies. Second, we analyze the many ways in which magic realism is defined in Wikipedia across different languages. To do so, we compiled a thorough database of all writers mentioned in Wikipedia's entries for magic realism in fifty-six different languages.[2] We visualized this data to understand better which writers are most often identified as magic realists across all languages, to which literary and national traditions they belong, and how definitions of magic realism in different languages interact with each other. We find that writers not identified as magic realists in contemporary scholarly debates are often labeled as such by Wikipedia users across different languages (for example, Jorge Luis Borges and Italo Calvino, to name just two). However, we also find that the three writers usually identified as the Latin American founders of magic realism in scholarly debates (Alejo Carpentier, Arturo Uslar-Pietri, and Miguel Ángel Asturias) also rank high in mentions across all languages, even if their work is little known outside of the Spanish-speaking world. This suggests that, unlike in scholarly debates, narrow and broad definitions of magic realism compete and overlap in Wikipedia. Furthermore, we argue that magic realism on Wikipedia can be better understood as a *glocal* phenomenon. In this sense, we reflect on what the worldliness of magic realism means in a non-academic context and ask how the broad circulation of magic realism can inform our understanding of world literature.

While this analysis might not necessarily lead us to refine scholarly definitions of magic realism nor come up with a brand new one, we hope that it shows that Wikipedia is a valuable tool to reflect on how magic realism functions as a

world literary genre across different languages and cultural traditions.[3] Because students, scholars, and readers in general actively use Wikipedia as a source of information, we believe it is important to provide a picture of how a world literary genre such as magic realism can either expand or contract depending on how users decide to define it. In other words, although we do not seek to read Wikipedia as if revealing certain truths about discourses on magic realism or world literature that lie outside of academia or other institutions and practices, we intend to pose questions that further complicate current debates on the topic. In turn, we believe this can prompt further research questions that will animate futures studies, such as who and why edits Wikipedia entries on magic realism and other literary genres, to what extent readers trust such information, and how such information travels across languages and disciplines both within and outside of Wikipedia.

Magic Realism in Scholarly Debates

Scholarly definitions of magic realism can be divided into two groups—narrow and broad definitions. Narrow definitions of magic realism tend to consider it "an aesthetic that belongs organically to non-Western, or rather marginal, cultures," while broad definitions argue that magic realism is instead "a universal aesthetic that unveils the supernatural core of the real anywhere" (Siskind, "Magical Realism" 834). The former highlights magic realism's cultural emancipatory potential, while the latter underlines magic realism as a narrative mode. Still, as we will see, even within this second set of broad and rather formalist definitions, critics have argued that magic realism overlaps with the fantastic, the absurd, and other genres that defy realistic representation conventions.

Because definitions of magic realism vary, there is also a debate around which writers and works of literature should be identified as magic realists and which should not. As we will discuss below, *Narcos*'s statement that magic realism was born in Colombia could be easily disputed from a historical perspective. Still, the claim is clearly a reference to the literature of Gabriel García Márquez, whose name and novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) have unarguably become synonymous with magic realism (Damrosch 6; Moretti). In an interview published in 1968, García Márquez described his writing process:

Una vez estaba bordando en el corredor cuando llegó una muchacha con un huevo de gallina muy peculiar, un huevo de gallina que tenía una protuberancia. No sé por qué esta casa era una especie de consultorio de todos los misterios del pueblo. Cada vez que había algo que nadie entendía, iban a la casa y preguntaban y, generalmente, esta señora, esta tía, tenía siempre la respuesta. A mí lo que me encantaba era la naturalidad con que resolvía estas cosas. Volviendo a la muchacha del huevo le dijo: 'Mire usted, ¿por qué este huevo tiene una protuberancia?'. Entonces ella la miró y dijo: 'Ah, porque es un huevo de basilisco. Prendan una hoguera en el patio'.

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Prendieron la hoguera y quemaron el huevo con gran naturalidad. Esa naturalidad creo que me dio a mí la clave de *Cien años de soledad*, donde se cuentan las cosas más espantosas, las cosas más extraordinarias con la misma cara de palo con que esta tía dijo que quemaran en el patio un huevo de basilisco, que jamás supe lo que era.[4]

(Once, I was embroidering in the corridor when a girl came with a very peculiar hen's egg, a hen's egg with a bulge on it. I don't know why this house was a kind of consulting room for all the mysteries of our town. Every time there was something that nobody understood, they went to the house to inquire about it, and, generally, this lady, my aunt, would have the answer. What I loved about it was how naturally she would solve such matters. Coming back to the story of the girl with the egg, she said: 'Look, why does this egg have a protuberance?' So my aunt looked at it and said, 'Oh because it's a basilisk egg. Light a fire in the yard.' They lit the fire and very naturally burned the egg. I think that 'naturalness' was the key for me to *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, where the most frightening things are told, the most extraordinary things are narrated with the same wooden face with which this aunt said to burn a basilisk egg in the patio, which I never learned what it was.)

As Ángel Rama has argued, García Márquez's description of his writing process summarizes the main aesthetic contentions of magic realism as a conjunction of the real and the marvelous (Rama 53). In Irlemar Chiampi's words, magic realism is the synthesis of "the denaturalization of the real and the naturalization of the marvelous" (quoted in Siskind, "Magical Realism" 834). *One Hundred Years of Solitude* offers countless examples of how this dialectic works. In the first chapter of the novel, the narrator famously describes the day the novel's main character saw and touched an ice cube for the first time in such a way that this everyday object turns into a thing of magic. Likewise, a series of extraordinary events proliferate throughout the novel (a character is followed by a cloud of yellow butterflies wherever he goes; a woman ascends into the sky in front of her family) without further explanation, just like García Márquez's aunt did not feel the need to explain what a "*huevo de basilisco*" was, nor why it had to be burnt. However, regardless of how fitting this definition of magical realism might be to describe García Márquez's and other writers' work, there are competing definitions whose scope we will discuss in this section.

As mentioned, one could challenge *Narcos*'s definition of magical realism from a historical point of view—the scholarly consensus is that its origins are not to be found in Colombia but early twentieth-century Europe. Indeed, it has become almost commonplace to tell the story of magical realism starting with the term's coinage in 1925 by German art critic Franz Roh, not to describe literature but post-expressionist painting.[5]

Franz Roh saw *Magischer Realismus* as a way of describing the work of German artists who tried to "reconcile the referentiality of impressionism with

the expressionist attempt to uncover the spiritual and mystical nucleus of reality" (Siskind, "Magical Realism" 835) Shortly later, in 1927, Italian writer Massimo Bontempelli, founder of the influential journal *900 (Novecento)*, proposed an aesthetic formula that is still very dear to magical realism today: "*precisione realistica e atmosfera magica*" ("realistic precision and magical atmosphere" (Camayd-Freixas 5)) . Erik Camayd-Freixas argues that Bontempelli called on European writers to resort to traditional myths and archetypes to renovate literature. Soon after, Bontempelli's magic realist agenda would be associated with nationalist movements and straightforward Fascism (Camayd-Freixas 6).

In a very different fashion, Latin American writers Alejo Carpentier, Miguel Ángel Asturias, and Arturo Uslar-Pietri, all of whom were living in Paris in the late 1920s, adopted magical realism and "reformulated the concept to propose it as an aesthetic form derived directly and organically from the hybrid nature of Latin American culture and society" (Siskind, "Magical Realism" 837). In Latin America, Alejo Carpentier wrote, one could find "the marvelous real at any turn," while in Europe, the surrealist marvelous was merely "manufactured by tricks of prestidigitation" (Siskind, "Magical Realism" 843). It would still take three decades from there for magic realism to have its Colombian birth.

Tracing the European origins of the term magic realism is productive because it challenges *Narcos*'s definition of the concept in yet another way—is magic realism a world literary genre, a universal aesthetic that can be embraced by anybody regardless of political or linguistic traditions, or is it an aesthetic expression of the political experience of the oppressed? It is in the latter sense that the past few decades have witnessed "the coupling of magical realism and the postcolonial" (Siskind, "Magical Realism" 834), perhaps best condensed in Homi Bhabha's claim that magic realism is "the literary language of the emergent postcolonial world" (Bhabha 7). Similarly, Gayatri Spivak considered magic realism "paradigmatic of Third World literary production," and wondered why a style of "Latin American provenance" had such a strong effect on subcontinental English-speaking writers, referring mainly but not exclusively to Salman Rushdie (Spivak 201). A quick review of scholarly books and articles published on the subject suggests that such a connection between magic realism and the postcolonial has long surpassed the limits of both Spanish and English, extending to Western African fiction (Cooper) and contemporary Romanian novels (Crașovan), just to mention two examples.

However, before magic realism as a concept made its way to postcolonial scholarly debates anchored in American institutions (of which Bhabha and Spivak would be the most prominent exponents), Latin American critics such as Ángel Rama laid claim to it as a literary phenomenon best understood within the boundaries of Latin American historical dialectics between power

and resistance, and the global and the local. In his book *Transculturación narrativa en América Latina* (1982), Rama considered magical realism yet another expression—albeit not the most accomplished, neither politically nor aesthetically—of a broader process of emancipatory transculturation where forces of modernization and local traditions embodied in the myths and beliefs of Indigenous and Black communities could be fused (Rama 56). Chiampi's definition ("the denaturalization of the real and the naturalization of the marvelous") stands, but the real and the marvelous are redefined within a geographically marked political context and in relation to specific historical aesthetic formations.

The subsequent coupling of magical realism and the postcolonial in the 1980s and 1990s within American universities opened up those historical and geographical boundaries to other timeframes and geographies but still retained this political and emancipatory specificity as a critical feature of magic realism. To scholars like Walter Mignolo, the fact that Latin American critics like Rama remain absent from the postcolonial debates on magical realism they first shaped, might evince academic colonialism (Mignolo). Be that as it may, magic realism gained momentum among postcolonial theorists with the publication of novels such as Salman Rushdie's *Midnight Children* (1981) and Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), both of which have been outspoken about the significant influence that García Márquez had on their work.

Curiously, also around the same time, magic realism underwent two very different processes. On the one hand, a group of young Latin American writers reacted violently against it. In 1996, Chilean writers Alberto Fuguet and Sergio Gómez edited a short-story anthology entitled *McOndo*, a satirical reference to Macondo, the imaginary town where *One Hundred Years of Solitude* takes place. In the prologue, they wrote that while they did not mean to account for a new Latin American aesthetic program fully, what brought them together was that they were not, in any sense, magic realists (Fuguet and Gómez). Paradoxically, although writers and critics have understood magic realism as a way to render visible the contradictions that animate Latin American cultural identity, to Fuguet and Gómez, magical realism had become a commodity for export. New Latin American literature, they claimed, should appear as if it could have been written anywhere. Magic realist literature, from this perspective, would be redefined as an allegorical narrative about a collective entity produced for consumption abroad. And although Fuguet and Gómez only discuss Latin American literature, one could argue that, following this line of reasoning, the exact definition might apply to other postcolonial magic realist novels.

On the other hand, after García Márquez was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1982, magical realism became the subject not only of scholarly papers but also of literary world-literature anthologies such as *Magical Realist Fiction*,

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edited by David Young and Keith Hollaman in 1984, which served as a textbook for students around the Anglophone world (Hollaman and Young). There, Young and Hollaman included, alongside texts by Carpentier and García Márquez, writers whose work has most often been associated with other literary traditions within Latin American literature (such as Jorge Luis Borges and Julio Cortázar) and outside of it (like Italo Calvino and Milan Kundera), as well as authors dating back to the 19th-century and the early 20th century (such as Gogol and Kafka).[6]

Scholars have pushed back against such broad definitions of magic realism. Mariano Siskind claims that magic realism is both a "formal and historical" cultural phenomenon (Siskind, "Magical Realism" 850). Ato Quayson, on the other hand, argues that although it shares "elements of the fantastic with other genres," magic realism's formal specificity lies in that it "generates a scrupulous equivalence between the two domains [the real and the fantastic]" (Quayson 728). Still, as we will show in the following sections, Wikipedia users often resort to a certain of undifferentiation between literary genres. As a result, magic realism often works as a catch-all term that can describe many of the writers included in Young's and Hollaman's anthology, as well as others, from E.T.A. Hoffmann to Haruki Murakami. It might even be the case that, among other things, magic realism is a literary commodity of sorts, as Alberto Fuguet and the "McOndo" generation claimed, but a rather global one with particular local inflections.

Magic Realism on Wikipedia

Just as it would be the case of a traditional encyclopedia, Wikipedia is meant to be explanatory rather than exploratory—even though, as we will see, this rule is at times broken. Unlike its monolingual counterparts, printed or electronic, it allows an immediate comparison between entries in different languages. At the same time, its collective authorship makes it more likely to lack coherence. This characteristic, however, can be helpful in this case. On the one hand, it highlights the contradictions and tensions within the understanding of magic realism; on the other, tracing how, within each particular entry, certain elements or sections are privileged over others can shed light on the roots of such imbalances. Thus, in many ways, we will read Wikipedia pages like secondary sources, such as literary criticism—trying to capture their main characteristics and asking for their implicit premises. We consider Wikipedia an interesting basis for this analysis because it is positioned at the crossing of different discourses. While it incorporates many elements of academic debates from scholarship written in multiple languages, it also includes non-academic sources and elements introduced by Wikipedia editors that are not attributed to any bibliographical sources. Consequently, it allows us to zero in on different contradictions and tensions in understanding the term, both within a particular article and between entries in different languages. Through our analysis of Wikipedia, we will not discuss what the

most interesting or productive understanding of magic realism is, nor whether the definitions provided by users are more or less accurate than those in scholarly texts. Instead, we wish to focus on what we can learn about magic realism from its reception and circulation through the study of Wikipedia. While our linguistic capacities do not allow us to dive deeply into each page on magic realism that we can find today as part of Wikipedia, we visited all of them. This overview enabled us to compile some of the critical information from all of them (mainly which authors and titles appear), as we show below. After this general impression of the structure and salient points of different pages, we focus more in-depth on a few that stood out to us for reasons we explain in each case.

We could see immediately that most of the Wikipedia pages were fairly similar—in length and in their approach to the subject. Interestingly, the Wikipedia page in Spanish also pertains to this group, even though we expected it might be different from others, given the strong connections of the genre to Latin American literature. Some articles were not far in their general shape from most entries on the subject but included important shifts in emphasis regarding the most common approaches to the topic. The page in English was more significantly different: it is by far the most extended entry, with multiple subdivisions, a long list of footnotes, and a couple of parts marked as problematic according to Wikipedia standards. It is also constantly being tweaked and edited—as we continue checking the edition history while writing this article, new changes keep showing up.[7] While the analysis of the Wikipedia pages is not necessarily representative of how the genre is conceived in each language, it allows us to analyze the different elements that influence the popularization and wide circulation of scholarly terms.

In what follows, we discuss our findings, organizing them into two sections. In the first one, we describe the great majority of Wikipedia entries, tracing the dominant tendencies in understanding the genre. To do so, we visualize the compiled data and discuss the different ways in which magic realism is represented throughout Wikipedia. In their listing of magic realist writers and works, some entries show a more localized point of view, but usually, global and local forces tend to coexist, not without tensions.

Reviewing the fifty-eight entries for magic realism in all fifty-six languages, we counted 322 authors mentioned as magic realists.[8] We compiled these mentions and divided them into languages to visualize which authors are most identified as magic realists, in which language they are mentioned as such in Wikipedia, and how these authors overlap. Figure 1 shows the number of mentions of any given author in the Wikipedia article on magic realism for each language. Four languages do not have any mention of authors, while some have plenty because they include long lists of authors identified as magic realists without further explanations (see, for example, the cases of

French and Occitan). As a result, despite some entries being lengthier and more detailed than others (English being the longest of them all), they mention fewer authors than others that otherwise are not as thorough. [Figure 2](#) shows, for each author, the number of times they are mentioned across the fifty-eight Wikipedia articles (only authors with more than five mentions are plotted). Some authors are mentioned frequently, and others are less so. Gabriel García Márquez is, by far, the most mentioned author, followed by Jorge Luis Borges and Isabel Allende. Salman Rushdie is the first non-Spanish speaker to appear on the list, but many follow across different languages (Günther Grass, Haruki Murakami, Mikhail Bulgakov). [Figure 3](#) is a word cloud, which emphasizes which authors are most mentioned throughout the articles. In [Figure 4](#), we plot a histogram showing that some authors are mentioned a vast number of times, whereas most of the authors are mentioned fewer than five times. As we will see, this is because each entry tends to identify as magic realists with a number of authors working in the language of the entry that is not present in any other languages (for instance, the Turkish Wikipedia names fifteen Turkish authors as magic realists that do not feature in other languages). Finally, in different ways,

Figures [5](#) and [6](#) visualize which languages show similarities in the authors they mention. Both show how there are two bigger groups of languages where similar authors are mentioned (groupings 1 and 8 in [Figure 6](#)), as well as a few smaller clusters and some languages more isolated in their take on magic realism.
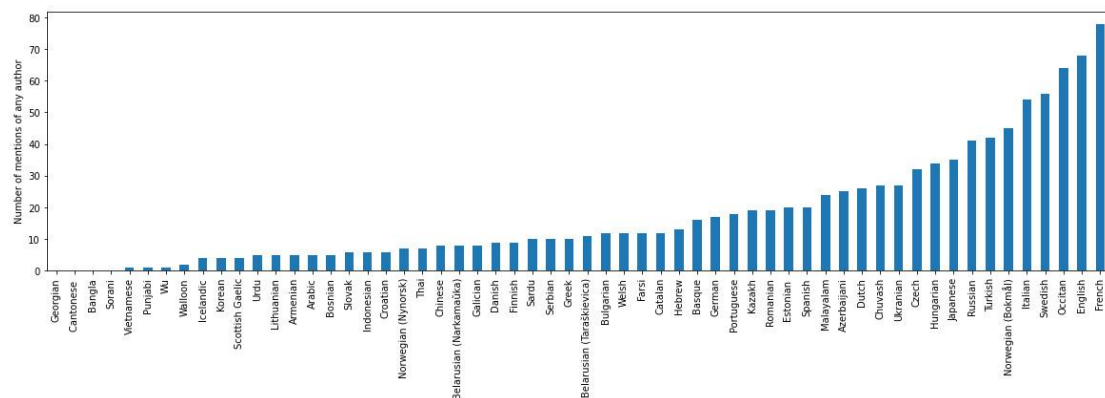
Figure 1.A number of mentions of an author in the Wikipedia article on magic realism for each language. Four languages do not have any mention of authors.

Figure 2.For each author, the number of times they are mentioned across all Wikipedia articles. The authors with more than five mentions are plotted. As we can see, only 35 among the 322 of all the authors that appear throughout the pages have mentions in more than five articles.

Figure 3.The word cloud gives the authors names in size order according to their number of mentions (for authors with more than five mentions).

