

T. C.
FIRAT ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
BATI DİLLERİ VE EDEBİYATLARI ANABİLİM DALI
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI BİLİM DALI

**MAGICAL REALISM: A PATH TO A NEW CHICANA
IDENTITY IN ANA CASTILLO'S *SO FAR FROM GOD***

MASTER THESIS

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**ANA CASTILLO'NUN *TANRIDAN ÇOK UZAK* ADLI ROMANINDA BÜYÜLÜ
GERÇEKÇİLİK: YENİ BİR CHICANA KİMLİNE GİDEN YOL**

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ÖZET

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Ana Castillo'nun *Tanrıdan Çok Uzak* adlı romanında Büyülü Gerçekçilik: Yeni Bir Chicana Kimliğine Giden Yol

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Bu tez Büyülü Gerçekçilik akımının Ana Castillo'nun *Tanrıdan Çok Uzak* (1993) adlı eserinde yansımalarını incelemeyi hedeflemektedir. Büyülü Gerçekçilik, 20. yüzyılda postmodernizmin bir alt dalı olarak gelişmiş ve 1960'lardaki Latin Amerika edebiyatının 'patlama'sından sonra postmodernizmin gelişmesine paralel olarak tüm dünyada kullanılmaya başlanmıştır. Büyülü Gerçekçilik, merkezdeki öncelikli güçlerden uzaklaşıp toplumdaki 'diğer'inin sesi olmayı amaçlayan bir akım olduğundan, postkolonyal, yapıbozumcu ve feminist teori eleştirisinin bu yazım stiliyle yazılan eserlere yaygın olarak uygulandığı görülür. Bu bağlamda, akım Chicana feminist yazarların da dikkatini çekmiş ve onlar tarafından sıklıkla kullanılır olmuştur. Bu tez çalışmasında *Tanrı'dan Çok Uzak* adlı eserde büyü gerçeççilik yapıbozumcu, feminist ve Jung'un arketipsel eleştirisi bağlamında incelenecektir. İncelenecek eser, doğüstü ve mistik olaylar, eski mitlerin kültürel yapıbozuma uğratılması ve kadının ataerkil topluma ve egemen Katolik Kiliseye karşı mücadelesi açısından büyü gerçeççiliğin tipik bir örneğidir. Eserde, büyü gerçeççilik kullanılarak toplumda yeni bir mestizo (melez) kimlik oluşturmaya hedeflenmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Büyülü Gerçekçilik, Ana Castillo, *Tanrıdan Çok Uzak*, Chicana Feminizm, mitler, arketipler, kimlik.

ABSTRACT

Master Thesis

Magical Realism: A Path to a New Chicana Identity in Ana Castillo's *So Far From God*

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This thesis aims to examine reflections of magical realism in Ana Castillo's *So Far From God* (1993). Magical realism has developed as a branch of postmodernism in the 20th century and after the 'boom' of Latin American literature, it has been started to be widely used all over the world as postmodernism has improved. As magical realism aims to decenter the privileged powers of the society and become the voice of the other, postcolonial, deconstructive and feminist criticism theories have been generally applied to the works written in this narrative mode. In this respect, magical realism has attracted the attention of Chicana feminist authors and has been often employed by them. In this thesis, magical realism will be examined in *So Far From God* in relation to deconstructive, feminist and Jung's archetypal criticism theories. The work is a typical example of magical realism in terms of the supernatural and mysterious events, cultural deconstruction of old myths and the struggle of the female against the patriarchal society and dominant Catholic Church. To form a new mestizo consciousness of identity has been the purpose in this work.

Key Words: Magical Realism, Ana Castillo, *So Far From God*, Chicana feminism, myths, archetypes, identity.

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I dedicate this study to my father and mother.

INTRODUCTION

The present thesis aims to examine reflections of magical realism in Ana Castillo's *So Far From God*. Magical realism as a term has been first mentioned in the gloomy atmosphere of Germany after World War I (1914-1918). The German art critic, Franz Roh (1890-1965) has used it to refer to the photograph-like paintings having mystery to be discovered in the background. Later the term has spread from Europe to Latin America.

Alejo Carpentier (1904-1980), a Latin American critic claimed that magical realism is existent in the land of Latin America indigenously. He has claimed that the mysterious and the supernatural elements are used in the myths of their culture. After the 'Boom' in Latin American literature with the release of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's (1928-2014) masterpiece *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967), magical realism has become known all over the world as a movement and narrative mode.

After Latin America, it has arrived in Central America and other parts of the world. As it is a narrative mode which backups the 'other' against the privileged centres, it has been popular amongst the coloured or native authors of the non-western civilizations. Non-western civilizations with their oral traditional culture and matriarchal history and background stand against the written, harsh and dominant male culture of Western society. Therefore, authors who have postcolonial, feminist and deconstructive aims have widely employed magical realism as a weapon against their colonizers and/or suppressors. In this respect, magical realism combines the supernatural and the realistic elements in its narration as an ordinary plot structure.

Magical realism having a stance against the global, privileged male authorities has been used by the Chicana authors. Ana Castillo, who is a Chicana trying to form a new consciousness of identity in the future generations of Chicana/o people has achieved a sarcastic, reforming magical realism in her work which is the starting point of this thesis. This thesis tries to figure out how magical realism helps the communities to survive and restore their old (indigenous) and new (given by their colonizers) identities to form a new mestizo (hybrid) consciousness of identity.

The structure of this thesis depends on two chapters, the first of which is for the theoretical background with sub-chapters and the second chapter consists of three sub-

chapters, each one deals with a different aspect of magical realism. The chapters are followed by the conclusion part and bibliography of the studied literature and autobiography of the author of the thesis.

In Chapter I, the theoretical background will be provided, so that the history and different definitions of magical realism can be seen. After its definitions, the characteristics of the movement which make it different from the other literary movements or genres will be explained, so that the features and aims of the movement will be better understood. The next part will deal with the brief history of Chicana/o literature and movement and in the final part of Chapter I, the literary career and life of Ana Castillo will be explained to make her view as a Chicana author clear.

In the second chapter, reflections of magical realism will be evaluated according to deconstructive, feminist and archetypal criticism. In the first sub-chapter, the most prominent feature of magical realism will be handled, that is, the use of the supernatural. The aim of this part is to explore how the supernatural or spiritual events in the flow of the narration can help to resist the powers of the patriarchy which are hegemonic and suppressive over the female.

In the second sub-chapter, the mythological and historical stories of Chicana archetypes will be explored and with the help of these archetypes, the characters of the work will be examined. Myths are important in magical realism, as they are the basic stones of oral tradition and culture. After the local archetypes, Jungian archetypes will be briefly explained and then how the characters form their *self* will be discussed in this part. Jung also groups the archetypal figures who affect the development of the psyche. These are mother, great mother, father, child, devil, god, wise old man, wise old woman, the trickster, the hero and so on. In this study, the mother and the grandmother archetypes are handled. Jung says that “mother image of a child is not a direct representation of her/his mother, but it is the portrait made or reflected by the potential anima of the child.

In the third sub-chapter, whether magical realism achieves a salvation for *the other* female or causes a catastrophe for them in the end will be focused on. Each character’s analysis will be ended according to these two aspects. It is essential to comprehend and find out if magical realism is able to re-shape a new identity or not.

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. The History of Magical Realism and Its Definitions

Magical (or magic) realism refers to the literature in which the elements of the marvelous, the mythical or the dreamlike are injected into an otherwise realistic story without breaking the narrative flow. However, it has been defined in slightly different ways according to its founders and most of the literary terms resources. Magic realism is explained as “a kind of modern fiction consisting of fabulous and fantastic events that take place in a narrative maintaining the ‘reliable’ tone of an objective realistic report” (Baldick, 2001: 128). The term has extended to the works of very different cultures by surpassing the limitations of realists and using myths, fables and folktales to narrate the social events. In *American Heritage Dictionary*, magical realism is chiefly “a literary style or genre originating in Latin America that combines fantastic or dreamlike elements with reality” (Soukhanov, 2000: 4349). According to *The Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature*, magic realist novels have generally a strong narrative drive, in which they use the realistic details with the ‘unexpected’ and ‘inexplicable’ that is, “they contain the elements of fairy story or mythology together with everyday actions and details” (Drabble, 2000: 629).

Starting from 1920s and becoming more and more popular throughout the decades, magical realism is defined under the terms like ‘magic realism, magical realism and marvelous realism’. These three terms are related to each other with some differences according to the initiators of the terms and their locations in the world. To comprehend magical realism precisely, the history of the term and the narrative mode it refers to should be examined by focusing on the definitions. The story of the mentioned terms above is a complicated one spanning eight decades with three principal turning points and many characters. The first period is set in Germany in the 1920s, the second period in Central America in the 1940s and the third period, beginning in Latin America in the 1950s continues internationally to this day. These periods are linked to each other by literary and artistic figures who affected first Europe, from Europe to Latin America, and from Latin America to the rest of the world. The German art critic Franz Roh

(1890-1965) from the 1920s, the Italian writer Massimo Bontempelli (1878-1960) from the 1920s, the mid-20th-century Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier (1904-80), the mid-20th-century Latin American literary critic Angel Flores (1900-1992) and the late 20th-century Latin American novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez (1928-2014) are the most influential characters who help magical realism to become known and read all over the world. These critics and writers have the ‘supernatural’ element and everyday reality in common, but their handling the supernatural is different from each other. As for Roh, who is the European initiator, it is an artistic style of painting, but Carpentier who is the prominent initiator of the style in Latin America, thinks that ‘magic’ existed in the culture of Latin America to be used in literature with its myths and folkloric elements.

According to the consensus amongst the majority of the critics dealing with literary style, the term was first introduced by the German art critic Franz Roh to refer to a “new form of post-expressionist painting during the Weimar Republic” (Bowers, 2004: 8). Weimar Republic was the unstable era of 1919-1923. This was just after the German defeat in the First World War and Kaiser’s abdication and flight into exile in 1918. It was a period of political violence during which the Minister of Reconstruction was assassinated in 1922 and extreme economic difficulty due to the destruction of Germany’s economy of by the war. Democratically distanced from the rest of Europe and caught between the demolition of their old world and the uncertainty of the future, a desire for ‘*Sachlichkeit*’ (matter-of-factness) was the growing focus of the nation (Bowers, 2004: 10). As the living conditions were hard, and the political instability made people depressed, they wanted to see the world from a new and objective perspective taking them away from the aftermaths of the war. As a result, Roh wanted to define and create a new artistic style with the phrase ‘*magischer realismus*’ - instead of which he will use ‘new objectivity’ (*neue sachlichkeit*) later- in his essay called “Magical Realism: Post-expressionism”, which is in German, and was published in 1925. In his essay Roh explains magical realism as a return to realism from a more abstract art style expressionism in painting. According to Roh, magical realism deals with the objects in a new and enthusiastic way by admitting and applying some features of expressionism that has focused on fantasy. He declares his ideas in these lines:

Before, people were not all devoted to the object: they took the exterior world which art molds and takes for granted. In making what

was formerly accepted as obvious into a problem for the first time, we enter a much deeper realm, even though some of the results may seem inadequate to us. This calm admiration of the magic of being, of the discovery that things already have their own faces, means that the ground in which the most diverse ideas in the world can take root has been reconquered- albeit in new ways (Roh, 1925: 20).

Here Roh explains that before the war people were not interested in the object referring to ‘expressionism’ which was a popular modernist movement in painting and poetry and also popular during the Weimar Republic, which is the name of the government in Berlin. Expressionism presents the world from a rather subjective perspective and distorts it to affect the people emotionally and evoke moods and ideas in them. In his essay, he uses the term ‘*magischer Realismus*’ that is translated as ‘magic realism’ to explain a kind of painting that differs at a great extent from its predecessor (expressionist art) in its attention to accurate detail, a smooth photograph-like clarity of picture and the representation of the mystical non-material aspects of reality. Roh wants to get away from the abstract and emotional side of expressionism. Roh counts more than fifteen painters in Germany at his time to illustrate the form, including Otto Dix, Max Ernst, Alexander Kanoldt, George Grosz and Georg Schrimpf whose paintings are very different from each other. While some of them like Otto Dix and George Grosz were disregarding the traditional and realistic perspective, Alexander Kanoldt had a focus on traditional still-life objects. These artists tried to present their own exterior world in Germany after the war. Irene Gunther in her essay “Magic Realism, New Objectivity, and the Arts during the Weimar Republic” explains the ‘*Neue Sachlichkeit*’ in these lines:

Especially in the German context, Neue Sachlichkeit was an art of its time: the visible world of urban life, night life, crowded streets, dirty cities, workers, machines and factories, as well as of the alienated individual placed in a modern world he could neither fathom nor control (Gunther, 1995: 43).

The artists aimed to reveal their inner life with the depiction of what is familiar during the instable and tense era of the Weimar Republic. With a cold and clear depiction of the objects, they tried to hide the intuitions in their paintings existing in the picture just as a ‘mystery’ or ‘magic’. Roh says that by looking and drawing the ‘real’ world in a new and magical style, a new kind of objectivity is created. He tells these ideas as follows:

New Objectivity is something more than the simple respect for the objective world in which we are submerged. In addition, we see juxtaposed in harsh tension and contrast the forms of the spirit and the very solidity of the objects, which the will come up against if it wishes to make them enter its system of coordinates. The spirit cannot show itself in the open with such facility and speed as Expressionism thought it could; in the end, Expressionism aimed at disrupting the world as it existed in the structure of the Self, which in turn resisted such disruption.
(Roh, 1925: 22)

Here Roh again tries to determine one characteristic different from those of the influential movements of expressionism and surrealism that present their inner world. For Roh, the most important characteristic of the magic realist painting was that the mystery of the concrete object needed to be caught through painting realistically: ‘the thing, the object, must be formed a new’ that is, the materialistic world should be on the foreground. With this principle, Roh was expecting to lead the artist to take the psychoanalytical effects of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and G. Carl Jung (1875-1961) from Surrealism and to represent the object clearly with all its ‘magical, amazing meaning’ (Bowers, 2004: 11). This means that Roh hoped the artist to show the interior life of humans while telling it through depictions of material world in his magic realist painting. “For the new art, it is a question of representing before our eyes, in an intuitive way, the fact, the interior figure, of the exterior world” (Roh, 1925: 24). The inner and emotional sides of the human beings are shown by means of the details of the exterior world. Actually, Roh’s ‘magischer realismus’ is a combination of realism and expressionism, that’s why his essay contains the name ‘post-expressionism’. Expressionism is hidden in the details of a realistic context.

With his ideas and their implications, Roh influenced the literary figures in Italy and Latin America apart from the field of painting. In Italy Massimo Bontempelli (1878-1960), influenced first by surrealism then by the German magic realism, founded the magazine called *900. Novecento*, which was published both in French and Italian to make it Europe-wide, in 1926 and focused on the magic realist writing and criticism. Bontempelli was different from Roh as he applied these ideas to writing. He was affected by fascism and hoped to inspire the Italian nation with magic realist writing in order to make the Italian culture more international in outlook (Bowers, 2004: 12). Bontempelli was trying to build a collective consciousness “by opening new mythical and magical perspectives on reality” (Dombroski, 1996:522). He was getting around the fantastic, magic realist and surrealist writing in order to evoke nationalistic feelings in the Italian people.

In Latin America, Roh provided a notable influence on the development of magic(al) realism. In 1927, the chapters of his essay that are dealing with magic(al) realism were translated into Spanish and published in Madrid by *Revista de Occidente* under the title of *Realismo Magico*. Latin American writers such as Miguel Angel Asturias (1899-1974) and Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) were influenced by the essay. Besides Roh’s influence, another important motive for the development of magic (al) realism in Latin America was the post-expressionist and surrealist Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. Two important writers and diplomats are prominent: French-Russian Cuban, Alejo Carpentier (1904-1980) and Angel Flores were strongly affected by the artistic movements in Paris in 1920s and 1930s.

Carpentier, a novelist, essayist and also musicologist, first used the term ‘lo real maravilloso’ that is ‘the marvelous real’ in the prologue (reprinted in Zamora and Faris, 1995) of his magic realist novel *El reino de este mundo* (*The Kingdom of this World*) (1949) and explained that ‘the marvelous real’ apart from Roh’s magic realism, arose out of a Latin American context:

Because of the virginity of the land, our upbringing, our ontology, the Faustian presence of the Indian and the black man, the revelation constituted by its recent discovery, its fecund racial mixing [mestizaje], America is far from using up its wealth of mythologies. After all, what is

the entire history of America if not a chronicle of the marvelous real?
(Carpentier, 1995: 88)

According to him, with its mixtured culture of Indians and black people, the whole history of Latin America consists of the mythologies of these people and this forms the marvelous real. In his novel *The Kingdom of This World*, he tells a historically known slave rebellion in Haiti in the 1800s that is Haitian Revolution. During the narration, he uses many elements of African American cultural and belief practices, especially voodoo. His characters are shapeshifters, changing at will, and can fly when they die. The protagonist, Ti Noel, has learnt voodoo from his adviser, Mackandal, to make himself more powerful during the revolt. Carpentier achieves to tell a real event from the eyes of the slaves who are the repressed ones by means of their cultural practices that are the marvelous real in his work. He aims to combine the reality and mysterious practices which are in the core of current magical realism. With the help of the mysterious and magical happenings, he makes the reader aware of a historical event from a different perspective.

Carpentier later in his essay called “The Baroque and the Marvellous Real” goes on explaining the term “the marvelous real” instead of Roh’s “magical realism” and says again that this style descends and flourishes from Latin America. Carpentier says that Roh’s words are only associated with the art of painting, whereas his definition belongs to and tells Latin America (Ozum, 2009: 16). As he witnessed the European surrealism, he felt a need for art to tell the non-material aspects of life but also saw the differences between European and Latin American contexts. He used the term ‘marvelous realism’ that is ‘lo real maravilloso Americano’ in Spanish to describe a concept that could represent for him the mixture of differing cultural systems and the variety of experiences that create an extraordinary atmosphere, alternative attitude and differing appreciation of reality in Latin America (Bowers, 2004: 13).

