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**Investigating Magical Realism and Gothic in Fitzgerald's *The Curious*
*Case of Benjamin Button (1922)***

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master Degree in
English Literature

Option: Literature and Civilization

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June 2023

DEDICATION

I thank Allah for awarding me with patience and wisdom to accomplish my work.

I dedicate this work to my ideal father who is resting in peace and mercy of god.

To my cherished mother

My beloved sisters Massilia and Marconda,

My reason d'etre and strength

To my Lovely Friends El Mokhtari Mohieddine , Kaouther and Ayoub,

Thank you for your humble existence and lasting encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I grant my endless gratitude to my supervisor, Mr. Harhoura Kamel, who oriented me and delighted me on my journey to finish my thesis. I would like to thank him for supporting me with any helpful advice or knowledge that was eligible to conclude a valid output. Most of all, I am glad that he blindly believed in my work and commitment, helping me to believe in my potential.

My venerable work is a pathway for other researchers who are just curious like me to learn something new and dismantle the vagueness of literature. I am writing to show my appreciation to Dr. Kerboua Salim, Herzallah Selma for devoting their time to diagnosing and discussing my dissertation with a subtle and reasonable judgment that is most appreciated.

ABSTRACT

The chosen study prioritizes Fitzgerald's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* as a modern literary sample, for it aims to distinguish its most magical realist and Gothic grounds. The necessity of this examination attributes the validity of combining two genres and the perfectibility of their elements. It provides an analytic perspective that resides Modernism and its avenues. The foundation of this research optimizes the use of unique narrative which encompasses The None-Linear Narrative and Transformation, readers on this matter will be able to merge into the author's sight of reality and how he encourages extraordinary representations like Metamorphosis and the uncanny. Correspondingly, the study analyzes different psychological manifestation that proliferate dark atmospheres; these temperaments are neutralized through characterization and individualism which help the reader anticipate contemporary fragmentation and bear an attitude towards life's most questionable deals. The study carries out interminable realities of social and personal discussions; it explores fragmented characters that collide with notions of morbidity, love and loss, whereby the main figure struggles to absorb his life and falls into ambivalent status besides endless treats of passivity and abuse.

Key words: Modernism, Magical Realism, Gothicism, Characters Temperament, None-linear Narrative, Metamorphosis.

DECLARATION

I hereby confess that the content of this work is purely the outcome of my research, and that the chosen sources and acknowledgments to other researchers' works are made where essential.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Kerdoudi Numidia', is written over a faint, light-colored grid background.

Kerdoudi Numidia

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General Introduction

In the depths of magic and darkness, there resides the shadow and beauty of the macabre. Darkness and the supernatural have always been familiar subjects; human beings are always curious about the abnormal genres, for they open a door to man's most mystifying experiences. The abnormal sculpts the real distortion and hands an attitude towards life, prioritizing by that a magical-realism work and gothic ecstasy. Most literary works niche the contagious marks of the extraordinary and affirm a rebirth of pastoral Gothic, but in a revisionist manner that reflects the spirit of the roaring Twenties and the Jazz Age. Fitzgerald, in this context, attributes a fictional character that ages backwards to provide a post human stance that stems from experimental outbreaks of the early modernist period. The chosen genres exceed their epochs to portray social, cultural, and political depictions of American advances.

The surreal does articulate a locus of serious anxieties and monolithic disputes that are inflected in the contemporary world. While the dark covers the glittering and vulgar life that roots from 1860 to the 1930s, as in the story's timeline. The story celebrates what it means to be individual and self-destructive in American society, as we might notice that its reliance on genres introduces a ludicrous fantasy and satire that is devoted to poking fun at facts about social constructions that seem to hinder the character during his transformation process. It approaches the Gothic transgression and specific manifestations of horrific and gloomy symbols of modern metamorphosis.

Fitzgerald's vision works either beyond the schema of these themes; he colours the plot with the notion of love while blending that with its troubles and the struggle to live normally. The literary genres polarize an obscurity by making the real and the unreal collide, and the sense of

sublimation fuses under the curtain of Gothic demonstrations. The acquaintances served in this research seek claim of artistic measures; and rather, they address magical realism as well as Gothic attributes as a tool for understanding the story's confession of reality. Thus, the main objective here is to capture Fitzgerald's use of those vibrating aspects to dramatize that an individual should be condemned by the ongoing odds that he himself lived to pursue the American ideal.

Every story encompasses terror that is demonstrated in a marvellous manner, apparent in a status of shock, abandonment, and the dilemma of an uncanny creature; those myriad Gothic features are mingled with family and social refusal. The genres unveil the uniqueness and richness of story, in which a whole body of thoughts is grounded with no limits; this causality fundamentally strengthens the claims of Fitzgerald and helps the reader to evaluate further literary works that constitutes the same appreciations of genres. The study promotes critical thinking that inspires creativity and foster empathy towards life compatible notions.

Fitzgerald's use of abnormality contends with the natural and logical order of human creation; he builds the structures of juxtaposition by providing wildering events, doubts, and fragmented identity to polarize the reader and make him or her elaborate and demarcate what is behind this reconciliation with the extraordinary. The most intrinsic objective of a short story is that it expresses what most people fear and hope for at the same time, and that is what Gothic literature essentially focuses on. One might ask questions such as: Can magical realism and Gothic reignite a whole body of thoughts about modern dynamics? If yes, what choices of elements seem to be expedient in creating this atmosphere? . To examine the precedent hypotheses, the study uses F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* as a sample because, as a fictional work, it conjures simultaneously a blend of surreal and gothic manifestations.

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button heralds a remarkable extravaganza in the Tales of the Jazz Age collection. It was first published on May 27, 1922, in *Colliers*, Chicago Tribune. It tells the story of a man who is born a septuagenarian and experiences life in reverse. His journey is adventurous and full of ups and downs—obstacles that a modern human might encounter in a vertical world. This study will approach the story from a critical perspective that conjures fundamentally modernist theory because the case study is a 1922 modern work. The work again seeks to dismantle and find out what magical realists undertake and what Gothic traces through a systematic descriptive, interpretive, analytic method and through qualitative approach that clear the roles of both genres.

The investigation is divided into three chapters. The first one is a theoretical framework in which it provides an overview of the author's style as well as Modernism Theory. Moreover, it highlights the targeted variables by classifying their features and dispositions in literature, besides the relationship between them. The second chapter is a practical section in which it exhibits the fragmentation of modernity through magical realism mechanism; noting Non-Linear narrative, language tools, magical realism atmosphere and Metamorphosis. The third chapter is another practical part that sheds light on contemporary Gothic's common elements; mentioning terror and the uncanny, gothic dispositions like psychological and space elements, mainly their role in revealing inexplicable aspects of human beings.

The impacts of Magical realism and gothic genres in the world of literature are an indication not just of contemporary position but a reflection of a representational quality. The genres elements inflected multiple perspectives and became a landmark for academic researches. Fitzgerald as a modern and classical writer focuses on how man's psychology collides with self-foreignness and

self-assertiveness in modern fragmentation. In this matter many questions seem to back the orientation of this chapter as; what elements of magical realism contribute to a unique narrative style? In which way the story subject fragmentation and individualism? And how does gothic atmosphere allude to psychological complexities?

Much of Fitzgerald's literary corpus positions his short story into modern discourse. The necessity of portraying modern man's anxieties and his way of shaping a solid identity requires the prevalence of Modernism. Thus, the Curious Case of Benjamin Button portrays how male and female conceive the world. It is notably a codification of successive elements and representations of alienation, social realities and a new perspective of freedom and love; the depictions are deliberate through a collision of the self and the reaction to the other, which anticipates the need of salvation. Therefore, the theory examines modern's writings, mainly their articulations and style, as it provides an insightful look on how Fitzgerald portrays interconnected experiences of male character. Lastly it depicts key themes such as fragmentation, mortality and masculinity, besides carrying out psychological tapestry that lurks beneath human nature.

Chapter one: The Foray of Modernism: American Gothic and Magical-Realism Extractions

1. Introduction

This chapter sheds light on American modernism and its fledgling occupation with magical realism and Gothic. Through its lines, there is an entrance to its polar psychology as well as Fitzgerald's glaring adaptation to literary transitions, framing literary works and their relation to modern psychology. Moreover, the chapter introduces the core of modernism through its rapid impacts on society and cultural achievements. The guiding titles will serve as a dynamic examination of how modernism came into being and the evolution of Gothicism and magical realism; for it takes a vital contemplation to know their ostensible ideas and origins.

In this retrospective one would engage in philosophical and practical insights that contribute to literature and its performances, mentioning partial and epochal conventions, psychology and science, individualism and individual liberation. This chapter seeks to contemplate Gothicism and its journey to modern diorama, noting its divergent elements and atmosphere. While a systematic review on magical realism and its elements will help in comprehending its categories and portrays. Lastly the research encompasses an introduction to *The Curious case of Benjamin Button* in relation to the chosen themes that is to affirm the necessity of this work and its attachment to modern position.

1.1 Understanding F. Scott Fitzgerald's Style and Tendencies

To ask a question about Fitzgerald is to avowedly pledge to a long appreciation for his literary metamorphosis, notably as a traditional novelist or as a social realist. His works inform thoughts of American life bound by a deep consciousness, although he is constantly trapped by scenes of the Jazz Age. However, in both tensions, Fitzgerald captures its dual sumptuous and splenetic images with the cadenced historical experience of realism and romanticism.

It is that immense relationship that Fitzgerald has with society and belonging that shapes his social fiction and displays it in a more poetic formula. For him, "an author ought to write for the youth of his generation" (qtd. in Stanley 26). So, it is much more about conveying subtly scenic places and constructions of social connections. The depiction of *Tender is the Night*, for instance, upholds the tragic nature of the youth generation, and through the novel, Scott transcends contrasting symbols and settings that resemble *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, focusing mainly on how Benjamin is doomed to accept his unpleasant fate (16-26).

In that representation of the tragic, his concept of lost identity, which mainly refers to losing one's inner and outer character in a chaotic world, is of an innate status that works in conjunction with the captivation of mass popular culture and the machine age; his theme dictates the threat and allurements of a person's loss of identity and the edge that experimentation can evoke (113-324). This paradox exploits Fitzgerald's brilliant resonance in creating modern tragedy, yet it is in *The Great Gatsby* that Scott reaches the tone and texture of a modern parabola; it is much of tragic romance owed to a sophistry staging, while *Tender is the Night* conjures a lack of mythical composition. The stylistic practice of both works determines Fitzgerald's treatment and his noticeable progress simultaneously with modern or traditional modes.

There are a variety of subversive occupations, such as moral recession and sexual permissiveness, which are part of American culture and present an ultimate criticism. Identity crisis and social distortion are a revival of the pre-eminence of *The Decline of the West* by Oswald Spengler, which heavily influenced Fitzgerald. While hoping to understand Fitzgerald's tendencies, one should in no way deprive his style of the echoes of capitalism; even his language is that of playful rhythms that dictate characters orientation; their voices are highly charged with material displays that stem from the world of rich and Marxian thoughts, one of which resembles Gatsby's abyss and wealthy classes in *Tender is the Night* (C. Stanley 16-30). *The Great Gatsby* is realistic enough to connect the reader with the characters as it reveals this relationship between the narrator and hero in a more ironic mood that accumulates evocations of romantic access; this readiness for Fitzgerald's pessimism in his writings captivates themes of corruption and dissolution that are rooted in the post-war generation.

For Jackson R. Bryer, this movement to the tragic is reflected mutually in Proust and Fitzgerald's methods of condensation, replacements, and echoes that seem parallel to Freud's psychological mechanisms; however, in literary manifestations, it is conceived through a vivid characterization of disappointment, floral imagery, or feeling unreality; Nick Caraway says in this stance that: "The expression of bewilderment had come back into Gatsby's face, as though a faint doubt had occurred to him as to the quality of his present happiness" (Bryer 95).

Fitzgerald dismantles virtual hope and tries to reach his intentions by creating cherished man (in the status of a character or "narrator") who has abandoned opulence and a luxurious life for real interests (Stanley 325-327). In many cases, he sustains a sort of ambivalent reaction by following a rhetorical oxymoronic figure to introduce the real meaning behind the world's

fragmentation. All these symbolic features are part of Fitzgerald's imagination and his willingness to conciliate between romanticism realism and modernism. Through the integration of ambivalence, mixed feelings and contradictory performances of characters herald nuanced portrayals and continuous desires throughout the story or novel. Overall, these conflicting ideas are in fact an expression of human nature and their struggle to navigate values and moral compromises.

Titles like *The Mysterious Stranger* or *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* perform evocative narrations, compatible personas, and sensuous humour that can be detached from Mark Twain's travel writings (Bryer 27-254). His techniques pertain both the Gothic and the comic as two natural complexities as it takes a step towards the so-called concept of the turn to comic"; this word reformulates the assumed link between the normal and the absurd into a more modern sight, yet based on a meaningless and satirical stance, Kayser evidently says that; "The mechanical object is alienated by being brought to life, the human being by being deprived of it. Among the most persistent motifs of the grotesque, we find human bodies reduced to puppets, marionettes, and automata, and their faces frozen into masks" (qtd. in Horner Avril, SueZlosnik 15-17).

The changing attitudes of Fitzgerald explain his further use of notions like loss, decay, and Henry Adam's Gothic testaments in his 1920 work, *The Side of Paradise*, through Amory Blaine's journey of self-discovery, and his struggle to come to terms with his own morality. The above canonical works serve equitably both superior performances of modern literature and a valuable recognition of the historic past; on the other hand, they depict Fitzgerald's narrative priorities and methods that devoted him to world recognition.

Romantic Egoists as a literary pictorial introduces Fitzgerald's flawed and compelling choice of characters and his mesmerizing demarcation of self-expression and individualism. For

instance, a reader can capture a danger of conformity in Jay Gatsby with his constant pursuit of wealth regardless of the consequences, just as he/she can notice the rhetorical eagerness of Benjamin to reach an acceptable physical appearance (Bender 22). Character's perspectives are sensually maintained through the narrator's common sense, unfolding feelings of allurements or detachment seemingly like Scott's nuanced thoughts of *The Roaring Twenties*. Fitzgerald's occupation determines his tendency towards modern perspective; its passive and positive pathways, which are manifested in *The curious case of Benjamin Button* and it favours the requirement of understanding modernism and its inclinations.

