

MAGICAL REALISM IN NEIL GAIMAN'S *THE OCEAN AT THE END OF THE LANE*

Dissertation

Submitted by the University of Calicut in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of

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BY

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I couldn't control the world I was in, couldn't walk away from things or people or moments that hurt, but I found joy in the things that made me happy.

Neil Gaiman – *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*

In the world of English literature, Neil Richard MacKinnon Gaiman is considered as the 20th century greatest writer of fantasy. He was born on 10th November in Portchester, Hampshire in England. He is celebrated as an author of proficient in storytelling. He is a renowned British author of science fiction, short story, novel, comics, audio theatre and films. Over the span of his writing career, he has written for both adult and children. His notable works such as *The Sandman*, *Coraline*, *The Graveyard* and so on. His most of the works are adapted into the films and honored with many awards including the Hugo, Nebula, and Bram Stoker awards. He is the first author to win both Newbery and the Carnegie medals for the same work titled *The Graveyard* (2008). The novel *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* was voted for the Book of the year in the British National Book Awards in 2013.

Most of his works have the concept of magical realism which readers would be able to understand the content of the book easily. His works also blend with fairytales, gothic novel, science fiction, horror, dark fantasy and comedy. Magical realism is a literary genre which shows the realistic view of the modern world by adding certain magical elements. It is mostly connected to the works of the Latin American writers of the second half of the 20th century. It has been confused with fantasy but it has its own literary genre. Still, it doesn't have exact definitions. The best writers who use the concept of magical realism include Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Salman Rushdie, and Paulo Coelho.

Neil Gaiman has been nicknamed "The Muse in the Black Leather Jacket." His stories are full of amazing and marvelous events told in a genuine manner. This statement is best illustrated by the novel *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*. The novel is primarily classified as fantasy, but it can also be classified as magical realism. He proposed that we can broaden our range of experience through the means of "dreams and mistakes". In his works he creates:

Realistic modern: thinking, feelings being who are called to respond in marvelous way that they could never have predicted. They touch us because they are lively and force us to interact with them, whether they reside in world far way in an interplanetary future or a fictionalized Terran past, whether they are humid, hybrid or immortal (Porter)

He is known as the author of new fairytales, adapting fairy tales and short stories. Countless cultures, Gaiman analyzes familiar stories and combines them to create new ones. For example, Gaiman's *Emerald Study* invites readers to ponder Holmes and his scientific procedure differently. Out of the many adaptations and interactions with original tale, Gaiman's *Doctor Who* episode, "The Doctor's Wife" added a new dimension to the series' mythology "that is compatible with the franchise's nearly 50 years history of episodes"(Porter). His idea is to reconsider create characters and worlds to keep them fresh and relatable. At the same time, he wishes the readers "to admit our links to each other and the mythic past while challenging us to make new connections with ideas and to defy societal expectations" (Porter). The classical epic poem *Beowulf* directly effects on Gaiman's *Beowulf*. Gaiman's *Beowulf* is an animated movie collaborated with Roger Avary. The alterations, modifications and deviations from the style and tone of the original epic have been criticized by many medieval scholars. Since, the movie is labeled "a great cop-out on a great poem", "some kind of monster", "Anglo-Saxon of the Caribbean", "a weird cross between a serious attempt to envision the Northern early medieval past" (Fisher).

The poem *Beowulf* can be perceived as a “progenitor of modern fantasy literature... The poem has a profound influence on some of the giants of twentieth-century fantasy literature” (Porter). The inclusion of mythology makes Gaiman’s work prominent and distinguished. The mythological components in his works are quite diverse and they often feature modern and ancient mythology, including the past and present folklore of culture (Smith). As a writer who exhibit a deep fascination for myth, he asserts his stance on mythology and stresses that “myth is compost... They begin as religions, the most deeply held of belief, or as the stories that accrete to religions as they grow” (Gaiman). He added that retelling and act of inspecting myths are both beneficial because even the long-lost forgotten myths are compost, in which stories prosper. And comics have always dealt in myth: four-color fantasies with men in brightly coloured costumes waging unending soap opera conflicts with one other (predigested power fantasies for adolescent males): not to include friendly ghosts, animal people, monsters, teenagers, aliens. Mythology can entirely enslave us until a certain age, at which point we grow up and leave those particular dreams behind, either temporarily or permanently. But, as the twentieth century comes to a close, new mythologies await us. They abound and proliferate: urban legends of men with hooks in lovers' lanes, hitchhikers with hairy hands and meat cleavers, beehive hairdos, crawling with vermin, serial killers and bathroom conversation in the background while our TV screens feed us old films, new flashes

The Sandman is the series where Gaiman brings together characters from Greek myth and Norse myth. The ancient characters which portrayed in classic themes in the modern world are a new kind of mythology. It confuses our perception of reality and makes us think about what the world would be like if all forms of myths turned out to be true. To understand the role of mythology in Gaiman’s literary work, therefore, we must first understand the function of culture. Culture is often a learned set of beliefs that creates unity and order. The

expansive and convergent interpretations of mythology in Neil Gaiman's work, as well as the fusion of various traditional mythologies from different times and places, provide another view of mythology.

The novel *The GraveyardBook* (2008) introduces the conventional image of death that appears on a grey horse and rides through sky. Pagan and Christian mythology revive in the novel, as images of death arriving on horseback appear in both myths. She dances with main character, Bod and assures him that they will both ride horses. One of her distinguishing features is her laughter, which she calls "the chiming of a hundred tiny silver bells". The novel is about an unsolved murder case with emphasis on fantasy, dreams, and uncanny characters.

Gaiman's work is a blend of reality and fiction. With his innovative skills, the mundane visible side of the world becomes more sophisticated and fresher when viewed through one's own lens. In the comic series *The Sandman* he depicted seven personifications of traditional mythological archetypes with twist names such as Dreams, Death, Desire, Delirium, Despair, and Destruction. A lover of mythology in all its forms, as their names suggest, they are aspects of the universe, attributed to each personified personality and its own authority. Similarly, like all the characters in portal guests the characters in *The Sandman* move between worlds and they are transformed permanently "sometimes for good, sometimes for ill, and sometimes, they never leave the Dreaming at all" (Jones).

Death is another theme appeared on the Gaiman's works. It is portrayed to be a benevolent and appealing experience. It is associated with democracy because it creates freedom and freedom of expression. More importantly, death symbolizes unity in the novel and creates vocal polyphony. Drawing parallels between democracy and death, Gaiman highlights its importance of individual liberties and destroys many egalitarian values.

As mentioned earlier, Gaiman's work is full of allusions and reflections of myths, folk and fairy tales especially in his short fiction collection. The collection is limited with respect to the specific origins of the story and more attention is paid to the function as a group where the transmission of the story is fundamental to its meaning. His stories have a strong tendency to share some elements as he reworks these structures from fairy tales, folklore and oral tradition. As Gaiman's approach to storytelling explores an ongoing between the narrator and the audience, this forms a new relationship between the reader and the story. He said that children's stories had evolved out of the tales that people had exchanged over the long evenings. And it was clear that many individuals felt they had to remain. But they leave quickly. Most fairy tales, which have been refined over time, function so very well, in my opinion. They felt natural. Although they may have a straightforward structural design, the magic is frequently found in the decoration and retelling. like any narrative whose primary purpose is transmission. It all depends on how you tell them.

Gaiman makes advantage of the familiarity of stories from the canons of traditional fairy tales and folklore and adapts them to utilize narrative to examine human experience, emotions, and sexuality. The majority of Gaiman's works are based on fairy tales, and the poems "The White Road" and "Locks" as well as the short story "Snow, Glass, Apples" demonstrate how he employs these well-known tales in a way that purposefully emphasizes their approach towards storytelling as a creative process. According to G.K. Chesterton, "fairy tales are more than true; not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten" (Gaiman, *Coraline* prologue). Rewriting fairy tale is an important theme in Neil Gaiman's writings. His works can be interpreted as a modern rewrite of fairy tales. For example, "Snow, Glass, Apples" can be read as postmodern reworking of the classic fairy tale *Snow White*. In Gaiman's version the stepmother's execution is not silent but she speaks out, proclaims her innocence and calls Snow White vampire. He changed the

perspective of the original version by making the original monstrous character as the narrator of the story.