Carpentier in his essay also talks about the works of the artists who are said to be magical realists by Roh. Henri Rousseau, Balthus and Marc Chagall are among these artists. He says that they had drawn images which are impossible in their paintings like an Arabian sleeping in a desert and a lion standing by him, a flying colourful cow in the sky, or musicians among the clouds. All these images are parts of reality for him and he called them “oneiric” or “dreamlike” and the artists as surrealist. Another surrealist

artist exemplified by Carpentier is Salvador Dali. He says that the reality of these artists consists of only a “manufactured mystery”. However, the magical reality is a weird or strange but not extraordinary reality that always exists in Latin America. To relate this to Latin American literature, he uses the term “baroque” which comes from an artistic style in the 17th and early 18th century that is very dynamic and overtly emotional. He explains that Latin American baroque results from the “indigenous people’s architecture and visual art, and in particular its exuberance of detail and grandiose scale” (Bowers, 2004: 34). He adds that as the baroque style defines the life style of the public, then it can be used to define its literature which is rich in detail and ornamentation. As a literary term; baroque includes the binary oppositions of life and death. He points out that the 19th century history of Latin America is much more interesting, rich and baroque than the history of Europe and it contains lots of baroque stories that can be narrated. At the end of his essay he remarks that the language of these stories can reflect the magical realism and the authors of this type are actually historians and translators of the “reality in Latin America”. His goal in his essay is to encourage other writers to have their inspirations from their own land not from Europe, as their continent is richer than Europe in terms of cultural practices and mythological stories. Therefore; Carpentier’s artistic enterprise in the forties became a search for origins, and the recovery of history and tradition (Bowers, 2004: 35).

A new term ‘magical realism’ appears in criticism after the 1955 essay “Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction” by the critic Angel Flores. Magical realism is a term which is the combination of magic realism and marvelous realism, that is, magical realism is a form of writing dealing with the mysterious in a cultural context. This kind of writing is a matter-of-fact depiction of magical happenings. According to him, magical realism was an “amalgamation of realism and fantasy” (Flores, 1955, 112). The supernatural takes place in the ordinary lives of the characters, and the author reflects this situation to the reader objectively. Flores points out that magical realism actually goes back to Jorge Luis Borges and Franz Kafka (1883-1924) and it continues under different titles until 1955 (Flores, 1955: 112-113). According to Flores, this theory flourished between the years 1940-1950 in Latin America in the leadership of Borges who was under the influence of Kafka (Flores, 1955: 113).

It is important to point out that Flores did not admit Carpentier for bringing Roh’s magic realism to Latin America, but he argues that magical realism dates back to

the romantic realist tradition of Spanish language literature and its European counterparts. In order to prove this thesis, Flores created a new history of magical realism that descends from the 16th century Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547-1616). Despite the fact that it was written three hundred years ago, the characters and the plot in *Don Quixote (1605)* makes the novel compatible with the idea of magical realism. *The Dictionary of the Literature of the Iberian Peninsula* explains that “the opposition between mad, book-inspired, idealistic knight and his sane, pragmatic, materialistic squire appears to be absolute at the beginning of their relationship” (Bleiberg et al. 1993: 383). During the book Don Quixote wars with windmills that he believes to be the knights he must defeat. Flores bases his magical realist interpretation on Don Quixote’s belief in what he thinks and sees is absolute, that is real but can be seen by his companion, the squire Sancho and the reader differently. Besides *Don Quixote*, Flores was also inspired by Kafka’s *Metamorphosis* (1915), a realist story of a man who finds himself an insect when he gets up one morning and goes on to live with his family, adjusting to his new appearance as if it were an unalterable part of reality.

Borges is often admitted as the father of modern Latin American writing and a precursor to magical realism. He is considered as a real magical realist writer only by Flores, who emphasizes the influence of Borges to the extent of claiming that his 1935 collection of short fiction *Historia universal de la infamia (A Universal History of Infamy)* is the first example of Latin American magical realist writing (Flores, 1955: 113). Bower says that Borges is a perfect example for Flores’ theory that magical realism is influenced by European literature. Borges himself was influenced by Kafka, whose realist writing was on the verge of surrealism, and also he was aware of Roh’s ideas while he was writing his essay called “‘El arte narrativo y la magia’ (Narrative Art and Magic)” in 1932.

On the other hand, Luis Leal in his essay with the same title like Flores’ (1967), criticizes him for including the authors who are not related to the theory. For him, magical realism comes from neither Borges nor Kafka. He supports the explanations of Franz Roh in his article. According to him the first author in Latin America using the term ‘magical realism’ is Arturo Uslar Pietri (1906- 2001). In his book called ‘*The Literature and Men of Venezuela*’ Pietri handles the human beings of the region as a mystery surrounded by realist objects (Leal, 1967:120). According to Leal, the writer of

magic realist texts deals with the objective reality and attempts to discover the mystery that exists in objects, in life and in human actions, without resorting to fantastical elements. Instead of creating a text where the principles of logic are rejected and the laws of nature reversed, magic realist narratives, in his view, give an illusion of unreality (Spindler, 1993: 78). The mystery in the text is created through senses.

Leal points out that for Borges, the mood of Franz Kafka's works is to create improbable situations, and this attitude of the author toward realism cannot be accepted as 'magical' (Leal, 1967:120). Leal says that Gregor Samsa's getting up as a cockroach and not being able to consent his being in the novel *Metamorphosis* has nothing to do with magical realism. However, the event in the novel is very strange to be experienced in daily lives and in magical realism, the strange events and the characters' reactions to them are very important. According to Leal not all extraordinary events can be associated with the magical realism; but if the reactions of the other characters who are the members of Samsa's family are handled, it can be said that an extraordinary event as normal in time and as this acceptance of extraordinary experiences in daily life is a feature of magical realism, we can say that *Metamorphosis* contains the elements of magical realism. At the end of the novel the characters change their attitude and begin to think about their future and find themselves good jobs. Tzvetan Todorov in his book *Fantastic: A Structuralist Approach to the Literary Genres* (2004) says that Kafka's novel distinguishes itself from the other fantastic stories and adds that there is an impossible event in the novel, but this becomes a probable situation during the flow of the narration in a paradoxical way. At this point, Kafka's work both contains an extraordinary event and a normal reaction to this event. There occurs to be the supernatural but for the reader it does not consist of unacceptable features. Here, Todorov distinguishes the concept of Kafka's fantastic from general fantastic. General fantastic first admits the reality then conflicts with it. Todorov states that Kafka uses the supernatural as a piece of the plot. In Todorov's essay, "supernatural" takes place in the intersection of the 'fantastic' and 'magical realism' as literary genres. They differentiate according to the author's mood and narration style (Ozum, 2009: 20).

Leal explains in his essay that magical realist narration should particularly give importance to the mysterious relationship between the character and his environment. He, like Roh, thinks that magical realism's only aim is to identify the reality and the mystery that palpitates behind it:

Magical realism is more than anything else, an attitude toward reality that can be expressed in popular or cultured forms, in elaborate or rustic styles in closed or open structures. In magical realism the author confronts the reality and tries to untangle it to discover what is mysterious in things, in life, and in human acts. The principle thing is not the creation of imaginary beings or worlds but the discovery of the mysterious relationship between man and his circumstances. In magical realism key events have no psychological or logical explanation. The magical realist does not try to copy the surrounding reality or to wound it but to seize the mystery that breathes behind things (Leal, 1967: 119-123).

After his definition, he shows Arturo-Uslar Pietri, Angel Asturias, Alejo Carpentier, Juan Rulfo, Felix Pita Rodriguez as true magical realists trying to catch the mystery behind the reality. As it is seen here, magical realism has a different perspective of traditional reality in the external world, it tries to present the reader alternative realities.

Phillip Swanson in his book *Latin American Fiction* (2005) mentions that the movement of New Narrative in 1940s and 1950s aiming to use different experimental narrative techniques to present reality, becomes significant with the 'Boom' in the 1960s after the Cuban Revolution. He says that Cuban Revolution of 1959 helped Latin America foster a sense of cross-national subcontinental identity, identification, community amongst different Spanish American authors. The Boom is a period that marks the period when Latin American, or more particularly Spanish American fiction became visible internationally for the first time. He says that the era starts by means of Biblioteca Breve Prize of the Barcelona-based Seix Barral publishing house when it was given to the young Peruvian Mario Vargas Llosa (1936-) for his novel *The Time of the Hero* (formally published in 1963) in 1962 and ends with the suspension of the prize in 1970. The New Novel of Latin America became popular in Europe via the founding of a literary journal called *Mundo Nuevo* (*New World*) in Paris in 1966. This journal had a very important role in raising consciousness about the Latin American fiction in the world. He mentions the writers who are known as the Big Four during the Boom: Julio Cortazar (1914-1984), Carlos Fuentes (1928-2012), Mario Vargas Llosa (1936), Gabriel

Garcia Marquez. Among these authors Marquez became the shining star of the magical realism with his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in 1967 (Swanson, 2005: 71-75). The novel is about the history of Buendia family living and ruling in the town of Macondo for over one hundred years. Throughout the story elements of supernatural are used for the creation of an alternative reality by the reader. Macondo symbolizes Colombia and by means of the violent events in the story, the author tries to make the reader aware of the Latin American history and form a new consciousness about its history. Swanson says that the novel enables the reader to create his or her own reality by using the free play of the imagination (Swanson, 2005: 74). He shows the opening of the novel as an example to invite the reader to a fictional new world:

In the small room to the side, whose walls were filling up little by little with unrealistic maps and fabulous drawings, he taught them to read and write and do sums, and he spoke to them about the marvels of the world, not only up to the point his knowledge could reach, but forcing the limits of his imagination to incredible extremes. (Marquez, 2010: 21)

Here the author tells the reader that he can go beyond the limits of his imagination in his usage of the supernatural. It is seen that this foreshadowing is true, as a young girl ascends into heaven or a priest flies after drinking a cup of hot chocolate. The supernatural is presented as normal in the story. The narrator of the novel is a gypsy called Melquiades who writes his own manuscripts about the novel. This is the postmodern feature of the text commenting on itself and it is creating a new kind of reality different from the traditional realist texts. By means of defamiliarisation of objects like ice, magnets, false teeth, gramophones, the magic realist author achieves a new sense of reality. Swanson explains the function of the distinction between reality and fantasy as a matter of cultural assumptions. He mentions that the text privileges the perspective of a rural and isolated community and adds that the fantasy in the novel defies the Eurocentric views of Latin America in a cultural context. Swanson explains that the author frees the imagination of the readers in order to provide them with a new understanding of their identity and history of Latin America (Swanson, 2005: 75).

During and after the Latin American Boom, magical realism has become known throughout the world as the narrative mode of the cultural awakenings in the

postcolonial writings of third world countries. It always has the aim of voicing the suppressed ones against the privileged and ruling ones in the society; therefore magical realism has become a field of feminist and postmodernist writers.

Another critic William Spindler in his essay called “Magic Realism: A Typology” (1993) classifies the debates on the attitude of magical realism towards mystery and the supernatural into two contradictory usages. He says that the first one is the original one initiated by Roh and supported by literary critics like Luis Leal, Anderson Imbert, and the United States critic Seymour Menton. This usage refers to a kind of literary or artistic work which presents reality from an unusual perspective without transcending the limits of the natural, but which induces the reader or the viewer a sense of unreality. As a style, this kind of magic realism presents the natural and the ordinary as supernatural, while structurally not including the supernatural in the narration. The second usage which is the current one, describes texts where two opposing perspectives of the world (one is rational, the other is irrational or one is enlightened, the other is primitive) are presented as if they were not contradictory, by applying to the myths and beliefs of ethno-cultural groups for whom this opposition does not occur (Spindler, 1993: 78). This usage is the one popular in Latin American fiction and accepted as the synonym of Carpentier’s ‘marvelous real’. Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Juan Rualfo, Carlos Fuentes, Isabel Allende are among the authors who uses this kind of magical realism. As a style, this type of magical texts presents the supernatural as normal and ordinary in a matter-of-fact way. It is essential for the supernatural to exist in these texts to become magical realist.

On the other hand, Spindler also adds that some of the works of the authors mentioned above can be seen as an example of the first usage, while some others are shown as the important texts of the second type. For instance, the first usage leaves out Marquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) because this book contains the supernatural as an ordinary and normal element in the narration and the second usage exclude his *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (1981) as it is about the death of a young in a town which is known by the most of the characters in the book, but cannot be prevented. Throughout the book, his death is given the reader as a mystery to be solved in the end, but nothing that is extraordinary takes place during the flow of action. Therefore, in his essay Spindler categorizes the types of magical realism into three

groups according to their handling the supernatural and the attitude of the characters and also the readers: Metaphysical, anthropological and ontological magic realism.

Metaphysical magic realism is found in texts that induce a sense of unreality in the reader by the technique of defamiliarisation, by which a familiar scene is described as if they were unknown but without dealing explicitly with the supernatural (Spindler, 1993: 79). The result is often an uncanny atmosphere and the creation within the text of a disturbing impersonal presence, which remains implicit, very much as in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902) or Henry James' *The Turn of The Screw* (1898) and also in Kafka's *The Castle* (1926). For instance, *Heart of Darkness*, follows one man's nightmarish journey into the interior of Africa. Aboard a British ship called the Nellie, three men listen to a man named Marlow recount his journey into Africa as an agent for the Company, a Belgian ivory trading firm. Along the way, he witnesses brutality and hate between colonizers and the native African people, becomes entangled in a power struggle within the Company, and finally learns the truth about the mysterious Kurtz, a mad agent who has become both a god and a prisoner of the "native Africans." After "rescuing" Kurtz from the native African people, Marlow watches in horror as Kurtz succumbs to madness, disease, and finally death. Marlow's decision to support Kurtz over his company leaves readers wondering about his moral integrity, and possibly asking the question: "He did WHAT?!" The novel closes with Marlow's guilt-ridden visit to Kurtz's fiancée to return the man's personal letters. The novel has a gloomy and uncanny disturbing atmosphere making the reader think about the mysterious relationship between the colonizers and the colonized people in Africa. Although the events are first told the reader by an unnamed character, later it is told by the central character, Marlow, who is a representative of the colonizing world, the author achieves to question his morality and the attitude of the colonizers towards native African people through first person narration which exists as a mystery in the flow of events.

In anthropological magic realism, the narrator usually has two voices. Sometimes he depicts from a rational point of view (the realist component) and sometimes from that of a believer in magic (the magical element). This antinomy is resolved by the author adopting or referring to the myths and the cultural background (the collective unconscious) of a social or ethnic group: the Maya of Guatemala, in the case of Miguel Asturias (1899- 1974), who is known with his interest in the culture of the ancient Mayan people; the black Haitian population in Carpentier; and small rural

communities in Mexico and Colombia in Marquez. In anthropological magic realism, the developing countries with their cultural and mythological background are in the center and this makes this kind of magic realism especially popular in non-western societies. Spindler remarks that magic realism is more powerful in the “periphery” (Latin America, Africa, the Caribbean) than in the “core” (Western Europe, the USA), because the usage of collective myths acquire greater importance in the creation of new national identities. He also adds that pre-industrial beliefs still have a significant role in the socio-political and cultural lives of developing countries which make the magic realism a movement of the “periphery” rather than the “core”. In these non-western societies, magical beliefs and popular cultures are as important and fundamental as Western science and rationality (Spindler, 1993: 82).

On the contrary to the anthropological magic realism, Spindler says that ontological magic realism resolves the conflict without applying to any particular cultural view. This “individual” kind of magic realism presents the supernatural in an objective way as if it did not oppose to the reason, and the author does not make any explanations for the unreal events in the text. Mythical imagination of non-western societies does not take place in the narration. The author does not worry about convincing the reader, so the word “magic” here is associated with inexplicable, fantastic occurrences which contradicts the logic of the natural world, and have no reasonable explanation (Spindler, 1993: 82). The narrator in that kind of magic realism is not surprised, disturbed or skeptical of the supernatural. According to him, they are a part of everyday reality. The factual or objective style used in the description of impossible events is just the opposite of defamiliarisation in metaphysical magic realism. Kafka’s *Metamorphosis* (1916) and Carpentier’s *Journey Back to the Source* (1944) are shown as examples (Spindler, 1993: 82).

Consequently, magical realism is a narrative mode which has different definitions for critics. The key words for its definition are ‘the real external world told in detail’ and ‘the supernatural’ that are given to the reader together. For instance, for Roh, magic realism is used in painting to present the mystery lying behind the true objects. However, Carpentier thinks the marvelous real is a cultural phenomenon that naturally exists in the land of Latin America and he uses the mythic and supernatural elements to awaken the inhabitants of Latin America to be aware of their own history and culture. Roh’s definition for magic realism is also used in writing, but in this kind

of writing there is mystery but not the supernatural told in an uncanny atmosphere, like Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*, or Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Magical realism gains its worldwide fame by means of the Latin Boom in 1960s and Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is accepted as the masterpiece of it as it handles the of Macondo with a different perspective of reality, presenting it together with supernatural elements to make the reader have a new consciousness about the history of his country. Magical realism has different types according to its narration and the usage of the supernatural. Metaphysical magical realism creates a sense of unreality in the reader with an uncanny atmosphere just as in *Heart of Darkness*. In anthropological magical realism, the narrator has two voices, sometimes he believes in magic and sometimes not. The conflict in the narration is solved by the author with references to the myths of cultural elements to explain the supernatural. Marquez's, Asturias's and Carpentier's book are examples of this genre. In the ontological magical realism the narrator tells the supernatural in a matter-of-fact way and he is not surprised or disturbed by it. The author does not explain the magical happenings to the reader. Kafka's *Metamorphosis* can be shown as an example of this genre. Magical realism has been widely used by the writers who are telling the story of the 'other' who is suppressed in the society. Most influential authors of magical realism are, Colombian Gabriel Garcia Marquez, African-American Toni Morrison (1931-), British-Indian Salman Rushdie (1947), and English Angela Carter (1940-1992), Nigerian Ben Okri (1959), and Mexican- American Ana Castillo(1953).

1.2. Magical Realism as a Distinguished Narrative Mode

In order to understand magical realism, its relationship with the other literary genres and terms like realism, surrealism, the fantastic and postmodernism should be examined. In order to begin with realism, it is important to define what is meant by magic and realism separately in magic(al) realism. According to Maggie Ann Bowers, in magic realism *magic* refers to the mystery of life; in marvelous and magical realism, it refers to any extraordinary occurrence and particularly to anything spiritual or unaccountable by rational science. Magical realist writing includes ghosts, disappearances, miracles, extraordinary talents and strange atmospheres with the assumption that something extraordinary really has happened (Bowers, 2004: 19).

Realism flourished when the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle's concept of *mimesis* became popular in the mid-19th century and it has still been widely recognized. Aristotle claims that the act of reflecting the real life in art, is a natural instinct of humans. He explains that art is a way of learning the universal truths of life. So, the art itself must be close to the real appearance of the objects or events while depicting this to the reader or to the viewer (Bowers, 2004: 20). The artist shows or draws the objects in realism as if he was handling a mirror. In the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* realism is defined as a "mode of writing that gives the impression of recording or 'reflecting' faithfully an actual way of life" (Baldick, 2000: 184). Realism is loyal to positivist and rational sciences, so everything is told in detail and has a reasonable explanation. Realism is generally associated with the tradition of 19th-century novel of middle class or lower class, in which the problems of ordinary people in unremarkable circumstances are rendered with close attention to the details of physical setting and to the complexities of social life. The most famous works of realism in the 19th century are Honore de Balzac's *Lost Illusions* (1837-1843), Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1857) and George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871-2). In these works, the author was expected to 'show' rather than to 'tell' the reader an interpretation of reality. The authors told the familiar things or events to the readers to engage their interest with their realistic vision. This idea changed in the 20th century as David Grant explains, "Realism is achieved not by imitation, but by creation, a creation which working with the raw materials of life, absolves these by the intercession of the imagination from mere factuality and translates them to a higher order" (Grant, 1970: 15). In this kind of realism, it is the reader who forms the sense of reality from the narrative rather than the writer's presentation of reality to the reader. Therefore, the role of the reader is important; while reading the narrative he becomes more active in the creation of the reality in the narration. The reader's imagination comes to the foreground to help the author create the reality from what he is told.