1.2 Modernism and American Literature

Modernist writers' intentions were foggy with the intruding scenes of the Apocalypse and modernism's triumph. Daniel J. Singal sees that modernism is an "adversary culture " that accompanies mass society and counterculture, yet it has much of a bohemian root. The American authenticity of Singal cannot fully be traced, which is parallel to modernist's problematic approach to defining modernism and American identity; their literary entanglements shifted towards the changing epoch and its new innovative techniques. As Ranold Bush assumes "that, human identity is passing through a continuous forge of experiences, but even though it falls into challenging times, nothing less will satisfy the modernist standard" (qtd. in Singal 7-18). Thus, neither Ezra Pound's new orientation nor his interesting paradigm "*To make it new*" are persuasive enough for traditional artists to absorb.

The period relocates a surprising explosion that started in 1910 and changed the structure of western life with its delighting rubrics in music, art, painting, morality, and literature. McFarlane in fact prioritizes this age of early revolt, the bohemian period, during which "the emphasis is on

fragmentation, on the breaking up and the progressive disintegration of those meticulously constructs 'systems' and 'types' and 'absolutes' that the Victorians had assiduously created; a second term is famed by "a restructuring of parts, a re-relating of the fragmented concepts"; and its finale division is "a dissolving, a blending, a merging of things previously held to be forever mutually exclusive" (qtd. in Singal 12-14). Modernism as any former period witnessed borders' withdrawal and constructions; however its transition was and still addressed in contemporary works.

It is an offspring of personal experience and human progress, and what can be seen as passive in its documentary is in fact a congruent bedrock of civilization and logical testing of its contagious effects in mindsets and deeds. American reality, with its avenue towards liberty and sensuous visibility, witnessed the demise of conventional norms of social standards and necessities. This regular transformation is even evident in literature, with its recurrent attempts to shape formulas that suit this outrageous change. What appears to be conceived in literature is that the novel and the narrative aesthetics of the short story are still of convenient use, the common artistic devices are arbitrary on their own, and the radicalizing technique has a sensuous status in modern discourse. And so, what can be dismantled, modernism emerged from a long episode of cultural shaping and evident crisis—the heavy struggle with the First World War, libertine movements of feminism, and relativism. (Levenson 1-4). The terms foreshadow a visible breakdown and cement degenerated perceptions for intellectuals like Nietzsche and Freud towards the world's manifestations.

Among the portrayed American modernists, there was an ambitious cannois who devoted their potential to the mainstream milieu despite the inconveniences and lack of revelation they got from the public, but their eagerness was to utter justifications for the emerging culture and to

sustain it after their terms and enacted performances (1-8). The inevitable sense of alienation and moral anxiety opens a wider sphere of scepticism not only for writers but also for artists, whose paintings exhibit a dark imagery that stems from symmetrical surrealism.

Modernism as a whole body of thoughts is not fundamentally growing out of its surrounding tensions and achievements as much as it is an old spectrum of literary movements, while this last is not detached from Harlem Renaissance and Enlightenment autonomy and its pathway towards rationality (1-8). The secular, logical, and forward elements of the enlightenment are mutually developed in modernism; they both welcome faith in development and the capacity of human reason to address issues and advance society. Yet modernism contributes more to empirical research and observation, which affect literature by way of realism.

1.2 .1 Modernist Literary Embodiments

Approaching historical acquaintances is important insofar as writers' journeys of seeking meaning and defining the world's elusive knowledge are concerned, whereas Nietzsche defines those ambivalent events of doubt and uncertainty as being super-historical or mythical manifestations that transcend the usual understanding (Levenson15). In many works of art, mythical and biblical implications and formal aesthetics are sometimes demonstrated through spatial structure and causality. James Joyce uses this method to sculpt symbolic language and reflect characters' inner lives and experiences. T. S. Eliot's reaction to tradition and religious bonds appears to demonstrate his creativity and transcendent contribution, and *The Waste Land* (1922) depicts this prolific reality (15-16). This literary embodiment is not necessarily restricted to chronological involvement because modernist writers tend to be polarized toward circumstantial provenance. For several artists, national attachment is an essential realm whereby they cement a

belonging linkage to their culture and popularity, bearing in mind its authenticity among mainstream cultures.

This contemporary paradoxical influence is found on Wallace Stevenson's *idea of order at Key West (1934)*, his poetry explores this entwined tension between imagination and reality; he portrays a singing woman to realize that mythical inheritance helps in understanding the dramatizing world through the rhetorical language of seduction and symbols (Hollister 1-2). Therefore, implicit observation of language use and its dichotomies in modernist contexts characterizes it as a tool that encapsulates real views of human consciousness and places it in a less detrimental status. The role of language and its artistic measures seem to have a quite metaphorical conception because, in many ways, their index is associated with epochal borders. The language of science as a new emergent dimension explores evolutionary metaphors and suggests both the beauty and destructive potential of experimentalism. D. H. Lawrence's work often reflects these scientific interests, particularly in the fields of psychology and biology.

In his novel, *Sons and Lovers (1913)*, he draws attention to Freud's theories and Darwinian biology, emphasizing human instincts and impulses. The events can reflect Lawrence's relationship with his mother, bearing an autobiographical stance, while the character Paul Morel upholds an unconscious desire to possess his mother, and Miriam, his beloved, represents its idealized substitute. This phenomenon proliferate the Oedipus complex as there is Gertrude's unresolved emotions toward her son Paul, which indicates a supportable version of her father and shapes the Electra complex (Kumari 37-39). Modernist writers measurably consider science a mere empirical method that does not fully cover the real complexities of human depths, as it ignores the interconnections of a person's intuitions.

Modern literature is not immensely agnostic, yet it is committed to a common-sense approach whereby it adheres to providing a humanistic standpoint. Human perfectibility has lost its appeal, and the movement of idealism cannot deliberate the disorienting nature of modern life. In this respect, the rise of empiricism emphasizes the importance of observation and sensory experience, where humans may find answers and resolutions to World War I impacts. Modern writers through this influences initiated a variety of techniques that projects experimental writing yet blended with philosophical dispositions.

1.2. 2 Modernist Techniques and Dispositions

Modern writers are famous for their reliance on a variety of techniques like non-linear-narrative, individualism, and stream of consciousness. But most of their writings exacerbate a set of dispositions, like the failure of idealism and the emergence of freedom and sexual liberation. Idealism as a philosophical movement is too abstract and disconnected from reality because it emphasizes spiritual affirmations. It came to an end due to criticism from modern realists and modernist authors (Levenson 19-20). Modernists embraced new forms of expression and rejected traditional templates of art, culture, and literature; their anguish, which is surpassed in their literary fictions, is created through characters' inner chaos and deliberate thoughts of morbidity and fulfilment.

This need to seek meaning inspired conceived mindsets like *Virginia Woolf* and *Franz Kafka* to dive into characters' thoughts and project senses of alienation and "absurdity". An introspective approach to their fiction implies the use of *non-linear storytelling* (Bach et al 1–2). The narrative does not follow a certain structure as it follows no chronological order; the events seem to jump in time, describing a variety of timelines and disoriented shifts.

A metaphysical comprehension of individualism as a modernist philosophical form cannot be analyzed in one generation. This notion for Samuel Gregg is associated with "authenticity, meaning that an individual ought to be free and realize his individual grief and desires while he is living in a corrupting society (Gregg 5). Fitzgerald encompasses this concept in most of his works because it denotes an expressive American identity where everyone has his own authenticity and right to decide his custom.

Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophical nihilism, for instance, is parallel to artistic beauty, founding art without meaning and following the same course of dissolution, and Nietzsche sees it as a subtle reference for writers. He championed an individual who adapts to urban and industrial interventions and believes that traditional morality is a limitation to one's ability to express oneself and potential creativity (Levenson 26–27). Awrangzib EshaqZai suggests that individualism means the originality of the individual and the belief in the primacy of the individual in society (Awrangzib EshaqZai 59). The philosophy of this concept encourages an individual who is free to pursue his personal unity and autonomy by rejecting conventional constraints. Yet in this subjective idea, themes of loneliness, absurdity, and fragmentation follow the character's endeavours to overcome in his journey of seeking meaning.

Sexuality and freedom are other models of expression that are encountered by modernists in the dynamics of sexual liberation; concept's dislocation in literature resembles aestheticism, which is defined by Friedrich Nietzsche as "joyful and trusting fatalism." While Heidegger brings into its burdens the question of being, for him the expression of art is not linked to life value as much as it is a sign of its existentialist avenue (qtd. in Levenson 27-28). Both sexuality and aestheticism reflect an image of disharmony whereby a forbidden topic is frequently portrayed in modern

writings as a source of creativity and beauty, which may seem a response to Victorian moralists and utilitarianism, which present the continuum of sexual conformity as normal, immature, dual, or aggressive.

The figure "apeneck Sweeney" from Ts. Eliot's *Nightingales* grows aware of the chaotic prevalence of toxic masculinity and surfaces his degraded sexuality as a commentary on the dehumanizing effects of modern pressures (Levenson144-145). Subsequently, these calculations of extreme actions were diagnostically performed in theatrical drama and fiction, whereby tyrannical and physical portrayals are mingled through imagism, symbolic language, and magical realism excess. While it is deeply known that these notions of despotism and ruthlessness are congruent with Gothic and surreal representations, Writers tantalizing attitudes and their use of compelling language enchant readers into a close reading to understand American Gothic and magical realism , their achievements and new mechanisms. The ongoing textile of modern congruencies is heavily imposed through genres use, in which they approach the persistency of writers of finding the right techniques to define these shifts from the past.

1.3. Approaching Magical Realism

Reality has always been the subject of deeper questions and cynicism. Its revelations and opulence are visualized through existentialist discussions, even though most of its contradictions are observed through a marvel of insight. Re-discovering the world's alterations surpasses the need for expressionism and its exaggerations in dealing with inner utterances. Magical realism was first referred to by the German poet Novalis in 1798, when he portrayed an idealistic prophet. It turned out to be a fascinating genre that demands the access of magical and unreal elements to inflict life projections (Dash 1).

It was coined by Alejo Carpentier mainly in 1925 as a reassessing movement and accumulated its pathway as a genre in Latin America. Many writers project well-known facts into fantastic and mysterious conditions, but for Franz Roh, it was the right time for the flourishing of magical realism because he assumes that there is always that faint line between interior and exterior life that should integrate unique manifestations (M. Hart and Ou Yang 1-11).

Magical realism is a literary genre that developed itself as a great realm of thoughts for its dealing with war remnants; it took on a distinctive value in modernism, postcolonial, and comparative literature. Colonialist culture inspired writers like Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Miguel Angel Asturias to levitate a legendary mood in their works and discuss conditions like hybrid self and displacement.

Beyond every genre, there is a labyrinthine field of historical and cultural avenues, depictions of revolutionary mindsets, and a devastating balance between powerless and hegemonic categories. Although this last may occupy postcolonial literature, it serves modernist occupations

with its age-old evolution of extreme and incidental levitation. Flores writes that in "magical realism, we find the transformation of the common and the everyday into the awesome and the unreal". However, Luis Leal suggests that man is not seeking to create extraordinary things but rather explaining the mystery "that breathes behind things" (qt .in Dash 2).

Many writers consider magical realism as a continuity to Gothic attributes as they mix it with fiction appropriations, and here one can raise the question of whether this last is a neutral genre or not?

1.3. 1. Magical Realism Techniques

The rise of magical realism is insofar associated with realism, even though its style and contribution are distinctive. Magical realism is a genre that is based on the overflow of supernatural and superficial variations, while realism refers to anything that is abstract and can be sensed, as it is an essential part of the novel or short story. James Joyce argues that: "the only reason for the existence of the novel is that it does attempt to represent life" plot (qtd. in Bowers 20). What is interesting about this genre is that its normality is based on the integration of fantasy; it welcomes the idea of 'Make it Tangible', where the demise of familiar reality becomes a possible idea. The sublimation of magical realism affected many writers and magnetized them to compose flagrant short stories.

Jorge Luis Borges is considered the pioneer of modern Latin American writings and the enchanter of magical realism; his attraction to this form exemplifies why many modernist writers sought Latin America with modern European methods. For him, the unity of the universe as a whole is reflected through humans' faint efforts to make an abrupt meaning of it, which in many ways are fertile and pointless. Magical realism is often compared to fantasy; they both use allegory

to sustain factual and extraordinary things; however, sometimes allegory goes beyond one narrative, like in *Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, which subjects readers to complex interpretations of one plot (Bowers 1-30). This literary mode is mesmerizing by its fluidity; for some analytic writers, magical realism cannot be a fixed genre or style; it is rather a flexible mode of storytelling that can incorporate artistic elements from different genres and traditions through the integration of allusion, symbolic ideas, imagery, and metaphor.

The fusion of events in fiction can be traced using nonlinear narratives, which often approach multiplicity. Patricia Merivale suggests that one novel may hold two techniques: one is chronological and the other is non-chronological, which is notable in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Garcia Marquez. (Bowers 76-91). Other writers, like Tony Morrison, find it more suitable to present issues and conflicting matters through foreshadowing multiple perspectives, in which different opinions collide and project political disarray.

Magical realism can be seen as a projection to modernism because it offers a way of reconciling tensions between modernity and tradition. Its reliance on modern fragmentation and dislocation re-connects the natural world with one's heritage. Magical realism often features supernatural elements that are presented in a matter-of-fact way, as if they are normal parts of everyday life, yet they depict a defiance of the law of nature.

The boundaries between the real and the imaginary are blurred depending on 'the absurd'. This means that readers may have an obstacle in defining the real, while the events may unfold in a challenging way that surprises human understanding of life or reality. A writer's use of fantasy can create a sense of ambiguity and uncertainty so that readers cannot distinguish between objective

reality and the unfamiliar anymore; things dependably become part of dreamlike imagery where reality is just allegorical and vertical.

