INTRODUCTION

Trying to know [myth] better, even if only from the outside, is not only surrender to the (very legitimate) pleasure of reading and rereading a collection of fine stories, it is a way of probing deeper into men's thoughts.

(Introduction: Man and Myth, 1969).¹

This study focuses on John Fowles's use of classical allusion and myth in his postmodernist writings. Fowles has established himself as a postmodern writer, i.e. contemporary, historically conscious and inclusive, innovative and challenging, questioning, non-explanatory, self-reflective, metafictional, paradoxical, seeking truth and emphasising the code and the addressee (Hutcheon, 1988; Senekal, 1988). This statement is proved by the considerable number of studies that have been done on different aspects in his work.

In the studies completed on his work, the focus has been directed at different aspects. Loveday, in his The Romances of John Fowles (1985:3), chooses a thematic angle and discusses Fowles's novels in terms of four themes: the Few and the Many, the domaine, the contrasts between masculine and feminine characters and the importance of freedom. Fowles has also been studied from a philosophical point of view, as is illustrated in Friedman's An Existentialist Imagination (1978), a study of the existentialist thought in his work. Fawkner, in The Timescapes of John Fowles (1984), emphasises a more technical aspect, viz. the use of time in the novels of Fowles. An article written by Michael (1987) focuses on the characterisation of Sarah in The French Lieutenant's Woman, whereas the theoretical aspect of the complicated endings in the same novel receives attention in an article by Scruggs, "The Two Endings of The French Lieutenant's Woman" (1985). These are but a few of the many books and journal articles that have been written on John Fowles's work.

articles that form part of the research done, but they serve to prove the interest, especially during the last two decades, in John Fowles as a writer. Various general and more specific aspects have been covered, but none of these studies has focused on Fowles’s use of classical allusion and myth, though it has been mentioned briefly. Friedman (1978:91), for instance, mentions, but does not elaborate on, the use of classical mythology in *The Magus*.

Although it is never easy to trace the use of classical allusions and myth in the work of a writer, because the borrowings are usually not acknowledged, Fowles frequently and explicitly uses classical allusions - direct and indirect references to classical mythology - in most of his writings. This use calls for further investigation, given the lack of a systematic and coherent attempt to do so.

When referring to characters, Fowles sometimes uses the names of mythological figures. For example, in *The Magus* (1977:157) he compares Nicholas Urfe, the main character, to "... a Ulysses on his way to meet Circe" when Nicholas feels that he has "entered a myth." The latter quotation contains a reference to myth, a concept linked in this study to classical myth. In *Mantissa* (1982:49) there is an allusion to the muse Erato in terms of her function: "ERATO, presided over lyric, tender and amorous poetry." References to writers and the literature of the classical age also occur, e.g. in *Mantissa* (1982:177-178): "You’re confusing two people ... Virgil’s the one who wrote about Rome ... The one you had an affair with was Ovid." In addition, Greek and Latin words and phrases are used, for instance Charles’s words when thinking about Sarah in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* (1985:79): "Noli me tangere."
It is still not evident why a postmodern writer should prefer to use classical allusion and myth in a postmodernist text. Perhaps part of the explanation lies in a statement from Senekal, namely that the quest for absolute truth still exists (Senekal, 1988:299). Though man questions the margins of the world familiar to him, he still wants to know and determine his destiny. In the ancient world man could turn to the gods to find an answer and to determine his destiny. Dr Grogan, in The French Lieutenant's Woman, quotes Virgil, saying: "We make our destinies by our choice of gods" (1985:132). Though a remark made by a Victorian (but still in a postmodernist text), the concepts of destiny and mythology are linked and several vital questions arise from the remark:

* Does this still hold true for postmodern man?
* Does the use of classical allusion and myth in postmodernist texts reflect this "choice of gods"?
* Can one assume that classical allusion and myth are used in a postmodern way?
* Is there a development in Fowles’s work in terms of his use of classical allusion?
* What is the role that the competence of the reader plays in the reading and apprehension of classical allusions in the relevant postmodernist texts?

The main question emanating from these questions is what the relevance and function of the use of classical allusion and myth in postmodernist texts are and how these allusions and myths are used. The thesis which is to be tested in this study, therefore, is that Fowles’s use of classical allusion and myth leads to the creation of a myth with postmodern characteristics.
To determine more closely the use and function of classical allusion and myth, the aims of this study are as follows:

* to provide a brief overview on the use of classical allusion and myth in literature
* to define classical allusion and myth in a postmodern context
* to establish Fowles's use of classical allusion and myth
* to determine the way in which Fowles uses classical allusion and myth
* to determine the effect of this use in Fowles's work
* to determine the degree of development of this use in Fowles's work, if any
* to determine the role and response of the reader when dealing with classical allusion and myth in postmodernist texts
* to determine whether the use of classical allusion and myth in postmodernist texts and in a postmodern context leads to the creation of a myth with postmodern characteristics.

To achieve these aims an attempt is made to provide a theoretical framework on classical allusion and myth, the kind of reader, and the role he assumes and his dealing with allusions in literature. After the theoretical discussion the concepts are used in the analysis of three of Fowles's novels, namely *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969), *The Magus* (1977) and *Mantissa* (1982). These specific novels have been chosen because, for the purpose of this study, they best illustrate Fowles's use of classical allusion. The novels are treated separately to determine the use and function of classical allusion and myth in each, to decide whether they can be called mythological novels, and to point out the development (if any) in Fowles's use of classical allusion. The latter is also discussed in an overview on the use of classical allusion in the rest of Fowles's œuvre. Lastly, the reader's role and involvement in dealing with classical allusion in terms of its function in postmodernist texts are investigated.
The objective is to assess whether the use of classical allusion and myth by a postmodern writer in postmodernist texts leads to the creation of an alternative myth - a myth with postmodern characteristics - and to which extent the reader's involvement regarding such a myth is important.

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The use of the words postmodern, postmodernism and postmodernist may also call for an explanation. The words postmodern and postmodernism are used to describe general trends, e.g. the postmodern era, as well as the postmodern writer and reader. Postmodernist is used in regard to postmodernist texts, i.e. texts with postmodern characteristics.

Classical allusion as a phrase refers to classical allusions in general, i.e. is used as a collective noun, but is also used to refer to a single allusion, whereas classical allusions refer to more than one allusion.

For the purpose of the study only the male form "he" instead of "s/he" will be used, but all general references to "he" also imply the word "she".
CLASSICAL ALLUSION AND MYTH: WORKING DEFINITIONS

(M)yth can assume as many shapes as Proteus himself (Mythology in the Modern Novel, 1971)².

In order to deal with the almost unlimited number of shapes that myths assume, it is necessary to provide some background on allusion and myth as a basis on which a working guideline for the analysis of the use of myth in literature can be developed. This means that the relevant concepts and terms, with reference to the relation between myth and literature in particular, must be defined. It is, however, not the aim of this study to enter into the complex debate surrounding the term myth, therefore only relevant issues are discussed and the study is limited to a survey of myth in English literature only.

This chapter first provides a general overview of myth in historical context, i.e. the use of myth during the course of history, and then discusses literary and classical allusions (mythological references in literature), their functions and the reader's role in dealing with an allusion. Myth is addressed with reference to a working definition, its characteristics and relations and its functions, with special reference to the connection between myth and literature. In this regard attention is paid to the concept of the mythological novel and the twentieth-century writer's treatment of myth. Attention is also paid to the role of the reader, as he is the one who has to deal with classical allusion in literature.

The Classical Age, with the inclusion of the influence of Ancient Egypt and the Etruscans, is commonly accepted as the age in which myth, as we know it today, has its roots. Myth played an important role in the everyday lives of the people of the Classical Age. Some myths served to create a universe endowed with its own laws (Grimal, 1969a:98), e.g. the supernatural

powers of Aphrodite's girdle which made everyone fall in love with her (Field, 1977:67). Myth also functioned "to bring the divine to earth, in fact to minimise the differences between the immortals and the mortals. So Zeus was seen to be in love, ... Aphrodite was wounded by a spear and Hephaestus was lame. The anthropomorphic gods have biographies like those of human beings. They were born, they loved, betrayed anger, fought and sometimes died" (Grimal, 1969a:98). Other myths served to explain natural phenomena (Beckson & Ganz, 1960:139), e.g. a thunderstorm was described by myth as a hurling of missiles by a god (Zeus) in the sky (Field, 1977:8). The fascination of the classical writers with mythological heroes is illustrated in three of the best-known epics: Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, and Virgil's Aeneid, based on the former.

The attitude towards myth changed during the course of history. The Renaissance brought about a revival in the interest in Greek literature and myth became subject to intellectual scrutiny of what it represented and what kind of truths it hid (Righter, 1975:8). In England the Earl of Surrey translated Virgil into blank verse - as a result of his reading of the Roman dramatist Seneca, who died in 65 A.D. (Burgess, 1985:62). Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage and Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis are examples of mythological stories used as a basis for the plot in Renaissance literature, although classical imagery had been used even before Marlowe and Shakespeare. Christian humanism in the same period tolerated the interest in the classical myth as long as it did not compete with the Christian religion (Bidney, 1966:4).

In the "Second European Age of Enlightenment", viz. the eighteenth century, classical myths were discredited as irrational superstitions and a religion of reason was sought (Bidney, 1966:4). Classical literature was translated, interpreted and modernised for the society of the day. In Imitations of Horace, Pope translated Horace's satires "so that ancient Rome becomes completely London" (Burgess, 1985:144).
The Romantic Movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries regarded myth as the mainspring of human culture and as a necessary mode of feeling and belief (Bidney, 1966:5). Myth functioned as a source of inspiration, as is indicated in Keats's belief in the glamour of the classical past and the gods of ancient Greece. This is illustrated in his poem "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer", inspired by a translation of Homer by Chapman. Use was made of classical imagery, e.g. in a reference to Charon in a poem by Walter Savage Landor (Burgess, 1985:171,173).

The twentieth century was named "The Mythical Age" by the German novelist Herman Bloch (White, 1971:3). Modern writers, such as Yeats, Joyce and Eliot, have occupied themselves with the concept of myth; examples of this are the recurrence of parallels with the Odyssey of Homer in the well-known novel Ulysses by Joyce and Eliot's poem "The Waste Land", which relies heavily on classical mythology. Although myth was used in literature, the meaning of the existence of myth and its place with the languages of mankind were questioned (Righter, 1975:8). And in the so-called postmodern era, this same urge to find answers to the ever-increasing number of questions that surround the subject still exists. In postmodern literature the tendency exists to demystify and defamiliarise myth (Vickery, 1992:429), as seen in the parody on the muse in Fowles's Mantissa, rather than to regard it as a possible answer to the questioning that prevails in postmodern thought.

It seems as if the role of the postmodern writer is to stimulate questions rather than to provide answers. Because myth provided answers for man in the Classical Age, myth now becomes part of what is questioned by postmodern man, as for him the answer seems not to lie in classical mythology. He is, in fact, not sure whether the answer exists any longer. Man's disillusionment with postmodern society and religion causes him to take a sceptical stance towards anything that could possibly provide a solution.
ALLUSIONS

Mythological references appear in literature in the form of allusions. Because of the classical roots of some of these myths, these specific references are called classical allusions. For the purpose of this study classical mythology and the Classical Age are regarded as the source and origin of classical allusions.

An allusion in a literary text normally appears as a reference, explicit or indirect, to a well-known person, place or event, or to another literary work or passage (Abrams, 1985:8). One of the basic assumptions for the successful functioning of an allusion is that the reader is expected to recognise the significance of the allusion (Ruse & Hopton, 1992:16).

An allusion evokes more than just the subject alluded to, because the ideas associated with that subject are also called to mind. The following example serves as an illustration: Joyce’s use of the name Ulysses for his novel with the same title is a classical allusion. It refers to the main character in Homer’s Odyssey, as well as to the Odyssey itself, or, in other words, to another literary work. The theme, plot and setting of the work alluded to are thus called to mind, i.e. the original context of the allusion. Eventually one allusion succeeds in eliciting a world of ideas which contributes to the meaning of the work in which the allusion is used.

It is evident that an allusion is a complex variation of metaphor; this is stated by Thornton (1961:3) when he argues that Allusion is distinguished from other varieties of metaphor or analogy by the greater complexity and potential its context necessarily brings with it; it is a metaphor with an almost inexhaustible number of points of comparison. No matter how skilfully an author uses an ordinary image, such as a rose, there are only limited points of comparison to be developed - color,
beauty, length of life, etc. But an allusion to Lucifer, for example, provides a framework of relations among characters, qualities of personality, themes, structural patterns, all of which may be put to use if the author has the desire and the genius to do so (my emphasis - TMB).

Thornton also suggests that an almost unlimited use of allusions in terms of copious points can be developed, depending on the skills and aim of the writer. However, this is only possible when reader participation takes place in accordance with the writer's intentions. It seems that if the reader misinterprets, or even totally disregards, an allusion that forms the key to a framework of relations, the whole framework is lost to him; on the other hand, a world of reference is unlocked if he successfully deals with the key allusion.

In modern literature an allusion is often applied in a context different from the original context from which it is taken. The result may be a defamiliarisation or foregrounding of the subject alluded to. Allusions can therefore function to illustrate or emphasise a subject, to contrast the subject to its context or to introduce a note of irony (Abrams, 1985:8-9). Allusions can actually be used in any number of ways: they may be used for characterisation, or to add to the description of the setting, or to illustrate the theme of the new literary work in which they are used. The same allusion may fulfil all these purposes, or different allusions may each function on its own without performing the functions of other allusions that may be used.

How is this done? An allusion to Baedeker's Handbook for Travellers (Anon., 1975:preface) will, for instance, call to mind more than just the information the volume itself contains, but also the Victorian notion of the "Grand Tour" - travelling through Europe, visiting the appropriate places and achieving a proper background and education. Themes that can be associated with an allusion to Baedeker are, among others, a journey, which
may refer to the journey of life, and education. The suggested setting can imply Europe as well as Victorian England; if a character is involved he will most probably have a preference for travelling. This single allusion could therefore be seen to enhance theme, setting and character within a new literary context.

By adding to the meaning of the text an allusion serves to communicate with the reader. However, the reader's recognition of an allusion to a great extent determines the efficacy of this communication. An allusion can encourage the reader to go to the original source and grasp the whole context from which the allusion is taken. A reader who is not familiar with *Baedeker* may be interested enough to familiarise himself with the particular text, thereby discovering the meaning it has added to the new context in which the allusion is used.

An allusion often serves as a key to the reader with which to unlock a world of reference where the writer's message is stored. To the reader who is unable to unlock some of these clues, the text will nevertheless not be entirely impossible to understand. For instance, a reader not familiar with the content of Homer's *Odyssey* will not notice the parallels used in *Ulysses*, and will have to remain void of certain finer nuances in the latter text, thereby lacking a particular interpretation intended by the writer.

In her article on literary allusion, Ziva Ben-Porat (1976:109-111) divides the reader's process of actualising an allusion into four stages. The first stage is the recognition of a marker in a given sign, where the recognition implies the identification of marking elements as related to an independent text. The second stage is the identification of the evoked text, as an obvious result of the recognition of a marker. In the third stage modification of the initial local interpretation of the signal takes place. This is a result of the interaction between two texts and leads to the formation of at least one intertextual
pattern, which eventually leads to the fuller interpretation of the alluding text. In the fourth stage the evoked text as a whole is activated in an attempt to form maximum intertextual patterns, which implies the activation of the whole alluding text.

Although the text does not remain entirely obscure to the reader who does not grasp all the allusions, the functioning of an allusion is only significant in the case of the reader who does go through the above-mentioned stages. Only by working through these stages are the following warranted: the reader experiences the literary work as an example of intertextuality; an allusion will fulfil its function towards enlightening an aspect, such as a character, theme or structure; a comparison with, or contrast to, the context of the original text can be drawn (Swanepoel, 1987:108).

A close relation between allusion and intertextuality is evident, because a literary allusion refers to another, already existing, work of literature, most often by a different writer. Intertextuality here refers to the belief that all literary texts form part of an "organic whole" in relation to one another, and must be read and understood in that relation (Culler, 1981:38), also deriving their meaning from within that relation. Intertextual refers to other texts in general (Abrams, 1985:247), whereas macrotextual refers to other works by the same writer.

While classical allusions form part of allusions in general, as well as of intertextual references, they do, however, have distinct characteristics which are especially relevant to the rest of the argument.

The word classical in this context refers to the world of Greek and Latin antiquity, the period between approximately 1 000 B.C. and 500 A.D. (Kinder & Hilgemann, 1964:45,64). When a concept is placed historically, it is inevitably linked to the ideology of that particular historical period.
The following definition of a *classical allusion* is not intended as a rigid and inclusive explanation, but will be used as a working definition for the purpose of this study: a classical allusion refers to an allusion made to a person, place, event or literary work from the Classical Age. In most instances classical mythology and history form the source of classical allusions. The following categories of allusions can be distinguished: the names of gods and mythological figures, e.g. Apollo, Ulysses (Latin: Ulixes), Venus (category one); references to mythological concepts and ideas, e.g. satyrs, the word myth (category two); references to writers from the Classical Age, e.g. Catullus, Virgil (category three); direct and indirect quotations and phrases from Greek and Latin, e.g. "Dulce est desipere" (category four).

These categories will be used only to categorise and not for interpretation. An allusion will be identified, categorised and discussed in terms of its function in the context of the novel. The categorisation is done to be able to group together the different classical allusions, to determine which type of allusion is more or less dominant and what the effect of the use of a specific category is in comparison with the other categories.

Take, for instance, the following example from *The French Lieutenant's Woman*:

"But there came on him a fleeting memory of Catullus: 'Whenever I see you, sound fails, my tongue falters, thin fire steals through my limbs, an inner roar, and darkness shrouds my ears and eyes.' Catullus was translating Sappho here; and the Sapphic remains the best clinical description of love in European medicine (216-217)."