Known as a writer master in storytelling, *M is for Magic* explores the different ways Gaiman's storytelling technique. His works promote the openness of orality through the act of storytelling. Storytelling, on the other hand, denotes the act of expressing the past in order to comprehend the present environment. Throughout his narrative, the collective memory and consciousness of the characters are frequently transformed by the act of storytelling, which allows for different alternatives. Most crucially, in Gaiman's writings, narrative serves as a badge of selfhood. Charles Taylor opines that "a basic condition of making sense of ourselves [is] that we grasp our lives in a narrative" (Vice 94). Therefore, narrative form is not merely an indispensable state of experiencing the world, it also entails understanding our selves (94). This statement is significant in the context of Neil Gaiman because characters build their narrative selves through the process of storytelling. This does not imply that Gaiman's narratives are linear and strive to internalize coherence between story components. Personhood is rather one way of displaying the manner in which the self can be told.

In Gaiman's works, storytelling influences the characters' worlds, and it is through the process of narrativizing their experiences that characters gain enormous significance and the ability to transform rationally based realities. His narrative includes mythological imagery both old and new and often used in playful yet drastic ways. Additionally the magic built in narrative realism, gothic elements and dreams enrich the story. His storytelling technique engages the reader and explores collective memory. His use of narration in his stories gives his readers a dual sense of the present and the past.

Gaiman's works are written in the style of a *bildungsroman*. The use of *bildungsroman* has an underlying association with the concept of self. His characters'

progressive growth and development recall every detail of their experiences, from the inner to the outward level of thinking. The combination of the fantastic story and the inclusion of the bildungsroman create a reservoir of awareness that moves beyond simple escapism and into knowledge of a broader character's psychology. The use of bildungsroman, which eventually locates his works as a quest fantasy novel, reveals the symbolic character of their growing relationships with their environment. What stands out in the study is the strange magnificence of desire and the surreal that has become a part of everyday life. Furthermore, Gaiman's novels eventually dispel the traditional image of the child through the weaving of bildungsroman. It has produced a child with a mystical notion of selfhood. Characters are given the opportunity to express their concerns, resentment, unfulfilled promises, and continuing sense of exile and loss through the use of bildungsroman, even when they appear to be reunited in their familiar surroundings. On the other side, it contains the complex path inherent in defining one's selfhood, and it serves as a crucial facet of the characters' journey to liberation, achieving a resonant and improvisational expressive dignity.

The pastoral scene enhances their sensory experience by providing a clue and consolation from nature. The pastoral scenery and surroundings are portrayed as the little protagonists' most natural wishes. Nature becomes a shelter for peace and grace after being alienated since childhood. The child characters are driven by the anguish and grief of childhood, as well as the loss of hopes, and this is mirrored in the building of pastoral fantasy. A deeper dive into Gaiman's works has uncovered the relationship between nature and the child. The incorporation of the bonding between these two fundamental notions has aesthetic and moral significance, as well as value beyond its utility to humans. The depiction of nature and the tight relationship between nature and humans inspire environmental appreciation.

The magnificent terrain and environs create a tranquil wilderness that greatly increases the protagonists' consciousness. When we turn to the pastoral and green worlds, the self stays transparent while retaining the vibrancy of childhood. Gaiman has repeatedly proven that his child characters are continuously engaging with nature, demonstrating that nature bears a striking resemblance to the child characters in his works. Aside from that, it has unwittingly designated the child's potential to make social connections in such a way that he or she can see what life has to offer beyond what is obvious. The intimate relationship between humans and nature is at the heart of his novels which bringing an eco-consciousness to both characters and readers. The characters' strong connection to nature works as a strategy to turn them in to passive spectators. His novels evoke a deep respect for non-human characters and condemn all forms of exploitation and destruction. The characters' attitude towards non-humans ethically encourages the reader to correct the environmental wrong.

In his works, fantasy serves as a means of communication and a repository for everything that cannot be seen and is not judged genuine, significant, or trivial by the protagonists. Most significantly, the individuals' encounters with the supernatural provide a crucial insight into how supernatural and magical happenings become a part of regular life. An encounter with the supernatural provides an extraordinary experience that goes beyond conventional sense and comprehension of reality. And also we can see the complexity of childhood in his work. Gaiman's stories challenge the accepted view of childhood. Unlike the romantic notion of the child as innocent, vulnerable, and an object of purity, the conventional understanding of infancy as a path to the construction of maturity is unraveled. Rather, in Gaiman's writings, the child is portrayed as the personification of loss, seeking to satiate his or her yearning and establish his or her own unique selfhood. When the adult characters stereotype the young characters and assign them to specific norms and behaviors, their differences are immediately apparent. Their existence as insignificant people, including the

construction of normal infancy, reinforces the notion that childhood can be regarded as a site of colonialism. The disintegration of the kid's personal authority, as well as the child characters' concepts of normalcy, permits a consistent type of domination, judgment, intervention, and control.

Gaiman has introduced characters who have no connection to their names. Naming is a peripheral occurrence in his writings, indicated as a nebulous and insignificant event. The skilled approach with which Gaiman has planted the unorthodox explanation of self-hood grows more appealing and inventive. In his works, naming is thought to be insignificant for the characters due to a constraint inherent in naming. Gaiman introduces an unidentified male protagonist in *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, who remains unnamed throughout the novel's plot. Despite the fact that he goes by no name throughout the work, the author portrays him as the most notable character. The lack of a name represents his interaction with both the visible and the invisible. On the other hand, it denotes the inability to objectively view the protagonist's life experience. Establishing values beyond what is visible becomes an essential backbone in the novel's narrative; therefore, the protagonist's namelessness suggests that he is not a victim of narrative seduction. It signifies metaphorically that he grows towards maturity and departs from his infancy, which is defined by abandonment and loss. The protagonist of *The Graveyard Book* is addressed as Nobody Owens by the graveyard denizens. Contrary to what his name implies, the opposite attribute of nobody becomes apparent as the novel's plot continues. As a result, in the story, the protagonist maintains a significant distance from the connotation conveyed by his name. Being nobody does not prevent him from nurturing his most primal instinctive cravings and desires.

Gaiman's novels take a postmodernist viewpoint and foundation for reality. Postmodernism, as a philosophical and cultural paradigm, rejects totalizing narratives. It

interrogates the notion that there is no reality beyond what is represented and instead favors the fragmented and the disjointed (Nayar 48). Moreover, it professes that images and signs comprise reality that discards elite culture and is apprehensive of truth in language (48). The inclusion of the carnivalesque in the research has promoted the subjective character of reality in Neil Gaiman's works. The Bakhtinian concept of carnival situates reality in flux, which is both flexible and dynamic. The incorporation of the funfair into the fantastic story has glorified the strange, in which human and non-human character relationships coexist peacefully. The fantastic occurrences, characters, and non-human characters coexisting in concord call the normal from the abnormal and the usual from the uncommon into doubt. The presence of these otherworldly characters, on the other hand, dilutes reality and truth and blurs the line between the two. The Bakhtinian carnival's framework has fostered many shifting truths that deviate from reality's conventions. The carnivalesque creates an opportunity for the characters in Gaiman's works to mingle and share thoughts and opinions. The narrative's order has been upended by combining the human, the non-human, and the supernatural. As a result, the tale reduces classifications and blends the high and low, as well as the sensible and reckless. Most significantly, the task of experiencing and reconciling with the supernatural and fantastic is part of the self-making process. The carnival's relevance in Gaiman's tale is regarded from a different perspective, in which the phenomenon works to instill polyphony of voices. The diversity of voices in his narratives drew readers' attention to selfhood. Each character's voice in his narratives is considered significant and challenging. In his works, he pays equal attention to the voices of minor and important characters, eliciting explicit information about human death as well as essential notions about what it means to constitute the self. Regardless of the characters' origins, class, or upbringing, their voices serve as proof of their presence.

The Ocean at the End of the Lane is a novel that presents magical realism within its narrative. The novel talks about something strange what the protagonist experience when he was seven years old like the mysterious death of the opal miner who lived in his house, the presence of Lettie Hempstock and her family and the existence of mythical creature such as varmints and Ursula Monkton. The story goes like this an unnamed adult narrator attending the funeral near his childhood home. After ceremony he heading to his sister's house, he finds himself at the farm along the road where he spent his childhood. There he meets an old woman whom he recognizes as Mrs. Hempstock, the mother of his childhood friend Lettie Hempstock. The narrator sits to near the pond and recollects that Lettie used the call the pond ocean. Then he takes us to forty years ago memories and tells us about the story of magical experience with Lettie when he was seven years old. It all started with the fact that narrator's family rented out a room in their big house for additional income. One day, an opal miner comes to the narrator's family for stay. However, he commits suicide in narrator's father's car and police find the body. This is moment when the narrator and Lettie met for the first time. She takes him to her family's farm where she lives together with her mother and grandmother. Through their talk it clear that Hempstock women have special abilities. They are fully aware about what police investigating about opal miner's death. And also know about the content of opal miner's suicide letter. Then the narrator and Lettie start a journey on "quest" to the forest on her family's farm to make a creature that is, "flea" leave because it makes trouble. Somehow, they manage to make it disappear but it comes back to narrator's sole. Later, the "flea" takes the shape of Ursula Monkton, the narrator's family's new nanny and housekeeper. After discovering, her character, the narrator manages to escape to Hempstock. Lettie helps him to defeat "flea" at great cost. She almost dies. Her mother takes her to a pond which is the ocean where she will sleep until recover.