Figure 4.Histograms show that some authors are mentioned a vast number of times, whereas most are mentioned fewer than five times. It is worth noting that the authors mentioned once or twice are mentioned across a wide range of languages.
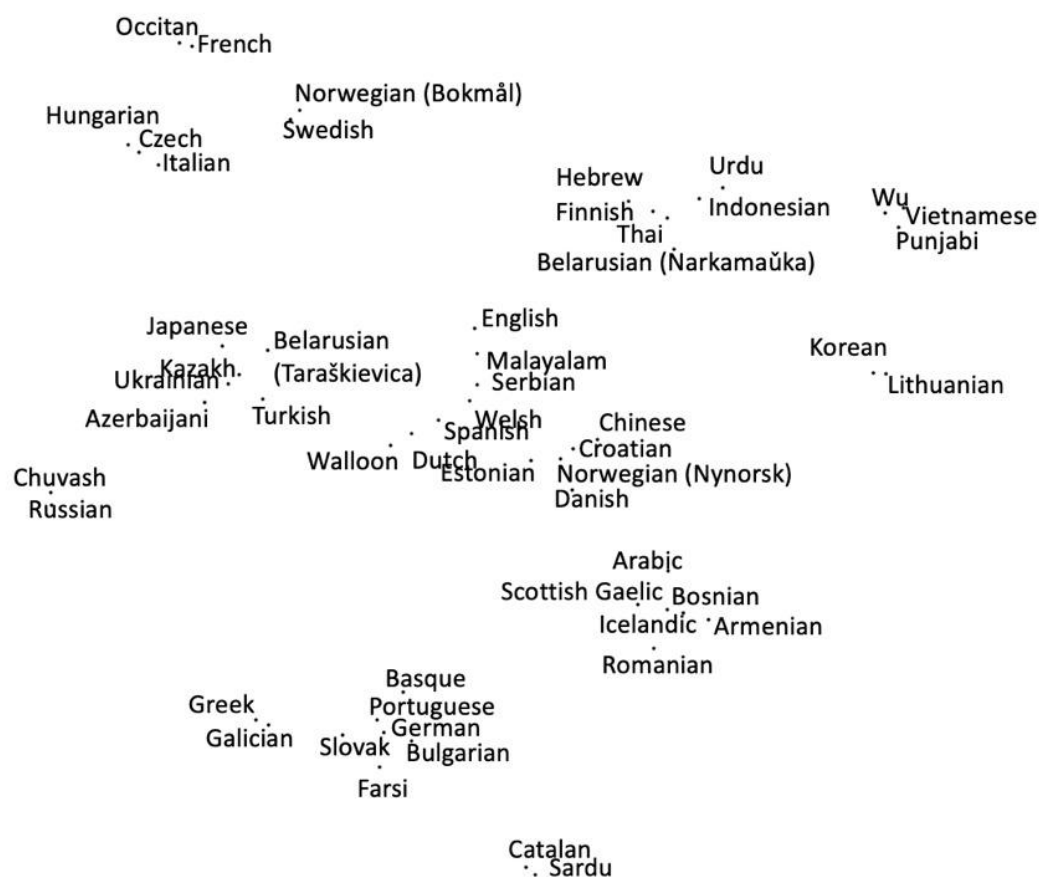
Figure 5.Visualization of the similarities between the authors mentioned in different languages. A t-SNE plot was constructed using "intersection over union" (IoU).
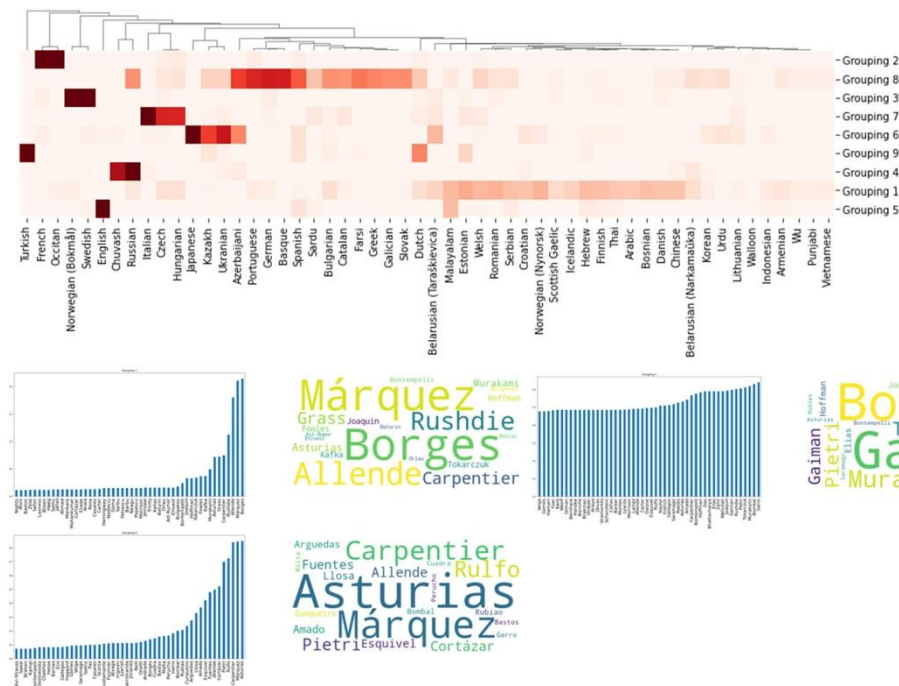
Figure 6.Visualization of the similarities between the authors mentioned in different languages. An analysis using non-negative matrix factorization. Visualization of three groupings included (groupings 1, 5, and 8) to illustrate some of the commented observations.

Going through the data, we find that the standard approach that most entries adopt is to highlight the connections of magic realism to Latin American literature (see Figures 2 and 3). Most pages refer to Gabriel García Márquez as its leading exponent—and, more, in particular, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. They also frequently refer to the authors identified with the understanding of magic realism as a broader genre present in the postcolonial context or the Global South—most of all to Salman Rushdie and, to a lesser degree, Toni Morrison and Ben Okri. On many occasions, they point to the roots of magic realism—citing the origins of the term within visual arts, and enume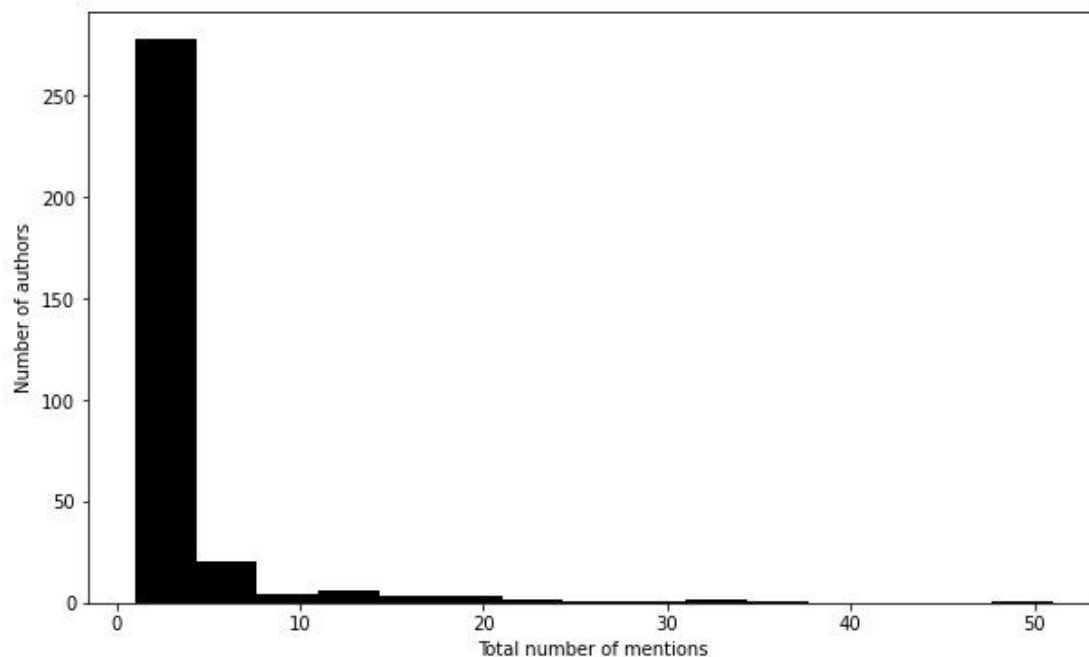rating authors that are at times considered by scholars to be predecessors of the movement (but whom the Wikipedia articles most often plainly identify as magic realists), such as Jorge Luis Borges, Mikhail Bulgakov, and Ernst Jünger. Frequently, we find references to authors that qualify among the writers of magic realism under the broad umbrella of the genre understood as a set of universal—and in this case somewhat ambiguous—aesthetic practices: for instance, Franz Kafka, Haruki Murakami, Günter Grass, and Milan Kundera.

Moreover, besides these references common to most Wikipedia pages, almost all of them enumerate authors creating in the language in which the

Wikipedia entry is written and other languages of the region where the language is most used. For instance, in the entry in Basque, beyond the usual suspects, we find five authors writing in Euskara (Irati Jimenez, Felipe Juaristi, Joan Mari Irigoien, Bernardo Atxaga, and Joseba Sarrionandia), as well as authors writing in Catalan (Joan Perucho) and Galician (Álvaro Cunqueiro). The page in Malayalam mentions authors writing in Malayalam (Sethu, K. V. Mohan Kumar, Vinod Mankara) and several authors writing in Bangla (Nabarun Bhattacharya, Akhtarussaman Elias, and Shahidul Zaheer, Jibanananda Das, Syed Valiyallah, Nasreen Jahan and Humayun Ahmed). The Polish page references Wacław Kostek-Biernacki, the Hebrew page— Meir Shalev, the Estonian page—Karl Ast-Rumor and Jüri Ehlvest, and the list could go on. Many of these authors appear only in the Wikipedia entries in the languages they write or in a few pages within the neighboring regions. Among the 322 authors that appear across all entries, only thirty-five are mentioned more than five times. This combination of authors commonly recognized as magic realists and authors writing in a particular language or cultural circle connects with the sources cited in each entry. While not all articles include a bibliography or footnotes, most of those that incorporate such references mention some sources in English and Spanish, yet point primarily to scholarly and non-academic sources written in the language of the Wikipedia article.

A few of the Wikipedia entries differ from these general trends. In these cases, we see that the more generally accepted connotations of the term are implemented, but the localized understanding or transformation of the concept takes precedence over more widespread definitions. Firstly, while in the vast majority of the languages, magic realism is emphasized as a literary genre, some pages highlight its use within the visual arts. For instance, the German, Dutch, Italian, and Finnish pages give more importance to the European roots of the concept. They start by discussing how magic realism has been used to describe the 20th-century movement in painting, listing numerous artists, most of them Western European—and only afterward describe the literary dimension of the concept. This insistence on the visual aspect of magic realism can be seen as related to the fact that the painters considered representative of it come primarily from the cultural circles that speak the languages in which the articles are written.

Secondly, some entries dedicate more attention to the authors that are said to represent magic realism in their most immediate cultural context. For example, in the article in Russian, while the term is first explained through the most common reference to Latin American literature and a handful of other authors, it is followed by a long list of Russian-language writers, which Wikipedia editors flag as not complying with the rule of balanced representation. The page in Chuvash is similar to the one in Russian, as it references predominantly Russian authors. While a few Wikipedia entries about magic realism are concise and do not mention any authors by name, the entry in

Chuvash is one of just two pages that enumerates some writers, but none of them Latin American. The other one is the entry in Walloon, which is very short—marked by Wikipedia editors as just a stub of an entry, that is, "an article too short to provide more than rudimentary information about a subject"—and mentions just two authors, both writing in Dutch (Simon Vestdijk and Johan Daisne). While the appearance of some authors can be associated more in general with cultural ties within specific geographic regions,[9] sometimes we might also assume a more direct translation from one Wikipedia article to another, especially when many speakers of a language are multilingual (as, for instance, could be the case in the aforementioned connection between Chuvash and Russian Wikipedia articles). Broadly speaking, the Wikipedia pages could be seen as a somewhat eclectic collection of references to the different ways magic realism has been understood and theorized, paired with some interpretations of the term that do not have much support in scholarship, leading to a series of omissions and additions. The omissions could be ascribed to different reasons—some occur in languages in which Wikipedia is less robust; others in linguistic traditions within which the cultural importance of the term seems lesser and thus its descriptions are more succinct; and in some cases, there are possible sociopolitical or cultural reasons to present the term as more local.

The elements added to what usually appears in the scholarship are also of a few different types. Some Latin American authors that keep on popping up throughout the pages are not traditionally considered part of magic realism in Latin American studies because their work does not abide by the genre's rules, as most usually understood within scholarship (Jorge Luis Borges, Juan Rulfo, Carlos Fuentes, Jorge Amado). This can point to the role magic realism played in the circulation of Latin American texts: the intertwining of magic realism with the Latin American boom, which we have seen analyzed in scholarly debates, can be one reason leading to putting all famous Latin American fiction under the same—and exoticizing—umbrella. It can also show that scholarly narratives on how magic realism was born out of the contact between European intellectual traditions and Latin American literature have made their way to Wikipedia. This would explain why writers like Alejo Carpentier, Miguel Ángel Asturias, and Arturo-Uslar Pietri are regularly mentioned across all languages, despite their work being little-known outside the Spanish-speaking world. Indeed, as pointed out in the previous section, they were the original group who adopted Franz Roh's term and made it their own. Other Latin American writers who could be more easily labeled as magic realists, such as Isabel Allende or Laura Esquivel (and whom Wikipedia acknowledges as such), have been disregarded by Latin American scholars for their allegedly derivative nature.[10]

The authors coming from more immediate cultural circles that the Wikipedia pages bring up can be seen as another addition, given that not all of them

have been read in terms of magic realism in academic studies. Their introduction into the definition can be seen as two-fold. It is how the term is made more familiar—closer to authors that might be well-known to the reader. At the same time, it inscribes the literature from the familiar circles into the worldly movement.[11]

As mentioned above, the English article on magic realism stands out in a few ways. The only page that could compete in the number of users with the English article is the one in Spanish.[12] That the English and Spanish articles about magic realism have a similar number of views, editors and edits is significant, particularly if we consider that, as we can read in the Wikipedia article on Wikipedia itself, "As of January 2021, the English Wikipedia receives 48% of Wikipedia's cumulative traffic." That would, once again, point to the strong ties of the concept to Latin American literature and scholarship. Yet, the English entry is, by far, the most extensive of all. If we compare the length of the article, we see that the length in bytes of the English article is about nine times greater than the Spanish one. This points to the other aspect of magic realism that we discuss—the way in which Latin American magic realist authors traveled to readers of other languages, as well as the entanglement of the genre with postcolonial and world literary discourses. It is interesting to note that the definition of magic realism that the English article offers is also the most capacious. Moreover, unlike in other languages, the English Wikipedia entry is a battleground where different definitions of magic realism compete. As we will see, users have edited this article to comment on the article itself, turning it into an active forum to challenge each other's views. As was the case in scholarly debates, here conversation also turns to whether magic realism should be considered a specifically Latin American cultural phenomenon or a global aesthetic. In this case, we argue that the latter prevails.

Indeed, a quick look at the first paragraph of the English entry shows that the English Wikipedia's primary definition of magic realism is more aligned with what we labeled ahistorical and broad definitions in our previous section.
Magic realism (also known as magical realism or marvelous realism) is a 20th-century style of fiction and literary genre. The term was influenced by a German painting style of the 1920s, given the same name. As a literary fiction style, magic realism paints a realistic view of the world while adding magical elements, often dealing with blurring the lines between fantasy and reality. *Magical realism*, perhaps the most common term, usually refers to literature in particular, with magical or supernatural phenomena presented in an otherwise real-world or mundane setting commonly found in novels and dramatic performances. Despite including certain magic elements, it is generally considered a different genre from fantasy because magical realism uses a substantial amount of realistic detail and employs magical elements to

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make a point about reality, while fantasy stories are often separated from reality. Magical realism is often seen as an amalgamation of real and magical elements that produces a more inclusive writing form than either literary realism or fantasy.

Like most scholarly accounts of the term, this definition starts by acknowledging the German roots of magic realism and its emergence in art criticism. Moreover, it borrows from this historical fact to describe literary magic realism as "painting" a world that blurs fantasy and reality, similarly to Ángel Flores's "Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction" and the anthology *Magical Realist Fiction*, edited by David Young and Keith Hollman, both reviewed in the previous section. In this way, magic realism is deprived of its historical context as an emancipatory cultural project in Latin America and the post-colonial world more generally and of its particular dialectics between the real and the marvelous. The latter is, however, alluded to by the clarification that, unlike other fantasy subgenres, "magic realism uses a substantial amount of realistic detail and employs magical elements to make a point about reality." Still, the definition fails to detail to what extent this "point about reality" is historically and politically situated, on the one hand, and to account for how realistic detail is not separated from magical elements but rather embedded in them (and vice versa).

To sketch this broad definition of magic realism, users point readers to both scholarly introductions to magic realism, such as Maggie Anne Bowers' *Magic(al) Realism*, and popular websites like MasterClass.com, whose article "What Is Magical Realism? Definition and Examples of Magical Realism in Literature, Plus 7 Magical Realism Novels You Should Read" is a perfect example of how narrow and broad definitions of magic realism coexist and even overlap in non-scholarly publications. Sure enough, the suggested readings list in this article begins with García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, but it also includes Haruki Murakami's *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1994) and even Neil Gaiman's *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* (2013), a brief description of which already suggests how capacious magic realism becomes under such broad definitions ("A novel about a man who reflects on his past after returning to his hometown for a funeral.")

The English Wikipedia entry reflects on such ambiguity, as it points out that "the term *magic realism* is broadly descriptive rather than critically rigorous, and Matthew Strecher (1999) defines it as 'what happens when a highly detailed, realistic setting is invaded by something too strange to believe.'" It could be the case that the writers of *Narcos* borrowed from Strecher's definition the phrase "too strange to believe" concerning magic realism (Strecher). Indeed, both definitions are as capacious as they can be, and both also blur the boundaries between magic realism and all other non-realistic genres, like the marvelous and the fantastic. Furthermore, like *Narcos*, the

English Wikipedia relates magic realism to Latin America and Colombia ("magical realism is often associated with Latin-American literature, especially in Colombia, including founders of the genre").

However, at the same time, the English Wikipedia entry for magic realism lists the genre's foremost exponents in languages other than Spanish, such as English, Bangla, Japanese, and Polish. It should be noted that magic realism, in such a list, becomes a surprisingly capacious category across languages and within them. In Spanish, for example, a writer like Jorge Luis Borges, known for his fantastic short stories that resort to different traditions, is paired up with Venezuelan writer Rómulo Gallegos, whose realist novel *Doña Bárbara* (1929) is usually considered the ultimate expression of Latin America's regionalist literature. Further down the article, such disparities even translate into art forms other than literature, such as the visual arts and cinema.[13]

The "Etymology" section of the English Wikipedia follows the historical accounts we saw above (from German art criticism to Massimo Bontempelli and from European avant-gardes to Latin American literature). Interestingly, the detailed description of the stylistic "Characteristics" of magic realism in literature challenges the broad definition given above. It highlights elements such as the fact that "the story proceeds with 'logical precision' as if nothing extraordinary had taken place," and it quotes Alejo Carpentier's claim that magic realism expresses a particularly Latin American understanding of reality and history. In this section, unlike in the first paragraph, Wikipedia authors draw mainly from Latin American or Latin Americanist critics, such as Luis Leal, Emir Rodríguez Monegal, and Jean Franco, among others.

There is, however, a long section in response to this one titled "Latin American Exclusivity" that also sets the English entry for magic realism apart from Wikipedia pages in other languages. Interestingly, in this section, the tone and syntax diverge from the rest of the article, and we find some spelling mistakes. At times, the sentence structure or expressions seem taken directly from Spanish.[14] Drawing from critics Ángel Flores (Flores) and Irene Guenther (Guenther), this section argues against claims that magic realism should be considered a Latin American aesthetic. Some of the alleged non-Latin American predecessors of magic realism are, in fact, mentioned in Flores' "Magical Realism in Spanish Fiction," such as Gogol's "The Nose" and Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*. Overall, the section produces a relatively uncommon metacommentary on the Wikipedia entry itself, concluding that "magic realism's foundations are more diverse and intricate than what the Hispanic origin theory, as defined in this article," and that "the Hispanic magic realists should perhaps have a proper designation as such, but not the overarching umbrella of the broader term as this article suggests." And, in turn, produces yet another metacommentary when it is flagged as not sufficiently grounded in existing scholarship: "This section possibly contains original

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research. Please improve it by verifying the claims made and adding inline citations. Statements consisting only of original research should be removed. (May 2020)." Still, the definition sketched by other users in the first paragraphs of the article is, by our standards, broad, and it is especially so when compared to Wikipedia articles in languages other than English.

Glocal Magic Realism

The analysis of these articles reveals a set of characteristics of the circulation of the concept, which, we argue, can be described through the notion of the *glocal*. Framing the circulation of magic realism in the theorizations of the glocal can shed light on the tensions and contradictions in how magic realism is employed to speak of different cultural products, as well as their reception and circulation.

The persistent play between the different aesthetic, geographical, and political dimensions of magic realism makes it possible to read it in terms of a glocal understanding of the genre. The concept of *glocal* is another notion with multiple and disputed roots—dating from the 1990s and including Japanese business circles, ecocritical art, and scholarly responses to the rise of global studies in both the humanities and social sciences (Roudometof 775–77). Encyclopedia Britannica defines it as "the simultaneous occurrence of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies in contemporary social, political, and economic systems." It is used to defy the monolithic ideas of globalization: Glocalization indicates that the growing importance of continental and global levels is occurring together with the increasing salience of local and regional levels. Tendencies toward homogeneity and centralization appear alongside tendencies toward heterogeneity and decentralization. But the notion of glocalization entails an even more radical change in perspective: it points to the interconnectedness of the global and local levels (Blatter).