This allusion appears in the context of the meeting between Charles and Sarah in the barn after he has gone to the Undercliff, looking for her. The passage alludes to a great Roman love poet - Catullus - and a Greek love poetess - Sappho.
These references fall in category three. Catullus used Sappho's words to portray his feelings towards Lesbia - a married woman who initially returned his love, but lost interest in Catullus, as a result of which the relationship did not survive. The reference to Catullus is functional in characterising Charles's feelings for Sarah, because the words describe the effect she has on him. The love theme in the novel and the Charles-Sarah relationship are enhanced by the allusion, as the context in which the words were used by both Sappho and Catullus is that of a love relationship. Furthermore, Charles, who is identified with Catullus in this specific situation, is characterised. The allusion can even serve to forecast the outcome of the relationship to the reader who is familiar with the Catullus-Lesbia story. The mentioning of Sappho as the source of Catullus' translation serves to emphasise the intertextuality of which classical allusions form part. The French Lieutenant's Woman is thereby placed in the world of intertextuality and the boundaries of the specific text are transgressed, implying that the text forms part of the greater organic whole of literature.

Catullus' words form a classical allusion that is a variation of category four, because they are recorded in English instead of the original Greek (Sappho) or Latin (Catullus). They serve to describe explicitly Charles's feelings for Sarah and the effect that she has on him. The poetic fragment is very convincing and more functional than a mere mentioning of Charles's emotional experience would have been. It could also be an illustration of the Victorian notion of a person not to show his feelings, but rather to express them through poetry. The poetry also places the Charles-Sarah relationship in a literary context.

This classical allusion contains significant information with regard to the reinforcement of the theme, the possible outcome of the Charles-Sarah relationship, Charles's experience of his feelings for Sarah and the intertextual character of the novel. The different nature of the classical allusion, in comparison to keeping to the boundaries of the Victorian
English-cum-postmodernist text, creates an awareness in the reader, almost halfway through the novel, of the concepts enhanced by the classical allusion. It is therefore clear that this classical allusion adds to the novel by enhancing some of its important aspects. Other classical allusions will be treated in a similar way.

**MYTH**

Before attempting a discussion on the highly controversial concept of myth, its history and origins, the reason why myth is still alive today should be contemplated. Schmidt (1980:1) states the following:

> The mythology of the Greeks and Romans is alive today because it is very close to human reality. The major Greek and Roman gods are not abstract entities but beings imbued with life and possessing qualities and faults that are all too similar to those of humans. Their very immortality, rather than lifting them above the realm of mortals, bestows upon them the importance of examples and makes them continual references even for us today ... Mythology continues to live because it sets the stage for heroes whose moral and physical trials, whose metaphysical doubts and anxiety in the face of Death, Love and Fate, strike a familiar chord in humans and continue to concern modern [and postmodern] man.

Schmidt offers the reason for the interest of postmodern writers in classical mythology, namely the similarities between human beings and classical gods, as well as the exemplary function those gods can still fulfil. This serves as ample motivation for any postmodern writer to use mythology in his writing, especially in the postmodern mode of questioning society, life in general and even the writing process.
Grimal (1969b:9) adds:

... [T]oday the myth is no longer considered a mode of thought reserved for primitive societies. If each one of us considers the matter carefully and honestly, he will be forced to recognise that myth is far from foreign to our daily thought, and, what is more, that it is far from opposed in essence to scientific thought ... The myth really answers a fundamental need of the human mind, and to grasp this fact we do not need artificially to invent the idea of primitive thought; we need only to recall our own childhood impressions - after all, scientific truths play only a very slight part in our most intimate daily life, and what we know completely rationally is little compared with what we believe or suppose. Everything in us that is not transfused by rational knowledge belongs to myth, which is the spontaneous defence of the human mind faced with an unintelligible or hostile world.

Myth is part of daily human reality and thought - as is clearly stated above. I will argue that it is part of postmodern reality and thought. What is more, postmodern man may need myth to help him cope with reality, even though he does not always realise it.

What is myth and how can it be defined? A selection of examples will indicate that its definition is no simple matter.

White (1971:25) states that a Greek myth is the equivalent of a plot traditionally related to the action of gods and heroes. Chase (1966:68) adds to this:

The simplest meaning of the Greek word 'myth' is the right one: a myth is a story, myth is narrative or poetic literature ... myth is therefore art and must be studied as such. Myth is a mode of cognition, a system of thought, a way of life, only as art is.
Lord (1980:145) defines myth as "a traditional narrative in the 'sacred' realm, a story springing from the needs of both individual and community, which is believed in and has [a] serious function." In his seminal Anatomy of Criticism Frye (1957:365) gives yet another definition, stating that myth is a narrative in which some of the characters are superhuman beings, acting accordingly. The Shorter Oxford Dictionary on Historical Principles (1973:1381) defines myth as a fictitious narrative commonly involving supernatural persons, actions, or events, and illustrating some popular idea concerning natural or historical phenomena. Beckson & Ganz (1960:139) give a slightly more expanded definition:

An anonymous tale, ostensibly historical, the origins of which are unknown. A mythology, which is a collection of such tales, may contain the story of the origin of the world, the creation of mankind, the feats of gods or heroes, or the tragedies which befell ancient families. For the primitive mentality, many myths provided explanations of natural phenomena; with an increase in scientific knowledge, however, this function is often supplanted and myths survive simply as stories.

This definition is open to debate. While Beckson and Ganz describe the mentality of the man who used myth as an explanation for the world in which he lived, as "primitive", I would prefer to use the word "alternative" instead, because who is twentieth-century man to say that his ancestors had a "primitive mentality"? An alternative way of thinking, different from a purely rational one, functioned. Myth seems to have been originally part of that society.
It becomes clear that a myth is in the first instance a story or narrative. This is qualified: the story involves gods or superhuman beings transcending reality to some extent. In the earlier times, however, this kind of story was used to explain reality. Myth is therefore related to a community, and, because of its narrative nature, also to literature.

The following has been formulated to serve as a working definition of myth for the purpose of this study: A myth is a narrative originally related to a community in which it served an entertaining, as well as an explanatory and educational function - through narration knowledge was conveyed. It involves characters like gods or superhuman beings mostly related to the sacred realm, and survives today in the form of a story in which man’s awe of the universe and the world around him can still be detected.

It is at this stage necessary to mention the most important characteristics of myth. Myth serves as a link between the present and the past; it has a spiritual quality and at its centre there are gods (Frye, 1978:239) and supernatural forces. Myth is one of the elements of the human consciousness and has provided material for poetic and philosophical creation. There is always a mystery surrounding myth and myth can be a symbol for an abstract truth (Grimal, 1969b: 13,14, 1969a:97). Moreover, myth does not die because it can be, and is, transformed and kept alive by change; in fact, "[m]yths can tolerate almost any kind of treatment except indifference" (Ruthven, 1976:47). It furthermore possesses a knowledge of mankind (Barthes, 1972:106) and is "a synthesis of values which uniquely manages to mean most things to most men" (Gould, 1981:5).

Righter (1975:7) states that myth is one of the oldest elements of the human heritage. However, there is no agreement on the source of myths; the great Greek myths even appear to have taken shape before the date of the oldest texts available in Greek (Grimal, 1969a:99). Stewart (1981:1-2) summarises the dispute:
To explain the existence of similar mythic images in different times, places and cultures, the diffusionists posit that myths originated in one locality and then spread to the rest of the world. Scholars favouring a theory of convergence suggest that human beings, subject to similar stresses, respond with similar dreams, wishes, or artistic impulses. Functionalists search for ways in which a myth arises to fill the need of a society or to suit the purpose of its leaders. Psychologists debate the universal source of mythic images - the id (etc.) or the dominance of one side of the brain. Theologians and idealists argue the existence of an absolute myth which reveals itself through the human mind. Structuralists research myths serially in 'gross constituent units' to unearth the 'basic logical processes which are at the root of mythical thought'.

It is evident from this brief summary that the debate surrounding the origin, nature and function of myth is still alive. The purpose of this chapter is not to enter into this debate, therefore the following serves as a comment: although the source of myth is not clear, it is evident that myth is something unique, at the same time being part of both the spiritual and the corporeal realm. It also seems to be very much part of our daily lives, although we more often fail to realise it; also apparent is that myth is not isolated, but stands in a certain relationship to several concepts such as literature, legend and folktale.

The most obvious relation is that between myth and literature. Frye (1984:5) states: "[Myth] being a story, it is always potentially literary, and very soon becomes actually so". Vickery (1966:ix) adds to this, saying that "[m]yth forms the matrix out of which literature emerges both historically and psychologically". Schmidt (1980:1) gives further substance to this statement when he argues that "Greek and Roman mythology
established the themes that were subsequently explored and developed by literature". Myth is therefore regarded as a source of literature. Ruthven (1976:55) also refers to the belief that myth is closely connected with literature, and Gould (1981:11) argues that literature and myth must exist on a continuum by virtue of their function as language. This "function as language" most probably refers to communication, the transferring of a message from one source to another, where myth can be regarded as a source of, for instance, biographies of classical gods.

In the context of the relation of myth to literature, it is important to note the differences between myth, legend and folktale, as these concepts are often intermingled. However, it is still often difficult to draw a clear line between these three. Though yet again not all scholars agree with him, Chase (1960:130) gives the distinct characteristics:

- **Myths proper** ... are concerned with the origin of the world and man, the motions of the stars, the vicissitudes of vegetation, weather ... the invention of the useful arts, the mystery of death. **Legends** are traditions ... which relate the fortunes of real people in the past, or which describe events ... that are said to have occurred at real places. **Folktales** are purely imaginary, having no other aim than the entertainment of the hearer and making no real claim on his credulity (my emphasis - TMB).

Another significant relation is that which myth bears to religion as emphasised by Chase (1960:127) when he states that in early times, myth and religion were indistinguishable, because myth was born from primitive man's fear and adoration of nature. Furthermore, most religions, including the biblical ones, begin with a creation myth (Frye, 1984:7), illustrating the strong link between religion and myth.
A further important relation, which actually stands to reason, is that between myth and culture (culture here includes society). Because myth initially arose from a local tradition, it stands in a relation to that specific culture. "Myth is a story that ... states cultural agreement and coherence" (Barthes, 1972:106). According to Bien (1980:160), it follows that when one culture gives way to another, some basic mythic patterns are transferred and transformed into the corresponding forms of the new dominant group. Again the culture plays the dominant role. And later on, myths tended to become international (Grimal, 1969a:99), but most probably still reflecting a relation to the culture of their origin.

Because of these relations that exist between myth and literature, religion and culture, one assumes that myth must have specific functions within specific contexts. Vickery (1980:187) supports this statement:

On one level, the relationship of classical mythology to [post]modern literature is obviously a historical one involving the concepts of origins and transmission. But on another level, it is a critical relationship revolving around the notions of functions and significance.

The historical relationship between myth and literature has been dealt with. The question relevant to this study is whether myth bears relation to postmodern literature in terms of function and significance, and whether there is more to the ties between myth and postmodern literature than merely historical remnants. Before attempting to answer this question, a brief overview of the function of myth in historical context is given.

In the Classical Age, and especially in its religion, myth played an important role. Many people solved their everyday problems and questions with the help of myth. Myth explained to them matters otherwise inexplicable, as many Greek philosophers imagined that myths concealed secret teachings which they in
their wisdom might fathom. It is, however, not as simple as to say that all Greek myths at a given moment in their history were the repositories of secret truths. Prior to these myths a mythology existed as a way of thought which, in practice, proved capable of creating a universe endowed with its own laws. Unfortunately, nothing is known about the origins of this mythical thought (Grimal, 1969b: 13, 1969a:97,98). For the purpose of this study these myths are accepted as a given and indisputable entity.

Grimal (1969a:98) states that the essential function of myth is to bring the divine down to earth and to minimise differences between immortals and mortals. Some of the gods even willingly descended to earth and took on physical shape without any metaphysical consequences. With regard to the divine-linked function, Johnson (1980:24) mentions the religious purpose of myth, i.e. the presentation of the sacred, as an important but often overlooked function, where myth describes the irruptions of the sacred into the world.

A function that has been mentioned already and which links up with the so-called essential function, is that of myth providing answers and guaranteeing truth with regard to the questions surrounding the universe (Grimal, 1969b:10). Chase (1960:143) expounds this by saying that myth performs a beneficial and life-giving act by dramatising the disharmonies which may result from a clash between the forces governing man, nature and the gods. He calls it the "Promethean function of myth" (1960:143), because, he contends, Prometheus is the intermediary between God and man. Myth additionally serves to reveal the structure of reality to man (Detweiler, 1978:50); it also describes the deep structures of human need (Barthes, 1972:106).
These functions mainly focus on man's relationship to the universe, the world in which he lives, and himself. Myth was very popular in the Classical Age, a time in which man needed and used myth to come to terms with the universe, his world and himself. It seems that man needed myth to help him cope with the forces outside and within himself. Myth has, however, not been dispelled; it still exists as a different way of thinking, also for postmodern man to use in his dealing with his world.

During the course of history the function of myth charged, because man formulated different explanations for the world in which he lived. The function or relevance of myth is often expressed in literature.

In the English literature of the Restoration Period, an intellectual age in which the function of literature was to give a picture of truth, the manner of the ancient Greeks and Romans and assumedly also that of their gods were used as examples (Burgess, 1985:126). The eighteenth century - the Age of Reason - saw the emergence of the professional writer. This resulted in a variety of prose in which many classical values were actually rejected (Nokes, 1989:88). Myth did not have a significant place in literature and society, because it was discarded as irrational. In the Romantic Period there was a reaction against rationalism and a return to nature to fulfil man and find spiritual truth (Lamont, 1987:277). In this context, myth functioned together with nature to provide fulfilment and truth, as well as to act as a source of inspiration. During the Victorian Period social comment filled the bulk of literature and man was occupied with society, values and industrialism, and not with myth (Burgess, 1985:180,185).

However, in the twentieth century (the modern as well as postmodern periods) myth still seems to have a significant function: "[S]upposedly primitive myths can help us to grasp and order the chaos of twentieth-century experience" (Bergonzi, 1987:408). According to Bergonzi, myth still has a purpose to
serve in the society of today. Is this reflected in Fowles’s novels, as they do comment on society? To find some answers, the special purpose myth can serve in literature receives attention.

Apart from the various functions that have now been discussed, myth has a vast number of functions with particular reference to literature in general. The most important ones are summarised as follows: first myth can function as a source of literature, providing in some way or other the stimulus for a specific work of fiction; secondly, myth can also, more specifically, be a source in terms of plot, theme, character, setting and structure, and serve as a structural principle; in the third instance myth may serve as either a parallel or a contrast to the work of fiction or a specific aspect thereof - in this way myth serves to enhance either the work itself or an aspect thereof; and, finally, myth can also prefigure, and thus anticipate, the plot in a number of ways (White, 1971:11).

Vickery (1992:429) suggests four functions of myth, with reference to John Barth’s Chimera (1972). These functions apply to myth in a postmodern context. The following extract provides the four functions:

The first may be labelled the demystification of myth as spiritual, cultural, or historical heritage. Next, and contradictory so far as reader expectancy is concerned, is the defamiliarization of myth as received tale. The third function is what might be called the radicalization of myth as self-parody ... The final function ... is the restoration of myth as unbounded narrativity (my emphasis - TMB).

As Chimera was also written in the postmodern period, it will be interesting to see whether these functions are applicable to Fowles as well.
When dealing with the specific functions of myth in literature, the question arises whether the "mythological novel" exists. White (1971:7) refers to Ulysses as the best-known illustration of this type of novel. The two fundamental characteristics of such a work are stated as the following: the mythological parallel is suggested as an analogy or contrast to the contemporary world in which the main events of the novel occur, and the parallel is extended and could be described as a motif.

Herd (1971:51-52) adds his voice to this viewpoint, distinguishing five different categories of mythological fiction: the first is the novel which sets out to retell an acknowledged myth; the second category is a work in which the writer uses myth as a means of literary allusion, to attract the attention of the reader and to add significance to a theme or situation by means of illustration or parallel; the third category deals with the conscious use of myth as a structural element; in the fourth instance a mythical structure is present within the novel without conscious development by the writer, while the fifth category deals with a writer claiming himself, or is claimed by critics, to be creating a new myth. These categories will be used in the analysis.

In the said essay the term "mythological motif" is often used. It can be defined as a motif taken from mythology or a myth and employed in a work of literature to fulfil a specific function. Herd (1971:118-145) mentions ten ways in which this mythological motif can be introduced in a work of fiction: the title can be or contain the motif; the motif can be mentioned in the preface; mythological chapter headings can be used; a foreword or appendix can be used to inform the reader of certain parallels; naming as the simplest form of characterisation can contain the motif; the motif can be given directly by using quotations from mythology; a chain of similes and metaphors can introduce the motif; the writer can use the motif as a plot-motivation; the motive can be introduced as part of the creation of the anti-hero; and, a character's life can be stylised into a myth.
In discussing the writer’s role in myth and literature, the following concepts receive attention: whether the writer writes a work of fiction containing classical allusions; what role his attitude towards myth plays and how it is reflected in his work, and if he creates a new form of myth when writing a novel.

Johnson (1980:26) quotes Bush, stating that his comments on English Romantic and Victorian uses of myth would also apply to many contemporary writers:

Poets ... reinterpreted myths predominantly as vehicles for their own experience or vision or their own reflections on the problems of their age.

White (1971:15) states that the twentieth century novelist usually borrows a single myth, or at least draws upon a limited body of mythological material, offering this as a comment on part of the (post)modern plot, aiming to use myths and not to create a new mythology. The novelist presents a (post)modern situation but simultaneously refers the reader to a familiar analogy. The writer using myth will also accept the supernatural operating within nature and the form of his text will then be some form of myth (Lytle, 1966:105). Whether this is true or whether Lytle contradicts the above statements will be determined, as well as the question whether the writer in the end creates some form of myth.