When the relationship between realism and magical realism is handled, as a narrative mode, magical realist texts give details while telling the events in a realistic context and make the reader believe in what is written without hesitation whether they are supernatural or not. In magical realist texts, both the characters in the text and the readers accept the extraordinary and fantastic events as if they were real. Magical realist writers attract the attention of the reader with the realistic context and details, but it is

different from traditional realism with its use of myth and legends, supernatural elements in the narration, as traditional realism under the effect of positivism always seek and tell what is rational and logical in the narration. Both of them use the everyday language and their characters are ordinary people telling the historical, political and social changes in their lives. Although realism is based on one single reality which is always rational, magical realist text tries to create alternative realities with its usage of supernatural elements. Both the reasonable and illogical events are parts of the story in magical realism (Bowers, 2004: 21).

The second movement that is generally confused with magical realism is surrealism, which has developed in the first half of the 20th century. They have a common denominator; both of them seek the illogical and non-realist part of humanity and existence, but they are different in their way and aim of handling the ‘unreal’ and the ‘supernatural’. Surrealism is an artistic movement which lasts roughly from 1919 to 1939 that is defined by its practitioners by means of a manifesto. Its followers aim to write against the realist literature that reflects what they considered to be bourgeois society’s idea of itself and in order to cure the society psychologically after the World War I, they want to depart from the old and look for new ways of thinking. That is, realism focuses on the external reality, whereas surrealism aims to privilege the inner reality of the individuals to free their emotions and save them from the aftermath of World War I. Andre Breton, the writer of the surrealist manifesto, emphasizes the idea that it is necessary to stress the ‘savage’ aspects of human psyche that are suppressed by the social order. In order to achieve this, surrealism deals with the imagination and mind, in particular it tries to express the ‘inner life’ and psychology of human beings through art. According to surrealists, conscious states of man are not sufficient to explain him to himself and to others, so they try to explain the subconscious and the unconscious. They are influenced by Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalysis and as a result of this; they make use of dreams in their works. They distort the reality so that they can express a non-physical aspect of life.

On the other hand when magical realism is considered, it is seen that it is interested in the extraordinary to express the material reality not the inner reality. “The extraordinary in magical realism is rarely presented in the form of a dream or a psychological experience because to do so takes the magic out of recognizable material reality and places it into the little understood world of imagination” (Bowers, 2004:

23). The supernatural elements in magical realism are woven into the external world, not into the dreams, in order to provide the narrative with a more realistic vision. Here it is important to point out that, magical realism is influenced by not Freud, but by Jung's ideas on society. It tries to express the collective unconscious of societies. It does not focus on what is hidden behind the behaviours of the individual but on the social history. For instance; in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*(1987), Sethe, a former slave escaping from the farm where she works with her children and because of the fear that they would be caught and sent back to the torturing slavery life, kills her own baby. In the book Sethe, Denver and their grandmother live together with the ghost of the baby. During the story, Morrison not only tries to understand the psychology of Sethe, but also tries to explain the trauma that the black people experienced in the days of slavery in the USA. She wants to tell and make the readers become aware of the bitter history of black people, so her main aim is not to deal with the mystery behind the individual's reactions, but to deal with the social history.

The last difference between surrealism and magical realism is emphasized in *Magical Realism and The Fantastic: Resolved Versus Unresolved Antinomy* (1985) by Amarryl Chanady. She associates magical realism with Latin America, whose myths are thought to be non-Western while associating surrealism with Europe whose inhabitants try to recover the psychology of the individual after the World War I in the 1920s and 1930s (Chanady, 1985: 21).

The next genre whose differences from the magical realism should be explained is the fantastic. Tzvetan Todorov (1939-) explains fantastic literature as a piece of narrative in which there is a perpetual tension between belief and non-belief in the supernatural or extraordinary event presented. For Todorov, the fantastic depends upon the reader's hesitation between natural and supernatural explanations for the fictional events in the text. This feature may be stressed in the text to create a theme of ambiguity and hesitation (Todorov, 2004: 25). The reader's hesitation may be experienced by a character in the text, so that in the case of naive reading, the actual reader identifies himself with the character. Moreover, the fantastic can also represent dreams or wakefulness where the character or the reader hesitates as to what reality is or what a dream is. Todorov refers to Henry James' (1843-1916) *The Turn of The Screw* (1898) as a clear example of the fantastic literature. In this novella a governess finds herself alone in a house with an illiterate and strange housekeeper and the children in her care whom

she tells about the ghosts that she sees in the house. The story is told from the governess's perspective to give the impression to the reader that the ghosts do exist, but there is sufficient additional comment that she may in fact be delusional. Mrs. Grose, the housekeeper, is usually skeptical about the governess' speculations. This element of doubt and the governess's own fear of the unknown and of the supernatural stop the text from being magical realist, but it is exactly this hesitation between two explanations - whether there are really ghosts or she is really mad - that affirms its fantastical nature (Todorov, 2004: 43).

Chanady in her study gives the difference between the fantastic writer and the magical realist:

In contrast to the fantastic, the supernatural in magical realism does not disconcert the reader, and this is the fundamental difference between the two modes. The same phenomena that are portrayed as problematical by the author of a fantastic narrative are presented in a matter-of-fact manner by the magical realist. (Chanady, 1985: 24)

Chanady shares the view with Todorov, that the reader feels the hesitation that the characters experience in the narrative and is uncertain about the reality of the problematic mysterious or supernatural events; however, in magical realist texts the author renders the supernatural events from an objective view and the characters does not question the reality of the events and they accept the supernatural just as they are in the narrative. Therefore, the supernatural does not disturb or leave the readers in hesitation while reading.

Another essay on the theory of magical realism is "What is Magical Realism, Really?" (2002) by Bruce Holland Rogers concentrating on the differences between the genres of magical realism and the fantastic. According to the magical realist writer, the miraculous events can be ordinary and ordinary events can be miraculous. In magical realism, the extraordinary events are not questioned to be real or not; they are admitted without trials by the characters. In magical events, the events take place in a real setting, and the characters have personalities or abilities associated with the 'real' world. Rogers uses Marquez's novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* to explain this situation. In it, the gypsies bring Maconda a piece of ice. Although this is a very ordinary event, it is told in

the novel as if it were an incredible event. For the ones who see the ice for the first time in their lives, this is not different from the magic or the miracle, also very extraordinary to believe. Moreover, the characters cannot find the right words to define the ice in the novel. Another example from the novel is, when a character is shot the blood coming from his head drops on to the street, flows like a river and goes to the grandmother of the character. This event can be called miraculous, but the flow of the blood is told in such a detail that it is impossible not to define this as a realistic feature. In magical realism the works have extraordinary things from this world; and what makes them extraordinary is the way they are handled throughout the flow of the action (Rogers, 2002).

Rogers also points out another feature of magical realism in his essay. He claims that magical realism does not escape from the reality, it reflects the reality itself. The theory does not have an escapist attitude to give pleasure to the reader. Fantastic works create an alternative to the real world, with their characters and settings they escape from the reality, but in magical realism the world is the real world with extraordinary events experienced by the realistic characters told in detail (Rogers, 2002).

Luis Leal in his essay called “Magical Realism in Spanish American Literature” summarizes the relationship of magical realism with the terms and genres that have been discussed so far:

Magical realism cannot be identified either with the fantastic literature or with the psychological literature, or with the surrealist or hermetic literature that Ortega describes. Unlike surrealism (surrealism), magical realism does not use dream motifs; neither does it distort reality or create imagined worlds, as writers of fantastic literature or science fiction do; nor does it emphasize psychological analysis of characters, since it doesn't try to find reasons for their actions or inability to express themselves (Leal, 1967: 121).

As Leal explains, magical realism does not use the supernatural in order to hide the reality or escape from it, it reveals the truth by means of the supernatural in the narration in a realistic context which is expressed to the reader in detail so that the reader can question the privileged centers that are politically or socially powerful. Faris

and Zamora point out that in magical realist texts “ontological disruption serves the purpose of political and cultural disruption: magic is often given as a cultural corrective, requiring readers to reconsider accepted realistic conventions of causality, materiality, motivation” (Zamora and Parkinson: 1995, 3).

Being on the side of the suppressed, and politically powerless, as a narrative mode magical realism is “the cutting edge of postmodernism” (Dhaen: 1995, 201). It rejects fundamentalism and purity, and disagrees with racism, ethnicity and the search for homogeneity. In his essay called “Magical Realism and Postmodernism: Decentering Privileged Centers” (1995), Theo Dhaen explains the connection between magical realism and postmodernism starting from their definitions and short histories of the movements. He says that both of the terms became popular since the 1960s. Magical realism attracted the attention of the world with Latin American *boom*, especially with the publishing of Marquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in 1967. He reveals his aim and wish in writing with the following words in his Nobel speech in 1982:

On a day like today, my master William Faulkner said in this very place, ‘I refuse to admit the end of mankind.’ I should not feel myself worthy of standing where he once stood were I not fully conscious that, for the first time in the history of humanity, the colossal disaster which he refused to recognize thirty-two years ago now simply a scientific possibility. Face to face with a reality that overwhelms us, one which over man’s perceptions of time must have seemed a utopia, tellers of tales who, like me, are capable of believing anything, feel untitled to believe that it is not yet too late to undertake the notion of a minor utopia: a new and limitless utopia for life wherein no one can decide for others how they are to die, where love can really be true and happiness possible, where the lineal generations of one hundred years of solitude will have at last and forever a second chance on earth (Bloom, 2005 :69).

Here he explains the key points of his writing aim and style that is, without having a sense of chronological time order he wants to tell the stories of the impossible events and characters but apart from the shaming disasters of history, he wishes for

happy endings where no one can decide for the death of the other. Actually these are the key points of magical realism and while doing this, they use the narrative techniques and ironic also parodic style of postmodernism. Dhaen prescribes the features of postmodernism that are self-reflexiveness, metafiction, eclecticism, multiplicity, discontinuity, intertextuality, parody, the dissolution of the character and narrative instance, the erasure of boundaries, and the destabilization of the reader (Dhaen, 1995:192). These features of postmodernism are also seen in magical realist narratives. Although both of them became popular during the same period, postmodernism is associated with North America while magical realism is attributed to South America. When their progress in the European countries and other continents is considered, it is seen that postmodernism has clearly been the more successful one to refer to developments in other technically sophisticated Western literatures and magical realism has been started to be known as a branch of the former. The authors like Günter Grass, Thomas Bernhard, Peter Handke, Italo Calvino, John Fowles, Angela Carter, John Banville, and Michael Tournier, as well as Dutch authors Willem Brakman and Louis Ferron are accepted as the representatives of simply national movements or tendencies in their countries in the 60s and 70s, but in the 80s all of them have been considered to be representatives of postmodernism. Dhaen also adds that much of the works of these authors are thought to be magical realist as well, for instance Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* (1984), Salman Rushdie's *Shame* (1983), and D. M. Thomas' *The White Hotel* (1981). These books are examples of magical realism from British fiction in 1980s and they have accomplished their magical realist program by means of the same techniques usually singled out as marking postmodernism.

One of the common features of both movements is their *ex-centric attitude*. Dhaen explains this with Carlos Fuentes' words that "there were *no privileged* centers of culture, race, politics" (Dhaen, 1995: 194). Dhaen summarizes his ideas on the subject with the following words:

It is precisely the notion of the ex-centric, in the sense of speaking from the margin, from a place 'other' than 'the' or 'a' center, that seems to me an essential feature of that strain of postmodernism we call magical realism. In literary-critical terms, this ex-centricity can in the first instance be described as a voluntary act of breaking away from the

discourse perceived as central to the line of technical experimentation starting with realism and running via naturalism and modernism to the postmodernism... To write ex-centrally, then, or from the margin implies dis-placing this discourse. My argument is that magic realist achieves this end by appropriating the techniques of the 'centr'-al line and then using these, not in the case of central movements, 'realistically', that is, to duplicate existing reality as perceived by the theoretical or philosophical tenets underlying said movements, but rather to create an alternative world correcting so-called reality, and thus to right the wrongs this 'reality' depends upon. Magic realism thus reveals itself as a ruse to invade and take over and take over dominant discourses. It is a way of access to the main body of 'Western' literature for authors not sharing in, or not writing from the perspective of, the privileged centers of this literature for reasons of language, class, race, or gender, and yet avoiding epigonism by avoiding the adoption of views of the hegemonic forces together with their discourse. Alternatively, it is a means for writers coming from the privileged centers of literature to dissociate themselves from their own discourses of power, and to speak on behalf of the ex-centric and un-privileged (Dhaen, 1995: 195).

In order to explain his idea, Dhaen shows Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1980), which uses the typically English tradition of the colonial novel as written by Kipling or Forster. In this tradition, the white man's view of the land and its inhabitants are in the centre. Colonised nature and society have the role of the 'other', the exotic, the strange. However, in Rushdie's novel the Indians are in the centre with their views of their country and society. From this perspective, the Westerner becomes the 'other'. In this way, he can avoid epigonism that is the imitation of central artists. Magic, which in the colonial novel functions as the sign of the otherness of non-Western society, with Rushdie becomes the daily reality.

All together, the children born in India at the very moment the country gained its independence from England, communicating with each other in such a magic realist way, literally give voice to an entire

subcontinent; a proper voice this time, as the subjects of their own story and not as the objects of an English colonial novel (Dhaen:1995, 199).

Dhaen points out here that the magical realist text becomes the voice of the unprivileged people in the societies, by using the techniques of the Western literature which has a centric perspective.

Another critic who focuses on magic realism as a strain of postmodernism is Wendy Faris. Faris in her essay "Scheherazade's Children: Magical Realism and Postmodern Fiction" mentions us five fundamental features of magical realism. First of all, the "irreducible element" of magic takes place in the flow of the action. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude* Remedios' ascension to heaven, or in Patrick Suskind's (1949-) *Perfume (1985)*, Grenouille really takes the scent of the virgin maids from their bodies (Faris, 1995: 167).

As for the second feature, Faris mentions that detailed realistic descriptions in texts serve to distinguish them from fantasy or allegory. Although this may seem as a continuation of mimetic tradition, in magical realist texts magical events like Beloved's appearance, or phenomena like Melquiades' manuscripts or Grenouille's nose are also told in detail which can serve to the aim that the text seems not real but imaginary (Faris, 1995: 169). Beloved is the dead daughter of Sethe, and she comes back and lives with her family. Her appearance is told in detail during the narration. Melquiades is a gypsy in Marquez's novel, who writes the history and the future of Macondo in his manuscripts. Grenouille makes perfumes from the scent of the virgins by using his sense of smell which is told again in detail.

Apart from descriptions, Faris also remarks the 'real' historical references made in magical realist texts. Faris says that the reader witnesses 'an idiosyncratic recreation' of historical events, but events based strictly on historical realities form an alternative version of officially written accounts. She shows Marquez's retelling the story of a massacre that was done to end a strike in a banana company in Macondo. The tales are distinct from mythologic stories, but the mythic truths and historical events are necessary for our collective memory to survive (Faris, 1995: 170).

Thirdly, she says that the reader may hesitate between two comprehensions of uncanny events - whether they are a character's hallucinations or miracles. Reader's attitude changes according to his culture. For example, she shows Morrison's

mysterious character of *Beloved*, who goes between two options playing with the logical tendencies to recuperate or to co-opt the marvelous (Faris, 1995: 171).

Women outside of Sethe's house ask themselves, 'Was it the dead daughter come back? Or a pretend? Was it whipping Sethe? A bit farther on 'Paul D. Knows Beloved is truly gone. Disappeared, some say, exploded right before their eyes. Ella is not sure. 'Maybe,' she says, 'maybe not. Could be hiding in the trees waiting for another chance'(Morrison, 2004: 260).

Despite the fact that Faris does not mention this point in her essay, the hesitation changes according to the narrator's point of view or the author's perspective. So this determines the magical realist text's type whether it is metaphysical, anthropological or epistemological. Anthropological magical realist texts induce a sense of unreality in the reader while the narrator of anthropological texts have two voices and the author explains the uncanny with references to the mythological stories and lastly, the author renders the uncanny or the supernatural as a matter-of-fact happening and the reader admits the supernatural without hesitation.

The fourth feature, Faris points out in her essay is the closeness of two different worlds, for instance one is the world of the living and the other is the dead's, or one is the world of ordinary people and the other is the witches'. She states that a magical realist text exists at the intersection of two worlds, reflecting both of them like a double-sided mirror. She says that the boundaries between these two realms are crossed in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *Midnight's Children*, *That Voice*, *Distant Relations*, *The White Hotel* and *Ironweed* (Faris, 1995: 172).

For the last characteristic, Faris says that these fictions question the received ideas about time, space, and identity. For the questioning of times, she renders *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as an example; "after 'four years, eleven months, and two days' of rain and insomnia plague that vanishes the past and hence the meaning of words, a room in which it is 'always March and always Monday,' Jose Arcadio who lies half-dead and half-alive for years under a banana tree in the courtyard of his house, and a final whirlwind that abolishes a race's second opportunity on earth, our sense of time is shaken". As for the questioning of space she shows Carlos Fuentes's *Distant*

Relations (1980), when tropical plants grow over the Paris automobile club's pool in the end. Finally for identity, she gives *Midnight's Children* as an example and asks if Saleem was himself with over five hundred children of midnight talking through his head. She says that their historical dimensions of magical realist fictions help the reader to have a new perspective away from the centre. For instance, Rushdie situates his narrative in the events that are related to India's independence and the violence that followed it (Faris, 1995: 173-74). In her essay, she also focuses on the magical realism as a room of postmodernism when postmodernism is thought to be a house and lists nine qualities as follows:

1) Metafictional perspectives are usually seen in contemporary magical realist texts, so the text comments on itself. This is made possible by means of signs, images, metaphors, narrators and narratees. She says that metanarrative comments on the text's writing itself are seen in *Beloved* when Beloved brings out stories at various moments (Faris, 1995: 175). "‘Tell me,’ said Beloved, smiling a wide smile. ‘Tell me your diamonds.’ It became a way to feed her... Sethe learned the profound satisfaction Beloved got from story telling... As she began telling about the earrings, she found herself wanting to, liking it" (Morrison, 2004: 58). The text comments on itself. Sethe, by telling her story to her daughter, actually she retells the history of black people.

