

## HISTORIOGRAPHIC METAFICTION AND MAGICAL REALISM IN WINTERSON'S *THE PASSION* AND MORRISON'S *BELOVED*

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### Abstract

This paper aims to explore the role of Historiographic Metafiction and Magical Realism in the enrichment of the plot of Jeanette Winterson's *The Passion* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, clarifying the concept of Magical Realism, its goals, and the reasons for its emergence and importance in literature. Both novels are a distinctive model of Historiographic Metafiction, and both authors have reversed all norms and traditions that are imposed by religious beliefs and patriarchal society to modulate the historical facts and present the familiar and common facts in a different form, and women are no longer oppressed as once their presence were intentionally obliterated in history. They have also mingled fiction with reality, creatively. Winterson embodies Magical Realism's elements innovatively, as she constructed a fictitious and mythical world, creating mythical creatures that are difficult to imagine or explain, whereas Morrison presents slavery different from what is common, portraying the pains of slavery via mixing fiction and reality, to make ordinary become unusual and familiar seem unfamiliar.

**Keywords:** *Historiographic Metafiction; Magical Realism; Patriarchal Oppression; Slavery; Racism*

### 1. Introduction

Magical Realism is an innovative literary narrative concept that combines what is realistic with what is unfamiliar or fantasy, weaving a world in which imagination and myth is intertwined with everyday life. In the magical realist world, everything is far away from normality, and magic becomes normal to the reader, as the "wish-granting coins are found on city streets, tea is served by talking mice, and schools teach spell casting alongside reading, writing" (Ford, 2016: 120). Furthermore, what interests the reader is the question of what is real and what is magic. Similarly, the real world has witnessed a new age of development and technology, which has created a different reality combining contradictions such as progress and backwardness, war and peace, science and ignorance, and wealth and poverty. Therefore, these contradictions mystified the authors to choose the most appropriate narrative discourse to express reality by a magical means, trying to undermine this reality, and create a new reality free of violence and persecution, achieved through fiction. Besides that, combination of reality and magic, attracted the attention of critics, authors, and readers from the moment it emerged in the literature.

It is hard to obtain a comprehensive and concise definition of magical realism, but it can be described as a "kind of modern fiction in which fabulous and fantastical events are included in a narrative that otherwise maintain the 'reliable' tone of objective realistic report" (Baldick, 2008: 194). However, Magical Realism refers widely to a type of fictional writing that contains a supernatural or magical event depicted objectively; it is kind of a literary tool that examines the issues of reality like "expressing postcolonial issues such as cultural distortion and displacement" (Bowers, 2010: 92), and presents it to the reader in a way different from what is usual by integrating real and magical events. In other words, Magical Realism tries to solve contemporary issues or shed light on them by providing a strange mixture, that may seem something abnormal to the reader, but at the same time gradually accepted as a tangible reality. Moreover, magical realism, or marvelous realism is not critically rigorous but widely descriptive. Strecher (1999) describes it as something "happens when a highly detailed, realistic setting is invaded by something too strange to believe" (p. 267).

Magical Realism was first used as a pictorial art term in 1925 by the German art critic Franz Roh, who used this term in his paintings to express everyday life from different angles and views. He did not mean to express ghosts or supernatural powers by magic, but aimed to express ordinary everyday issues from different angles and standpoints, stating that "mystery does not descend to the represented world, but rather hides and palpitates behind it" (Zamora & Faris, 1995: 120). In other words, Roh aims to use magic to express ordinary objects through supernatural elements and fairy tales, to use different perspectives to express reality. However, the difference in interpreting magic as well as the innumerable definitions of magical realism were not specified by Roh in the intelligible definition for the term he coined. This confusion has made many critics assume that magical realism in literature is "the exact opposite, in fact, of what the original term signified" (Hegerfeldt, 2005: 14) in pictorial art.