Brief reference has been made to the role of the writer in using myth in postmodernist texts, and it is also necessary to pay attention to the role of the reader as the receptor of these texts in which the writer sends the messages. It must be borne in mind that, when using an allusion, the writer expects the reader to have the knowledge to be able to understand the allusion. This ties in with the discussion on the reader’s role in dealing with, and actualising, an allusion.
Cloete et al. (1985:51) distinguish four different categories of readers who will investigate the text in different ways: A **writer** can be a reader; his reception of a literary text will probably lead to a new text; he investigates the text itself and is led and inspired by the text as such. A **literary critic** as reader produces an evaluating text about the literary text; he carries out an experimental analysis and evaluates the literary text according to a certain literary theory. A **literary historian** mainly produces a descriptive, explanatory text about the literary text, investigating documents and letters in reaction to his reading of the text. A **non-professional** reader has a certain degree of experience according to the literary texts he has already read; he reads merely for enjoyment and relaxation.

Once he is categorised, the reader assumes a role, which will differ from reader to reader because of differences in social, cultural and historical backgrounds. The roles are the following (Cloete et al., 1985:51): An **explicit** reader is addressed in the text; an **implicit** reader is an ideal reader assumed by the writer while busy writing, an abstract reader present in every act of communication between writer and reader. The **real** reader is the real, concrete person who takes the text in his hands and reads it; he realises the communication between writer and reader through his act of reading. The **model** reader is always non-existent; he is the person whom a writer would like as reader. The writer sets conditions in the text which this reader must satisfy. Any real reader can partially, but not fully, satisfy these conditions.

The reader of a text is actually a writer himself, because through his imagination he re-creates the world described in the words written on the pages. If the reader fails to do this, the novel does not exist; in other words, if a story is not reconstructed in the reader's mind on the basis of the hints of the writer, a reader is not really reading, he is merely reading about (Gerould, 1937:110).
Cary (1958:119-120) states:

Reading is a creative art, subject to the same rules, the same limitations as the imaginative process by which an observer of the arts turns things completely meaningless in themselves, into formal impression. The meaning received is created by the imagination from the symbols, and that imagination must first be educated - as the artist himself was educated - in the use and meaning of a symbolic system. The reader may believe that he is completely receptive and uncritical, he may and should attempt to expose himself to an experience without prejudice, but in fact he is performing a highly active and complex creative act. The reason he does not notice it is because most of it takes place in the subconsciousness.

For the purpose of this study classical allusions can be regarded as the symbols referred to in the above extract. The reader must deal with them to participate actively in the reading process and consequently create an aesthetic object. And, according to the extract, the reader performs the act of reading in his subconsciousness. Though this reflects the view of only one school of thought, it is accepted for the purpose of the study.

In addition to what has been said, it has been stated that mythological references in literature establish the structure of the collective unconsciousness (Gould, 1981:4). This links up with earlier statements, namely that myth is part of the human mind and thought, revealing the structure of reality. Falck (1989:116) adds to this:

Myth, and the mythic mode of apprehension of reality, seems in actual historical and prehistorical fact to be a universal stage through which the developing human linguistic consciousness passes, and the mythic mode of awareness can perhaps best be understood as another aspect or dimension of the corporeally-based awareness of our own powers ...
The collective unconsciousness is apparently also the reason why a human being attaches himself to certain myths in his life. It could be argued that he has consciously recognised something already impressed upon his collective unconsciousness (Herd, 1971:102). As a result, the postmodern reader also seems to go through the universal stage of "the mythic mode of apprehension of reality", especially when dealing with classical allusions. The reader apparently does, in some way, unconsciously deal with myth in a novel. In all probability, this precedes the stages of actualising an allusion. A reader's literary and cultural background will determine whether or not he is ignorant of classical allusions and mythological references in his reading of a novel. And although he is not aware of all the sources, the writer still expects the ideal reader to be familiar with most mythological references (White, 1971:12).

The so-called mythological novel demands that the reader draw a number of conclusions and make deductions as a result of certain veiled information (White, 1971:149). The reader therefore has to unveil and then interpret the information. If not unveiled, interpretation can obviously not take place to the same extent, but in view of the collective unconsciousness one is to assume that some interpretation is indeed done by the reader. As a result, no reader is totally untouched by myth in literature. Whether this is reflected in the reading of selected texts by Fowles will be assessed, also bearing in mind the expectations of the reader.

The concepts discussed in this chapter will be used as a background to the analysis. The following summary serves as a guideline according to which relevant questions will be examined and the analysis carried out: throughout the analysis the working definitions for classical allusion and myth will be kept in mind. The classical allusions will be discussed in terms of their different categories, and their context and function within the context and in terms of communication with the reader. This will lead to consideration of the function of myth in the
postmodernist texts, with special regard to its characteristics, the relation between myth and literature, and its function in literature. An attempt will also be made to describe Fowles's texts in terms of the categories of mythological fiction, with reference to his use of mythological motifs.

Eventually the postmodern writer's dealing with myth and the postmodern reader's actualising and interpretation of classical allusions will be argued, in an attempt to decide to what end the use of classical allusions in postmodernist texts leads.

In terms of the reader's and the writer's dealing with classical allusions it is useful (although the situations are not necessarily the same for all readers and writers) to bear in mind the following: reading always occurs in social contexts which influence the process; both reader and text are ideologically situated, which means that these ideologies have to meet somewhere in the reading process, which is an interactive process. The reader approaches a text with questions, anxieties, interests and literary experience because of his own place in history; he implements reading strategies to process the text. The text, on the other hand, offers directions to guide the reader's dealing therewith, as well as gaps which allow the reader interpretative freedom. If the reader's expectations are fulfilled, it will lead to a matching of ideologies\(^3\), whereas a mismatching takes place if the reader does not interact meaningfully with the text (McKormick & Waller, 1987:193-208).

The role played by Fowles's use of classical allusion and myth in terms of his offering some strategies and the reader's dealing with them will be determined according to the concepts discussed.

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\(^3\) I prefer to use the word "ideologies" instead of "repertoires" used in the mentioned article, because the former is more self-explanatory.
3 THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT’S WOMAN: A CHOICE OF GODS

Fiction is woven into all, as a Greek observed some two and a half thousand years ago ... You do not even think of your own past as quite real; you ... fictionalize it (The French Lieutenant’s Woman, 1985)4.

"Fowles has combined the historical novel ... with the self-conscious work of fiction" (Loveday, 1985:48); "Fowles ... weaves two novels together. One is a parody of the Victorian novel, the other is a modern novel" (Tarbox, 1988:80). Both these descriptions apply to The French Lieutenant’s Woman, Fowles’s first major novel. Tarbox (1988:60) adds to this catena by saying that "... critics invested a good deal of energy in trying to determine what species of novel Fowles has created" when this novel was first published. Not much of this energy seems to have been spent, however, on the use of classical allusions in The French Lieutenant’s Woman - which are constantly present throughout the novel - and the question whether or not it is a mythological novel. This chapter addresses these concepts in a discussion of Fowles’s use of classical allusions in the novel.

The French Lieutenant’s Woman is described by Spear (1988:10) as "a love story which leaves us troubled and bewildered". It deals with Victorian England, though seen from a twentieth-century perspective. The French Lieutenant’s so-called fallen woman, Sarah Woodruff, is the heroine, and does not really belong in a Victorian society. In strong contrast to her is the young, thoroughly Victorian, Ernestina Freeman, heiress to her father’s trade fortune. Both Sarah and Ernestina fall in love with a Victorian gentleman, Charles Smithson, a geologist and palaeontologist who eventually becomes an illustration of a mind torn between Victorian values and the freedom Sarah represents.

Other significant characters are Dr Grogan, an Irish doctor and friend of Charles, Sam Farrow, Charles's servant, and Mrs Poulteney, a woman with very strict Victorian values.

The most important themes in the novel are the themes of freedom, the perennial love triangle, Victorian hypocrisy and repressed sexuality, evolution and the Victorian roots of a (post)modern society. Fowles employs many different techniques to reveal these themes, such as epigraphs, historical references, the intermingling of the Victorian and modern eras, authorial comments and intrusions, the multiple endings and, very significantly, the explicit use of classical allusions.

Another concept which receives a great deal of attention in the novel is that of metafiction. "Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (Waugh, 1984:66). It touches upon the role of the writer - who actually becomes a character himself - and that of the reader - who is addressed in the novel. The multiple endings also add to the metafictional character of the novel. Whether Fowles's use of classical allusions adds to the metafictional character of the novel has to be decided.

Also to be determined in this chapter is the question whether the use of classical allusions adds to enhancing the themes, to describing the characters, and to the novel as a whole. It is therefore not the purpose of this chapter to discuss every classical allusion, but to concentrate on the most significant ones in terms of their use and function in the context of this postmodernist novel.
The following functions of the classical allusions (together with other techniques) in The French Lieutenant’s Woman will be investigated, namely characterisation, contextualisation and the emphasising of themes. The classical allusions occur in the form of all four categories described in the introduction, namely the explicit use of the name of a god or mythological figure (category one), references to concepts from classical mythology (category two), references to writers from the Classical Age (category three) and direct and indirect quotations and phrases from Greek and Latin (category four).

Bearing in mind the different categories of classical allusions, the function of the use of classical allusions in terms of characterisation will be illustrated with reference to the characters of Sarah, Ernestina, Charles and Dr Grogan.

The character of Sarah, or perhaps one should rather say the mystery surrounding her character, is illustrated by the fact that the writer refrains from identifying her with a specific mythological figure. This is done in a very postmodern, and simultaneously un-Victorian, way, because Sarah is neither explained nor described, but simply called "a figure from myth" (FL&W 9) - classical allusion, category two. The reader is to understand from the very beginning that Sarah is different from the other (Victorian) characters. Sarah uses the age-old method of telling a story when she wants to involve and even educate Charles. This adds to her mysterious character, because narration is a distinctive characteristic of myth. Although she is not really a mythological figure, the mystery that surrounds her character gives her an almost superhuman quality - illustrated by the word myth. She is not to be tied down by Victorian characteristics, but fights for, and possesses, a freedom that enables her to rise above the expectations and boundaries of Victorian society to her own sphere of existence not to be understood by anybody, not even by herself. The use of the word myth in this context therefore successfully functions to capture the essence of Sarah’s character.
This notion of refraining from explaining Sarah is present throughout the novel. In the second ending Sarah herself proves this, saying to Charles when he questions her about her refusal to have contacted him and to marry him:

But I am not to be understood ... I meant that I am not to be understood even by myself. And I can't tell you why, but I believe my happiness depends on my not understanding (FLW 386).

An indirect command to both Charles and the reader not to try and explain Sarah, not even to themselves, is implicit in these words: she must remain a mystery, a figure from myth, otherwise she loses her nature and her happiness, and by implication her character and being.

Charles's description of Sarah's eyes adds to this indirect command: "Do not come near me, they said. Noli me tangere" (FLW 79). The Latin phrase (category four) is used functionally by Charles to describe the message her eyes convey to him and to illustrate his experience of her character, as has been discussed, which corresponds to the mystery that surrounds her. The Latin words, meaning "Do not touch me", also function to emphasise the English words by adding to the meaning of "Do not come near me". The message is clear: Sarah's character is not to be meddled with, but simply to be accepted as it is.

The only time Sarah uses a classical allusion is not to describe or identify herself, but when she tells Charles the name of their daughter: "Lalage ... It is Greek. From lalageo, to babble like a brook" (FLW 392). It is surprising that a woman living in the Victorian age possesses this knowledge; the uniqueness of Sarah's character is yet again emphasised by the use of the Greek word. It corresponds with Charles's use of classical allusions as part of his everyday life. Sarah is still, and even more so, very much un-Victorian and values her freedom highly. The unusual name she has chosen for her child adds to stress this fact. And still neither she nor Charles links her (Sarah) with a specific figure from mythology.
The gist of Sarah’s character is captured through the use of classical allusions. Does the same apply to Ernestina, who is the typical, young Victorian woman, in marked contrast to Sarah’s un-Victorian character?

Ernestina indeed explains her own character, in no other way than through a classical allusion (category one), mentioning the names of specific women from the Classical Age:

I know I am innocent. I know I am spoilt. I know I am not unusual. I am not a Helen of Troy or a Cleopatra (FLW 327).

Helen of Troy is the mythological figure remembered for having been the cause of the Trojan War, being a very beautiful woman and the queen of Sparta at the time of the war (Guirand, 1959a:205). Cleopatra was the queen of Egypt, although not a figure from mythology, but was also reputed to be a very attractive woman, known for her liaisons with Julius Caesar and Mark Anthony (Bowder, 1980:63). It is ironical that Ernestina chooses two such remarkable women, with whom she does not identify, to compare herself with. By stating what she is not, Ernestina describes herself as an ordinary woman, not exceptionally beautiful nor attractive, nor worthy to be recalled in the course of history - neither as a mythological figure nor a historical person. It is emphasised, because of the classical reference, that she is just an ordinary young woman who views herself with the modesty of the Victorian mind, not striving for more but being Victorian.

This classical allusion illustrates the nature of Ernestina’s character, but also serves to enhance the dissimilarity between her and Sarah. A likeness to Helen or Cleopatra would actually suit Sarah’s character much better, because of her being un-Victorian and unique. Sarah’s character is consequently again portrayed and emphasised. No room is left, therefore, for any doubt as to the significance of the use of this classical allusion in terms of characterisation, with reference to the characters of Ernestina as well as Sarah.
It is not surprising that numerous classical allusions are used with reference to the character of Charles. He lives - thinks and speaks - in terms of classical allusions. Most probably as a learned and educated, typically Victorian, gentleman, Charles has a sound knowledge of the classics and he uses this as part of his everyday life. This knowledge seems to provide him with a framework within which he can deal with his experiences. His first reference to a figure from mythology is the use of the name Neptune (category one):

My dear Tina, we have paid our homage to Neptune. He will forgive us if we now turn our backs on him (FLW 10).

Here Neptune is referred to in his capacity as the mythological god of the sea (Field, 1977:156), while Charles and Ernestina are taking a walk along the seaside; Neptune is thus metonymically used to personify the sea.

Charles even uses classical allusions when talking to Sam, his servant, who is certainly not expected to have the same classical knowledge as his master:

Quod est demonstrandum. You have the hump of a morning that would make a miser sing. Ergo, you have been drinking (FLW 39),

and

Ursa? Are you speaking Latin now? ... Ah, but where is the primum mobile? Who provoked it first? (FLW 97).

These Latin words and phrases are used in the same manner in which a person who has a working knowledge of more than one language sometimes draws on words from a second language during a conversation. He does not need to be perfectly bilingual or trilingual; he may merely be familiar with specific isolated phrases, which he uses in such instances. Because Sam most probably does not understand these Latin words, Charles’s use thereof enhances the class difference between the two of them.
Charles is a man of education, with some knowledge of Latin, whereas Sam is but a servant, neither expected, nor supposed, to be learned. The sub-theme of the class differences which strongly prevailed in Victorian society is therefore emphasised by the use of the Latin words.

Another example which illustrates Charles’s knowledge of the Classical Age is his remark about a concept from Roman religion: "But are your two household gods quite free of blame?" (FLW 133). This classical allusion (category three) appears in a conversation between Charles and Dr Grogan about the politics of England. It refers to the Roman custom of worshipping gods or spirits in the house; the most important of these household gods were the Lares and the Penates, which were supposed to keep watch over the household and the members of the house (Field, 1977:181). Charles’s reference implies that the household gods or spirits even had the power to impose punishment of some kind on one of the members of the house, perhaps for not having worshipped them properly? In this context the allusion does not refer directly to the household gods, but is applied in such a way as to refer to, most probably, a political figure or party, thereby functioning as a symbol in this instance.

When talking to Ernestina, breaking the news that he is going to lose part of his inheritance because of his uncle’s marriage, Charles again expresses himself through a classical allusion:

My dear Tina, Cupid has a notorious contempt for other people’s convenience … I am afraid he has everything to do with it. Old hearts are the most susceptible (FLW 173).

Cupid is the Latin version of the god known to the Greeks as Eros, the god of sexual desire, best known as a child who shoots arrows of romantic love in an irresponsible manner (Field, 1977:141). The indifferent tone of Charles’s reference to Cupid illustrates that he (Charles) does not give the situation of his uncle’s marriage a second thought, but accepts it as such. The
reference to Cupid also points to a certain characteristic of the relationship between Charles and Ernestina: they think they are in love, but are so out of touch with their own and each other’s feelings that the emptiness of their relationship does not dawn on them; they simply accept that, because they are to be married, they are to be in love, as if Cupid is there to set feelings in order. Charles’s reference to Cupid therefore illustrates the Victorian’s ignorance with regard to matters of the heart and his own feelings.

Charles’s contact with Sarah - be it in his imagination or in reality - is more than once described in terms of classical allusions. The allusions are all provided from his perspective, thereby adding to illuminate his character. When Charles thinks about being seen with Sarah, he uses a Latin phrase: "However he was seen with Sarah, it must be in flagrante delicto" (FLW 161). The allusion is a legal term that can be translated as "caught in the act"; it illustrates that Charles tries to cover himself in terms of Victorian decorum, because as a Victorian gentleman he is not supposed to be seen in the presence of a fallen woman.

Charles still does not refrain from thinking of Sarah. His awareness of and his feelings for her are described in a classical allusion which clearly illustrates the effect she has on him. Charles does, however, not express the words of the love poem to Sarah. They merely occur in his mind, as if being part of his inner being:

But there came on him a fleeting memory of Catullus: 'Whenever I see you, sound fails, my tongue falters, thin fire steals through my limbs, an inner roar, and darkness shrouds my ears and eyes.' Catullus was translating Sappho here; and the Sapphic remains the best clinical description of love in European medicine (FLW 216-7).
Catullus is regarded as one of the greatest Roman love poets, while Sappho was a Greek love poetess. Catullus uses an ode written by Sappho to describe the feelings which the presence of his beloved Lesbia arouses in him, still in the early days of their relationship (Fordyce, 1961:218). What better words than those from classical love poetry could be used to describe Charles’s feelings for Sarah? Their relationship is compared to the Catullus-Lesbia relationship, which immediately characterises it; in this way the Charles-Sarah relationship is ranked among the famous and almost immortal love stories.