2) Faris mentions that the reader may experience a particular kind of verbal magic - a closing of the gap between words and the world, or a demonstration of what might be called the linguistic nature of experience. She says that the magic occurs when a metaphor is made real and renders an example from *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (Faris, 1995: 176). It is often said that blood is thicker than water and in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* when Jose Arcadio Buendia shoots himself, a trickle of his blood "‘came out under the door,...went out into the street,...went down steps and climbed over curbs,...turned a corner to the right and another to the left, and once inside the Buendia kitchen, hugged the walls so as not to stain things and came out in his mother Ursula's kitchen (Marquez, 2005: 129-39)".

3) Faris points out that the narrative seems its contemporary adult readers as fresh, childlike, even primitive. The supernatural events are told mostly without comments, in an objective way, and they are accepted by the reader as if a child were to believe them. This is achieved by the technique of defamiliarization that appears to be

natural in magical realist texts (Faris, 1995: 177). For example, defamiliarization is frequently employed in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*:

'When the giant opened it, the chest let out a chilly breath of air. Inside it there was just an enormous transparent block with countless internal needles which broke up the light of the setting sun into stars of many colours (Marquez, 2005: 22).'

According to Edwin Williamson, when it comes to explaining the mystery, the difference between Jose Arcadio Buendia's innocent awe and the reader's knowledge is sharply drawn within the text itself, producing an effect of irony (Williamson, 2006: 100):

'Taken aback, yet knowing that his sons expected an immediate explanation, Jose Arcadio Buendia dared to murmur, 'It's the biggest diamond in the world.'

'No,' the gypsy corrected him, 'it's ice (Marquez, 2005: 23).'

Here, via defamiliarization, the reader is told the situation as if he saw the ice for the first time, but with the comic effect of irony, one of the characters in the narrative, a gypsy explains that the diamond-like thing they see is only ice.

4) According to Faris, repetition as a narrative principle symbolically or structurally mirrors certain events. For instance, Saleem's life in *Midnight's Children* mirrors the story of the new Indian nation with which he was born. She thinks that a similar version of narrative mirroring is seen in *The White Hotel* by D.M Thomas, where the same story is retold through reflected personalities like reflections in real mirrors. She adds that the images of ghosts or deadly figures seen again and again in the narratives resemble two-sided mirrors as they are situated between two worlds of life and death. Therefore they aim to enlarge the space of intersection where magical realist fictions stand (Faris, 1995: 178).

5) Metamorphoses are usual events in magical realist fictions. For instance, in *Distant Relations* young Victor and Andre Heredia are turned into a sinister twin fetus.

In *Midnight's Children*, Parvati, the witch makes Saleem an invisible entity for a while (Faris, 1995: 179).

6) Magical realist texts have an antibureaucratic stand that they use their magic against the established social order. Faris says that thematically, magical realist texts are written against totalitarian regimes. She elaborates this idea with examples:

Günter Grass publishes The Tin Drum and Suskind Perfume after World War II (in both cases a long time, it is true, but partly in response to it and to the Nazi period in Germany); Latin American writers of magical realism criticize North American hegemony in their hemisphere; Kundera is opposed to the power of Soviet Communism; Rushdie writes Midnight's Children in opposition to Mrs. Gandhi's autocratic rule. Toni Morrison writes Beloved in direct response to the atrocities of slavery and its aftermath, and Isabel Allende builds The House of Spirits in part to critique the barbarity of Pinochet's Chilean regime (Faris, 1995: 180).

7) In magical realist texts, old systems of belief and local lore often take place. For instance, in Ana Castillo's *So Far from God* (1993), the narrator tells the old practices of healing commonly used in Mexico. According to Faris, magical realism focuses on rural settings to be away from powerful centers. Bowers mentions in her book that the Colombian novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez sets the majority of his novels in a fictional town called Macondo on the isolated coast of Colombia. Toni Morrison, while sometimes setting her novels in the city, sets the magical realist events in rural areas and small townships. However, some magical realist writers set their novels in large cities which are the center of political and social tensions. Salman Rushdie sets his novels in big cities such as London, Bombay, or New York, yet his novels are written from the perspective of people who lack political power. His protagonist may be an impotent writer in a pickle factory in Bombay, or a group of young British Asian rebels in London.

8) Faris points out that a Jungian rather than a Freudian perspective can be more suitable in magical realist texts; that is, the magic may be attributed to a mysterious sense of collective relatedness or myths rather than to individual memories or dreams or

visions. The communal magic of storytelling figures prominently in *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie (1983), *Distant Relations* by Carlos Fuentes (1980), *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende (1982), *Beloved* by Toni Morrison (1987) and *So Far From God* by Ana Castillo (1993). The aim of the magical realist texts is to awaken the collective unconscious hidden in the societies' identities. For instance, Rushdie wants to arouse a communal unity of Indian history with the events experienced by Saleem and five hundred other children. Morrison, with the story of Sethe, a former slave and her dead daughter's ghost, retells the sad history of black people in America. Moreover, in *So Far From God*, Ana Castillo by narrating the story of Sofi and her four daughters who are doomed to be dead at the end of the novel, aims to form a new identity shared by Chicanas or Mexican-American women inhabiting in America. In order to achieve this, the writers use mythic references of native societies.

9) According to Faris, a *carnavalesque* spirit is common in the magical realist texts. Mihail Bakhtin (1895-1975) explains the term *carnavalesque* in his work called *Rabelais and His World* (1965). He uses the word *polyphonic* to explain the term; according to him, language and culture cannot be fixed and *carnival* and *carnavalesque* are appropriate terms to define magical realist fictions. Because in a carnival, different sounds from different races or backgrounds are heard. Bakhtin says that the fiction does not have a centric structure, it should have a 'polyphonic' structure to interact within the society just like a carnival where all people coming from different castes, having different professions or races are all considered to be equal to each other. In this way, the fiction can go further beyond the traditional homophonic novel in Europe (Bakhtin, 1984: 10).

Bakhtin in his work *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1973) says that Dostoevsky has freed all the characters, enabling them to hear each other's voice, as they are equal. So Dostoevsky's novels are said to be 'polyphonic'. According to Bakhtin, in Dostoevsky's works, each character hears the other's voice and influenced by each other (Bakhtin, 1973: 5). In addition, Bakhtin uses the term 'carnavalesque' as a literary genre. This term, by means of humour and chaos, throws privileged elements of order into confusion. In *Rabelais and His World* (1984) he summarizes the idea of the 'carnival':

As opposed to the official feast, one might say that carnival celebrated temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms and prohibitions. Carnival was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change and renewal. It was hostile to all that was immortalized and completed (Bakhtin, 1984: 10).

The carnival uses the ordinary and the extraordinary together; so it can be said that binary oppositions like life and death, good and bad, heaven and hell take place together in the carnivalesque mood in magical realist fictions. David K. Danow basing his ideas on Bakhtin's, mentions the features of magical realist novels in his work *The Spirit of Carnival: Magic Realism and the Grotesque* (1995). By using the binary oppositions together, the fiction makes the supernatural seem natural, so the boundaries between different worlds are transgressed.

[it supports the unsupportable, assails the unassailable, at times regards the supernatural as natural, takes fiction as truth, and makes the extraordinary or magical as viable a possibility as the ordinary or 'real', so that no true distinction is perceived or acknowledged between the two (Danow, 1995: 3).

Danow emphasizes the place of the 'other' in magic realist texts. They make use of the binary oppositions by surpassing the boundaries between the realms of the supernatural and the real. The aim of the spirit of the carnival by doing so is to break away from the social systems of hierarchy, norms and prohibitions; in fact it helps to decenter and subvert the privileged centers. This is the intersection of magical realism and postmodernism. Both of them aim to present the one that is unrepresentable and irreducible, therefore they start a war against totality (Lyotard, 2000: 158). They are on the side of the ones that have been suppressed so far.

Ana Castillo, as a representative of Chicana/o Literature used magical realism in her writing, so Chicana/o Movement will be studied in the next part with its history and aim. It became popular in the 1960s, when Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* became worldwide known. Chicana/o Literature has similar aims to those of magical

realist writings'. Both of them want to arouse national feelings in the society's minor and 'other' members. Their priority is to constitute a new identity for their people, and help them gain their rights.

1.3. Mexican American and Chicana/O Literature

Mexican American and Chicano are generally used interchangeably in literary circles, but they are different adjectives reflecting distinct generations and ideologies. Mexican Americans are the people who live in America and see themselves as American. On the other hand, *Chicano* is a word coming from *mexicano*, and it refers to the ethnic pride and unique identity flourishing as a result of the civil rights movement among Mexican Americans from the 1940s to the present. *Chicano* as a term reflects the Mexican American resistance to the United States cultural hegemony. It should be noted that Chicano is used to describe male writers or the corpus of Mexican American literature since 1940s whereas *Chicana* refers to women writers and their writing.

In order to understand the development of the literature of Chicanos, the history of Mexica should be examined first. The written history of the Hispanic nations coming from the Spanish roots, starts with the writings of Christopher Columbus when he lands on America in 1492. In his accounts of his 33-day sea voyage from the Canary Islands to the Caribbean, he tells the wonders of the Caribbean islands and explains the tribal cultures and mysterious legends of the new land. Here he learns of Taino myths that foretell the coming of the White and fair-haired foreigners. He uses this myth to explain his aim of colonizing the land under the title of 'civilizing' mission given by the Spanish monarchs Isabella and Ferdinand. These colonizers thought that by converting the natives of the Americas to Christianity, Columbus and Spanish conquistadores could make trade and export the goods from the New World to the Old safely. The Spaniards considered that Christian natives would be more suitable than the pagan ones (Ramirez, 2008: xiii).

After Columbus's first contact with the inhabitants of the Caribbean, Spain expanded its empire through the efforts of conquistadores such as Hernan Cortes in Mexico, Francisco Pizarro in Peru, and Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca in the lands known as Florida today and the southwest. Luz Elena Ramirez mentions that Mexican-American literature has its roots in the writings of soldiers, explorers and priests who went to the Caribbean with the purpose of assimilating the native people living there.

She says that Fray Bernardino de Sahagun's *Florentine Codex*, a 16th century ethnographic research project in Mesoamerica documenting the culture, religious activities, society, economics and natural history of the Aztec people, explains much of the conflicts and themes of the Mexican-American literature. In the codex, Aztec warriors tell their first meeting with Hernan Cortes and his men. This is the first indigenous account of the European colonization. They tell their stories in their own native language, Nahuatl and the Indian narrators describe the dresses of European soldiers and their warfare. This codex is important as it fosters the theme of opposition between the *European self* and the *indigenous other* that has shaped Hispanic-American writing. In the codex, one of the important figures of Mexican history is depicted: La Malinche. She was Cortes's interpreter and mistress who bore him a son. As Ramirez says this son represents a new race of people in the Americas: the mestizo born of Spanish and Indian blood. This mixture of cultures and bloodlines is a significant theme in Mexican-American and Chicano literatures (Ramirez, 2008: xv). The authors question their identities in their works, some Mexican American authors want to see themselves as Americans, while Chicanos emphasize their mestizo heritage and mostly Indian roots.

After Cortes's arrival in 1519, Spanish colonization of Mexico started and continued until the country's independence from Spain in 1821. In this period, Mexico held the region that is now the U.S. Southwest. With the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 after the U.S.-Mexican War, Mexicans in the southwest became Mexican Americans. Mexicans gave up the territory to the U.S. for \$15 million and the United States, in turn, agreed to respect the cultural and property rights of Mexicans living in the Southwest. After Mexican Revolution in 1910, lots of Mexicans immigrated to the U.S. and began to work there. Until the 1960s, Mexicans were neglected and exploited as labour force in the U.S.

The cultural and political awakening of the Mexican-Americans mostly started with the American Civil Rights movement in 1960s, which was led by Martin Luther King and other Blacks. This movement served as "the larger social backdrop in which people of colour began to actively rethink and reformulate their position in the making of modern American society" (Lomeli, 1993: 89). In this respect, the Chicano civil rights movement also known as La Causa or El Movimiento struggled for an individual and collective Mexican-American identity. Because of their mestizo blood that is a

mixture of Indian and Spanish heritage, Mexican Americans were exposed to discrimination and racism at school, in the workplace and in the military. Mexican Americans also established local and national organizations to secure their civic rights and began using the name Chicano. The political activist of the movement was Cesar Chavez who founded the United Farm Workers Movement in 1965. The philosophical and literary manifesto of the movement was written by the activist Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales in his poem called “Yo soy Joaquin” / “I am Joaquin” in 1967, which became an emblem for their struggle. In his poem, Gonzales introduced the concept of Aztlan, a mythical Aztec homeland in the native lands of Mexicans known as the Southwest including Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, California and Colorado. Francisco A. Lomeli in his essay called “Contemporary Chicano Literature, 1959-1990: From Oblivion to Affirmation to the Forefront” explains that the poem is a type of historical manifesto, stressing *barrio* themes which means neighbourhood, historical uniqueness and a noble lineage with Indians, specifically Aztecs. According to Lomeli, Gonzales resurrects a forgotten mythology while idealizing it. In the poem, the story of an earlier social bandit, Joaquin Murrieta as a symbol of resistance is told (Lomeli, 1993: 91).

Another activist who was inspired by Chavez’s UFW was Luiz Valdez, who founded El Teatro Campesino, which is a group of farmworkers and performed pieces stressing poor working conditions and strike activities in 1965. Lomeli points out that during this period literature gained a mode of social commitment mixing politics with punning satire, real life experiences with archetypes, humour with tragedy, and a sense of the epic with individuation. Five fundamental aims of the Teatro Campesino were counted by Francisco Jimenez in his essay “Dramatic Principles of the Teatro Campesino”:

1) to serve as the voice of the barrios, the community of the oppressed, 2) to inform the Chicano of the negative conditions that exist to oppress him, 3) to politicize the Chicano so he can overcome the existing conditions of oppression, 4) to inform the Chicano of his rich heritage so as to instill him pride in his culture, and 5) to strengthen the Chicano’s heart by communicating spiritual values such as love, hope and kindness (Jimenez, 1975: 102).

The other active foundations in the movement were the nationalistic urban center called “Crusade for Justice” founded by Corky Gonzales in Colorado dealing with educational concerns, political representation and social services, La Raza Unida (United People’s Party), a political party which was founded by Jose Angel Gutierrez in Texas to gain political strength, the student groups - especially UMAS (United Mexican American Students) and MECHA or Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (Chicano Student Movement of Aztlan) - and a paramilitary support called the Brown Berets that monitored demonstrations. All of these foundations aimed to open Chicano Studies programmes and departments in American universities in 1970s (Lomeli, 1993: 90).

In the 1970s Quinto Sol Publications established an annual prize for Chicano writers. ...*Y no se lo trago la tierra* (1972), a novel by Tomas Rivera and Rudolfo Anaya’s *Bless me, Ultima* (1972) were awarded the Premio Quito Sol prize. Both of the novels tell the stories of boys facing hostile environments along the border. Oscar Zeta Acosta, Rolando Hinojosa Smith, Miguel Mendez, Alejandro Morales, Ron Arias were the prominent authors of the Chicano literature during the 1970s.

The 1970s and 1980s also gave rise to a new generation of women writers and editors who took the term Chicana as a source of pride, and wrote with the aim of forming an identity for the Mexican American women. They were suppressed by, first, in the American society as the outlander and then at home by their husbands and children overwhelming them with their domestic burdens. The Chicana movement was seen as a threat for their demand of equal rights both at home and in the society by the Chicano movement, as the Mexicans had a patriarchal structure, putting the males in the front while oppressing the females with the housework. The Chicanas had a feminist view fighting for the rights of the Mexican American women. The leading figures of the Chicanas such as Margarita Cota Cordenas, Lorna Des Cervantes, Alma Villanueva, Bernice Zamora, Lucha Corpi founded various publishing houses or tried to convince publishers to invest the Chicana writers. The 1980s is known as “The Decade of the Chicana” with the booming literary output of Helena Maria Viramontas, Sandra Cisneros, Cherrie Moraga, Denise Chavez, Pat Mora, and Gloria Anzaldua.

In 1981, Anzaldua and Moraga edited a critical volume of essays by women of colour entitled *This Bridge Called My Back*. Ramirez states that this collection, along with Anzaldua’s *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), created a turning

point not only in Mexican American studies but also in American ethnic literature (Ramirez, 2008: 72). Chicana writers focused their studies on the discussions of race, language, class and hybrid (mixed) identities. Anzaldua and Moraga have tried to resurrect feminine myths and attract attention to folkloric figures such as La Llorana, who drowns her own children in order to be with the man she loves and La Malinche, a Nahua woman, who served Hernan Cortes as his interpreter and mistress and tried to take vengeance on him when he left her to marry a Spanish woman after she bore him a son. These mythic archetypes are largely used in the writings of Chicana Feminist writers. Ana Castillo continued this project with *Massacre of the Dreamers: Essays on Xicanisma* (1994).

According to Ramirez, Chicana/o literature published in the 1990s handles the issues of gender and cultural affiliation with confidence and a sense of direction (Ramirez, 2008:73). The protest literature of the civil rights era is replaced by the hybridization of Hispanic and American Culture. In the 1990s, technical experimentation is in the foreground. Graciela Limon, Norma Elia Cantu and Alicia Gaspar de Alba are the important authors of the decade.

Consequently, it can be said that contemporary Chicana/o writing addresses themes such as immigration, assimilation, family and individual life in the forms of fiction, poetry and essays.

1.4. Ana Castillo and Her Literary Career

Ana Castillo (1953-), a Chicana essayist, novelist, and poet, was born in Chicago. As a first-generation Mexican American living in Chicago, Castillo experienced many forms of prejudice together with her family. Castillo's dark-skinned mother faced the racism of the 1950s when her landlord made her scrub the stairs of the front entrance of their building every Saturday for 10 years. Her light-skinned father, however, was able to "pass" for Italian; and eventually he changed his surname to *Costello* in order to align himself with Chicago's European immigrant community. Unlike the father, the rest of the family kept their surname *Castillo* and faced the difficulties of being Mexican in the United States. Although both her mother and father endured prejudice as Mexicans, her mother was doubly disadvantaged as a Mexican woman in a European immigrant community and English-speaking, male dominated world. These experiences contributed Castillo's formation of a feminist Chicana identity

and she became a politically and socially conscious Mexican-American woman (Ramirez, 2008: 62).

