

Gesine Müller

Re-mapping World Literature from Macondo

1 Introduction

1.1 World Literature and the *Global South*

A two-hundred-year-old debate about World Literature has reached new heights in the last two decades. This development has issued primarily from the United States, with scholars such as David Damrosch, Franco Moretti, Pascale Casanova and Emily Apter. Their theoretical reflections have contributed in different ways to an analysis of the paths of circulation traversed by literary texts on their way to canonization. This debate, however, seldom questions the established centers of denominating power which are located in Western Europe and the USA.

When we address the question of how World Literature is “done” today, however, this necessitates considerations of the global differentiation that has reshaped the map of the world. The end of globalization has almost become a topos; some analysts have gone so far as to proclaim the end of a phase of global northern hegemony, with its clear socioeconomic divide between the wealthier, politically dominant North and a poorer, marginalized South. In the context of the channels in which literature becomes canonized, this raises the question of the degree to which – given a worldwide farewell to center/periphery logic – new circulation paths in the *Global South* affect denomination processes in World Literature.

In the following discussion¹, I use the hotly debated and problematized notion of the *Global South* as an epistemological descriptor for world regions located beyond the “old” established centers of Western thought. Ultimately, these regions can be located anywhere on the globe: “The ‘Global South’ is not an existing entity to be described by different disciplines, but an entity that has been invented in the struggle and conflicts between imperial global domination and emancipatory and decolonial forces that do not acquiesce with global designs” (Levander/Mignolo 2011: 3)². Jean and John Comaroff also point out

1 For the topic of this article see also Müller forthcoming.

2 Compare the article by Hermann Herlinghaus in this volume, as well as his comments in *Violence Without Guilt: Ethical Narratives From the Global South* (Herlinghaus 2009: 57–66).

Gesine Müller, Universität zu Köln

another important aspect of the concept of the *Global South*: “‘The Global South’ has become a shorthand for the world of non-European, postcolonial peoples. Synonymous with uncertain development, unorthodox economies, failed states and nations fraught with corruption, poverty and strife, it is that half of the world about which the ‘Global North’ spins theories” (2012: 113). Ketaki Kushari Dyson already pointed in 1988 to the dangers of reducing the idea of the *Global South* to a “Third-Worldism” (8).

1.2 Gabriel García Márquez’s *Cien años de soledad* as a model case

Social-theoretical and sociological studies on these questions are one step ahead of literary studies, which is due not least to the difficult archival situation facing scholars who want to work on the material side of World Literature. The unquestionably canonical work of the Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez³ serves in my analysis as a model case for tracing canonization processes⁴. At first glance, his work seems to have traveled along the “classical” paths of literary circulation nodes – those for Latin American literatures – in the 1960s, specifically Barcelona, Paris or New York; from there, his texts then went on to the centers of former colonial empires, such as Bombay or Cape Town, where English plays a canonizing function as a privileged language. If we take a closer second look, incorporating perspectives that take account of the *Global South* concept at the epistemological level – for example, in the direction of China, Russia or the Arabic world – the picture becomes highly differentiated and very productive. The following discussion focuses on the central novel, *Cien años de soledad*, and its reception in the USA, India and China, as well as the Arabic world and Russia. The following questions inform my analysis:

1. External to literature: To what extent should we consider the exemplary reception paths of García Márquez’s work not just in the conventional parameters of European or North American centers and a Southern periphery, but also at the level of South-South relations? Aamir R. Mufti famously criticized

³ For extensive studies on the complete works of the author see the fundamental works of Julio Ortega, e.g. Ortega 1989, 1995, 2003, 2007.

⁴ Seventy percent of the books and academic articles circulating worldwide are in English, 17 percent in French and 3 percent in German. Only slightly more than 1 percent are in Spanish (Helgesson 2015: 73). Regarding the connections between literature and the market, see also Sánchez Prado (2015: 15). These figures make the global and wide-ranging impact of García Márquez even more significant.

the fact that the question of Orientalism has received too little attention in current concepts of World Literature (Mufti 2010: 458). Even if Mufti is referring primarily to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this question may enable new findings in an examination of global García Márquez reception.

2. Internal to literature: To what degree does the realm of the aesthetic reveal specific intertextual references between García Márquez and authors of the *Global South*? Can we distill processes of reception and transformation with regard to certain literary topoi, genres or paradigms?

In 1967 – exactly 50 years ago as of this writing – Gabriel García Márquez’s novel *Cien años de soledad* had an unusually large print run of 8,000 copies for the first edition, at Editorial Sudamericana in Buenos Aires. This was three times the standard. The same year, three further editions of 20,000 copies each went into print (see Marling 2016: 25). This led to more awareness of García Márquez’s earlier work, which was then also reprinted in large numbers (Cohn 2012: 1). The main stimulus for the international reception of the Latin American literary *boom* in general, and García Márquez in particular, came from Spain, closely followed by France; a decisive point of intersection was Barcelona, where the author lived between 1968 and 1975 (see Shaw 2010). This first and critical level of international reception has been researched intensively for decades and developed into the topos of Latin American literature of the 1960s, which I will not go into here.