The name Lesbia was adopted from Sappho, who wrote the above-mentioned love poem to a girl from the island Lesbos, though the name does not occur in the original poem (Macnaghten, 1899:10). Catullus hints at the Sapphic influence on his work by using the name Lesbia; Lesbia, when used by Catullus, refers to Clodia, the wife of Q. Metellus Celer, a very influential woman of her time, with whom Catullus had fallen in love. However, the relationship did not survive. This is probably an indication of the outcome of the Charles-Sarah relationship.

Later, while going abroad and actually waiting for Sarah to show up somewhere, Charles’s emotional detachment from his immediate situation is illustrated through a classical reference:

If he did not remain quite celibate technically ... he remained so emotionally. He performed (or deformed) the act with a kind of mute cynicism, rather as he stared at ancient Greek temples or ate his meals (FLW 367).

In his state of being deserted, an ancient Greek temple appears not to mean anything to him. This could suggest a degree of detachment from his classical background, though an integral part of him, as he is detached from his emotions.
A person who strengthens Charles’s knowledge of the classics is Dr Grogan, who is also to a great extent characterised by his own use of classical allusions. He is a learned Victorian gentleman and a friend of Charles, who plays a pivotal role in the life of the latter and in influencing his character, and who is the person whom Charles consults for advice.

When we meet Dr Grogan, he is quoting a Latin phrase to Charles:

> Now for you, sir, I prescribe a copious toddy dispensed by my own learned hand ... Doctor’s orders, you know. Dulce est desipere, as the poet says. It is sweet to sip in the proper place (FLW 131).

The allusion is taken from an ode by Horace (IV, xii, 28), dealing with the passing of winter and the returning of spring, which proposes a drinking party (Page, 1950:68). The universal theme of the ode (and of his other odes) can be summarised as the brevity of life which calls for frivolity, where desipere is translated as "to cast off seriousness" (Page, 1950:71). Dr Grogan is indeed suggesting to Charles to relax, to have a drink and, by implication, to enjoy life without fretting too much about his feelings for Sarah as well as his obligation towards Ernestina. The classical allusion therefore successfully expresses Dr Grogan’s attitude towards life, which is also the message he wants to convey to Charles.

Further on, in the same conversation, Dr Grogan quotes Virgil, a poet from the Classical Age. One therefore assumes that Dr Grogan has a fair knowledge of the classics, applying it in his everyday life:

> 'Quisque suos patimur manes.' Which is Virgil, and mean something like 'We make our destinies by our choice of gods' (FLW 132).
These words are taken from the *Aeneid* (VI, 743). They are part of Anchises’ speech in which he tries to explain the spiritual world to his son, Aeneas. The writer’s translation of the above-mentioned allusion (category three) is rather a free one, where the words literally mean the following: "Each one of us endures our spirits of the underworld" and, as a result, the power they have over our lives. The translation, ascribed to Dr Grogan, therefore implies that a person has freedom of choice over his destiny, whereas the literal translation indicates that a person’s power over his destiny lies not in the choice, but in the living with the choice that has been made for him (by the gods themselves?). The latter belief suits the Classical mind, whereas the former illustrates a degree of development in the Victorian mind, that could eventually realise in a reaching out for a freedom of choice, which had not been part of the traditional Victorian mind. This allusion has the function of enhancing the theme of freedom, a very significant theme in the novel. Fowles therefore uses classical allusions not only for characterisation, but also to emphasise the themes.

When Charles eventually informs Dr Grogan of his plans to marry Sarah, the doctor comments in Latin: "Then amen. *Jacta alea est* ... I wish you well on your march away from the Rubicon" (FLW 342). The Latin words mean "What will be, will be," or literally "The die has been cast"; in other words, Charles’s destiny has been determined for him, to a certain extent as a result of his own actions. The allusion, according to tradition, refers to Julius Caesar’s words uttered while crossing the Rubicon and successfully invading Italy (Grant, 1974:109-114). Is Charles’s march away from Ernestina to Sarah going to be as successful as that of Caesar? This allusion links up with Dr Grogan’s interpretation of the Virgil quotation, namely that, to a certain extent, man determines his own destiny according to his choice of gods (FLW 132), and has to accept the consequences of this choice.
In the light of Dr Grogan’s interpretation it will be interesting to see whether the different characters have actually made their choice of gods. These gods do not necessarily imply classical gods, but can be anything a character chooses to live according to or up to, for instance a way of living or thinking. And, having made their choice, do the characters live according to it? In this regard it is important to remember "the fact that every Victorian had two minds" (FLW 319). On the one hand the typical Victorian was, like Charles, constantly struggling to escape from being simple-minded about life and the Victorian way of doing things; on the other, however, these very principles formed a safe cocoon in which the possibility to challenge and evaluate them did not even occur to the real Victorian.

Sarah chooses not to identify with a god in the classical sense of the word. The god which she chooses is the freedom of not committing herself to a Victorian way of life, thereby constantly challenging Mrs Poulteney’s regulations (as an embodiment of Victorian principles) by wandering to the Undercliff alone. The mystery of her own character and staying true to it becomes her god, i.e. that she is neither to be understood nor explained; as a result, therefore, Sarah is not to be identified with a classical god or other specific figure from mythology.

Ernestina, in contrast, prefers to be a typically Victorian woman, chooses no classical god, but the god of the Victorian way of life, never even considering to challenge it: "I know to you I have never been anything more than a pretty little ... article of drawing-room furniture" (FLW 327). The questioning side of the Victorian mind is absent and even discarded in Ernestina’s case, as illustrated through her dissociation from Helen of Troy and Cleopatra (FLW 327).
The character of Charles is an illustration of the two minds of the Victorian, not knowing which god to choose. At first the life of the typically Victorian gentleman seems to appeal to him; he is engaged to be married and will inherit his uncle’s fortune. In this way he can spend time on his interest, fossils, pay regular visits to the club and lead a contented life, relatively happily married, without thinking too much (typical of the one-sided Victorian mind). But suddenly Sarah comes along and disturbs his choice of gods by challenging his beliefs in the Victorian way of thinking when appealing to him, while being called "the French lieutenant’s woman". And his "other mind" gets into motion, trying to escape from his initial choice. This pictures the theme of evolution, as this side of Charles’s mind can be called the "Darwinian" mind.

In the end he gives preference to this escape route. Ironically, it does not give him liberty, because his mind is not free. Sarah’s freedom comes from within herself, whereas Charles seeks freedom in trying to find Sarah. She eventually becomes his god(dess), determining the course of his life until he finds her, and presumably after their meeting as well, whether they get married or not. Charles’s mind when he chooses Sarah as his god(dess), as the force which determines his life, can be described as that of a man who is not prepared to take responsibility for himself; Charles chooses to rely on Sarah for his happiness rather than finding it in himself or in his Victorian lifestyle. The irony is that Sarah is not willing to accept this role of goddess but rather prefers to stay true to her choice of freedom for herself above all else.

Dr Grogan seems to be the only Victorian person coping with his two minds, possessed by neither. Therefore he does not choose only one of these as his god, but most probably a synthesis between the two, which he then "worships" as it suits him best, depending on the situation in which he finds himself.
It seems that Dr Grogan’s remark about the choice of gods indeed holds true for these characters in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*: in the end they all live up to the choice which they have made for themselves; they all worship the god of their choice.

A further function of classical allusions in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* is that of historical contextualisation. This strongly links up with Loveday’s remark, namely that Fowles combines the historical novel and the self-conscious work of fiction (Loveday, 1985:48).

After Charles has broken off his engagement to Ernestina, her father wants him to sign a statement of guilt. In the discussion concerning the statement several “classical” allusions occur, as an illustration of the English legal system. The classical allusions point to the fact that the English legal system is based on the Roman system and will, therefore, contain Latin phrases referring to certain concepts concerning the law. Part of a conversation between Charles and his lawyer reads as follows: “‘My guess is that you will be asked to make a *confessio delicti*.’ ‘A statement of guilt?’” (FLW 351). Charles’s answer indicates that he does in fact understand the Latin phrase, as one expects him to. Note that Charles’s remark also serves as an explanation to the reader who does not know Latin.

Fowles uses the character of Mrs Poulteney as an embodiment of the false and hypocritical Victorian values and beliefs. He then uses a second reference to Catullus, though a very indirect one, in a comment on Mrs Poulteney to mock the Victorian Age: 

I doubt if Mrs Poulteney had ever heard of the word ‘lesbian’; and if she had, it would have commenced with a capital, and referred to an island in Greece (FLW 137).
The island referred to is the island named Lesbos, on which the lyric poetess Sappho lived. This allusion may indirectly serve to enhance the love theme between Charles and Sarah, especially because Catullus and his Lesbia never married and his love for her seemed to be unrequited to some extent. However, it is implied that Mrs Poulteney would not have possessed all this knowledge. She would in any way certainly not have approved of the love affair, which seems to have been illegal, as the woman supposed to have been Lesbia had been married. Primarily, Mrs Poulteney would perhaps have thought about the island named Lesbos, but not about sexual orientation, enhanced by the allusion, also linked to the island. The writer is mocking Mrs Poulteney, her knowledge and her beliefs, illustrating that she does not have any understanding whatsoever for a situation outside her Victorian mind.

The views of the Victorian Age again come under scrutiny in the following example:

When we remember that Hardy was the first to try to break the Victorian middle-class seal over the supposed Pandora’s box of sex, not the least interesting (and certainly the most paradoxical) thing about him is his fanatical protection of the seal of his own and his immediate ancestor’s sex life (FLW 235). Pandora’s box, according to the myth, contained all the evils of the world; she opened it from curiosity and the evils flew out and infected the world (Guirand, 1959a:99). The moral of the story is that the Victorians believed the same would happen if the subject of sex would be brought into the open, as the comment on Hardy’s protection of his own family suggests. The irony of the matter is that many wrongs did go on, in spite of refraining from talking about the subject. By using this classical allusion the dichotomy in the Victorian beliefs is exposed.
The same applies to the following example where Charles and a friend are talking during a visit to the club:

'We're going to old Ma Terpsichore's, Charles. Worship at the muses' shrine, don't y'know?'

Charles stared at the smiling face of the bishop's son.

'Shrine?'

'So to speak, Charles.'

'Metonymia. Venus for puella,' put in the Bishop's son (FLW 262).

This is a concentrated classical allusion. "Ma Terpsichore's" most probably refers to a place where they could be entertained, as Terpsichore was the muse of lyric poetry and of the dance. The implication is, however, that sexual entertainment was also on the menu. "Worship at the muses' shrine" refers to the corrupt activities in such a place and "puella" means girl; in addition, Venus is the goddess of love. The picture of the Victorian gentleman's amusement at the end of a visit to the club is drawn in no uncertain terms. The double standards of the Victorian are exposed as well, especially by the reference to the bishop's son. The use of classical allusions adds to convey the message with shocking honesty and intensity, almost over-emphasising the matter, unlike the traditional subdued Victorian treatment of the subject. At the same time the allusions serve to veil the message in a truly Victorian manner, which creates a distance between reader and text. Consider, for example, the following description of the saloon in which the gentlemen find themselves a little later:

At the one end of the chandeliered room was a small stage hidden by deep red curtains, on which were embroidered in gold two pairs of satyrs and nymphs. One showed himself eminently in a state to take possession of his shepherdess; and the other had already been received. In black letters on a gilt cartouche above the curtains was written Carmina Priapea XLIV.
Velle quid hanc dicas, quamvis sim ligneus, hastam, 
oscula dat medio si qua puella mihi?
augure non opus est: 'in me' mihi credite, dixit
'utetur veris viribus hasta rudis'
(FLW 263) ('satyrs' and 'nymphs': my emphasis - TMB).

And as a footnote an explanation and fairly free translation are
offered:

It is the god Priapus who speaks: small wooden images of
him with erect phallus, both to frighten away thieves
and bring fertility, were common features of the Roman
orchard. 'You'd like to know why the girl kisses this
spear of mine, even though I'm made of wood? You don't
need to be clairvoyant to work that one out. 'Let's
hope,' she's thinking, 'that men will use this spear on
me - and brutally' (FLW 263).

Fowles undoubtedly - quite mischievously - exposes Victorian
sexuality by using a concentration of classical allusions.
Satyrs and nymphs (classical allusions in category two) represent
lust, as their description adequately illustrates. A satyr
belongs to a class of Greek or Roman woodland deities, whereas
a nymph is a very beautiful, so-called semi-divine maiden,
constantly falling victim to a satyr's lust. The function of
contextualisation (in this case illustrating the context of
Victorian England) is again illustrated here: by implication the
Victorian gentlemen behaved like satyrs on such visits. The
words and the presence of the god Priapus (category one - the
name of a classical god), being the god of fertility, serve
almost as an invitation and strongly confirms the picture drawn
by the satyrs and nymphs. By over-emphasising Victorian
sexuality through the use of such a concentrated classical
allusion, the writer succeeds in ridiculing the "myth" of
morality in the Victorian Age.
In the above paragraph the word *myth* has been used as it has been done several times in the novel - classical allusion, category two. The first use of the word *myth* is made with reference to Sarah:

... the figure stood motionless, staring, staring out to sea, more like a living memorial to the drowned, a figure from myth, than any proper fragment of the petty provincial day (FLW 9).

Because of the mystery attached to her character, it is significant that no name is used here to refer to Sarah, but only the word myth, describing her as a mysterious, perhaps godlike figure. No other clue is given to explain her, not even the name of a figure from myth.

The second time myth is used is in a reference to "the childish myths of a Golden Age" (FLW 63), in their role of offering explanations to the Victorian mind's obscure feelings. The Golden Age also refers to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (I), as he describes the golden age in the first book: "aurea prima sata est aetas" (I,89) - "Golden was the age first born" (Hill, 1985:16). The word childish discards these so-called myths as bedtime stories. The mere use of the word *myth* therefore does not add value to a story or belief as such. Consider, for example, the following passage:

One look at Millie and her ten miserable siblings should have scorched the myth of the Happy Swain into ashes; but so few gave that look (FLW 138).

The word myth is used here as a synonym for tale, a mere fictitious narrative. The last phrase of the extract again comments on the ignorance of the human being in general - by implication most people accept and believe all kinds of social myths without considering their truth and value, if any. The reference to "the myth ... that the world had been created at nine o'clock on October 26th, 4004 B.C." (FLW 139) confirms this statement. Myth in this context refers to a misguided belief and an explanation, most probably from an ancient source, about the origin of the world.
The word myth is further used when Charles meets Sarah the prostitute:

She made no advances after that first leading of his hand; she was his passive victim, her head resting on his shoulder, marble made warmth, an Etty nude, the Pygmalion myth brought to a happy end (FLW 273).

"The Pygmalion myth" refers to the mythological sculptor, Pygmalion, and is also taken from Ovid’s Metamorphoses (X,243-306): "Passionately devoted to his art, Pygmalion was only happy in the silent world of statues which his chisel had created" (Guirand, 1959a:148). He made an ivory statue of a woman of extraordinary beauty, eventually falling in love with it; the statue could, however, not return his love. Venus took pity on Pygmalion and gave life to the statue, and his love was returned (Guirand, 1959a:148). At first Pygmalion had been very happy. One tends to ask whether this happiness lasted and if his creation brought him the happiness he thought it would have. A child was the result of the union. In a translation of Ovid’s Metamorphoses, the following lines provide an answer to the above questions:

... were he childless/ ... he might have been happy
... don’t believe this is true; or, if you do, believe also its punishment; if nature allows such to happen ... (Boer, 1989:215, l. 297-304).

The implication of the Pygmalion myth seems to be that if the physical laws of nature are transgressed, even by a goddess, the result will eventually not be a happy one, just as Pygmalion was not equally happy with his live creation as with his statues. Charles turns to the lower-class prostitute to fulfil Sarah’s role; he acts according to the laws of the Victorian gentlemen society, but transgresses the boundaries between different classes in his society - in this instance the laws of nature. When he learns that the prostitute is also named Sarah, he realises that still he cannot replace "the French lieutenant’s woman" with a prostitute. He cannot "make" his own Sarah and
wish for her to become alive, as that will bring him neither happiness nor satisfaction. The situation in which Charles tries to find comfort is therefore exposed and doomed. The "happy end" (FLW 273) does not materialise; these words become ironic because for Charles the end of his encounter with the prostitute is rather disastrous. This may imply that, as a result, the Charles-Sarah relationship is doomed. If so, Fowles uses classical allusion as a foreshadowing device in terms of the outcome of the novel.

Another example of the use of the word myth directly relates to the Victorian age:

Perhaps one can find more colour for the myth of a rational human behaviour in an iron age like the Victorian than in most others (FLW 287). Myth here stands for legend or tale, as it did in the foregoing example: "The Faust myth is archetypal in civilized man" (FLW 362). The Faust myth refers to the story dealing with the character from Marlowe's play Doctor Faustus, who trades his soul to the devil and is unable to repent when realising his own evil. The reference here implies that deep inside every man lies a Faust, an evilness; the allusion therefore serves to characterise man in general.

Although used in different contexts and having different nuances, the overall meaning of myth in the novel is that of a tale, whether a folktale that has grown into a legend or belief and to which much importance in terms of meaning should be attached, or a tale that equals the significance of a bedtime story. The fact is that some general knowledge about these tales is implied. This leads to the conclusion that they all carry with them some kind of truth or value that should be remembered, even if the details of the tale are forgotten.
However, all of these so-called myths are used in a context where the reader is urged to question their value and authority. If there were gods intervening in the fate of the characters of those myths, the writer implies that those gods are either non-existent or powerless, unable to change the fate of his characters. The word myth is therefore indeed used to demystify myth, to offer a questioning perspective on the value and truth which myth is supposed to offer; myth as a received tale is consequently defamiliarised. These two functions clearly illustrate the postmodern character of the use of the word and concept myth in The French Lieutenant’s Woman.