The novel which have been selected for the project titled *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* own the major characters are children. Although the selected work account for the lives of children, they also appeal to adult readers because the early stages of life are obviously mirrored via the child characters. It has a dual purpose in that it teaches both children and adults about childhood frustrations. It promotes a solution for both readers and reinforces impression to varied degrees. Gaiman connects with two audiences in his works by blurring the line between the audience and the genre.

The novel honored with the Locus Award for Best Fantasy novel in 2014.it was nominated for Book of the Year in the British National Book Awards in 2013. It adapted into play by the British playwright Joel Horwood and directed by Katy Rudd in 2019. The play premiered in London on 11th December 2019 at the Royal National Theatre's small theatre.

It also tries to adapt in to film ahead of novel publication but they acquired the rights to adapt it into feature film. It was supposed to produce by Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman through their company Playtone and Joe Wright was to be director. The themes include the search for self-identity and the disconnection between childhood and adulthood.

Even though it considers as fantasy, but through this dissertation it proves that it can be considered as magical realism. This dissertation is attempted to find magical elements in the novel. The second chapter discusses magical realism; its history, characteristics. The third chapter analyzes how the literary technique of magical realism represents in the novel; the role of magical realism portrayed in it. And the final chapter gives the overview of the dissertation.

CHAPTER 2

MAGICAL REALISM

MAGIC REALISM is a composite noun. Socio-cultural critique is defined as self-reflexive story-telling in which one attempts to represent the dialectical process of thought and its peculiar affects through art, photography, film, literature, music, or any other medium. Exempt from binary or fixed polarities, dictated by sensory apprehension, formal experimentation, and a resistance to capital acceleration. It has become one of the most interesting artistic terms of recent decades but often misunderstands with fantasy and rarely accepted. The term “magical realism” or “marvelous realism” was coined by the German art critic Franz Roh in 1925 he used the term in his book titled *Nach-Expressionismus, Magischer: Probleme der neusten europäischen Malerei (Post-expressionism, Magic Realism: Problems of the Most Recent Europeans Painting)* to describe a style of painting which was also referred to as “neue Sachlichkeit” (New Objectivity). During 1940s and 1950s, it was used by Roh to describe art in which “the mystery doesn’t descend to the represented world, but rather it hides and palpitates behind it. (Wendy B.Faris, *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community*, pp 15-31). This term was used for the type of painting that was also called ‘new’ or ‘ideal’ realism. It isn’t mere representation of what real might be. According to Roh, magical realism is a mixture of both real and ideal.

In any event, there were huge differences in how magical realistic craftspeople responded to this turmoil. During the interwar period, magic realistic artwork conveyed a range of reactions to the social and political context in which it was created, from explicitly political to traditionalist, even emotional works of art. Artists like Dix and Grosz interview two of the politically charged magical realism painters of the moment. The goal of Roh's

definition of magical realism is to place it inside formal discourse. According to Roh, realism is a framework that is constantly developing, and the critical category of magical realism is meant to denote a pivotal point in that evolution. Roh views magical realism as an intuitive "realism," one that presents before our eyes, in a natural way, the reality, the inside figure, of the exterior world, despite the fact that it is gathered to describe a masterful development towards a faithful rendering of the object of representation. Thus, the phrase can also be used to describe works that depict ambiguous representations of reality if the distortion eventually results in more obvious clarity. According to Roh, magical realism is a kind of reality that is established by both representation and creative feats. According to Roh, magical realism is a type of realism that may be found in the middle of two philosophical axes—one that tries to maintain a link to reality as something that is obviously true and intelligible, and the other that ventures beyond such knowledge to create fantastical constructs of its own. Roh, who presents magical realism as a fresh philosophical perspective, contends that it will stand on a firm foundation not because it is inadequate but rather, on the contrary, because it is energetic and conscious of its power. It will be a confined edge between two abysses on the right and left, with a sharp edge.

The influence of Roh's magic realism quickly spread from Germany to other European countries, such as the Netherlands, France and Italy. The artistic movement had the most noteworthy impact on the Italian writer Massimo Bontempelli. In 1926, he founded the literary journal *900* in which magic realist writings and critiques were published. Despite the fact that the works in the magazine seemed sometimes more fantastical than magical realist, he is still considered to be the first magic realist creative writer (Brower 2004, 12).

At the end of the 1920s, magic realism made its way into Latin America and developed primarily as a literary genre. Roh's book was partially translated into Spanish in

1927 and the translation was published in Jose Ortega y Gasset's *Revista de Occidente*, a Madrid literary magazine. However, the translation had one key difference from the German original: in the title "realism magico" was placed before "post expressionism". With publication of Roh's text in *Revista de Occidente*, magical realism found its way to Latin America as early as 1928, but it was not regarded to be a strictly Latin American phenomenon until Arusto Usler Pietri used it in 1949 in his book *Letras y hombres de Venezuela* (Reeds 2013, 54).

After magical realism was introduced into Latin America by the translation of Roh's text, cultural migrations from Europe to America in the 1930s and 1940s helped spread the term. Escape from the horrors of the Third Reich, many of the exiles were prominent cultural figures who remained active in Latin America. Another important factor in Latin America's growth of magic realism was the role of two diplomats and a writer; Arturo Usler Pietri, a Venezuelan and Alejo Carpentier. Between the 1920s and 1930s, they lived in Paris and were heavily influenced by the creative trends in Europe including magic realism. When Usler Pietri used the term magical realism in 1949, he didn't mention Roh. Only in 1986 did he admit that the term came from the German art critic. In the same year, Alejo Carpentier, published his famous prologue to *El reino de este mundo* in which he first used the term "lo real maravilloso" to describe the uniqueness of the Latin American flora and fauna (Reeds 2013, 52). The term was first used by Angel Flores in his essay entitled "Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction" in 1955. He also mentioned an Argentina writer, Jorge Luis Borges as the first magical realist and his anthology of short stories *Historia universal de la infamia* (1935) as the starting point of Latin American magical realism.

The literary output of magical realism was particularly notable in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s. Gabriel Garcia Marquez' novel *Cien años de soledad* (*One Hundred*

Years of Solitude) is considered as fine example for magical realism. Due to his success of his novel, Garcia is most closely associated with magical realism in Latin America and is also considered one of the most influential magic realists. His style of writing, especially his matter-of-fact narrative, inspired many writers to adapt the magical realist mode.

Furthermore, he contributed to establishing a closer connection between magical realism and Latin American literature (Bower 2004, 32).

Magical realism was not confined to Latin America. In the early 1970s, it began to spread to other continents. The most notable locations are Canada, Caribbean, West and South Africa, India, United States, United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. Perhaps the most famous writer outside of Latin America is the Anglo- Indian writer Salman Rushdie. Literary works of magical realism in these countries have not existed long enough to trace the influence between individual magical realists. Moreover, the writings don't form the mainstream of all literary works in these countries. For example, in India besides Rushdie, there are two other famous acclaimed magical realists, Amitav Gosh and Arundhati Roy. But these three don't form any group or any movement in Indian literature. They are unrelated to each other.

Briefly defined, magical realism, according to Faris, "combines realism and the fantastic so that the marvelous seems to grow organically within the ordinary, blurring the distinction between them". Despite this seemingly, clear, though basic definition, magical realism still remains a great mystery in literary history and criticism. As Kalenic Ramsak writes, magical realism's characteristics and its influences on Latin American prose of the 20th century are still not clearly elucidated. Furthermore, there is still not an overall accepted and exact definition of magical realism nor an accurate list of magical realist authors, and it is

still not clear how magical realism affected the development of the modern prose (Kalenic Ramsak 2008, 7).

One of the main problems in forming a precise definition of magical realism is a precise definition of magical realism is confusion surrounding the term and its history. Until now, many critics have created their own definitions without giving due consideration to the historical development of the term. Additionally, some critics denied Roh's role in development of literary magical realism.