2 The USA as a central reception filter and driver

2.1 Initial rejection: Gabriel García Márquez’s political communism and the global economic “Worthlessness” of Latin America

García Márquez was a dedicated communist and worked from 1959 to 1960 with Fidel Castro’s *Prensa Latina* in Havana, Bogota and New York, which led to some distrust in the United States. In *Conversations with Gabriel García Márquez*, William Kennedy (2006: 61) explained the lack of American interest in Latin American culture and literature as the tendency of the average U.S. citizen to categorically reject socialist and communist systems in the 1960s. Additionally, the majority of the U.S. population considered the Latin

American continent as “worthless” due to its political and economic insignificance at the time. This provides a context for understanding the following comments by García Márquez regarding the integration of Latin America into the (intellectual) map in 1967:

We're writing the first great novel of Latin American man. Fuentes is showing one side of the new Mexican bourgeoisie; Vargas Llosa, social aspects of Peru; Cortázar likewise, and so on. What's interesting to me is that we're writing several novels, but the outcome, I hope, will be a total vision of Latin America [...] It's the first attempt to integrate this world. (Castro 1967: vii)

If the Cuban revolution stands for an attempt by Latin America to emancipate itself from the political control of the USA, then the *boom* signifies the creation of cultural autonomy and the end of cultural colonialism in the literary-intellectual field, particularly vis-à-vis the USA.

2.2 *Cien años de soledad* as a spearhead for Latin American literature

The attitudes of the U.S. readership, which ranged from disinterested to critical, changed suddenly in 1970 with the appearance of Gregory Rabassa's translation of *Cien años de soledad*, which appeared with the title *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. The publishers of the New York Times Editor's Book Review named the novel one of the year's twelve best. The paperback edition, published by Avon in 1971, then began to circulate among a genuinely “extra-literary” audience (Johnson 1996: 133). The translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was the first exposure for many North Americans to Latin American literature and led to a perception of the novel as a microcosm of a larger, “exotic” Latin American world. The novel's success ushered in the publication of far more Latin American literature in the USA and its significantly broader reception in the public sphere (Shaw 2010: 27). Ronald Christ – who was the first to use the term *magic realism* (Marling 2016: 37) – edited a special booklet for the journal *Review*, with articles and reviews translated from Spanish to English, as well as discussions of *Cien años de soledad* from Francophone and German speaking regions. García Márquez's ascendance in the Anglophone world continued with the first scholarly work written in English on his work: in 1977, Frederick Ungar published George McMurray's *Gabriel García Márquez*, the first monograph on the author, in a series dedicated to the greats of World Literature, such as Saul Bellow and Truman Capote. McMurray's book functioned as a door opener for various English-language editions of essays and interviews, as well as further

monographs⁵. In the United Kingdom, on the other hand, it was not until 1990 that Michael Bell included García Márquez as the first Latin American in his “Macmillan Modern Novelists” series. Shaw calls the honor bestowed upon García Márquez’s work by Anglophone Hispanic studies the “consecration of Gabriel García Márquez as a world author” (2010: 33).

2.3 The potential for connecting to World Literature

The aforementioned understanding of *Cien años de soledad*, in which the microcosm of Macondo, the fictional town where the novel takes place, represents a “foreign” Latin America is just one side of the coin of reception in the USA. On the other side, there was the staging of archetypal universalisms and anthropological constants. This potential for multiple connections made it easy for recipients, and especially for scholars of literature, to weave the novel into the fabric of universalist World Literature. Intertextuality research uncovered García Márquez’s innumerable allusions to such works as the Bible, Faulkner, and Dostoevsky (McGrady 1981, cited in Ortega Hernández 2007). Such Occidental lines of interpretation contributed more than a little to the resounding success that *Cien años de soledad* experienced in the major cities of the Western and North American hemisphere (Marling 2016: 38; see also Düsdieler 1997: 335).

Furthermore, García Márquez’s narrative style, often described as “premodern” or “fable-like”, was credited with significant influence on writing after the modern age, in that it triggered a *narrative turn* and initiated the rediscovery of storytelling (Düsdieler 1997: 324). What is important here is the departure from the fragmented narration of the modern period and a “return to a consciously anachronistic oral style” (Düsdieler 1997: 324) oriented through its fantastical style against the *nouveau roman* and the temporal regime of modernity. Thomas Pynchon and Toni Morrison (as is particularly clear in her 1987 novel, *Beloved*) qualify as storytellers who picked up the mantle of Márquez’s poetics.