The ultimate tale - and it is not a bedtime story - being told in The French Lieutenant’s Woman is that of the relationship between Sarah and Charles, i.e. a love story. It is, nonetheless, not a usual story with a happy ending. The difference lies in the fact that, first, the writer offers no definite outcome to this relationship, and, secondly, he actually prepares the reader for not ending his tale in the traditional happy way. And no god - no deus ex machina - intervenes to carry Sarah to Charles on “a magic carpet”; the characters are left on their own to work out their fate. This illustrates that the dominant theme of the novel, i.e. freedom of choice, is also enhanced by the use of classical allusions. The fact that Sarah’s character stays a mystery does, however, add a mystical colour to the novel.

The meaningful use of classical allusions in the novel succeeds in enhancing, and supporting, the characterisation of the main characters as well as the contextualisation and exposing of the Victorian Age and the most significant themes. The constant occurrence of these allusions throughout the novel contributes to its being a historical, an experimental and a self-conscious work of fiction.
The French Lieutenant’s Woman is not a mythological novel; Fowles does not use one single myth as a parallel, neither does he re-narrate an acknowledged myth. He uses myth as a means of literary allusion to add to the meaning of the novel. Different classical allusions are used to reach this goal, so that no specific motif is singled out as the mythological motif.

Fowles indeed uses the concept of myth to comment on both the Victorian and the postmodern eras, as well as on the traditional concept of myth. He also illustrates that fiction - myth - is woven into all, especially through Sarah’s telling her life story to Charles. Fowles does not offer the reader a new or alternative myth, though, but the choice to create, to fictionalise, to tell one himself, but still within the framework of the text. This corresponds with the multiple endings being offered to the reader, also indicating that he has to select one himself. A logical question to consider is whether the same use of classical allusions applies to The Magus.
In John Fowles' *The Magus*, one of the central metaphors is the vortex myth (*Fowles' The Magus: The Vortex as Myth, Metaphor, and Masque, 1980)*.

The revised version of *The Magus* was published in 1977, eight years after *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Parallels between these novels exist with regard to the themes as well as the use of classical allusions. Where the allusions in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* are used mainly for characterisation, contextualisation and to emphasise the themes, the allusions in *The Magus* additionally describe the setting as well as the love relationships that develop in the story. The setting in the latter actually forms part of the classical allusions, which is not the case in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*.

According to Fowles (*TM* 10), the alternative title of *The Magus* is "The Godgame". This is a result of his interest in the game, inherited, according to McDaniel (1985:31), from the Greek philosopher Heraclitus. In his philosophical work *The Aristos* Fowles indeed states (1993:158): "Games are far more important to us, in far deeper ways, than we like to admit". It will also be determined whether the use of classical allusion in *The Magus* supports the game played in the novel.

The alternative title illustrates a postmodern characteristic of playfulness which, though the game is serious, is present throughout the novel. A strong questioning attitude also exists, portrayed by Nicholas's quest for the facts behind the mystery. The myth Conchis creates draws the attention to the process of fiction-making, another postmodern characteristic of the novel.

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Also as a result of the myth, the boundary between the real and the illusionary is blurred, e.g. the use of Doppelgängers to confuse Nicholas. The open-endedness of the novel also adds to its postmodern characteristics. How does the use of classical allusions fit in with the postmodern character of the novel?

As will be illustrated by the plot summary, one of the main features of The Magus is its tripartite structure. The use of classical allusions ties in with this structure, illustrating a development in Fowles's use of classical allusion, as is shown in the discussion. An important structural device is the setting and it has to be determined whether the use of classical allusion also ties in with this device. Because of the tripartite structure, the reader will notice the change in setting: London - Greece - London, which may add to his awareness of classical allusions used in the text.

Three main themes - the quest for identity, the love story and the godgame - emerge as the basis of the plot. The first two themes also appear in The French Lieutenant’s Woman, though in a somewhat different form; they can be called universal themes, because of their reappearance in literature. The main character, Nicholas Urfe, struggles to find his real identity. In this struggle he becomes involved in relationships with two women. To add to his struggle, Nicholas also becomes involved in a mysterious situation - the godgame - derived from "the alternative title" (TM 10), in which the writer intended to display a series of masks representing human notions of God. The accent in the novel is slightly different from this intention, but a godgame is still played by Conchis. The "vortex myth" referred to in the epigraph forms part of this godgame in which Nicholas becomes involved.
Part I provides the background: Nicholas is a young English teacher who, at the beginning of the story, is staying in London where he falls in love with an Australian girl named Alison. Meanwhile he succeeds in getting a teaching job on the Greek island of Phraxos; his going to Phraxos puts a temporary end to their relationship as well as to the first part of the novel.

The setting of Part II is the island of Phraxos. Nicholas becomes involved in a mystery after having met an old man called Conchis. In trying to sort out the mystery, he falls in love with a girl named Lily (later called Julie), an acquaintance of Conchis. However, Nicholas and Alison meet in Athens and soon after that, Nicholas gets word that Alison has committed suicide. This adds to his struggle of finding out the truth about himself and the situation in which he is involved. At the end of Part II Nicholas finds himself on his way to Italy after having received a hint that Alison is still alive.

In Part III Nicholas returns to London both to find Alison and finally solve the enigma surrounding Conchis and the mystery. The novel ends in an open-ended way: Nicholas finds Alison, but whether they are going to start a life together is up to the reader to decide. The mystery is also partially solved; it is again up to the reader to decide whether this is satisfactory.

The importance of the setting in the novel, emphasised because the school on the island of Phraxos is placed in an almost mythological setting, has been mentioned. This chapter sets out to determine whether Fowles sets the scene for a myth about to be written or told, why Greece is used as a setting and how this ties in with the use of classical allusions in the novel.

The first classical allusion in Part I indeed describes the setting, whereas no classical allusions are used when Nicholas meets Alison and a relationship develops. The setting is therefore immediately enhanced. Nicholas personifies Greece, a country forming a central part of the ancient classical world:
What Alison was not to know ... was that I had been deceiving her with another woman ... The woman was Greece (TM 41).

This is confirmed when Nicholas arrives in Greece, confessing: ... I fell totally and for ever in love with the Greek landscape from the moment I arrived. But with the love came a contradictory, almost irritating, feeling of impotence and inferiority, as if Greece were a woman so sensually provocative that I must fall physically and desperately in love with her, and at the same time so calmly aristocratic that I should never be able to approach her ... None of the books I had read explained this sinister-fascinating, this Circe-like quality of Greece; the quality that makes it unique; ... in Greece landscape and light are so beautiful ... that the relationship is immediately love-hatred, one of passion (TM 51).

Greece is not only described as a woman but also identified with a Greek goddess named Circe. The use of the name of the goddess is a classical allusion in category one. Circe was a goddess of degrading love, known for her evil spells and enchantments (Guirand, 1959a:162). It seems as if Greece has already succeeded in enchanting Nicholas, true to its so-called Circe-like quality, but in a positive sense, i.e. in the sense of fascinating him. In this instance the classical allusion is used to characterise the country and to illustrate its effect on Nicholas: he already strongly identifies with Greece, as an answer to his need for, as he calls it, "a new mystery" (TM 21). The use of typical Greek names such as Hymettus and Peloponnesus in the description of the setting immediately adds to the perception of being in ancient Greece (TM 50). The mere use of these names does not necessarily mean that they are classical allusions. They do, however, add to the description of an atmosphere of ancient Greece, because the names are also those of places from Greek mythology.
The ancient character of the setting is enhanced by the following comment from Nicholas about the school where he is teaching:

To begin with there was something pleasantly absurd about teaching in a boarding school ... only a look north from where Clytemnaestra killed Agamemnon (TM 53).

Agamemnon, a Greek warrior in the Trojan War, was the king of Mycenae and husband of Clytemnaestra. In his long absence she had taken a lover, Aegisthus, and they killed Agamemnon on his return most probably because of Agamemnon’s willingness to sacrifice their daughter, Iphigenia. However, according to one version of the myth, Iphigenia was saved by the goddess Artemis, providing a deer to take the place of Iphigenia, who became a priestess of Artemis at Tauris (Field, 1977:116; Guirand, 1959a:132). After having killed Agamemnon, Clytemnaestra and Aegisthus ruled at Mycenae (Field, 1977:131; Howe & Harrer, 1947:14-15). Nicholas uses this reference to illustrate that, although centuries later, the setting still possesses the quality of creating an awareness of the mythological activities that took place on the island long ago. Owing to its classical atmosphere the setting can be called classical.

Most of the classical allusions in *The Magus* are used against the background of the classical setting (i.e. the Greek island of Phraxos) and are therefore connected with the mystery of which Nicholas becomes part and at the same time tries to solve. Using Greece as a setting links up with the use of classical allusions and serves to enhance the atmosphere of mystery on the island. Classical allusions are actually part of life on Phraxos, as Nicholas illustrates with his reference to the setting of the school. The setting as such enhances and supports the use of classical allusions in *The Magus*. The fact that, on his return to London, Nicholas uses classical allusions, which has not been the case during his first stay there, proves this statement. He has been changed by the classical setting to such an extent that classical allusions have become part of his life, even after he has left Phraxos and returns to London. It is clear, therefore,
that classical allusions are used in this novel as a structural device to support the tripartite structure of the novel.

Another significant function of classical allusions, as has been the case in The French Lieutenant's Woman, is to aid characterisation. Nicholas is characterised by classical allusions, identifying himself with different figures from mythology and the Classical Age. Nicholas's identification and association with figures from mythology serve to add to the sense of his trying to find his own identity. He does not stick to the same figure from mythology, but rather changes his mind to suit the particular circumstance. Each of these classical allusions illustrates a characteristic either of Nicholas or of his situation in the specific context.

In Part I, Nicholas likens himself to "Sciron, a mid-air man" (TM 59) when experiencing inner conflict. Nicholas seemingly has no place on the island and consequently senses that he does not fit into his own age; neither is he able to get back into a previous one. Sciron (a figure from Greek mythology) forced travellers to wash his feet, kicking them into the sea to be destroyed by a monster if they did not obey him (Field, 1977:90). However, Nicholas does not find himself in a situation where he can "kick" around other people or force them to obey him. There are no people to "kick" around; he is completely alone at this stage, as even Alison's letters have stopped. If he should meet anybody, Nicholas's conduct should be to befriend the person rather than to kick him around. The contrast between the situation in which Nicholas finds himself and that of Sciron illustrates a use of a classical allusion: only the point of agreement is alluded to, i.e. the "mid-air" point in this instance. The rest of the allusion, because of the contrast, serves to enhance Nicholas's predicament. Though he may be a "mid-air" man, as Sciron was, he does not possess the rest of Sciron's characteristics, and still has to sort out his own situation. Being associated with a figure from mythology does not do him any good: his situation has not changed.
Still finding himself in a state of confusion, Nicholas uses the well-known expression *cogito, ergo sum* in an amended way to describe his state of mind: "Not *cogito*, but *scribo*, *pingo*, *ergo sum*" (TM 60). This literally means: "Not I think, but I write, I paint, therefore I exist". These words were used by the French philosopher Descartes (1596 - 1650) and do not belong to the Classical Age. He used them to express his belief concerning the existential question about what man can be sure of in life. The words as used by Fowles form a variation of category four (the use of Latin and Greek words), because the exact Latin words are used, although not by a person belonging to the Classical Age. The expression still serves to describe Nicholas, referring to his writing poetry, trying "to express his disengagement between his existence and nothingness" (TM 60).

Adding to his existential crisis, Nicholas contracts a sexually transmitted disease, as a result of which he has to remain celibate for a few months. Nicholas identifies himself with "a Catullus without talent forced to inhabit a land that was Lesbia without mercy" (TM 62). This refers to the relationship between the Roman poet Catullus and Lesbia also referred to in The French Lieutenant's Woman. Lesbia is a pseudonym for the woman with whom he was in love, but after a while did not return his love and eventually treated him in a cold-hearted way.

The classical allusion enhances the fact that Nicholas, who has to remain celibate while ill, describes himself as untalented. Nicholas's celibacy is contrasted to Catullus' writing talent; though refused by Lesbia, he was still able to write. Her refusal actually inspired him to write, because he found comfort in his writing, i.e. his talent. For Nicholas there is no comfort, because he seemingly has no talent.
This allusion applies to more than the situation discussed above, as Nicholas experiences rejection throughout the novel. First Alison rejects him by stopping her letters to him, and on a weekend which they spend together she rejects his sexual advances. Then he meets Lily and eventually he is rejected by both her and her sister, after having been sexually accepted by both of them. To a certain extent Conchis also rejects Nicholas, treating him as a friend initially and later as some kind of prisoner. Nicholas therefore never really copes with rejection, because no talent helps him to deal with his identity crisis and the relationships he encounters.

The next person to whom Nicholas likens himself is another figure from Greek mythology, namely Orestes (TM 79). Nicholas does this while trying to escape from clouds of black flies on a hot day. Orestes was the son of Agamemnon (who was one of the leaders in the war against Troy and who was killed by Clytemnaestra) (Field, 1977:120); Orestes was saved from the war by his elder sister, Electra. When he grew up Apollo instructed him to avenge his father by killing his mother and her lover. For these killings Orestes was condemned to death, but fled with his sister Iphigenia in the role of Artemis’ priestess after she had recognised him by chance. They returned to Greece together (Field, 1977:131-132, Howe & Harrer, 1947:195).

The tale of Orestes is significant in terms of Nicholas’s situation on the island. Nicholas becomes captivated by Conchis and the mystery surrounding the activities on Conchis’s estate, Bourani. There are no elder sisters or Greek gods to free him, but the outcome of Orestes’ situation can nevertheless be seen as a prediction that Nicholas will be captivated, but will also eventually be freed from what keeps him on the island. This allusion occurs at the beginning of Part II and serves to set the atmosphere for the mystery and Nicholas’s involvement in it.
The reference to Orestes establishes a link between the earlier reference to Agamemnon's killing, referred to in the discussion on the setting, and the allusion discussed above, because of the family ties between Orestes and Agamemnon. The link illustrates two important things, the first being that Fowles uses classical allusions from mythology that can be linked to the setting he has chosen for his novel, and the second, viz. that the allusions are not simply chosen at random, but bear relation to each other.

It is, however, significant that all the above-mentioned classical allusions describing the setting and Nicholas’s character occur before he meets Conchis, the mysterious old man living on the island, who befriends the young teacher as he has apparently befriended Nicholas’s precursors (TM 569-575). Conchis is therefore not the key to introducing the classical allusions when presenting the mystery in which Nicholas gets involved and which he struggles to solve.

After his meeting Conchis, Nicholas still identifies with, or is characterised by, classical allusions, especially when coming into contact with women. He enters into two relationships: one with Alison and the other with Lily/Julie. The relationships, which deal with the love theme, are equally well characterised by classical allusions. The following allusions all appear in Part II, which enhances the mythological setting of the island.

The relationship between Nicholas and Lily forms an integral part of Nicholas’s experience of the mystery on the island - the so-called "site for myths" - and it is therefore not surprising that this is illustrated by quite a few classical allusions. Nicholas meets Lily, apparently a friend of Conchis, at Bourani.

Several times during meetings between Nicholas and Lily (secretly arranged by Conchis), the statue of Poseidon is mentioned (TM 215,226,325,457,564). The repeated meetings suggest a development in their relationship. The allusion to Poseidon links with Lily’s reference to Neptune (TM 198), as Poseidon was
the Greek god of the sea, called Neptune by the Romans. He both lived in the sea and controlled it. He was Zeus’ brother and is also mentioned as the probable father of Theseus. Because of the control he had over the sea he was able to assist sailors and his assistance to both Theseus and Odysseus is mentioned (Field, 1977:14, 89, 138; Howe & Harrer, 1947:230-1). As does the use of the name Neptune, the use of the name Poseidon once more serves to enhance the setting. The characters on the island, Nicholas in particular, are to a certain extent exposed to a power greater than themselves, as the ancient sailors were at the mercy of the god of the sea. This power is realised in the person of Conchis, who eventually determines almost every move of Nicholas as well as the situations to which he is exposed, of which the following scene is a good example.

During a visit to Bourani, urged by Lily, Nicholas watches what he later calls "the Apollo scene" (TM 191) and what later becomes significant in terms of their relationship. He describes the scene as follows:

With a new shock I realized that it was that [figure] of an absolutely naked man ... tall, well-built, well cast to be Apollo. His eyes seemed exaggeratedly large, as if they had been made up. On his head there was a glint of gold, a crown of leaves; laurel-leaves ... It struck me after a few seconds that his skin was an unnatural white, almost phosphorescent in the weak beam, as if his body as well as his face had been painted (TM 185).

This allusion appears in the context of a play being performed. Nicholas confirms this: "I just wish I had a programme" (TM 185). When asking Lily who the person is, she answers: "My brother ... That is in the other world" (TM 185). It becomes clear that she is referring to the world of mythology. If Apollo is her brother, she must be Artemis, as is proved by the following:
I also did a little research on Artemis. She was Apollo's sister in mythology; protectress of virgins and patroness of hunters. The saffron dress, the buskins and the silver bow (the crescent new moon) constituted her standard uniform in classical poetry. Though she seemed permanently trigger-happy where amorous young men were concerned I could find no mention of her being helped by her brother. She was 'an element in the ancient matriarchal cult of the Triple Moon-goddess, linked with Astarte in Syria and Isis in Egypt.' Isis, I noted, was often accompanied by the Jackal-headed Anubis, guardian of the underworld, who later became Cerberus (TM 249).

Nicholas is the speaker. Because Lily has played Artemis in the Apollo scene, he finds it necessary to learn more about the Greek goddess (Roman: Diana). He does, however, not call Lily Artemis, because she is not "his Artemis"; she is Artemis, i.e. the virgin goddess, only when she is an actress. This classical allusion is significant because it illustrates the double role which Lily plays throughout the novel, viz. the innocent virgin on the one hand and the eternal liar on the other. The following classical allusion enhances this statement very well:

Something carried me back to that night incident when she played Artemis; to the strange whiteness of Apollo's skin. The dull gold crown of leaves. An athletic body, living marble. And I knew then that Apollo and Anubis had been played by the same man. That night, when she had left ... the next day's innocent virgin on the beach ... Artemis, Astarte, eternal liar (TM 539).