However, magical realism cannot be removed from its roots, as that will lead to confusion about its meaning, where the main "reason for this confusion is the fact that critics create their own definitions of magical realism, often without taking into account the term's historical evolution" (Reeds, 2013: 41). Therefore, Roh significantly influenced formation of the basis of this term in literature in general, and its widespread use in Europe, later. Moreover, critics' interest in Roh's notions led to the remarkable spread of magical realism in Latin America, which made it a milestone in Latin American literature. Furthermore, Alejo Carpentier is considered one of the most prominent authors who adopted magical realism in his works. Carpentier developed the term to suit his surrounding environment and its problems, and presented it for the first time through his novel *The Kingdom of This World*, adopting the term 'American marvelous realism' instead of magical realism to symbolize the perspectives of Latin American authors, besides that "this gives the concept the stamp of cultural authority if not theoretical soundness" (Slemon, 1988: 9), to be a fundamental reference for the rest of the works there. Moreover, Carpentier's goal was to have a distinctive "Latin American form of magic realism" (Bowers, 2010: 13), representing his continent far from any European influence. Moreover, Carpentier was against Europeans' interpretation and presentation of magical realism in their works, due to the limitation of their imagination. Therefore, Carpentier's term of American marvelous realism considers as a real indication of "difference in a Latin American discourse of identity rejecting European influence" (Zamora & Faris, 1995: 137).

The Latin American authors have used many native elements to represent their own identities, such as cultural traditions and folklore, things that are difficult for the Europeans to understand and imply them in their works because it is based on their own local superstitions, such as humans turning into animals because of their sins, traveling in time backward and forth, slaves rescued by the dead, etc.

Surrealism also affected magical realism that some readers confuse the two concepts because of their similarity. However, this influence can be observed in the works of many magical realist authors, for instance, Carpentier was greatly influenced by surrealism during his stay in Paris, which later led him to coin a new term different from the two aforesaid ones. In this regard Bowers stated that:

Roh considered magic realism to be related to, but distinctive from, surrealism due to magic realism's focus on the material object and the actual existence of things in the world, as opposed to the more cerebral and psychological reality explored by the surrealists (2010, p. 10).

The significant prosperity of magical realism in Latin America has made many believe that this marvelous genre is represented only by Latin American authors, but the fact is that many writers from different countries have appreciably contributed to enriching this important literary genre, such as Jeannette Winterson, Salman Rushdie, Toni Morrison, Gabriel García Márquez, Jorge Luis Borges, etc. Furthermore, magical realism is not merely a literary genre used by the authors for its novelty or strangeness, but it has been relied upon to express the serious problems of marginalized peoples or Otherness, women's problems, colonized people's affairs, and racism that was different from what was common in that time. However, this attributes to the prevalence of the genre, significantly in the second half of the last century. Besides that, the authors of magical realism considered it as a tool to attract the readers' attention and liberate their imagination.

## 2. Literature Review

This research is regarded as an addition to the series of research that dealt with the disastrous aspects of the patriarchal system, and its influences on society, if not merely on women. Patriarchy can be described as the set of privileges granted to men such as the right to dominate and control women, and therefore women remain marginalized and a tool in the hands of the male-dominated society, subject to all its norms and authorities that it practice unjustly (Dzregah 2013; Hammood & Janoory 2019). However, one of the negative aspects imposed by the patriarchal society is the falsification of history and the presentation of a beautiful picture of the atrocious events that have already occurred, creating a feeling of the unreliability of the historians (Abootalebi, 2016: 33). Moreover, most of their books were written by men, and under the observation of the Church, and therefore a large part of history that contain events related to women was blurred, especially if it is in one way or another contrary to the patriarchal system (Jefferies, Horsfall, & Schmied, 2017).

This oppression led many feminist authors to create literary tools to address the problems. However, magical realism was used to express women's suppressed voices in their writings, creating a parallel world to the real one in which they can live magically and freely (Saribas, 2020). In addition, it quests for amending history through historiographic metafiction, to make it more equitable for women, and to change some of the historical facts that have obliterated the role of women (Elias, 2016). Magical realism and historiographic metafiction were also used as an anti-patriarchal tool.

### 3. Research Method

Present article explores the treatment of historiographic metafiction and the use of magical realism in Winterson's *The Passion* and Morrison's *Beloved*, for their similarity in using the two genres. In addition, it assesses the genres' role in the enrichment of the two novels and formulating the notion or ideology that both authors wanted to present. Moreover, the novels and embedded ideologies in them were used as material and data to evaluate the two works within the framework of postcolonialism, especially the arbitrariness of the patriarchal system and the discrimination against women. However, different perspectives of postcolonialism, such as racism, realism, and historiographic metafiction were adopted in general, referring to Linda Hutcheon (1988), Maggie Bowers (2010), and others.