It was the anti-rational and mythical understanding of reality evinced by the characters in *Cien años de soledad*, presented as a matter of course, that advanced Macondo as an exemplar for Latin American literature in general and for broad parts of U.S. literature as well. García Márquez’s art brings together

⁵ These include for example the epochal works of Bell-Villada (*Gabriel García Márquez. The Man and His Work*. North Carolina University Press, 1990), Bloom (*Gabriel García Márquez*. Chelsea House, 1989), Janes (*Gabriel García Márquez: Revolutions in Wonderland*. University of Missouri Press, 1989), McNerney (*Understanding Gabriel García Márquez*. South Carolina Press, 1989).

elements that are disparate and paradoxical in terms of content, which served as points of reference for U.S. writers after 1970, namely the admixture of literature and anthropological knowledge, of fact and fiction, of the trivial and the extraordinary. One example for this dimension of reality is the priest in *Cien años de soledad*, who speaks of nothing but the arrival of the Antichrist, and then the Antichrist actually appears in this fictional world (see Düsdieler 1997: 323, 324, 353). At the same time, García Márquez's novel offers literary material that marginalized groups (ethnic, religious, etc.) take up in peripheries and use to undermine the "discourses of domination, knowledge and history" established by literary and political centers (Düsdieler 1997: 336). The USA's own English-language canonization of Gabriel García Márquez's work became the primary driver of reception for the Anglophone *Global South*, to which we now turn.

3 Reception in India

3.1 Translations and quantitative reception

Cien años de soledad was first received in India in the English language. The first translations into India's regional languages — Hindi, Bengalese, Marathi, Malayalam and Tamil — took place after the immense leap in García Márquez's popularity and reputation resulting from his being awarded the Nobel Prize in 1982 (Maurya 2015: 252)⁶.

In a journalistic text, Indradeep Bhattacharyya (2014) describes the astounding rise in sales of Gabriel García Márquez's books after his death in 2014; his works were on display in all of Calcutta's major bookstores, where the world's largest public book fair takes place each year. They sold as soon as they were put out⁷. He also draws parallels to developments in the Indian book market after the

⁶ The four-volume *Bibliographic Guide to Gabriel García Márquez* (ed. by Nelly Sfeir de González) lists the following translations between 1949 and 2002: Malayalam: *Cien años de soledad* (tr. Kottayam, India: Di. Si. Buks, 1995), *El amor en los tiempos del cólera* (Vi ke Unnikrsnan, tr. Kottayam, India: Di. Si. Buks, 1997, 1998); Gujarati: *La Mala hora* (Nirāñjana Taripathi, tr. Amadavada, India: Gurjara Grantharatna Karylaya, 1991).

⁷ See also Bhattacharyya 2014: "Ranjit Adhikary, sales manager of Supernova Publishers, Penguin's exclusive distributor in eastern India, said: 'The demand for Garcia Marquez's books has shot up exponentially. Every day we receive orders for at least 90–100 copies of each title. The two books most in demand – 'One Hundred Years of Solitude' and 'Love in the Time of Cholera' – are out of stock. They will be back in circulation next week'".

Nobel Prize of 1982⁸. García Márquez's reception in India therefore seems to be characterized by two sudden upswings, one associated with his Nobel Prize and the other with his death. According to Bhattacharyya, the gradual story of his reception began in the 1970s:

Way back in 1971, when Manabendra Bandyopadhyay introduced him in the comparative literature syllabus at Jadavpur University, nobody had heard of the author, but he noticed an instant liking among students for "One Hundred Years of Solitude". "The first sign was that students read the text themselves, which was definitely not the case with someone like Joyce," Bandyopadhyay said. (Bhattacharyya 2014: n.p.)

One key to Gabriel García Márquez's success in India therefore lies in a certain intimacy enacted by literature, as well as the book's readability: its everyday speech-like narrative and fable-like style speak to every reader, regardless of education or cultural conditioning.

3.2 Magical realism as a reception amplifier

El realismo magical [sic], "magic realism", at least as practiced by Garcia Marquez, is a development of Surrealism that expresses a genuinely "Third World" consciousness. It deals with what Naipaul has called "half-made" societies, in which the impossibly old struggles against the appallingly new, in which public corruptions and private anguishes are more garish and extreme than they ever get in the so-called "North", where centuries of wealth and power have formed thick layers over the surface of what's really going on. (Rushdie 1982: n.p.)

As the Rushdie quote above makes clear, the global establishment of magical realism on the basis of shared experiences in the *Global South* was crucial to García Márquez's reception in Indian literature. Mariano Siskind comes to the point when writing about the phenomenon of *Cien años de soledad*: "Macondo is the mediation between the idiosyncratic hyper-localism of the Colombian tropical forest and the general situation of the continent. Macondo is the village-signifier that names the difference of Latin America, and later, perhaps of the Third World at large" (Siskind 2012: 854). The universal dimensions of the magical in García Márquez's texts fascinated Indian readers, paired as they were with the interleaving of reality and fiction; as the García Márquez translator Buddhadeb

⁸ "College Street bookseller Suvojit Saha said, 'Demand for Garcia Marquez's books had shot up in 1982. It has again peaked after his death. We are sending away customers as there is no supply. We had about 30 titles; we sold out last Saturday'" (Bhattacharyya 2014: n.p.).

Bhattacharjee notes, “Take ‘The Autumn of the Patriarch’, for instance. The sweep of the novel startled me. At that time, Latin America had seven-eight military dictators who exercised ruthless power. It could be the story of any of them – their despotic rule as well as their helplessness” (Bhattacharyya 2014: n.p.).

García Márquez’s success in India was also fed by the success of Rushdie’s novel, *Midnight’s Children* (1981). Rushdie has himself acknowledged his admiration for his Latin American colleague in numerous reviews and interviews; looking back, Rushdie emphasized the enormous impression produced by his reading of *Cien años de soledad* and the uncanny feeling of familiarity that he felt for it.