What we find here is an example of syncretism, i.e. the merging of two or more religions of which the elements influence each other mutually (Ringgren, 1969:7). The Greeks worshipped the goddess Artemis; the Romans worshipped her as Diana (Howe & Harrer, 1947:39). As becomes clear from the extracts, the gods
and goddesses were not worshipped in isolation. Often they were associated with a god/goddess from another religion with more or less the same function (e.g. Artemis - linked with Astarte, the Phoenician goddess of fertility and erotic love, and with Isis, an Egyptian goddess who became very popular among the Romans (Field, 1977:185)). The reference to these goddesses ties in with the use of Doppelgängers, which serves to confuse Nicholas while he tries to find the one true goddess, whom he later identifies as Ariadne. The various goddesses are therefore used as part of the godgame to complicate the mystery for Nicholas.

The reference to Artemis/Astarte/Isis/Diana illustrates a postmodern use of myth, which is also reflected in the use of the character Lily/Julie as part of the mystery in the novel. The presence of the Doppelgänger portrays the uncertainty that prevails in postmodern thought and adds to the riddle Nicholas tries to unravel. The various goddesses, embodying different cultural representations of the same figure, additionally depict the choice postmodern man has - he can choose whichever he prefers.

Apollo is also part of the above-mentioned riddle. Who was Apollo besides being Artemis' brother in the world of mythology? Apollo was the son of Zeus, was called the "golden youth", and was very beautiful and strong. He could almost get away with murder, such were his charms. Being a patron of music and archery, he usually carried a lyre or bow. He also carried a laurel wreath as a reminder of a girl named Daphne (whose story is told in Ovid's Metamorphoses (1:452-567)), whom he wanted as his wife and who was turned into a laurel tree by Mother Earth to protect her from him (Field, 1977:38, 57, 59, 61; Howe & Harrer, 1947:32).
It is evident from Nicholas’s research that an analogy exists between Apollo and Anubis, the latter being the one to protect the underworld, associated with Cerberus, the multi-headed, frightful hound that guarded the gates of the underworld (Field, 1977:85). This may imply a two-sidedness of the character of Apollo or of the actor himself. It links up with the duality concerning Lily/Julie and the situation on the island as such. Evidently the actor in the Apollo scene represents this mythological Apollo, as is proved by the golden laurel crown he wears. In this context Apollo is not used to characterise a person, but an act is being performed in which he is the main character. Because the other characters do not have mythological names, one assumes that they support Apollo’s role. Three other figures appearing in the Apollo scene, namely a nymph, a satyr and a goddess (TM 186-187), illustrate this statement. Although they are not given mythological names at this stage, their presence strongly adds to the mythological colour of the act, because they are mythological figures, albeit being impersonated by ordinary people, as is the case with Apollo. One could go as far as to say that a mythological act is performed, as part of the initiation rites associated with the ancient gods, as the following extract also indicates.

The function of the scene in the novel is largely summarised by Nicholas after he has watched it:

Plainly it was an attempt at the sort of 'scandalous evocation' mentioned in Le Masque Français. At that level I could laugh at it ... But more and more I smelt some nasty drift in Conchis's divertimenti ... I had an idea that sooner or later I was going to be asked to perform as well, that this was some initiation to a much darker adventure that I was prepared for, a society, a cult, I didn’t know what (TM 188).
The scene serves as a forecast to Nicholas’s situation on the island, with particular reference to the development and outcome of the relationship between himself and Lily. In the context of this relationship a parallel can be drawn between Nicholas and Apollo; Nicholas has been unsuccessful in his relationship with Alison, as Apollo had been with Daphne. And it seems as if the gods are not going to bless the relationship with Lily either - so to speak. In the scene emphasis is placed on sexuality, which reflects a characteristic of Nicholas’s relationships both with Alison and Lily, Lily in this case being identified not with the virgin Artemis, whom she only represents when pretending to be the innocent virgin, but rather with Astarte, the goddess of erotic love. The scene furthermore serves to characterise the attitude of Conchis and his friends towards Nicholas - a clear dichotomy is present in all their acts. Unfortunately, Nicholas realises this when it is too late, only when their experiment is almost complete. The Apollo scene is therefore extremely functional in the context of the novel as a whole, as well as in terms of the Nicholas-Lily relationship, which, at this stage, is not over yet.

Nicholas suspects Lily of having played the nymph in the Apollo scene, trying to captivate him, and questions her on her drama background. She reacts: "I am Astarte, mother of mystery". He answers that he is an atheist; she says that she will then have to teach him faith. "In mystification?" he asks (TM 210).

Lily identifies herself with Astarte, seemingly a moon-goddess (TM 249). It is significant that a relationship between Astarte and Adonis (Nicholas is called Adonis by Conchis (TM 147)) existed (Guirand, 1959a:89). This indicates a relationship between Lily and Nicholas. The word mystification links up with mystery in the first quotation and illustrates yet again the situation in which Nicholas finds himself and is still trying to figure out. At the end of this meeting with Lily Nicholas concludes:
I had also a return of that headlong, fabulous and ancient sense of having entered a legendary maze; of being infinitely privileged. There was no one in the world I wanted to change places with, now that I had found my Ariadne, and held her by the hand. I knew already that all my past relationships with girls ... could now be justified. It was always to be this, and something in me had always known it (TM 215).

The use of the name Ariadne places this classical allusion in category one. She was the daughter of King Minos, who lived on the island of Crete; she was in love with Theseus (an Athenian hero) who came to kill the Minotaur, a monster living on the island. With the help of Ariadne he succeeded to enter, and escape from, the labyrinth in which the monster was kept, taking Ariadne with him. Afterwards he tired of her. Dionysus found her and she bore him several children (Field, 1977:31,32; Howe & Harrer, 1947:38).

Nicholas regards Lily as his Ariadne, his princess. He believes that she is the one to help him unravel the labyrinth of events on the island. She does, however, not give him anything that could be associated with the thread and sword Ariadne gave to Theseus to ensure a successful mission. In Nicholas's viewpoint Lily does accept the role of Ariadne when he initially thinks she is going to assist him in trying to unravel the labyrinth of the godgame. Furthermore, the failure of the relationship between Theseus and Ariadne may serve as a forecast to the outcome of the Nicholas-Lily relationship, which eventually does not survive. Also significant are Nicholas's first words in the above quotation; they convey the message that he finds himself in another sphere of existence, a mythical sphere.
Seemingly the Nicholas-Lily relationship does not have a future. At the back of Nicholas’s mind Alison still remains, though at some stage he thinks that she has committed suicide. This relationship is also pictured through classical allusions.

It has been mentioned that, in London, the relationship between Nicholas and Alison is not described in terms of classical allusions. However, when Conchis refers to Nicholas in terms of his relationship with Alison and Nicholas says that he has been turned down, he tells Nicholas: "You sound like Adonis" (TM 147). Adonis was known for his extraordinary beauty; as a baby he was given to Persephone, but when Aphrodite discovered his beauty she wanted him back. It was decided that Adonis should live with each of them for one-third of the year and on his own the other third. Aphrodite was not satisfied and used her magic girdle to capture Adonis during his free period. The girdle made everyone fall in love with her (Field, 1977:67).

The implication of this allusion is that Alison has a magic girdle, but when Nicholas turns to her he is rejected. The myth is demystified, because just the opposite happens to what is supposed. Nicholas’s failure in trying to get closer to Alison is enhanced. Note that the allusion does not mention Astarte at all or liken Alison to her. This further emphasises the failure of the relationship at this stage.

When Alison visits Athens and joins Nicholas on a hike, Nicholas’s longing when he sees her wrapped in a blanket is described in terms of a classical allusion:

... but somewhere in the recesses of my mind that little Priapus threw up his hands, and that other member of his body, and leered wildly (TM 268).
Priapus was the god of the creative power of nature in man, beast and plant. Wooden statues of him with the erect phallus were placed in gardens to represent his creative power (Howe & Harrer, 1947:233-234). The "other member of his body" refers to the phallus which, in the quotation, illustrates the lust and longing of Nicholas for Alison's body. The allusion therefore also illustrates the importance of sexuality in their relationship.

Later on, after having spent a less successful weekend with Alison, which ended in his being rejected, Nicholas again turns to a classical allusion to reveal his feelings:

I drafted a long letter, several letters, to her that evening, but none of them said what I wanted: that I hated what I had done to her, but couldn't do otherwise. I was like one of Ulysses' sailors - turned into a swine, and able now only to be my new self (TM 284).

Ulixes (English: Ulysses) is the Roman name for one of the great Greek warriors in the Trojan War, Odysseus. Odysseus did not return home immediately after the war was over. The episode referred to above is only one of many adventures that befell his party on their return journey. Odysseus and the survivors arrived at Circe's island, Aeaea; he sent his men to explore, upon which they were turned into pigs by Circe, as it was her habit to turn all visitors to her island into animals. Odysseus was then warned about her magic power and she did not succeed in changing him too. Circe invited him to stay as her companion and as a result bore him several sons; she also restored his men to humans. When he eventually started on his journey again, she also warned him about the next dangers he would have to face (Field, 1977:135-136; Howe & Harrer, 1947:186).
It seems as if Nicholas has to rediscover himself in a life of which Alison does not form part. In the allusion a sudden, unexpected metamorphosis is described. Like the sailors, Nicholas plays no active role in it - he is changed by Greece and all he has to do is to be available:

What I really wanted to say was that I was enchanted and that I had, absurd though it was, to be free to be enchanted (TM 284).

However, in contrast to the sailors, Nicholas is not immediately restored; the magic spell does not lose its power over him. Does this mean that Nicholas has a choice at all? It seems as if he has been enchanted before even realising what has happened. And he is only able to be his new self after having been changed. The process of change seems not to have had that great an impact as the fact that the change has taken place. Only now is he ready to enter a life in which he can be his new self. The implication is that this new self can only exist on the Greek island; the sailors were pigs only on the island - which may serve to prove this assumption.

Only towards the end of the novel, after having undergone the metamorphosis, Nicholas uses the name of a goddess to describe Alison: "Ashtaroth the Unseen, was Alison" (TM 576). This allusion twice appears in Part II: when Nicholas is introduced to the team of so-called scientists and just before his return to London after having learnt that Alison did not commit suicide. The latter allusion serves to explain that, in Nicholas's perception, Alison has been dead for quite a while - unseen - and now she is alive. The name does, however, not suit Alison that well; she is no longer a virgin, and Ashtaroth - the Phoenician-Canaanite name for the Roman Astarte - is regarded a virgin goddess. This is another example of syncretism: Fowles uses the non-classical name to illustrate the double-sidedness of the women in the novel, viz. Lily becomes Julie and Alison "rises from the dead". Neither is what she seems at first glance.
The first reference to Ashtaroth reads as follows:

The old man turned. 'Now - on my left - you see an empty box. But we like to think that there is a goddess inside. A virgin goddess whom none of us has ever seen, nor will ever see. We call her Ashtaroth the Unseen. Your training in literature will permit you, I am sure, to guess at her meaning. And through her at our, we humble scientists', meaning' (TM 513-514).

This allusion is obviously used to help Nicholas understand the motives of the scientists' experimentation with him. The motives are unfortunately not explained in the allusion.

When Nicholas at last meets Alison (London, Part III) he feels he is "sitting with a priestess from the temple of Demeter" (TM 662). Demeter was the Greek goddess of corn (Roman: Ceres), once a companion to Zeus. Her daughter Persephone was kidnapped and, blaming Zeus, Demeter left Olympus and went to live among humans; as a result famine broke out. When Persephone was later released, Demeter restored and introduced the growth of corn (Field, 1977:38,46,50-54; Howe & Harrer, 1947:78-79).

The function of the allusion is to illustrate that Alison is difficult to reach and is not going to open up her heart easily. The relationship between herself and Nicholas has to be restored and actually introduced from the start, just as the growth of corn had to be introduced by Demeter. Alison is not likened to Demeter herself, but to one of her priestesses. She therefore has no godly power and will only carry out commands from the goddess. This is proved by the fact that, some time previously, before having met Alison again, the mother of the twins, Mrs Lily de Seitas, is likened to Demeter by Nicholas:

I knew she was sitting there, in her corn-gold hair, and that she was like Demeter, Ceres, a goddess on her throne (TM 609).

At this stage she already knows where Alison - her priestess - is, and is about to tell her when to meet Nicholas.
At the conclusion of the novel, the following lines in Latin appear, referring to the outcome of the relationship between Nicholas and Alison:

\[
\text{cras amet qui numquam amavit} \\
\text{qui quique amavit cras amet}
\]

(TM 668, writer unknown),

meaning:

Let him love tomorrow who has never loved
And he who has loved, let him love tomorrow.

All there is to add is "... and may they live happily ever after". This classical allusion predicts a happy ending to the Nicholas-Alison story, or, in mythological terms: Ulysses has reached home and his Penelope after an adventurous journey.

But before reaching the happy ending Nicholas still has a mystery to unravel, a mystery that is becoming a myth to him in which he unconsciously plays a role. Nicholas calls the island of Phraxos - the classical setting - "a site for myths" (TM 66), a very suitable name indeed, because there is a mythological awareness on the island. In this reference the use of the word myth is an example of a classical allusion belonging to category two. Myth in this context refers to mystery or adventure. The use of this allusion creates an expectation in the reader as to whether the plot is going to turn out a mystery or an adventure. The allusion serves to unite the plot and the setting: yet another mystery is to take place on the island of Phraxos, not far "from where Clytemnaestra killed Agamemnon" (TM 53).

Nicholas does indeed confirm that he finds himself in a mythical sphere, a whirlpool of events, in which Conchis is the god determining the outcome of the myth:

I also felt, beneath my anger, a return of the old awe for what Conchis was doing. Once more I was a man in a myth, incapable of understanding it, but somehow aware that understanding it meant it must continue, however sinister its peripateia (TM 388).
Nicholas becomes a mythological figure in the "vortex myth" written and directed by Conchis. Though caught in the situation, Nicholas admires Conchis for what he is doing, just as the classical gods were admired for their supernatural powers. As myth is an alternative way of thinking, Conchis exposes Nicholas to, and involves him in, a myth, thereby expanding his process of thinking. Nicholas is eventually set free from the myth a different person than he was when he entered it.

In a scene where Nicholas is to enact judgement for what the group of so-called scientists have done to him and have exposed him to, he describes himself as "the Eumenides, the merciless Furies" (TM 524). The use of the name Eumenides, figures from mythology, puts this classical allusion in category one. The name Eumenides was used as a nickname for the three Furies, because it was unwise to speak of them directly. Eumenides means "the Kindly Ones" (Howe & Harrer, 1947:98). They were avengers of social crime, just, but fearful, both on earth and in the underworld. Their appearance was grim: they had dogs' heads, snakes' hair and bats' wings (Field, 1977:50). They were at times venomous and therefore without mercy (Podlecki, 1989:15), as is illustrated in the play Eumenides by Aeschylus.

The function of the use of the names Eumenides and Furies in this context is to portray Nicholas as a judge of what the group of scientists have done to him. He can choose either to be as cruel as the Eumenides, or not as cruel. The less cruel side is portrayed by the name Eumenides, which people used for the Furies when they wished them to be less cruel. Naturally Nicholas can only judge on earth - in this instance on the island - and not in the supernatural realm. The possibility also exists that the scientists can take revenge after having been punished, whereas the Eumenides were untouchable in this respect.
Still, Nicholas becomes a figure in the myth (mystery) created by Conchis. It is not possible for any human being to become a figure from classical mythology to the full extent. At the same time no possibility exists any more to write another classical myth. However, assuming that Conchis is the god playing a godgame, he is also the writer of the myth on the island, his own myth. In a conversation between Conchis and Nicholas following the Apollo scene Conchis makes two very significant remarks in response to Nicholas reminding him that he has not finished the story he has been telling. Conchis answers:

Let us jump to the climax. To the moment when these gods that neither of us believes in lost patience with such hubris (TM 190);

and:

Apollo will reign again. And Dionysus will return to the shadows from which he came (TM 191).

With these remarks Conchis introduces the shocking climax of the story, which deals with the life story of an acquaintance of his. Apollo is already known to us. Dionysus originally was a Greek god of fertility, but eventually became the god of wine together with Bacchus. He was also a son of Zeus and was often accompanied by satyrs. As a child he had either been torn to pieces or burned, but was reborn from Zeus' thigh. Though not married, he did have children by Ariadne. The myths associated with Dionysus are mostly concerned with people being driven mad and/or torn to pieces (Field, 1977:71, 73, 74; Howe & Harrer, 1947:38).

The gods are viewed by Conchis as entities to be reckoned with, almost in the same light as they were regarded in the Classical Age. The implication of his remarks is furthermore that the gods did intervene in the story he is telling, and not in a positive way. That is proved by the rest of the story: a château was burnt down and a person called de Deukans committed suicide.
The reference to the two gods Apollo and Dionysus in the context of the terrible end to the story serves to strengthen Conchis’s belief, namely that:

One day, many millennia from now, there will perhaps be a world in which there are only such châteaux, or their equivalents, and such men and women (TM 190-191).

He refers to the château that burnt down and de Deukans’s death (by implication as a result of madness, according to the Dionysus myth), as if he is predicting a world in which nobody will get hurt, be driven mad (cf. Dionysus) or direct his life only according to the rational, but rather be happy, beautiful and strong, experiencing also the artistic in life (cf. Apollo). The names of the gods are therefore used to outline the characteristics of this "ideal" or "mythical" world in which experience of the artistic is also important.

Then Conchis himself acts as a god, telling Nicholas how to indicate the outcome of his judgement over what the group of scientists have done to him, in the form of a classical allusion:

Now we ask you to do as the Roman emperors did and to raise or lower your right thumb. If you lower it, you will be released and free to carry out the punishment ... If you raise your thumb in the sign of mercy, you will ... be free of us for evermore (TM 524).