Magical realism is a distinctive form that constitutes political and social critique. By using fantastical elements to explore real-world issues, magical realist writers can link the cultural and historical context of the story to magical realism. This can include references to traditional beliefs, folklore, and mythology, as well as political and social matters of the time. The method is 'representational' in challenging the dominant cultural narratives of Western culture.

Magical realism as a literary style provides a wide range of playful words, while this last is not only famous in literary practice; it is encountered in visual art, paintings, and film. It is accordingly a tool for the marginalized to assert their rights and freedoms, as well as resist the impacts of modernism and globalization. By blending reality and fantasy, magical realism allows writers and artists to create a new reality that lies beyond the realm of everyday treatments, which creates an 'autobiographical performance'. In this way, it challenges narratives and opens new possibilities for understanding world distortions. Amaryll Chanady suggests that: "this narrative point of view relies upon an 'absence of obvious judgements about the veracity of the events and the authenticity of the world view expressed by characters in the text'" (1985:30) (qtd. in Bowers 3).

Magical realism deeply relies on the metaphorical or symbolic use of the fantastic. Dr. Rajkumar M. Lakhadive suggests that: "the symbolic reference leads to transference of emotion, purpose, and belief, which cannot be justified by an intellectual comparison of the direct information derived from the two schemes and their elements of intersection" (2). Salman Rushdie's *Midnight children* for instance implies magical realism through a symbolic stance in which his character's birth with telepathic potential indicates the birth of a new nation and the hope

for a peaceful life, which seems parallel to Benjamin's birth and the texture of surrealism that is a literary and artistic movement that seeks to explore the unconscious mind and break down the boundaries between reality and fantasy. What is distinguishable about this genre that it shares the access of supernatural as an intrinsic part with the gothic, for they both trace a variety of unusual narrations like the dilemma of the uncanny, the psychological and unexplained beginning and endings. They both emancipate a vivid and descriptive language as they involve around this idea that the past is chasing the present.

1.4. Exploring The Gothic Genre

The bloom of American Gothic and its condemnation in literature are demonstrated through the writer's united options in rhetorical methods. In fact, one can sense American perception and its status as a newly emerging republic that is democratic in its own spectrum and powerful in its literary discourse by merging the real and extracting the Gothic. Leslie Fiedler suggests that the whole tradition of the Gothic is highly depicted as "a pathological symptom rather than a proper literary movement" (Fiedler 135). American Gothic is a genre that incorporates familial modes of crisis literature, and the processes of imitation and reception delineate it as an experimental and explanatory style. One image of the Gothic adheres to great tension; writers use gothic attributes to present dark atmospheres like murder, confinement, conspiracy, and ultimate violence. It is fundamentally that question of the real and the struggle to strain the limits of language that draw the obstacle to acknowledging American distractions, Michelle Burnham in this matter suggests that:

The Gothic has been understood as a literary tradition that emerges in counter-response to the best promises and hopes of the Enlightenment, as the dark counterpart to the period's

bright scientific rationalism, as the violent and disordered underbelly of reason and democratic revolution (qtd. in Wanlin 2)

This literary dilemma, as it may seem, takes its narrative operation into being fragmentary and expressionist, contrasting European "realism" and consolidating with the extreme. The dispute over the world's relativity approaches language vagueness, historical obscurity that never comes to an end and realizing that the future for American modernists is one of conversational contraction and scepticism (Hogle 167-172). The American modern matrix does not appreciate explicit orientation as it favours D.H. Lawrence's symbolic and fugitive formulas (170-172). Comprehensible adaptation to the extreme, strange, and uncanny is roughly preserved to react to historical convention and relocate spectacles of the Gothic.

The lasting curiosity and imaginative sense that fugitive representation can express an exploration of the unknown, while dealing with contemporary supernatural or monstrous figures are subjected to the ideological premise of America. In several gothic writings, the author tries to simply provide conversational words and techniques that decode the morbid portrayals of the uncanny; these hidden signals are often scattered through literary works, mainly in the plot and its conflicting parts.

1.4. 1. Recognizing The Gothic: Literary Samples

To recognize Gothic accelerations, one should merge himself into Charles Brockden Brown's achievements of the 18th century. For Brown, the content is a reflection of political tendencies and national interests, as he believes in individuals' ability to govern them. His novel *Wieland* is often seen as a clash with religious extremism; it tells the story of a man who assumes to be the messenger of God. This last dictates a political threat and the patricide of revolution, as Jerrold E. Hogle describes it. (Hogle173-176). Recurrent themes and methods appear to have sculpted a literary dominion open to Poe and Hawthorne, who flourished in the succession of Romanticism. Nathaniel Hawthorne's fascination with English Romanticism and Gothic allows him to observe themes like redemption, guilt, and exploring history's Gothic in the hands of Anglo-American writers. He is subjective enough in dealing with American history and many provincial articulations of the colonial past.

Immersive interpretation of Hawthorne's works uplifts autobiographical strategy. His treatments accumulate the use of patriarchy and gendered abstractions through an overlapped reliance on personification and metaphor. This quest for reconciling the Gothic with the political sphere is often portrayed through an extended allegory precisely to convey the immense meaning of real darkness. Allegory is a sublime art that often takes the shape of an image, creature, or any symbol; it is elaborated in early mythological orientations and appears to dominate religious perceptions in dealing with the aftermath. Mainly in the mid-eighteenth century, critical interests shifted towards negotiating the roots of this technique and the origins of texts; only in the twentieth century did this occupation with allegory take on a more abstract implication. (Whitman 281-282).

Gothic meditation in melancholy prioritizes Allan Poe's impressionist dealings with suspension and the supernatural, as it discerns his transgression from superficial to spatial ground in many of his short stories. Poe's allegory narratives point out a fertile representation of the black with its interior and exterior conditions. In most of his stubborn realizations of characters, he introduces powerful antidotes of macabre and psychological passivity. He roughly preserves unconditioned desires and disoriented manners that uplift both genders.

This chaotic sign often shows no identical and permissive encounter between the real and the uncanny, which appears to formulate a hideous obsession, or monomania, which is a Greek pathology (Hogle 147-285). In Gothic works, writers who dealt with hybrid techniques join gothic traditional devices with what may appear experimental and contemporary, such as Edgar Allan Poe and Melville, introducing conventional morality and otherness.

Poe, for instance, tried to fuse this bridge between lower literature and elite literature, that is, to sculpt psychological manifestations that one may encounter with himself. However, in contemporary dealings with the Gothic, issues of popular culture seem to fracture in the division of lowbrow and highbrow, which are less regarded when it comes to literature (Agnieszka 12-24). Hester Prynne's *Scarlet Letter* (1850) is a pure confession of adultery and ultimate sin; at the same time, it reveals a recurrent theme of allegory that Nathaniel embodies in most of his literary works. Subjecting the uncanny and evil inflicts the symbolism of exhumation, digging into buried objects or graves for uncovering hidden truths and human darkness.

1.4.2. Gothic Devices

Approaching the dark takes many forms; Fitzgerald captures Benjamin Button's appearance as a manifestation of the Gothic. It is more of a modern hypothetical implication than an early, appalling melancholy of ghosts and dead corpses. Tracing writers' Gothic animations shifts occasionally and conditionally from Nathaniel Hawthorne's attachments to the oblique use of phantoms and the uncanny to a more experimental return. It is a complex and compelling art that emerged as an ancient time; it often depicts extreme suffering and the deepest fears of human feelings. Gothicism and its evolution cannot descend from the integration of Gothic into its transcendent perimeter. It started as a theory, and writers shaped its function into a flexible genre that hits their imaginary or realistic events and characters.

Gothic perception arises out of a dispute between order, reason, and chaos and reflects humans' ability to experience intense desires and their innermost instincts. They anticipate spots of anguish and individuation. Nietzsche ultimately defines the reason of the dilemma and the wrenches of human beings, while he suggests that their escape to illusion and mythology is a refuge for their doubts towards nature (Lenson 59–62).

The Gothic's pleasant choice of heroes and heroines often narrows to an alienated hero condemned by an unusual faith. The sense of hardship and inner conflict is always recurrent, as he gives the supernatural a deep chance to dive into most of his plays. It polarizes cultural and social claims. Thus, Gothicism is representational; it can be introduced as an epochal ceremonial that enhances this consonance with different enlightening mindsets. Nevertheless, it becomes more fragmented in modern times, and it plays an alternate role for individual experience rather than a grand narrative.

American modern Gothic is characterized by fragmented characters and disjointed structures that mirror reality and psychological divisions, which can clandestinely depict Nietzsche's perceptions. It usually closes its extreme provisions into a more delicate presentation of comedy, whereby the downfalls and strange situations in fiction turn into satirical processes. As another Gothic convention, it manifests itself in literary modes and uses humour to comment on the world's flows.

Sentiment and love traces another atmosphere in gothic embodiments. Don Quixote declares the appearance of modern romance: 'Fiction henceforth divested herself of her gigantic size, tremendous aspect, and frantic demeanour, and, descending to the level of common life, conversed with man as his equal and as a polite and cheerful companion.' From Cervantes, writers learned 'to avoid extravagance and imitate nature' by adhering to the rules of probability (qtd. in Botting 17). One cannot substantially eliminate the access to love and loss texture; however, the modern era tends to create this mixture between gloomy indications and the human dark side with blind echoes of romance and a fanciful tone.

This atmosphere is applied to regularly ensure the roughness of contemporary sight and to lower the hardness of monstrous depictions, ghosts, and gothic architecture. Horace Walpole described the effects of his predilection for romances in a letter to George Montagu (6 May 1736): "As I got farther into Virgil and Celia, I found myself transported from Arcadia to the garden of Italy, and saw Windsor Castle in no other view than the capitol immobile Saxum"(qtd.in Salas 17-19). The context determines gothic texture however in less roughness texture, what makes modern perspective to the gothic disintegrated from its norm.

Verbal irony through Fitzgerald's tendency bears that intention towards his society and its flaws; he is too curious to hold this burden and define its derisive parts, mainly because of experimentation that exceeded its rough deeds. Furthermore, early modern fiction did not exclude the intervention of *horror*, *terror*, and ambiguity, which were drawn from antiquated Gothic art, literature, and architecture. Terror heralds a psychological and suspenseful sphere of complexities; it is usually used differently depending on situational contexts. "The sequence of events depends on Ostergard's ability to unfold an ironic relative to the protagonist" (Ostergard 449). Terror displays the reality of human depths and the enigma of being in life without understanding its vertical affiliations and meanings.

Most literary scenarios were horrified reactions to innovation and science. Although these two concepts may not inevitably create an atmosphere of high intensity, their exaltation shapes itself through the characters' roles and their finale's sublimation. Successful scenes of terror and horror contributed to cinematic productions. Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) is a vital example of the American gothic tradition. The manifestations of racial oppression transmitted through uncanny subjects are subsequently depriving time and familiarity of their normality. Poe's *The Fall of the House of Ushers* is another irrational extravaganza that resonates with southern Gothic and distributes fluctuating images of morbidity and terror (Botting 101-105).

Often unclear and unreliable narration ends in unresolved or open-ended plots. The events are so full of uncertainty and dread that even the reader approaches a circle of unease and equivocal status. In the process of examination, Terror and ambiguity is always backed by an ongoing suspension and confused judgments that persist without resolution and hover around the readers perspectives (qtd. in Wanlin Li 4-7). Robert argues that "the American gothic authors found in the

Gothic new ways of making an "ambiguous and globally dispersed social body cohere as a political entity" (Wanlin qtd.in 4). The gothic is a projector to world's most complicated realities ,this last point can be mutually indicated with the use of magical realism, for both require a language and narrative formulas that are open to different interpretations.

In many cases, these two genres can be overflowed altogether, formulating sort of pastiche as they contribute to the overall artistic mechanisms of fiction. Writers use ambiguity to demonstrate a given reality with its deepest flows and tiresome situations.

1.5. A Review of *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*

The depictions of *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* endure popularity among the esteemed works of Francis Scott Fitzgerald. The story has been adapted into various extravagances and forms of media, including a film adaptation that starred Brad Pitt as a brilliant actor. The work fused many historical and contemporary contexts, concisely appealing to the marks of magical realism orientation and Gothicism. Fitzgerald himself declared that "*Benjamin Button*" when he introduced the story in *Tales of the Jazz Age*: "This story was inspired by a remark of Mark Twain's to the effect that it was a pity that the best part of life came at the beginning and the worst part at the end," he explained, which prompted him to "try the experiment upon only one man in a perfectly normal world" (qtd.in Sasser 182). In magical realism, many authors indicate their observations about the story as being full of allegorical and ironic biases towards reality. John Gery in this matter claims that the irony created within the story by the fact that Benjamin, though different from everyone in his society, fits in better than anyone else, "raises the story above the level of mild satire to that of an American fable". The events assume increased tragic fulfilment as they visualize Fitzgerald's contribution in making the real persuasive (qtd. in Sasser 181).

Examining magical realism in the story is established through providing a rational end, where the explanation of strange is lastly gratified like Benjamin's end; the events are supplemented and balanced between the supernatural and the natural; Amaryll Chanady proposes that "magical realism presents as an antinomy two coherent perspectives in conflict, one based on a rational view of reality and the other one on an acceptance of the supernatural as a normal everyday occurrence" (qtd. in Camayd 11). In another context, this mood is correlated with a primitive stance in which Fitzgerald surfaces a provincial perspective, identity matters, and the reader's anticipations of the real as being not contradictory to the tone of 'Maravilhoso, which is detected in Gabriel Garcia Márquez's *Cien aos de soledad*, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, 1967.

Within the genre, Francis overflows his work with the peculiar, which is repulsive and malformed for asserting the gothic. The Gothic accumulates the surreal by making it more elaborate. Fitzgerald shares many similarities with Edgar Allen Poe; for instance, they both explore human crumbles with decay and death. *The Fall of the House of Usher* covers a character that struggles to emancipate in life as well as find his place in the world's destruction. Witnesses of weak civilization and lost culture are noticeable in H.G. Wells's prominent work '*The Time Machine*.' The traveller in this novel is filled with uncertainty and curiosity about his future and past.

