Conclusion

Magical realism stems from the fact that reality is always probable and this probability occurs because of our subjective description of an incident or event. The subjectivity of a writer's vision can give the stamp of approval to a set of unrealistic events simply as real or truthful. Magical realism dedicatedly performs that task. It does not reflect reality, rather it creates reality. It is a rebellion against absolutism. Because no truth is absolute; the real world is as expandable as our imagination permits it. This way magical realism supplements reality. The following argument will clarify my point. In today's modern society, few people believe in ghosts, but after reading Henry James' story “The Turn of the Screw”, a reader gets confused whether ghosts really exist or not. A major character of that story, a governess genuinely believes in ghosts. Thus James' story may not be conventionally realistic, yet it creates a reality for the readers and that is the governess's willingness to believe in ghosts. This particular version of reality from the point of view of the governess is intensely personal, subjective and more believable. The ghosts are always accepted as real by that particular character in that story. This is magical realism at work. Thus magical realism can make a story or novel more, not less, realistic. It is another way of romanticizing the reality. Here the subject sees reality in a dreamy way and narrates it in a magical way, though it always remains true. Actually, by contorting reality, magical realism does not distort reality as science fiction does, but attempts to present the mystery behind reality and thereby prevents myths, folklore etc. from being relegated to the supernatural realm.
From the chapter I, it becomes clear that magical realism is a popular novelistic genre for the modern as well as the postmodern writers. Today it has become a global phenomenon, enjoying tremendous appreciation and acceptance from writers across the globe. Magical realism marks a recent conceptual development of an old literary genre called romance. The sole aim of this mode of writing is to uncover the layers of truth through magical elements. These are not mere fantasies. The term originated first in Europe during the 1920s in the writings of Franz Roh, a German art critic. It was first developed as a counter-Expressionist movement in post-war Germany known as New Objectivism, whose practitioners depicted the natural world with clarity and detail but infused it with a sense of mystery and strangeness intensified by magic. It was adopted as a narrative device in literature by many Latin American writers during the 1940s. From the 1960s to the present, there has been a strong current of magical realism within the general movement of post-modernism, especially in European and North American literature. It follows the basic tenets of nineteenth-century realism, but at the same time presents mythology, folklore and mysticism as a reaction against that gritty realism. It rejects everything that is traditional or conventional. However, realism is as important as magic in a magical realist novel, as it brings a level of immediacy or involvement to the issues raised by such works. In Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which is the standard bearer of this genre, the description of the story of Macondo from the villagers’ point of view is far more believable than an objective, documentary style of narration. As a result, there is natural love and empathy between the fictitious characters and the readers. The story grows to be extremely personal and hence more believable. Magical realism can provide the writers best of both worlds: the real and
the fantastic. Actually, the fusion of ordinary and extraordinary is found within every human institution or in politics, religion, culture, family, community etc. With the aid of magical elements the writers can throw light on certain new ideas or construct new metaphors through which to view the real world anew. It gives opportunities to address the global issues in a different way. The readers feel attached to the situations or problems highlighted by these works and there lies the subtlety of such works too. The statements made by this genre of novels are magically contorted versions of the truth. The magical elements are quite unusual and they take place in the day-to-day real world and this attracts the readers' attention. It rests on a paradoxical unity of contradictions within the framework of the projected fictional world.

Magical realism is widely used to explore characters' inner worlds, issues of gender, politics and history. It has become a form of global meditation that balances the modern and the traditional, the realistic and the fantastic, the colonial and the colonized or the secular and the religious. This literary trend enjoyed a presence in world literature for hundreds of years. The 21st century readers find it interesting because it deviates itself from the gritty and depressing realism and retells our own stories and allows us to celebrate our common humanity in an innovative way. More recently, it has been theorized with the aid of postcolonial interpretation. This mode is popular in the postcolonial or unevenly developed societies where different cultures and civilizations overlap or mix uneasily and coexist. It genuinely expresses a Third World consciousness. It uses defamiliarizing and subversive mechanism to project anti-totalitarian discourse. Writers like Salman Rushdie, Ben Okri, Kojo Laing, and Robert Kroetsch created a counter discourse in their postcolonial magical realist fictions. Most of these fictions have appeared particularly during the turbulent
historical periods and magic is always projected as a social and cultural corrective
device which motivates the readers to scrutinize the accepted conventions of reality,
causality or materiality operating in a society. Carnivalesque manifestations are the
most common in such novels. The carnival of irreverent behavior, bodily exultation,
laughter or parody is used for various modes of resistance. It offers life outside
officialdom. It is this carnivalesque universe of grotesque realism that helps Bulgakov
to accommodate figures like Woland, Azallo or Bohemath in the overall framework
of *The Master and Margarita* and Grass to introduce Oskar in *The Tin Drum*. So, in
one sense we can say that personal creativity is the norm in this genre of writing.

