

of evil – in revenge tragedy (*q.v.*) of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods came to be regarded as a Machiavel.

machinery In his preface to *The Rape of the Lock* (1712, 1714), Pope refers to machinery as a term invented by the critics ‘to signify that part which the deities, angels or demons are made to act in a poem’. The term is particularly associated with Greek tragedy in connection with the *deus ex machina* (*q.v.*) which the Greeks used to put a god on stage. It is also associated with epic (*q.v.*) because Homer included a large number of gods in the *Iliad*. Thus, supernatural figures were referred to as ‘machines’. There is a good deal of supernatural ‘machinery’ in *Paradise Lost*.

macrology (Gk ‘long language’) Verbose repetition by way of long words and phrases. See JARGON; OFFICIALESE; PERIPHRAISIS; TAUTOLOGY; VERBOCRAP.

macron The horizontal sign (¯) put over a vowel to indicate length. See MORA.

madrigal (L *maternalis*, ‘maternal’ and so ‘simple, primitive’) Originally a pastoral song, it is a short lyric (*q.v.*), especially one to be set to music and intended for several voices. It arose in northern Italy in the 14th c. and Petrarch wrote a number of them. In the 16th c. there was a revival of the form and it became extremely popular in England in Tudor times.

Metrically it showed much variety. In the 14th c. it tended to consist of two or three tercets (*q.v.*) followed by one or two rhyming couplets. By the 16th c. there were few rules, but for the most part madrigals were of ten to fourteen lines and normally ended with a rhyming couplet. The themes were usually love, the pastoral or the satiric. Many Tudor poets attempted it, but its three famous English composers were Thomas Morely, Thomas Weelkes and John Wilbye.

magazine (A *makhazin*, plural of *makhzan*, ‘a storehouse’) A periodical (*q.v.*) publication. See LITTLE MAGAZINE.

magic realism This term was coined by Franz Roh and used in the title of his book *Nach-expressionismus, magischer Realismus: Probleme der neuesten europäischer Malerei* (1925). He was concerned with the characteristics and tendencies discernible in the work of certain German painters of the period, especially the *neue Sachlichkeit* (*q.v.*) artists of Munich. Their work was marked by the use of still, sharply defined, smoothly painted images of figures and objects depicted in a somewhat surrealistic manner. The themes and subjects were often imaginary, somewhat outlandish and fantastic and with a certain dream-like quality. The effects could be powerful. Magic realism was also associated with the 1920s Italian movement *stracittà* (*q.v.*).

Later, early in the 1940s, the idea and term magic realism reappeared in the USA. In 1943 the New York Museum of Modern Art held an exhibition called ‘American Realists and Magic Realists’. Among the distinguished painters whose work was hung were Edward Hopper (1882–1967) and Charles Sheeler (1883–1965). Subsequently, Hopper’s paintings in particular were to receive considerable publicity in Britain and elsewhere.

Gradually the term came to be associated with certain kinds of fiction. In the late 1940s George Saiko (1892–1962), the Austrian novelist, began to publish fiction of a quasi-surrealistic nature and he expressed his views about what he called *magischer Realismus* in his book *Die Wirklichkeit hat doppelten Boden. Gedanken zum magischen Realismus* (1952).

In due course the term caught on in literary circles and was used by critics. By the 1980s it had become a well-established 'label' for some forms of fiction. It has been applied, for instance, to the work of Luis Borges (1899–1988), the Argentinian who in 1935 published his *Historia universal de la infamia*, regarded by many as the first work of magic realism. The Colombian novelist Gabriel Garcia Márquez (1928–) is also regarded as a notable exponent of this kind of fiction, especially his novel *Cien años de soledad* or *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967). The Cuban Alejo Carpentier (1904–80) is another described as a 'magic realist'. Experiments in magic realism effects and techniques are also to be found in the fiction of Italo Calvino (1923–85), John Fowles (1926–2005), Günter Grass (1927–), Emma Tennant (1937–), Angela Carter (1940–92), and Salman Rushdie (1947–).

Some of the characteristic features of this kind of fiction are the mingling and juxtaposition of the realistic and the fantastic or bizarre, skilful time shifts, convoluted and even labyrinthine narratives and plots, miscellaneous use of dreams, myths and fairy stories, expressionistic and even surrealist description, arcane erudition, the element of surprise or abrupt shock, the horrific and the inexplicable. It is seldom easy to define it as a genre and a plausible case might be made that there are plentiful instances of magic realism in the fiction of Kleist, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Prosper Mérimée, Fournier, Kafka, Ronald Firbank and Edward Upward. See also GOTHIC NOVEL/FICTION; HORROR STORY; NOVEL.

magnitizdat See SAMIZDAT.

magnum opus (L 'great work') A major literary work, perhaps a writer's masterpiece. Milton's *Paradise Lost* was his *magnum opus*.

magody (Gk 'rude pantomime') Like lysiody (named after Lysis, who wrote songs for actors playing female characters in male attire) and hilarody (Gk 'joyous song'), magody was a form of Greek mime (*q.v.*). The magodist took a comic plot or a theme from comedy and worked out a mime. Wearing female clothes, he played both male and female parts. The lysiody, by contrast, wore male clothes and played female roles, to the accompaniment of a flute. Hilarody was a kind of parody of tragedy (*q.v.*). The actor wore male clothes and buskins (*q.v.*). Simody was an alternative, and later, name for hilarody. See also SATYR PLAY.

Mahābhārata (Skt 'War of the Bharata dynasty) One of the two major epics composed in Sanskrit verse, alongside the *Rāmāyana* (*q.v.*). Classified generically as an *itihāsa* or traditional historical account, it was composed over several centuries before the 5th c. AD when it achieved its present form, but its authorship is conventionally attributed to Vyāsa. It is the longest known