And of course when I did read it, I had the experience that many people had described of being forever lost in that great novel. Unforgettable. I think all of us can remember the day when we first read Gabriel García Márquez; it was a colossal event. One thing that struck me, [...] was the incredible similarity between the world he was describing and the world that I knew from South Asia, from India and Pakistan. It was a world in which religion and superstition dominated people’s lives; also a world in which there was a powerful and complicated history of colonialism; also a world in which there were colossal differences between the very poor and the very rich, and not much in between; also a world bedeviled by dictators and corruption. And so to me, what was called “fantastic” seemed completely naturalistic (Rushdie 2007, cited in Siskind 2012: 860–861).

3.3 Postcolonial perspectives on global magical realism

In a scholarly context, the reception of Gabriel García Márquez gained steam after Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children* and the Nobel Prize. The first “International Seminar on García Márquez and Latin America” was organized in Hyderabad in 1984⁹. Beginning in the 1990s, a broad field of research on postcolonial fiction and magical realism opened up, and García Márquez, along with Rushdie and others, played a prominent role, especially in terms of his influence on Indian literature. Siskind’s 2012 study on this matter is a pioneering work, examining the global dissemination of magical realism as a postcolonial form of expression and, in this context, assigning a central role to Gabriel García Márquez, or the “globalization

⁹ A selection of the talks can be found in Bhalla 1987. Similar to the developments after the Nobel Prize in 1982, the “English and Foreign Languages University” in Hyderabad organized another seminar, entitled “Márquez and Literatures of India”, which took place on March 25, 2015. The seminar’s program is available for viewing at <http://efluniversity.ac.in/images/Documents/schedule.pdf>.

of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*”¹⁰, “The emergence of a magical realist narrative in other postcolonial locations [than Latin America] will be a result of a material and concrete process of global expansion [of the novel]” (Siskind 2012: 867, n. 80)¹¹. From a perspective internal to literature, what seems decisive for this path-breaking role is “the narrative and interpretative horizon opened up by García Márquez by rendering visible the relation between the universality of (colonial, postcolonial, capitalist) modern history, and the particularity of local forms of oppression” (Siskind 2012: 855). Siskind describes one particular feature of the postcolonial variant of magical realism inspired by *One Hundred Years of Solitude*: the perspectivation of the magical in relation to a specific subaltern socio-cultural experience of colonialism and other forms of local or global oppression (see Siskind 2012: 855–856).

Christopher Warnes and Taner Can have recently published works on magical realism in English-language postcolonial novels. Both books invite a rereading of magical realism, which the authors declare as central for postcolonial fiction in English, as in works by Salman Rushdie, Shashi Tharoor, Ben Okri and Sly Cheney-Coker. Not long ago, Susanne Klengel and Alexandra Ortiz Wallner developed a new paradigm focused on the question of relationships between Latin America and India; they offered the descriptor of “Sur/South”, an alternative for the *Global South* and raised the question of new Orientalisms.

3.4 Gabriel García Márquez’s influence on Indian culture

The traces of García Márquez’s literary aesthetic are remarkable in Indian literature, at least with regard to internationally circulating works. The aforementioned connections between the works of García Márquez and Salman Rushdie, above all in relation to magical realism, are well known and have seen intensive international research. Deep Basu writes,

¹⁰ There are a large number of authors worldwide in postcolonial situations whose work was significantly influenced by García Márquez’s novel. In addition to Salman Rushdie and Toni Morrison, who I have already mentioned, there are: Latife Tekin (*Dear Shameless Death*, 1983), Ben Okri (*The Famished Road*, 1991), Mia Couto (*Sleepwalking Land*, 1992), and Mo Yan, about whom I will say more in a moment (see Siskind 2012: 857–858).

¹¹ For earlier studies on the connection between magic realism and postcolonialism see i.a. Rincón 2001.

And not to forget Salman Rushdie, whose first epoch making novel “Midnight’s Children” and controversial novel “Satanic Verses” were heavily influenced by Marquez’s Magic Realism. Rushdie once told in an interviewer that there was “a whole group of writers” including himself who, “broadly speaking, are thought of as a family”, namely a Magical Realism family. (Basu n.d.)

This group also includes Amitav Ghosh (*The Circle of Reason*, 1986) and Arundhati Roy (*The God of Small Things*, 1997). Comparisons between Roy’s novel and García Márquez are as common as they are part of the commercialization of Roy’s works. Ghosh, for his part, responded to an interview question about this literary role models by identifying García Márquez as the most important source of inspiration in his work (Aldama 2002: 87).

Yet García Márquez has exercised an immense influence on Indian culture that goes beyond the narrow confines of literature. In the context of film, for example, his work has opened up ways to draw upon an oral, magical tradition to levy critiques against colonialism and imperialism and the effects of both. Again, Deep Basu:

Lijo Jose Pelliserry’s film “Amen” has been described as the most successful experiment with magic realism in Malayalam cinema. He says that though India and Colombia exist in two different hemispheres, the sensibilities are almost the same. Indians also have uncountable legends and supernatural stories and lore borne out of fertile imagination, robust beliefs, large families and a culture of strong family and community bonds. (Basu n.d.)