The fusion of the two terms, thus, is meant to show them to be a false binary—as Arjun Appadurai argues, locality both requires and produces the context for other localities, therefore always has a projection outside of its boundaries and is affected by its exterior (Appadurai 210). At the same time, national and global structures can lead to a "situation, in which the power-relations that affect the production of locality are fundamentally translocal," which can interrupt the mechanism of creation of locality (Appadurai 212). The irresolvable conflict between different geopolitical inscriptions is not the only dimension shared by the concepts of magic realism and the glocal. How the terms have been constructed also shares important similarities. The notion of the glocal has its roots in a series of other conceptualizations of cultural contact, most of all those that emerged in the study of postcolonialism and the Global South—notions such as hybridization, creolization, or transculturation (Roudometof 776). The glocal is understood as a similar sociopolitical and cultural process of cultural exchange, which recognizes the violence and conflicts behind it, but that at the same time is generalized,

moving away from the context of colonization. The trajectory of the concept, thus, is not dissimilar to that of magic realism—which points to the explicative power of both notions but also puts them at risk of losing some of their force through their broader application.

We can see that in how the term *glocal* is discussed in scholarship. Some scholars point to the possibilities that the application of the concept opens—for instance, Theo D'haen advocates for the creation of what he denominates "glocal anthologies" of world literature—constructed from perspectives so far marginalized in the study of world literature and thus also adopting different criteria of choice when assembling an anthology of texts, and combining different ways of reading, close and distant. In D'haen's words, this would give way to "a more truly global perspective on what constitutes 'world literature'" (D'haen 17). Similarly, when using the term "glocal memory" to analyze contemporary novels, Birgit Neumann defines it as a "a minor and rooted cosmopolitan memory" which is "a genuinely localized memory that refuses to stay still and cannot be tied to a single culture" (Neumann 222–23). In other words, the theorization of glocality allows scholars to reflect on the importance of the local for how we imagine the world, as well as rethink contemporary locality, most of all in terms of recognizing its multifaceted construction.

On the other hand, according to William Thornton, the concept has severe limitations—he argues that it more aptly designates "the ersatz localism" that actually promotes a globalized idea of space and finding one's place within it. As he writes, "local resistance is always 'rooted,' but that is not to say it is monadic. A cultural politics of location can be compared to a forest ecosystem—a world composed of infinitely variegated smaller worlds, like the Mexico of Octavio Paz. By contrast, a congeries of 'glocalities' can well be compared to a tree farm" (Thornton 87). Thus, he sees glocal space as a depoliticized locality, which does not destabilize the top-down power dynamics and subjugates the local to the global.

Interestingly, both the arguments for and against the use of glocal can be confirmed in the way magic realism is defined in Wikipedia. Magic realism proves once again to be a potent category. It shows something important about the reception of magic realism—it reveals that many readers identify with the defiance of realism, mainly with how magic realism shows that the dominant narratives don't make space for many marginalized perspectives. In other words, since it speaks to the readers how this aesthetic device sheds light on the limitations of realism, which they readily perceive works of fiction familiar to them as representative of the category. This points to the cultural exchange through translation and circulation of literature—the Latin American boom left a mark on how many of us read, while the exact local versions of this mark on reading practices are not necessarily the same. In a certain sense, Wikipedia articles propose a decentralized anthology of magic

realism—a variation of what D'haen proposes in his study of world literature anthologies. This glocal wiki-anthology is partially connected to the scholarship written in non-dominant languages and to the scholarship concerning literatures in non-dominant languages.

At the same time, we could hardly treat Wikipedia as such an anthology, as not all elements seem informed by non-mainstream scholarship—rather, they often appear as somewhat capricious. The term's popularity leads also to a simplified vision of Latin American literature, offering a domesticated image of difference under the umbrella term of magic realism, imprecisely defined. The anti-colonial and anti-imperialist potential within magic realism is at risk of being incorporated into a version of difference acceptable within the global structures. We also saw that in the case of some authors from outside of Latin America, who were placed on the worldly map and market through their alleged adherence to magic realism, even if the term does not elucidate much about their works. The most paradigmatic case, in this sense, might be that of Borges, who ranks second only to García Márquez as a magic realist writer on Wikipedia, even if his work has circulated widely in languages other than Spanish throughout the past decades without being labeled as such by academic and non-academic critics.

This tendency is connected to the linguistic politics of literary circulation and world literature. Gabriel García Márquez said of the famous translator of Latin American literature, Gregory Rabassa, that he was "el mejor escritor latinoamericano en lengua inglesa" ("the best Latin American writer in English" ("Gregory Rabassa, El Sutil Arte de Traducir Literatura Latinoamericana.")). Given how crucial the circulation of Latin American literature in English was for the world fame of magic realism, these words have great weight. While this circulation is immensely valuable in terms of how it allowed many readers to access Latin American literature, it also decontextualized magic realism; while it highlighted the appeal of this aesthetic for multiple contexts of marginalization, it might take away its potential to denounce the particular conditions created by colonial violence.

The Broad Appeal of Magic Realism

Let's go back to *Narcos*. Right after the second sentence about magic realism disappears ("There is a reason magical realism was born in Colombia."), a narrator starts speaking—in English. He immediately references the US government in the very first sentence. This establishes a context the viewer can understand to describe its difference from Colombia in 1989. Clichés of a domesticated yet exotic difference superpose cocaine and magic realism. Yet Wikipedia shows us more than that—and ties into broader conversations about the role of translation in world literature and magic realism as both a world literary genre and an aesthetic emancipatory project. The Wikipedia articles reveal important local variations is that the ways in which books are read, studied, and understood. Looking at how the term is used in different

languages gives us a sense of how complex it is. It also ties into the debates on how world literature is a useful category if we see it through a broader spectrum of languages rather than just a handful of dominant ones.[15] And it shows the manifold ways scholarly debates interact with Wikipedia: they are often cited but also contested, followed, and disregarded. It is curious to see what it is in each case Wikipedia users take from scholarly sources and what they discard. For example, the Latin American roots of magic realism as a literary genre seem to be as present on Wikipedia as in scholarly narratives. The same can be said about the term's coinage in art criticism in the early 20th century. And yet, when identifying authors as magic realists, personal opinion, taste, and linguistic expertise (and perhaps even pride) seem to weigh more than scholarly sources. Why else would Franz Kafka, Milan Kundera, or Julio Cortázar be consistently classified as magic realists, even when their proper Wikipedia entries offer alternative labels for their work based on scholarly bibliography?

Reading different Wikipedia pages shows us that we need to pay attention to other worldly combinations, connections, and dialogues, which are not necessarily conducted in or between dominant languages. In doing so, we might be able to challenge conventional and unidirectional conversations. Many contemporary narratives of world literature have been criticized for equaling world literature with global circulation, thus positioning literature and scholarship in English (whether in translation or not) as the center of knowledge creation and dissemination. Here, however, we see how the connections between the pages do not always pass through the one in English, and the multilingual editors of the English Wikipedia bring perspectives and insights elaborated in other cultural circles. For instance, what would it mean that the Malayam entry for magic realism shaped the English one rather than the other way around? And what does it mean that contemporary Latin American authors such as Sara Gallardo and José Donoso are named as magic realists in the Turkish Wikipedia without the mediation of other dominant languages (or even translation, for that matter)? Such questions open a world of different multilingual clusters. It can be messy. But messy is better than monolithic.

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Peer reviewer: César Domínguez (University of Santiago de Compostela)

Figlerowicz, Matylda, and Lucas Mertehikian. "An Ever-Expanding World Literary Genre: Defining Magic Realism on Wikipedia: Published in Journal of Cultural Analytics." *Journal of Cultural Analytics*, 11 May 2023, culturalanalytics.org/article/73249-an-ever-expanding-world-literary-genre-defining-magic-realism-on-wikipedia.

3) Don't Call It Magical Realism: Latin American Writers Use Imagination and Fantasy to Explain the World Around Them

Across Latin America, writers who once turned to magical realism to capture the realities of the region are increasingly turning to science fiction and fantasy.

[Español](#)

For countries in the Global North, the "polycrisis" has become a kind of dark cloud obscuring the horizon. The concept is increasingly the stuff of dystopian fantasies about a future set aflame by the convergence of multiple, global and existential challenges.

In Latin America, the polycrisis has defined much of its history, and where once writers turned to magical realism, many now look to science fiction to depict that reality.

"Confusing what we are doing in Latin America… with magical realism is a common mistake," says Mexican writer and editor Libia Brenda, a slight irritation in her voice. "Many in the North think that if it's not the science fiction they know, then it must be magical realism."

Indeed, what writers like Alberto Quimal and Gabriela Damián Miravete (Mexico), Fernanda Trias and Mariana Enriquez (Argentina), Ignacio de Loyola Brandao (Brazil) or Liliana Colanzi and Edmundo Paz Soldan (Bolivia) are doing with literature today has little relation to the works of writers like Colombia's Gabriel García Márquez, the greatest exponent of Latin American magical realism.

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Marquez, whose best-known work, "One Hundred Years of Solitude," centers on the fictional town of Macondo, often drew for inspiration from the lives of everyday people and from history. By contrast, today's boom in Latin American literature delves into themes as varied as horror and environmentalism, technology, dystopia, and fantasy.

According to some observers, these new works focus less on reconciling the past than on making sense of a fraught present and uncertain future.

Libia Brenda, Writer, Editor, and Translator, based in Mexico City; Climate Imagination Fellow, Center for Science and the Imagination, Arizona State University discusses the future envisioned by Mexican science fiction authors.

"The region is finding in its literature the futures that politicians are incapable of imagining," writer Jorge Carrion points out in a [recent New York Times essay](). These new mythologies, he continues, "are constructed by writers through the hybridization of an indigenous cosmovision with… feminism, of technology with humor, of essay with science fiction."

In other words, says Brenda, "Here, we do our own thing."

A "fantastic literature of another order"

A distinctive feature of Latin American science fiction is the "combination of elements that we experience in real life and therefore can describe very naturally," she explains.

"Something we do a lot is to mix fantasy with science fiction, and fantasy not understood as in the framework of unicorns or dragons, but a fantastic literature of another order," she adds.

An example is Mexican writer Gabriela Damián Miravete's "[They Will Dream in the Garden]()," where traces of the minds of murdered and disappeared women and girls are preserved in a "holographic memorial" as survivors attempt to preserve their memory in a future Mexico that has long since moved on.

In a country where a minimum of ten women and girls die or disappear every day due to gender violence and domestic violence (rather conservative official figures), Damián Miravete's story imagines a future in which women organize themselves and stop the murders.

Ursula K. Heise, a professor in the Department of English at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), points out that in Latin America, "what has been striking has been the attention paid to social settings rather than science and technology" in so-called science or "speculative" fiction.

An AI rendering of the holographic garden depicted in Mexican writer Gabriela Damián Miravete's "[They Will Dream in the Garden](#)."

"If you think of people like Ignacio de Loyola Brandao in Brazil, science fiction becomes a way of articulating political criticism, doesn't it?" explains Heise. "His great 1981 novel, Nao Verais Pais Nenhum (You Shall See No Country), is about a somewhat futuristic Sao Paulo, where the whole Amazon has been deforested. It's incredibly hot, and the whole thing is a metaphor for the military dictatorship of the time."

Heise also references Bolivia's Edmundo Paz Soldán, whose work in speculative fiction "arises in the context of having to write about oppressive forms of government under conditions of censorship."

Paz Soldán's themes of a future society or of extra-terrestrial societies are widely interpreted as a veiled critique of conditions in his own country.

Or take Argentine Pedro Mairal's 2005 novel, "The Year of the Desert," which has taken on a cult-like status. In it, a force called "intemperate" attacks the

city of Buenos Aires, "where chaos reigns, food rots, epidemics break out and women see their rights curtailed."

"The most plausible interpretation is that it refers to the 2001 collapse of the Argentine economy," Heise explains, "and perhaps a roundabout way of dealing with the dictatorial past and European colonialism."

Searching for answers

Argentinian writer Mariana Enriquez, known as "the queen of gothic realism" and recipient of multiple awards in Spanish and English, explained it this way during an [interview with Mexico's El Economista](#):

"We are living in a horror that is quite difficult to explain through realism. It seems to me that fiction, and especially horror fiction, helps to get answers. And why am I so interested in this answer? Maybe because I despair when there is no answer."

For Heise, anxieties fueling the dystopian futures present in so much of Anglo science fiction have long been a reality in Latin America.

"The people of the Third World, the developing world, the Global South, so to speak, are already experiencing the problems of widespread waste, climate change, poverty, hunger, desertification, in a way that the Global North is beginning to experience, but not yet," she said.

And it is there – in that literature born of a tortured past, a complicated present, and an uncertain future – where from the magical realism of years past a new literary language emerges, even as Garcia Marquez' fabled Macondo recedes into memory.

This story was produced as part of a special reporting series exploring how global societies and diaspora communities in the US are navigating the "polycrisis," a term increasingly used to describe the confluence of extant and emerging global crises. It was supported by a grant from the [Omega Resilience Awards](#).

Marrero, Pilar. "Don't Call It Magical Realism: Latin American Writers Use Imagination and Fantasy to Explain the World around Them: EMS." *Ethnic Media Services*, 14 June 2023, ethnicmediaservices.org/news-exchange/dont-call-it-magical-realism-latin-american-writers-use-imagination-and-fantasy-to-explain-the-world-around-them/.

3.5 MAGICAL REALISM AND MUSIC

1) Latin American Music Facing Off Against Clickbait-Creators And Lazy Critics

The recent debut recordings of the masterly symphonic cycle by Ecuadorean composer Luis Humberto Salgado reminded me—yet again—of the persistent neglect (and condescension) classical music and musicians outside of Europe and especially Anglo-America are regularly subjected to. Why this occurred historically is a complex matter, but that it should continue today is inexplicable, much less excusable. Especially when various talking heads have taken to fashionably lambasting classical music for reasons that curiously coincide with larger issues that media outlets would never dream of exploiting cynically for page-clicks and ad revenue. But however one may feel about such criticisms, what makes no sense is why virtually none of these critics have done anything meaningful to rectify what they believe are classical music's obstructions to being more diverse and inclusive. For example, would it not make sense to simply start programming and regularly champion music from outside Anglo-America and Europe? Not in some special interest series treated as something apart from mainstream repertoire, but sitting side-by-side with Beethoven and Brahms where such music belongs? Will the New York Philharmonic make good on the "classism" it purported to decry in a recent podcast it co-produced and give a symphonist like Salgado a central place on its programs?

With typical irony, too, the chattering clickbait-creators reveal their ignorance by overlooking how important the likes of Beethoven were to non-white composers. "From a very young age I loved Bach and Beethoven," wrote Silvestre Revueltas. "I enjoyed wandering about with large strides through the romantic boulevards of Chapultepec, hair tousled, and arms folded behind my back. Those lithographs and etchings which showed poor Beethoven looking like a loner always had a great influence upon me. I could do no less." Moroi Saburō, perhaps one of the greatest of Japan's composers, not only bears the strong imprint of Beethoven in his own symphonies, but also wrote several books of biography and commentary on Beethoven which remain highly regarded in his homeland to this day. Luis Humberto Salgado was in some ways Beethoven-obsessed, yet found his own creative and highly original musical voice, his idol becoming an inspiration rather than a burden. If Beethoven is such a symbol of racial oppression or whatever, how does one explain his formidable influence on composers from such diverse racial and national backgrounds?

Sometimes what well-meaning *bien pensants* in classical music tend to say about composers from Latin America is even more revealing. It has become a cliché, for example, to liken the music of the region, whatever the actual

individual style of the composer in question, to the "magical realism" of Gabriel García Márquez. According to Wikipedia, "magical realism" is "a style of fiction and literary genre that paints a realistic view of the modern world while also adding magical elements, [and] often deals with the blurring of the lines between fantasy and reality." The term has become a reliable catch-all for our redoubtable Mark Swed for whenever he is confronted with music south of Calexico:

"Southwest Chamber Music has just issued an all-[Gabriela] Ortíz recording, "Aroma Foliado," in which you can hear the past sneak up on the present through a kind of musical **magical realism**."

"[Alberto] Ginastera's Piano Concerto No. 1, written in 1961, is a work of brutalist, **magical realism**." [Swed continues by describing the music's "unusual evocations of eerie rain-forest weirdness," which is funny as Ginastera was born and raised in Buenos Aires, a city as much a rain forest as Manhattan, lived in the United States for long stretches of time, and spent his final years in the curiously un-tropical climate of Switzerland. Not exactly the sort of places where Swed may have expected our presumably spear-chucking composer to have lived.]

"It is a little easier, although still somewhat problematic, to come to terms with [Daniel] Catán's old and new in the L.A. Opera revival. Part of what made it easier was the outstanding conducting of Grant Gershon, who unraveled new layers of wonder in Catán's orchestration. The pit, more than stage, is where most of the **magical realism** is realized."

"The text for "Cantata Criolla" is an important Venezuelan poem by Alberto Arvelo Torrealba, the director's grandfather, that celebrates the dusty, perilous, mysterious llanos (plains) of Venezuela and presages **magical realism** with a singing contest between a brazen coplero (a troubadour of the llanos) and the devil." [In that case, why are Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* or Gounod's *Faust* also not forecasts of "magical realism?"]

The less a critic or musicologist knows or cares about Latin American music, the more you can expect them to describe it as "magical realism." Not exactly an enlightened attitude.

Castiglione, Néstor. "Latin American Music Facing off against Clickbait-Creators and Lazy Critics." *Echorrhea*, echorrhea, 1 May 2021, www.echorrhea.com/reviews/latin-american-music-magical-realism.

2) The Colombian folk songs that influenced Gabriel García Márquez's 'magical realism'

Gabriel García Márquez once described his novel "100 Years of Solitude" as a 350-page vallenato.

García Márquez, the famed Colombian novelist who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982, influenced fiction writers around the world. A major source of inspiration for his own work came from Vallenato, a form of Colombian folk music played on accordion, caja (a type of drum), and guacharaca (a scraping, percussive instrument).

Vallenatos are mini-epics about characters from small towns, and the songs' lyrics are filled with poetic imagery about local lore. García Márquez was such a fan of the music that helped create a **Vallenato festival** that still takes place every spring in the Colombian city of Valledupar. I visited this year to see if I could trace a connection between the music being played there today and the musical tradition that García Márquez so cherished.

You don't have to look far for signs of García Márquez's love of Vallenato in his work. It's right there in his 2002 memoir, "Living to Tell the Tale."

"I had dreamed about the good life," he wrote, "going from fair to fair and singing with an accordion and a good voice, which always seemed to me to be the oldest and happiest way to tell a story."

García Márquez would often mention Vallenato in his stories, even name-checking a beloved composer, Rafael Escalona. And he made Vallenato a central part of his most famous novel, "**One Hundred Years of Solitude**,"turning a real-life Vallenato accordionist, Francisco El Hombre, into a mythical balladeer.

"García Márquez took the real [Francisco El Hombre] and processed him through his 'magical realism,'" Vallenato historian Tomas Darío Gutiérrez says. "The problem is when people confuse one thing with the other. And people think Vallenato began with 'Francisco El Hombre' taking an accordion, a drum and a 'guacharaca' instrument, and traveling all over the region, teaching the music he had invented."

That origin story, Gutiérrez says, was invented by García Márquez.

It's all part of the oral tradition that the novelist was steeped in, explains Raymond Williams, a professor at the University of California, Riverside who's written extensively about García Márquez. Williams says García Márquez kept that tradition alive through the novel, and also through the annual Vallenato festival, where he was a regular.

"It's a happy marriage for him literarily and eventually it became a real cultural marriage because he was famous for going to the Festival de Vallenato every year," Williams says. "I guess until he became so, so famous that he just couldn't do it comfortably anymore."

Vallenato's minstrel tradition is still very much alive at the festival. I saw some of it when I dropped in on a parranda in the city of Valledupar. These are small gatherings of friends and musicians who sing, tell stories, eat and drink Old Parr whisky.

The parranda I attended was hosted by the composer Deimer Marín. He sang and played guitar — no accordion. After a while, Carlos Mario Zabaleta, a

well-known Vallenato singer arrived. And he told me a story: In October of 2006, while on tour in Mexico with the group Reyes Vallenatos de Colombia, he was invited to sing at a parranda hosted by the Colombian ambassador in Mexico City. The guest of honor was García Márquez.
Zabaleta & García Márquez - with drummer Pablo Cruz in the middle - after the Parranda in Mexico City
Lolita Acosta

"He started asking me about Armando Zabaleta, a great-uncle of mine, a Vallenato composer," Zabaleta said. "You cannot imagine the nostalgia I saw in his face. I had no idea how long it had been since he last heard a drum, a guacharaca, an accordion. I will never forget that he asked me, 'I would love for you to sing "La Diosa Coronada."' So when he died two years ago, I dusted off his books and re-read them, and I found the epigraph he included in '**Love in the Time of Cholera**,' two verses from 'La Diosa Coronada': 'The words I am about to express, they now have their own crowned goddess.'"