### 4. Discussion and Results

Jeanette Winterson, one of the authors who portrays reality in her own style, encourages artists to show readers new realities and considers it an obligation. Moving beyond the boundaries of her world, she succeeds in becoming a prominent writer at an early age. Motivated by her personal experience, she strives to convince her readers that it is up to them to get a rough, but independent life not controlled by anyone except them, or a constrained, simple life (Andermahr, 2009). Winterson writes stories consisting of various universes in which the distinctions between real and imaginary are exterminated, and the sequence of events is broken for people whose limited imagination is a barrier for them even in their dreams.

On the other hand, Toni Morrison was born and raised in a working-class family in Lorain, Ohio, the United States of America. As a child, she read a lot, and the stories of her father, derived from the African-American tradition influenced her, and eventually she became an icon in writing fiction. Toni Morrison's stories revolve around African-American experience both in their past and present life. Her works frequently portray difficult situations and the negative side of humanity but also convey dignity and salvation. However, "Morrison reflected miseries, abnormalities and distortions of the black women's feeling and mind under the oppressions of racism and sexism" (Ru & He, 2016: 8). Moreover, the way she presents the stories of human lives expresses perspective, empathy, and compassion for her characters. Her books are easy to read, and she integrates various techniques into her fiction, such as altering the sound of the narrator in her stories to shift viewpoint (Bloom, 2009). The use of descriptive analogies, important historical references, and varied sentence structure are some of her most used techniques.

#### 4.1 Historiographic Metafiction as a Means of Emphasizing Unreliability of Historians

Fictions are often used as a tool to express the ideology of the author, and historical events where the author wishes to revise some of the events that occurred in the past and make some amendments to the events that already occurred. However, there was a need for a way to mix reality with imagination and present crucial issues such as historical events in a different way from what is common. Therefore, the need for magical realism as a literary genre has become significant, especially in the post-colonial era, and as a means for many authors to reflect the issues of their reality, beside attracting the reader's attention to represent the reality through using magical elements.

Winterson's *The Passion* is characterized as a spectacular Historiographic Metafiction, the concept coined by Linda Hutcheon, blending the historical reality with

magic which “refutes the natural or common-sense methods of distinguishing between historical fact and fiction” (Hutcheon, 1988: 93). Winterson has mingled the Napoleonic war period with her metafictional self-consciousness and introduced a new magical interpretation of real historical events. Therefore, her novel is regarded as one of the most prominent examples of Historiographic Metafiction, through which she marginalizes the events of the novel in a different way from what is familiar and common. Moving away from the traditional narrative of the historical events, she often represents a specific idea reflecting her own ideology. However, Winterson has chosen magical realism to ridicule and highlight different issues, such as sexuality, gender ambiguity, “boundaries, desire, time, and identity” (Reynolds & Noakes, 2003: 25). Magical realism played the key role in creating and escalating the novel events, as the main point of the novel's structure to achieve the desired goal of rewriting a critical period of history through Historiographic Metafiction. The novel presented a different image of what is known, as there was no depiction of Napoleon's victories or a glorification of his wars, but on the contrary, Winterson recasts the events in a magical style with a feminist touch. However, she attacks the patriarchal society and its practices in reducing women's value with specific traditional roles in the historical narrative of war.

Winterson emphasizes that not all of what the historians write is trustworthy, because the events are recounted from the victors' point of view and restricted by the traditions and norms of the period in which they were written. Therefore, the Napoleonic wars were presented from a different perspective, in which the voice of the marginalized people are heard and highlighted for the first time, and thus Winterson finds that magical realism is the best way to reveal what has been withheld from the records of history and considered insignificant from the viewpoint of society and its norms. Winterson recounted the events of the Napoleonic War from the perspective of the marginalized people or those who are forgotten and not mentioned in history, where she used magical realism to create fictional events based on historical facts to emphasize that history is told and documented through trusted patriarchal authority. Therefore, she frequently reminds the reader of the credibility of her own story by stating that “I'm telling you stories, trust me” (Winterson, 1987: 13). The novel is narrated from two different points of view; the first narrator is Henri, a susceptible and coy soldier who works as a cook in Napoleon's army. The second one is Villanelle, a woman who was born with webbed feet working in a casino.