In summary, it is fair to say that García Márquez’s reception in India has taken place in several stages: the slow spread of magical realism to the global level certainly paved the way, propelled as it was by the Nobel Prize awarded to Miguel Angel Asturias in 1967, the year in which *Cien años de soledad* was published. The translation of the novel into English in 1970 ushered in rapid worldwide success and inclusion in comparative literature programs in India as early as 1971. Beginning in the 1980s, Gabriel García Márquez’s influence became clear and decisive for Rushdie and other “postcolonial” authors. García Márquez’s Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982 served as a catalyst for these developments and strengthened scholarly interest in García Márquez’s work from a postcolonial perspective that is associated with magical realism. This tradition lives on among numerous storytellers in India, some of whom are internationally visible (Ghosh and Roy, among others). García Márquez’s death in 2014 also led to greater interest in his work and even stronger relationships between Indian literature and his oeuvre.

4 Reception in China

According to Gisèle Sapiro, the production and circulation of symbolic goods is highly politicized in countries in which the economic is subject to the political and the state runs the institutions that direct cultural production and the

organization of intellectual careers, as in fascist or communist countries (Sapiro 2016: 84). This is an apt description of García Márquez's reception in China.

4.1 Literary boom in the 1980s: García Márquez as figurehead

In the early 1980s, after the painful Cultural Revolution, the recently selected Nobel Prize winner García Márquez advanced to become a literary and cultural figurehead in the “New China”. The 1980s were an unusually successful and productive phase for literature in China, based on the fact that many of the most important authors in twentieth-century World Literature – such as Franz Kafka, James Joyce, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Kawabata Yasunari, Mario Vargas Llosa – and García Márquez, who had previously not fit into the context of exemplary socialist literature – were translated in China in the 1970s. García Márquez's literature in particular provided support to Chinese intellectuals. One Chinese critic remarked, “It's as if a friend of yours, a neighbor, suddenly became a millionaire”, because, in China, García Márquez was still considered a “third-world artist” (Ye 2015: 29).

The Nobel Prize initiated a major reappraisal of his work on the Chinese book market. In 1982, Translation Publishers of Shanghai (Yiwen Chubanshe) published an anthology of his works from 1950 to 1981. In 1987 two versions appeared of *El amor en los tiempos del cólera*, and the famous poetological interview *El olor de la guayaba* with Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza (Ye 2015: 29). Interestingly, an official campaign was waged in 1983/84 against magical realism as an anti-socialist “pollution of the spirit”. China had to wait until 1994 for a full translation of *Cien años de soledad*. The first authorized version only appeared on the market in 2011¹². Two translations of the novel had already been published in 1984, one of them based on the original Spanish version and another on the English translation (Ji 2015: 358). Both were drastically abridged, however, due to accusations that the book was obscene and depicted superstition (see Ye 2015: 29).

China's *Xungen* literary movement also emerged in the 1980s and was characterized by its return to the roots of Chinese civilization, as well as an artistic style that sought to combine tradition and modernity in harmonious ways. Han Shaogong, one of the main members of the *Xungen* movement, said the following in 1985: “Literature has its roots. Literature has to be deeply set in traditional grassroots. If it is not, the Tree of Literature will never flourish” (Han 1985: 2, cited

¹² All previous editions of *Cien años de soledad* were published in China without the official permission of the author. Chen Mingjun, head of Thinkingdom House publishers, secured the exclusive rights for one million dollars (see <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/apr/29/gabriel-garcia-marquez-chinese-edition>).

in Ye 2015: 30). Chinese literati found points of connection in García Márquez's poetics, unleashing a true "fever for Latin American culture" (Gálik 2000: 161). To accommodate this celebratory fervor, completely new translation techniques had to be invented because magical realism did not compare with any of China's established literary currents (Ji 2015: 358).

4.2 Mo Yan and magical realism in China

Mo Yan (born 1955), the Nobel Prize winner of 2012 whose epochal cycle of novellas, 红高粱家族, *Hóng gāoliang jiāzú* (*Red Sorghum*) was published in 1986, produces work that is very closely aligned with García Márquez's form of magical realism. In his novel *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* (1996), for example, he rewrites China's tumultuous twentieth-century history. With a sharp eye for the strange and peculiar, he deconstructs the official historiography of China's revolutionary period (see Siskind 2012: 857). Yan creates a Chinese equivalent of Macondo, a provincial universe based on his fictionalized city of birth, Gaomi, in the Shandong province. "I was born there, I grew up there, my roots are there" (Ye 2015: 30) admitted Yan in an interview. It is therefore no accident that Yan was honored by the Nobel Prize Committee for his "hallucinatory realism", which we can define as a derivation from twentieth-century Latin American poetics. García Márquez's influence on Yan's writing also surfaces in the constant interweaving of the periphery/center topic in Yan's narrative texts.