In the second half of the twentieth century, many Latin American critics tried to define magical realism and tried to either prove or negate a connection between the former and Roh. To begin with by naming Borges, the first magical realist, Flores diminished Roh's role in the growth of magical realism. By doing so, he confirmed Uslar Pietri's separation of magical realism from Roh. In 1967, Luis Leal published "magical realism in Spanish America" in response to Flores's essay. Later Roh was reestablished as the originator of this term. However, he connected magical realism and the marvelous real, which would later be the source of further confusion. In the following years, the dispute around magical realism and originators grew stronger and became more confusing. In the same year as Leal and in common with the latter, Angel Valbuena Briones published an essay in which he acknowledged magical realism and Carpentier's marvelous real as the same thing. A year later, Orlando Gomez Gil also recognized Carpentier as a magical realist. However, he believed that the latter's claims on Latin America being marvelous were based in legend and myth, not reality. In her 1969 book, Jean Franco acknowledged Carpentier as magical realist, as well. Furthermore, she believed that magical realism was limited to Latin America and negated Roh's part in the discussion on the term. Contrary to Franco, in his 1969 essay Valbuena Briones referred to Roh as the first person to use the term magical realism. The

year 1975, he presented a paper “The Baroque and the Marvelous Real” in which he distanced himself from magical realism. Subsequently, critics began to differentiate between Roh’s magical realism and Carpentier’s marvelous real along the line of the former expressing a phenomenological and the latter an ontological view (Reeds 2013, 55-64)

It's a common misconception that magical realism is a sort of fantasy. As opposed to a critic of magical realism, critics who analyze magical realist books as fantasy interpret and approach the stories differently. A critic of fantasy would view unusual occurrences as fantastical aspects contained within a realist narrative. On the other hand, a critic of magical realism would view the same circumstances as commonplace components of a realist story. The minute difference shows how little there is to distinguish between the two names.

The phrase and postmodernism were closely related. It was repeatedly changed and modified during the 1940s and 1950s in both Europe and the USA so as to express many meanings and cover various sectors. However, the majority of commentators concur that the phrase came to have its current widespread connotation in relation to American prose literature.

Magic realist text tends to present familiar things in non familiar, even unusual ways in order to emphasize their properties. In *Ordinary Enchantments: Magical Realism and the Remystification of Narrative* (2004), Faris outlines five fundamental aspects of magical realism. The irreducible element, as defined by Robert Young and Keith Hollaman, is "something we cannot explain according to the laws of the universe as they have been formulated in Western empirically based discourse, that is, logic, familiar knowledge, or received belief." (Faris, 7). Irreducible elements might take the form of people or things with remarkable appearances or magical powers. The irreducible element is acknowledged as a real object in the story, despite the fact that it cannot be explained by logic, common

knowledge, or received belief. The irreducible element serves a purpose in realist fiction's magical element.

The next characteristic is unsettling doubts. According to Faris, the reader may waver between two opposing interpretations of events before categorizing the irreducible factor as irreducible, resulting in some disturbing questions. This perplexity is related to the story's supernatural happenings. Readers question if a magical event occurs as a character's dream or hallucination or if it truly occurs as a miracle. The vivid descriptions, which are often overly detailed, create a fictional world that is similar to our own. The narrator of a magical realist novel gives in-depth explanations of the characters' reality, which is similar to the readers' world and incorporates magical events concealed inside of objective facts like places, historical events, and governmental structures. Magic, an irreducible element, can also be regarded a component of the phenomenal cosmos.

Faris describes mystical regions, which is a feature of magical realism. He suggested that readers may detect a clustering or near proximity of different domains or genuine elements. The blending of magical and natural components results in the near-merging worlds. The various realms that are employed can be between the human and animal worlds, between the traditional and modern, between the ordinary and the witch, and so on. The confluence of these distinct universes also demonstrates how, in magical realism, the line between fact and fiction is blurring. And he added that, these fictions, in addition to combining disparate worlds, disrupt received ideas about time, place, and identity. The cultural hybridity of magical realism not only disrupts time and space, but also the characters' identities in the novel.

Hegerfeldt explains five basic techniques that are used in magic realism text. The first one is adaptation of other genres and mode. In magical realism the aspects of hybridity

focus on the Western tradition. Hegerfeldt states that “not surprisingly, in magical realist fiction from Britain and other Western English-speaking countries, the reliance on non-western traditions is not as pronounced as in many postcolonial literatures”. Literary realism and literary fantasy are two of the most well-known Western traditions. As a result, these strategies concentrate on the adaptation of literary genres and modes in Western traditions by magical realism. Magical realist fiction employs realism to persuade readers that they are in a world that reflects reality. The presence of mystical components in the story, on the other hand, has violated the law of reality. This strategy of subversion is also what distinguishes magical realist fiction from realism fiction. Hegerfeldt observes that magical realism fiction employs reluctance to actively examine that world-view from a meta level, implying that reality cannot be reduced to empirically observable or logically explicable elements, but that so-called fiction must also be considered. Reader apprehension is employed in magical realist writing to help the reader perceive the world from a different perspective.

The writer employs an ex-centric focalizer in a magical realist composition.

Hegerfeldt defines the ex-centric focalizer as the presentation of dominant viewpoint by individuals in marginalized positions from whom the narrative is conveyed. Magical realism allows writers to present diverse world views while also challenging prevailing power and cultural centers through the characters' points of view. This style is related to magical realist fiction since it questions if the story is fiction or actuality. According to Hegerfeldt, magical realism unsettles established concepts and conventions in order to reevaluate human ways of knowing and describing the universe by breaching the rules of the literary system, a dominant worldview at every turn. Using this technique, writers of magical realism fiction attempt to explain the universe using both mythos and logos. Mystique and logic are addressed honestly in magical realist literature as a tool for understanding how the human brain functions and how people strive to make sense of their surroundings. The authors of magical realism will

use this strategy to show the real as unbelievable and the wonderful as real. This method necessitates two steps: naturalization of the bizarre and super naturalization of the extra textual realm. Naturalization describes the amazing as something common, but hyper naturalization describes the commonplace as strange, incredible, and unreal. It is possible to argue that the technique is dependent not just on the reader's acquaintance with realist characteristics, but also on their grasp of empirical reality.

Tzvetan Todorov in *The Fantastic* writes, “the supernatural often appears because we take figurative sense literally” (Hegerfeldt 235). She acknowledges that magical realist novels also featured this incident. She writes, “through techniques of literalization, magical realist fiction puts the immaterial on a par with empirical reality: endowed with material existence, metaphors and memories, concepts and emotions are shown to be as important as the material world” (Hegerfeldt 235). This method focuses on the language employed, including metaphors and figurative language, and how they are interpreted literally in the text.

The magical realist texts frequently contain metafictional elements. They give comments on themselves and may contain a story within a story. It contains a special kind of verbal magic. Plays on words, especially metaphors presented in literally. For instance, the idiom “blood is thicker than water” is illustrated in *One Hundred of Solitude* when Jose Arcadio Buendia shoots himself and dribble of his blood makes its way through the town to his mother Ursula’s kitchen. Furthermore, magical realist narrative may appear fresh, childlike or even primitive. Astonishing happenings are mainly depicted in a matter-of-fact way, often with no comments. The narrator accepts them as child would, without any doubt or questioning (Faris 1995, 175, 176)

Repetition and mirroring may be presented either symbolically or structurally. As a narrative principle, they often form a “magic of shifting references” (Faris 1995, 177). For

instance, *Midnight's Children*, Saleem's life mirrors of the new Indian nation, formed at the same time as he was born. Mirroring may be indicated by doubling characters and stories, which may only appear to be the same. Such is the case in *The White Hotel* where the same story is reiterated through reflected personalities. Structural mirroring may also be reinforced by reflecting surfaces in the story, particularly, windows. Ghosts or people who seem ghostly can also be perceived as two-sided mirrors that are located between two worlds, one of the living and one of the dead. Although it is commonly present in all literature, it appears with particular frequency in magical realist texts.

According to Faris, metamorphoses are a common occurrence in magical realist narratives. In the realm of organisms, they represent a merging of two worlds. In order to contradict established social orders, magical realist text often uses magic and are many cases written as critiques of totalitarian regimes. Latin American magical realist writers, for example criticized North American dominance over their hemisphere; Rushdie wrote *Midnight's Children* to oppose Indira Gandhi's autocratic reign. Ancient systems of beliefs and local folklore can often be found in magical realism, which are usually set in rural settings and rely on rural inspiration, though there are some influential exceptions, such as *Midnight's Children* (Faris 1995, 179,180).

Additionally, a Jungian perspective prevails in magical realists' texts over a Freudian one. According to Faris, "the magic may be attributed to a mysterious sense of collective relatedness rather than to individual memories or dreams or visions". Also, since magical happenings in magical realism cannot usually be interpreted as hallucinations or fabrications, they may point toward the existence of spiritual worlds, to which in turn, Jungian psychology is open to while Freudian psychology is not (Faris 1995, 183). And he added that the texts

that use magical realism have lavish, overflowing language. It frequently has a carnival-like vibe, and supernatural elements are frequently employed.