Scott's dealing with the genre is immensely important to make the remark that modern focus on fragmentation and individualism has a gothic ground; the story in this discourse provides a foreboding and eerie identification that any individual would certainly rehearse. In *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, there is a clear sense of departure, mystery, and unusual thoughts that needs a vital modernist narrative and structure. Shelly's *Frankenstein* is also parallel to Francis's

perspective about creating life for the uncanny and supplementing its borders with human and social attachments. The Gothic is wide and heralds a variety, which is why many authors multiply their literary works with its miscellaneous themes.

The astonishing history of a work of art as a fantastic literary model is ostensibly related to its collision with a modest reality and a sharp dominion of imaginary style. The short story in this matter can hold a dozen themes that promote inexplicable framed events and characters, to report an insightful line that fundamentally connects the reader with the author's memorable past. The factual past here is preferably linked to the story's entangled regimes, which a self-styled writer can for no reason exclude. The figuration of a primary view is a shady penetration of the story so as to be aware of its pathways and narrative relocation. The story foreshadows a man who is born old, gradually ages backward. This satire may seemingly go beyond the typical natural and biological reality of human beings as it heralds a shallow discrepancy towards a respected standard of a venerable family and his American society. These views are heavily introduced in the study's chapters through a variety of unique elements.

1.6 Conclusion

The rise of American modernism for many authors, this abrupt shift from the usual to the authentic, its value as a discrete movement transcends the limits of ordinary writers. Thus, it designates the thoughts of laminated authors and expatriates like Ernest Hemingway and Francis Scott Fitzgerald. The other sections describe this status of reconstruction, where both magical realism and Gothic identify the criteria of contemporary introspection and assert how epistemological relativity is challenged by modernist integration of terrible and surreal connections. The factual thing about genres, they participate to the former and cope to the new; mainly to what determines the present realities of modern era.

The overview helps the reader to remark how the bridge between reality and its altering deterioration contends with this commitment to dark surfaces. The contingency of modernism is so far coded with devices by which its corners are subjected to corruption, morality, and monotony. Indeed, one needs a whole record of American modernism to understand the flow of present articulations and sensibilities. Its shift towards pragmatic empiricism denotes this detachment from the early egotism of rational guidance and determinist hierarchy. The chosen short story is a real entity that suits all mindsets and anticipates their vision towards a whole realm of modern growth and calamity. The acquaintances detected in the above testimony, recognizes what is beyond this reasoning in the gothic and the surreal, besides how realistic consideration can be devoted in literary works. In the heading chapter, the study will examine the variety of magical realist representations in Fitzgerald's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*.

Chapter Two: A Journey to Magical Realism and Redemption in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*

2. Introduction

Among the Tales of the Jazz Age, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* undergoes the right occurrence that fantastic work demands. Its movement from the surreal to the real emancipates a critical examination of its borders. Beyond its content, Fitzgerald surfaces magical realism, in which it renders the unusual mirrors of western and modern atmospheres. In this story, he subverts a variety of characters, each of which reveals a set of complexities and social manifestations that are followed by a gradual metamorphosis.

The analysis situates the unreal indications, the gaps, and the conflicts that denote the transformation of the character. The chapter covers three titles: the first one penetrates the relative world and its relation to the character's extraordinary case, how this one concludes a shaken reality. Besides, it executes the different supplementing tools that permeate the access of magical realism; mentioning Allegorical devices and representational events. The second section, entitled Magical Realism atmosphere, shows how the character is on the edge between giving meaning to his life and living the absurd; through this part, there is recognition to surreal banalities and dealings with dichotomies of aspiration and disillusioned status. The last title is Metamorphosis, which presents the character's transparent journey towards salvation, where the tangle is unlocked and the character releases his most traversing pains.

2.1. Relativity and The Non-Linear Narrative

In *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, everything is relative based on worlds' relative answers. Fitzgerald calculates this shattered reality into creating extraordinary tone while depending on the flavour of the unreal and magical realism. Fitzgerald colours his plot in the story with the passage of time, portraying time as a fleeting dilemma that takes the characters to questionable endings. It can make them struggle to slow time or fall into the slippery trap of recapturing the past. Fitzgerald's occupation with time and relativity manifests in Benjamin's transformation; his persona changes from the unnatural to the natural, from old to young, yet his 'age' awkwardly shifts from a baby to a seventy-year-old man. Einstein proclaims that "different speeds observed at different points would have different understandings of the same thing" (qtd. in Berman 49). Benjamin's life is a 'living memory," while his reality is horizontal. The real is not processing alone for some reason or another; the events are not conceived in familiarity. His experience in life is deliberating an objective study that is not usual in the ancestral spectrum of the world's illustrations, yet it encapsulates a nonlinear narrative and a thematic view of the past.

Benjamin's birth is creepy and reversed; he is an old man and a six-hour-born baby, interestingly older than his parents and wiser than what his age would pronounce. Fitzgerald depicts that saying: "Young Mr. and Mrs. Roger Button were fifty years ahead of style when they decided, one day in the summer of 1860 that their first baby should be born in a hospital" (Fitzgerald 1). Realistic codes are measured by verisimilitude and relativity, correspondingly to America, which is shaped and polished by different periods, from the Renaissance, Enlightenment, Realism, and Naturalism to modern escalation.

Time in the story is progressive; however, Fitzgerald frames the events into timelessness, whereby Praveen suggests that the character struggles to adapt to the linear march of time (23), so their choices and actions are much more of a factual allusion. Timelessness is subjected in the story. The narration suggests that the protagonist is not subjected to death in the first chapters, his case leads to the notion of eternity. This disclosure is created when Mr. Rodger Button gets ready to see his child than he finds out that they are nearly the same age.

Measurement of time in composing the events is often a magical realism element; it does refer to an obnoxious incident for both readers and characters. When both Rodger and Benjamin encounter, Benjamin seems to confine himself in the outrageous and violent descriptions he gets in the hospital, the sudden realisation of the self and the ability of human to talk is shaped through experience, and it takes a long period of time, yet it is apparently present in the newly born Button while he is having a conversation like a mature adult;

"Where in God's name did you come from? Who are you? , burst out Mr. Button frantically".

"I can't tell you exactly who I am," replied the querulous whine, "because I've only been born a few hours—but my last name is certainly Button."

"You lie! You're an impostor! "

"Yes, we can't have him here. We really can't, you know?"

"I'm right glad of it," whined the old man. "This is a fine Place to keep a youngster of quiet tastes. With all this yelling and howling, I haven't been able to get a wink of sleep. I asked. For something to eat"—here his voice rose to a shrill note of protest—"and they brought me a bottle of milk! ". (Fitzgerald 6)

The distant past is present in every moment, and the future has already happened says Bruce Holland Rogers (qtd. in Praveen 24). Mr. Button's relationship with his son Benjamin is respectively parallel to the relationship of the present and the past of America. Fitzgerald as both traditional and modern author is always in search of lost time; hence, he illustrates that in Benjamin's transformation, although he is progressing in age his birth is evident of a wise and inexorable former period. Inside a character's inner, there is always this tension between their reality and what they want, which often exacerbates the access of illusion. In the next lines, these problematic can be sensed mainly when Roger is entering a status of denial, in a sudden thought his willing is just an ordinary son for his preserved reputation, Fitzgerald depicts that saying: "Mr. Button sank down on a chair near his son and concealed his face in his hands". "My heavens!" he murmured, in an ecstasy of horror. "What will people say? What must I do? (Fitzgerald 6).

In synchronization, the universe is taking the shape of someone (Praveen 27). Benjamin's present and future are dictated by the abnormal. Although the details at first glance are not directly presented, yet these shifts between the natural and extraordinary are happening for a reason. Benjamin experiences life in a synchronized manner; firstly, he lives the course of his time, mainly in 1860, as an old man, and then, once he is getting younger, World War I and the Jazz-Age play a role in his avenue, which preferably indicates the uniqueness and newness of the era. Another sublime indication of progress occurs when Benjamin meets his pride as a young girl while she is considerably obsessed with his old spirit and character; however their ages converge, and he unusually gets roughly younger. Benjamin grows younger every day while people around him like his child and father are getting older. The New Emergent America and modernity are questioned through Benjamin's questions about his life, such as why he came into existence, how he would live with his appearance, and whether he would be accepted in society ?

Events that have no reason are based on relativity which overruns Fitzgerald's perceptions and 1920s confrontation with continuity (Berman 37-44). The Age is likely to be a revelation of the past, the past that substitutes the fruitful present. *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* is a modernist exclamation intends to point towards anxieties and the emptiness of American progress; its denomination as The New America cannot exclude the pre-eminence of life actualities, the primary figure in this matter is much of a reference to Fitzgerald's reality.

2.2. Uncovering The Subtle Reality: Benjamin's Case

In magical realism, the unreal is an alternative to the real, whereby there is no coincidence (Praveen 25). Characters are symbolic, and everything is progressing in a flow throughout the whole plot; Benjamin himself is following a chain of unusual issues, preserving the idea of mortality. Experimentation came about by no coincidence, which is why most human thoughts are fundamentally questioned and push him/her to accept the change and confront their desires. Perhaps Benjamin's refusal to play with his toys resembles Fitzgerald's reaction to modern antagonism. He feels compelled to follow its wave; Fitzgerald's asserts that saying: "Thereafter Benjamin contrived to break something every day, but he did these things only because they were expected of him and because he was by nature obliging" (Fitzgerald 11).

Depth of Benjamin's reality is fragmented and scary; it is like surrealistic paintings that constitute different random objects that a reader struggles to unite; even its creator is confused by its multiple connotations. Ernest Hemingway suggests that "it is very bad for a writer to talk about how he writes. He writes to be read by the eye, and no explanations or dissertations should be necessary. Hemingway prioritizes that: "You can be sure that there is much more there than will be read at any first reading" (qtd. in Berman 35). The action of the plot meets to progress a sense of nostalgia, as it could be revulsion towards the universe. Benjamin's first meeting with his family

and his adaptation indicates a symbolism and a collision with an American's luxurious and unprecedented life.

Fitzgerald style is more autobiographical, he uses satire to symbolise how things are playing around him. In the conflicting scenes Benjamin appears to act rationally unlike children in his age. Benjamin's pleasuring company with his grandfather indicates that the writer mocks his modern society, being fragmented and irrational at a young age even though the world is of a constant progress.

Illusions and dreams in the human psyche are the release of a stricken experience. That is why realistic literature foregrounds vital human shaping and involvement in life by targeting readers' reactions. The real in the story is fragmented through the inaction of the unreal, in which the focus might be reductively imposed on societal conventions, so that the character and reader's interpretation fail to capture its fluidity. Benjamin's exploration of his existence is seen through the lenses of his perceptions, like the way man perceive his individual march; the difference is that human beings experience it similarly but in a sudden dream where they meet with their suppressions or often with an interaction with the past. Edgar Allen Poe suggests that "all that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream" (*A Dream within a Dream*, 1849).

Benjamin is in focus of his deeds; he plays with the flows of his life because he knows clearly that he is different. He is making choices that seem suitable when he is anxious or trapped by an obnoxious struggle. His mind is the only thing that would create a balance in his curious case. When Roger tries to impose his child to act like children and play with toys, Benjamin neglects him; "But despite all his father's efforts, Benjamin refused to be interested" (10), says Fitzgerald.

The story is a prototype in which Fitzgerald describes his journey after his disintegration from university of Princeton academic elite at a young age and joining Army officer training. He denotes that: "The younger generation has been changing all thru the last twenty" (Clarck 58-59), where he centres his beauty and pride in following the sumptuous youth standard; "he found, as the new century gathered headway, that his thirst for gayety grew stronger" (Fitzgerald 22). Modernism for Scott is a continuum of an unpleasant concussion which post-war generations have witnessed. Benjamin portrays Fitzgerald's inclusion to the Lost Generation expatriates likely with William Faulkner, John Dos Passos and John Steinbeck (M Cruz 1-2).

Those glaring writers write to memorize their 'Lost' in the panic of war. He emphasises on his case involving Benjamin's tries to adapt to his harsh reality; the protagonist is septuagenarian that even wrapping him with a white blanket is not venerable for his age. Magical realism concludes symbolic exploration through analysing the western reaction to the unreal, to universal happenings and mainly to modern portal. Many young people at that time felt by subversion from conventional norms and values as they could not shape their identity properly. While Benjamin indicates the lost generation encouragement to this shift although the sense of alienation tends to be a heavy morass.

As soon as reality is questioned, 'the real is acknowledged through minds', but it is hard to understand when it is divergent from the normal. It can be sensed that Benjamin's physical shape is a disturbance for society's norms; it is something that concludes relativity, which will refract his changes and his life track. "Arthur Eddington argues that: "everything perceived needs to be gelatinized or understood as having more than one relationship to the viewer's mind" (qtd. in Berman 52). The beginning of the story is discernibly the beginning of the end; America for Scott is in constant correction on that account an unfamiliar and obtrusive phenomenon like Benjamin's

one leads to unfamiliar consequences. The way by which Fitzgerald emphasizes his distinguishable skills in introducing the unreal, devotes a reliance on allegory and its devices that are cautiously examined in the coming title.

2.3. Language as an Outlet of The Real

Language as an artistic device is playing a major role in deliberating magical-realism work. The emphasis on the unreal is preferably articulated through ‘parallelism.’ The universe narrows into the language of signs and words; for Fitzgerald, quantity can serve as a long disclosure of conscious complexities. Through Benjamin’s journey, the notion of ‘time’ is being repeated many times, and Scott rather names him a "freshman" frequently, for which he points out the anxieties of modern man. The character is prevented by a standing burden of self-discovery as he tries to ensure his ‘youth’ by recurrently saying: "I am eighteen". The recurrence of phrases can serve as an allegory of fragmented scenes that enchanted Fitzgerald and deprived him of understanding what is right or wrong in his society.

Repetition is articulated through sentences and expressions; “He seems to grow Younger every Year,” (Fitzgerald 19). Fitzgerald retraces the disparity between Benjamin and things or people around him as the narrator’s feelings of unsure disintegration and attraction towards the era; “and from that time the chasm begin to widen between them” (21).