"The Colombian Folk Songs That Influenced Gabriel García Márquez's 'Magical Realism.'" *GBH*, 6 May 2016, www.wgbh.org/news/2016-05-05/the-colombian-folk-songs-that-influenced-gabriel-garcia-marquezs-magical-realism.

4 MUSIC STYLE
4.1 COLOMBIAN MUSIC GENRE

Colombian music has a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Every part of Colombia moves to a different sound; each region has its own rhythms.

There are more than 1,025 folk rhythms grouped into 157 different genres. That is why our country is known by "the land of the thousand rhythms".

It is not surprising, then, that ProColombia has outlined one of the country's promotion campaign based on our musical diversity. The campaign is called Feel the Rhythm.

Also, in 2018, ProColombia together with UNWTO and Sound Diplomacy released a white paper on music and tourism, called Music is the new gastronomy. It looks at music as a primary driver of tourism.

Now you know, no trip to Colombia is complete without music!

So, if you are planning to visit Colombia, make sure you get familiar with our music and with our language.

There is no better way to enjoy Colombian culture than by dancing our music and talking to our people!

Let us now take you to a Colombian music journey.

Caribbean region
1. Cumbia
Cumbia is perhaps the country's most popular music genre. It originated as a courtship dance among West African slaves.

Initially, Cumbia was performed using only drums and claves. Then, it incorporated other influences from the indigenous Kogui and Kuna tribes (flutes and percussion). As well as from Spaniards (European guitars), and Germans (accordion).

Even if you have not visited Colombia, you have probably heard Cumbia beats and seen Cumbia dance. Shakira, one of the country's most recognized artists has been a great ambassador of this genre.

2. Bullerengue
Bullerengue is a Cumbia-based style traditionally sung by women. It also has African and Spanish roots and influences.

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Some of its main characteristics include a strong emphasis in rhythm and improvisation over melody, large groups of musicians, and a call-and-response interaction between the lead singer, known as "cantadora" and a choir.

Two of the most famous bullerengue singers are Petrona Martinez and Totó La Momposina. Thanks to them, Bullerengue recognized internationally.

3. Vallenato
Along with Cumbia, Vallenato is one of the most popular Colombian music genres.

Vallenato is traditionally played with an indigenous Gaita flute, a caja drum, a guacharaca, and an accordion.

This genre is characterized by its literary content and narrative style. To such extent that Gabriel García Márquez, Colombian writer, once said that this music had been woven with the same strand of his novels and that the most famous of them "One hundred years of Solitude" was nothing more than a 300-pages Vallenato.

Vallenato was considered the music of the lower class and farmers. But, after the mid-20th century, it gradually started penetrating through every social group.

In recent years, artists like Carlos Vives have begun mixing vallenato with contemporary rhythms, developing a modern variant.

4. Champeta
Champeta is more than a music genre or a dance; it's a movement. It began in the early '80s among Afro-Colombians, mainly Cartagena de Indias.

The word "champeta" originally denoted a kind of knife used in the region at work, in the kitchen or, sometimes, even as an offensive weapon. Then, the term "champetudo" started to be used by the elites of the city to refer to those residents of the more outlying districts of Cartagena, who tended to be poorer and of African descent.

Champeta is a fusion of rhythms from Africa (soukous, highlife, mbaqanga, juju), the Antilles (ragga, compás haitiano), and music of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian origins (bullerengue, mapalé, zambapalo and chalupa).

Champeta also has evolved during the last decades. It passed from being a music genre and dance of the so-called "poor"; to being even one of the favorite music genres of the middle and upper classes in Bogotá.

Pacific Region
Pacific music includes a large number of music styles depending on the region.

Music from the north is more energetic, while music from the south is characterized by a mellow timbre from the wooden marimba.

5. Currulao
Currulao is the most renowned Pacific music genre.

It is mainly played by a group of musicians. The Currulao rhythm is created by striking the skin of the African drum called "cununo" with the one's hand and tapping the side of the drum with a small stick. But the main instrument is perhaps the Colombian marimba, a wooden xylophone that resembles the African balafon.

Andean Region
6. Bambuco
Bambuco is a folk genre that originated in the Andean highlands. It is pretty much a fusion between Spanish and indigenous styles, although it has some African roots as well.

It is traditionally performed with a bandola, guitar or mandolin and a small 12-string instrument called a tiple.

Rhythmically is related to the Currulao, which is called some times Bambuco Viejo (Old Bambuco). However, Andean Bambuco has a more melancholic spirit.

Bambuco was popular all over Colombia between the 1920s and the 1930s. Unfortunately, its popularity is not as it used to be but its rhythms have influenced many other modern genres.

Interestingly, during the last years, traditional music has gained again some popularity thanks to young musicians. One of them is Katie Jaimes, who was born in south Ireland but when she was two years old her family moved to Colombia where she grew up and lives presently.

7. Salsa

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Those from Colombia probably are used to hearing "are you from Colombia? So you dance salsa, can you teach me?"

Although Salsa is not originally a Colombian music genre, it is very important to mention it due to its great influence in our culture.

There is not a trip to Colombia without music, there is definitely not a trip to Colombia without salsa.

Colombian salsa started developing in the country during the 1960s when Cali's upper class organized every year a carnival to commemorate the crop of sugarcane. This music style gained quite some popularity among the "caleños" (people from Cali), they introduced their own steps and speed. Was then when Colombian Salsa or Salsa Caleña was born.

Unlike other salsa styles, in Colombian salsa, the upper body remains mostly rigid, with most of the movement occurring in the hips and legs.

Orinoquia Region
8. Musica Llanera and Joropo
Joropo is the traditional style from "música llanera" which literally translates to "music of the plains". It is inspired by nature, landscapes, and the lifestyle the Colombian cowboys.

There are milking songs (canciones de ordeño); cattle driving songs (canciones del cabestrero); calming songs before sunset (canciones de vela); and taming songs (canciones de domesticación).

It is known for verbal contests called "contrapunteo", the use of the harp as the lead instrument, and the fast-paced maracas.

Cholo Valderrama is one of the most popular artists performing Musica Llanera.

Insular Region
9. San Andrés and Providencia Islands rhythms
The music of the insular region is even more diverse than the music from the other regions. It also has African and European influences, but it also adds some Caribbean mixes.

The rhythms from the islands include Calipso, Compas, Foxtrot, Mazurka, Mento, Praise Hymn, Pasillo isleño, Polca, Quadrille, Reggae, Schottische, Soca, Vals isleño, and Zouk.

There is not one specific genre from the Colombian Insular region; the "traditional" rhythms are the blend of these.

Amazon Region
10. Amazon Rainforest Rhythms
The Amazon is the least populated and least developed region of Colombia, but it is one of the most biodiverse from Colombia and from the world.

Amazon rainforest is also known as being the Lungs of the Earth. It produces some of the world's rarest and most unusual fruits and flavors. It is also home to numerous indigenous communities, sounds and rhythms.

There is not a specific genre or rhythm from this region. However, each year, at the end of November, and for three days, takes place the International festival of amazonense popular music finmupa "el pirarucu de oro".

The 5 Most Popular Music Genres in Colombia

Music is a determining factor of culture for all countries and Colombia is no exception. In Colombia, music is considered an element of great importance for the social and cultural union. Therefore, there are many musical genres in charge of bringing happiness to all national and foreign inhabitants. Here are the 5 best music genres in Colombia.

Vallenato
Vallenato is one of the first musical genres created in Colombia, full of Caribbean sounds where the participation of musical instruments such as the accordion, drum, guitar, and guacharaca stands out. At the beginning of the genre, only the four previous instruments were used for the creation of its tonalities, but with the passing of time, many more instruments were added such as drums, piano, percussion, among others.

This genre is originally from the Colombian Caribbean coast and is considered a musical genre born from the countryside and farms, with lyrics of love, passion, party, sadness, etc. It has been internationalized with the passing of time in other Latin and European countries. Among its most popular singers are: Carlos vives, Poncho Zuleta, Silvestre Dangond, Rafael Orozco.

Salsa
Salsa is recognized as a very popular musical genre in Latin America, in Colombia, we have great exponents of salsa as Joe Arroyo and El Grupo

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Niche, this genre became popular mainly in the Pacific of Colombia, in cities like Cali, salsa has been the cultural identity of that city, where the rhythm of drums and maracas citizens demonstrate their culture to the world. This genre has generated great admiration worldwide due to the essence of its dance, being denominated as one of the main genres used for dance competitions.

Reggaeton

This genre is one of the most listened to in general in my country because it has pleasant rhythms for adults, young people, and children, very catchy music that has become very famous worldwide because its singers constantly make collaborations with world artists. In the city of Medellin, we have the greatest essence of reggaeton culture, in this city, we find very famous singers such as Maluma, J Balvin, Feid, etc.

It is played a lot in parties, discos, and meetings, it has different ways of dancing that are attractive for the new generations, besides, it is a genre that lives in a constant update to the new rhythms that are seen in the society.

Champeta

The champeta is a musical genre heard a lot on the Caribbean coast of Colombia in cities like; Barranquilla, and Cartagena, among others. It is a genre that fills with cultural music and modern rhythms with ancient rhythms. This genre was born in Africa and with the passing of time was on a journey to reach the Caribbean coast where it has been updated and brought to catchy rhythms that produce joy, joy, and good humor in whoever listens to it.

It is a genre heard in neighborhoods as well as in weddings and parties representative of the culture, it could be said that the champeta was formed with the Spanish language in Colombia because in Colombia the artists took the African rhythms and merged them with Spanish lyrics that led to the champeta was heard in several places around the world. Some of its famous singers are Mr. Black, Kevin Florez, and Papoman.

Cumbia

Cumbia is a genre full of a lot of culture in its rhythms and dances, although its origin is usually very confusing because in several countries of South America cumbia is heard, with different tones, it is usually very difficult to say which country is the original cumbia. This musical genre in Colombia includes all the cities of Colombia, because it has a very important ancestral value for Colombians, cumbia dances have been practiced since many years ago for the celebration of important events. Cumbia is heard with drum, tambora, and maracas rhythms, they are few instruments, but they generate completely authentic melodies.

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In cumbia there are usually no singers, it is a genre that is made up of groups or orchestras that are responsible for making a great group work to generate passion and joy in their listeners, along with their music cumbia has traditional costumes that produce recognition for those who sing and dance this genre. Generally, it is a white suit with a red scarf for men and a white dress for women, this costume is representative of the ancestors who started cumbia in its early years.

These are the most popular musical genres in Colombia, they are genres full of a lot of cultures, we know that music is a universal language that unites society, and for that reason, it is necessary to know the music of a country to recognize its cultural roots.

"The 5 Most Popular Music Genres in Colombia." Italki, www.italki.com/en/article/8erKBUTSGrKQIXuB5R4uqa/the-5-most-popular-music-genres-in-colombia. Accessed 19 Aug. 2023.

4.2 INSTRUMENTS IN LATIN MUSIC

What Are the Top 11 Traditional Instruments Used in Latin America?

1. Digital Piano

Invented by Harold Rhodes in the recent era, digital piano is an alternative to the acoustic counterpart with almost the same construction and working method. Also known as electronic piano, the best digital piano is now getting famous across the globe as many people who cannot afford acoustic models can easily get their hands on electronic pianos. They have got weighted keys and could be used to create unique symphonies and something aesthetic. You could also use digital pianos to learn playing popular songs and music rhythms in a single go.

2. Pandeiro

This instrument resembles a tambourine. It is held by the hand and comes with small cymbals around its side. It's widely popular in Brazilian music especially capoeira and samba. This instrument is considered versatile as it can be tuned to your liking. It can also be played in different ways including using the fingers and the whole palm.

3. Conga

With its origins from Cuba, this single-headed drum commonly comes in a set of two. Each of the drums is tuned to a specific pitch, giving the drums its rhythmic beat. You can use various sounds with the conga by striking the instrument on its head using your hand.

4. Güiro

This handheld musical instrument is also believed to originate from Cuba. It is made with a piece of metal or wood. It is hollowed out and comes with grooves that run horizontally along its side. The güiro is played similar to a washboard – it's held in one hand and using a stick, it's scraped, which creates a rattling sound. Another way to play it is to strike it using a stick.

5. Timbale

This instrument is an essential part of various Latin music including meringue, salsa, and mambo. It has a resemblance to the conga, in such a way that it is played in pairs. However, the timbale comes with metal rims and is shallower than the conga. The timbale heads give a resonant and high-pitched tone because the drum heads are tuned high. It can be played by striking a stick to its head or metal casing.

6. Maracas

The maracas are believed to originate from various places including

Venezuela and Puerto Rico. If you have never heard maracas played live, the best option is to [rent a car San Juan airport](#) and go to experience these emotions live. It is not only popular in Latin American music but also all over the world as a back-up instrument. Probably the major reason behind its popularity is its simplicity to play. The maracas are made of a hollowed-out shell with a handle. Inside the shell are dried seeds, so that when the instrument is shaken, the maracas produce a rattling sound.

7. Clave

This Latin American instrument, which is common in Cuban music, looks simple. However, it is among the most distinct of the instruments in the region. It's a handheld wooden block that is approximately as small as a big cigar. To use the instrument, you strike two claves together to make a sound.

8. El Tres

This instrument is usually played in the Caribbean islands. The instrument was said to originate in Cuba and later used by Puerto Rican people. It's clearly created based on the idea of a guitar based on its appearance. In some places, this instrument is called a bandola or a triple. It has six strings like the guitar, but these strings are grouped into three. The el tres is an instrument commonly used for music that has Spanish and African influences. Musicians who seek to explore the rich sounds of the el tres can enhance their compositions by incorporating a diverse range of [free midi pack](#) resources.

9. La Marimba

The la marimba is an instrument that originated from Central America. Other people believed that this instrument was created during the Mayan civilization while others say that it was created by slaves as their own version of an African instrument. Costa Rica and Guatemala are still known to use the instrument until today.

It is entirely made of wood and the sound is generated by striking on its wooden bars, which are located over resonators of varying sizes. The player uses long sticks that are rubberized on one of its ends.

10. El Bombo Leguero

Made of wood and leather, this instrument is said to originate from Argentina. It resembles a [drum](#) but produces a distinct sound. It's said to be among the oldest instruments being used today.

11. La Antara

The la antara is a musical instrument that originated in the Paracas and Nasca cultures, which were ancient civilizations of Peru. This instrument is also called a pan flute and is made using bamboo or wood. Tubes of bamboo or wood are placed in a row to create this instrument. It's also called the pan flute, which is believed to be the ancestor of the harmonica and similar instruments.

Sounds and Colours. "What Are the Top 11 Traditional Instruments Used in Latin America?" Sounds and Colours, 6 July 2023, soundsandcolours.com/subjects/travel/what-are-the-top-10-traditional-instruments-used-in-latin-america-49760/.

4.3 FEATURES OF SALSA MUSIC AND DANCE

Popular Instruments in Salsa Music
Since its origin in Cuba, the Salsa music performance was centered on one of the two traditional Cuban arrangements, - string-based charanga or horn-based son conjunto. The most popular Cuban Salsa ensembles were of the Son Conjunto type, and other bands either tried to honor these traditional arrangements or to try to give Salsa a new sound by switching some of these core instruments, enlarging certain sections of the band, or incorporation new types of instruments. In the modern decades, the rising popularity of the New York style of Salsa placed higher importance on the percussions. In the 21st century, Salsa bands, musicians, and composers have even incorporated electronic instruments and effects that have enabled this Latin song to remain relevant and popular.

Son Conjunto
The most popular Cuban Salsa ensemble can be of varying sizes, from small to very large. Son Conjunto band type was in part present earlier, but it was finally solidified into its modern form during the 1940s by the famous Cuban tres player Arsenio Rodríguez who expanded the traditional "son cubano ensemble" with additional instruments. Crucial for the early development of Salsa, Son Conjunto band ensemble consisted of congas, bongos, bass, piano, tres (not used regularly, but favored by Arsenio Rodríguez), a horn section consisting of the trombones or trumpets, and the wide variety of the handheld percussion instruments such as maracas, guiro or claves.

String charanga
In addition to Son Conjunto, the other popular Cuban Salsa ensemble type is string charanga. This band type evolved from the traditional Charanga band type, by changing its brass and woodwinds from flutes and strings.

String charanga band is focused on the instruments such as congas, timbales, bass, piano, and flute. To finish up the band, it also must have a string section (such a cello, viola, or violins), and singers also participate in music by playing with hand-held percussion instruments claves, or guiro. One notable percussion instrument that storing charanga bands never use are bongos.

Percussions
Salsa in New York received a big boost of popularity when immigrant Afro-Cubans started focusing their bands on three instruments – congas, bongo, and timbales. Timbales were responsible for the main bell patterns, congas were supported, and bongos were used as an improvisational instrument.

Many other instruments were also needed to make the band whole, but these three provided the foundation for all other sounds.

These three drum-based bands became the basis of the Salsa in the New York scene, and after the popularization of the genre in the 1970s, this percussion-based style was also embraced worldwide.

Music structure
The music structure of Salsa is built upon the foundation of calve, a concept and pattern of five strokes that are present in many Afro-Cuban rhythms.

Calve – The calve pattern of the Salsa music is syncopated rhythm across 2 bars in European 4/4 notation. It consists form of the "strong measure" that contains three notes (also known as "tresillo") and a "weak measure" with two notes. Patterns of the Salsa can begin with either measure, often called "three-two" or "two-three." Other Calve patterns used in regional Salsa styles are called son calve, rumba calve, and 6/8 calve.

Percussion – Since the foundational calve beat can start with either strong or weak measure, the percussion instruments (such as bongo or timbale) need to adapt to the rhythm of each song.

Guajeo – Guajeo is a traditional Cuban ostinato melody, formed as a blend of European harmonics, African rhythmic structures, and North American Jazz influences. Salsa guajeo melodies are usually played during verses and montuno sections of the song. Guajeo melodies are often regarded as the most recognizable element of Salsa music. If in some Salsa styles the core composition is not following the basic Clave rhythm, the melody of Guajeo is the one that is essential for tying the composition with the Salsa format.

Bass tumbao – Bass section of the salsa band is closely tied on the tressilo pattern, where the last note of the measure is held over the downbeat of the next measure. Tumbaos can be calve-neutral or have specific alignment. Moñas – Similar to guajeo but performed solo or in duos/trios with horns. The major difference is that Moñas can be improvised. Songs with strong Moñas sections are also described to have "típico style" of soloing on trombone or trumpet.

The rhythm of Salsa music usually lands between 150 and 250 beats per minute, but most of the dancing is done between 160 and 220 bpm.

Phases of the Salsa song:

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- Introduction – An Opening opening part of the song, usually with 8 measures and sometimes performed with percussion only.
- Body – Coming up with the band's instruments.
- Bridge
- Conga Break
- Montuno Section
- Coro/Pregon – "Call and answer" part of the song, performed with a vocal tune between the singer and the chorus.
- Solos – Instrumental-only section.
- The mambo section/monas – Usually instrumental-only section.
- Second Montuno Section/ Changes in clave direction
- Ending The ending – Similar in form to the Introduction section, done in 8 measures.

4.4 FEATURES OF CUMBIA MUSIC

1) Cumbia: The Sound of Colombia

Today, cumbia is one of the most popular and widespread genres in Latin America. Its roots are in Colombia, but cumbia is a blend of music and cultural traditions from indigenous Colombians, Africans, and Europeans, particularly the Spanish. It first began near the ports and coastal settlements where Spanish traders and descendents of African slaves settled.

Traditionally, the music had a basic 2/4 or 2/2 rhythm and drums and other percussion borrowed from African traditions. It incorporated native Colombian flutes playing the melody, plus costumes and melodic variations from European traditions. The three drums common to traditional cumbia are: tambora (for deep bass rhythms), tambor alegre or mid-drum (used for backup rhythm), and lamador (also providing backbeat).

Three flutes are used in traditional cumbia. The melody is played on the five-hole gaita hembra, or female flute. A gaita macho, or male flute, with one hole provides rhythmic and harmonic support. These two gaitas have a mouthpiece of hardened beeswax and use a turkey feather to blow air through them. The third flute, the flauta de millo, is a four- to six-hole flute made of millo cane that helps carry the melody. Classical cumbia was completely instrumental and never accompanied by singing.

The genre's dance movements also have roots in various cultures. The costumes come from Spanish traditions. Women wear long, colorful skirts, flowered headdresses, earrings, and lots of makeup. Men wear white shirts and pants, and don red bandannas and a sombrero. Movements borrow elements of both European and African traditions. The men dance with one hand behind their back, putting on and taking off their hats. The red bandanna is either worn around the neck or waved. Women playfully wave their skirts and are lured toward the men and then away, as if showing disinterest.