This allusion refers to the gladiatorial games where the Roman emperors were to indicate whether or not the defeated was to die. Whether the situation in which Nicholas has to carry out judgement is as serious as life or death is to be doubted. It is also an ironic situation, because Nicholas does not have the power which the emperors had. According to the passage he is still a prisoner in some way. His own freedom is also at stake and he is at his own mercy, as Lily is at his mercy. Nicholas has to say farewell to a difficult and sometimes unpleasant situation, but which had a major impact on his life. The
question at stake is what he will choose to do. Though Conchis has given him the right to carry out judgement, Nicholas cannot judge regardless of the consequences. He has to judge within the context of the godgame played by Conchis. His personal freedom is involved, whereas the emperors were not personally involved in the consequences of their judgements at the gladiatorial games. A parallel as well as a contrast is illustrated in this classical allusion.

Part of Conchis's godgame is the drama concept, which is akin to the mystery concept. Drama formed an integral part of the mystery rites: "things recited, ... things shown ... and things performed" (Nilsson, 1957:593). Amongst others, the following drama terms are used: "programme" (TM 185), "divertimenti" (TM 188), "climax" (TM 190) and "peripateia" (TM 388). The Apollo scene is also a very important part and illustration of Conchis's use of drama in his godgame. Initially Nicholas plays the role of the audience, with Conchis and his friends or acquaintances in the roles of the actors. But gradually Nicholas becomes involved and cannot withdraw himself from the events by which he is surrounded. The drama forms part of the greater mystery on the island. The events become so interwoven that Nicholas battles to distinguish between acting and real life, and between the actors and who they really are. This alludes to the difference between fiction and reality: Is there a clear-cut line between these two concepts? And is the mystery an act as such? In the light of the fact that not even Lily/Julie is who she seems to be and who Nicholas believes her to be, and that the "actors" appear to be a group of scientists experimenting with Nicholas, the answer to the last question appears to be yes, and this brings us to the concept of initiation.

Nicholas comments on the Apollo scene, saying that "this was some kind of initiation to a much darker adventure that I was prepared for, a society, a cult, I did not know what" (TM 188) (my emphasis - TMB). Nicholas has been initiated into Conchis's so-called mystery cult on the island, like the ancient devotees were
initiated into mystery cults. The main satisfaction offered by these cults was the privilege of a new birth for the individual, together with an air of deep mystery and most impressive rites (Willoughby, 1974:266-267). The godgame does indeed offer a deep mystery, and perhaps also a spiritual new birth for our identity-seeking hero. What is ironic, however, is that though he seems to have been initiated, Nicholas does not really become part of the cult, of the godgame. He stays the guinea-pig. But if the mystery is regarded as an initiation, the outcome is somewhat different: Nicholas is changed by what he experiences and it is a different Nicholas who goes back to London, determined to find Alison. In a sense he has received a new life. This links up with the metamorphosis undergone by Ulysses’ sailors, with whom Nicholas identifies at one stage.

To Nicholas the mystery appears to be a labyrinth that every person has to go through on his own, without assistance or warning. That is why he chooses not to inform his successor, just as his predecessors did not inform him of the mystery awaiting him on the island. His reaction illustrates his awe for the mystery he has been privileged to be part of, as well as that there seems not clear-cut end or solution to it. Myth is much more a life-like experience than a riddle which has to be solved:

I had also a return of that headlong, fabulous and ancient sense of having entered a legendary maze; of being infinitely privileged (TM 215).

This motif appears in the legend surrounding Theseus’ adventures on the island of Crete, as well as in Ulysses’ travels. It serves to enhance Nicholas’s association with these figures, as well as to provide a paradigm (if a labyrinth can at all provide a paradigm!) for the mystery on the island of Phraxos.
As Nicholas becomes involved, whirled up, enchanted and changed by the mystery in the novel, the reader may similarly get caught up in the current of events. The following questions come to mind in terms of the reader’s involvement: whether the novel casts a spell over the reader, whether he becomes a player in the so-called godgame and whether he is spiritually transferred to (ancient) Greece. These and relevant concepts are dealt with in the section on the reader in Chapter Six. It would furthermore be interesting to see how Fowles’s use of classical allusion develops in Mantissa, and whether the characters are as involved in the "myth" as Nicholas is in The Magus.
MANTISSA: A PARODY OF MYTH

*Mantissa* (1982) is the most teasing, self-consciously fictive of Fowles' novels to date. An autonomous, self-contained game ... which consists almost entirely of dialogue between a writer and his muse (Fowles' *Mantissa*: Funfair in Another Village (1985)).

Fowles's use of classical allusions reaches a climax in *Mantissa* with the choice of the muse Erato as the main character. Because *Mantissa* (1982) follows *The Magus* (1977) chronologically, the question of progress with regard to the use and function of classical allusions is important. The use of Erato is an appropriate development, contrasting distinctly with the characterisation in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and *The Magus*, where no figure from mythology becomes a character.

The presence of a mythological character brings to the fore an important issue, which, in fact, becomes the main theme of the novel: the relationship between reality and imagination, between fact and fiction, between real-life situations and acting. Reality and fact are questioned in the novel; this may induce the reader to question the very same concepts in real life. Furthermore, questioning these concepts in the novel results in the questioning of myth and of the role of the muse in postmodern literature: Is myth real or imaginary, fact or fiction, or simply part of a game between a writer and his muse? Does that game include the reader to some extent? Does myth still have a message to convey to postmodern man who reads a postmodernist novel in which a questioning attitude prevails and the meaning appears to be as blurred as Miles's mind? What is the role of the muse in this novel? Does she inspire the writing - or rewriting - of a postmodern myth? The main question is whether Fowles's use of classical allusions supports the theme and the related concepts. Because of the postmodern character of the

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novel, it is not always possible to separate the discussion in terms of the concepts dealt with; thus the discussion will to a certain extent be integrated.

The novel, being "self-consciously fictive", mainly consists of an encounter between Erato, the muse of love poetry, and Miles, who represents the writer. This suggests a strong metafictional element in Mantissa, which, in turn, again leads to the questioning of the relationship between fiction and reality. The writing process itself also comes under scrutiny.

Mantissa deals with a man named Miles Green, who suffers from amnesia. He finds himself in a hospital where he is treated by Dr Delfie in an attempt to regain his memory. Dr Delfie appears in the novel in the cast of different characters, among whom an important figure from mythology, viz. the muse Erato.

Mantissa is structured in five parts; this structure strongly reminds one of the convention of a drama consisting of five parts (Conradie, 1985:8). The first part comprises an intertext (a text within a text); each of Parts I to IV also starts with an extract. These extracts function as prologues, setting the tone of the novel and introducing the main theme(s) to the reader. This corresponds with The French Lieutenant’s Woman, where Fowles also uses intertextual references at the beginning of each chapter as an introduction, although not in the form of classical allusions. Furthermore the extracts serve as a reminder of the role of the chorus in Greek tragedy, where a song relevant to the action was sung between the various acts (Conradie, 1985:8). Whether the extracts fulfil this function in Mantissa has to be decided.
The extract introducing Part I gives a definition of the muses:
They were generally represented as young, beautiful, modest virgins, were fond of solitude, and commonly appeared in different attire, according to the arts and sciences over which they presided

Lemprière, under Musae (in M 7).

The extract can be regarded as a classical allusion providing general information which may serve to familiarise the postmodern reader with the concept of a muse. It can be presumed that this information would not have been provided, had it not been necessary for the reading of the novel. The indication is that muses play a significant role in the novel.

It is important to bear in mind the role of the muses in classical literature, if one is to assess their application in a postmodernist text:

[T]he muses were daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne born ... at the foot of Mt Olympus ... They were the goddesses who presided over arts and science. Originally they were three in number, ... [l]ater their number grew to nine... The [m]uses were closely associated with Apollo as the god of poetry, who was looked upon as their leader ... In ancient art they were represented as maidens clad in long flowing garments (Howe & Harrer, 1947:12-13);

and:

Originally the [m]uses ... seem to have been deities of springs. Afterwards they became goddesses of memory, and then of poetic inspiration ... [They] were for long merged in an indissoluble choir which presided over music and poetry in general. It was only later that a special province was assigned to each (Guirand, 1959a:126).
It becomes clear from the extracts quoted above that the function of the muses changed from having been deities of springs to being goddesses of memory and then to goddesses of poetic inspiration. This gives rise to the question whether their function can be adapted to suit the character of a postmodern context.

The reference to the muses brings to mind another, less obvious, classical allusion, i.e. the name Delfie, derived from the Greek Delphi, mentioned in the context of the muses as dancing girls coming from Delphi (M 74). This is a reference to Delphi - an important location in Greek mythology, as the temples of many gods were found there. The muses were also honoured there together with Apollo, with whose cult they were closely associated. Furthermore, the muses were guardians of the oracle of Delphi and had the gift of prophecy. The oracle lived there and was visited on many an occasion to give a prophesy on a matter of importance to the visitor (Field, 1977:19,62; Guirand, 1959a:92,127-128).

Dr Delfie becomes a postmodern oracle when attempting to cure Miles of his amnesia. The character changes undergone by Dr Delfie add to her possessing a mysterious, and perhaps mythological, nature. She changes from Dr Delfie into Nemesis (M 52) and then into the muse Erato (M 58), before "she becomes instant Dr Delfie again" (M 133). The changes also refer to the role of the muses as guardians of the oracle of Delphi. The oracle and the muses do not function separately. Finally, the character changes also illustrate a postmodern way of dealing with mythology and characters.

Cory is another classical allusion associated with the muses. It refers to the Corybantes, children of the muse Thalia and the god Apollo, and priests of Cybele, who venerated her with wild dances to music and noisy festivals (Guirand, 1959a:129; Howe & Harrer, 1947:67). Cory’s role in the novel is that of a nurse, Dr Delfie’s assistant, just as the Corybantes were the assistants or servants of Cybele.
The characters Dr Delfie and nurse Cory are introduced in Part I as if to prepare the way for Erato. As has been pointed out, Part II starts in the same way as Part I, although with two different extracts, in this case describing two individual muses. The extracts differ from the first, which provides general information, as they become more focused and specific:

**MNEMOSYNE**, a daughter of Coelus and Terra, mother of the nine [m]uses, by Jupiter, who assumed the form of a shepherd to enjoy her company; the word signifies memory. To Mnemosyne is ascribed the art of reasoning and giving suitable names to everything, so that we can describe them, and converse about them without seeing them

Lemprière, under Mnemosyne (in M 49);

and:

**ERATO**, presided over lyric, tender and amorous poetry; represented as crowned with roses and myrtle, holding a lyre in her hand, with a thoughtful, sometimes a gay and animated look; invoked by lovers, especially in April

Lemprière, under Erato (in M 49).

These two extracts are explicit classical allusions of both categories one and two; the first being the use of the names Mnemosyne and Erato, as they are figures from mythology, and the second being the descriptions of the two figures, dealing with concepts that form part of classical mythology. The significance of these extracts lie in their introducing two specific figures from mythology, namely the muse Erato and her mother Mnemosyne. Bearing in mind Miles's amnesia, it appears that Mnemosyne is meant to help him recover his memory and his ability to reason. Erato's function might also be to restore his memory and, in addition, perhaps his love life (Erato being the muse of love poetry). She might function further as the muse inspiring the writer, whom Miles represents.
The information provided in the extracts leads to the assumption that these characters are to play a distinctive role in at least Part II, or in the rest of the novel. An expectation is created as to the possibility of other figures from myth being treated in the same way: being introduced first and then taking up their role in the novel.

The extract introducing Part III is, however, more general in character than is the case with that which introduces Part II. The particular reference appropriately introduces Part III, commenting on the nature of divinities, as Part III starts with a divinity - "Mnemosyne’s daughter" (M 133), Erato. A broader context in which to deal with the muses is presented to the reader:

But what persuades many that it is difficult to prove the existence of divinity is this. They never raise their minds above things apprehensible to the senses, and are become so accustomed to not considering anything without first imagining it - a way of thinking applicable only to material objects - that all that is unimaginable seems to them unintelligible. This is manifest in the fact that even the philosophers hold it for a maxim in their schools that nothing can enter the mind that has not first passed through the senses - in which, however, it is certain that the concept of divinity has never found a place. It seems to me that those who try to use their imagination to understand this concept behave exactly as if they tried to use their eyes to hear sounds or smell scents ...

René Descartes, *Discours de la Méthode* (in M 131).
This epigraph stems from the French philosopher, Descartes (1596-1650), a true rationalist. His whole philosophy is dominated by his pursuit of certainty; he believed that anything which could be doubted had to be doubted. In the epigraph a glimpse is given of his "problem of perception", because "the senses have often been known to mislead" (Gibson, 1967:74-75). Man's senses are, according to Descartes, not to be trusted as a means of gaining knowledge about the world in which he lives. As proof he explains in the epigraph the difficulty of proving the existence of a divinity apprehensible by means other than the senses and imagination, as a divinity is something beyond the grasp of one's senses, an unimaginable entity. The significance of this extract in the context of the novel is proved when Miles falls into the trap of sensing, or "dreaming up", Erato. As a figure from mythology, she is incomprehensible through the senses, but Miles still understands her through his senses, which shatters his reality and that of the novel (Salami, 1992:196). This may serve as an implicit warning to the reader not to fall into the same trap: not to imagine that which does not exist, neither to simply ignore that which cannot be imagined, nor to trust his senses. The comment by Descartes serves to stimulate the reader to question his perception of the novel, which is done, among other ways, through his eyesight.

All the above-mentioned extracts contribute to the illusion of a five-act drama being performed, and set the tone for the mythological atmosphere of the novel and the significant role played by Erato throughout the plot. Ample information is provided for the reader to take notice of and to understand Erato's role. The extracts therefore tend to fulfil the function of the chorus in a classical drama: providing information, but also stimulating the reader (audience) to comment on what he experiences throughout the novel (play). It becomes clear that the reader, who here performs the role of the audience, is largely part of the so-called game between the writer and his muse, thereby reinforcing Fowles's postmodern adaptation of classical myth to serve a purpose in the postmodernist novel.
The inspiring effect of the muse is illustrated in the two extracts introducing Part IV:

Deux beaux yeux n'ont qu'à parler
Marivaux, La Colonie (in M 155);

and:

By God she can do the talking. She has seen more of the world than you and me, of course, that's the secret of it

Flann O'Brien, At Swim-Two-Birds
(in M 155).

In translation, the French words read: "Two beautiful eyes have only to speak" (Salami, 1992:194). This is another reference to the senses: eyes do not have the ability literally to speak. As a result of the Descartes epigraph, the effect of the muse, who seems to inspire almost merely by looking at the writer, is doubted. Because she has seen more of the world than the writer has, she still seems to be the inspiring power of creativity. Whether this is true in Mantissa has to be determined.

Apart from the introductory extract, no names of figures from myth or muses occur in Part I, though the reader has been introduced to the concept of the muses in the extract introducing Part I. It seems as if the reader is kept in suspense, as part of the game to be played with him. The first figure from mythology presented in Part II seems, however, not to be one of the above-mentioned muses, but is called Nemesis (M 52), much to the reader's surprise, I think, because she has not yet been introduced. The structure of the novel (drama) is splintered. Nemesis appears just after "[t]he neck of the guitar is thrust violently forward, as if it were a sub-machine gun, at poor defenceless Dr Delfie" (M 52), by "[t]he satanic double-ganger" (M 52). Dr Delfie then disappears, supposedly changes into Nemesis, and Nemesis starts speaking, cursing and accusing Miles of ruining her best performance in years (M 53-54). She also refers to the surnames Delfie and Cory, introducing the reader to these characters, without offering additional information.
This reference is made with disgust, most probably because Nemesis feels they are interfering with her trying to restore order to Miles’s mind. She then stands back; in fact, disappears, and leaves it to them to complete the task. Significantly, Nemesis also says that she supposes Miles thinks the whole world still speaks Greek (M 54). The conversation carries on in this tone for a while. Then both the character and the scene change.

Before considering the change, it is necessary to look at Nemesis more closely:

... Nemesis had at first been a moral idea, that of the inexorable equilibrium of the human condition. Man could displease the gods in two manners, either by offending the moral law - in which case he incurred their wrath - or by attaining too much happiness or riches - in which case he excited their jealousy. In either of these cases the imprudent mortal was pursued by Nemesis, or the divine anger. If he had offended only by an excess of good fortune he might hope to propitiate the goddess by sacrificing a part of his happiness ... Nemesis later became a goddess with more definitely defined personality ... always responsible for seeing that order was maintained (Guirand, 1959a:187).

Something must have happened to evoke the disapproval of the gods, probably resulting in Miles’s memory loss; the order in his life therefore has to be restored. Nemesis enters, albeit in the appearance of a satanic rock figure. The Nemesis figure is written into the novel at a particular point where the other characters are not figures from mythology, but still exist within her mythological framework. The Nemesis figure in this context correlates with her responsibility as a goddess, being the corrective when the gods are displeased by a mortal being. She is to restore the order - which she tries to do in a conversation with Miles. However, before it becomes clear whether Miles has
to make a sacrifice, her character suddenly changes. Just a
glimpse of the mythological character of Nemesis is offered. The
actual ceremony which the reader could have expected, considering
her function as a goddess, is not carried out. Order has not yet
been restored; Miles has not got his memory back. The situation
is left open-ended. This is an example of a figure from
mythology used in a postmodern way, contrary to the reader's
expectations.

The character that results from the transition at the change of
the scene is much nearer to a mythological character: "The now
dark hair is bound up, in Grecian style. Round her forehead
appears a small chaplet of pinkish-cream rosebuds among myrtle-
leaves; and the guitar has become a nine-stringed lyre" (M 58).

This description fits that of Erato at the start of Part II. Is
this character Erato? The character describes herself as
"supremely real ... [a]s well as being a goddess" (M 61). She
is, however, not only a classical and ancient figure, because she
refers to her "bikini" (M 63), a piece of clothing which was not
commonly worn during the Classical Age. It becomes clear that
she is a muse when there is talk about her sister Euterpe (M 66),
who was the muse presiding over flute-playing (Guirand,
1959a:127). The use of the name Euterpe is applied in this
context to identify the as yet anonymous muse. The muse then
identifies herself more clearly when saying that she "thought
[he] was clever drawing love poetry when [they] picked lots in
the beginning" (M 67). The muse of love poetry is Erato, as is
shown by the extract describing her at the beginning of Part II.