The aesthetics of short story progress through Fitzgerald’s brilliance choice of metaphors and Allusion. In metaphors, he describes the characters conditions to signify their evolution and fate. For instance, people around the city are less dignified to declare that the boy ‘‘Benjamin’ “resembled his grandfather” (11), then when Benjamin turns into adult his status gets to the extreme where the registrar at Yale shouts: “You are dangerous lunatic” (13). The audacity is

vertical in Benjamin's society; a listed atmosphere of emotions, feelings and chaotic anxieties are enthralling and absurd at the same time. What if a case like Benjamin's is real, would people embrace this distorting image or reject it for it does not emancipate a normal happening. Fitzgerald calculates that Benjamin is versus "Nature", if scientific resolutions exaggerate in its experimental offspring, humanity would end up with Benjamin's issue, saying that some deeds are just a dispute with the natural order.

Allusion is another indirect figurative way to sculpt a metaphysical context. The Oxford English Dictionary defines this method as a covert, implied or a reference (Irwin 1). Whereby the name Benjamin is in fact a biblical and Hebrew name that means 'Son of the right hand'. Benjamin is a humble and truthful man among the twelve's Israel tribe; he appears to be among Josef prophecy, where God in fact makes a lesson of his weakest creatures to bring attention to his greatness in substituting a better life (Forerunner). Another word is 'Methuselah' which is a connotation of another biblical figure, when the word is divided, two Hebrew words are dictated, "Methu" which means "He dieth" and "Shalah", He sendeth out" (Roger p11-12). The history of this prophet is unreasonable, where the receiver struggles to know wither he died or he is being sent to god again for it cross the discussions of eternity and mortality.

For Fitzgerald, Benjamin himself is a transparent exclamation of life while the precedent terms open larger philosophical questions; what if human life is eternal, does existing is only temporal and wither mortality can be reshaped through experimental contributions? The entire story is an arrangement of references and "contrast"; Benjamin's life, connections, mind, and age are equally diverse from others' lives. Age and wisdom are considerably signs of high categories, which in numerous ways depict the elite in America and writers who alienates themselves for the estrangement of modern distress.

Did his eyes deceive him, or had his hair turned in the dozen years of his life from white to iron-Grey under its concealing dye? Was the network of wrinkles on his face becoming less pronounced? Was his skin healthier and firmer, with even a touch of ruddy winter colour? He could not tell. He knew that he no longer stooped, and that his physical condition had improved since the early days of his life. (Fitzgerald 12)

In the quote above, the narrator uses imagism to describe the uniqueness of the protagonist, his vivid transgressions in age and relationships, and how life is perceived as memorable and surreal. In chapter five, the writer stimulates a glowing image of Benjamin's wife, Hildegard, to show how beauty standards attract society's attention. "Over her shoulders was thrown a Spanish mantilla of softest yellow, but terflied in black; her feet were glittering buttons at the hem of her bustled dress" (15). Another passage describes the transformation of the girl, in which Fitzgerald says: "Her honey-coloured hair became an unexciting brown; the blue enamel of her eyes assumed the aspect of cheap crockery" (19). Imagists try to depict concrete, specific objects and avoid abstractions and generalizations (qtd. in Kao, Jurafsky 6). The methods imply the unreal as being palpable and truthfully natural, that is, to balance the idea in the reader's mind and allow him or her to understand moral dichotomy.

Symbolic connotations are another style of magical realism. The writer uses a set of critical symbols to convey certain meaning; he mentions the clock, train, and button, each of which serves Benjamin's transformation. For instance, the clock indicates the passage of time and his journey towards the process of life with its birth, aging, and death autonomy. The train is mentioned to express that life goes on and moves forward despite all its absurd revelations. Lastly, Button, which is part of Benjamin's name, deeply asserts the unique birth of this last and his voyage to youthful

life. Magical realism is a combination of the real and the abnormal; thus, reconstructing a whole literary work without prioritizes the narrator's style and choice of rhetorical language. The story sculpts other partial and time variables that create certain real demarcations, in magical realism the events are lucid and much of a representational discourse, each place or timing proliferate a historical context.

2.4. Magical Realism Atmosphere

Most of Magical realism atmosphere deals with fragmented personas that are lost and confused, or sometimes peculiarly struggle to unite a reason for their deeds or understand how reality is processing. The chosen events in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* for instance, provide an interesting shift in character's journey between seeking meaning, grasping the exterior world or falling into a status of disillusion. Benjamin in his life is distressed because of his paradoxical case and inwardly exhausted of society's mistreatment. These productions are substantially tested in the coming selected titles.

2.4.1 Pretension and Meaninglessness

The concepts of eternity and mortality in modern sight are a resume of an arbitrary conclusion that man is convinced by its justification while he seeks no other meaning behind it; he takes them guaranteed because they follow his aspiration. One question may lead to absurdity and scepticism (Nagel 716-717). The protagonist in the story has the possibility to imagine and think, which is to determine whether he ultimately can handle his existence, but, in many cases, every object or factual juxtaposition is dominated by an endless recognition that leads to a pointless chain of banalities and meaningless relations. It is only inescapable because it does reflect human permissiveness. The justification of things in magical realism is deeply absurdist only if it consists of a rate of "seriousness" and if it is abruptly not opened to question.

In *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, Benjamin is in constant doubt; he affirms that he struggles with interrogative self-consciousness. Sometimes what a man is seeking is larger than his or her circle of thoughts, and what he or she tends to find is insignificant. In fact, life is meaningless when there is nothing to identify his existence with; identity can only be accomplished by a sense of belonging. Nagel argues that "the absurdity of our situation derives not from a collision between our expectations and the world, but from a collision within ourselves" (Nagel 722).

Rational decisions in this context progress when Benjamin accepts that the world is fluid, but if he proclaims a larger escalation, rationality gets deprived of its balance. In magical realism, the unknown foreshadows the status of an unusual body and contradictory human; in Benjamin's traumatic case, Fitzgerald tries to sculpt that life in reverse is parallel to the normal one, in which they both lead nowhere, and that what is done in young age won't matter in old age. In chapter ten Benjamin becomes a child again, his aspiration comes to denote his eagerness towards army days; so, he cares ultimately to join. The scene is futile and satirical in which his desire has no longer the possibility to overrun.

Beyond every surrealistic narrative, there are correspondingly an infinite number of interpretations; one interpretation is fitly absurdist. A western identity and mobility in Benjamin deprive him of the actual meaning and lastly orient him to futility and passive customs. The magical realism choice of an imperfect creature often denotes that technical and experimentalism attempts to shape an idealistic human, especially with the effortless attempts to assure Darwinian psychology, are heading to vain outcomes. In the story, the protagonist seems to bear an interminable pride because, after years, he starts to look younger and more vibrant than before. A bridge opens between him and his wife Hildegard, but after years of joy, things return to their

absurdity, as Fitzgerald narrates: “As this was an inane and unanswerable argument, Benjamin made no reply, and from that time on, a chasm began to widen between them. He wondered what possible fascination she had ever exercised over him” (Fitzgerald 21).

Meaninglessness as a sign dictates that all human decisions are doomed to emptiness and predictable failure, yet Benjamin here tries to find something that could lower his or her expectations. Roger Button concludes this orientation: through his encounter with his son, his manners turn puzzling and chaotic; the child is neither what he expected nor what his society would welcome. Nietzsche suggests that: "from the moment man accepts that the world has no direction, he must give it one, which will eventually lead to a superior type of humanity" (qtd. in Ambrose et al , Section 6). Benjamin indeed is giving himself a chance; he succeeds in attaining wealth, marriage, and college; however, each time he tries to reserve his normality, he fails because, factually, he is different, and that's what gratifies absurdity. The magical in case like this leads to fatalistic outcomes and paradoxical encounters that compatibly hinder character's journey.

2.4.2 Characters' Mistreatment and Paradoxical Reality

In the presence of magical realism work, absolute truth becomes fragmented, and if reality shifts from its order, it turns poignant. At the birth of Benjamin, he is nearly seen as a monster by his father and society, and he is emotionally abandoned. This situation articulates a sense of hostility; once things do not go in its pentameter, it eventually collapses. When Benjamin is eighteen and he intends to register at Yale, he dyes his hair and wears fitting clothes to reach the required standards; however, he is being rejected savagely;

The registrar eyed him wearily. "Now surely, Mr. Button, you don't expect me to believe that."

Benjamin smiled wearily. "I am eighteen," he repeated.

The registrar pointed sternly to the door. "Get out," he said. "Get out of college and get out of town. You are a dangerous lunatic". (Fitzgerald 13)

The language of abuse portrays how complex the real world is. Fitzgerald's choice of expression symbolizes the abnormal life of Benjamin Button. Scott uses the word 'septuagenarian'(Fitzgerald 6) to claim the existence of Benjamin as being an affront to nature and then concludes afterwards by saying 'What a pity'(22), encapsulating that the protagonist is ostracized from society despite his condescending attempts and respect.

Humans try to impose what justifications they would follow, and which terms are satisfactory. However, the character, like in the case of Benjamin Button, acts through the seriousness of the issue and his desire. Benjamin chooses to resist, and the conflict appears to be swallowed by his displacement from the problem. This scene is depicted through indirect characterization. Franz Bacon argues that: "a man's disposition is never well known till he is crossed" (1). A character's obstacle dictates his coming steps and his way of confronting things. Through one reading, one can notice that Fitzgerald is letting the receiver interpret the events of the story through Benjamin's actions and his reactions to things.

The previous lines suggest that the protagonist is rejected, yet the author foreshadows what's going to happen after saying: "He would go to Harvard, and then they would regret these ill-considered taunts! Safely on board the train for Baltimore, he put his head from the window; "You'll regret this!" he shouted" (Fitzgerald 14). Some surrealist mechanisms are controlled by human aspiration; they can be overlooked through the narrator's common sense. Fitzgerald's style affirms that magical realism articulates itself in such a plausible and rational way that its familiarity

cannot be sensed easily. However, 'the contradictory 'events in Benjamin's journey dictate that the journey of life is purposeless. Time moves forward for others while Benjamin ages backward; his father rejects him at first sight yet embraces him when he is a child. Fitzgerald says that: "all these had faded like unsubstantial dreams from his mind as though they had never been" (28). Everything is challenging and absurd: society, family, the environment, and death. This last is paradoxically outrageous in that Benjamin's departure happens when he is a child, while people die when they are old.

The characters are all flawed and imperfect, and their change is not a rescue for Benjamin because they are a product of the environment, but change is an individual choice. "When his grandfather's initial antagonism wore off, Benjamin and that gentleman took enormous pleasure in one another's company" (11). Language is attributed to all characters; each one is a motivator through dialogue and description to serve a crucial understanding of Benjamin's transformation and how they endure it. While a lack of empathy is apparent, many are less humanized. Benjamin, with his strange case, is more compassionate; although he struggles with a lack of parenting, his grandfather embraces him, and he succeeds in his life; mistreatment is transparent through this passage:

"They look sort of funny to me, he complained. I don't want to be made a monkey of."

"You've made a monkey of me! Mr. Button retorted fiercely. Never mind how funny you look. Put them on or I'll Spank You". (Fitzgerald 8-9)

Perhaps because the era is marked by alcoholism, Fitzgerald intends to portray his perplexity through Benjamin's father's nervous attitudes and prejudice. The story is set in the twentieth century and deals with political issues, a time of recession, and racial segregation

(Levenson157–158). Furthermore, the term mistreatment does not exclude "women's inferiority," which is another common slogan. In the denouement, Hildegard is seen as useless without her beauty, and Benjamin intentionally leaves her. Though he had a previous struggle with his shape, it is easier for him to begin a new life with other young women.

Benjamin throughout the story is tolerant of himself; although he constantly fails to make order in everyday treats, he tries to assemble his faith through pretension and enjoying extravagant things. The conflict arises when he is eighteen years old and meets Hildegard; from there, protagonist's enlightening divergence starts, his vision in life just begin.

Through story's devoted narrative, Benjamin's harmony with his grandfather proliferate, as if two aged human beings are having a repellent conversation about their past experiences, and soon after, along the plot, Benjamin seems to be an impostor that sneaks among adults. Furthermore, he marries his beloved while he is in his fifties, and things shift when his wife becomes older, and Benjamin gets younger. The scenes construct a system of paradoxes and ambivalent situations. In the final scenes, the protagonist is invited again to the army, and he appears to be younger than Roscoe's son while they are playing together in kindergarten. It is an extraordinary and fabulous way indeed, to sculpt momentous roughness through contradiction and satire. Fitzgerald introduces an absolute magical work that renders a complete obsession with fantastic and existentialist utterances.

The structure of thoughts that Fitzgerald affords in his story revolves around 20th-century disillusionment. Feelings of tiresomeness are apparent in a descriptive manner through the characters' faces and treats, evoking the burdens of life that lead nowhere.

2.4.3 Benjamin's Disillusion and Loneliness

In the matter of disillusionment, magical realism appears to be vibrant in the war and the astonishing era that American society has witnessed, mainly since 1860. Transgression trauma grounds emotional circumstances and helps in understanding the tragic and comic mood that acts as a reference and representational dictator of war's horrific impacts. The character for Fitzgerald is a testimonial record and a commentary; Benjamin's change is unwanted in traditional society; his transformation translates the change of the world; the outcomes of war are seismic; and no convention is fundamentally immune in the twentieth century.

In Traumatic Realism, Michael Rothberg depicts Holocaust representation as "realist" and "anti-realist." He writes, "By realist, I mean both an epistemological claim that the Holocaust is knowable and a representational claim that this knowledge can be translated into a familiar mimetic universe." (qtd. in Hirth16)

The callousness of war affects the society of Benjamin and its norms. His shape and face become younger as he is tired of his wife's constant struggle with her fainting beauty because she is no longer in her twenties. The surreal manifests when Benjamin chooses to register in the army. Benjamin is enlisted as a lieutenant colonel and achieves a satisfactory triumph after his great success in his father's company. After years, he is invited to a new commission with other officers who had served in the Spanish-American War. The surreal can be projected in a more comic stance, showing how much the world is meagre and out to be constantly devastating. It is usually representational, as it serves a satirical structure of ideas. In the beginning, Benjamin appears to have passed through the conditions of war in which he resembles his grandfather, yet the previous narration is mysteriously different where he joins the camp as a child and being refused what causes him an endless disappointment.