As Colombia's vibrant music industry grew cumbia evolved and blended with other styles, both traditional and commercial. During the '60s and '70s, "the golden age of cumbia," the music became popular around the world. Colombian musicians like Pacho Galán and Lucho Bermúdez created a "refined" cumbia.

Latin American countries adopted its forms and rhythms, blended it with their traditional genres and created variations: cumbia Peruanan, cumbia Argentin, cumbia Chilena, cumbia Mexicana, technocumbia, and many others. The music is played today on a wider range of instruments including conga, güira, claves, timbales, accordion, clarinet, horns, guitar, and more.

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Yurco, Cherie. "Cumbia: The Sound of Colombia." Making Music Magazine, 16 Oct. 2014, makingmusicmag.com/cumbia-sound-colombia/.

An Introduction to Latin Music: Cumbia History

One of the most popular dances in Latin America, cumbia has come a long way since its early development among African communities along the pacific coast of Colombia. It is now played and danced in various guises in clubs, on bandstands and on the streets as far north as Mexico and as far south as Argentina, as well as being popular among Spanish-speaking communities in the United States. While cumbia was traditionally played by percussion, vocals and gaita flutes, modern cumbia is played by a full rhythm section of bass and piano, with a full complement of percussion instruments as well as brass, backing vocals and of course a lead vocalist. This article will trace cumbia back to this more folkloric beginning, analyse some key musicians and songs and explore some more modern manifestations of the style.

A Synthesis Of Styles and Cultures

Many musical styles throughout the Americas are the result of fusion of different cultures and musical heritages. In Cuba this fusion led to styles such as son and rumba, in the United States it led to blues and jazz, in Brazil it paved the way for samba. In Colombia the fusion of African communities (brought there as slaves by the Spanish) and prehispanic communities led to cumbia. Cumbia was originally popular in coastal communities where this synthesis of cultures was most prominent, but as it began to spread to the rest of Colombia in the 1940s, more hispanic influences emerged. Each of these individual cultures contributed a different musical element to cumbia music. The African influence can be heard through the percussion instruments (a combination of hand drums, stick drums and maracas) and the rhythms they play, while the prehispanic elements are most evident in the gaita flutes heard in traditional cumbia music. The European influence is most evident in slightly later renditions of the style when instruments such as guitars, basses and horns were added as well as the fact that Spanish has been the dominant language in most modern manifestations.

Instrumentation

Let's take a look at some of the common instruments in a cumbia ensemble, starting with a more traditional line-up before looking at a more modern one.

Traditional

Percussion - traditional cumbia ensembles usually feature a percussion section of...

Tambora - a large drum played horizontally (much like a modern bass drum would be) with sticks. Different sounds can be made by the skin, which produces a low "thud," and the shell, which creates a dry clicking sound.

Llamador - a small hand drum played on the lap to play a rhythm similar to a backbeat in Western popular music. It produces a clear open sound, which can be heard clearly over the rest of the band. In more modern cumbia music, the piano or guitar often plays the same rhythm as the llamador.

Tambor alegre - a drum similar in size and shape to the llamador, which plays a much busier and more syncopated pattern. The alegre player often improvises between melodic phrases, a feature common in a lot of African musical styles.

Maracas - a pair of very large circular maracas that produce a very long sustained note when played properly. The shape and size of cumbia maracas (or gaita maracas) is different to Cuban, Mexian or Venezuelan maracas and is important in generating their unique sounds.

Gaita flute - a large wooden flute that provides the melodic interest in early cumbia music. In instrumental dances the gaita flute plays longer melodies, but in songs where there is also a singer (or group of singers) it usually fills the gaps between vocal phrases

Vocals - like a lot of African music, cumbia usually features a singer or chorus of singers who provide most of the melodic and harmonic interest.

Modern

Percussion - due to the fact that cumbia has become popular all over the world, you can hear a vast array of percussion instruments playing cumbia, from drum kit to cajon. Certain bands (such as La Sonora Dinamita) maintain a traditional percussion section of tambora, allegre, llamador and maracas but fuse these folkloric instruments with horns, piano and electric bass guitar. Other percussion instruments you're likely to hear in modern cumbia music are…

Congas - tall hand drums of Cuban origin, which sound very similar to the llamador and tambor alegre. When the latter aren't available (in a band outside of Colombia with no access to folkloric Colombian instruments), these

rhythms are often played on congas. A good example of this is La Vida Es Un Carnaval by Celia Cruz. The song is a cumbia up until the coro, when it changes to salsa and features a percussion section of cangas, bongos and timbales.

Bongos - a pair of small wooden hand drums native to cuba. Again the bongos are often used in cumbias played by bands who also play other latin american dances, such as salsa, in their repertoire.

Timbales - a pair of large metal drums played with sticks. A timbal player will usually have a cowbell or block as part of their setup. The timbales usually outline the rhythms played by the rim of the tambora.

Drum Kit - when none of the above instruments are available, the drum kit's vast array of sonic possibilities can provide a versatile alternative.

Piano - in a lot of mainstream cumbia music, the majority of the harmony is outlined by the pianist. Rhythmically, the piano often plays the backbeat mentioned previously, which is also played by the llamador.

Guitar - this could be an acoustic or electric guitar, depending on the musical situation. Like the piano, the guitarist often outlines the backbeat.

Horns - while Gaita flutes aren't a common addition in modern mainstream cumbia music, their role is important and is usually taken by horns such as trumpets, trombones or saxophones.

Musical Examples
The best way to learn about any musical style is by listening to the music itself, so let's listen to and analyse two well known examples of cumbia music, one traditional and one modern. The first is a traditional song called El Pescador (The Fisherman). I'd recommend listening to this version by Toto La Momposina filmed in 1991, as it's a good example of traditional instruments without the poor audio and video quality usually associated with old recordings.

First let's look at the instrumentation. As mentioned previously, the ensemble is dominated by percussion with tambora, llamador, maracas and two alegre drums (one playing a more improvised role). Aside from the large percussion, we have Toto La Momposina herself on lead vocals and a large backing chorus of male and female vocalists. While Toto takes the melody and tells the story through her vocals, the chorus provides a rich harmonic backing. All

the instruments are acoustic which makes sense given that this was originally folk music played in small, usually poor communities.

Like most early cumbia music, this song is monophonic in the verses and homophonic in the choruses with the lead vocals singing in between the choral phrases. The percussion keeps a constant pulse throughout, a feature of African music as a whole.

Now let's have a listen to a more modern manifestation of cumbia. The song we'll listen to is the 1996 hit Como Te Voy a Olvidar by Mexican cumbia group Los Angeles Azules and is a good example of the international success of cumbia.

Before we even discuss the music itself, it's important to notice the venue, a huge arena that looks to be sold out, which shows how popular this music has become. Also, the video itself has over 106,579,200 views since 2015, and Los Angeles Azules have almost 5 million subscribers on YouTube.

Now let's get on to the music itself, starting with the instrumentation, which is far more modern and varied. The percussion section is still large but features more modern Afro-Cuban instruments such as congas and timbales as well as guiras played by backing vocalists. While there are no maracas, the rhythm played by the guiras approximates this sound fairly closely. The congas play a blend between the llamador and the tambora rhythm, while the timbales play the rhythm usually played by the rim of the tambora as well as fills towards the end of musical phrases.

There is a large rhythm section of electric bass guitar, keyboards and accordian (a common instrument in Mexican cumbia). The bass guitar outlines a rhythm similar to that played by the bass notes of the tambora drum (beats 3 and 4 of each bar of cut time being the prominent beats), while the keyboards outline the llamador backbeat (beats 2 and 4 of each bar). The accordion plays a similar role to the brass (two trumpets and two trombones) and plays melodic lines towards the end of each vocal phrase. The song follows a more conventional pop verse/chorus structure, which is dominated by the lead vocal melody and doesn't feature backing harmony like that of El Pescador.

The above examples give us a clear insight into the journey cumbia has taken, from small coastal communities in northern Colombia to massive arena concerts in Mexico and beyond.

Conclusion

This amazing style of music has come a long way, although it still holds true to its musical origins. Our next article will go more deeply into cumbia rhythms and look at these from a drummers perspective. We'll assess what each instrument plays in a typical cumbia ensemble and how we can approximate this on the drum kit. As you've seen and heard in the above examples, there is not just one way to play cumbia, and, by listening and learning the origins of this music, we will have a better idea of how to incorporate this material into part of our musical vocabulary.

Bache, Brendan, et al. "An Introduction to Latin Music: Cumbia History." Liberty Park Music, 20 July 2020, www.libertyparkmusic.com/introduction-to-latin-music-cumbia-history/.

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A Blending of Latin Sounds

Defining salsa, like defining jazz, can be an elusive task. Like jazz, it has absorbed many influences and evolved over time. And like the terms jazz, funk, or disco, the word salsa, which means sauce in Spanish, is a label. No one is quite sure who "invented" the term -- it is said to have been used to describe "hot" Latin music long before the 70's. But it was the New York-based Fania Records operating in the mid-70's that did the most to generate a worldwide recognition of the music and its new name by aggressively promoting its new stars in markets in and beyond the United States. Izzy Sanabria, graphic artist, M.C., and publisher of Latin New York magazine in the 70's and 80's who was integral to the promotion of salsa, described his own role in an essay on his Web site (www.salsa.bigstep.com)

"I never claimed to have coined the word salsa, or used it first (I'm too young). My claim to fame is being first to see the potential of the word as a marketing tool to promote New York's Latin music. I had always felt that 'Latin music' was too broad a term for the sound being created by Latino New Yorkers and that it needed its own name like jazz, rock 'n' roll, disco, R&B, blues, etc. A new name and image was needed that people could get excited about and be able to relate to. Salsa was easy enough for anyone to pronounce and remember. I thought salsa was just perfect" Whatever its success as a marketing tool, salsa was still a label, and to some, a simplification of a diverse tradition. In a sense that is true -- salsa is a product of many Latin styles. Early salsa records might contain any of a dozen unique traditional song forms -- son, rumba, pachanga, bomba, danzon, guaguanco. The label may have obscured the variety of Latin music, but it also made it easy for new listeners to identify, and it helped

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sell records.

Although a great number of New York's stars and sidemen in the 70's were Puerto Rican, the basic musical elements of salsa were derived mainly from Cuba. Traditional Cuban styles had been popular favorites in the United States as far back as the 1920's. Johnny Pacheco, a musician, bandleader and salsa pioneer, explained in an interview that while music from Puerto Rico and the Domincan Republic was often heard in New York, Cuban music held a special appeal for musicians and dancers: "It was more intricate to play Cuban music because of the arrangements....The Cuban music was more danceable and more intriguing."

In the 1940's and 50's, New York was home to flourishing Afro-Cuban jazz and mambo scenes. Tito Puente, Tito Rodriguez, Machito and Dizzy Gillespie led popular bands rooted in Cuban forms, often augmented by big-band jazz arrangements and instrumentation. As the 50's came to a close, only the few most successful big bands could survive economically. But the love affair with the Cuban sound did not die.

Cuban song forms such as the son that were a mainstay of the rhumba and mambo eras would also be taken up by younger musicians to form the basis of salsa.

The 60's saw a turn to smaller groups -- first to flute-led charangas, then later to the popular conjunto, or combo, patterned on a type Cuban street band featuring trumpets and percussion.

Sarah Krulwich/The New York Times

Eddie Palmieri, the pianist, rehearsing with band for a concert at Lehman Center for the Performing Arts in the Bronx, 1986.

These conjuntos, which in New York often added piano and bass, specialized in tipico, or down-home style of music common in New York's Latino neighborhoods, most notably a section of East Harlem known as El Barrio, considered by most to be the cradle of New York salsa. Early Cuban conjuntos like those led by tres player Arsenio Rodriguez and bassist Israel "Cachao" Lopez -- and those in New York that would follow -- were less jazz-oriented than the big bands, and featured Spanish-Caribbean folk melodies and song forms charged with hard-hitting polyrhythms with African roots that could move bodies well north or south of any border. These groups became the stylistic models for many upcoming salsa bands of the 70's.

Despite Cuba's deep influence, salsa was not merely Cuban music dressed up in a new name: It was a product of pan-Latin New York. By

1961, United States-Cuba relations had been severed. New Yorkers no longer had inspirational visits from well-loved Cuban bands like Orquesta Aragon. They were left to develop a music of their own. Consequently, Puerto Rican, Dominican, African and African-American sounds were all thrown into the mix. Up-and-comers like New York-born Puerto Rican Willie Colon challenged the "Cuban orthodoxy" and eagerly wove sounds and rhythms from down the street and across the globe into his arrangements.

Traditional Latin music also was subject to a distinct New York urbanization. This was no longer music straight from the "old country" -- it was infected with New York energy. Tempos quickened, bands became more aggressive and brassier, lyrical content changed to reflect city life, addressing subjects like inner-city crime and poverty. Enthusiasts of all backgrounds -- Jewish, African-American and Italian among them --

Latin New York Publications, Courtesy of Izzy Sanabria

Tito Rodriguez during a recording session.

flocked to the music, as fans, dancers, musicians, journalists or industry players.

During this period, Fania Records, a New York-based label co-founded by musician Johnny Pacheco and his partner Jerry Masucci in 1964, became the engine behind the scene. Fania launched or furthered the musical careers of many of salsa's future stars -- Mr. Pacheco, Hector Lavoe, Roberto Roena, Pete "El Conde" Rodriguez, Larry Harlow, Willie Colon and Ruben Blades among them. Fania was certainly not the only Latin music label in New York in the 70's, but it was dominant. Its matchless roster of musicians and the hard, streetwise music it produced in its heyday inspired an almost cultish loyalty among fans, and helped define New York as salsa's capital. Fania's success was also a source of pride for Latin New Yorkers -- this music, developed and honed in their own neighborhoods, moved quickly from the city's local clubs and studios to stages and airwaves worldwide.

At the close of the 70's, as the popularity of hard salsa began to decline, Mr. Masucci decided to sell the Fania label to a South American company. Though it still exists in name, the label never again reached its former status and its dissolution was a severe blow to the scene. Some, who made their names in New York, like Mr. Barretto and Mr. Blades, moved naturally toward the developing Latin-jazz scene, which departed somewhat from salsa's anchored dance grooves for the more open spaces

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and experimentation of modern jazz.

By the early 80's, it seemed New York's day as salsa's capital had passed. The New York style held little sway in the major United States radio and record-buying markets, a void partly filled by "salsa romantica,"

Jimmy Arauz/Latin New York Publications, Courtesy of Izzy Sanabria

Charlie Palmieri's farewell at Beau's Restaurant, February 1980. From left: Ray Baretto, Johnny Pacheco, Tito Puente, Charlie Palmieri. Singing, from left: Machito, Joe Quijano, Joey Pastiance.

which featured mellower rhythms and pop-style lyrics and production values. The oncoming wave of popular Dominican merengue would also take a prominent place in the Latin record industry (it still is a major force in Latin music today). New York-based Latin performers like Marc Anthony and La India were working in newer styles like Latin house and hip-hop in the late 80's; they had little interest in salsa at the time, a music that seemed outdated.

The 1990's, though, brought some change to the industry as producers and musicians began to look to the roots of classic salsa and its innovators for new inspiration. With the influence of people like RMM Records' Ralph Mercado and producer Sergio George, a meeting of the generations began to take place as newcomers revisited the harder, homegrown sounds of classic salsa and even collaborated with pioneers, as La India did with master salsa pianist Eddie Palmieri on her 1992 album, "Llego La India via Eddie Palmieri." Around this time, Marc Anthony made his move, too, from the Latin house style to a salsa-based pop with definite Afro-Cuban rhythmic elements, mainly engineered by Mr. George. These records by younger artists retained the polished studio sound and lyrical styles of commercial Latin music, but also brought forward some of the rhythmic drive and complexity of classic 70's salsa. They also set the stage for the so-called Latin Explosion of the late 1990's when Cuban music by veteran groups like the Buena Vista Social Club, and Latin pop with its most visible artist, Ricky Martin, were hugely popular in America. But commercial success has taken its toll on Latin music, too. As Times critic Peter Watrous pointed out in a recent article, that popularity has led in most cases to a creative dead end for Latin artists, with many of the most original performers going unheard outside their niche markets.

Still, the last decade has had its bright spots for classic salsa purists. WSKQ-FM, known as La Mega, the city's popular Spanish language station, now devotes some programming to classic salsa. And non-commercial New York stations, such as WKCR (89.9 FM) and WBAI (99.5

FM) air excellent weekly salsa shows that provide in-depth listening sessions with recordings of some of the world's best Latin groups, past and present.

Popular groups, like Dark Latin Groove (DLG) that draw on many styles, frequently turn to salsa traditions. DLG has recorded a version of Johnny Pacheco's hit "Acuyuye." (Mr. Pacheco still plays with his own group in New York clubs). The talented young trombonist, Jimmy Bosch, has devoted his career to hard salsa (or salsa dura), as a sideman for many artists and with recordings under his own name. Other artists like Victor Manuelle, Gilberto Santa Rosa, and George Lamond often top La Mega's charts and perform in New York clubs. Their records, while not quite tipico, can still appeal to hardcore salsa fans.

"A Blending of Latin Sounds." The New York Times, The New York Times, archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/music/102400salsa-essay.html. Accessed 19 Aug. 2023.

4.5 MODERN LATIN POP MUSIC FEATURES

Traditions

Latin music is the result of a complex social and historical process that took place in the Americas after the arrival of Columbus. Despite the traumatic experience, Latin music is one of the positive outcomes that came from that process. The following is a brief introduction to Latin music history that takes a look at the cultural mix and social environment that ended up producing one of the best music genres in the entire world.

Most Latin pop music is heavily influenced by American pop and, therefore, uses many of the same instrument. The voice is typically most prominent, but other instruments include guitar, bass, drums and keyboard. The keyboard will sometimes play sampled instruments such as strings or horns in addition to piano. Cymbals, percussion instruments, and electric synthesizers are all instruments that are used in Latin pop. Latin pop is influenced to a great degree by Western pop. Voices are usually prominent in this genre of music.

Characteristics of Latino pop

Latin American music is wide and has a number of different characteristics. This genre includes music from all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Spanish and music from Portugal have very strong ties to this music as well. The music that falls under this genre is unified mainly by language, with various different styles originating from the many countries and cultures that make up Latin America and the Caribbean.

The best in today's emerging Latin pop artists. Mixing in rhythms such as salsa, samba, merengue, flamenco, tango, reggaeton, and reggae. The evolving landscape of Latin music now. Featuring artists such as: Shakira, Nelly Furtado, Alejandro Fernandez, Aventura.

Latin pop music generally refers to pop music with Latin American influence. It has become well-known form of music in the USA during the '80s and '90s and still keeps its influence everywhere. In other words, the influence of Latin pop is not really restricted just to Americans; it has attracted the interest of

production techniques as well as other styles of music. Anybody in search of future stars of the Latin pop world should watch Tuesday's announcement of nominations in the fourth Annual Latin Grammy Awards. The Latin Recording Academy will reveal this year's nominees in 41 categories, selected from 3,500 entries from 15 countries, including the U.S and Canada.

A torero is a bullfighter and the main performer in bullfighting, practised in Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Peru, France and various other countries influenced by Spanish culture.

"Latin Pop (Pop Latino, in Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese;" *Prezi.Com*, prezi.com/ucbleyurk76c/latin-pop-pop-latino-in-spanish-italian-and-portuguese/. Accessed 19 Aug. 2023.

4.6 TYPICAL MODES AND RHYTHMIC PATTERNS OF LATIN MUSIC

What Is Latin Music?

If you listen to a mambo or bossa nova, it's easy to say that it's not the same rhythmic style. But there's something similar about the two. We often call this generalization "Latin music," but what is Latin music?
Latin music is from Latin America, a cultural region consisting of countries that speak Latin-based languages in the Americas. It's a mix of mostly African rhythms and instruments, European song forms and instruments, and indigenous influences.
In this article, I'm going to talk about some of the primary elements that make up Latin music and address the generalization itself. This means that not every element can or will be addressed and that rhythms and other musical elements will be left out for the sake of staying focused on describing how something identifies as Latin music.