Yan himself once said that his childhood experience of famines taught him "to think about life from my gut and to get to know the world from my teeth" (Ye 2015: 30). Such experiences of deprivation assume similar literary forms in Yan's and García Márquez's work, and we must interpret this as the expression of a specific literary aesthetic of the *Global South*. One example is the ingestion of non-edible items. The protagonist in Yan's "Iron Child", lacking anything edible to eat, consumes steel rods, while Rebeca, in *Cien años de soledad*, reacts to unrequited love by becoming a geophage, someone who eats soil. Fan Ye interprets this behavior as a meta-cultural stance of resistance, a silent protest by the marginalized against their oppressors (Ye 2015: 31–32).

In his "Confessions", Mo Yan writes about the poetological and ideological influence that García Márquez and Faulkner had upon him (Ye 2015: 37), in which, interestingly, he categorizes García Márquez as a Western author:

In the year 1985 I wrote five novelettes and more than ten short stories. There is no doubt that where their worldview and artistic devices are concerned, they were strongly influenced by foreign literature. Among Western works the greatest impact came from García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* und William Faulkner's *The Sound and Fury*. (Gálik 2000: 161)

5 The Arabic world: Magical realism and the deconstruction of outdated social structures

In the contemporary literature of the Arabic world, magical realism has also opened up a space for the thoughts and memories of marginalized voices that were or are oppressed by imperialist structures; a space in which ancestral spirits and nature are constitutive elements of ritual practices and mythologies, a space in which the boundaries between reality and the “magical”, between reality and dream, between past and present, are elided (see Jarrar 2008: 305–307). The first translation of *Cien años de soledad* was done from the French version in 1979. In the context of literature in the Arabic world, it is instructive to consider the novel *Les 1001 années de la nostalgie* by the Algerian Rashid Boudjedra, which also appeared in 1979¹³; its title resembles *Cien años de soledad* as well as the *One Thousand and One Nights*, and its narrative structures also borrow from both works (see Jarrar 2008: 307; Rabia 1981: 96).

Arabic authors have read texts from the *One Thousand and One Nights* as a narrative against colonialism. As in the two aforementioned regions of the *Global South* – India and China – there are an array of social, economic and political problems in many Arabic and Latin American countries that facilitate similar reading patterns and expectations. This provides the basis for cross-pollination between postcolonial local literary traditions and magical realism, particularly the globally circulating form of magical realism in the form of *Cien años de soledad*. The reception of Gabriel García Márquez has contributed significantly to the literary deconstruction of existing, long outdated social structures that cement the postcolonial dichotomy between the center and the periphery. The authentic textual content of magical realism, especially through its orality and fantastical style, enables the reproduction of political and cultural ruptures and breakdowns.

Of course there are other world regions and other cultural contexts from which aspects of García Márquez’s immense global influence can be read, such as Japan or Africa. In Russia in 2012, for example, in honor of his 85th birthday, a Gabriel García Márquez Year was announced and celebrated with a broad range of cultural events, including seven subway cars in Moscow bearing oversized images of the author and quotes from his works. At this point, however, our look

¹³ Published by Denoël (Paris). Published in Arabic in 1981 (under the title, *Alf wa ‘am min al-hanin*).

at the four major regions of the USA, India, China and the Arabic world suffices to permit conclusions to be drawn from the circulation and adaptation of García Márquez's work and magical realism.

6 Conclusion

If we turn our attention, from an extra-literary perspective, to the canonization history of a recently deceased author, then – despite global nuances and differences – published works have to pass through Barcelona, Paris or New York to reach Bombay, Peking or Casablanca. The denomination centers of the West/North continue to exercise enormous power. The fact that García Márquez's global reception intensified after two key events – his Nobel Prize and his death – confirms this finding.

The history of the canonization of his works from a perspective within literature has distilled two different reception filters: in the West of the 1970s the two pillars of successful reception were the potential for connecting the works to World Literature and Orientalism; in the countries that here stand for the *Global South*, the specific, shared experience and aesthetic related to postcolonialism seem to be important. These two reception filters also manifest themselves in the frequently mentioned explanation of success at the level of the content: according to this line of argument, *Cien años de soledad* found global resonance because of its unique combination of its ability to connect universal dimensions of modern history with the particularities of local forms of oppression (see Siskind 2012: 855).

We have seen that a South-South perspective also offers heuristic potential arising from the question of the possible existence of decidedly “Southern” aesthetics and forms of representation. This seems to be all the more significant whenever we look to the literary modeling of shared historical experience within the *Global South*, which ranges from colonial history to integration into the economic, social and cultural processes of transformation within global modernity.

This also raises a literary question in relation to García Márquez, namely the extent to which Héctor Hoyos' manner of reading Borges and Bolaño could also be an example of how cultural products participate in the creation and recreation of narratives of the global and thereby find a transnational readership (Hoyos 2015: 4). This does two things to questions about the establishment of World Literature: first, they turn away from Eurocentric and U.S. concepts and canon formation; second, a content-based (pertaining to topics and author biographies) re-situation in the literatures of our time at the international and transnational

levels. Ottmar Ette's term "Literatures of the World" may capture this dimension particularly well because he points the way to the development of a scholarly concept (a development that is a long way from being complete) while taking up a conventional practice in the literary scene (Ette 2004, 2017). Vittoria Borsò speaks similarly of this phenomenon of "World Literatures"¹⁴. If we remain at the material level of specific processes of circulation and canonization, there are still a few research gaps that have to be filled at a purely descriptive level. At the same time, such processes must be reconsidered in light of South-South perspectives in order to meet the demands of an appropriate concept of World Literature in our current phase of globalization and in our academic practice.