An author and therapist, Ben Mijuskovic argues that ' Loneliness forges its powerful expression in all great literature, often in disguise' (1). The surreal is a thematic reference to loneliness and dread. It purifies the idea that the world is void of meaning, especially when you become a witness to millions of ashes, but sometimes it heralds an escape from reality with its valorisation of beauty and norms. Demolition can be reliable; Benjamin's case is complex, for he feels more senselessness and loneliness through war and occupation but rather favours it more willingly than staying in his fragile family and society.

In the story, Fitzgerald sculpts loneliness as being part of the human condition; it is a natural internal preference that leads the character to a monitoring release. Loneliness as a device may articulate a further usage of nostalgia where Benjamin is frustrated by the momentous conditions and thinks that he is living in an unwanted era or that he has lost something priceless that would make his melancholy resolve. Likewise, there is a fleeting fear in Benjamin's wife: "She is no longer assertive for her beauty and her husband's feelings towards her." "She went out socially with him, but without enthusiasm, devoured already by that eternal inertia that comes to live with each of us one day and stays with us to the end," "says Fitzgerald (Fitzgerald 20). Edmund Husserl's idea, as a contrasting interpretation, suggests that the transcendental ego is purely a mental construct (Mijuskovic 15). It means it is detaching from the outside environment; human experience is just stimulation for consciousness, which seems to be abstract and equivocal. Thus, Benjamin's adaptation to loneliness is a pure consciousness articulation in which he alienates himself for years to not experience the changes around him and particularly between him and his wife.

Magical realism symbolizes the literary work and defines its fictional. Its indications adopt this persisting rupture between the unreal and the representational to examine the irresolvable and

its extremes. The above interpretation devotes satirical struggle and nonsensical events to being shady and persuasive, for it takes in the coming lines anecdotes from Fitzgerald's critics and his way of resolving the incidents through metamorphosis.

2.5. Kafka's *Metamorphosis*

Fitzgerald's narrative shares productive events that dependably seek problem's figuration. The hero's or character's views are twisted through the narrator's view of reality on how the conflicts will be fixed, or sometimes how everything stays mysterious for both readers and the protagonist. The story resembles Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* in dealing with physical and mental transformation. Some events, words, and connections in *The Curious Case of Benjamin* are privileged to digest the composition of ideas that would lead, lastly, to Redemption.

Benjamin is a destructive male; nevertheless, he indicates a sincere performer. Erving Goffman differentiates between sincere performers and cynical ones, the former being those "who believe in the impression fostered by their own performance, while the latter have no belief in their "own act and no ultimate concern with the beliefs" of their audience (qtd. in Irwin J 86). The character passes through three stages whereby his status changes through historical and present contexts that energize him in modern confessions; however, the structure by which Scott fulfils his story is much more of a modern structure.

Metamorphosis is grounded through a blend of traditional familiarity intrigued with a repulse of unusual notions of age, conception, and relationship. Often, the process of metamorphosis digs into how characters progress either independently or synchronously; its mechanism concludes duality, yet its subject requires consistency and balance between events.

2.5.1 The protagonist's Initial Transformation: From Birth to Adolescence

The initial dealing with metamorphosis in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* occurs through the birth of Benjamin. Everyone in the scene is stressfully waiting for the new baby to rejoice in their day. But during the macabre, characters seem to be silent; Doctor Keene starts washing his hands while Roger is flabbergasted that something happened to his wife or that his son is dead. Even the nurse enters an apocalyptic sense of hysteria when she realizes that the child is in fact an old man with a sharp face and white hair and beard (Fitzgerald 3-9). Fitzgerald presents the futility of life and how human existence is nonsensical without humans' norms; the first realization is notoriously hard for both his father and Benjamin that they are going to be doomed by a severe neglect and a mess with reputation. "Kafka argues that in the ordinary course of life, we are blind to those puzzles because we are unaware. Only a specific, peculiarly decisive event makes us aware of ourselves and challenges our capacity for understanding" (qtd in Kohzadi and Mohammadi 1606). Thus, they will start complaining and questioning the strangeness of the situation, wondering if there should be any resolution that will rescue this oddity.

For society, everything is based on how identity is shaped, so it is sustainably controlled by a cognitive process that must be present in the self and the "other". Benjamin's transformation is a gradual dispute between the conscious and the external world. The change at first sight is compelled by an abrupt 'rejection' that will soon push the protagonist to confront his deadlock. Roger wishes that his son would resemble any other child in that he starts drinking milk and his weeping sound would expand to all the corners of the hospital, yet the 'crying room' turns in fact into a puzzling calamity. The nurse angrily reacts;

"Go downtown and buy your son some clothes."

Mr. Button's son's voice followed him down into the hall:

"And a cane, father. I want to have a cane."

Mr. Button banged the outer door savagely. (Fitzgerald 7)

Kafka explains this status by saying that "man is confronted by a world of impossible dimensions, and he cannot but despair of comprehending its overwhelming and mysterious forces in the best form of surrealism" (qtd.in Kohzadi and Mohhamadi 1606). Humanity seems to disappear while Benjamin's *Metamorphosis* displays an escape to freedom. In chapter two, self-treatment appears to transcend "a matter of adjustment to the body" and perception. Benjamin tries to figure out what would be palpable in his case. He is curious about what is fitting in his society and, particularly, what is fitting for his body and mind. He wears pants that his father bought while he is afraid to be made a monkey of. Benjamin's scepticism begins once he questions what his father would call him: a boy for now than soon after." Mr. Button grunted. "I don't know," he answered harshly. "I think we'll call you Methuselah" (Fitzgerald 9).

He experiences a large dispute with childhood; he struggles to adapt to children's mentality, saying that his wants are different while his only demand is to stay alone and play the way he prefers, and that concludes "isolation". *Metamorphosis* appears again in Benjamin's adolescence; although his body manifests itself, he continues to experience the typical hardships of an adolescent. The indication of 'Methuselah'(9-10) that switches after to 'Benjamin' is a remark of transformation and the growth of the character that Benjamin is sent abnormal, yet acceptance endures this stage, and his father expects that his son will experience normal life through his life track.

Although Benjamin expects that his appearance is getting better, he tries to colour his hair with a brown dye to lower his panic during his registration at Yale. Benjamin is repulsed and has

become more alienated because he is being refused by the registrar and given a decadent critic by his colleagues. Human beings feel desperate when they cannot do what is necessarily the custom. "Kafka says, Art for the artist is only suffering, from which he releases himself for further suffering." (qtd. in Kohzadi and Mohammadi 1601). While Benjamin thinks that his admission to college will unchain him, social treatment deprives him of his objectives and portrays him as weak and occult. These underscores elaborate on "rejection." Horvath and Lynch argues that Ostracism and other forms of social exclusion often lead to changes in behaviours that are likely to garner social approval and increase the likelihood of social acceptance and inclusion" (Horvath and Lynch).

For Fitzgerald, the situation presents the unpredictability of life as well as a criticism of human recognitions and standards, saying that life in reverse is the same as the ordinary one. It is redemption in its vital definition, through the protagonist's journey of metamorphosis and specifically through the final lenses of this analysis, where Benjamin and the characters prettify the nicest denouement. His interior is trapped by ease, loss, guilt and lastly death which are parallel to anyone's life. The author is trying to denote that everything is processed in the story is previously dealt with, however modern perspective is a cycle of extreme experiences entangles with man's first enchantment.

2.5.2 The Septuagenarian Transformation

Youthful life is always portrayed as attracting and irresistible, in that it pushes Benjamin to create his own avenue at his own momentous age. This notion is sophisticated and relates to both war footage and the Roaring Twenties. Fitzgerald's work focuses on the role of aspiration and conforming to societal conventions, which apparently dictate the driving force of artistic expression and innovative achievements. Metamorphosis in this stage comes to terms with understanding how Benjamin's condition affects his relationships. Is short life and long life comparable, and which of them is innovative. In chapter five, Benjamin's life is confined by his refusal to adapt to his society. He instead contributes to the company of his father because it is the only way he can frame material success and maintain his superiority over his surroundings.

Benjamin, from the beginning of the narrative, is enslaved by tremendous insults and descriptions, but he is stubborn enough that he eventually enchains himself in his youth and emancipates the ultimate freedom. Independence for Scott is a matter of perception; if only man is convinced and has the power to project his inner repressions and needs. The environment for Benjamin is an engine through which he grants a joyful life, and everyone would accept his transformation as it is parallel to the normal life. A human being is condemned to live based on his enthusiasm and despite external treats.

Although Benjamin gains popularity in New York papers as "the Mystery Man of Maryland" (Fitzgerald 18), he is rather trapped by his new life, as Hildegard says: "You're just the romantic age" (16). Button, as a magical realistic character, transcends his 'marginalization' by embracing his physical appearance, confronting people's bullying, and eliminating his trauma through success. His transformation from old to young man is deliberate through a sharpened resistance that sustains for years and manifests just after his marriage with Hildegard. In magical

realism style, the tone of the story is based on a fantastic persona, like in the case of Frankenstein by Mary Shelley. However, Benjamin Button is likely to be a human being that is levitated by an unfamiliar transformation; indeed, he is a multidimensional persona.

In the final scenes, he wants to emphasize his military doctrine; he is purely subordinate and depicts the concept of "mission command," but after his marriage to Hildegard, they are both abused for the chasm between them: "Look!" people would remark. "What a pity! A young fellow that age tied the knot with a woman of forty-five (22). Benjamin decides not to listen; he lives his life enjoying an extravagant life, buying cars and joining parties, but, as soon as he is growing younger, he is doomed by 'memory loss,' which dictates metamorphosis in his cognitive side, although his shape is neutralized. Age degradation will cause a sense of threat for Benjamin, mainly the same feeling he has once he is born as a septuagenarian. Fitzgerald says that "instead of being delighted, he was uneasy—he was growing younger" (21).

The narrator narrows the sharpness of the real through the inclusion of supernatural incidents. This technique is transparent in modern short story; it is fundamentally direct and concise in defining realistic scenes; thus, magical realism makes unfamiliar things "tangible"(Rajabi 5). In magical realism, a reader may enchant a tension between two to three characters in which abnormal information proliferates and curiosity attracts his/her mind to the small gestures and conversations in the narrative. Benjamin confronts the clerk and asks him for a uniform so he becomes eligible to join the army, the clerk responds sarcastically, you want to play soldier, sonny? (Fitzgerald 25), while Benjamin turns to behave irritably.

The above example between Benjamin and the clerk is precisely connotative. Button is doomed by pitfalls throughout his life; he is sensitive, and even though he has great wealth and success, he is unable to reach stability and confinement. He sustains conformity by pursuing

happiness and giving meaning to his existence. "Conformity is a mechanism of escape that has a way of submitting human individuality to desire. "This mechanism is the solution most ordinary individuals find in modern society "(qtd.in Dyah 391). His life is reversible; it magnifies all possibilities in life, and it has its demolishing side. The hero falls into a satirical situation; he thinks that he is still old enough to show his potential, so he tries to wear a uniform, but what he is in fact pursuing transcends his perspectives and shape, his struggle magnetizes a change in his life's terminus limit through which it integrate his liberation.

2.5.3 Benjamin's Redemption

The extent to which metamorphosis can lead depends on the ends. Often in fictional works like *Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka or *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel, the accomplishment of redemption is manifested through magical traces, which are parallel to Benjamin's case, but what differs is the type of extraordinary. The character may turn into a monster or a dwarf, like Vermin in Kafka's novel; nevertheless, here there is a revelation of a man who turns into an infant, which delineates a mysterious characterization of the absurd.

None of the characters embraces his predestined situation; he seems insecure by both society and God's will. In Benjamin's society, passion and respect are correlated with beauty and material inclinations. The essence to which Button is immune is just the need for acceptance. Benjamin falls into a dilemma of atonement where he tries to adjust everything around him and serve his father's expectations. It is notable, therefore, that "sacrifice" takes place along the events in which it touches Roger in the way he changes his treatment towards his child, then Hildegard, who sacrifices her beauty to marry an old man, and finally Benjamin, who loses his identity in seeking a youthful life.

Certain deeds conjure a necessity, the birth of Benjamin has a reason, and his infancy is a sumptuous salvation that finally bears the reader's satisfaction. This line of consideration arose because the turn is either apocalyptic or levitating. Benjamin's transformation transgresses from personal salvation to a determinist ending; his individual relations and decisions are opened to inferences. The treatments are bound by a balance between commitment and faith." "Want to play soldier, sonny?"(Fitzgerald 25), Benjamin shows his faith in his own way: "My name's Button and I live on Mt. Vernon Place, so you know I'm good for it." (25); the description is a legitimate agreement with oneself. Benjamin's son takes the role in the last chapter; his reality is purely different from his father's, but the narrator's answers are always paradoxical and fantastic. He acts without gratitude; a harsh phenomenon anchors: "I want you to call me "Uncle"—not 'Roscoe,' but 'Uncle,' do you understand?, It looks absurd for a boy of fifteen to call me by my first name" (24).

Roscoe rejects the presence of his father because he looks even younger than him; the consequence is a puzzle in which there are references to guilt. He attributes the responsibility for this transformation and its outcomes to his father. But when the son returns from his travels with a child, perhaps this incident reunites Benjamin with Roscoe again, where the character feels by belonging and acceptance. Mr. Eggenschwiler suggests that "the description of a family's liberation from guilt as an act of will casting off a psychological burden indicates that redemption, in this instance, comes from within" (Hunter15).

Roscoe takes both his son and Benjamin to kindergarten. Fitzgerald portrays Benjamin as delighted and pleased, a feeling that he did not experience at the beginning of his life. "Sometimes when other tots talked about what they would do when they grew up, a shadow would cross his little face as if in a dim, childish way he realized that those were things in which he was never to share" (Fitzgerald 27). It is the context that allows the reader to recognize the relocation of

redemption; the claim is a realization that life is fleeting and that every moment counts. Mortality is inescapable, and the focus is limited to identifying the final contribution of salvation and the fall of the hero. "Then it was all dark, and his white crib and the dim faces that moved above him, and the warm, sweet aroma of the milk, faded altogether from his mind" (28). The legacy of the character would unavoidably stay roaming in Roscoe, Hildegard, and all his community's minds, while Benjamin is consequently contained by existential freedom.