The author aimed to portray Napoleon as an ordinary figure such as Henry and other marginalized characters, unlike his patriarchal authoritative image as invincible and almighty. For instance, through Henry and his role as a narrator, Winterson highlighted Napoleon's life from a completely unfamiliar perspective, where inconsequential details were focused on Napoleon's passion for playing billiards with Josephine, raising chickens, horses, etc. However, she blurred the details that may seem important to the reader such as the course of the Napoleonic wars and his victories. Through the concept of Historiographic Metafiction, Winterson has made all the characters equal, whether they have a great history like Napoleon, or a marginalized figure not mentioned by any of the history books like Henry, they both lived an ordinary life and there is no difference between them except that the patriarchal authorities made Napoleon look like a legend and marginalized all those who really contributed to achieving all of his victories. For instance, the value of the soldier from Napoleon's point of view does not exceed being just numbers; he does not care about them as individuals but as numbers by whom he occupies new lands and achieves more victories, so he may lose some of them and make up for that by recruiting others.

Winterson destroyed this common image by blending imagination with reality and presenting a new reality from her point of view. Therefore, she achieved several goals, one of which is destroying the patriarchal authority imposed through history books, as well as emphasizing that historians are unreliable, where she made Henri a model for the unreliable historian who documented historical facts from his point of view, influenced by his feelings and his personal wishes. He explicitly stated that:

I told stories about the camp at Boulogne and how we could see the English quaking in their boots on the opposite shore. I embroidered and invented and even lied. Why not? It made them happy. I didn't talk about the men who have married mermaids (Winterson, 1987: 30).

He admitted being an unreliable historian in transferring the events of the Napoleonic Wars, when he narrated his story to anyone he met during his way to his village, because Henri could not forget being a marginalized soldier in Napoleon's army, so he began to create a great glory for him and fabricate events that did not exist. However, when he noticed that people were enjoying his stories about war and victories, he began to turn the facts away from the bitter truth of war, such as the soldiers' marriage to mermaids, which symbolizes the massive number of soldiers who died at sea. Therefore, Henri apprised on more than one occasion that not all that the historian recounted was true, advising the reader "trying not to make up too much. [because you] can think of it by mistake" (Winterson, 1987: 103), because everything narrated, depends on the historian's point of view and ideology in obscuring certain events and highlighting others.

In short, Winterson wanted to emphasize that the truth is uncertain or absolute, especially if it is that of an unreliable patriarchal authority, where she used Historiographic Metafiction and blended it with magical realism to present a new truth absent from everyone's minds. As well, she used Henri as a narrator to be a model of the unreliable historian who is influenced by his surrounding environment and changes the facts to suit his aim and to glorify himself and his role in the war in which he did not participate, to attract people's attention and entertain them at the expense of the important historical facts. Therefore, Winterson used magical realism as a tool to question Henri as an unreliable historian and representative of the unjust patriarchal authority.

#### **4.2 The Role of Magical Realist Elements in Winterson's *The Passion***

Magical realism played the main role in employing the ideologies that the author wanted to present, using all the magical means to criticize the institutions of patriarchal authority, the most important of which could be the Church, since Winterson's attitude against the Church is clear in most of her novels. In addition, she criticized all the notions or beliefs that devalue women and their role in a society or limit some abilities and possibilities to men only and exclude women. Winterson has used many elements of magical realism to highlight these contradictions, one of these elements are Patrick's eye where his "left eye could put the best telescope to shame" (Winterson, 1987, p. 21), so he can use it to see vast distances, Villanelle's webbed feet, the city that was changing where "it is not always the same size, streets appear and disappear overnight" (Winterson, 1987: 97) and the heart that can live outside the body, when Villanelle "discovers that she can live after her beloved has taken her heart outside of her body" (English, 2008: 220).

Winterson created an alternative world where she reversed the patriarchal norms. For instance, the protagonist Villanelle born with webbed feet, a characteristic of men which

made her look like an exceptional woman with a physical ability, who spend most of her time outside working in a casino, despite the common belief that a woman should be in private space. Winterson wanted to manipulate the patriarchal norms about the gender, through “the insertion of non-realistic features which are portrayed as real and natural and cannot be reinterpreted or clarified as delusions, visions, metaphors or lies” (Hegerfeldt, 2002: 66), by granting all the manly qualities to Villanelle, while giving Henri the feminine qualities. Thus, she criticizes the norms of heterosexism and the patriarchal authority who set these norms. However, Villanelle is not a normal woman but a distinguished one described as a “girl whose feet were webbed in the entire history of the boatmen” (Winterson, 1987: 51). Winterson created a world in which all the standards of patriarchal authority were overturned, and the role of women was no longer limited to cooking, cleaning, and raising children, but a working woman who works alongside men. Winterson highlighted the physical ability of Villanelle, which Henry describes as following:

We were moving. How? I raised my head fully, my knees still drawn up, and saw Villanelle, her back towards me, a rope over her shoulder, walking on the canal and dragging our boats. Her boots lay neatly one by the other. Her hair was down. I was in the red forest and she was leading me home (Winterson, 1987: 129).