The character has therefore changed from Nemesis to Erato; the
reason for the change is Erato's task as a muse. The reference
to the bikini reveals the teasing attitude of the novel,
functioning as a parody on the mythological figure Erato - not
treating the divinity or goddess very seriously, but mocking her
and thereby also those who believe in her. It also illustrates
a postmodern characteristic of playfulness towards myth.
An important point to consider is what the function of Erato, the muse of love poetry, would be in a postmodernist novel or in connection with a man who has lost his memory. In some way Erato answers this question herself: "Then getting stuck with the whole of fiction as well. I have to work ten times as hard as all the rest of them put together" (M 67). The "whole of fiction" refers to fictional writing, over which Erato presides in this context, and "them" refers to the other eight muses, her sisters. Erato's function as the muse of love poetry has been adjusted to suit the context of the novel: love poetry now includes fictional writing. Proof emanates from the following quotation where Erato indirectly comments on the writing process: "I give you ten more sentences to make a full, proper and formal apology" (M 61). She is in control of what Miles may, or may not, say. As a muse she also has the status of a goddess of memory, a feature all the muses inherited from their mother Mnemosyne. By manipulating Miles, she probably stimulates him to get his memory back. The writing process is therefore linked to the process of remembering.

The muse Erato is not used in isolation. Besides the reference to her sister Euterpe, she also recalls some other biographical information, which includes references to, among others, her sister Thalia and Apollo Musagetes (M 74). The latter was called by this name because the muses were his regular companions, as he was the god of music (Guirand, 1959a:126). Erato and her sisters even danced on stage, their group being called the "Delphi Dancing Girls" (M 74). Referring to their being muses, she ironically adds: "We might get booked in as the Glorious Muses" (M 74). Their dancing fits in with their being Apollo's companions, and the stage is associated with the drama character of the story. These particular references to the muses reflect the playful character present throughout the novel.
A point to consider is why only two muses, Euterpe - muse of flute-playing - and Thalia - muse of comedy - are mentioned at this stage, if there are nine muses to choose from. The other seven are: Clio (history), Melpomene (tragedy), Terpsichore (dance), Polyhymnia (mimic art), Urania (astronomy) and Calliope (epic poetry and eloquence) (Guirand, 1959a:127). Euterpe and Thalia combine music and acting in their various functions as muses. Music is also implied in nurse Cory's "origin" and the comedy function suits the playful, dramatic character of the novel. On the one hand one assumes that only these two additional functions are applicable to the character of the novel; on the other, the reference to two muses could serve as a clue for the reader to go and find out more about the others on his own. The game continues: clues are offered and it is left up to the reader to actively participate if the game is to succeed.

As part of the biographical information, Erato also relates a sexual encounter between her and what Miles calls a "faun" (M 82). The use of the word faun is a classical allusion (category two) because it is a concept from mythology. Faunus is the Roman name for the Greek Pan, the god of herds, usually goat-like in appearance, and known for his amorous appetite for nymphs or muses (Field, 1977:144). The word faun, according to Barnhart (1988:372), is borrowed from the Latin faunus, referring to one of the various gods of the countryside. The faun was known for its sexual appetite. It had a human body and the horns and legs of a goat (Room, 1986:62). The variety of sexual encounters between Erato and the faun is described by her in terms of the Greek alphabet: "We went through the whole alphabet ... We're in Greece" (M 82).

The function of this reference to the sexual encounter should be contemplated. In terms of the kind of treatment Miles receives, Erato is trying to appeal to his sexual fantasies in order to get back his memory. On another level, a mythological atmosphere is created by characters from mythology, an atmosphere which
strongly relates to the therapy applied to Miles in Part I. This therapy and Erato's narration of her sexual adventures establish a link between the classical-mythological and the postmodern contexts, blurring the boundaries between the two periods and emphasising Fowles's adaptation of classical myth to suit the character of his postmodernist novel.

Miles does not seem to believe the above-mentioned recollection and states that "satyrs were always pure myth" (M 83). This may be an expression of postmodern man's attitude towards myth. Erato, after having made a few comments, then adds:

No my name is not Erato! And you're absolutely right. Of course satyrs are pure myth. Of course that grotesque scene never took place. Especially as it involved not one, but two entirely mythical beings ... ... And I'll tell you what a modern satyr is. He's someone who invents a woman on paper so that he can force her to say and do things no real woman in her right mind ever would (M 84-85);

and:

That story about the satyr ... I embroidered it terribly (M 103).

The fact that Erato herself takes a sceptical stance emphasises the point that she is only playing a role, that she is perhaps not a real muse, but a postmodern (or imaginary?) representation of one. Her words contribute to the destruction of the mythological atmosphere possibly created, or added to, by her presence. It seems as if she is disillusioned with her mythological character, denying the reality thereof.

The use of the words satyr, myth and mythical being forms classical allusions dealing with concepts related to mythology, i.e. category two. However, here they are used not to create or restore the classical or mythological atmosphere, but to shatter it, contributing to the suspicion voiced both by Erato and Miles.
Furthermore, to some extent Miles enacts the role of the reader (audience), because he "views" Erato's acting. He, as a character in the novel, is also part of the scene which she enacts on his reaction to her dialogue.

As the scene develops, the character Erato ridicules herself, enhancing the broken and questioning atmosphere, exposing her acting (thereby enhancing the contrast between acting and real life) and commenting on Erato the muse:

Moreover, she ought - if she did exist - to do a little market research on herself. Try knocking on a few doors. 'Hi. My name's Erato. I sell inspiration on the never-never. Can I interest you in an epithalamion? May I show you your new bargain line in personalized alcaics?' (M 91).

An **epithalamion** is a nuptial song or poem, while the word **alcaics** refers to a particular verse metre pattern. These two concepts serve to represent the art over which Erato the muse had control. The character here ridicules the belief in the muses through the manner in which she poses the questions about what Erato has to offer. This also serves as an indirect comment on the writing process: the questions whether the writer has to wait to be inspired by a muse, whether he must do the job without divine help or whether he still depends on a muse are asked.

The encounter continues, starting with the mythological "Mnemosyne's daughter" (M 133) who again becomes Dr Delfie, and Erato yet again, as if playing a character in a scene. Acting receives a lot of attention, as it does in *The Magus*, illustrating that in the context of the novel myth and acting are related. The following quotation not only illustrates Erato in her role as the muse of writing, but also emphasises the feature of drama in the novel: "As a matter of fact I came to a decision during that last scene. There's not going to be a next time" (M 140) (my emphasis - TMB).
The character Erato is used to enact a scene, not to create a real life situation. The five-part structure and the structural changes in Mantissa emphasise - and ridicule - the character of a drama being enacted. This is proved by a reference to the "[d]eath of the novel" (M 67), which actually alludes to George Steiner's The Death of Tragedy (1963). Steiner discusses the Greek tragedy and the role and place of tragedy in the modern era. By creating the illusion of a traditional five-act drama with a chorus introducing each part, the writer lures the reader into believing that he has to do with a familiar genre. Soon, however, already when the chorus's introductions and the content of the "acts" do not correspond, the reader has to realise that he is faced with a challenge: a parody of the traditional drama, as well as a parody of myth. The role of the muse serves to expose myth: the reader is led to question the role of the former, and, as a result, the role of myth in postmodern literature and in general. The writer consciously creates - and then shatters - the theatrical and mythological atmosphere to expose the imaginary boundaries between different genres and between fiction and reality, inviting the reader to create his own scene, his own stage if he wants to act, his own combination of genres, and his own real life, or, for that matter, imaginary situation. In the same way Erato "teaches [Miles] the ways of regaining his sense of creativity" (Salami, 1992:200), remembering for him at first, and teaching him eventually to remember for himself.

The scene between Erato and Miles proceeds in the form of a discussion about literature and the writing process, very fitting to the category of art over which Erato presides as muse. Though now unmasked, Erato still plays her character and simultaneously comments on it, with Miles in the role of the writer. The function of the scene is to comment on the role of and belief in the muse in the writing process, as well as on the writing process itself.
Metafictional comments are present throughout the novel. In the character of the rock star, Dr Delfie uses cruel language and Miles reacts by saying: "I have a feeling we don't quite share the same register of discourse" (M 54). This comment refers to the theoretical concept discussed by Tzvetan Todorov, who made an important literary theoretical contribution to the French Structuralist movement (Du Plooy, 1986:183). The reference to discourse is relevant because the attention is attracted to the fact that a writer writes in a specific register, which he assumes is shared by the reader on the latter's reading of the piece of writing. Note that Erato is not the one making this comment. This implies that she is not the only one who possesses knowledge about language and the writing process. This knowledge does not belong exclusively to the muse of writing, but also to human beings. The implication is that the muse does not have total control over her field of art. The concept of the muse as a divine being is commented on: the muse is demystified to the extent that she shares knowledge with man.

Erato then takes over and gives Miles ten sentences - "I give you ten more sentences ..." (M 61) - to apologise for having offended her character as a goddess. He opposes her when sensing "a hint of complacently superior inner knowledge" (M 63), by sarcastically remarking:

What I was actually rather wondering was this (colon) whether there aren't really (comma) in spite of your distinctly exaggerated umbrage at one or two small assumptions I was obliged to make in my fictional representation of you for which you can in any case very largely blame your own extreme deviousness (bracket) if not positive coquettishness (dash) ... areas that merit further investigation by both the written and the writer (comma) or (comma) if you prefer (comma) between the personified as histoire and the personifier as discours (M 64).
This extract is taken from more than two pages written in this fashion, and clearly illustrates the conflict between the writer and his muse. Instead of conventional punctuation marks words are used in Miles’s speech. He does this to prove to Erato that he will decide when to use which punctuation marks. This illustrates that the writer still has his own power of decision-making and is not inferior to the muse, corresponding with "I have a feeling we don’t quite share the same register of discourse" (M 54). The conflict exists because the muse desperately tries to regain full control over the writer. Miles acknowledges this control when he holds Erato responsible for his fictional representation of her; he implies that she has created her own character in his writing. She is simultaneously addressed as the muse and as the character (the "written") in his piece of writing. Erato, as a muse, therefore still possesses some power over the writing process. In this context one could perhaps go as far as to say that she is the "personifier" and Miles the "personified".

The other metafictional references occur in similar contexts, where Erato acts as the muse and Miles as the writer. There is a significant reference to Erato, together with two of her "literary sisters", Clio and Calliope (M 169). Clio was the muse of history, whereas Calliope was the muse of epic poetry and eloquence (Guirand, 1959a:127). The inclusion of the latter two puts the emphasis both on Erato’s role as muse and on the writing process. In addition, various references are found to the following writers and poets from the Classical Age: Virgil, Ovid, Horace and Catullus (M 177-178). The link between these literary figures is that Fowles, throughout his novels, alludes to their writings, especially with reference to the love theme, as they have all written love poetry. Furthermore, a person who has a classical or literary education is supposed to be familiar with the work of these writers, because they are key figures in the Classical Age. In The Aristos Fowles actually mentions Catullus as one of the poets whose poetry he has a special love for (TA 208).
Through the metafictional references, the concept of the muse is simultaneously illustrated, exposed and questioned. The references therefore serve to attract attention to the muse (a classical entity), as well as to guiding the reader to investigate the relevance of the muse in the writing process, and, subsequently, the relevance of mythological concepts in a postmodernist novel.

Both the writing process and classical mythology come under scrutiny as a result of the very functional use of the character of a muse in Mantissa. The fact that the reader - who is truly part of the game in the novel - is aware that Erato is only a character enacting a scene, enables him to view the situation more objectively. He does not feel that he is misled to believe in Erato as the muse. A postmodern stance towards the concept of the muse prevails in the novel, which most probably appeals much more strongly to a postmodern reader than a classical stance would. The attitude towards classical myth is therefore less serious in this novel, which serves to reveal postmodern man's attitude towards classical myth.

However, it becomes clear that the postmodern writer, represented by Miles, does not regard Erato, nor her knowledge of the writing process, as superior. This implies that he is not dependent on her for inspiration; she is not any longer regarded as the power of creativity. He is quite capable of handling the writing process on his own. Postmodern man's attitude towards myth is reflected in Miles's behaviour towards Erato: she is ridiculed and not worshipped as a goddess. The cynical stance taken illustrates the game between a writer and his muse in which the muse loses her superior status and becomes a ridiculed character in an even more ridiculed drama.
Additional classical allusions are also used in Mantissa, some of which are ascribed to Erato, some to Dr Delfie and some to Miles. The most relevant ones need also be investigated, as they support the general use of a classical allusion in the novel.

A few references to the myth of Troy occur in the novel. The first refers to the "sexual perversions of ancient Crete" (M 128), as Erato tells Miles that she wants to treat him in the way the Cretan women treated their husbands when the latter came back from the siege of Troy (M 128). This classical allusion clearly has a sexual connotation, fitting in, again, with the therapy Miles has received, and supporting the context of the novel.

The second reference is one made by Miles, referring to Helen of Troy (M 149) with respect to her beauty, where he remarks that he would have touched Erato even if she were Helen of Troy. Here the classical allusion serves to compare - and, in the context, belittle - Erato's beauty to that of another figure from classical mythology, thereby mocking her stature of being a muse. The third and most significant reference is also relevant in terms of Erato being a muse. She talks about a book she has written under a pseudonym, and which has lost its original title (M 169). Hesitatingly, in reaction to Miles's "And I don't suppose for a single moment that by some extraordinary chance this voyage started just after the sack of Troy?" (M 170), she admits that she refers to the Odyssey. And in the same breath Homer is also mentioned. (The reference to the Odyssey falls in category two, and the one to Homer in category three, because he was a classical writer.)

This reference to the legend of Troy is significant in the literary sense, where it enhances the metafictional character of the novel in dealing with the literary value of the myth. This can be seen in the use of the names of the main character and his wife in a context that demystifies and ridicules rather than enhances the myth:
If you’d ever actually read the damned thing, you’d have realized the only reason Ulysses went back to Ithaca is because he didn’t know where the hell else to pick up another boat and crew. And Homer had his bloody wife’s number, for a start (M 171).

This classical allusion expresses a cynical stance towards classical myth. The reader is prompted to laugh at, rather than show respect for, the main character of an acknowledged classic. At the same time the muse’s contribution to the outcome of the story is ridiculed. Erato reacts, saying: "Miles, you’re going to make me cry. Rather like Penelope, actually" (M 171), Penelope being Ulysses’ wife who had waited for him for years to return home from his voyage. Erato likens herself to Penelope, most probably in a state of serious longing, when Miles criticises her work. This recurrent likening of Erato to a figure from mythology - which seems more suitable than likening her to an ordinary human being - is most probably a last attempt to preserve a hint of divinity in Erato’s character.

In using the names Ulysses and Penelope, both figures from mythology, the allusions highlight some of the human characteristics of these two figures, bringing them nearer to man, instead of enhancing their superior characteristics as figures from mythology. The cynical stance taken in the reference to Ulysses is enhanced by the reference to Penelope. It is clear that this last classical allusion referring to the myth of Troy illustrates the writer’s stance towards classical myth as expressed in the novel, namely a postmodern attitude of questioning, a cynical and even humorous outlook, least of all serious. This postmodern perspective on one set of classical allusions can be regarded as representative of postmodern man’s attitude towards myth in postmodern literature.
Myth in *Mantissa* does not appear to be fact and reality, but rather fictional and imaginary. The final decision about this is left to the reader. In the light of these statements the value of myth to postmodern man can be expressed in terms of myth being merely that of a story in which he does not believe and which he can use and even abuse according to choice. Fowles uses classical allusion and myth in *Mantissa* to provide a framework within which the characters enact their scene. This means that they are twice removed from reality, first by myth and secondly by the drama character of the novel. Yet again both the fictional and imaginary are emphasised. The use of classical allusions succeeds in enhancing and developing this very important theme. This leads to the question of development in Fowles’s use of classical allusions in this novel.

Development has indeed taken place in Fowles’s use of classical allusions. He provides more theoretical information on the concepts from mythology used in *Mantissa* than in any of his other novels. He introduces the reader to (only) the most prominent figures from mythology functioning in the novel by using extracts in the manner of a chorus at the beginning of each part of the novel. As a result, the classical allusions surrounding the muses are more obvious and easier for the reader to understand. It is also the first time that a figure from mythology becomes a character in the novel. This is a very significant development, especially in the light of the humorous, cynical stance taken towards this specific character, Erato. The importance of Erato’s role in the novel should not be underestimated. Miles’s amnesia is used as a vehicle to arrive at a metafictional discussion; therefore Erato does not change into Mnemosyne. The memory loss becomes subordinate to the writing process and Erato’s function in that regard is apparent: she was, after all, the muse of love poetry, with the additional function of memory inherited from her mother. Additionally, the function of Erato as the muse of love poetry is adjusted to suit the context of the novel. This illustrates a postmodern way of dealing with classical mythology in a postmodernist text.
With Mantissa Fowles does not set out to write a new myth. The novel does, however, comment on the writing process: the concepts of writing and rewriting, as well as of the different genres, receive attention. This leads to the idea of rewriting a classical myth in postmodern terms, applying postmodern characteristics.

In this process of commenting a few characteristics of what could be labelled a postmodern myth become clear, challenging postmodern man to rewrite the myth the text offers him and to apply classical myth in a postmodern context, free from the boundaries of fact and reality, and almost beyond the grasp of a person's senses, but still within the framework of the text. First, the reader has the freedom of choice to choose a figure or muse from mythology which suits his purpose or subject. Secondly, that figure may be adjusted to suit the context of the piece of writing. Thirdly, the writing may, and should preferably also comment on some or other aspect relevant to postmodern man, with the help of the figure from mythology, of course. Fourthly, the reader, who becomes the writer of his own myth, may also become a character in his own piece of writing - he is free to use his imagination. Fifthly the myth should preferably be open-ended.