Magical realism is vastly different from fantasy. Unlike magical realism, fantastic
literature is not reality-based and is set in a different world. The story is completely
imaginary and is purely used for entertainment. But magical realism acts to propagate.

Magical realism has been popular during the twentieth century, but its survival
as equally powerful and fashionable seems vulnerable. Firstly, most of the literary
terms naturally undergo changes of meaning. Many consider magical realism as
thoroughly Latin American. Another argument is that this genre is more popular
among western readers who get an exotic vision of life in these works. It provides
means to escape the hard realities of life and the readers enter into a fantasy world and
find amusement. Indeed, these criticisms bound to crop up. Because, a magical realist
work does not impose a judgemental attitude on either its realist or magical aspects.
The text remains open-ended and has plurality of meaning. So, the readers can
interpret it in their own ways. Careful study reveals that magical realism is equally
popular in many countries outside Latin America like India, Canada, and England. A
section of readers believes in postcolonial magical realism, where the writers put
much emphasis on realism and pragmatism than they do on the magical that is believed to be irrational and encapsulates the colonized. To conclude, the future of magical realism is not uncertain. The genre is spreading to newer parts of the world and is producing other variant forms as a result of creative mix with other landscapes. The debate concerning the relationship between fact and fiction will be a never-ending process and will keep on generating novel ideas and arguments.

In the second chapter, which is dedicated to Bulgakov's novel *The Master and Margarita*, the repressed gains a more dominant and advantageous position and haunts the ordered and safe Soviet world under Stalin. The chapters dedicated to the Master's narrative find their carnivalesque parallels in the other part of the novel that is set in the modern Moscow and is under total control of Woland, the magician. The intrusion of magic reveals the layers of totalitarian madness under the surface skin of normality. The novel engages in rewriting and deconstructing history and myth. It deals with the interplay of good and evil, innocence and guilt, social power and art in a repressed world. Love is another dominant theme. Margarita's love for Master resolves all other vital issues at the end of the novel. Master gets peace and Pilate gets mercy only because of Margarita. The novel can be read as a philosophical allegory, a biting socio-political satire on the Soviet system as well as a Bildungsroman. Magical realism lends helping hand in fulfilling these targets of varieties of interpretations of the novel. It creates dramatic tension in the book. Though not an out and out magical realist novel, yet, *The Master and Margarita* is a major precursor of this genre in Russian as well as world literary history. The novel treats the doings of a narrow circle in Moscow as affairs of universal significance. The skeleton of the novel is the story of Woland, the devil who intervenes with the lives of the common people of
Moscow and plays on their own sins like greed, vanity, pride and cowardice. At The Variety Theatre, they are exposed to the core. Interwoven with the tale of Woland is the love story of Master and Margarita that brings a refreshing gush of wind to the otherwise sordid realities of Moscow story. There is the third strand of the story in the form of a novel that the Master is writing- a retelling of the biblical story of Pontius Pilate and Yeshua-ha-Nostri in the time of the latter’s Crucifixion. This story is told from the point of view of Pilate. He yearns for good but his cowardice compels him to commit vice and punish Yeshua. The realities of a totalitarian regime are pictured more appropriately in Pilate’s story. Fantasy-horror ball of Woland and Margarita is another fascinating piece of the novel where imagination and imagery run wild due to sheer power of Bulgakov’s description. Fact and fiction coexist here in a true magical realist fashion. Woland tempts those who are wicked and reveals their inner selves. Bulgakov also paints a satirical picture of the Stalinist Moscow. Nobody is spared. Moscow literati is satirized in the sequences revolving around the members of MASSOLIT, housing shortage becomes a metaphor for lack of freedom in the repressed society, Berlioz is punished for his baseless atheism. The victory of art over time is epitomized in the figure of the Master, who in spite of all odds emerges winner with his finished novel. Thus the novel interweaves several stories into a unified whole with the help of fantasy and the grotesque and reinforces the victory of good over evil in a metaphorical way.