Painters that want to display the most resemblance to real life often adopt the magical realist artistic movement. The paintings use tiny details in large paintings to show the inner mystery of common things. A style in art known as expressionism that placed a strong focus on spiritual qualities was unable to meet the needs of the German populace. The Expressionist artist failed to capture the spirit of the era against the backdrop of the World War's terrible impacts. This ultimately led to artists abandoning the Expressionist style of painting and the emergence of a rival movement known by a variety of titles, including Post Expressionism, Neo-Realism, Neo-Naturalism, Magic Realism, and Magic Naturalism. Maria Takolander highlights Seymour Menton's (1918–1981) opinions on magical realist art in her book *Catching Butterflies: Bringing Magical Realism to Ground*. As stated by Menton, Takolander claims that the magical realist artists began to create their works based on urban realities mostly in response to and in opposition to the then-dominant aesthetic movements of expressionism and cubism. Menton contends that the calm and clarity of magical realist art also included a dismissal of the brutality and upheaval of the First World War and that the focus on contemporary urban vistas reflected the rapid industrialization and urbanization of society that took place in the years following the war. The debut of Gustav Hartlaub's exhibition in Hannover in June 1925 under the banner of "Die Neue Sachlichkeit" marked the formal beginning of post-expressionism or magical realism in art. In *Catching Butterflies: Bringing Magical Realism to Ground*, Maria Takolander discusses artworks that exhibit magical realism. According to Maria Takolander, magical realist works of art frequently depict contemporary and urban cityscapes in a style that is characterised by its abnormal point of interpretation, seriously sharp and uniform center, distinctive shadows, geometric

exactness, and scaling down of the subject, thin paint surface, destroyed brushstrokes, and resulting photographic smoothness.

Magical realism is usually not considered to be a category of the film. Certain characteristics of the mode, however may be recognized in many films and may be analyzed as such (Bowers 2004, 104). Fredric Jameson is one of the first and few critics to explore magical realism in realm of film. In his essay “On Magic Realism in Film”, he analyses the following three films with the approaches used by visual art critics: a Polish film *Fever* (1981), a Venezuelan production *La Casa de Agua* (1984) and the Colombian feature *Condores no entierran todos los dias* (1984). Though all three films are historical, Frederic considers this to be one of the three features “constitutive of a certain magic realism” (1986, 303). The other two features include the different colour of each film, which establishes a source of a unique fascination and a simplified narrative that focuses especially on sexual assault and violence to a lesser extent (1986, 302, 303)

Furthermore, Bowers describes the possibility of analyzing films as magical realist stories presented through the film medium in this case and approaches similar to those employed in analyzing magical realist literature may be used. Additionally, adaptations of magical realist novels in the film industry offer an opportunity to observe how the incorporation of visual elements and the transfer from page to screen affect the magical realist narrative.

There are many instances in cultural items produced for children, particularly in literature and television that can be identified as magical realist. Fairy tales aren't magical realism because the stories take place in a realm of reality different from our own, she believes that children get used to accepting these narratives as being somehow connected to their own reality. Bower contends that magical realism offers kids the ideal way to use their

imaginations to explore the world without losing touch with what they understand to be the "real world."

Magical occurrences in the narratives of children's literature usually take place in realistic settings and only for limited periods of time. This way, children are given opportunity to explore disruptions in their everyday world while still feeling secure knowing that magic and extraordinary happenings can be contained (Bowers, 2004, 100).

The magical realism in children's literature in English was introduced by the late-Victorian English children's writer Edith Nesbit. Her writings obey the adult moral in children's books and this considered revolutionary. She wrote on the base of the behavior and language of her characters on what actual children would do or say, making her stories appear much more realistic. By adding magical realism elements in child characters her writings are considered as magical realist.

In the opening chapter of *Five Children and It*, Nesbit addresses the child reader:

"You may leave the book about quite safely, for no adults and uncles are likely to write 'How true!' on the edge of the story. Grown up people find it very difficult to believe really wonderful things unless they have what they call proof" (quoted in Bowers 2004, 102)

Nesbit's type of narrative of an ordinary family and an animal with human behavior was the most commonly used format in children's fantasy writing in the mid twentieth century in the United States and Britain. For example, the stories of *A Bear Called Paddington* by Michael Bond and *Stuart Little* by E.B White both include animals behaving like human children and are living with a human family. In the second half of the twentieth century, many stories took a step away from Nesbit's example and started including adult characters in the magical

events. These adult characters though were usually portrayed as innocent in order to contrast other adults, thus offering hope and a sense of safety for the child readers (Bowers 2004, 102, 103).

This type of children's literature modeled on Nesbit's writings led to an increase in magical realist television drama and film for children after 1970s. one of the first to include such content was the British Broadcasting which adapted Nesbit's novels for television and made the Paddington Bear stories into a cartoon series. Additionally many dramas written for children have adopted a magical realist tone. Highly sophisticated film technology allows for the non human characters or magical elements to be portrayed remarkably realistically. (Bowers 2004, 103,104)

Nowadays, instances of magical realism in children's work are many. The perfect example is Isabell Allende's *La Ciudad de los Bestios (City of Beasts)*.

CHAPTER 3

MAGICAL ELEMENTS IN *THE OCEAN AT THE END OF THE LANE*

Detailed descriptions of magical phenomena and objects enhance the presence of an extraordinary world of magical and realistic stories. A perfect example for this is Lettie uses broken non-magical toys such as “doll’s eyes and heads and hands, cars with wheels, chipped cat’s eye glass marbles” (Gaiman 2013, 148) in order to create a magical barrier that Skarhach of the keep cannot pass to trap her in the narrator’s house. For instance, the “snip and stitch” (Gaiman 2013, 127). Technique that Old Mrs. Hempstock uses to change the memories of the narrator’s parents. The technique is described as if Old Mrs Hempstock were merely mending the narrator’s nightgown. The effects though are magical in nature.

The narratives in novel are based on a real world setting with protagonists as ordinary characters. An unnamed narrator, the seven years old boy who lives with his parents and sister in a big house. The novel is settled in the countryside of Essex in the late sixties or seventies. He leads an ordinary life with its hardships. He has no friends and he only has a pet, a small kitten names Fluffy, but it run over by a car. However, the man responsible for death of his cat gives him a new cat, but he doesn’t like it and he can’t forget his beloved cat. He is a boy who loves to read books and he often lost on books. He considers book is safer than humans. He loves more fairy tales. He reads ones that the main characters fight against enemies.

The Hempstock women have magical abilities are portrayed realistically and ordinary. They are described doing their everyday tasks such as take care of their cow “we stopped at a small barn where an old woman much older than my parents, with long grey hair, like combs, and a thin face, was standing beside a cow. Long black tubes were attached to each of the cow’s

treats. ‘We used to milk them by hand’, she told me. ‘But this is easier’” (Gaiman 2013, 25, 26)

The first feature of magical realism, as defined by Faris is the irreducible elements of magic. It contains what Faris refers to as an “irreducible element”. In the former, the element is based on the English folklore and Celtic traditions, whereas in the latter it seems to be more imaginary and make believe. The irreducible elements in the novel can cause magical happenings in the real world. The extraordinary begins and events in novel are presented in the same way as other non-magical ones. Hempstocks epitomized this characteristic. The narrator met Hempstock when he was seven years old. The farmhouse at the end of the lane was home to the Hempstock family. This family includes Lettie, Gennie, her mother and Old Mrs. Hempstock, her grandmother . They are considered as irreducible elements of magical realism as they possess magical powers, something that can’t be defined by science. The origins of Hempstock women and their farm never explained. Though they always claim that came from the “old country” (Gaiman 2013, 1) they never clarify where or what the “old country” was. Thus, the narrator and the readers have accepted them “as a given, accepted but not explained” (Farris 2004, 7)

“ ‘You are in a lot of trouble, young man,’ said my father.

Snip! Snip! Snip! went the black scissors, and the irregular section of fabric that Old Mrs. Hempstock had been cutting fell to the table.

My parents froze. They stopped talking, stopped moving. My father’s mouth was still open, my mother stood on one leg, as unmoving as if she were a shop window dummy”. (Gaiman 2013,128-129).