Which Countries Are In Latin America?
The Latin American countries include Mexico in the North of the region, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. This can be confusing if you begin to think that it's all just South America because you'd be leaving out the North American Latin countries like Mexico and half of the Caribbean.
The main Latin-based languages of this region include Spanish, Portuguese, and French. These languages were brought by the European conquerors who took over the native populations and the land they survived by.
Conquistadors sought resources like gold to feed the mercantilist economy of Western European monarchies in the 15th and 16th centuries. However, they found fertile land and a variety of biological diversity in the plants, animals, and people who were either wiped out by disease or used for forced labor, among other things.
When the indigenous labor supply was not enough for the Europeans, they brought slaves from Africa. This led to the mixing of another crucial element of Latin American culture.
Since the European conquest and subsequent forced migration of African slaves landed largely in places like Cuba and Brazil, these countries have become ground zero for the development of Latin music.
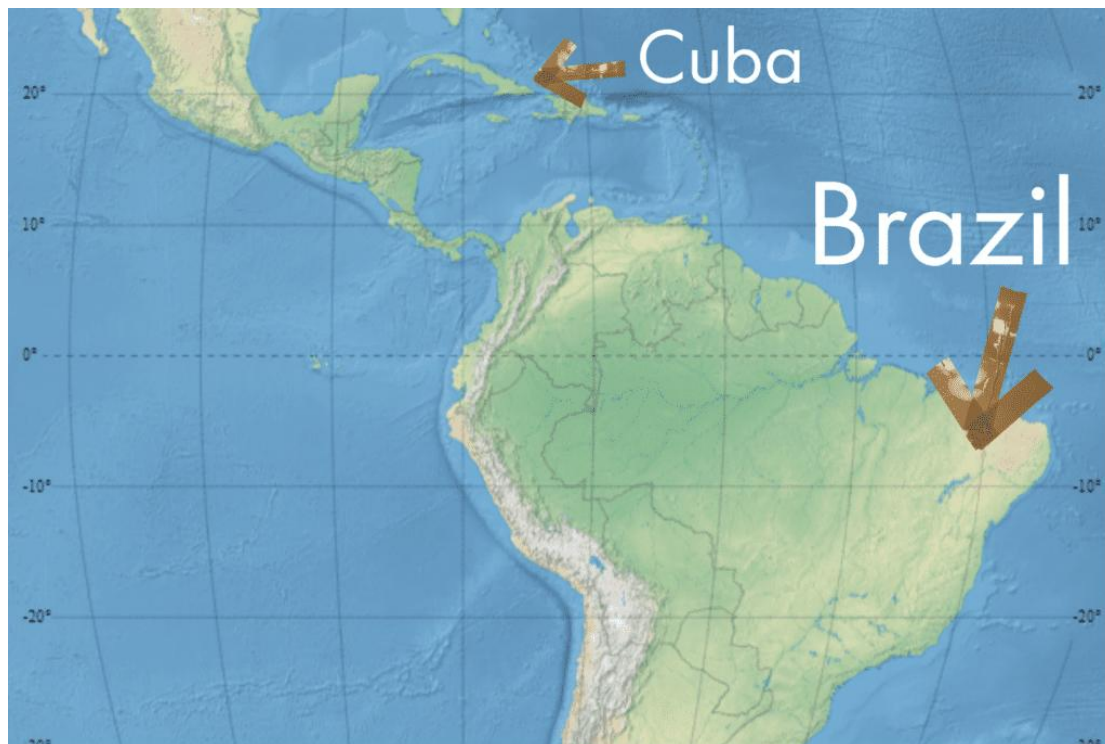
So for the majority of the following article, I will discuss music from these countries with a few other Latin American examples that are popular throughout the modern world.

Basic Elements of Latin Music

Although Latin music draws its influences from Europe, Africa, and indigenous peoples, the most significant commonalities among Latin American countries point to Africa. This is mostly because of the traditions that the segregated slave and eventually free black populations kept alive from their African heritage.

Further, many new forms of music developed after slavery was abolished. Black neighborhoods adapted African song and dance to new settings, such as European-style dance halls.

Of the many elements of Latin music that makes it regionally significant, the clave rhythm stands out the most. This rhythmic cycle comes from the African bell patterns brought through the Middle Passage of the slave trade. Various forms of clave and other elements of African bell patterns can be found in the music of Cuba and Brazil.

Clave Concept from Africa to the Americas

Clave is a two-measure rhythmic cycle that forms the basis of Cuban music, and it is the Latin rhythm to which all rhythmic ideas relate. It exemplifies two of the most important African music concepts: (1) call and response and (2) rhythmic cycles.

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In the following examples, pay close attention to how the African bell pattern relates to the clave rhythms used in Brazilian and Cuban music. Look for the call on one side of the clave rhythm and the response on the other side.

African Bell Pattern
If clave is the key to Latin music, the African Bell Pattern is the mold from which the key was cut. And, although there are several African bell patterns, there is one that influenced all music around the world more than any other.

It's important to feel a consistent pulse on the downbeats. This pulse, in both West Africa and Latin American music and dance, is often played by shaker or rattle instruments, such as shakere or maracas.
Feel the downbeats by tapping or stomping your foot as you play the bell pattern. If you want to practice more of a dance move to feel the pulse, you can try the following steps.
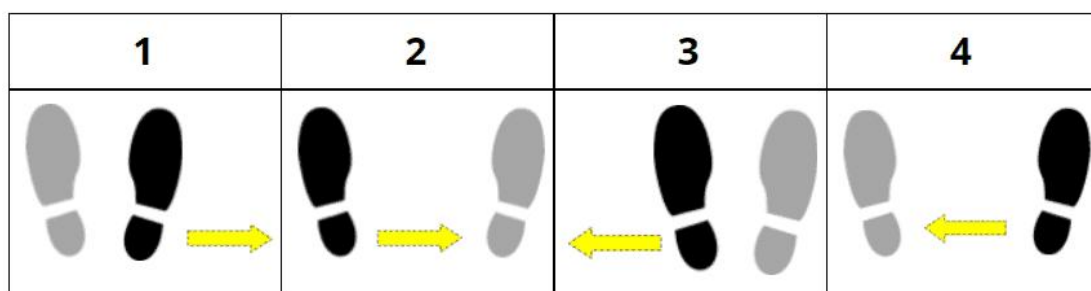
6/8 Clave
The 6/8 clave is basically the African Bell Pattern without the eighth notes. It's not a particular common clave rhythm for Latin music, but it's important to fully conceptualize the rumba clave and how much of Latin music is phrased.

Since the Western music tradition has been used to notate Latin music, musicologists and general consensus have agreed that the African bell is in 12/8 meter. But it's important to note that the 6/8 clave is notated as such to outline the importance of the two sides of the clave to which vocal and instrument parts in Cuban music relate.

Rumba Clave
Rumba clave is basically the 6/8 clave in 4/4. Since African rhythms are of the oral tradition and not necessarily passed down through notation, like Western music studies, the distinction between the meters four and six is more of a shift in feel than a mathematical interpretation.

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The rumba clave is used for a lot of folkloric styles. You'll also hear it in more modern styles like songo or timba. The songo and timba were formed by combining the son montuno and folkloric rhythms along with rhythm and blues and funk.

Think of folkloric music in Cuba as a place where the rhythmic history is preserved. Musicians in Cuba learn these rhythms in both religious and secular settings, and interpretations of the rhythms vary from family to family and one neighborhood to another.

Rhythms like the rumba clave are just one of the many patterns that have bridged the transition from the music of slaves to the development of free black music — Cuban music.

Son Clave

The son clave is very similar to the rumba clave. The only difference is that the third clave hit on the three side is on the downbeat of four. For the rumba clave, the third hit is on the upbeat of count four.

Son clave is the primary clave rhythm for son montuno. This is the genre of Cuban popular music that became the foundation of salsa.

Brazilian Clave

Clave in Brazilian music is a bit different from its counterpart in Cuban music. The Brazilian clave is not as strict and can be varied a lot more.

The following examples shows the Brazilian clave as it comes from samba and bossa nova, a subgenre of samba. It's only different from the son clave in one way — the last clave hit is shifted one eighth note to the right. This places the last clave hit on the upbeat of three.

This rhythm is played by a variety of instruments, like the caixa (snare drum) and tamborim. Within a piece of music, the rhythm can change to other variations for phrasing purposes, which is not a common characteristic in Cuban music.

Generally, the clave in Cuban music stays the same throughout an arrangement. However, with the advent of Latin jazz, incorporating both Brazilian and Cuban musical elements, a lot of modern compositions switch claves or styles for phrasing purposes.

Tresillo Rhythm and Latin Music

The tresillo is a fundamental rhythmic concept that comes from the African rhythms brought to the Americas. It literally means "triplet," and it refers to rhythms that are in groups (or cells) of three evenly spaced notes.
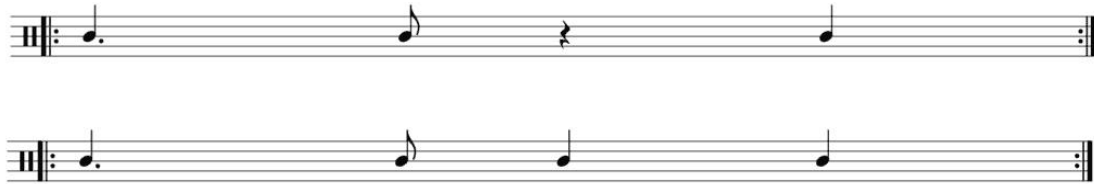
This rhythm is the three-side of both the Cuban and Brazilian claves. It's the theme of many drum breaks in samba and Afro-Cuban genres, and has been the foundation of so many popular Latin music rhythms over the last hundred and fifty years.

When you combine the tresillo and a strong consistent pulse like in the examples below, dancers and listeners can enjoy the balance of downbeats and upbeats. The rhythm starts with a strong downbeat, followed by an upbeat on beat two, and finishes with a strong downbeat on beat four.

This downbeat on four feels more like a release of the tension that the upbeat of beat two creates and takes us back to the downbeat of one more gradually. If you think about this rhythm in cut-time with a downbeat pulse on one and two (one and three for common time), this balance of downbeat and upbeat tension and release is easier to understand.

Tumbao Rhythms for Bass, Piano, and Congas

Tumbao means to lay it down. It's a term used to describe musicians laying down a groove and stretching that groove out over a space for other instruments to build upon.

Piano, bass, and congas all play tumbaos, and, in particular, the bass and conga patterns are commonly referred to as tumbao in the Cuban tradition.

Bass tumbao comes very much from the tresillo rhythm explained above.
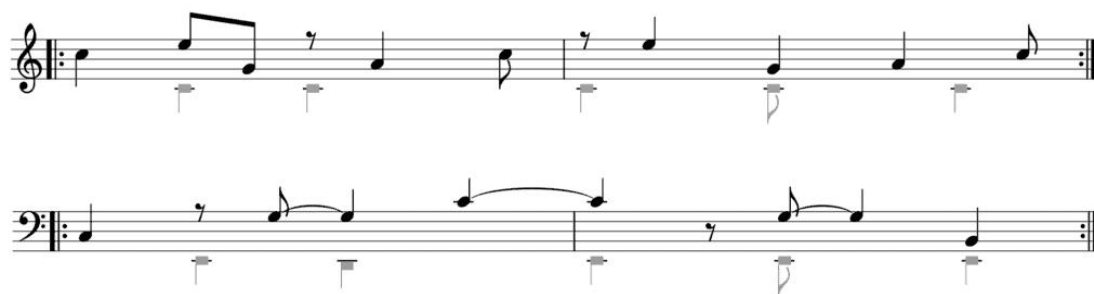
Phrasing in Latin Music

Latin music does not usually emphasize beat one of a measure or phrase. The phrases generally start on beat four, either the downbeat or upbeat, and accents usually fall on one level of syncopation or another. By that, I mean the syncopation produced by beat four in a cut time feel or the upbeat of beat four in common time — 4/4 time signature (see "Phrasing With Clave in Latin Music" below).

The conga pattern below starts on the upbeat before beat four.

If you listen to samba from the Brazilian music tradition, you'll hear a strong accent with low drum sounds on beat two of a two feel. You'll also hear high-pitched percussion, like a snare drum, accenting the upbeats. This is an example of the groove accenting different levels of syncopation that I explained previously.

The example below is a samba batucada. Look at the last line, the surdo de premeira. Notice that the open tone for this big low sounding drum. It's on beat two of a two feel (cut-time meter).

Phrasing With Clave in Latin Music

Let's look at clave and how phrases are built around this rhythmic cycle.

The Cuban clave is a phrase composed of two distinct rhythmic cells. One cell has three hits, called the "three side," while the other has two, and it's called the "two side."

The two sides of clave establish a call and response musical form, which is also apparent in Brazilian rhythms. This is one of the reasons most Latin music is more appropriately written in cut time. The meter itself outlines the two sides of the underlying rhythmic phrasing.

Additionally, clave has a couple of accents that impact the phrasing — the bombo and ponche (see image below).

The bombo is the second clave hit on the three side, and it is a low sounding long note. This means lower sound drums producing a bass sound would accent this clave hit in relation to a musical phrase.

Ponche refers to the "punch" on beat four of clave. If you listen to salsa music, you'll hear entire ensembles accent the ponche at the end of a short or long phrase.

It's important to understand clave phrasing because the rhythm of melodies and lyrics, for example, start and stop in relation to clave.

Latin Music is Best Written in Cut Time, Mostly
Regardless of which Latin American country's music you listen to, you'll almost always find a strong half note pulse. This is one of the reasons cut time is more appropriate for notating Latin music.
The other reason is based on the concept explained in the previous section — the two part rhythmic phrasing.
If you look at the two examples below, you may notice that they are rhythmically the same. One is written in common time and the other in cut time. Since this is a cascara patter is based on the Cuban clave, the two-measure cut time notation makes more musical sense for musical phrasing.

By writing the example above in cut time, it outlines the rhythmic phrasing that clave establishes. The cut time notation also honors the call and response nature of Afro-Cuban musical aesthetics.

Latin Music Styles and Genres
The list of Latin music styles and genres is very long. The following is a short list that shows the variety that different countries have to offer.

Salsa
Salsa is music based mostly on the Cuban conjunto and charanga orchestras. It's stylistic basis comes from the Cuban son and various other styles developed in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and by mostly immigrants to the United States.

Since salsa is a genre, it's composed of many styles. For example, you should expect to hear mambo, cha cha, bolero, and even merengue in modern salsa ensembles.

Samba

The samba genre encompasses a wide range of musical styles that developed mostly in the 20th Century. Much of the modern samba rhythms that you'll commonly hear are based on the batucada percussion style.

Batucada Instrumentation

The batucada style includes surdos, tamborims, caixas, ganzas, and many more percussion instruments. They are called by the high-pitched drum that sounds like a small timbale played with one stick and a hand. The calls are answered by the whole ensemble, the bateria, of between 10 and 50 people, sometimes more.

Bossa Nova

A bossa nova is sort of the opposite of the batucada. It's light and usually played by a few people. And the rhythms are from the same Brazilian approach to African percussion.

This style of the samba was created on the beaches of Rio de Janeiro in the late 1950s and was pioneered by musicians like Antônio Carlos Jobim and João Gilberto ([source]).

Many people will hear a bossa nova, like the example below, played by a jazz group with a drum set for the first time.

Merengue

The merengue is a musical form that dates back to the mid-19th Century in the Dominican Republic. Like Cuban and Brazilian music, it developed based on the local rhythms and instruments as well as those brought to the region from other places.

Merengue is a very popular dance music that incorporates several different traditional styles performed by some key instruments. The typical group includes accordion, stringed instruments, guira, and tambora.

For many of the merengue styles, the beat has a very Latin music characteristic to it in the form of a strong bass drum downbeat. The guira, a metal cylindrical percussion instrument that's scraped with a comb-like implement. This provides the rattle rhythm (see below) that Latin music often incorporates from its African heritage.

Much of the merengue music you may hear in U.S. cities would be played by a Latin jazz group or a salsa ensemble. These groups add more instruments like congas to fill out and support the traditional rhythms.

Latin Jazz
This is the genre of Latin music that is most open to various styles from around Latin America. Although the rhythms of Cuba and Brazil are very dominant in these types of ensembles, groups from places like Peru would incorporate Afro-Peruvian rhythms, for example.

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Admin. "What Is Latin Music?" *Rhythm Notes*, 19 Feb. 2023, rhythmnotes.net/what-is-latin-music/.

5 PRODUCTION HISTORY

5.1 EL MITO WORKSHOP

El Mito or The Myth of My Pain, a new play written by visiting artist in residence in playwriting, Andrew Rincón, received its first staged reading on April 1st in Filene Hall, presented by Skidmore Theater and made possible in part by the support of The Miranda Family Fund at The Hispanic Federation and the Skidmore College Presidential Discretionary Fund. The cast, directed by Teisha Duncan, was composed of both students (Sophia Paulino Adames, Javier Soto, and Fabian Rodriguez) and professional actors (Francisco Arcila, Guadalís Del Carmen, Andrea Abello, and Luis Vega) of Latinx descent, an extension of Rincón's homage to his Colombian roots which inspire the play's focus on culture, family, and storytelling.

The play follows Los Villegas, a Colombian-American family in Miami, Florida whose pride and joy lie in their locally produced telenovela. However, the family experiences difficulty in dealing with the recent loss of their Abuela Rosmira, as evidenced by Michelle's own frustration with the reality of growing up and life in general. The family refuses to reckon with their grief, allowing it to fester and break the family apart without their knowledge. One prime example is Flaco's divorce from his husband Freddie which demonstrates how unacknowledged pain can affect the ways in which people receive and offer love.

Michelle, however, proves to be the play's heroine, as she discovers her ability to travel into other people's "inner worlds" to save them. Pulling from the magic of cultural myth, Rincón paints a world of fantasy as Michelle is empowered by Patasola, a supposed demon whose unfettered bravery compels Michelle to face the reality of her fears. Throughout her journey, Michelle shares her discoveries with her family, and together they fight against three demons who continually tempt the family to ignore their pain and succumb to avoidance.

Flaco's journey becomes an important focus in the story, as he struggles against the demon El Silbon, who lures him into apathy towards his issues. One notable moment in the play occurs when Flaco goes on Grindr, a popular gay hookup app, and is seduced by El Silbon who poses to be an extremely enticing man. In the end, Michele uses a machete to destroy the other demons but Flaco destroys El Silbon himself, a profound demonstration of Flaco's acceptance of the reality of his heartbreak over Freddie and his grief for Abuela Rosmira. Flaco then cries into Michelle's arms to cement this newfound self-awareness where feelings are acceptable and outwardly expressed.

El Mito or the Myth of my Pain is a truly riveting experience. One can say that the play resembles a telenovela of its own, one filled with characters whose fiery interactions glow with humor, specificity, and moving love. Indeed Rincón shares his unabashed love for the imaginary, where the characters step out of their telenovela and into the difficult and often painful realities that come with

life. But, as Michelle teaches her family, the audience, and the greater collective whom the theater serves, "adios to the part of you living in the myth of the world."

Siegler, Gemma. "Skidmore Theater Living Newsletter 'EL MITO OR THE MYTH OF MY PAIN.'" Skidmore College, 2022, theater.skidmore.edu/2022/04/el-mito-or-the-myth-of-my-pain/.

6 ANALYSIS

6.1 STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS
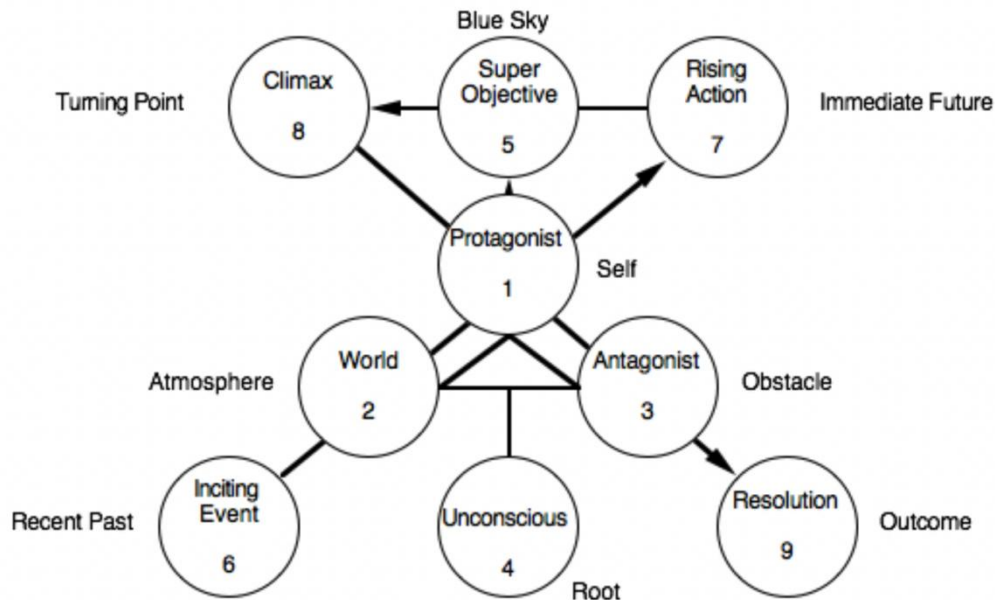
Zeder Method Analysis Rules:

> 1. The relationship between 1 (Protagonist), 2 (World), and 3 (Antagonist) is the primary conflict of the play;
>
> 2. The relationship between 1 (Protagonist), 4 (Unconscious), and 5 (Super Objective) is the conflict within the protagonist;
>
> 3. The relationship between 6 (Inciting Event), 2 (World), 1 (Protagonist), and 7 (Rising Action) describes the event that upsets the world and forces the protagonist into a series of rising actions;
>
> 4. The relationship between 7 (Rising Action), 5 (Super Objective), and 8 (Climax) describes the turning point of the action, the protagonist, in search of the superobjective, builds the action of the play to a climax;

5. The relationship between 8 (Climax), 1 (Protagonist), 3 (Antagonist), and 9 (Resolution) indicates the way the climax leads to a showdown between the Protagonist and the Antagonist and results in the resolution of the play and the establishment of a new balance.