Works cited

- Aldama, Frederick Luis (2002): "An Interview with Amitav Ghosh". In: *World Literature Today: A Literary Quarterly of the University of Oklahoma*, 76, 2, pp. 84–90.
- Basu, Deep: "Adiós Márquez: Dear Writer, Journalist and Magic Realist!" In: *India Opines*, <<http://indiaopines.com/adios-marquez-writer-journalist/>> (last visit: December 7, 2016).
- Bell-Villada, Gene H. (ed.) (2006): *Conversations with Gabriel García Márquez*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Bhalla, Alok (ed.) (1987): *García Márquez and Latin America*. New York/New Delhi: Envoy/Sterling Publisher.
- Bhattacharyya, Indradeep (2014): "García Márquez wave grips Kolkata". In: *The Times of India*, 26 April 2014, <<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/Garcia-Marquez-wave-grips-Kolkata/articleshows/34214765.cms>> (last visit: December 7, 2016).
- Borsò, Vittoria (2004): "Europäische Literaturen versus Weltliteratur – Zur Zukunft von Nationalliteratur". In: Labisch, Alfons (ed.): *Jahrbuch der Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf*. Düsseldorf: DUP.
- Borsò, Vittoria (ed.) (forthcoming): *Weltliteratur* (Grundthemen der Literaturwissenschaft, Bd. 8). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Brouillette, Sarah (2015): "World Literature and Market Dynamics". In: Helgesson, Stefan/Vermeulen, Pieter (eds.): *Institutions of World Literature. Writing, Translation, Markets*. London: Routledge, pp. 93–106.
- Can, Taner (2015): *Magical Realism in Postcolonial British Fiction: History, Nation, and Narration*. Stuttgart: ibidem.
- Castro, Rosa (1967): "Con Gabriel García Márquez. Interview". In: *La cultura en México*, 23, pp. vi–vii.
- Cheah, Pheng (2016): *What is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature*. Durham: Duke University Press.

¹⁴ Recent years have seen further important programmatic interrogations of a positively connotated notion of World Literature, including for example Robert Stockhammer (2009), Sarah Brouillette (2015) and Pheng Cheah (2016).

- Cohn, Deborah N. (2012): *The Latin American Literary Boom and U.S. Nationalism During the Cold War*. Nashville: Vanderbilt Press.
- Comaroff, Jean/Comaroff, John (2012): "Theory from the South". In: *Anthropological forum*, 2, pp. 113–131.
- Düsdieker, Karsten (1997): "Gabriel García Márquez, Thomas Pynchon und die Elektronisierung der Märchen-Oma. Schicksale der Mündlichkeit in der Postmoderne". In: Herlinghaus, Hermann (ed.): *Sprünge im Spiegel: postkoloniale Aporien der Moderne in den beiden Amerika*. Bonn: Bouvier, pp. 323–360.
- Dyson, Ketaki-Kushari (1988): *In Your Blossoming Flower-Garden. Rabindranath Tagore and Victoria Ocampo*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.
- Ette, Ottmar (2017): *Weltfraktale. Wege durch die Literaturen der Welt*. Stuttgart: Metzler.
- (2004): "Wege des Wissens. Fünf Thesen zum Weltbewusstsein und den Literaturen der Welt". In: Hofmann, Sabine/Wehrheim, Monika (eds.): *Lateinamerika. Orte und Ordnungen des Wissens. Festschrift für Birgit Scharlau*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, pp. 169–184.
- Gálik, Marián (2000): "Searching for Roots and Lost Identity in Contemporary Chinese Literature". In: *Asian and African Studies*, 9, 2, pp. 154–167.
- Han, Shaogong (1985): "Wen xue de gen". In: *Zuo jia*, 4, pp. 2–5.
- Helgesson, Stefan/Vermeulen, Pieter (eds.) (2015): *Institutions of World Literature. Writing, Translation, Markets*. London: Routledge.
- Herlinghaus, Hermann (2009): *Violence Without Guilt: Ethical Narratives From the Global South*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hoyos, Héctor (2015): *Beyond Bolaño. The Global Latin American Novel*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Jarrar, Maher (2008): "The Arabian Nights and the Contemporary Arabic Novel". In: Makdissi, Saree/Nussbaum, Felicity (eds.): *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context: Between East and West*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 297–316.
- Ji, Meng (2015): "Exploring Chinese Experimental Literary Translation: Translation of Latin American Magic Realism into Modern Chinese". In: *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 8, 3, pp. 55–363.
- Johnson, Dane (1996): "The Rise of Gabriel García Márquez and Toni Morrison". In: Lynch, Deidre/Warner, William Beatty (eds.): *Cultural Institutions of the Novel*. Durham/London: Duke University Press, pp. 29–157.
- Kennedy, William (2006): "The Yellow Trolley Car in Barcelona". In: Bell-Villada, Gene H. (ed.): *Conversations with Gabriel García Márquez*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, pp. 59–79.
- Klengel, Susanne/Ortiz Wallner, Alexandra (eds.) (2016): *Sur/South: Poetics and Politics of Thinking Latin America/India*. Madrid/Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana/Vervuert.
- Levander, Caroline/Mignolo, Walter (2011): "Introduction: The Global South and World Dis/Order". In: *The Global South*, 5, 1 (Special Issue: The Global South and World Dis/Order, ed. by Caroline Levander and Walter Mignolo), pp. 1–11.
- Marling, William (2016): *Gatekeepers: The Emergence of World Literature and the 1960s*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Maurya, Vibha (2015): "Las demografías literarias y el encuentro sur-sur (América Latina e India)". In: Müller, Gesine/Gras, Dunia (eds.): *América Latina y la literatura mundial: Mercado editorial, redes globales y la invención de un continente*. Madrid/Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana/Vervuert, pp. 249–259.