This movement shows magical events performed by Old Mrs Hempstock. She used mundane objects such as scissors, needles and spools to erase the memories of the narrator's parents. By using these things, she was able to delete the memory of the narrator's parents about the incident in which they tried to drown him in the bathtub. She was also able to turn things around when the narrator's parents arrived at the Hempstock farm. The narrator's parents expected their son would spend the night with the Hempstocks, so they came to give him his toothbrush instead of taking their son home. The supernatural abilities of Hempstock were what caused this incident. The narrator's parents had no idea that their kid had escaped from the house. The occurrences in the narrator's parents' neighborhood defy rational explanation. The irreducible element in the story is portrayed by "fleas" and "varmints", as Old Mrs. Hempstock calls them. The "flea" occurring in the story most is Skarthach of the Keep that is, Ursula Monkton. She was first introduced when strange incidents over money began to occur after the death of an opal miner. First the narrator receives a letter, informing him that he has won twenty-five pounds in Premium Bonds his grandmother gave him at his birth. He was happy because he never won anything like this. Later the same day, the narrator's family gardener digs up a jar of old coins in the garden. The following night, the narrator wakes from a nightmare, choking a silver shilling. The narrator's neighbors also begin experiencing strange dreams and encounters related to money. Later Lettie explains these things to the narrator that the happenings were the result of somebody trying to give people money. It turns out that the somebody is the "flea", Skarthach of the Keep, unnamed at the beginning of the story. The narrator describes the "flea" as "I thought that I was looking at a building at first: that it was some kind of tent, as high as a country church, made of grey and pink canvas that flapped in the gusts of the storm wind, in that orange sky: a lopsided canvas structure aged by weather and ripped by time." (Gaiman 2103, 53). She tries to make people happy by giving money. After encountering the "flea" Lettie begins singing in an unknown language and the "flea" is

quickly defeated or it seems. Instead, she uses the narrator to leave her world by putting a wormhole in the sole of his foot and disguising herself as a worm. The narrator, however, discovers the wormhole. He tries to remove the worm, but it is not entirely successful since it snaps off before he can pull all of it out. He flushes the entire worm down the drain in the bathroom. The hole in his foot immediately being closing, and he no longer gives it any future attention.

The following day, Ursula Monkton appears as the narrator's family's new housekeeper and nanny. The narrator immediately dislikes her and feels uneasy in her presence. Her grey and pink dress reminds him of the "flea", by the way it flaps where there is no wind (Gaiman 2013,71). It quickly became evident that Ursula is no ordinary person. She knows exactly where the narrator is at the all times, even though he is certain she is not watching him, and she can seemingly teleport or at least travel incredibly quickly: "Ursula Monkton was standing just inside the black door of the house to welcome me in, although she could not have got past me. I would have seen. Her hair was perfect, and her lipstick seemed freshly applied" (Gaiman 2013, 77).

The narrator soon realizes what Ursula really is: "a cardboard mask for the thing that travelled inside me as a worm" (Gaiman 2013, 79, 80). In the following days, he is not able to escape her because she knows his every move. One rainy night, after almost being drowned by his father, he finally manages to run away. However, Ursula or rather "the thing that called itself Ursula Monkton" (Gaiman 2013, 109) immediately finds him running through the neighboring fields. She is described as if she is floating, bothered by neither the wind nor the rain. She tries to take him back, but Lettie turns up, forcing her to retreat, and takes the narrator to the Hempstock farm. There, Lettie, together with her grandmother and her mother, comes up with a plan to make the "flea" return to the world she came from. As it comes to an end, Lettie finally reveals the "flea's" true name, Skarthach of the Keep (Gaiman 2013, 160).

She, in turn, transforms back into her original form and tries to leave, but is unsuccessful. Eventually, she is devoured by the hunger birds.

The hunger birds, also called “varmint” by Lettie’s grandmother, refer to themselves as the “cleaners” (Gaiman 2013, 162, 172). They are bird-like creatures that seem to come and “clean” whenever a fantastic being enters the non-fantastic world. The narrator describes them as being jet black and having wings, yet they are not birds, but older. Their black jaws are filled with needle-sharp teeth, and their eyes are burning (Gaiman 2013, 168, 169). Counting them seemed impossible; “perhaps they were from a place where such things didn’t Apply, somewhere outside of time and numbers” (Gaiman 2013, 171).

Apart from the “fleas” and “varmint”, the Hempstock family and their farm can be considered as irreducible elements, as well. The Hempstock women seem to have a way of knowing everything even though they possess no means of having that kind of knowledge. One such example was their knowing the exact details concerning the death of opal miner. They knew how and why he died. Lettie’s mother knows exactly why he committed suicide and can explain in detail how he ran into some issues with gambling and money. In addition, Lettie can recite the letter that the opal miner left behind, word by word. Furthermore, the Hempstock women also seem to be immortal. Old Mrs. Hempstock even claims to remember when the moon was made and we get the feeling that she has been alive since the big bang: “She said she could remember the really old country. She said the really old country had blown up” (Gaiman 2013, 1). This is confirmed when the Narrator is in Lettie’s Ocean of infinite knowledge, and he discovers that her grandmother has witnessed the last Big Bang, as she will do with the next one as well. The duck pond behind the Hempstock’s farm is another irreducible element. The pond is labeled as an ocean by Lettie which hides an extraordinary characteristic beneath its surface. It is filled with infinite knowledge.

Apart from the irreducible element, it shows evidence of the fusing of two realms. The merging of two worlds is much clearer in the *Ocean at the End of the Lane*. There, the non-fantastic world, which resembles ours and in which the narrator lives, is merged with the fantastic one with the “fleas”. The latter is a part of Hempstock farm and, according to Lettie, her family brought it with them when they came from the “old country” (Gaiman 2013, 52). Gaiman describes the fantasy world as a place where the sky was the dull orange of a warning light and the plants were spiky, like enormous, ragged Aloes, and were a dark silvery green, appearing as though they had been pounded from gun-metal. In this world that he and Lettie first encounter the “flea” Skarthach. However, the fantastic creature they meet is not only the Skarthach. They also came upon a “manta wolf”, a floating brown and furry rug-like creature with a mouth filled with many tiny sharp teeth (Gaiman 2013, 50). The building where the Hempstock women live seems to have fantastic properties as well, even though it appears to be just an ordinary farmhouse. The moon, for example, is enchanted by the grandmother to always shine fully on a particular part of the farmhouse. As Lettie explained, “Gran likes the full moon to shine on this side of the house. She says it’s restful, and it reminds her of when she was a girl. [...] And you don’t trip on the stairs” (Gaiman 2013, 140). Some strong indications that the narrator’s world is not only world in existence can also be found when he is submerged in Lettie’s Ocean. There, he finds out that his world is only a small fraction of what exists in the universe:

“I saw the world I had walked since my birth and I understood how fragile it was, that the reality I knew was a thin layer of icing on a great dark birthday cake writhing with Grubs and nightmares and hunger. I saw the world from above and below. I saw that there were patterns and gates and paths beyond the real. I saw all these things and understood them and they filled me, just as the waters of the ocean filled me.” (Gaiman 2013, 192)

The combination of magical and mundane happenings resulted in two contradicting interpretations of events. It creates uncertainty on how to decipher the events. The existence of irreducible magical ingredients is another factor that can cause unsettling doubts. The uncertainty concerning their nature was brought on by the Hempstock as the irreducible ingredient. This hesitation is shared by the protagonist.

‘You Hempstock aren’t people,’ I said.

‘Are too.’

I shook my head. ‘I bet you don’t actually look like that,’ I said. ‘Not really’.

Lettie shrugged. ‘Nobody looks like what they really are on the inside. You don’t. I don’t. People are much complicated than that. It’s true of everybody’

(Gaiman 2013, 149)

This reflects the protagonist's uncertainty regarding the Hempstocks' legal status. Their miraculous ability to modify the circumstance and tremendous knowledge were things that no ordinary person could have. However, Lettie claimed that they, too, were human, just like the protagonist. Despite the lack of explanation for their status, the Hempstock are nevertheless acknowledged as actual individuals that exist in the protagonist's universe.

The readers may have difficulties with their perception of time. The fantastic elements have the characteristics either to manipulate time or to remain unaffected by it.

The Hempstock women seem to be defy time as well. They are untouched by time and give the impression that they have been alive for a long time. They are always ambiguous about their actual age. Old Mrs Hempstock claims to remember when the moon was made, and Lettie insists she is eleven years old:

“How old are you, really? I asked.

‘Eleven’

I thought for a while. Then I asked, ‘How long have you been eleven for?’

She smiled at me”. (Gaiman 2013, 40)

As the narrator returns to Hempstock farm after forty-something years, he meets old Mrs Hempstock and Ginnie Hempstock, who still look the same as they did when he was seven years old. In addition, the narrator is greeted by a black cat with a white spot over one ear. It turns out to be Ocean, the cat he pulled from the ground after he and Lettie were returning from enchanted forest where they met the flea Skarthach for the first time. He brought her back to Hempstock farm after he and his family moved out of their house by the lane.