Therefore, Winterson struck all the norms imposed by society and restricted women to certain traditional roles in accordance with the convictions of patriarchal authority, as there is no difference between the physical strength of men and women as she believed since in some cases women outperform men in their ability and physical potentiality as Villanelle outperformed Henri in terms of masculinity. In other words, Winterson wanted not only to “feminize history and travel discourses, but it also challenges the construction of gender” (Makinen, 2005: 61), as an endeavor to reform the traditional understanding of femininity and masculinity by introducing magical elements to change these understandings imposed by the patriarchal authority. Winterson was in constant conflict with the Church and its notions, which obscured everything that opposed the patriarchal society from the history books. Thus, she created another alternative world in which she presented same-sex relationship, blending the real facts with a magical framework when Villanelle lost her heart and was able to live without it, although in deep love with the Queen of Spades, which is an unorthodox matter for a woman living in the 19th century, and a clear indication of Winterson’s challenge to patriarchal authority that imposes heterosexuality on everyone. However, Villanelle’s heart loss considered as one of the most important elements of magical realism in the novel, Winterson used the technique of literalization of metaphoric language to portray *The passion* as a magical realist novel, in this regard Hegerfeldt (2002) stated that:

the literalization of metaphor (and perhaps not always clearly distinguishable) is the way in which magic realist texts allow abstract nouns to acquire a distinctly material presence ... it is allowing abstract concepts and even language to merge with reality to the point of becoming solid sub-stance, the technique once again underlines the extent to which the non-material, too, is an essential aspect of human reality (pp. 69-70).

Therefore, when she needed to get her heart back, which stayed at Queen of Spade’s house, Henri thought she “had been talking figuratively” (Winterson, 1987: 115), and he did

not believe what Villanelle said, telling her that "you would be dead if you had no heart" (Winterson, 1987: 116), but once he put his hand on her chest and assured that nothing was beating inside, made him believe that "It was fantastic" (Winterson, 1987: 116). However, after being convinced, Henri stole the heart from the mysterious woman's house, put it in a jar, and then gave the heart to Villanelle to swallow it and get it back to her chest. Moreover, Winterson wanted to emphasize that same-sex love is not different from what patriarchal authority imposes on her alternative world, even Villanelle's heart loss could be considered as a metaphoric image to the soldiers who lose their hearts after the horrors of the wars, which is reflected in their actions and behavior later, which is believed to be one of the most important causes of women's sufferings from Winterson point of view.

Winterson not only stood against Church and parental power by creating a same-sex love affair but went beyond that, through criticizing the ecclesiastical institution by portraying Patrick the priest in a different way from what is customary in Christianity, where Winterson portrayed the priest's magical ability as immoral by spying on women from miles away. In this regard, she describes Patrick's magical eye as follows:

In Patrick's case, thanks to the miraculous properties of his eye, no bosom was safe. A girl might be undressing two villages away, but if the evening was clear and her shutters were back, she might just as well have gone to the priest and lain her underclothes at his feet (Winterson, 1987: 21).

Winterson wanted to criticize the ideal image imposed by the patriarchal authority to beautify the church and did not give any positive image of the priests in the novel. Patrick took advantage of his magical ability in immoral matters, as well as the priest whom Henri met before he joined the army, and worked as a priest to make money through betting and gambling, where Henri described the priest as he always holds "a hollow Bible with a pack of cards inside, sometimes he took it to our service by mistake and then the reading was always from the church of Genesis" (Winterson, 1987: 12). Moreover, by using magical realistic elements and historiographic metafiction to rewrite the past, Winterson wanted to show the church's attitude opposed to the imposed religious teachings on the public in churches, while priests do not follow any of them. Beside criticizing sexism in the ecclesiastical institution, which allowed women to be priests, but not promoted any further to be Bishops for instance, Winterson indicates male's superiority over female in Church. She believes that Church as a representative of the patriarchal authority encourages the underestimation, contempt, and marginalization of women.