Salvation in many literary works is an offspring of a long journey, mainly character's journey to personal-reliance and aspiration. It can be a conclusion of being forgiven by man or god yet In Benjamin's case it is much more of a personal treatment that ended with a determinist end. Fitzgerald cautiously implements these perceptions to emphasize on personal salvation and the necessity of pursuit of happiness.

2.6 Conclusion

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button is a foundation for diversity in a fictional world. Benjamin introduces the contemporary model and the destructive man. The changes the character is exposed to present the serious and distinguishable conditions that human beings are doomed by. The complexity of understanding human existentialist thoughts about mortality or eternity is exhaustive, yet it is deliberate through a surrealistic composition, which is fundamentally endured in this chapter. Many circumstantial banalities conclude the ongoing anguish of modern man, besides his worthy calculations to command his life. This chapter presents the allurements of relative world and time. The whole narrative demonstrates the present as being an offspring of the past and a way of coping with what is new, in which there is an emphasis on timelessness and synchronization. Those techniques are part of the nonlinear narrative and they adjust an empirical literary style that warms modern works. Instinctively, Fitzgerald presents things as being exported and realizations of his time.

Yet, the way to Scott blazing writing is examined through his reliable allegorical patterns that address minds to his credibility and artistic skills. His use of symbolism and imagism carries out the features of the avant-garde and its costumes. Furthermore, the analysis covers an adjustment of absurdist reaction that is dictated by magical realism atmosphere; an atmosphere that holds a variety of world's meaningless facts. The dilemma of being lost in this era is highly recognized through metamorphosis, becoming an agency for dark exterior and interior confrontations. These treats are used by traditional authors, through which they foster the exploration of gothic entanglement. The accomplishment of this surrealistic umbrella is described in the third chapter that penetrates gothic elements.

Chapter Three: Situating Gothic Texture in *The Curious Case of Benjamin*

Button

3. Introduction

The analysis carried out in this chapter explores the unique perspectives of gothic narrative. Through displaying terror and the uncanny, author's mastery of creating a haunting atmosphere is purely traced, the observation makes diving into human dark experiences a possible mission. The targeted themes unveil how characters' dealing with the uncanny resembles human reactions that conjure trauma, ambiguity, and denial of any strange or unknown manifestation. The section upholds a set of psychological and physical utterances that help in determining the overflow of these themes. The second part visualizes dark tones of love, relationships and loss; it uplifts an analysis of this metonymy of love with individual choices, freedom, material encapsulations, and other knowledge that calculates the character's distress and anxieties.

The chapter is complemented by gothic displacements; this disposition examines how gothic approaches societal conventions and, mainly, how masculinity is no longer a steady subject, this idea is merchandised by the antidotes of idealism demise. The final stage addresses contemporary perception about modern psychological complexities; in this matter a whole analysis is carried out to project insanity and its surrounding aspects as paranoia, monomania and other paralysis. Finally how gothic spaces are used to portrayal contemporary interior and exterior reactions.

3.1 Characters' Terror and The Uncanny

The Gothic as a sublime genre has gained popularity due to its hybrid role in targeting dark atmospheres and the human subjective side. Its narrative makes a rhetorical and connotative exception in the world of literature. Its themes stand to trace a combination of artistic pictures and interior truths; one of these conventions covers terror and the uncanny. Both elements emancipate a pathway towards the most superficial and deep representations.

Perhaps the title of the short story has much to say through claiming 'The Curious,' and once digging into the content, much of its illustrations and events assume the successive entrances of strangeness and morbid turns. The very visible adaptation of the Gothic denotes that terror is more explicit in its operation. In *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, the plot is shaped by suspense and ambiguity, and the whole anticipation of the story has a scary effect. Terror corresponds to the inclusion of the uncanny; in fact, it reinforces its productivity. Schelling defines the uncanny as 'that which ought to have remained secret and hidden but which has come to light' (qtd. in Connolly 411). Fitzgerald describes the birth of Benjamin as 'whether the darkness of the night had borne in new life upon its bosom'(Fitzgerald 3) —a habitual process that the narrator provokes and that substantially identifies Schelling's claim. The unexpected is immediate but unstable in reaching the tone of terror, as it takes an odyssey to proliferate.

The character's sudden change is part of the terror mechanism; the construction of ambiguous steps often leads to an intricate situation. Roger Button's manners turns from modest to ordinary; he is running in a 'gasping rush' (3) in the hospital, bagging Dr. Knee, while this last is staring at him with a 'curious glance' (4). The realization of the uncanny is first approached by both the doctor and the nurses; the birth of Benjamin is taken through intellectual shock and

unease. Fear in the incident takes place through an obscure reaction, although Fitzgerald did not describe what happened yet. "She rose to her feet and seemed about to fly from the hall, restraining herself only with the most apparent difficulty" (Fitzgerald 4). The flow of sensations chains the focus to the sudden appearance of Benjamin, or 'the Uncanny.' "Wrapped in a voluminous white blanket and partly crammed into one of the cribs, there sat an old man, apparently about seventy years of age (5)." The unknown surfaces Roger's curiosity and fear, and his interaction with his son embody the ultimate terror. Rand and Tork argue that:

The uncanny owes its upsetting and frightful effect to a thoroughly paradoxical simultaneity. What we consider to be the closest and most intimate part of our lives—our own family, our own home—is in fact at the furthest possible distance and the least familiar to us .(qtd. in Connolly 412)

What is potentially recognized as normal and decisive is an abnormal melancholy. The grotesque in Gothic fiction often remarks psychological complexities that are fundamentally caused by terror upheavals. The major character and the sub-characters experience a sense of trauma and denial, as in Benjamin's case. Roger Button refuses to accept his son. "Am I mad?" thundered Mr. Button, his terror resolving into rage. "Is this some ghastly hospital joke? (Fitzgerald 5). The uncanny is qualified by a deep continuity through the narrative, especially if it is developed by a set of criteria; for instance, the old man, who naturally should bear the shape and characteristics of an infant, starts speaking in 'a cracked and ancient voice'(5). While Roger Button is trapped by gothic gloominess, his unconscious is in denial, repudiating the truth that transcends into those around him and eventually everyone in the city. Therefore, Terror blurs the readers' genuine way of recognizing their weaknesses, triggering them with a determinant menace just like in the following

passage: "A grotesque picture formed itself with dreadful clarity before the eyes of the tortured man—a picture of himself walking through the crowded streets of the city with this appalling apparition stalking by his side". "I can't. I can't," he moaned. (Fitzgerald 6)

The Gothic has its way of justifying the uncanny; sometimes it provides explanations; on the other hand, it hides its inimitable truths to expand its atmosphere in the reader's mind, in which he tries to accomplish the scenario in his own way, even if it does not necessarily distress him, yet it approaches them to understand Fitzgerald's view. "A strange experience that the words cannot relate to, but just makes one feel awe", (qtd. in Polyzogopoulou). In Benjamin's case, his birth remains unexplained all his life, and the terror conquers his journey to adolescence. Roger Button tries to eliminate his shame; fear, trauma, and disgust join to describe his status. The narrator depicts his misery through a variety of expressions whereby a lasting terror is captivated: 'nervously', 'he snapped out', 'retorted Mr. Button fiercely' (Fitzgerald 8-9).

Terror's displays are always manifested through gestures, body expressions, and words; the uncanny may lead fundamentally to the loss of rationality and the repression of harsh reality. Roger is trying to rescue his case from either being denied by society or himself; his spiritual side turns into a dreary and tangible frustration, not knowing what to do or how to escape this sombre riddle. He doesn't know what to call his son or how he would walk with him to his home. Even the baby nurse because of the horrific scene; Fitzgerald narrates that she left the house after one look, in a 'state of considerable indignation' (10).

"Methuselah" represents a hope for Roger that something extraordinary will redeem them. His trauma is substituted for his child; he insisted in no uncertain terms that he should "play with it" (10). Fitzgerald emphasizes that 'Benjamin is a baby, and 'a baby should remain'; nevertheless,

a psychological dilemma cannot be narrowed only if it is correlated with a sudden fulfillment. Roger's treatment is aggressive and pathological; however, Burke argues that "when danger or pain press too closely, they are incapable of giving any delight and are simply terrible; but at certain distances and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful" (qtd. in Connolly 410). When the character starts growing, his parents feel that he resembles the different children in Baltimore. Terror is a hypnotic operator in creating interchangeable reactions and feelings; as in this case, it elevates from suffering to the satisfaction of parents that their child is having a better change.

The idea of aging in reverse is terrifying as a matter; people would assume that this case would happen again, even Benjamin, once he starts realizing that he has no control over its process. Its concept copes with the irony because reality is different from what seems to be emphasized. It is a frightening condition for everyone who encourages normal autonomy. The foreignness of this idea still emancipates the inclusion of terror. Benjamin is the unknown; his otherness is received through uncertainty in his society as to whether he should be accepted in school or is a part of their journey. "Finally, a compromise was reached. Benjamin was to continue to dye his hair. He was to make a better attempt to play with boys of his own age" (Fitzgerald¹²).

Benjamin's process of change persists; his loss of identity is shattered through his inability to define his existence and relationships. This idea is terrifying for some in normal life. What if there is another case like Benjamin's? Valuing oneself is arbitrary and only maintained through different individual and collective connections. Terror, in its last evolution, condemned Benjamin to be isolated and fragmented from society. As Robert Miles has claimed, the Gothic represents the self-finding itself dispossessed in its own house, in a condition of rupture, disjunction, and

fragmentation (qtd. in Obernyer 19). College for Benjamin contributes to the dichotomies of evil and delight; Benjamin is terrified that his shape is not fitting as he is 'excited' about his first day; the day he missed to dye his hair, he is mistaken to be his father; double meaning affirms a closure to modern torsions:

"I'm very glad to meet you, Mr. Button. I'm expecting your son here any minute."

"That's me!" burst out Benjamin. "I'm a freshman."

"What!".(Fitzgerald 13)

The sublime can orient the character toward an unstable circulation of either hatred or neglect. Modern society is consumed by repression and severe comprehension as it is crippled by its fear of the future. Contemporary gothic focus turns to grounding gothic settings and horrific experiences through characters' paroles and deeds. The inclusion of scary places like basements and prisons is no longer supportable (Obernyer 15). For example, in this story, Fitzgerald portrays college and school as areas of distress and threat from the character's point of view; the character falls into a domestic frustration, not being able to be part of adults his age; "The registrar pointed sternly to the door." "Get out," he said. "Get out of college and get out of town" (Fitzgerald 14). The above accomplishments calculate Fitzgerald's tendency towards irony, which is a modern technique; every notion that is supplied out of reality is typically shattered and depicted paradoxically. Benjamin's continuous attractive age turns out to gain him a legacy after his destructive struggle with a terrifying past and the falsity of being rejected in society. Even his birth is measurably different; people are naturally born young and grow older. The life of a character is

based entirely on approaching modern speed and fragmentation, as it is achieved in the previous chapter and in the suggested sections of gothic quality.

3.2 Dark undertones: Characters' Vision of Love and Loss

The story is unique in its narrative; it displays a symbolic immersion in modern convention with its integration of a emotional tone. The work distinguishes between masculine and feminine orders and their blurring concerns in the new era. Dark romance for instance often describes the instability and struggle to maintain an individual's autonomy. Perceptions of this ideology are polished by the representation of sentiment, love, and uniqueness, which denote access to Gothic variations. Love convention is distorted in modern society, and Fitzgerald tries to unite a storytelling that is profound in compromising love, individualism, the material, and the grotesque.

The clarity of love curtain is shaped through its most vivid parts, and although it is sometimes deprived of substantial features, it adheres to its purity. The story foreshadows that the fusion of love began with a strive towards an obtainable partner only if it is seen as a matter of hope and stability, for Benjamin is more about allowing himself to pass alienation; thereafter, love is recognized through a trajectory goal.

The very possibility of blending two contradictory notions is in fact a rebellion against an extreme Gothic, which is a fancy task for contemporary writers while they try to subvert a release of emotional knowledge. Through the narrative, the journey of the hero and heroine highlights how mourning and love intensify. In chapter five, the character and his father drive out to a dance at the Shevlins' country house. Benjamin chances upon a young lady who seizes his mind; even his father startles and asks if it is the daughter of General Moncrieff. A passionate group starts roaming around Hildegard while Benjamin is just waiting for his dance. The cemetery that is endured in this

passage emancipates that before any love crisis, emotions tend to be free and conventional (Norman 144); the narrator is constituting an atmosphere whereby the structure of passion and its roots deliberate ; characters are interestingly connected, and the rising events follows the typicality of the rising plot.

Intimacy in all the cases of Gothic presents a delighted attitude in the character's confinement while he or she explores a variety of rising experiences like love and marriage. Benjamin lives his life seeking a balanced life that is full of love and passion; Hildegard seems to be a substitute in this case. Benjamin remembers his experience at Yale while he thought that the same dilemma is going to repeat itself with his first meeting with Hildegard: "It would be rude to contradict a lady; it would be criminal to mar this exquisite occasion with the grotesque story of his origin (Fitzgerald 16)." As it was said in the previous section, the uncanny exists throughout the character's life and affects his connections; however, passion seems to lower its intensity. Benjamin agrees with Hildegard that she favours a man of fifty rather than a thirty-year-old, which fills the protagonist accordingly with vibrancy and hope. The modern era makes the Gothic more liberated from its classical meaning, contradicting those conservative ideas of the Victorian age, when women were literally oppressed and ought to accept their family's decisions.

Although the events are already transparent from the omniscient narrator's revised hints that the affair is heading into a gloomy end, (I say "made known," for General Moncrieff declared he would rather fall upon his sword than announce it) (18), after six months, both Hildegard and Benjamin are engaged, which is heavy to be accepted by a well-known general. Curiosity and mysterious qualities arise against the traumatic situation; her father points out the instability of living with a man of fifty; everything is temporal and strange about their marriage; and Benjamin is cautiously seen as "criminal" instead.