The phenomenal world contains objective truths that can be found in the real world. The author introduces a geographical setting for the story at the opening of the work. The narrator describes the setting realistically.

“I drove along winding Sussex country roads I only half remembered, until I found myself headed towards the town centre, so I turned, randomly, down another road, and took a left, and a right. It was only then that I realized where I was going, where I had been going all along, and I grimaced at my own foolishness. “(Gaiman, 2013, 3)

Sussex is a historic country of southeastern England. It is the name of an actual location in the real world. By situating the novel in Sussex, it draws on existing knowledge of the county. Additionally, incorporating real locations as a backdrop might inspire knowledge of other things related to it, such as the society, buildings, and other things that can be found

in the real world. To persuade readers that magical happenings occurred, it is crucial to provide a realistic depiction.

According to Lodge, the literary strategy to be used is the magical realists' appropriation of various genres and forms. The adaptation of Western traditions, specifically literary realism and literary fantasy, is where magical realism gets its hybridity. Installation-subversion strategies will be covered in this topic. The first technique, installation and subversion, is to be addressed in relation to the adaptation of different genres and modes. To create realism in magical realist fiction, the installment technique involves using objective fact, while subversion is used to present in the magical happenings. The perfect example for this:

“She put the dressing gown down on the table, in front of Old Mrs Hempstock. Then she pulled out from the front pocket of her apron a pair of scissors, black and old, a long needle, and a spool of red thread”. (Gaiman, 2013, 127)

A dressing gown, a pair of scissors, a large needle, and a spool of crimson thread are examples of commonplace items in the edition. Due to the ease with which those items may be in the real world, it creates a feeling of familiarity. However, these everyday objects are utilized to show magical events as realistic phenomena. After the installation, the subversion procedure continued here.

The magical occurrence is portrayed as commonplace. Ginnie gave a straightforward response when the main character asked Lettie's mother what she did: "Just a little snipping, then a little sewing." It appears that the text is hinting that the Hempstocks' actions were ordinary. It appears that they were only engaging in routine human behavior. However, the protagonist's parents lost all recollection of the incident in the bathroom because of the dressing gown being cut and sewn.

Readers' uncertainty plays a role in deciding how to distinguish magical realist fiction from fantasy fiction. This strategy connects to disturbing doubts, one of magical realism's traits. The event connected to Lettie's Ocean is where this strategy is most commonly used. The first time the narrator saw Lettei's ocean, he discovered it to be about the size of a duck pond. As a result, he started to doubt that it was a duck pond and more likely the ocean. He even confided in Lettie about his reservations about the ocean. In reality, Letteie's ocean was a pond. Readers are unsure of who to believe because of the conflicting accounts provided by the narrator and Lettie.

According to Hegerfeldt, the story is written from the ex-centric focalizer or perspective of characters in marginalised positions in magical realist literature. The narrator, who was recalling his upbringing, viewed the events in the book mostly through his own eyes. Because adults have the ability to govern children, children are typically seen as being less important than adults in magical realist literature. The narrator occasionally made it quite plain how grownups were treating him as an outcast as a child. The narrator believed he could not discuss what happened with anyone, especially grownups, because he woke up choking on a silver shilling. He was aware that what had just happened was real and had actually occurred, but he also understood that no one would believe him. The narrator's reluctance to inform adults about mystical occurrences that had occurred to him confirms that children and adults have distinct viewpoints. When he was younger, he was able to think that magic existed and what had occurred to him was true. He didn't require a logical scientific explanation to describe how the lump in his throat had formed. He was unable to share it with grownups, though. Adults wouldn't believe in magic, he knew. Adults require a logical perspective to explain everything that occurs in this world. As a result, it is clear how differently infants and adults see reality, particularly in relation to magical phenomena.

This method addresses the novel's discussion of the problem of knowledge and knowledge production. When the protagonist's father was questioned about the issue in the novel, the father gave his explanation in the form of both a logical and scientific viewpoint.

‘Just thinking’, I said. Could you have an ocean that was small as a pond?’

‘No’, said my father. ‘Pond is pond-sized, lakes are lake sized. Seas are seas and oceans are oceans. Atlantic, Pacific, Indian, Arctic. I think that’s all of the oceans there are.’ (Gaiman, 32).

This shows how the scientific paradigm is a legitimate one for knowledge. The narrator asked his father if an ocean could be as little as a pond, to which his father emphatically replied, "No." He imparted to the main character knowledge about the ocean as understood by science. While the narrator's father functioned as a spokesperson for the scientific viewpoint, Lettie Hempstock provided insight into an alternative paradigm based on her personal convictions. She responded differently when the narrator asked her the same question about the ocean. She wasn't adamant that an ocean needed to be a specific size to be called an ocean. Even though it went against common sense, she thought her ocean was large enough to qualify as an ocean. The narrator's father and Lettie's explanation of the ocean illustrate that there are two methods to acquire knowledge. The first is founded on science and quantifiable facts and may be referred to as objective knowledge, whereas the second is founded on human belief and can be referred to as subjective knowledge. It follows that both science and faith in this novel perform the same functions, which is to explain how people's perceptions of the world are influenced by their knowledge, both objective and subjective.

The narrator's parents' memories were being manipulated when Old Mrs. Hempstock used the process of naturalisation. She used a needle and spool of red thread to do magic instead of employing fantastical instruments like a magic wand or a magic potion. The

narrator and Lettie's mother have a dialogue in which the mother clarifies that it was merely routine activities. Ginnie Hempstock merely saw it as a routine act of snipping and mending, even though Old Mrs. Hempstock was actually wiping his parents' memories of the occurrence in the bathtub. This demonstrates how the novel's portrayal of naturalisation was done. However, at the same time, from the narrator's perspective, Old Mrs. Hempstock's snipping and mending were still seen as amazing events. He was amazed to learn how his parents' position can be impacted by the snipping stitching exercise. As a result, this event worked as a double mirror, naturalizing the incredible while also super naturalizing the real. The Hempstock perceived the event—the snipping and sewing of a dressing gown—as routine, but the narrator perceived it as surreal because the activity was causing his parent's memory loss.

Magical occurrences are described using figurative language in magical realist literature. Since the events are believed to have occurred, metaphorical language should be regarded literally. Metaphor is one of the figurative language styles used in this book. When the narrator's parents arrived to introduce Ursula Monkton, who was in human form, as their housekeeper, we can notice the use of metaphor. The narrator's heart began to ache as soon as he spotted Ursula. The phrase "my heart hurt" might be interpreted symbolically. If used too symbolically, the phrase can be used to convey negative emotions and sensations like sadness and anguish. But as the narrator made clear, "I mean that literally, not metaphorically," his heart was genuinely hurt. He even gave description about what he felt clearly like "a momentary twinge in my chest". The work employs the literalization technique to persuade readers that supernatural occurrences actually do take place. The metaphor "ocean of knowledge" has often been used to describe large amount of knowledge that are yet to be discovered. In the novel, this metaphor is portrayed literally as the duck pond in

Hempstock's. The pond which Lettie called "ocean" is a body of water under the surface of which infinite amounts of knowledge are located.

Repetition in the novel may be seen in the occurrences that led the narrator to Hempstock farm. Both times, at the beginning of the novel and when he first meets Lettie who brought him to the farm, somebody is passing away. At the opening of the novel, the narrator has just attended a funeral and decided to drive around in his car for a while before going to his sister's house. Another instance of repetition is related to the narrator and him coming to Hempstock's pond. At the end of the novel, as the narrator is joined by Ginnie Hempstock and Old Mrs Hempstock and they all are sitting by the pond. Old Mrs Hempstock told him that he has come to the pond before at least twice. He repeatedly returning to the pond is supposedly Lettie's doing because she wants to check that her sacrifice has not been in vain. This repetition indicates Lettie's magical qualities and how she is able to influence the narrator even though she is not physically there.

Apart from repetition, examples of mirroring can be found in the novel as well. The pond that is Lettie's Ocean is one such instance. Because its dark surface is reflective, it may be seen as one way mirror. On the outside it seems like reflective water surface and gives somebody looking at it the impression that it is simply a normal pond. However, underneath its surface is a different world is hidden which contains a limitless amount of knowledge and one that an individual cannot exist for long periods of time since it would destroy them.

In the novel, realistic details can be seen in descriptions of most magical happenings. After the narrator returns from the forest with the "fleas" with Lettie, he finds a wormhole in the sole of his foot. He goes to bathroom, gets a pair of tweezers and tries to pull the worm out of the hole. The event presented matter of fact is described exhaustively and at great length. A full chapter is devoted to his trying to grab the worm, eventually succeeding and

flushing it down the drain. The description of surroundings is filled with sensory images, emphasizing the realism in magical realism even more. By the way the narrator described what he was doing, the task seems perfectly mundane.