#### **4.2 Modifying History with Feminist ouches in Morrison's *Beloved***

In *Beloved*, Morrison is telling a story about a woman called Sethe. Sethe is an African-American woman and a mother of four children. Sethe and her four children escaped from slavery, hoping to achieve freedom and redemption from slavery. Eventually, she murdered her daughter Beloved to free her of slavery. However, after eight years of her daughter's death, Beloved resurrected as a ghost. The ghost of Beloved reflects Sethe's past experience of slavery and a manifestation of her fear. Morrison wanted to rewrite the story of Margaret Garner, a slave who fled the slavery in Kentucky state and decided to kill one of her children to prevent her experiencing the cruelty of slavery and threatened to kill the rest of her children if they took her back to the farm as a slave, but ironically, they captured her. Garner was not tried for killing her child, but was tried for the crime of escaping from her white master, and then she was forced to return to slavery again (Kodat, 2008: 159).



Morrison wanted to rewrite the stories, and history books that documented racial discrimination the African-Americans suffered from and added a feminist touch to historical documentation since history on slavery was written by men, and Morrison believes that there are repression and distortion of many facts about African-Americans that the patriarchal society deliberately falsified and distorted.

Even though there are many authors who have highlighted slavery in America, there is a complete absence of representation of the inner character of African-Americans depicting them as human being equal to whites in their writings. Therefore, Morrison used Magical realism and historiographic metafiction, to rewrite the past and modify the history by voicing the African-American tales and rewriting the true history, to be a starting point for introducing the real history of what African-Americans suffered throughout that dark period of slavery. Morrison uses magical realism on a large scale to represent what historians intentionally have overlooked, through blending fiction with historical facts. Therefore, *Beloved* is characterized as a spectacular Historiographic Metafiction novel, in which Margaret Garner's tale was modified to fit Morrison's feminist ideology, where she embodied Garner through Sethe the black-skinned woman and added magical elements to modify many historical facts that the patriarchal society deliberately obliterated or beautified in history books. Linda Hutcheon described this postmodern technique as the feminist desire to focus on "reorientation of historical method to highlight the past of the formerly excluded ex-centric" (Hutcheon, 1988: 95). However, there is a desire for many feminist writers to use these techniques as an anti-patriarchal means, that aimed to obliterate the identity of women and African-Americans in particular, and seek to modify history to eliminate racial disparities of all time.

Morrison believes that the reaction of people and even the African-Americans to Garner's murder of her child was triggered by the patriarchal society, which condemned Garner for her act and sentenced her to return to slavery again, without showing the real reason that drove her to murder her own child, or at least highlight what she was experiencing during slavery that led her to commit the crime. Morrison has amended this incident through Sethe, who is considered a simulation of Garner's biography, as she legitimized Sethe's killing her own daughter, where she justified that as it was motivated by love that made Sethe think killing would prevent her daughter suffering from slavery and emphasizes in a way or other "the monstrous potential of love—even for a child" (Otten, 1993: 656). However, Sethe believed that everything she is experiencing now would be just "like a bad dream" (Morrison, 2004: 275), and even her victim daughter will reconcile with her and accept the crime she committed to her out of love.

Morrison deconstructs the conventional ideas of an autobiographical and historical novel that focus on slavery and make her novel serving as spokesperson of all slaves in the darkest era of history that slaves were treated like animals or less. She achieved that through blending magic with reality and historical facts with fiction in order to create a new perspective, in which history speak of slavery as it happened in reality without any modification, or beautified by the patriarchal society. However, Morrison has served slaves narrating their true forgotten history.