Castillo attended Chicago City College for two years and Northeastern Illinois, where she studied art and received her BA in 1975. She taught ethnic studies at Santa Rosa College in California from 1975 to 1976 and was a graduate fellow at the University of Chicago, eventually earning an M.A. in Latin American and Caribbean studies in 1979. She served as a dissertation fellow in Chicano studies at the University of California from 1989 to 1990. She earned a Ph.D. in American studies from the University of Bremen, in Germany in 1991 and was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship for creative writing in 1995. She has taught at Mills College in Oakland, California and at Mount Holyoke in South Hadley, Massachusetts. She currently teaches in the English Department of DePaul University in her native Chicago.

Since the appearance of her initial chapbook of poetry, Castillo has published six volumes of poetry, four novels, one short story collection, and one collection of critical essays and has edited or coedited three Latino literary anthologies. Her collections of poetry are *Otro Canto* (1977), *The Invitation* (1979), *Women Are Not Roses* (1984), *My Father Was a Toltec* (1988), *My Father Was a Toltec and Selected Poems, 1973-1988* (1995), and *I Ask The Impossible* (2001). Her fiction includes the epistolary novel *The Mixquiahuala Letters* (1986), the epic *Sapogonia* (1990), the episodic novel *So Far From God* (1993), and the romance *Peel My Love like an Onion* (1999). Her single collection of short stories appears under the title *Loverboys* (1996). Castillo has also published a children's book, *My Daughter, My Son, the Eagle, and the Dove: An Aztec Chant* (2000). Her single collection of critical essays was published as *Massacre of the Dreamers: Essays on Xicanisma* (1994). Besides her novels, Castillo discusses these themes of female identity and heritage in her essays compiled in *Massacre of The Dreamers*. In the 10 essays assembled between 1987 and 1993, she searches the origins of gender relations, as in "The Ancient Roots of Machismo" and "In The Beginning There Was Eva". She also discusses aspects of Chicana feminism, which she calls Xicanisma, in "A Countryless Woman" and "Un Tapiz" (A tapestry). She examines female-female relationships in "Toward the Mother-Bond Principle". Her essays contribute to an ongoing discussion about the border in terms of gender relations and effects of patriarchal history on women. Therefore, Castillo's works can generally be

read within the context of Chicano literature, Border Literature and Latina Lesbian Literature (Ramirez, 2008: 63).

Castillo writes about Chicana feminism, which she dubs "Xicanisma," and her works focus on issues of identity, gender, racism, and classism. Castillo argues that Chicanas must struggle multiple modes of oppression, including homophobia, racism, sexism and classism, and Chicana feminism must acknowledge the presence of multiple Chicana experiences. Her writing shows the influence of magical realism which is a narrative mode using the ordinary, the supernatural and the mythic together in order to be the voice of the 'other' in her society.

Castillo's first novel, *The Mixquiahuala Letters* tells the story of two women who meet in Mexico. Teresa, a Chicana, and Alicia, a gringa - which means a person who does not speak Spanish - have come to a language school to study Spanish and the culture of Mexico. Because Teresa is in Mexico to reconnect with her cultural past, she becomes disenchanted with the Americans who look for an authentic summer experience. Teresa and Alicia try to make the connection on their own through their travels around Mexico; their experiences, however remind them that they are equally at risk in the patriarchal culture of Mexico as they are in the United States. They see that both the American Culture and Mexican culture debase the female.

Castillo's second novel, *Sapogonia*, takes its name from the Spanish name *sapo* (toad), which is sometimes used to refer to the people who cross the border from Mexico to the United States. The novel is about two sapogones (Mexican immigrants), Maximo Madrigal and Pastora Velasquez Ake. While both have come to the United States, they have followed different ways with very different aims. Maximo, a modern version of the Spanish Conquistador, wants to conquer the United States, the art world and every woman he meets. On the other hand, Pastora is a singer, songwriter and activist who wants to transform society, she resists Maximo's efforts to conquer her. The novel shows the reader the dubious position of Maximo and Pastora in the American society, as well as power struggles and violence in male-female relationships.

Castillo's third novel, *So Far From God*, was awarded both the Carl Sandburg Literary Award in 1993, and the Mountains and Plains Bookseller Award in 1994. The novel takes place in Tome, which is a small town in New Mexico in 1990s and tells the story of Sofia (which means Wisdom), and her four daughters, Esperanza (hope), Fe (faith), Caridad (charity), and the youngest, La Loca (the crazy one). Through

daughters' lives, the novel illustrates the generally negative and destructive nature of female-male relationships. Sofia, who is abandoned by her husband, manages to stand on her own and helps to change her community for the better while witnessing the catastrophic ends of her daughters as they move away from the community. From this perspective, Castillo represents the balance between the material and the spiritual world, and she stresses the importance of being in touch with one's family and heritage. In her novel, she employs magical realism to show the spiritual part of life and the material world together, which is given by the supernatural powers and gifts of the characters. In her book, Castillo draws attention to the seeking of the roots through the folkloric stories of Indians and their mixture with Catholic Spanish culture which has come to colonize them. As it is seen in magical realist texts, Castillo wants to represent the lives of the 'other' in the community by focusing on five women who live differently from their community. In order to express their cultural heritage, she uses the stories of the archetypal figures like La Malinche, Llorana and Lady of Guadalupe.

CHAPTER II

REFLECTIONS OF MAGICAL REALISM in *SO FAR FROM GOD*

2.1. The Use of Magical Realism against the Powers of Patriarchy

Magical realism as a poststructuralist and postmodernist movement has aimed to shake and reform the old systems of religion, culture and patriarchy with the new hybrid ones in the 20th century. In order to achieve this, they unite the supernatural with the ordinary daily life. Wendy Faris in her book *Ordinary Enchantments* explains magical realism and its style in this way:

Magical realism combines realism and the fantastic so that the marvelous seems to grow organically within the ordinary, blurring the distinction between them. Furthermore, that combination of realistic and fantastical narrative, together with the inclusion of different cultural traditions, means that magical realism reflects, in both its narrative mode and its cultural environment, the hybrid nature of much postcolonial society. (Faris, 2004:1)

Faris states that the movement uses the fantastic and realism so intertwined to each other that the boundaries between the real and the supernatural are transgressed. Besides this, in the content of the narration, the old and new cultural traditions are given together in the literature of the colonized societies to reflect the hybrid nature that grows as a result of this in-betweenness. "Magical images or events, glowing alluringly from within the realistic matrix, often highlight central issues in a text." (Faris, 2004: 9) The supernatural and/or spiritual events that take place during the flow of the narration often emphasize prominent subjects such as questioning of established norms in the society, and forming a new identity in order to resist the oppressive patriarchal authorities.

Ana Castillo as a Chicana author applies the supernatural to her novel to resist the patriarchal authority which refers to the Catholic Church, male oppression and Anglo-American culture. As it is understood from its title, *So Far From God*, gives the foreshadowing that it will have a stance against the established religious institutions.

The novel is about the life of a family consisting of Sofi and her four daughters, Esperanza, Caridad, Fe and La Loca, who are not very faithful Catholics and do not go to the masses. They have spiritual powers/ beliefs given to them to challenge the patriarchy in their society. Looking from the perspective of female characters, Castillo wants to make the Chicana women active in the society. The supernatural elements have some functions during the narration. Magali Cornier Michael states that Castillo's work searches and brings together the possibilities for new forms of communal agency and coalition work that comes out of alternative structures of spirituality.

With poor Mexican American women as its central characters, the novel engages in an examination of other (than dominant American) constructions of spirituality that value formulations of faith, justice, and collectivity grounded in material social practices and that, at the same time, break down the hierarchies and binaries associated with most dominant established religions — Catholicism, in this instance — and the cultures in which they reside. Given their “shared history of conquest and colonization,” Mexican American women as the novel presents them share a distinct standpoint from which “to challenge the dominant [American] culture’s devaluation” of their “own culture, language, and indigenous intellectual legacy” and to assert a “vision of a new paradigm of civilization that is free of systemic injustice and violence” and that “affirm[s] new models of social relationships that are capable of fully sustaining human dignity.” (Michael, 2006: 113)

Michael explains the author's subjects and aims very explicitly here. Castillo by using the spiritual practices or the supernatural has achieved to destroy the hierarchal structures and beliefs founded by the dominant religions, Catholicism is under gaze here, and the cultures they live in. In short, the author tries to awaken the Chicanas to get rid of their chains that have been restricting them and gain a new mestizo consciousness to overcome the injustice and violence that they have been enduring for years.

This trial of social freedom is required according to Anzaldua when she discusses la mestizo “[should] discover that she can’t hold concepts or ideas in rigid

boundaries” (Anzaldua, 1987: 56). According to her and Castillo these rigid boundaries are male-created and by rejecting to obey them women can participate in their own identity and their own autonomy.

In order to understand how magical realism functions to voice the female against the oppressive patriarchy, the characters and events having supernatural or spiritual effect should be examined. The novel tells us the life of a family consisting of five women who do not conform to their society with their way of living. Sofi is the mother of four girls who have her own struggle against the patriarchal powers. The narration starts with the part that La Loca, whose name means the crazy one, dies and comes back when she is three years old. This resurrection causes her first to be accepted as a saint, then as an outcast by the society.

The lid had pushed all the way open and the little girl inside sat up, just as sweetly as if she had woken from a nap, rubbing her eyes and yawning. “Mami?” she called, looking around and squinting her eyes against the harsh light. Father Jerome got hold of himself and sprinkled holy water in the direction of the child, but for the moment was stunned to utter so much as a word of prayer. Then, as if all this was not amazing enough, as Father Jerome moved toward the child she lifted herself up into the air and landed on the church roof. “Don’t touch me, don’t touch me!” she warned (Castillo, 1993: 23)

La Loca’s resurrection and ascension to the top of the church is given above. La Loca comes back to life while she is being taken to the church for the burial in a coffin. She rises to the top of the church and speaks to Father Jerome there. This means that La Loca as a character will be above all the Catholic beliefs and she sees herself higher than Father Jerome and Catholic Church when Father Jerome tries to question whether she is coming from God or Satan. She resists against his praying for her in the following lines:

“Hija, hija!” Father Jerome called up to her, hands clenched in the air. “Is this an act of God or Satan that brings you back to us, that

has flown you up to the roof like a bird? Are you the devil's messenger or a winged angel?" (Castillo, 1993: 23).

Father Jerome questions her if she is a believer or a non-believer with her act, but Sofi opposes to him and stops him. Meanwhile, the crowd attending to the funeral settles on their knees looking up to the girl like "the glittering angel placed at the top of a Christmas tree" (Castillo, 1994: 24). This scene is told the reader just like a miraculous event and Sofi does not permit Father Jerome to blame her little baby for being the devil's own. Then, La Loca calls to the crowd:

"Listen," she announced calmly to the crowd, "on my long trip I went to three places: hell..." Someone let out a loud scream at this. "To purgatorio and to heaven. God sent me back to help you all, to pray for you all, o si no, o si no..."

"O si no, que, hija?" Father Jerome begged.

"O si no, you and others who doubt just like you, will never see our Father in heaven!" (Castillo, 1993: 24).

La Loca tells the people about her experience when she is dead, and situates herself above the authority of Father Jerome. Here, Castillo making use of use such a miraculous event proves the title of her book that the events will make a stance against the authority of God, which is represented by the Church as an institution here. Castillo, changes the popular Mexican American Catholic belief with La Loca's spirituality on her own (Michael, 2006: 129). After this event, La Loca is disturbed by the smell of human beings and she does not touch them. She starts to stay at home and she never goes out. She takes the responsibility of "healing her sisters from the traumas and injustices they were dealt by society" (Castillo 1993: 27). She acts as a fixer of the illnesses or the problems that the male society causes. For instance, she "had cured her sister [Caridad] of her pregnancy" as public knowledge of an abortion would have been a cause for the excommunication of the both. She helps her mother by taking care of the animals when her sister, Fe, undergoes a crisis screaming permanently when she is left by her fiancée before her wedding. Michael comments on Loca's place in the family in this way:

[H]er [Loca's] decision to distance herself from the outside world situates her firmly in the Catholic tradition, her choice to sequester herself in her woman-centered, poor, Mexican-America home rather than in a convent points to a spirituality that blends a variety of traditions and remains firmly anchored in the everyday life of people. Her family further witnesses La Loca's development as an expert horsewoman, a skilled fiddler, a one hundred percent manita cook - skills she manages to master miraculously without being taught and which are central to carrying on particular cultural traditions – most importantly a vital contributor in manifold ways to the construction and daily functioning of their caring, synergic familial community (Michael, 2006: 130).

Although she lives secluded from the society and does not have any education of cooking, medicine or horse riding she becomes an expert of these subjects by herself. When Fe gets married, she gives her recipes for favourite Mexican food and when her sisters get into trouble she senses them beforehand and prays for them. For instance, when Caridad is raped she hides into the stove at home because she is afraid that her sister is killed (Castillo, 1994: 26). These were all features of the seventeenth century mystical nuns. Alma Rosa Alvarez states that by using mystical nun narratives of the seventeenth century Castillo is determined to attain a mestizo consciousness for the Chicanas (Alvarez, 2007 : 66). In the seventeenth century the nuns used to live in the convents and they were banned from public prayers, writing, teaching and preaching. This was done in order to maintain the male autonomy on women. The education of women was forbidden by the pope in fear of their getting active and higher in the clergy. According to rational-irrational binary opposition, the Church put them on the irrational part, while the male clergy were accepted to be rational. The nuns were kept in a contemplative mode of silence, cloistered into invisibility, and not formally educated. They were denied confession or communion by misogynistic priests. After the Reformation, they were given the right to confess and as a result of these confessions, they were open to be the sexual subjects of the priests. In order to avoid this, they were displacing their sexual energy by the narratives of martyred virgins/saints to achieve divine love. In order to escape from the misogynistic attitude of the priests, the nuns

experienced visions of flight which is a kind of mental travel to heaven, purgatory and/or hell. In this spiritual way, they used to put themselves out of clerical control (Alvarez, 2007: 70-76).

When La Loca is thought in terms of a mystical nun, it is seen that she does her ascension or visions of flight in the beginning of the narrative and like the nuns she avoids public life and lives in seclusion. She puts herself in a place higher than the church clergy in the beginning with her opposition to Father Jerome. She says that she has been to heaven, hell and purgatory and seen her father in the hell. She adds that she has prayed for his soul (Castillo, 1993: 44). However, Castillo implies the impossibility of avoiding the hegemony of the male patriarchy by Loca's dying of AIDS. Although she lives apart from the society and does not have any sexual intercourse, it is ironic and impossible that she has AIDS. AIDS is the symbol of the male's abuse over the female. After she gets ill, she takes part for the first and last time in a procession of Holy Friday wearing a blue bathrobe which is the same colour as the nun's clothes. In the end, she is visited by a nun, invisible to all but her:

...the Lady in Blue started coming to visit her. ...This was not the woman Loca had known down by the acequia, by the way. This lady looked like a nun. In fact, she was a nun. But she didn't smell like nothing so Loca was not sure if she was a present nun or a past nun or maybe hasta una future subjunctive nun. ... Even if it was during the day when she came by, the nun carried a lantern; and on one afternoon, she ...opened up her habit to show La Loca the horsehair vest beneath that into her delicate white body....(Castillo, 1993: 244).

The nun's horsehair vest is a penitential practice of common mystical nuns of the seventeenth century. Therefore, la Loca deconstructs the seventeenth century nun as she does not obey the rules of the church, and she resists the prayers of the Father Jerome. Although nuns did not use to take part in the community, la Loca joins the public in the end and she prays for the others. She stays free in her own way interdependent of the church and male dominant society. When she is disturbed by the patriarchy at home by means of AIDS, the Lady in Blue comes and takes her to eternity. This means that la Loca achieves salvation by means of her spirituality.

Caridad is the character, who happens to gain spiritual power of sensing the future after her miraculous recovery of being raped by *la malogra*. In *So Far From God*, *malogra* is described as something:

made of sharp metal and splintered wood. Of limestone, gold and brittle parchment. It held the weight of a continent and was indelible as ink, centuries old and yet as strong as a young wolf. It had no shape and was darker than the night, and mostly, as Caridad, would never, ever forget, it was pure force (Castillo, 1993:77).

Malogra which means the evil one is an old folk tale in New Mexican folklore told to warn the women that malogra wanders during the night, especially at crossroads and terrorizes women hanging around alone. The malogra is said to be usually wearing a large lock of wool or the whole fleece of a sheep and rarely takes on a human form and the one who sees la malogra, like a one who sees a ghost, forever remains senseless (Martinez, 2011: 223). It is said that Caridad is raped as a punishment for her having sex with men in promiscuity. In her collection of essays, *Massacre of the Dreamers*, Castillo expresses that Chicanas

have been forced to believe that we, as women, only existed to serve man under the guise of a serving Father God. Furthermore, our spirituality has been thoroughly subverted by institutionalized religious customs. The key to that spiritual oppression has been the repression of our sexuality, primarily through the control of our reproductive ability and bodies (Castillo, 1994: 13).

As Castillo explains here in a clear way that in Chicana/o society women have oppressed their sexuality and in case they have a free sexual life as in the example of Caridad they will be punished by the established social norms imprisoning woman to her body and inside the houses. Malogra, here symbolizes the male dominance and the Catholic restrictions that overwhelm women in their social environment.

The subordination of women's sexuality was crucial for the survival of patriarchal religious practices...The Virgin Mary is not an example of inherent femaleness or womanhood but an invented concept of the Church leaders to dictate social and political policies (Castillo, 1993: 107).

Castillo claims that with the religious stories Catholic Church provides the continuation of the patriarchal practices within the society by classifying the women into three groups: the virgin, the mother, and the whore. Castillo puts Caridad in the third group and although malogra is seen as a punishment in the society for the women, she uses the oppressive myth to transform Caridad from a sexually usurped female to a curandera who has spiritual powers and undergoes trances that result in her guessing the future events. Therefore, malogra here as a symbol of the patriarchal society leads to Caridad's supernatural physical and spiritual recovery as a Chicana.

The three women huddled together went to the bedroom where Caridad was. Sofi stepped back when she saw, not had been left of her daughter, half repaired by modern medical technology, tubes through her throat, bandages over skin that was gone, surgery piecing together flesh that was once her daughter's breasts, but Caridad as she was before.

Furthermore, a calm Fe was holding her sister, rocking her, stroking her forehead, humming softly to her. Caridad was whole. There was nothing, nothing anyone could see wrong with her, except for the fact that she was feverish. Her eyes were closed while she moved her head back and forth, not violently but softly, as was Caridad's nature, mumbling unintelligibly all the while. (Castillo, 1993: 39)

Caridad and Fe recover in a supernatural way with the help of Loca's prayers for them. It is seen that these miraculous events take place in order to solve the problems that occur as a result of the suppression of patriarchal institutions and society. After Caridad recovers, she undergoes trances three times: "Esperanza is going far away...and she's afraid..." Caridad continued. 'We should keep her home, Mama...' Caridad finished, her voice drifting off as she fell into a sound sleep" (Castillo, 1993:

47). Esperanza is the oldest of four sisters, who is an anchorwoman first in the local TV channel, then leaves for Washington DC to take a post as an anchorwoman with a major television station and has not been back since. That day, Esperanza calls her mom to tell them that she is leaving for a post in Saudi Arabia.