Similarly, in *The Tin Drum*, Gunter Grass shows an acute consciousness of the war-torn modern society with an essentially experimental, pioneering literary style. He studies the life of common people and the social problems confronting them in the post-war world and advocates keen social reforms. To achieve this goal, he tries to
make magical realist novel an infallible instrument. The narrative technique of the novel is based on the surrealistic style of the earlier German writer Franz Kafka and is closely related to magical realism. Primarily, it is Oskar Matzerath’s odyssey through the nightmare of Nazism. It covers the period from the 1920s through the 1950s and ranges from Danzig to Germany and France. The narrator Oskar is gifted with a magical voice that can shatter glasses and can be used as weapon. In spite of growing mentally, he retains the stature of a three-year old child and that is quite extraordinary and seems unreal. A tin drum that he receives as a gift on his third birthday remains his prized possession and sole companion. It is a political novel that presents a critique of Nazi ideologies of Hitler and emphasizes the futility of war. Oskar is an artist as well as a satirist. He wishes to dismantle the emergent Nazi party as well as their violence and aggression. Grass’s magical and poetic imagery subtly aligns with the political events of that period. War is compared with Oskar’s art of drumming and at the end art defeats war and proves its superiority. Art remains eternal. There are elements of allegory, myth or legend in order to carry out the fantastic schemes of the narrative that will be harmoniously fused within the realistic setting to make it more palpable. The terrors of Nazism and the history of Second World War is so grotesque that they resist operating within the realistic paradigms of representation and resort to the realm of fantasy, steeped in myth, legends and fairy tales. Thus, magical realism indulges in metaphorical language in order to evade political censorship or ban. Though sometimes, Oskar’s insanity compels the readers to questions the reliability of the narrative, yet Grass’ detailed and realistic recreation of the incidents and happenings in each chapter comes vividly to life and ultimately intoxicates them to willingly suspend their disbelief. Actually, in the novel, Oskar is sane and the outside
world is insane, where values are inverted, vice is dubbed as virtue and the tragic becomes comic. The rising tide of anger and outrage against the crimes of Nazi Germany and the charred remains of Auschwitz became the visible symbol of the nation's guilty past and the theme and tone of the novel manifest that aspect, opting for a radical change.

Both Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* and Grass' *The Tin Drum* have shades, hues or tones of magical realism and yield a bumper crop of magical contortion of reality. There is clear parallel between the two texts. Both the writers play with time in order to convey the unpredictability of life. They are engaged in fantastic recreation of history with a realistic presentation of specific political concerns and they make parody a means to overturn the established versions of history. Although many characters in both the novels may seem weird or otherworldly, the backdrop of the novels raise some of the most pressing social, political and economic issues faced by Russia, and Germany. The novels concentrate thematically on the relationship between art and society and portray the dehumanizing effects of authoritarian control. The characters struggle to define their own worlds and their fight is against time, history and fate. The novelists remind us of the limitations of our own real lives and also of the possibility of viewing the world in an entirely different way. In both the novels, the supernatural or magical is used to portray the individual's power against the workings of politics or history. Unreal becomes perfectly possible in both the novels and imagination is the key to escape from all kinds of oppression. Bulgakov and Grass satirize modern societies through a reexamination of the religious past. Bulgakov takes up life in Moscow of his own time in the context of Jerusalem at the time of Christ, while Grass presents the life
story of Oskar with Jesus as well as Satan as a backdrop. Clearly the novels are written with the authors hiding behind the masks of their characters. They deal with the questions of past and present, imperatives of time and space and most importantly the battle between good and evil. They stress on the fact that evil must exist in order to make God or goodness more recognizable. They are often in close proximity. Thus, hybridity becomes part and parcel of human existence. The representation of most of the issues in the novels is similar, although the ways of presenting them are different. They contain many important insights which are applicable to other societies as well. At last, this comparative study establishes the point of globalization of magical realist literature. Bulgakov and Grass are from two distant parts of the world, but their novelistic pursuits help them enter into a solemn bond. The novels are signs of social and literary progress made by the writers in their bid to push all kinds of boundaries in order to create radical literature.

In spite of being elusive or passing through all the trials and tribulations of its journey from imperfection to perfection, magical realism will remain a major trend of literature in the 21st century. Apart from painting and literature, some writers have recently applied this mode of presentation to cinema and advertisements also in a variety of innovative ways and it is gaining tremendous popularity. Magical realism is a marriage between reality and fantasy and it has a social dimension. It does not blindly follow the strict norms of realism without any deviations. The power of any message is increased when we add fantastic details that can be easily imagined by a viewer. Apart from that, we want our own stories to be told or our common humanity to get reflected in a piece of art. Magical realism thrives to fulfil that in an indirect
and innovative way. It is traditional because it is realistic in tone and modern in its spirit as it embraces magic and fantasy to create life's rich tapestry.

*******