Climax
Michelle mastered the way to use the machette, broke the limitation and inspired the power in it. She traveled through the spiritual worlds where her families are being hunted by the monsters, eliminated all the monsters and protected the family

Super objective
Michelle wants to take on the responsibility of protecting the family and make the immigrant family live happily in Miami

Rising Actions
1. Michelle let La Patasola teach her to use the Machette.
2. Michelle investigates Colombian folklore and wants to learn about La Patasola
3. Michelle runs to La Patasola's house and ask for help to save Flaco from Bufeo
4. Michelle asks Harvey's help to get her to Flaco's Apartment.

Protagonist
Michelle
Latina Girl. 17 years old

World
Miami
A bustling seaside modern city with a diverse population of immigrants

Antagonist
Colombia Folklore Monsters
Figures of the manifestation of family trauma at the spiritual level.
e.g. El Silbón, El Mohàn ...

Inciting Event
La Patasola appears in Michelle's world and begins to guide her.

Unconscious
Michelle is mentally immature, fearing the separation of her family, and as the second gen of immigrants, she is forgetting her connection with her hometown Colombia.

Resolution
Michelle grew up and took on family responsibilities, but La Patasola or the shadow of their Abuela still accompanies the family as their unforgettable memory

1. Protagonist:
Michelle
Latina girl, presents as 17 years old.

2. The World of The Play:
Miami City, Girl's bedroom
A bustling seaside modern city with a diverse population, teenager's bedroom full of modern popular American elements

3. Antagonist:
Colombia Folklore Monster
As the figures of the manifestation of family trauma at the spiritual level

4. Unconscious:

Michelle is mentally immature, fearing the separation of her family, and as the second generation of immigrants, she is forgetting her connection with her hometown Colombia.

5. Superobjective:

Michelle wants to take on the responsibility of protecting the family and make the immigrant family live happily and strongly.

6. Inciting Incident:

La Patasola's house appears behind Michelle's closet, and La Patasola begins to guide Michelle.

7. The Rising Actions:

a. Michelle shows the machete to La Patasola and let La Patasola teach her to use the machete

b. Michelle investigates Colombian folklore and wants to learn about La Patasola

c. Michelle runs to La Patasola's house and ask for help to save Flaco from Bufeo

d. Mihcelle asks Harvey's help to Flaco's apartment to save Flaco

e. Michelle uses machete and kills Bufeo

f. Michelle finds La Patasola to learn the memories from past

g. Michelle breaks her own limits and masters the machete's true power

h. Michelle saves Harvey and kills La Bola

i. Michelle kills El Mohan and pulls Chemita out of the darkness

j. Michelle kills El Sibon and saves Flaco

k. Michelle reveals who La Patasola really is and bids farewell to La Patasola

8. Climax:

Michelle mastered the way to use the machete, broke the limitation and inspired the power in it, got the ability to travel through different worlds. She traveled through the spiritual worlds where her families are being hunted by the monsters, eliminated all the monsters and protected her family.

9. Resolution:

Michelle grew up and took on the family responsbilities, but La Patasola or the shadow of their Abuela still accompanies the family as their unforgettable memories.

Fliotsos, Anne L. Interpreting the Play Script : Contemplation and Analysis. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, [England] ;: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. Print.

6.2 ACTION ANALYSIS

Sequence of External Events:

1. Michelle opens the closet door in her bedroom and talks to La Patasola.

2. La Patasola guides Michelle to smell the sense of the approaching danger.

3. Harvey, Chemita, Diana and Freddi film the telenovela together.

4. The family suddenly feels the eerie hunting feeling when they danced and celebrated together

5. Flaco and Freddi argue and quarrel over relationship issues.

6. El Macho invades Freddi's spiritual world while he is doing meditation.

7. Michelle shows La Patasola the machete

8. Michelle enters Flaco's world with the guidance of La Patasola and sees monsters approaching him.

9. La Patasola scares the monsters away with a roar.

10. Michelle let Chemita help to find materials to learn about the story of La Patasola.

11. Flaco scolds Michelle for being irresponsible and missing the telenovela filming.

12. Michelle learns the story of La Patasola from Flaco.

13. El Hombre Bufeo seduces and attempts to hunt Flaco.

14. Michelle rushes to rescue Flaco with the guidance of La Patasola and the help of Harvey.

15. Michelle kills Bufeo with the machete and saves Flaco.

16. El Mohan, El Sibon and La Bola show up and threaten Michelle

17. La Patasola transforms to Diana and shows Michelle the past memories.

18. Michelle awakens the true power of the machete and breaks the walls that limit her.

19. El Mohan attempts to hunt Chemita.

20. La Bola attempts to hunt Harvey.

21. Michelle saves Harvey and kills La Bola with machete.

22. Michelle kills El Mohan with machete and pulls Chemita out of the darkness.

23. El Sibon transforms into El Macho and attempts to hunt Flaco.

24. Flaco kills El Sibon himself before Michelle tries.

25. Michelle reveals who La Patasola really is and bids her farewell.

26. Freddi bids farewell to Flaco and leaves him.

27. Families come together and dance together

28. The family sees La Patasola again and recognizes her as their Abuela.

Seed:
Trauma

Theme:
Adolescents in the family should overcome the trauma in their growing process under the guidance, and take the responsibility to help their families, this can make the whole family closer and stay strong together.

Sequence of Internal Events Related the to Seed:
1. Michelle opens the closet door in her bedroom and talks to La Patasola.

Michelle sees La Patasola as someone who can guide her and listen to her troubles and help her overcome the **traumas** of losing her Abuela.

2. La Patasola guides Michelle to smell the sense of the approaching danger.

La Patasola made Michelle realize that these monsters incarnated from the **traumas** that had been created in the hearts of her family members were closing in on her family.

3. The family suddenly feels the eerie hunting feeling when they danced and celebrated together after the telenovela filming.

The family is in imminent danger from the monsters born from the **traumas** within them.

4. Flaco and Freddi argue and quarrel over relationship issues.

Flaco was also deeply affected by the **trauma** of losing a family member, but he didn't want to add new trauma to his family by breaking up with Freddi.

5. El Macho invades Flaco's spiritual world while he is doing meditation.

The monster that was incarnated from Flaco's **trauma** began to try to hunt Flaco.

6. Michelle shows La Patasola the machete.

Michelle cherishes the relics left by Abuela very much, she is still reeling from the **trauma** of losing her.

7. Michelle enters Flaco's world with the guidance of La Patasola and sees monsters approaching him.

Michelle finds Flaco's trauma about losing Freddi and sees dangerous monsters trying to hunt him.

8. La Patasola scares the monsters away with a roar.

La Patasola temporarily scares away these **trauma**-incarnate monsters.

9. Michelle let Chemita help to find materials to learn about the story of La Patasola.

Michelle wants to learn about La Patasola's past and the **trauma** that made her what she is now.

10. Flaco scolds Michelle for being irresponsible and missing the telenovela filming.

Flaco is distressed that Michelle has not recovered from her **trauma** and is angry at her irresponsible attitude of disregarding his telenovela.

11. Michelle learns the story of La Patasola from Flaco.
Michelle learns about La Patasola's ordeal and her **trauma**.

12. El Hombre Bufeo seduces and attempts to hunt Flaco.
Bufeo, a monster conjured up by Flaco's evil thoughts and desire to recover **trauma**, tries to hunt Flaco.

13. Michelle rushes to rescue Flaco with the guidance of La Patasola and the help of Harvey.
Michelle tries to save Flaco from the spiritual world trapped in a **traumatic** hallucination.

14. Michelle kills Bufeo with the machete and saves Flaco.
Michelle kills the monster that evolved from Flaco's **trauma** and saves Flaco.

15. El Mohan, El Sibon and La Bola show up and threaten Michelle
The rest of the monsters, created by the various **traumas** and psychological disorders of the family, appeared and frightened Michelle.

16. La Patasola transforms to Diana and shows Michelle the past memories.
La Patasola's transformation into Diana takes Michelle back to memories of a **traumatic** past.

17. Michelle awakens the true power of the machete and breaks the walls that limit her.
Michelle is determined to face and overcome her **trauma** to protect her family.

20. El Mohan attempts to hunt Chemita.
The monster El Mohan who transformed from Chemita's **trauma** attempts to hunt Chemita.

21. La Bola attempts to hunt Harvey.
The monster La Bola who transformed from Harvey's **trauma** attemps to hunt Harvey.

22. Michelle saves Harvey and kills La Bola with machete.
Michelle kills La Bola and helps Harvey overcome his **trauma**.

23. Michelle kills El Mohan with machete and pulls Chemita out of the darkness.
Michelle kills El Mohan and helps Chemita overcome her **trauma**.

24. El Sibon transforms into El Macho and attempts to hunt Flaco.

El Sibon transforms to EL Macho trying to use Flaco's **trauma** to lure him in and hunt him.

      25. Flaco kills El Sibon himself before Michelle tries.
Flaco confronts his **trauma** and overcomes it, killing El Sibon to protect himself before Michelle tries.

      26. Michelle reveals who La Patasola really is and bids her farewell.
Michelle realizes that La Patasola's true identity is the **trauma** left by their Abuela to the family, and she is determined to say goodbye to her.

      27. Freddi bids farewell to Flaco and leaves him.
Freddi blesses Flaco and is relieved that Flaco can face his **trauma** and leaves him with peace of mind.

      29. Families come together and dance together
Families each overcome their own **traumas** to reunite and dance to celebrate and being happy for each other.

      30. The family sees La Patasola again and recognizes her as their
         Abuela.
The **trauma** of Abuela's loss to the family still surrounds them as part of their shared memory.

Three Major Climaxes:
      1. Michelle entered La Patasola's house through her closet, and under the guidance of La Patasola, she smelled the danger approaching and realized that some monsters were approaching and trying to hunt her families.

      2. Michelle mastered the power of machete, broke her own limitations, possessed the power to travel through different spiritual worlds, and was determined to protect her family.

      3. Michelle killed all the monsters that tried to harm her families, she protected her family and bring them together.

Protagonist's Super-Objective:
Michelle wants to take on the responsibility of protecting the family and make the immigrant family live happily and strongly.

Through-Action:

    1. Michelle shows the machete to La Patasola and let La Patasola teach her to use the machete

    2. Michelle investigates Colombian folklore and wants to learn about La Patasola

    3. Michelle runs to La Patasola's house and ask for help to save Flaco from Bufeo

    4. Mihcelle asks Harvey's help to Flaco's apartment to save Flaco

    5. Michelle uses machete and kills Bufeo

    6. Michelle finds La Patasola to learn the memories from past

    7. Michelle breaks her own limits and masters the machete's true power

    8. Michelle saves Harvey and kills La Bola

    9. Michelle kills El Mohan and pulls Chemita out of the darkness

    10. Michelle kills El Sibon and saves Flaco

    11. Michelle reveals who La Patasola really is and bids farewell to La Patasola

Counter Through Action:

    1. The smell of the monsters gradually approached and surrounded Michelle's family.

    2. Freddi wants to break up with Flaco and leave him, but Flaco keeps hesitating and delaying.

    3. Bufeo puts Flaco in a hallucination and tries to hunt him.

    4. La Bola and El Sibon show up to scare Michelle.

    5. The monsters lure Michelle's family separately and put them in danger.

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6.3 CONCEPTUAL MAP

```mermaid
flowchart

A[Flaco has an frank conversation with Freddi and decides to separate, the family reunites to say goodbye to their grief, and as they dance together, the house of La Patasola appears]

B[Michelle enters Harvey's world, rescues him, helps him kill La Bola and tells Harvey to hold on to his dream]

C[Michelle enteres Flaco's world. Flaco wakes up from the temptation of El Sibon and stabbed El Sibon. Michelle helps Flaco kill El Sibon. The brother and sister hugs each other.]

D[Michelle enters Chemita's world, pulls her out of the darkness, kills El Mohan, and tells Chemita that she loves her family more than Chisme]

E[Michelle tells La Patasola about her first killing. Under the guidance, she recalled her memories and found herself. She broke the limitations and got her true power and ability]

F[Michelle arrives to Flaco's apartment with Harvey, killes Bufeo and rescued Flaco, but El Mohan, La Bola and El Sibon appeared and threatens Michelle]

G[Bufeo invades into Flaco's world, luring him into dancing in his spiritual world in an attempt to hunt him]

H[Michelle senses danger and sees Flaco's danger with the help of La Patasola.And she found Harvey under guidance and let Harvey take her ot Flaco's apartment.]

I[Harvey is dreaming about flying in the sky and flying a jet and shooting to the ground in his dream]

J[Michelle talks about the thing she heard with La Patasola. And Patasola tells Michelle that a dangerous monster named Bufeo is approaching]

K[Chemita helped Michelle investigate La Patasola's information, and then Flaco told Michelle Patasola's story.]

L[Flaco and Freddi quarreled about their divorce, and Flaco met El Macho, who was transformed by El Sibon in his spritual world]

M[With the help of La Patasola, Michelle saw Flaco's situation and he is being hunted by El Mohan and La Bola, Patasola roars to scare away them, temporarily keeping Flaco safe.]

N[The family films the telenovela and feels something wired after shooting]

O[Michelle enters La Patasola's house through her closet and talks to Patasola. Under La Patasola's guidance she smells something dangerous is coming to hunt her families]
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EL MITO Conceptual Map

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1. What moves or impacts me about this play?

The setting of this play is novel and has multiple perspectives for me to interpret it. It's a play about family, love, growth, trauma, responsibility and more and more. It focuses on a Colombian immigrant family living in Miami, and the elements of Colombian myths and folklore stories are integrated with the emotions and trauma of the families in the play, creating the theatrical world where spirituality and reality are intertwined. In the process of reading this script, I can experience the rich emotional changes on different characters, the diverse colors of Colombian folk culture, and the protagonist's growth experience. At the same time, the magical and surreal scenes also make the whole story full of tension and rhythm, which makes me very immersed in it.

2. What is/are the conflict(s) of the play?

The main conflict of the play is that the protagonist Michelle wants to protect her family and make her family an inseparable whole, while the traumas from her family members transforms into monsters from Colombian folklore that sought to harm and hunt them.

In addition to the main conflict, there are also other conflicts in other supporting characters. The first is the conflict between Flaco and Freddi. Flaco loves Freddi and wants to continue their queer marriage while maintaining the integrity of the family, while Freddi firmly wants to divorce him. And for Chemita, she loves chisme and wants to be an independent and confident chisme queen who doesn't care about anyone. But when chisme hurt her family, she realized how scary chisme is and that she loves her family more than chisme.

And for Harvey, he had a simple wish, which was to fly into the sky and take his family for a ride, but reality told him that this hardly can be realized. He doesn't speak both English or Spanish well and doesn't have full confidence in himself.

3. What is the main story and theme?

The main story of the play is the immigrant family is grieving the loss of their beloved Abuela, and the grief combined with the family members' respective troubles, evolved into monsters from Colombian folklore that sought to hunt them in their spiritual world. And our protagonist Michelle, with the guidance of her Abuela's incarnation of the monster La Patasola, gradually grew up and took on the responsibility of the family, and kills the monster to protects her family.

Theme: Family and love are the source of courage to overcome trauma and difficulties. Adolescents in the family can overcome the trauma in their

growing process under the guidance, and take the responsibility to help their families, this can make the whole family closer and stay strong together.

4. Is the play structure climactic (causal linear), episodic, a combination and/or other (atmospheric, circular, environmental…)?
Combination of Causal linear & episodic.

5. If climactic, where is the central conflict resolved? If there is more than one, please note that. Are there other high points of tension (crisis, emotional climax)?
The central conflict was resolved after Michelle broke through the limitations in her heart, mastered the true power of machete, traveled through the spiritual worlds of various family members, killed monsters, and help her family members to untie their knots in hearts.
Other crisis:
1) Michelle smelled the smell of blood and the danger of the monster approaching under La Patasola's guidance.
2) Bufeo lured Flaco into dancing and entered a dreamy state. Other monsters appeared to hunt Flaco. Michelle asked La Patasola for help, and La Patasola used a roar to scare the monsters away.
3) Michelle uses machete to kill the monster Bufeo for the first time and is threatened by the three monsters El Mohan, La Bola, and El Sibon that followed.
4) Michelle showed a twisted mental state in front of La Patasola. Then under the guidance of La Patasola, she broke through her inner limitations and mastered the true power of machete.

6. How is the structure of the play potentially related to design work?
The structure of the loose linear combines episodic parts allows me to use this mode when doing sound design. I can use some certain sound elements and music style to build the main plot, and at the same time and create different unique sound symbols for each branch part. For example, I will build the score for the main plot line by combining South American music elements with modern pop music. And all sound effects will be mainly created around the core character of La Patasola, such as the sound of water dripping and the swaying of leaves every time she appears. These elements will be integrated with each other to support the loose linear structure of the main line. On other episodic parts, I will create some unique sound motifs based on the characteristics of each monster, such as El Sibon's death whistle, El Mohan's roar, etc. And the score will also be developed based on these characteristic sounds. This kind of sound design not only highlights the main plot, but also retains its own characteristics for the plots of each episode.

7. What is the style of the play, as written?

Magical Realism, the playwright puts reality into an illusory environment and atmosphere, giving reality a grotesque and magical coat. It not only reflects the immigrant family life status, but also inserts many magical and grotesque illusions, makes the realistic scenes blend with some surreal spiritual scenes.

8. How is the style related to the design work?

The magical realism style brings a lot of space to sound design, This interweaving style of reality and fantasy allows my sound design to follow this path, creating two music styles that merge in a collision. For the real life scenes that play portrays I can use a more modern and pop music style. Then for the surreal scenes I can design various immersive scores and incorporate elements of Colombian music to make it more appealing with folk cultural characteristics based on the atmospheric ambient music. At the same time, when shaping the image of a monster in the surreal world, I can use various distinctive sound effects and soundscape to enhance the appeal of the characters to the audience. Each monster will have its own unique sound symbol. This sound symbol will be displayed in various forms every time they appear on stage, awakening the audience's impression of the monsters.

9. When is the play set and how is this important to the conflict of the story?

The show is set to be close to the modern times we currently live in. The Colombian immigrant family in the play lives in the today's United States. The young people in the family have been affected by American and modern cultural. They try to fully integrate into this cultural environment, but the connection from family and relatives always reminds them of their connection to their hometown Colombia to a certain extent. And the monsters evolved from the traumas of losing their loved Abuela are also symbols of the traditions of their hometown, which conflict with the new American culture they are accepting. Therefore, setting the play in the present will help us understand the special state of mind of this immigrant family and the deep-seated reasons for the main conflicts in the play.

10. What are the social and political circumstances of the story and the characters you are designing?

In today's American society, the living conditions of immigrants and peoples' acceptance of cultural and gender diversity have always been hot topics in the society. Michelle and other youths in this play are typical children from immigrant families. They accepted the impact of different cultures while growing up. They have the sense of belonging in Miami, but there is also a connection between them and their hometown. For example, Harvey was brought to the United States at a young age, which resulted in him not being

able to speak Spanish and English well at the same time and developing an inferiority complex. The growth experiences of these children are worthy of society's attention and exploration. And their brother Flaco has a queer marriage with Freddi, which also made me pay attention to the status and inner world of people with both immigrant and LGBTQ minority identities.In addition to these, this story also touches on the impact of today's social media on young people's lifestyles, such as the character Chemita. She loves chisme on the Internet and is deeply influenced by some strange values, but but essentially she loves life and family more. How to correctly guide young people's values and their ability to think independently without being controlled by social media is also one of the circumstances that this society is paying attention to.

11. How does the relationship between the content, form and style in the play relate to and or reinforce a system or systems of authority or power structures?

The systems of authority in this play world are mainly reflected in the spiritual will of the ancestors or elders in this immigrant family to affect and guide the youth's growth. This is mainly show in the fact that the spiritual will of the Abuela, or in other world the legacy of her life values, morals, and spirits has been inspiring the inner strength of the protagonist Michelle, guiding her to grow up and take the responsibility to protect the family. This system of authority essentially drives Michelle's process of self-awareness and inspires her own strength to resolve the main conflicts in the play world. And the play uses the form of magical realism to package the core of system of authorityl, like Abuela's spiritual will is embodied in the mythical character La Patasola. The process of her guidance to Michelle in the surreal spiritual world is the process of Michelle discovering the will left by Abuela in her mind. The form of magical realism shows this process in a more vivid and concrete way, which is also highly related to reality, to a certain extent strengthens the expression of system of authority in this play.

12. How does consideration of the systems of authority at work in the play resonate and/or inform your interpretation for design of the play?

The design for this play can be highly related to the show's systems of authority. From a macro perspective, the spirit will of family ancestors or elders as a system of authority can be well related to the traditional Colombian culture described in the play. From the perspective of sound design, I can design two different styles of scores. As a young immigrant generation deeply influenced by American modern life culture in Miami area, the protagonist Michelle and the teens in her family are exposed to trendy pop music and social medias in their daily lives. When depicting their daily life scenes the pop salsa music with a clear rhythm and can become the

main part of the scores.And when Michelle accepts the guidance of La Patasola, her incarnation of Abuela's will, the score can be distinguished from becoming more folk traditional elements and more spiritual atmosphere. The process of the traditional spirit will of the elders and the modern life consciousness of teens from the initial collision to the gradual integration can show the process of system of authority driving the protagonist to understand her inner self and find the balance point to master the true power she can have to protect her family.

And for some more specifically design methods, we can lay out relevant clues to reflect the function of system authority when shaping the characters. For example, in the play, La Patasola is clearly the incarnation of Abuela's spiritual will, so when Michelle and Flaco doing meditations we can use the voice of La Patasola to express the meditation voices, which can very effectively reflect the guidance and influence of this spiritual will on the two young people in the family and how it can change their emotions and attitudes to make more wise choices.

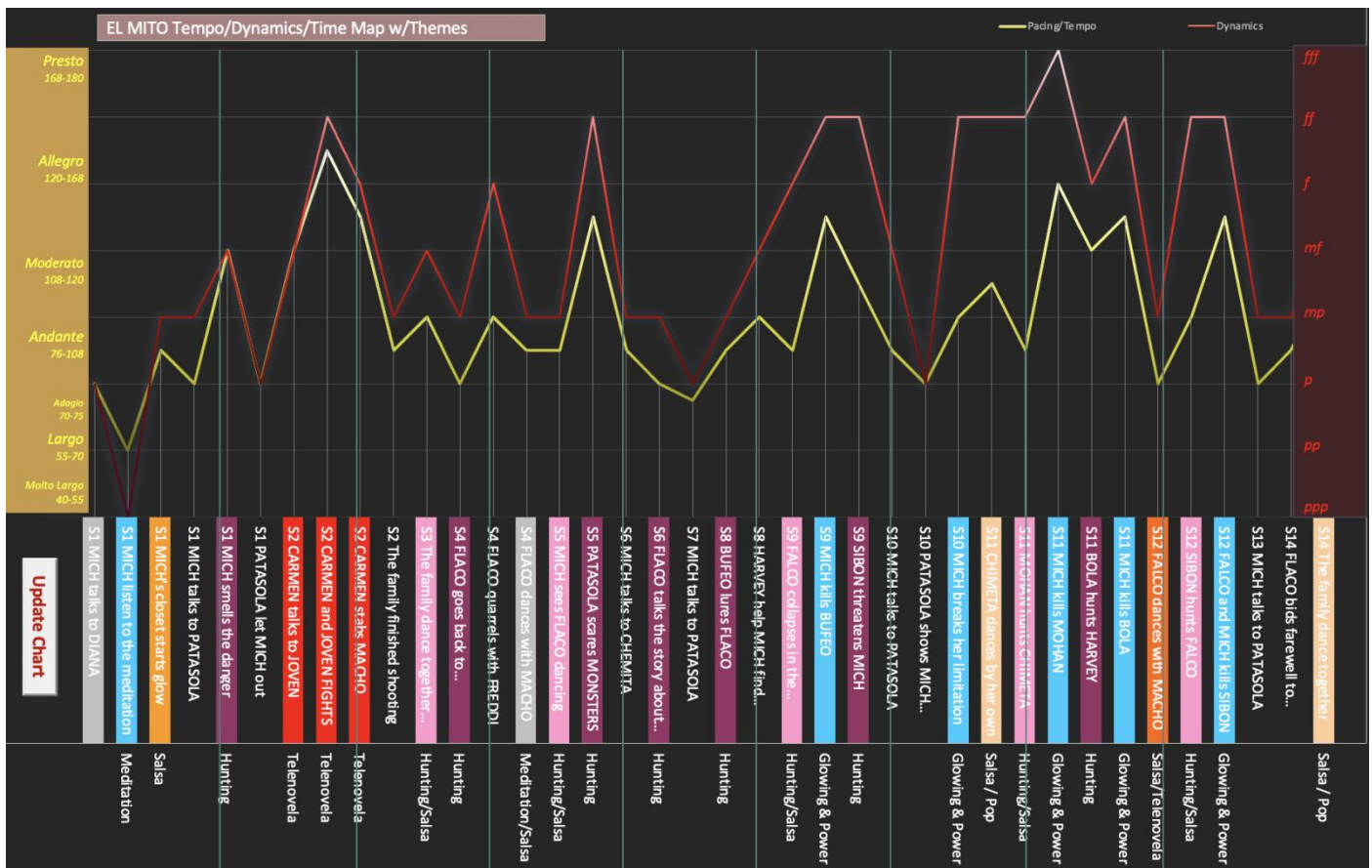### 13. Why is it an important story to be told now?

Connected to the issue of social and political circumstances mentioned in point 10 above. Accepting "diversity" has been the hottest topic in society in recent years, including immigrants, race, culture, gender, etc. And the play mainly draws our attention to a Colombian immigrant family, through the spiritual worlds of the characters embodied with the cloak of magical realism, we can see their psychological state of the disconnection from their hometown in a new cultural environment. But in this foreign environment, they still try to stick to the traditional family concepts and values from the Latino culture. The death of their loved elder brings traumas to the youths, but the will of the elders that is highly related to their home culture are also guiding them to grow up and take family responsibilities. Fro myself, as a foreign student living in the United States, I have this deep feeling that I can never be separated from my home culture and my family despite the distance. Inside a US university here, an environment with many immigrants and races from all over the world, I can often feel the impact of cultural diversity that is completely different from the environment where I grew up. And maintaining the connection with my traditional Chinese cultural background and finding a balance while accepting different cultural concepts is also how I, as a part of the minority group in this country, try to integrate into this environment. And this play uses a concrete representation of monsters from Colombian mythology to metaphorize traumas and the spiritual wills form elders or ancestors on the one hand, and the family's struggle to integrate into a this foreign cultural environment in Miami on the other.

In addition, this play also pays attention to the status and marriage of the queer group in Latino. As a stereotype sense spread in the society, some

people always have a sex-oriented prejudice when it comes to same-sex relationships. It seems to them that same-sex relationships are often based on sexual and sensual desires. And the queer couple Flaco and Freddi in this play are actually trying to eliminate this prejudice. Although Flaco was initially lost in the temptation of Bufeo, a monster represented by sexual desire and sensuality, he was able to wake up and face his own emotions and killed El Sibon who wanted to lure him into the abyss. This plot setting also strives to eliminate the prejudices of some people and allow audience to understand that the relationships of minority groups like queers cannot be defined by stereotypes.

Like the playwright talked about himself in an interview: "my goal as a playwright is always I want you to feel a little bit of everything when you go to a play, I want you to cry, I want you to laugh really hard, I want you to think, I want you to get mad, I want you to talk out loud." This play is is exactly what he said it is, it can make different groups of people feel different emotions and get different meanings from it. Especially in the most diverse environment such as the university campus here, telling such a story will not only draw people's attention to some Colombian culture that they may not be very familiar with, but also allow more audiences to feel the diversity that can be shown on the university stage. And it can also create a more open study environment for students like me who come from different countries, or maybe in different races, different gender orientations, and different cultures, etc. Even though it specifically focuses on the Colombian and Latino culture, we can feel a diverse environment that respects various cultures and identities through this story.

6.5 PULSE AND DYNAMIC ANALYSIS

EL MITO Tempo/Dynamics/Time Map w/Themes

Revised: 2023/9/19

EL MITO PULSE AND DYNAMIC ANALYSIS

Action (Act.scene# (page-line): Title/Cue)	Themes		Pacing/Tempo		Dynamics	
	Theme	Comments	Tempo	Comments	Dynamics	Comments
S1 MICH talks to DIANA		/	80	Michelle and Diana's daily talk, normoal talking pace	p	Normal conversation no strong dynamic change
S1 MICH listen to the meditation	Meditation	Meditation BGM, atmospheric synth music	60	Michlle listen to the peaceful meditation voice, slow pacing	ppp	Peaceful and quiet, calm emtion with low dynamic
S1 MICH's closet starts glow	Salsa	Salsa music with reverb and atmosphric feelings	90	Michelle listens the crowd noise and salsa music come out from her closet, the actor's actions are in a moderate pacing	mp	Entering the transition into a surreal scene, the dynamics are stronger than before, but still at a medium level
S1 MICH talks to PATASOLA		/	80	Michelle talks with La Patasola, La Patasola speaks slowly	mp	Normal conversation no strong dynamics
S1 MICH smells the danger	Hunting	Hunting ambient music with a strong sense of surreal and dangerous atmosphere	120	Michelle smelled the smell of blood and danger under the guidance of La Patasola, and her speaking speed gradually increased	mf	Danger gradually approaches, and the dynamics gradually increase with tension
S1 PATASOLA let MICH out		/	80	Michelle's conversation with La Patasola ends and everything returns to calm	p	Normal conversation no strong dynamics
S2 CARMEN talks to JOVEN	Telenovela	A dramatic TV drama music that combines Latin and pop elements	120	Carmen come to Joven's house angrily and confronted her, speaking rapidly.	mf	Carmen and Joven are aggressive towards each other, and the dynamic is relatively intense compared to a normal conversation
S2 CARMEN and JOVEN FIGHTS	Telenovela	A dramatic TV drama music that combines Latin and pop elements	150	Carmen and Joven fight together, the pace is fast	ff	The two screams and fights, the dynamic is very strong
S2 CARMEN stabs MACHO	Telenovela	Ending of the drama music, go into Slow Motion	130	Carmen stabbs Macho in the chaos, and the music enters a slow motion ending, but the overall rhythm is still fast.	f	A very dramatic ending, and the dynamics are still very strong in conjunction with the actors' movements
S2 The family finished shooting		/	90	The family finished filming the telenovela and began talking, the rhythm returning to a normal conversational pace	mp	The dynamic returns from the intensity of the previous telenovela fight to the calm dialogue
S3 The family dance together and get hunted by monsters	Hunting/Salsa	Salsa music combines a dangerous hunting feeling with a dramatic transition from normal slasa to surreal sense	100	The family suddenly felt a strange hunting atmosphere while dancing, with a medium-tempo rhythm	mf	The dynamic iss slightly more intense, but the hunting time is short and there is no large-scale change in the dynamic

EL MITO PULSE AND DYNAMIC ANALYSIS

Action (Act.scene# (page-line): Title/Cue)	Themes		Pacing/Tempo		Dynamics	
	Theme	Comments	Tempo	Comments	Dynamics	Comments
S4 FLACO goes back to apartment	Hunting	Hunting ambient music with a strong sense of surreal and dangerous atmosphere	80	Flaco walks into the apartment cautiously and slowly	mp	Flaco crept into the apartment in the dark, with low dynamics
S4 FLACO quarrels with FREDDI		/	100	Flaco and Freddi quarres with each other due to divorce matters, and they speakes faster than before	f	During the quarrel, they are more excited and the dynamics are more intense
S4 FLACO dances with MACHO	Meditation/Salsa	Gradually transformed into the salsa music in the spiritual world from the meditation BGM with a strong sense of atmosphere	90	Falco enters the spiritual world while meditating and meets El Macho and dances with him, the rhythm is gentle but slightly faster	mp	A weird dance in the spiritual world, the dynamic is in middle range
S5 MICH sees FLACO dancing	Hunting/Salsa	The dreamy dancing music, combines both hunting feels and salsa rhythm	90	Michelle saw Flaco's dance through the environment created by La Patasola. Michelle's dialogue in Patasola was relatively slow and medium-paced	mp	Michelle's dialogue through La Patasola is not very dynamic and is generally relatively smooth
S5 PATASOLA scares MONSTERS	Hunting	Hunting ambient music with a strong sense of surreal and dangerous atmosphere	130	The tension and speed gradually increase as the monsters gradually gather around Flaco in an attempt to hunt him, until La Patasola's roar scares them away	ff	The sense of tension and danger increases, and the dynamic performance becomes very strong and intense
S6 MICH talks to CHEMITA		/	90	Chemita and Michelle's normal conversation, medium speed	mp	Normal conversation no strong dynamic change
S6 FLACO talks the story about PATASOLA	Hunting	A soundscape with hunting feelings to enhance Flaco's telling about the story of La Patasola	80	Flaco narrates the story of La Patasola in a slow and eerie tone, with a slower pace	mp	Calm and eerie storytelling atmosphere with low dynamics
S7 MICH talks to PATASOLA		/	75	Michelle and La Patasola's conversation about the story, low speed	p	Calm conversation with no dynamic change
S8 BUFEO lures FLACO	Hunting	Hunting ambient music with unique dolphin sound symbols for Bufeo	90	Bufeo teases Flaco and tries to hunt him, speaking at a normal conversation speed	mp	Calm conversation with no dramatic dynamic change
S8 HARVEY help MICH find FLACO		/	100	Michelle finds Harvey and asks him to help her go to Flaco's apartment, which is a bit more faster than the normal pace.	mf	Michelle is more nervous and hasty, and her emotional dynamics are relatively strong

EL MITO PULSE AND DYNAMIC ANALYSIS

Action (Act.scene# (page-line): Title/Cue)	Themes		Pacing/Tempo		Dynamics	
	Theme	Comments	Tempo	Comments	Dynamics	Comments
S9 FALCO collapses in the dancing	Hunting/Salsa	The gentle salsa music gradually transforms into ambient music with a strong sense of hunting.	90	Bufeo seduces Flaco to dance with him. The scene is dreamy and weird, and the rhythm is relatively gentle	f	Falco lost himself in the dance, and his emotions reached a dreamy climax level, with strong dynamics
S9 MICH kills BUFEO	Glowing & Power	The fantasy and powerful music come out from Michelle's machete, mainly composed by SFX with a strong sense of magic	130	Michelle fights Bufeo and eventually kills him, the pace is fast and tense	ff	Intense and exciting fighting scenes, extremely dynamic
S9 SIBON threatens MICH	Hunting	Hunting ambient music with a strong sense of surreal and dangerous atmosphere, combines with El Sibon's death whistle	110	El Sibon, El Mohan and La Bol appeared around Michelle, threatening her and scaring her. The pace was fast and tense	ff	The scene is full of tension, danger and a very oppressive atmosphere, which mirrors Michelle's inner fear, and the dynamic performance is very strong
S10 MICH talks to PATASOLA		/	90	Michelle talks to La Patasola about her dangerous experience, the pace is a little faster than normal conversation	mf	Michelle is relatively emotional because she is afraid of danger, the dynamic is also stronger than the normal
S10 PATASOLA shows MICH memories		/	80	La Patasola brings Michelle into the environment to show her past memories. The scene is dreamy and calm, and the speed is slow.	p	Showing past memories with low dynamic changes in Michelle's mental space
S10 MICH breaks her limitation	Glowing & Power	The fantasy and powerful atmosphric music, with the glowing from machete, it gradually reviews the inner power come out from Michelle's heart	100	Michelle's monologue, in which she realized her true power and broke through the inner strength that limited her. The speed of her speaking gradually increased with excitement.	ff	The process of Michelle's power awakening with strong emotional changes and high dynamics.
S11 CHIMETA dances by her own	Salsa / Pop	Modern pop-style salsa music with clear rhythm and beats	110	Chemita dances by herself in the world of chisme, with a faster rhythm	ff	Pop dance scene with strong dynamics
S11 MOHAN hunts CHIMETA	Hunting/Salsa	Guitar music with salsa characteristics gradually transforms into hunting music with a sense of surrealism and danger.	90	El Mohan plays the guitar to seduce Chemita and try to hunt her, the rhythm is medium tempo	ff	As the guitar music becomes weird and full of hunting, the emotions of tension and danger slowly rise, and the dynamics gradually become stronger

EL MITO PULSE AND DYNAMIC ANALYSIS

Action (Act.scene# (page-line): Title/Cue)	Themes		Pacing/Tempo		Dynamics	
	Theme	Comments	Tempo	Comments	Dynamics	Comments
S11 MICH kills MOHAN	Glowing & Power	As the guitar music becomes weird and full of hunting, the emotions of tension and danger slowly rise, and the dynamics gradually become stronger.	140	Michelle rescues Chemita, fights Mohan and eventually kills him, the pace is fast and tense	fff	Intense and exciting fighting scenes, the first scene of Michlle saving her famlies, extremely dynamic
S11 BOLA hunts HARVEY	Hunting	Hunting ambient music with a strong sense of surreal and unique fire sound symbols for La Bola	120	Bola enters Harvey's world and try to hunt him, Harvey falls from his plane, the scence is intense, the pace is also fast	f	Bola throws Harvey from the plane. The whole scene is tense and full of danger, with strong dynamics
S11 MICH kills BOLA	Glowing & Power	The fantasy and powerful music come out from Michelle's machete, mainly composed by SFX with a strong sense of magic	130	Michelle catches Harvey and saves him, then fights La Bola and kills her, the pace is fast and tense	ff	Intense and exciting fighting scenes, extremely dynamic
S12 FALCO dances with MACHO	Salsa/Telenovela	Telenovela music with a smooth rhythm that combines the characteristics of Salsa music and has a sense of dreaming	80	Flaco is melancholy watching the characters dance in the world of telenovela, the rhythm is relatively slow and gentle	mp	Elegant and dreamy dance with low dynamics
S12 SIBON hunts FALCO	Hunting/Salsa	The salsa/telenovela music gradually changes into hunting atmospheric music with El Sibon's death whistle	100	The scene gradually becomes weird and dreamy, El Sibon attempts to hunt Flaco, the atmosphere begins to become dangerous and tense, and the pace speeds up slightly.	ff	El Sibon starts to hunt Flaco, and with the sound of the death whistle, the scene becomes extremely dangerous and distorted, with a strong sense of dynamics
S12 FALCO and MICH kills SIBON	Glowing & Power	The fantasy and powerful music come out from Michelle's machete, mainly composed by SFX with a strong sense of magic	130	Flaco takes off his disguise and stabs El Sibon. Michelle helps Flaco kill Sibon. The whole scene is fast-paced	ff	The scene of killing El Sibon is more exciting and oppressive, with high dynamics
S13 MICH talks to PATASOLA		/	80	After all the monsters were eliminated, Michelle had a final conversation with Patasola, untying Patasola's heart knot. The scene was touching and slow-paced	mp	The scene is affectionate and touching, the emotions are strong but deep and obscure, and the dynamics are stable

EL MITO PULSE AND DYNAMIC ANALYSIS

Action (Act.scene# (page-line): Title/Cue)	Themes		Pacing/Tempo		Dynamics	
	Theme	Comments	Tempo	Comments	Dynamics	Comments
S14 FLACO bids farewell to FREDDI		/	90	Flaco and Freddi bid farewell peacefully, medium tempo	mp	A calm and affectionate farewell scene with a relatively stable dynamic
S14 The family dance together	Salsa / Pop	Modern pop-style salsa music with clear rhythm and beats	110	The family finally reunited and dance together. The scene is joyful and lively, with a strong sense of rhythm.	f	The family members are in a joyful mood of reunion, and the dance is more dynamic.

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