After her second trance, “Caridad told of a spectacular dream she had. She saw her horse Corazon leading a herd of one hundred and thirteen horses along a creek. There was some snow on the ground and the horses were all at a gallop, happy and free” (Castillo, 1993: 49). Don Domingo, who is Sofi’s gambler husband, after listening to her daughter’s dream calls his brother immediately to play on the number 113 on the daily number lottery. Not surprisingly, he wins 80 dollars.

Caridad’s last occasion for a “prediction caused Caridad to come out of her trance with a smile. “ ‘Wilma’s coming home,’ she said. ‘And we’re all going to have our hands full with her...’ ” (Castillo, 1993: 49). Wilma is their Irish dog and has been missing for months. The next morning she returns home with her puppies. These trances serve as a step for Caridad’s spiritual restoration that she will experience after the malogra. After these events, Caridad’s personality changes fully, she becomes a person of mystics learning to help people with herbal treatment from Dona Felicia and quits her promiscuous sexual adventures. As in the case of Loca, Caridad’s miraculous experiences occur as an opponent to suppression of patriarchy on women characters in the narration. These supernatural solutions help the character to find a new way to overcome the difficulties and to criticize the perspectives of patriarchy on women.

After starting a peaceful life on her own, Caridad has to face with her shadow when she recognizes that she has fallen in love with an Indian woman, Esmeralda. In the beginning, she escapes from the reality and hides in a cave for a year, then in an extraordinary way she resists Francisco de Penitente and his friends when they find her. After that moment, there occurs a love triangle between Francisco, Caridad and Esmeralda. Francisco starts to follow Caridad and he worships her as if she was the Holy Virgin. However, when he discovers that Caridad is in love with Esmeralda, he cannot avoid taking away Esmeralda from the Rape Crisis Centre and raping her. Francisco is an old soldier who has fought in the Vietnam War and after coming back to his town he has devoted himself to Catholic Church. He has chosen to make bultos (wooden sculptures of saints) as a profession and has become a santero. It is clear that, Francisco as a zealot Catholic stands as the counterpart of Caridad, who chooses the

indigenous spirituality after her restoration. Although he is a faithful Christian, his devotion to religion is told in a mocking style as the other male characters in the narration. A penitente is a person who repents for wrongdoings. It is ironic that he takes his name before he stalks Caridad, rapes Esmeralda and causes their death. Francisco is the representative of male dominant Catholic Church and after he recognizes the relationship between Caridad and Esmeralda, he cannot endure the idea of such a homosexual love. Francisco sees women either the virgin or the whore. After his mother's death when he is young, "as the years went on his mother ascending to heaven became more remote as a former human being and more akin to a celestial entity. To Francisco, yes, his mother was no less than a saint" (Castillo, 1993: 98). He idealized his mother to the status of a saint after her death and likewise, he "looked upon [Caridad] as one looks upon Mary. In Francisco's eyes Caridad had proven herself to be all that was chaste and humble" (Castillo, 1993: 192). As a Chicano, he sees the women he loves as the virgins, but he attacks Esmeralda as he sees her responsible for the homosexual love. Gloria Anzaldua states that the Catholic lesbian "goes against two moral prohibitions: sexuality and homosexuality" (Anzaldua, 1987: 19). Therefore, Francisco as the stern male Catholic representative abducts Esmeralda and punishes her both for her sexuality and homosexuality. Esmeralda's abduction functions as a warning to Caridad not to go beyond the borders of male-patriarchal power. At this point, Caridad's and Esmeralda's suicide comes as a solution to the hegemony of the patriarchy over them and they shelter in the nature as the mother earth is calling them. This is not the end, but just the beginning for Caridad's rebirth and salvation. As it is seen, whenever patriarchy comes over the female and restrict their freedom, the author puts forward the spirituality of magical realism as a solution. When they leap off the cliff, there occurs to be deus-ex-machina but the divine God, who interferes and saves them is a female deity, Tsictinako who is believed to be the real creator of the earth. So as an opponent to Francisco's culture based on male Catholic God, Caridad chooses the nature sourced female deity to achieve spirituality and preserve her mestizo consciousness. After their suicide, Francisco hangs himself at the end of his uncle's land "dangling sorrowful-like like a crow picked pear from a tall pinon, which was how someone had first put it and how it was remembered (Castillo, 1993: 212). This image is told without any catharsis and as a punishment his scream calling Caridad is heard in the valley.

Esperanza is the oldest of four sisters and the last daughter who has a supernatural return after her death in Saudi Arabia to communicate with her family. Esperanza is a modern Chicana, who has gone to university and taken part in the Chicano Movement as a student with her boyfriend, Ruben. Her story as a Chicana activist is given to criticize the movement's lack of interest in women's activism. Although she had gotten her B.A in Chicano Studies, she does not try to resist the Anglo-American hegemony she works for or never tries to criticize the movement's male-oriented foundation and the attitudes leaving the female out of the structure only as a clerk or secretary. At university, she goes out with Ruben, who during the height of his Chicano cosmic consciousness renamed himself Cuauhtemoc. But Ruben abandons her for a white rich woman after the university. After he gets divorced from his wife, he calls Esperanza again and they start to meet up once more. Therefore, she becomes an attender of teepee meetings with Ruben after which they have sex at a hotel.

Every two weeks she was right there with Ruben, at the teepee meeting meetings of the Native-American Church, Ruben singing and drumming, keeping the fire, watching the "door," teaching her the dos and don'ts of his interpretation of lodge "etiquette" and the role of women and the role of men and how they were not to be questioned. And she concluded as she had during her early days, why not?

After all, there was Ruben with his Native and Chicano male friends always joking among themselves, always siding with each other, and always agreeing about the order and reason of the universe, and since Esperanza had no Native women friends to verify any of what was being told to her by Ruben about the woman's role in what they were doing, she did not venture to contradict him. (Castillo, 1993: 36)

Castillo here criticizes the Chicanos as they do not resist the order of the universe actively, and they follow the social order founded by Anglo-American culture. At their meetings they do not discuss anything useful for the society, but only puts restrictions on the role of women in their society. Castillo implies that Chicanos were supporting the male, on the other hand and going on to suppress women in order to prevent their social activism. Elizabeth Jacobs explains Esperanza's troubled

relationship with her boyfriend Ruben as a satirical reflection on the Chicano movement;

[Esperanza's affair with Ruben and having been betrayed later] mirrors movement ideology in the sense that on the one hand the Chicano movement called for justice and demanded equity for Mexican American people in the USA, but on the other hand little was said about the rights of women. Within its main organizational tool, the Chicano family, sexism and internal oppression were widespread and deeply entrenched. Consequently its ubiquitous ideology affected the female participants of the movement in a number of profound ways. As one Chicana activist stated, 'When a family is involved in a human rights movement, as is the Mexican American family, there is little room for a women's liberation movement. There is little room for having a definition of women's role as such (Jacobs, 2006: 33).

In the flow of the narration, Esperanza thinks that she should go on her life without Ruben and moves to Washington DC. She escapes from her society and the male dominance, but chooses to serve to another hegemonic authority, that is, Anglo-American society. There she starts to work as an anchorwoman on TV, but after a short time, the directors of the channel decide to send her to Saudi Arabia where there is a war. There she disappears magically: "The last traces of her and the other three members of the news crews were their abandoned jeep, six thousand dollars in cash, camera equipment, and footsteps in the sand leading toward the enemy lines" (Castillo, 1993: 84). Aldoma mentions that this magical disappearance of Esperanza has the function of reflecting the violence of the Anglo-American society. This capitalist society exploits one *other*, to fight against the other. Esperanza as "the other" in the white dominated American press is sent to mirror the war of another *other* (Arabs) against the capitalist invaders and she is dead at the end (Aldoma, 2003: 81).

After she dies, Esperanza's spirit comes back ectoplasmically and communicates with her two other gifted sisters. Her death provides her with a political consciousness and when she comes back she discusses with Caridad about the Gulf War, "about the president's misguided policies, about how the public was being fooled about a lot of

things that were going on behind that whole war business, how people could get some results by taking such measures as refusing to pay taxes” (Castillo, 1993: 163). Her spirituality acts as a gift to criticize and become aware of the misdoings of the Anglo-American politicians. Therefore, the spiritual functions as a solution suggested to the trouble caused by the patriarchy. It becomes the voice of *the other* in the society as a magical tool (Michael, 2006: 133).

As it is seen, Castillo uses the supernatural or spiritual elements when the characters are in conflict with male patriarchy and as a solution they are given spiritual powers to protect themselves from the male hegemony and survive as a Chicana on their way to their new mestizo consciousness.

2.2. Deconstruction of Established Female Archetypes

Magical realism, “as the cutting edge of postmodernism,” (Dhaen, 1995: 201) has become the voice of *the other* by refusing the fundamentalism and purity, and challenges racism, ethnicity, sexism and homogeneity. As a result of this perspective, it has achieved to be widespread among the colonized communities who have been suppressed politically, culturally, and sexually. The authors who try to decenter the privileged centres use magical realism in order to create *a new consciousness of identity in their community*, by deconstructing and/or re-narrating their history and myths.

Texts labeled magical realist draw upon cultural systems that are no less “real” than those upon which traditional literary realism draws often non-Western cultural systems that privilege mystery over empiricism, empathy over technology, tradition over innovation. Their primary narrative investment may be in myths, legends, rituals- that is, in collective (sometimes oral and performative, as well as written) practices that bind communities together. (Faris and Zamora, 1995: 3)

Faris summarizes the subject and method of magical realist texts which focus on the non-Western civilisations known as having mythological, oral and legendary narratives to hold the collective identity of the communities together. She goes on her explanation with the following words:

Mind and body, spirit and matter, life and death, real and imaginary, self and other, male and female: these boundaries are to be erased, transgressed, blurred, brought together... Magical texts are subversive: their in-betweenness, their all-at-onceness encourages resistance to monologic political and cultural structures, a feature that has made the mode particularly useful to writers in postcolonial cultures and, increasingly women. (Faris and Zamora, 1995:6)

She points out that magical realism erases the boundaries between binary oppositions and this in-betweenness helps to resist the hegemonic political and cultural structures. As a result of this, it becomes a mode of “the other”, especially of women.

Sevim Kantarcioglu (1934-), in her book *Edebiyat Akımları/Platon'da Derrida'ya [Literary Movements/From Platon to Derrida]* (2009) explains the deconstructive theory with the following words:

Derrida handles the deconstructive process in the guidance of Levi-Strauss' disruption of the myths theory. Levi- Strauss calls the replacement of an old myth with a new one as “bricolage”. Bricolage means to have something in order to disrupt a system structure, that is, to use the elements of a system against it. The aim is to evacuate the inner parts of myths that are in the centre of a system and to place them into a new space of reason by refilling the meaning again. Deconstruction also means to divide the myth-complexes of social values into its components, because there is the denial of logic-centre of the social structure. (Kantarcioglu, 2009: 294)

Kantarcioglu here gives us the methods and reasons of deconstructive theory, that is, in order to reshape the social values of a system, the myths of that system should be divided into its elements and changed with the new ones. She adds that to obtain a new whole of myths, the author should know the old system or myths in detail to use the concepts of the system against the old system and to transform and recreate it by disrupting it.

In magical realism, the myths deriving from the experience of the collective unconscious are deconstructed with a Jungian perspective rather than Freudian as it aims to change the society not the individual. As it has a Jungian perspective, it is seen that by making use of the local myths and the archetypes, a new understanding of the identity is the destination of the magical realist texts. For this reason, Chicana feminists are interested in magical realism to re-narrate their mythological or historical stories to deconstruct and change the dominant cultural ideologies so that their racial, ethnic identities and gender roles can be reexamined by the use of female archetypes seen in Chicana/o culture. Alicia Gaspar de Alba mentions the three archetypal roles given to women within Mexican and Chicana/o society: “the mother, the virgin and the whore,” (Gaspar, 2005: 51). As a result of the dominance of the male authority in the domestic spaces, female sexuality has been suppressed and made passive under these categories. In their community, the women have to conform to the structures founded by the patriarchy which debases them into three passive mother figures. They are either *the mother* serving at home to the male members of the family, or *the virgin* mother protecting and oppressing her sexuality for a patriarchal family structure, otherwise they become *the whore* who is sexually abused and made use of by the male. These roles are to be recreated by the transformation of three Chicana/o stories: *La Malinche*, *La Llorana* and *La Virgen de Guadalupe*. Gloria Anzaldua states in *Borderlands/La Frontera*:

All three mediators: Guadalupe, the virgin mother who has not abandoned us, la Chingada (Malinche), the raped mother who we have abandoned, and la Llorana, the mother who seeks her lost children and is a combination of the other two... In part, the true identity of all three has been subverted-Guadalupe to make us docile and enduring, la Chingada to make us ashamed of our Indian side, and la Llorana to make us long-suffering people. (Anzaldua, 1987:30)

Anzaldua claims that the identity of Chicanas has been suppressed under these three archetypes. In the Chicana/o community, the female cannot create her own *self* because of these misogynistic and oppressed mother figures. Guadalupe is a patient figure who is silent, obedient and passive. La Chingada (Malinche) is the Indian servant

of the colonizer, who functions both as a lover and a translator, so she is not a figure of honour for the Chicana/o people with an Indian root. And lastly, La Llorona is a suffering mother the combination of the two other mother archetypes. She is both a silent and obedient woman to her lover betraying her husband and the beast mother who kills her children at the same time. Chicana feminists use magical realism to distort these misogynistic and suppressed roles by means of deconstruction. They reimagine them within a new positive perspective that tries to attribute a new and true identity to the Chicanas and encourage them to act in the society. In order to understand and deconstruct these mythical and historical figures, their stories should be examined first.

La Malinche has become one of the most cursed and insulted figures in Chicana/o culture. She is an important historical figure, but she has been mythologized in terms of “the betrayal of the Mexican race and the danger of female sexuality” (Nelson, 2008: 4). Her story starts when she is sent to Hernan Cortes, the Spanish conquistador of Mexico, after his victory over the Mayan town of Potonchan. It is a known fact that she speaks two native languages which are Mayan and Nahuatl, and later she learns Spanish so that she becomes Cortes’ translator. She serves as the voice in negotiations between the Aztecs and Spanish conquistadores. Meanwhile she also becomes Cortes’ lover and gives birth to his child, Martin Cortes, who is known to be the first mestizo (mixed- both Mexican and European blood) (Nelson, 2008: 5). In her mythological story, her sexual relationship with Cortes is especially emphasized. Norma Alarcon states that in contemporary Chicana/o culture Malinche is seen as “an evil goddess and creator of a new race... mother-whore, bearer of the illegitimate children, responsible for the foreign Spanish invasion” (Alarcon, 1983: 182 in Nelson, 2008: 5). Malinche is thought to be a traitor who gives birth to the children of a colonizer and so causes her homeland to be colonized by the Spanish. Patricia Elie Nelson points out in her thesis “Rewriting Myth: New Interpretations of La Malinche, La Llorona and La Virgen de Guadalupe” that Malinche is also referred to as “La Chingada” which means “the fucked one” or “the violated” (Nelson, 2008: 5). Malinche is considered as a passive woman who is unable to show resistance to the sexual conquest of Cortes and this weakness causes the collapse of the Aztec civilization. Her body as a mother symbolizes her country, as she surrenders to the colonizer; it foreshadows the forthcoming distortion of her people’s dominance. Octavio Paz in his essay called “The Sons of La Malinche” mentions about Malinche as “the violated mother... Her passivity

is abject: she does not resist violence, but is an inert heap of bones, blood and dust. Her taint is constitutional and resides, as we said earlier in her sex...And yet she is the cruel incarnation of the feminine condition” (Paz, 1997: 208). As it is seen, Paz attributes Malinche’s passivity and weakness to all women. He claims that they should be seen as the potential traitors and as a result of this, they must be ruled under the male hegemony.

The second figure is La Llorona, “The Weeping Woman” has a story which is told differently in distinct regions as it has survived through oral tradition. The most common version tells about a woman who is sexually betrayed by her lover (sometimes her husband) and as a result of this kills her own children by drowning them in a river. It is told that she kills them in order to take revenge as a result of her jealousy. As punishment, she is destined to walk around the earth looking for her dead children for eternity and haunts rivers or streams crying in eternal pain. This story is told to frighten children with the threat that if they go away too far from home, the ghost of her will take them away (Nelson. 2008: 7). La Llorona is an evil and failed mother like Malinche and functions as another way to strengthen the common misogynistic idea for woman as sinful and criminal by nature. In *So Far From God*, she is told to be a wicked mother who drowns her children in order to run off with her lover and to leave her husband. She is also given as an example to the girls to warn them that having sexual pleasure is sinful for them, and this interdependent personal agency can make them kill their own children.

On the other hand, there is an idealized figure standing against these failed mothers, La Virgen de Guadalupe. She is a version of Virgin Mary in Mexico and her story has been told since Catholic Church became dominant as a religious institution after the Spanish invasion. In 1531, Catholic Church stabilizes itself as the religious authority in Mexico and forbids native religions, but an Aztec peasant sees an apparition on the hill of Tepeyac. She introduces herself as the Virgin mother. The peasant runs to tell the Catholic authorities about the miracle, but they suspect whether it is true. Therefore, they want a proof. When he goes to Tepeyac, the Virgin asks him to pick the flowers that have grown on the hill, although it is winter. After he collects and puts them in his cloak, he returns to the church and opens his cloak to show not only the flowers, but also a beautiful image of the Virgin printed there. Anzaldua tells the importance of the Virgin in the following words: “La Virgen de Guadalupe is the single

most potent religious, political, and cultural image of the Chicano/Mexicano. She like my race, is a synthesis of the old world and new, of the religion and culture of the two races in our psyche, the conqueror and the conquered” (Anzaldua, 1987: 30). According to Anzaldua, the Virgin is an icon of both the colonizer and the colonized as a religious figure. She is the only mother figure who is considered as innocent. Nelson points out in her thesis that, the root of Guadalupe has its roots in the traditional Aztec goddesses including Coatlicue (Serpent Skirt), an earth goddess who is the mother of the moon and the stars representing death, and Tonantzin, an Aztec fertility goddess, referred to as *Our Lady Mother*. Furthermore, Tonantzin has had a temple on the hill of Tepeyac (Nelson, 2008: 8). In this sense, the Virgin becomes a synthesis of the two cultures which are pre-Hispanic and post-Hispanic Mexican cultures. She is used as an opponent to Malinche by the Chicanos to empower the virgin/whore binary opposition.