- McGrady, Donald (1981): "Acerca de una colección desconocida de relatos por Gabriel García Márquez". In: Earle, Peter G. (ed.): *García Márquez: El escritor y la crítica*. Madrid: Taurus, pp. 60–78.
- Müller, Gesine (forthcoming): "'Macondo' y el desafío de sus traducciones globales". In: Locane, Jorge J./Müller, Gesine (eds.): Dossier: "Traducciones y transiciones entre América Latina y la lectura global". In: *INTI. Revista de Literatura Hispánica*.
- Mufti, Aamir R. (2010): "Orientalism and the Institution of World Literatures". In: *Critical Inquiry*, 36, 3, pp. 458–493.
- Ortega, Julio (2007): "García Márquez y el gran teatro de la lectura". In: Cobo Borda, J.G. (ed.): *El arte de leer a García Márquez*. Bogotá: Norma, pp. 163–177.
- (2003): *Gaborio. Artes de Releer a Gabriel García Márquez*. México: Jorale Editores.
- (1995): "Gabriel García Márquez: Text and Culture". In: Fidian, Norman (ed.): *Gabriel García Márquez, Critical Readings*. London: Longman.
- (1989): *Gabriel García Márquez and the Powers of Fiction*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Ortega Hernández, Manuel Guillermo (2007): "Magias y visiones del mundo en los primeros cuentos de García Márquez". In: *Cuadernos de literatura del Caribe e Hispanoamerica*, 6, http://investigaciones.uniatlantico.edu.co/revistas/index.php/cuadernos_literatura/article/view/461/275 (last visit: August 9, 2017).
- Rabia, Abdelkader (1981): "Gabriel García Márquez & sa fortune dans les pays arabes". In: *Recherches & études comparatistes ibero-françaises de la Sorbonne Nouvelle*, 3, pp. 5–103.
- Rincón, Carlos (2001): "Magisch/Magie". In: Barck, Karlheinz et al. (eds.): *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe. Historisches Wörterbuch in 7 Bänden*. Vol. 3. Stuttgart: Weimar, pp. 724–760.
- Rushdie, Salman (2007): "Inverted realism". In: *PEN America 6: Metamorphoses*, <<https://pen.org/inverted-realism/#overlay-context=>> (last visit: August 10, 2017).
- (1982): "Angel Gabriel". In: *London Review of Books*, 4, 17, pp. 3–5, <<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v04/n17/salman-rushdie/angel-gabriel>> (last visit: December 7, 2016).
- Sánchez Prado, Ignacio (2015): "Más allá del mercado. Los usos de la literatura latinoamericana en la era neoliberal". In: Ruisánchez Serra, José Ramón (ed.): *Libro mercado: literatura y neoliberalismo*. México: Universidad Iberoamericana, pp. 15–40.
- Sapiro, Gisèle (2016): "How Do Literary Works Cross Borders (or Not)? A Sociological Approach to World Literature". In: *Journal of World Literature*, 1 (Leiden), pp. 81–96.
- Sfeir de González, Nelly (comp.) (2003): *Bibliographic Guide to Gabriel García Márquez, 1992–2002*. Westport: Praeger.
- (comp.) (1994): *Bibliographic Guide to Gabriel García Márquez, 1986–1992*. Westport/London: Greenwood Press.
- Shaw, Donald (2010): "The Critical Reception of García Márquez". In: Swanson, Philip (ed.): *The Cambridge Companion to Gabriel García Márquez*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 25–40.
- Siskind, Mariano (2012): "Magical Realism". In: Quayson, Ato (ed.): *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 833–868.
- Stockhammer, Robert (2009): "Das Schon-Übersetzte: auch eine Theorie der Weltliteratur". In: *Poetica*, 41, pp. 257–292.
- Warnes, Christopher (2009): *Magical Realism and the Postcolonial Novel: Between Faith and Irreverence*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ye, Fan (2015): "El olor de la guayaba y el sabor del sorgo rojo: El realismo mágico en la literatura de China y de Latinoamérica". In: *Co-herencia*, 12, 22, pp. 27–39.