#### **4.2 The Elements of Magical Realism in Morrison's *Beloved***

The novel addressed several elements of Magical realism to achieve the aim of the author, presenting her anti-patriarchal ideology, retelling history from her point of view, and thus achieving justice for slaves. The Ghost of the murdered daughter, *Beloved*, was

regarded a major feature of magical realism in the novel, the main purpose of the ghost's appearance is re-birth of past experiences, and "Beloved in her return as a ghost makes the absence of past slavery, present again. By bringing this ghost, Morrison tackles the bloody heritage of slavery" (Selvakkumar & Seraman, 2013: 10). Thus, Slavery is a nightmare for *Beloved's* characters, and the ghost's rebirth brings back the past nightmare to the present. Morrison linked the appearance of the Ghost of Beloved to the slave tragedy of that period, especially with the "sixty Million and more" (Morrison, 2004: 11), who died on the banks of the Congo River when they were carried by hundreds of slave ships. Morrison (2004) through Beloved's character described the hideous experience of her protagonist in the slave ship where she stated that:

I am always crouching the man on my face is dead....in the beginning the women are away from the men and the men are away from the women storms rock us and mix the men into the women and the women into the men that is when I begin to be on the back of the man for a long time, I see only his neck and his wide shoulders above me he locks his eyes and dies on my face...the others do not know that he is dead (p, 210).

Through the aforesaid quotation, Beloved describes her death on a slave ship, where she compared the grave to the ship, and how she suffered so long inside the ship until her death. She also realistically and accurately described as living on that ship when Denver asked her about the place that she comes from, she says it is "dark ... hot, nothing to breathe down there and no room to move in ... heaps. A lot of people is down there. Some is dead." (Morrison, 2004: 75). Moreover, the realistic portrayal of slavery is illustrated by the depiction of Beloved's graves, where her grave is hot, gloomy, and dark like a slave ship, and there are a lot of people on the ship who cannot breathe very well. The grave is an exceptional dimension that underlines the reality of slavery. However, the Ghost as an element of Magical Realism was a motivation for changing Sethe's life to move on as she stated that "I can forget how Baby Suggs' heart collapsed; how we agreed it was consumption without a sign of it in the world" (Morrison, 2004: 183). Therefore, Sethe discovers a lesson in dealing with her past and looking forward to the future.

It is necessary to point out that other characters have suffered from the brutality of the slavery system and born the unbearable memories of slavery. Furthermore, most of the characters in the novel have the desire to forget their past and live in the present time, which is indeed what happened after years of liberation from slavery, but they must not forget the past, as argued in the novel, they must remember the past and challenge it and pass on their stories to new generations. Therefore, Carmean (1993) illustrates that "Suppressing the past may help her characters survive, but it doesn't allow for an authentic life. Suppressing the past results in another form of enslavement, holding the inner life captive to recurring fears and possibly neurotic obsessions" (p, 87). Besides that, the characters of *Beloved* must look at their past experiences, no matter how cruel and traumatic they may be, they will feel the true liberation and the restoration of their stolen lives. As Morrison, emphasized, if they do not remember their past, an important part of their real history will remain hidden.

## 5. Conclusion

Jeanette Winterson's *The Passion* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved* are regarded as distinctive models of Historiographic Metafiction, where both authors have reversed all the

norms and traditions imposed by Church and patriarchal society, and converted masculine into feminine and feminine into masculine, and the credibility of all historians were questioned as in Winterson's *The Passion*, and crime was justified in Morrison's *Beloved*. However, both authors aimed to modify the historical facts and present the familiar facts in different from, where women are no longer oppressed or their participation blurred in history intentionally, in which the patriarchal society was afraid to highlight or address it. Magical Realism gave female authors the space to express their issues and problems in an extraordinary way, finding a world where they can live freely and equally, and criticizing women suffering from marginalization and oppression under the patriarchal system. However, magical realism portrays the world as seen every day, in all its details and problems, but at the same time fills those details with supernatural, extraordinary, fantastic, and imaginative elements. Undoubtedly, Winterson has created a world of imagination, legend, and characters with extraordinary abilities, but she went beyond that by creating mythical creatures, which no one can describe. She stated that rational hypothesis can be dismantled, and even knowledge in its current form, is not stable or constant. On the other hand, Morrison's *Beloved* is regarded as one of the most important works that embodied the idea of Magical Realism, because of its distinctive style, and the way Morrison expressed slavery. Also, setting of the novel is a fundamental feature of Magical Realism, where events take place in a familiar cultural and historical framework and events are not interpreted as magical reality, through logic or scientific constants, but through the integration of reality with imagination, in which extraordinary events become ordinary from the author's point of view. However, reader observes how the unreliability of the historian in Winterson's *The Passion* can mislead the mass through conveying fake or unreal events, as well as how the ghost as magical element in Morrison's *Beloved* can change the course of the actions in the novel and reflect them as reality to support what African-Americans suffered from.

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