Furthermore, Old Mrs. Hempstock performed a “snip and stitch” technique in order to remake the memories of the narrator’s parents after his father wanted to drown him, which was Ursula’s that is Skarhach’s doing. With the technique, Old Mrs. Hempstock cut a piece of fabric from the narrator’s dressing gown and mended the hole with a red thread. Though the event has magical consequences it is presented realistically and in detail

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Magic reality is a socio-cultural critique involving self-reflexive storytelling through art, photography, film, literature, and music. It was first termed by the German art critic Franz Roh in his work *Magischer Realismus: Probleme der neuesten Europäischen Malerei* (Post-Expressionism, Magic Realism: Problems of the Newest European Painting), *Nach-Expressionismus*. In this work, Roh applies magical realism to artists and the field of interwar European pictorial craft. Roh claims that magical realism is a type of reality that is created via both artistic achievement and representation. Roh claims that magical realism is a subset of realism that lies somewhere between two opposing philosophical axes: one that seeks to maintain a connection to reality as something that is obviously true and understandable, and the other that ventures beyond such knowledge to invent its own fantastical constructs. According to Roh, who offers magical realism as a novel philosophical viewpoint, it will stand firm not because it is insufficient but rather because it is active and aware of its influence.

The influence of Roh's magical realism quickly spread all over the world. The artistic movement had the most noteworthy impact on the Italian writer Massimo Bontempelli. In 1926, he founded the literary journal 900 in which magic realist writings and critiques were published. Magic realism arrived in Latin America in 1920 and flourished primarily as a literary subgenre. In 1927, Jose Ortega y Gasset's *Revista de Occidente*, a Madrid literary journal, published a translation of Roh's work that was only partially completed in Spanish. However, there was one significant translation error from the German original: "realism magico" was added before "post expressionism" in the title. When Roh's article appeared in *Revista de Occidente* in 1928, magical realism made its way to Latin America. However, it

wasn't until Arusto Usler Pietri employed it in his book *Letras y hombres de Venezuela* in 1949 that it was recognized as a purely Latin American phenomenon.

Misconceptions about magical realism and fantasy exist, but critics who analyze magical realist books as fantasy approach the stories differently. Critics view unusual occurrences as fantastical aspects within a realist narrative, while those who analyze magical realism view the same circumstances as commonplace components of a realist story. This difference highlights the minimal distinction between the two names. The phrase and postmodernism were closely related, with frequent changes in 1940s and 1950s Europe and USA. Most commentators agree that it has a widespread connotation in American prose literature.

Wendy B. Faris outlines the five fundamental aspects of magical realism. The first one is irreducible element. The irreducible element, defined by Robert Young and Keith Hollaman, is something beyond Western laws of the universe, such as logic, familiar knowledge, or received belief. It can manifest as people, magical powers, or other real objects, serving as a purpose in realist fiction's magical element. The next characteristic is unsettling doubts. Faris suggests that readers may experience unsettling doubts before categorizing irreducible elements, leading to confusion about magical events in the story, whether they are dreams, hallucinations, or miracles. He states that realistic descriptions create a fictional world resembling our own, often using extensive detail. In otherworldly pragmatist writings, the storyteller provides in-depth explanations of the characters' lives and fantastical events that take place inside genuine realities, such as actual locations, historical events, and political structures. Even the unalterable elements of enchantment might be seen as a characteristic of the wonderful world. In supernatural authenticity, which is a fusion of unearthly and everyday elements, readers may experience the proximity or close convergence of many worlds. These realms can be between human and animal worlds, traditional and

modern, ordinary people and witches, and blur the boundary between fact and fiction.

Magical realism blurs time, space, and identity in fictions, disrupting characters' identities and cultural hybridity, affecting both time and space.

Gaiman's books adopt a post-modernist perspective and framework for reality.

Postmodernism rejects totalizing narratives as a philosophical and cultural paradigm. In contrast, it favors the fragmented and the disconnected and challenges the idea that there is no reality outside of what is depicted. Additionally, it asserts that reality is made up of pictures and signals, rejects elite culture, and is wary of linguistic truth. Neil Gaiman's works have promoted the subjective dimension of reality by placing the carnivalesque in the study. The Bakhtinian concept of funfair places a constantly changing, adaptable, and dynamic reality. The carnival's participation in the wonderful story has elevated the odd interactions between human and non-human characters. As was already established, Gaiman frequently reimagines mythology in his writing, and mythological animals play a significant role in his stories.

The book *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* makes it very evident how magical realism connects to kids and how they have a different perspective on the world. The narrator of this book, who is seven years old, tells the story from his point of view. It was the exact time he encountered the supernatural phenomenon. In the magical realism focalizer, the protagonist was unable to communicate when he encountered extraordinary circumstances, such as waking up choking on a silver shilling. He was unable to even inform his parents about it. He was aware that most grownups had a difficult time accepting something odd. It illustrates how the protagonist viewed reality as a young child. He accepted that what he had experienced was an illusion or dream rather than contesting it. He still thought that those things had happened to him, even if he was unable to explain how the shilling or the worm got inside his foot. But he was aware that grownups would respond differently, particularly in the case of something so improbable.

Each attribute was connected to the others based on the analysis. Due to the integration of the world in which the characters live and irreducible components (such as the Hempstocks, Ursula Monkton, and hungry birds), the worlds of the novel merge. Similarly, the narrator wonders whether Lettie and her family are human or not, and he wonders if Lettie's Ocean is indeed an ocean or just a duck pond. These unpleasant concerns are brought on by the merging of the realms. The irreducible elements, the Hempstock and Ursula Monkton, dominate how the rupture of time, space, or identity is conveyed.

In addition to these characteristics, this book also employs the five fundamental elements of magical realism. The first method is the one that is utilized to create the fantastical world; it entails adapting various genres and styles. A character's portrayal of magical occurrences and his response to them are referred to as the "magical focalizer." The miraculous occurrences in the novel that are supported by science and belief may be explained by the paradigm of knowing. This study demonstrates the existence of two worldviews: one based on subjective perception and the other on objective information. The presentation of "magic" and "ordinary" is a component of destabilization methods. The literalization is that the merging realms really happens, all kind of figurative language that are used in the novel should be taken in literal meaning.

The significance of magical realism and how it relates to everyday life in this book demonstrates how youngsters provide an alternative view of the world. Readers may understand how the narrator was ultimately able to face and conquer his difficulties via the magical occurrences that he encountered, particularly the nightmare and dreadful that were brought on by Ursula Monkton. It encourages readers who are having a hard time to get over their issues or circumstances. This book demonstrates how magical realism was used to study the human mind and how people perceive reality. It demonstrates how the way that adults and children experience the world may vary.

The final point is regarding the role of magical realism. *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* demonstrates how magical realism was used to better understand the human mind and how the character views reality. The novel's magical events have a significant impact on the narrator/protagonist's perspective of reality. The protagonist/narrator also becomes aware of the differences between his parents as adults and himself as a youngster as he deals with these magical events. He can accept these phenomena as his reality despite the fact that they are unexplainable. His parents, on the other hand, have difficulties accepting the mystical phenomenon.

The final point is regarding the role of magical realism. *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* demonstrates how magical realism was used to better understand the human mind and how the character views reality. The novel's magical events have a significant impact on the narrator/protagonist's perspective of reality. In coping with these mystical happenings, the narrator/protagonist can also notice the difference between himself as a child and his parents as adults. He can accept these phenomena as his reality despite the fact that they are unexplainable. His parents, on the other hand, have difficulties accepting the mystical phenomenon. Thus, magical realism in this story depicts the contrasting worldviews of children and adults. Adult viewpoints are frequently influenced by objective knowledge, whereas children's perspectives are mostly influenced by subjective knowledge. Their behaviors and behavior in the world are then influenced by these ideas.

The narration in the novel resembles the most common magical realism narrative techniques. Magical events are presented matter of facts with characters accepting them and rarely giving any comments. The readers are led to acknowledge them as an ordinary part of the story. Furthermore, by using plenty of realistic details when magical events are described the magical realist narrative makes these events appear ordinary and normal. This way, magic and extraordinary events become part of the realistic world.

In conclusion, magical realism as a literary genre has a rich and vivid history. It has been subjected to many attempts of literary critics and authors trying to define it. However, none was successful and consequently there is much confusion surrounding the terms' final definition. It can be seen as an important resource to prepare children for their adult lives. Because magical realist narratives resemble the real world they live in, they can explore them with their imaginations and yet still be in contact with reality. The novel *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* can be seen as such examples. Readers may connect with the nameless narrator and may relate to Lettie, their friend, as well.

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