Preface

The initial rationale to take up this research study came from my supervisor Dr. Nikhat Taj. An introductory research and investigation highlighted the fact that Angela Carter is one of the lesser known writers in the subcontinent. A dearth of research interest in this area, especially in India, motivated an academic effort in this direction.

Angela Carter has written extensively. She has to her credit novels, short fiction, poetry collection, dramatic works, articles/works of journalism, children's books, non-fiction and radio plays. She has also worked as editor and translator to many works. Two of her works namely *Company of Wolves* (1984) and *The Magic Toyshop* (1987) have been adapted as films and the screenplay for these was written by Carter herself. She is the author of nine novels namely – *Shadow Dance aka Honeybuzzard* (1966), *The Magic Toyshop* (1967), *Several Perceptions* (1968), *Heroes and Villains* (1969), *Love* (1971), *Infernal Desire Machine of Doctor Hoffman aka War of Dreams* (1972), *The Passion of New Eve* (1977), *Nights at the Circus* (1984) and *Wise Children* (1991). However only seven novels - *Shadow Dance*, *Love*, *Several Perceptions*, *The Magic Toyshop*, *Infernal Desire Machine*, *Nights at the Circus* and *Wise Children* have been included in the present study. The selected novels provide opportunity for an exhaustive and in-depth study in Magic Realism and Gothic Tradition. In course of this research work an attempt
has been made to study all the available critical material on Angela Carter so as to give a perspective and relevance to this study.

The two novels that have been left aside are – *Heroes and Villains* (1969) and *The Passion of New Eve* (1977). Both these narratives have similar themes and are futuristic, post-apocalyptic and highly fantastical texts where Carter has skilfully reconstructed the post-holocaust-world for her readers, making them inconsistent with the Magical Realist and Gothic aspects of her novels taken up in this research study.

The thesis follows a simple methodology of organisation. It begins with an Introduction which gives an insight into the life and career of Carter. The Introduction is followed by six chapters and a Conclusion. The first chapter *Understanding Magic Realism, Gothic Tradition and Surrealism* gives an appraisal of the techniques under study along with their historical background. The Introduction together with the first chapter is crucial for understanding the research study. The second chapter analyses three novels of Carter - *Shadow Dance, Love* and *Several Perceptions*. These novels have been clubbed together not by their chronology but because of the similarities and correspondences they share, in their style, thematic concerns, plot as well as their setting of the 1960s England. Hereafter, the chapter division/analysis is based on chronological order. Each chapter has an introduction followed by the synoptic view of the plot of the text under study, a detailed, exhaustive and analytical study of the techniques involved and the conclusion reached.
Maximum effort has been taken to locate the magic realist and Gothic elements in the text. It is possible that certain facets/aspects have been overlooked due to the very complex nature of the study. The capitalisation of the terms – Magic/Magical Realism, Gothic Tradition and Surrealism in the thesis has been applied for the sake of emphasis. Sometimes repetition becomes inevitable due to the very nature of this study. Documentation has been done in accordance to the guidelines of MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers – Seventh Edition as far as possible. A select bibliography at the end lists the books and sources read and consulted for this research work.

It is hoped that the thesis will help widen the recognition and influence of Angela Carter to some degree and be useful for those who are interested in the study of Magic Realism and pave way for further research work in this realm.

(Tasneem Noshi)