These mythological and historical stories are deconstructed by Chicanas, in order to keep the traditional elements of their Mexican culture, but as they are in conflict with these images, they re-narrate these figures in order to redefine the meanings of these figures and establish a new mestizo consciousness. In a way, they apply Levi-Strauss’ bricolage theory to these myths, that is, they evacuate their inner structure and recreate it.

Ana Castillo is one of the most prominent Chicana feminist authors, who challenges the established female roles in the Chicano society by using magical realism as a device to form a female agency to act against the suppressing attitude of Chicano and Anglo American culture and religion. She uses one of the features of postmodernism, which is bricolage, to form a new mythical background for the forthcoming Chicana/o generations. Bricolage as a postmodernist deconstruction method is commonly used in magical realism which is also a sub-branch of postmodern narrative mode. She uses parody, hyperbole and magical realism in *So Far From God*, to criticize the old stories told so far about these female archetypes and to create a new female archetype for the future Chicana generations.

In the novel, to start with La Llorona myth, she is told as a “Chicana astral traveler” (Castillo, 1993: 162), who travels around the world and communicates with the Chicanas. After Esperanza dies in the Gulf War, her spirit-mind comes back to communicate with her family through La Llorona so that the collective belief that she is a failed mother is deconstructed because according to Esperanza’s spirit mind “La

Llorona in the beginning (before men got in the way of it all) may have been nothing, but a loving mother” (Castillo, 1993: 163). Castillo here evacuates the meaning of La Llorona myth which depicts her as a wicked, jealous and failed woman, then explains her identity in terms of an affectionate mother who has fallen because of the male desire. Besides this, Sofi is given as an antithesis for La Llorona during the flow of the narration. She is an abandoned mother like La Llorona, but she acts differently from the mythical figure. She works and struggles for her daughters as cited below:

Sofia had not left her children, much less drowned them to run off with nobody. On the contrary, she has been left to raise them by herself. And all her life, there had always been at least one woman around like her, left alone, abandoned, divorced, or widowed, to raise her children, and none of them tried to kill their babies. (Castillo, 1993: 161)

It is clear that Sofia does not believe in the common story and as an alternative mother to La Llorona she resists to tell her story as a bedtime story to her daughters. She does not approve of the society’s attitude towards La Llorona as a mother and wants to lead a new consciousness to the myth of the failed mother.

Instead of giving each myth in separate characters, Castillo chooses to combine them in one character and form a new female archetype by going beyond the passive virgin-whore binary opposition and creating an active lesbian archetype with indigenous beliefs. Caridad is the character who carries all these features and aligns with Malinche, La Llorona and Virgen de Guadalupe. In order to understand her restoration, her story from the start of the narrative flow should be overlooked.

In the beginning of the narrative, Caridad, whose name means “charity” marries her high school love, Memo and is betrayed by him after two weeks of marriage. As a solution, she goes back to her home, but carries on her affair and has three abortions performed by her sister, La Loca. By getting rid of her children, Caridad is illustrated as a failed mother like La Llorona. However, she does not regret for having these abortions like the mythical figure. Here Castillo as a Chicana activist author criticizes the prohibition of abortion and tries to imply that, if it is not permitted, it will be done in a secret way: “It would have been a terrible thing to let anyone find out that La Loca had “cured” her sister of her pregnancy, a cause for excommunication for both, not to

mention that someone would have surely had La Loca arrested. A crime against man if not a sin against God” (Castillo, 1993: 27). The state of being pregnant is told like an illness to the reader, because in Catholic abortion is forbidden and as a result of this Caridad is healed by her sister secretly at home. After some time has passed, Memo leaves her again, this time forever. This makes Caridad fall into a mood of promiscuity and she starts not to discriminate between Memo and the other men: “Three abortions later and her weakness for shots of Royal Crown with beer chasers after work...Caridad no longer discriminated between giving her love to Memo and only to Memo whenever he wanted it and loving anyone she met at the bars who vaguely resembled Memo” (Castillo, 1993: 27). Here Caridad is associated with Malinche, who is admitted as a whore and as a result of this the community of Tome sees Caridad as a whore, too. Caridad as her name suggests surrenders her body to men without making any difference. As she has such a debased view of the Tome homelander, they do not react when Caridad is raped. They think that she is violated because of her sexuality and the attackers are never found, so the case is closed afterwards. They see her being raped as a punishment, for her being active sexually.

After she is taken home by her family, she recovers miraculously and quits her job at the hospital. She starts to live on her own and chooses to be a *curandera* (a healer who tries to cure people with the help of herbal therapy or spirituality). Her old neighbour, Dona Felicia (dona means Mrs. in Spanish), becomes her master telling her how to meditate and prepare herbal medicines for the people. It is important to point out that after her restoration Caridad leaves hanging around the pubs and having sexual intercourse with the men she meets there. Although she does not believe in the practices of Catholic religion much, she goes on a pilgrimage with Dona Felicia one day and there she falls in love with an Indian woman, who is first initiated by the narrator as the “woman-on-the-wall” then “the woman-on-the-wall-now-on-a-hill”(Castillo, 1993:76). This woman is called Esmeralda and from the beginning it is foreshadowed that there will be obstacles between her and Caridad. “Woman-on-the-wall was the most beautiful woman she had ever seen- but she had scarcely had more than a glimpse of her... There was just something about her...she knew that she could not bear the thought of living without that woman.” (Castillo, 1993: 79) Caridad is attracted by a woman for the first time in her life, and she does not know what to do. Therefore, after returning from the pilgrimage she leaves her trailer to have a mineral bath, but she does not come back for

a year and lives in a cave. She is found by Francisco el Penitente, who is Dona Felicia's godson and resists him when he tries to take her to the town. Francisco and his friends cannot take her back. She herself gets out of the cave and comes back. After this mysterious one year of seclusion, Caridad goes on loving Esmeralda and becomes her friend. At the same time she is accepted as a holy figure in Tome. She is described as emanating a glow and characterized as a "handmaiden of Christ" (Castillo, 1993: 87). When she is found she is ironically treated as a "saint" (saints are man, but she becomes a saint breaking the boundaries of patriarchy) and during the Holy Week, it is learnt that "hundreds of people made their way up to the mountain to la Caridad's cave in the hopes of obtaining her blessing" (Castillo, 1993: 87).

As it is seen, Caridad becomes a reflection of Virgen de Guadalupe, but she deconstructs the holy figure in terms of her love for Esmeralda and her resistance against men. While she is in love with Esmeralda, Francisco falls for Caridad. He adores her like a holy figure and begins to watch her secretly:

Even the first time he saw her he was taken aback by the glow her body emanated. Despite the beating of the sun on his brow and the cross that bent his bare back on that Good Friday he knew it was not delirium. One less faithful might have dismissed what he saw as a mirage caused by the pain he had chosen to endure emulating the passion of Christ. But Francisco el Penitente knew what he saw in Caridad was nothing short of a blessing, an unmerited reward for the physical suffering he was imposing on himself as penance. (Castillo, 1993: 192)

There happens to be a love triangle among these three people. He becomes obsessed with Caridad. As Caridad is watching her beloved, he follows her and in the end, out of jealousy, he rapes Esmeralda. Caridad's story ends with her and Esmeralda's death. After they escape from Francisco and hide in Esmeralda's grandmother's village named Acoma Pueblo, which is an Indian habitat, they desperately jump off a cliff to get rid of him. Caridad as a new archetype challenges the traditional love concept of the patriarchal society and falls in love with a woman, and in the end, instead of surrendering her male fanatic, she chooses to die with her female love. Therefore, it can be said that as a woman she changes her place in the dominant culture/society as a

passive suppressed woman and becomes a character representing a free soul who experiences a rebirth in the matriarchal myth of Acoma by returning to her female roots and beliefs. According to this myth, there were two females who grew out of the earth with the help of a spirit called Tsichtinako.

In order to understand Castillo's re-founded archetypes and myth deconstruction, the mother archetype in Jung's *Four Archetypes* (1970) should be studied. Jung divides the psyche of a person into four layers: conscious in which ego takes part, individual conscious in which the oppressed memoirs exist, collective unconscious and the oppressed part of the collective unconscious. According to Jung, collective unconscious is the layer of psyche which becomes concrete with myths of cultures. He claims that this layer is common in all the human beings, that's why he calls it collective unconscious and it is not the product of personal experiences; it lives and goes on through heritage (Jung, 2012:245). The most important components of collective unconscious are archetypes. Archetypes serve to organize, direct and inform human thought and behaviour. They hold control of the human life cycle. In different stages of life archetypal imperatives lead lives for birth, courtship, separation from parents, marriage, and preparation for death.

Jung also groups the archetypal figures who affect the development of the psyche. These are mother, great mother, father, child, devil, god, wise old man, wise old woman, the trickster, the hero and so on. In this study, the mother and the grandmother archetypes are handled. Jung says that "mother image of a child is not a direct representation of her/his mother, but it is the portrait made or reflected by the potential anima of the child" (Jung, 2004: 66). Mother archetype can reflect itself as personal mother, step mother, mother-in-law, wise woman, furthermore as a deeper reflection Virgin Mary, and for its deepest reflection as the Church, Country, and Vault of Sky. In this respect, cave, birth, fertility, tree, and mandala are some other minor reflections of the mother archetype (Jung, 2004: 21-22). Besides the mother archetype, the grandmother archetype has a significant place. If a person is under the effect of grandmother archetype it means that he has increased his status spiritually as he tries to serve for not his own happiness but the others' happiness and welfare.

Meanwhile, in order to analyze the character development of Caridad, the most four important archetypes for the psyche should be explained. There are four archetypes: persona, anima, animus, and the shadow. The persona means the mask of

collective psyche which helps human beings act in a right way in society. Anima archetype appears in men and it represents their biological expectation of women, but it is also a symbol of their feminine possibilities. The animus archetype is the image of the masculine that occurs in women. The shadow is a representation of the personal unconscious as a whole and it often represents one's dark side of the ego. Jung explains that every psyche has its positive or negative sides. When the personal unconscious and collective unconscious of the person come together as a whole and go under the individuation process, they form the *self* as a unity of the personality as a whole (Walker, 1995: 359).

If the phases of Caridad's life are examined according to Jung's archetypes, it is seen that she is under the effect of mother and grandmother archetypal figures. As Malinche and La Llorana are failed mothers, in the beginning she is under the effect of Shadow and as a result of this, her sexual instincts are in the foreground. After the rape, her restoration gives a start to her individuation process. In this period, she turns to her inner self and her spirituality comes forward as she is affected by Dona Felicia, who is the representation of the grandmother archetype in the narration. She wants to help the others and starts to live a secluded life in her trailer which means that she is more powerful in terms of both personality and spirituality as she undergoes trances and foretells the future events. These mystic powers does not inflate her as a heroine, on the other hand they encourage her to seek for her real *self*.

After she falls in love with Esmeralda, she is disturbed by this realization of her shadow and as it does not suit to her persona that she pretends to be in her community, she escapes and hides instinctively in a cave which symbolizes the mother's womb and there she encounters with her shadow and becomes a whole. She finds herself in that cave and lives a very primitive life and experiences a rebirth there. Although she manages to survive miraculously, she does not have an inflated character. On the contrary, after she gets out, she starts to resist against the patriarchy and other hegemonic powers. She accepts that she is a lesbian in herself, and keeps on loving Esmeralda. Francisco, who is her obsessive suitor, follows her everywhere, but instead of surrendering to heterosexual love and patriarchal family and the church, she chooses to hide in Acoma Pueblo, which is an Indian Village. In the end, she returns to nature or earth that is feminine –Jungian psychology is also feminine– by jumping off the cliff in that village. Her death is told as follows:

Tsichtinako was calling!... The Acoma people heard it and knew it was the voice of the Invisible One who had nourished the first two humans, who were also both female, although no one had heard it in a long time and some had never heard it before. But all still knew who it was... Much to all of their surprise, there were no morbid remains of splinted bodies tossed to the ground, down, down, like bad pottery or glass or old bread. There weren't even whole bodies lying peaceful. There was nothing. Just the spirit deity Tsichtinako calling loudly with a voice like the wind, guiding the two women back, not out toward the sun's rays or up to the clouds but down, deep within the soft, moist dark earth (Castillo, 1993: 211).

In her thesis, Patricia Nelson explains that this citation totally renders the reader about the Acoma creation myth. Tsichtinako (Thought-Woman) is the female spirit creator of the Earth. She says that by associating Caridad's death, Castillo deconstructs the Catholic myth of a male creator God and reconstructs the source of spirituality on the earth instead of a faraway heaven. When Caridad dies, she accomplishes a spirituality deriving from unity with the earth, other women and her indigenous past (Nelson, 2008: 64).

Even as we select from our Mexica (Nahua) and Christian traditions, it is only today, who can ultimately define what is needed to give us courage...Even when selectively incorporating what seems indispensable to our religiosity, we must analyze its historical meaning. We must, if necessary give it new meaning, so that it validates our instincts to survive our own terms. (Castillo, 1994: 145)

Here, Castillo explains the reason why she created a new female archetype. She states that Chicana women should question the meaning of both the indigenous and Christian traditions in order to help their *self* to survive in terms of their identity.

Consequently, it is clear that Castillo creates a new female archetype by combining and deconstructing all the old Chicana and Catholic figures in one female character in *So Far From God* in order to make future Chicana generations search for a

new understanding of their *mestiza* identity. Anzaldua summarizes Castillo's aim of deconstruction like this: "By creating a new mythos - that is, a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the way we behave- *la mestiza* creates a new consciousness" (Anzaldua, 1987: 80).

2.3. Magical Realism: Salvation or Catastrophe

Magical realism is a movement containing magic and reality in itself together. The magic used in the magical realist texts does not have an escapist attitude from reality, but it is in the demand of reflecting the reality from the eyes of the magic. Wen-Chin Ouyang defines magic in this way:

Magic can mean anything that defies empiricism, including religious beliefs, superstitions, myths, legends, voodoo, or simply what Todorov terms "the uncanny" and "the marvelous" fantastic. Realism, seen from the perspective of magic, is one or any way of grasping reality outside the matrix of what is by now disdained conventional realism. (Ouyang, 2005: 14)

Magic can be anything that is away from the rational point of view and religious beliefs, superstitions, myths, legends and even voodoo can be considered as magic. Magic here is used to reflect reality. Ana Castillo's magic is found in the religious miracles and stories given in the lives of Catholic saints to represent social and political activism (Caminero- Santengelo, 2005: 83). In her novel, Castillo deconstructs an old Catholic story of Sophia (wisdom) and her three daughters, Fe (Faith), Esperanza (Hope), and Caridad (Charity). She adds the fourth daughter *la Loca* (Crazy) to the narrative and in an ironic way tells their stories on their way of beliefs and ambitions which call for female collective agency. The original version of their story dates back to the second century. In the Catholic tradition, Faith, Hope, and Charity are virgin martyrs, tortured and killed in Rome for refusing to bow to a statue of Artemis. As a reward for remaining faithful to Jesus Christ even to the point of sacrificing her daughters, their mother, Saint Sophia, was brought to heaven by God to join them (Nelson, 2008: 51). Although in the original story, Sophia's daughters die for their faith in the Catholic Christianity, Castillo creates characters that are free of the Catholic

belief and resist on the limitations and impositions of the Church on them. Nelson in her thesis explains that the use of the names calls for a manifestation of virtue and adds that the daughters named by Christian ideals can be seen as archetypes rather than individuals affecting the beliefs and lives of the future generations (Nelson, 2008:52). They go after their faith, but not in the typical Christian belief. They seek for the interdependence of female agency through their beliefs and spirituality. It is important to question whether magical realism, that is magic here, serves as a salvation or catastrophe for the characters.

To start with *la Loca*, as it is explained in the first part, her spirituality implying to represent the seventeenth century nun and being taken to eternity by a nun, she manages to gain salvation as she deconstructs the mystic nun and stands against the Catholic authority. She does not give in to the Church and acts in an active way taking part in the public procession and praying for the others. In the end, she is accepted to be a saint and in spite of the fact that “people never really could figure out what *la Loca* protected and oversaw as a rule... it was considered a good idea to have a little statue of *la Loca* in your kitchen and to give one as a good luck gift to new brides and progressive grooms” (Castillo, 1993: 248).

Esperanza, whose name stands for the hope for political activism, achieves this only after her death. She is the educated member of the family, but she does not seek for the Chicana consciousness as a female against the oppressive male members of the society or for a political awakening against the Anglo-American policies. Instead she chooses to serve to the hegemonic and capitalist white male dominant Anglo-American society. She experiences an awakening and becomes active politically only after she dies. As a spirit, she comes and visits *Caridad* to discuss the policies of the Anglo-American government. Therefore, her spirit as a magical being attains salvation.

Caridad, who is a combination of the old local archetypes, *la Llorona*, *la Malinche* and *Virgin de Guadalupe* is the round character of the narrative. She changes totally from the beginning of the narrative till the end. In the beginning, she is the whore of the virgin-whore dichotomy, but her being attacked by *malogra* provides her to open a new page in her life. After her restoration of the rape, she starts to lead a spiritual life and wants to be a *curandera*. However; she completes her search for the self when she falls in love with *Esmeralda* and hides in a cave for a year. As the representative of patriarchal and heterosexual society, that is *Francisco* here, starts to chase her, she is

reborn when she jumps off the cliff in the Acoma Pueblo with Esmeralda and in this way she achieves salvation. She becomes a whole with the nature again by returning to it when the female creator of the earth calls for them.

Apart from her sisters, Fe is the only character who cannot live a salvation at the end of her life. Fe's spiritual lack comes from her choice to place her faith totally on the American dream and its more materialist aspects by distancing herself from her own family and culture. She is the only member of the family, who is disturbed by la Loca and she also sees the other members of the family as self-defeating and unambitious. This becomes evident when she prefers Anglo bridesmaids to her sisters: "Fe had just come back from Bernadette's Bridal gowns, where she had had herself fitted for her dress, and the three gabachas ...she had chosen from the bank as her bridemaids, instead of her sisters..." (Castillo, 1993: 29). Fe is the representative of the assimilated Mexican Americans with her obsession to her physical appearance: "[s]he maintained her image above all-from the organized desk at work to weekly manicured fingernails and a neat coiffure" (Castillo, 1993: 28). She is the only member who demands marriage and even after her break up with her fiancée before the wedding because of his marriage fright, she does not give up her faith and search for a marriage and purchase for an American dream house with "the long dreamed-of automatic washer, microwave, Cuisinart and the VCR..."(Castillo, 1993: 171). In the end she achieves to get married to one of her cousins, Casimiro, who has the habit of bleating like a sheep as his family has lived in isolation while they have continued their profession as shepherds. In order to pay for her dream house, she leaves her job and starts to work for ACME International where she is exposed to radioactive chemical and dies of cancer at the age of twenty-six. In *Massacre of the Dreamers*, Castillo explains the aftermaths of the American Dream:

In order to achieve goals of the American Dream, the Mexican tradition of an extended family community was deemed a hindrance and was relinquished within the time span of a single generation. In a nation that strongly motivates people toward competition, individual achievement, and above all, material acquisitions, collectivity and spiritual aspirations are anachronistic. (Castillo, 1994: 34)

She wants to tell that traditional Mexican family is an obstacle for the American Dream and in this capitalist nation only in search of material acquisitions. In this sense, individual's success prevents spirituality and collective agency. Therefore, Fe as a selfish and assimilated Mexican American does whatever post is given to her which results in her death without any spiritual rebirth. She recognizes the importance of her mother's home which she wants to escape throughout her life and before she dies, she wants to return home. In contrast to her sisters, she is too late to understand the importance of her identity as a Chicana and she gets consumed by the consumer Anglo-American society because of her consumptive ambitions.

The only character who stays alive and survives the poor conditions is Sofi, the mother. Her name and character is the allegory of wisdom. She, in her character, owns the features of her daughters' names, faith, hope, charity and craziness. She is a poor working class mother who has been abandoned by her gambler husband, Domingo. He returns home twenty years later and tries to gain Sofi's love but she does not love him anymore and has no desire to share a life with him again. She will no longer put up with his insulting her anymore like calling her 'silly Sofi'. She earns the necessary money for the living of the family and after he comes back he loses Sofi's house in a gambling bet and that is the only mistake that she cannot forgive as the house is "her identity and her history" (Lanza, 1998: 76):

But the house, that home of mud and straw and stucco and in some places brick- which had been her mother's and father's and her grandparents', for that matter, and in which she and her sister had been born and raised- that house had belonged to her. (Castillo, 1993: 215)

After she learns that he has lost their house, she wants him to leave from the house. Like the other male characters in the narration, Domingo is used as an opposition to his partner in character. Although the male are in power in the society, throughout the narration, the dominant and strong characters standing against the patriarchal rule are the female. Sofi does not demand for the purchase of the dominating culture, instead she prefers her own culture and home as a tool of spiritual growth. Anzaldua explains the features of the Chicana/o as the following:

Los Chicanos, how patient we seem, how very patient...We know how to survive. When other races have given up their tongue, we've kept ours. We know what it is to live under the hammer blow of the dominant norteamericano culture. But more than we count the blows, we count the days the weeks the years the centuries the eons until the white laws and commerce and customs will rot in the deserts they've created, lie bleached. Humildes yet proud, quietos yet wild, nosotros los mexicanos-Chicanos will walk by the crumbling ashes as we go about our business. Stubborn, persevering, impenetrable as stone, yet possessing a malleability that renders us unbreakable, we, the mestizas and mestizos, will remain. (Anzaldua, 1987: 63-64)

Anzaldua mentions the characteristics of the Chicana/o identity and adds that one day they will overcome the colonizing North American culture. Sofi is the lonely but resisting mother who cares for her daughters and gets strength from them. She is the spokesperson for the collective activism in the narration. She tries to establish an alternative social system and she is inspired by her daughter, Esperanza. She tells this to her husband:

Esperanza tried to tell me about how we needed to go out and fight for our rights. She always talked about things like working to change the "system." I never paid no attention to her then, always worried about the carniceria, the house, the girls. But now I see her point for the first time. I don't really know how to explain myself right yet, but I see that the only way things are going to get better around here, is if we, all of us together, try to do something about it. (Castillo, 1993: 142)

Having been motivated by her daughter, first she names her as the mayor of Tome then she founds a sheep-grazing and interweaving cooperative for the poor unemployed people of Tome. As charity is given her by her daughter Caridad, she is not selfish and works for her people. Through her faith in a new social system, she brings an order to her town and achieves to be the representative of the new mestiza

consciousness. During the narration she loses all of her daughters, but via her pain she achieves her and her community's salvation.

In this sense, her effort for the communal activism can be explained in terms of *liberation theology*. Liberation theology is a political movement in Roman Catholic theology which interprets the teachings of Jesus Christ in relation to liberation from unjust economic, political, and social conditions. It has been described as an interpretation of Christian faith through the poor's suffering, their struggle and hope. It is a critique of society, the Catholic faith and Christianity through the eyes of the poor. It is a blend of Marxist and Christian beliefs and it has derived from Latin America. Castillo deconstructs the theology as it is male-centered and hierarchical for the liberation of Chicanas. Holy Friday procession that occurs in the end with la Loca's participation clearly illustrates the theology. To give the reflection of this theology, it would be necessary to quote the procession part in full:

When Jesus was condemned to death, the spokesperson for the committee working to protest dumping radioactive waste in the sewer addressed the crowd.

Jesus bore His cross and a man declared that most of the Native and Hispano families throughout the land were living below poverty level, one out of six families collected food stamps. Worst of all, there was an ever-growing number of familias who couldn't even get no food stamps because they had no address and were barely staying alive with their children on the streets.

Jesus fell, and people all over the land were dying from toxic exposure in factories.

Jesus met his mother, and three Navajo women talked about uranium contamination on the reservation and the babies they gave birth to with brain damage and cancer. One of the women with such a baby in her arms told the crowd this: "We hear about the environmentalists care about saving the whales and rain forests, too. Of course we do. Our people have always known about the interconnectedness of things; and the responsibility we have to 'Our Mother,' and seven generations after our own. But we, as a people, are being eliminated from the ecosystem,

too...like the dolphins, like the eagle; and we are trying very hard now to save ourselves before it's too late. Don't anybody care about that?"

Jesus was helped by Simon and the number of those without jobs increased each day.

Veronica wiped the blood and sweat from Jesus' face. Livestock drank and swam in contaminated canals.

Jesus fell for the second time.

The women of Jerusalem consoled Jesus. Children also played in those open disease-ridden canals where the livestock swam and drank and died from it.

Jesus fell a third time. The air was contaminated by the pollutants coming from the factories.

AIDS was a merciless plague indeed, the crowd was told by a dark, somber man with sunglasses and an Eastern accent. It started in Africa, he said, among poor, black people, and continued sweeping across continents, taking anyone in its path. It was The Murder of the Innocents all over again, he said, and again, there was lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, not just in Rama as in Gospels, but this time all over the world. Jesus was stripped of his garments.

Nuclear power plants sat like gargantuan landmines among the people, near their ranchos and ancestral homes. Jesus was nailed to the cross.

Deadly pesticides were sprayed directly and from helicopters above on the vegetables and fruits and on the people who picked them for large ranchers at subsistence wages and their babies died in their bellies from the poisoning.

Ayyy! Jesus died on the cross. (Castillo, 1993: 242-243)

The difficulties that people have faced are told parallel to the difficulties of Jesus's life. While telling the sorrows of Jesus, political, environmental, and social problems are given in the narration. By means of this theology, the author is able to give social and political messages about the universe. Sofi manages to gather approximately 200 people to this march and she is successful at her collective activism and salvation.

In the end, Sofi founds Mothers of Martyrs and Saints after the deaths of her four daughters as she has been truly the mother of a saint, that is la Loca and her other three daughters can also be named martyrs. Esperanza dies in the Gulf War, Fe dies of cancer from the toxic chemicals she was made to work in Acme International, and Caridad dies as a result of violent attacks and rapes of herself and of Esmeralda. With the annual carnivalesque gathering of the organization, they choose who to be accepted as the mother of a saint or martyr. The foundation consists of only women, but treats equally both to the female and the male. The Masses are held by women clergy some of whom are married. Actually Castillo renders this organization as an alternative to the patriarchal Catholic Church and tries to form an organization with hybrid beliefs and spirituality where women can take part.

To sum up, Sofi, who is alone in the end, achieves to give salvation to her community by means of working together and evoking collective consciousness of her people. She loses her family, but becomes an activist who is free of the restrictions of her husband, her social environment and the Catholic Church.

CONCLUSION

The authorities of power and authority- as well as the resistances offered by men, women and the social movements to institutions, authorities and orthodoxies-are the realities that make the texts possible that deliver them to their readers that solicit the attentions of the critics.

Edward Said

As Edward Said explains, the social circumstances starting from the dominant powers to social movements prepare the conditions for the texts to be written. In this study, the functions of magical realism in Ana Castillo's *So Far From God* have been discussed and tried to be figured out. Magical realism as a sub-branch of postmodernism has become popular after the Boom of the Latin American Literature in the 1960s. It refers to the modern fiction in which supernatural elements are used in the flow of a realistic context. In the first part of Chapter 1, the definitions and the history of the movement have been rendered. The term 'magischer realismus' is first used by the German art critic, Franz Roh in 1925 to define the paintings having post expressionist features. Irene Gunther uses 'magic realism' for his definition. By initiating this term he wants a new objectivity to be used in order to see the mystery lying beyond the simple, photograph-like paintings of the Weimar Republic era in Germany. His definition has nothing to do with the literary narrative mode of magical realism.

After Roh, Alejo Carpentier from Latin America uses another term 'lo real maravilloso' that is marvelous realism to describe a concept that could represent for him the mixture of differing cultural systems and the variety of experiences that create an extraordinary atmosphere, alternative attitude and differing appreciation of reality in Latin America. Later in 1955 the critic Angel Flores mentions 'magical realism' which is a form of writing dealing with the mysterious in a cultural context and therefore it is a combination of magic realism and marvelous realism. According to him, magic realism is an amalgamation of realism and fantasy. The supernatural occurs in the ordinary lives of the characters, and the author tries to reflect this situation to the reader objectively.

The turning point for the movement is the Boom, as it has become known throughout the world as the narrative mode of the cultural awakenings in the

postcolonial writings of the third world countries. It always has the aim of voicing the suppressed ones against the privileged and ruling ones in the society; therefore magical realism has become a genre of especially feminist and postmodernist writers.

In the second part of Chapter 1, the similarities and differences of magical realism from the other movements are focused. The first movement is realism as the movement contains realism in its title. Although magical realism is given in a realistic context, it is different from the traditional realism as it doesn't use positivism and it is thought to be the irrational writing of non-western communities. Both of them use everyday language to tell the historical, political and social changes in the lives of the ordinary people. Despite the fact that realism relies on one single reality that is rational, magical realism tries to create alternative realities with its usage of the supernatural elements.

The second movement to be distinguished from is surrealism. Both of them deal with the illogical and non-realist part of the human psyche, but magical realism differs from surrealism as it deals with the material reality and unconscious of the societies while surrealism deals with the subconscious and inner reality of individuals. The fantastic is the genre that should not be confused with magical realism as in the fantastic the reader feels the hesitation that the characters experience in the narrative and is uncertain about the reality of the problematic mysterious or supernatural events. However, in magical realist texts the author narrates the supernatural events from an objective view and the characters do not question the reality of events and they accept the supernatural as they are in the narrative.

As a sub branch of postmodernism, magical realism tries to decenter the privileged centers of culture, race and politics. The magical realist text has become the voice of the 'other' in the societies by using the techniques of the Western literature which has a centric perspective. Wen-chin Ouyang summarizes the features of magical realism in the following lines:

Magic is derived from the 'supernatural' elements of 'local' or 'indigenous' myths, religions or cultures that speak directly to the imposition of Christianity in addition to post-Enlightenment empiricism on the 'natives' of South America. Christianity and European empiricism, as institutions of knowledge of the empire, have become the

symbols of this empire. The novel, itself a 'European' import, necessarily becomes the site of resistance on the ground of which the war of cultural recovery takes place. The process of decolonization, it may be said, entails recovery of histories derived from 'local' or 'indigenous' myths and religions that are not those of the 'West'. The 'West' in this case may be particularized as, let us say, the 'Hispano-Catholic' Europe that has its own articulation of the broader 'Western' institutions of knowledge in tension with those of the rest of Europe and its other empires, such as the British or the French. (Ouyang, 2005: 16)

As a movement, magical realism stands against all the features of the Western societies with its supernatural elements coming from the local or indigenous myths, religions or cultures. By means of defamiliarisation and deconstruction, the stories of the colonized communities are retold in order to form new identities or to question the history and to awaken the readers.

Wendy Faris in her essay "Scheherazade's Children: Magical Realism and Postmodern Fiction" mentions five major features of magical realism. Firstly, the irreducible element of magic takes place in the flow of the action. Secondly, detailed realistic descriptions are used in magical realist texts. The real historical references are made during the narration. Thirdly, she states that the reader may hesitate between two comprehensions of uncanny events- whether they are a character's hallucinations or miracles. This depends on the reader's culture. Fourthly, two different worlds are given together-for instance the world of the dead and the living- in magical realist texts. As for the last feature, Faris says that magical realist text question the established ideas about time, space and identity.

In the third part of the theoretical background, the history of Chicana/o movement is given. Chicano movement starts after the American Civil Rights movement, whose leader is Martin Luther King. Chicano movement under the effect of the mainstream civil rights movement aims to gain an individual and collective Chicano identity. However, the movement has ignored the female at home, at school, at work by signifying her as second degree citizens. Therefore, the female activists within the movement has separated from the Chicanos and called themselves Chicanas to form a new mestiza consciousness. They are seen as a threat by the Chicanos as they want the

liberty of the female who are suppressed at home by their husband and insulted at work because of their race and sex. The Chicanas do not see themselves as supporters of mainstream feminism, because the mainstream feminism ignores the women from other races. It only fights for the rights of the white female. The Chicana feminists use the myths and stories of their hometown to deconstruct the established identity for the women and form a new identity for them. Ana Castillo, one of the most active Chicana feminist authors, tries to change the dominant patriarchal structures of the colonizer America and Spain and to give a new consciousness of identity for the women. In the next part, her life and literary career is explained. Castillo writes on issues of identity, racism, gender and classism. She argues that Chicanas must struggle various modes of oppression, including homophobia, racism, sexism and classism. Her writing shows the influence of magical realism which is the major interest of this study. *So Far From God* is an example of magical realist texts in which the family saga of Sofi and her four daughters are given. Esperanza (hope) is a Chicana journalist, who works for Anglo-American society and dies in the Gulf War. Caridad (charity) is the second daughter who lives promiscuous sexual affairs with men and is raped by la malogra. After she recovers, she decides to lead a spiritual life and gives up her job at the hospital. When she is on a pilgrimage with dona Felicia, her mentor she falls in love with a native woman called Esmeralda and after she returns home, she escapes to the mountains and lives in seclusion in a cave for a year. She is found by Francisco de Penitente, who becomes obsessed with her and causes Caridad's and Esmerald's death. Fe (faith) is the third daughter who desires for the American Dream and the marriage. In the beginning she is left by her fiancée and gets depressed. Later she marries one of her distant cousins and achieves her dream house with automatic washer. However, in order to gain a higher standard of life she leaves her job and starts to work for Acme International where she gets ill because of toxic chemicals and dies of cancer. The last daughter la Loca dies and comes back to the earth when she is three years old. After her resurrection, she starts to live as an outcast in the society. She doesn't go to school, and doesn't go to the church. She says that she is back to pray for the others and rejects the authority of the Catholic Church. On her own, she learns to cook, to ride horses and to play the violin. She is disturbed by the smell of the people so she lives away from the public. Although she is a virgin, in the end she dies of cancer. At the end of the narration, Sofi stays alone and survives by working for her society.

In the second chapter, the functions of magical realism are discussed in three parts. In the first part, the post of the supernatural in *So Far From God* is discussed. The supernatural experiences that la Loca, Caridad and Esperanza have lived are given in this part. The reason and aims of the supernatural in the narration is tried to be understood and it is seen that when the characters are in conflict with the hegemonic powers like the patriarchal structures and members of the society, the supernatural is brought out as a solution for the characters' conflicts and by means of the supernatural element, magical realism helps the forming of the new mestiza identity of the characters.

In the second part, using deconstructive and Jungian criticism, the female local archetypes are explained and their reflections on the characters are given from a feminist perspective. In the Chicana/o society, women are grouped into three: the mother, the virgin and the whore. La Malinche is the translator and lover of Hernan Cortez, the Spanish conquistador. She is said to be la Chingada (the fucked one) by her people and called a traitor. La Llorona is the weeping mother, who has drowned her children in order to escape with her lover and leave her husband. Like la Malinche, she is seen as a fallen woman. The last archetypal figure is Virgen de Guadalupe, who is the only positive figure representing the good and silent mother. Castillo, instead of giving these archetypal reflections in separate characters, creates a new archetypal character via the difficulties that Caridad has experienced. She is told first as Malinche, the whore, then la Llorona as she has abortions and then as a holy figure, the Virgen. She transforms in terms of her spirituality and sexuality and returns back to the female goddess of the nature with her lesbian lover so as to manage her spiritual salvation. She represents an ideal for the identity of the future of Chicana generations.

In the last part, whether magical realism provided the characters with their salvation or caused their catastrophe is discussed. All characters except Fe, who is after the American Dream, live a salvation in the end. The only character who stays alive and reaches a total salvation is Sofi, the mother of the daughters. Sofi does not give up struggling for her family. When her daughter resurrects in front of the church, she opposes to Father Jerome and renders a stance against his autonomy. As an abandoned mother she embraces and raises her daughters with affection earning her living working for her own business. After her husband returns home, she does not see him as the ruler of the family and when she has the chance to reply against his insults on her, she

declares that she is not the oppressed and desperate wife and mother anymore. She decides to act and live within the society as a conformist. Unlike her daughters she does not become an outcast in the society. By means of her wisdom, she manages to lead and cooperate with her people. Her pains and mourning for her daughters do not cause her to leave and seclude from the society, on the contrary she becomes an activist and starts new projects to gain wealth for her people. She forms a new mestizo consciousness by combining her beliefs and activities in the society. She stands as a model for the coming generations of the Chicanas.

As a result, in *So Far From God*, Castillo tries to deconstruct all the hegemonic and patriarchal beliefs, people and institutions from a feminist perspective. She employs magical realism as a way to the forming of a new mestizo identity which enables the Chicanas with a new awareness of their roots, histories and place in the society. She tells the story of each character with her male binary opposition who is narrated in a mocking style. She deconstructs the Chicana/o society in which the male members are in power and oppresses and groups the female into three groups: the virgin, the whore and the mother. She liberates the women from their established identities and reshapes a new archetype for them who is free in her sexual choices and acts interdependently within the society. She implies Caridad to become a saint although she is seen as a fallen woman in the beginning of the narration. She combines all the archetypes in a character to show that a woman should have the freedom of her sexuality. With her spiritual journey she illustrates the *mujerista* theology. As a liberative praxis, *mujerista* theology is a process of enablement for Latina women insisting on the development of a strong sense of moral agency, and clarifying the importance and value of who they are, what they think, and what they do. Second, as a liberative praxis, *mujerista* theology seeks to impact mainline theologies, the theologies which support what is normative in church and, to a large degree, in society. She transforms and seeks for a new identity by means of which she gets rid of her chains. By using *mujerista* and liberation theology, Castillo leads her character to social activism and struggle for their rights.

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