Gothicizing the notion of love brings back the inevitability of death even in passionate situations (Norman 155-166). Through the lines, Moncrieff tells his daughter that Benjamin is captivated by high mortality, thinking that he is at an old age while the protagonist is getting younger. The notion of Love is always hindered by motionless enemies and obstacles at any narrative; despite the fact that society seems to mock their marriage, they suitably unite. Hildegard's deed is considered a sin that endeavours to predict failure and unluckiness. For the girl, it is all about personal freedom that cannot be halted by any external destruction.

Individualism is attached to modern ideologies of freedom and sexuality, which are revered in the mobile events of story; however, in the coherence of intimacy and resistance, there is always a whole vision of pain. Both Hildegard and Benjamin try to free their unconscious from social stereotypes; family, as believed, is a boundary that has existed since pastoral time, but women nowadays are unchained from patriarchal systems, which in all cases reframe Gothic undertakings. As it is well known that individualism focuses on individuals' subjective decisions, both characters are working for self-expression even though they are uniquely fragmented and become alienated at the end of the story.

Later in the narrative, the family fortune doubled, and General Moncrieff became satisfied that Benjamin "brings out his "History of the Civil War" in twenty volumes, which had been refused by nine prominent publishers" (Fitzgerald 19). Dark acquisitions are projected through fortune-telling deals. Modern man is conquered by a shady need for material alters to accept and be accepted. In the beginning, Benjamin is refused by the general, but in the end, he praises his achievements. The scenes constitute that "madness takes over the mind of the protagonist, and consequently, the space he inhabits" (Obernyer 21). Traces of individualism are obvious again, as in how Roger and his son never give up on making success in the hardware company; the radical

change takes place in 1895, when Benjamin's shape is entangled by young and gay life. Distress is another subsequent commitment of dark romance; Benjamin appears ghosted by his innermost distress that "his wife had ceased to attract him" (Fitzgerald 19).

The situation is contradictory; there is a rise in arrogance; even though the girl accepted him at first sight with his old character and appearance, Benjamin eventually does not care; now conditions are reversed. "She went out socially with him, but without enthusiasm, devoured already by that eternal inertia that comes to live with each of us one day and stays with us to the end" (20). The heroine is also another essential figure in Benjamin's life, as it elevates the idea of a woman in distress. Robert Harris suggests that;

As an appeal to the pathos and sympathy of the reader, the female characters often face events that leave them fainting, terrified, screaming, and/or sobbing. A lonely, pensive, and oppressed heroine is often the central figure of the novel, so her sufferings are even more pronounced and the focus of attention. (Harris 1)

Hildegard is in sorrow because she loses her youth and, interestingly, her beloved man, which concludes her overwhelmed distress. War Impact is an extreme gothic mood that provides a whole gothic narrative in itself as it creates an unfortunate encapsulation of terror and departure. The story of lovers is confronted by an obvious loss. The crisis is multiplied by Benjamin's discontent and his attachment to the Spanish-American War. Hildegard, upon Benjamin's return, turns forty "with a faint skirmish line of gray hairs in her head, "The sight depressed him" (Fitzgerald 21). Benjamin is banished to war and has lost some of his exciting years of youth, while Hildegard's beauty has vanished. Loss is always dictated in the paradoxical compositions of romantic stories; the trauma is vital in their faces and psychological melancholy. Each event leads to distress and the tight conflicts between the characters. The shadow of their inner selves

contributes to the gothic atmosphere; they cannot ignore what they feel or want because it is part of their desires, Benjamin fears of losing his aspiration to be young as well as his identity. Faith and anxiety are noticeable through a dialogue between the protagonist and his wife whom Hildegard accuses her husband that he is wants to be different from everyone else and that she cannot stop his unusual transformation.

Female Gothic is objectified by both classical and modern tropes. Beauty and age are processed as measurements for the duration of love and marriage and their solidity. It is terribly endured and dismantles a critic to 19th-century standards. The connection between beauty, alienation, and marriage uplifts a conflicting presentation of the fragility of love. Benjamin has both a pleasurable and haunting experience of aging. Irony is always present; Benjamin is now as young as his son Roscoe; "he and his son were, in fact, often mistaken for each other, "This pleased Benjamin"(22). While he tries to avoid appearing with his wife, the gothic crisis of distress is highly fulfilled; Benjamin's past seems to follow him, and his case, like many historical gothic works, remains open and unresolved.

Vivid love is not always obtainable; their journey is both lavish and uncertain. The protagonist leaves his home to join Yale and St. Midas; he returns to find out that his son bears no emotions for him, which emancipates the culmination of the tragic ending. "All these had faded like unsubstantial dreams from his mind as though they had never been" (28), the hero is finally stamped by amnesia, which refers to part of his memory and ultimately part of his former life; he is forgotten, and he is unchained from life. Memory glorifies the past with its venerable grief and delights; however, it is terrifying that man no longer distinguishes things or their value. Benjamin forgets his experiences and the life he lived; nevertheless, his legacy is honoured through the people he encountered and eventually through those he loved. The above observation is a mirror to

discrepancy and social disputes where ideals ideology seems to be fragmented in modern sight and depicts the demise of idealism.

3.3 Gothic Displacements: Masculinity and Shallow Society Gossip

Gothic as a literary genre is sincere in describing and representing modern ethos. It is certain that the collapse of idealism prevails in all aspects of society. Through Benjamin's life, as he ages backward, he collides with shallow society gossip that introduces him to how society shifts over time and, mainly, how their values deteriorate. His condition sheds light on how the most cherished and idealized objectives shatter through challenging epochs and spatial indications. Nothing stays stable; his relationships are affected by technology and cultural dispositions.

The domestic atmosphere is dictated throughout the whole story. Although the character becomes part of his body and mind, he suffers from this unsettling vision of society. In this matter, the writer explores gothic darkness through Benjamin's surrounding mindsets. In the first chapter, the antidotes of decay are mingled through people's views concerning mortality and death. Fitzgerald indicates that their fear already exists, yet Benjamin is just the stimulator and the evidential trauma that would make their distress go uphill. He highlights that there is a sort of confrontation not just for Benjamin alone, but that his society should bear in mind that aging is unavoidable and death chases everyone, including those whose cases are like Button's entrapment. The doctor, when witnessing Benjamin at first sight, has to say how much the case is irritating and would scare anyone: "Outrageous!" He snapped the last word out in almost one syllable, and then he turned away, muttering, "Do you imagine a case like this will help my professional reputation? One more would ruin me—ruin anybody" (Fitzgerald 4).

Mortality is a recurrent theme in all sorts of literature because it is part of human existence. Benjamin's creepy birth and aging are abnormal premises. Clara Reeve argues that: "The supernatural must be kept within the utmost verge of probability", (qtd. in Geary 33). Although, as he grows, he is careless about the burdens of age, he is never deprived of being subjected to harmful comments, but he is still condemned by a possible and valid commitment. Fitzgerald, through his scornful behaviour, mocks contemporaneous categories. Benjamin demands his father to give him some clothes so he can get out of the hospital. This man is captivated by a very sensitive situation;

"Keep it on! Keep it on!" said Mr. Button hurriedly. He turned to the nurse. "What'll I do?"

"Go downtown and buy your son some clothes." Mr. Button's son's voice followed him down into the hall: "And a cane, father. I want to have a cane." Mr. Button banged on the outer door savagely. (Fitzgerald 7)

Gothic texture can overload through behaviour; it is certain enough that the world is based on a system; man is born to suit what is prevalent and universal; the hero here is victimized in the whole short story.

The protagonist's masculinity is not an ideal in this society as it used to be, only in the middle of the story, as if it is shaken in the modern era. That is what Francis is trying to note. Benjamin's birth, life, and death project the demolishing of conservative, idealistic, and sensible views of world pragmatics. Benjamin in his younger years is old and dependent on others; even his father wants his son to live his younger period as a child, even though his face and shape are not really worthy. "He merely warned his son that he would "stunt his growth" (10). But when he is a

youth, his masculinity is accomplished; he has to face his burdens alone, as he is arrogant and in pursuit of force; nevertheless, it is challenged again when he becomes a child.

The colonel in the last chapters ignores Benjamin; this last is so stunned that army members stare at him with pity. "The colonel turned and began walking his horse in the direction of headquarters. "There was nothing for Benjamin to do but follow with as much dignity as possible—meanwhile promising himself a stern revenge" (26); thus, his transformations clash with the traditional notion of masculinity, which values human physical strength and independence rather than perseverance. Everything is allegorical; the perplexity of evil and good lingers between the father and the son, the protagonist and his partner, and lastly, Benjamin and his society.

In the beginning of the 19th century, the notion of 'the other' granted author's attention, they were directed towards moral decay and its extreme outcomes. Writers attribute gothic imagery just as Benjamin is subjected to horrific images; Francis draws attention to the character's ignorance in society; the story is explicit as it analyzes people's knowledge and attitudes as something that is acquired through experience. Gothic narrative detects the traces of psychological violence and the paranoids; Button is never the victimizing man but the one who attributes the inflection of his community's permissiveness.

The character is under different kinds of judgments; for instance, the hero is assembled with his heroine and married despite his mysterious case; "the New York papers played up the case with fascinating sketches that showed the head of Benjamin Button attached to a fish, to a snake, and, finally, to a body of solid brass" (Fitzgerald 18). The scene reveals why the story revolves around this era, where its observances go back to restrictions and unity and forth to gossip and unbalance. The traditions of masculine man are materially conjured, the second chapter concludes that religion

is taking place virtually, and the spiritual side of 20th century society is scattered through much of the functionality between the characters and their words, in this context character's banalities is presented through a look at inner complexities.

3.4 A Look at Characters' Psyche: Insanity as a Gothic Element

A twist's beginning is always vague and unstable as it is viewed through the titular narrator's perceptions. In *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, madness and rationality are blended to characterize Benjamin and his heightened instability, as well as his unchecked obsessions and downfalls. Other characters are certainly viewed by Fitzgerald as having these signs of irrationality.

In the first chapter, the events explore existentialist insanity. Benjamin is confused and ought to find a reason for his disoriented existence and shape. He never asks his father why he is born that way or how he would fix his situation, but rather endures a time of realization and hides his fragility; the character is in the in-betweens, between being wise or afraid that one question would overrun his mind. Benjamin's insanity traces that life's arbitrary nature is based on social conventions such as worshipping wealth, status, and strength; however, his case comes to ensure that the direction of life ends up with losing these meaningless needs. Insanity through the Gothic is manifested as a psychological horror that grounds the limits of Benjamin's experience at first so as to show whether he is completely insane or on the brink of insanity.

Aging in reverse is possible in the story's lines; however, it pushes Benjamin to deny his existence and case. It is a coping mechanism that the protagonist uses to escape his current status. When Benjamin is born, he rejects milk and asks instead for cane. His desires are diminished, as

are those of anyone who is depressed. Loss of interest and insanity are not just vital in the story. Roger's encounter with his son makes him mad and lost about fatherhood. Inadequacy causes the father to withdraw and act irritably each time his son talks to him, which indicates the symptoms of madness.

The extremes of their conditions exacerbate feelings of worthlessness. Roger Button, who seems to come from a humble family, deteriorates into a father's freak, and what would people say about him? That is his ultimate fear. His treatment of Benjamin makes this last break something every day; pressure leads to the explosion of the character's inner repressions. The protagonist's psychological complexities, which thrive out of society's abuse, make him dye his hair every time he is being rejected or rumoured about. Insanity rises along with social withdrawal; Benjamin is neither accepted in school nor welcomed in society; his depression leads him to be increasingly isolated and endlessly meditate about the struggle to form one day any lasting relationships with other people; and he is in all ways despondent watching himself age in reverse.

It is worth noting that Benjamin starts going out socially only once he reaches twenty years of age. His isolation calculates the resentful borders of insanity, and home seems to be a niche for him. When meeting with Hildegard for the first time, she takes him for his father's brother, which eventually undergoes Benjamin's unwanted past and fearful future; an anxious orientation becomes "habitual" in that it makes him suspect any reaction and afraid of any harmful rejection. For instance, he questions himself about whether he should enlighten her that he is young but with the appearance of a septuagenarian or hide himself and act as she thought—he is just his father's brother. Hildegard characterizes a stable and rational woman; she welcomes his case and, lastly, marries him.

The factual thing about insanity is that it presents a pathway from rational to destructive and then irresistibly a mental illness. Through the lines, Roger Button says, "Am I mad?" (Fitzgerald 5), he is interrogatively shocked, and at the same time, Scott, through this notion, is exploring a mental confusion just in the open passages of the story. The narrator has so much anger about Benjamin's case that each time he presents an obstacle, he determines its resolution. When Benjamin marries Hildegard, events seem to be successive, yet there is a long period between each incident. Insanity takes place on different occasions and at different times.

Hildegard is obsessed with Benjamin because they are fitting, and Benjamin is a man whom she assumes is rational and looks fifty; she is constantly controlling his daily well-being; however, her 'obsession' deteriorates to a paranoia through which she demands Benjamin to stop aging so they stay balanced in appearance, which appears to be abnormal for both readers and Benjamin. "I should think you have enough pride to stop it" (21), Fitzgerald narrates. Both characters are seemingly paranoid about age and appearance; Hildegard fears that her beauty fades and that she fails to monitor her marriage, while Benjamin is in the unknown; characters are consumed by their anxieties; his distress is lengthened; after a long term in the army, Benjamin's aging never stops; "Good Lord!..the process is continuing" (21). The scene where Benjamin is talking to himself in the mirror is a sign of worry and contemplation of the inner self.

Paranoia is opulent in its meaning. Wilmer et al. entangle the concept of paranoia in terms of Freud's arguments; they suggest that isolation is a psychic manifestation of paranoia, as it is considered a peculiarity of neurosis. It appears in the form of interposition that comes out of terrified feelings because "fears became paranoia (fear and suspicion of everyone, often without

cause (qtd. in Abu Jweid et Ghada 950). The definition is contagious as it is framed through characters' temperature.

The atmosphere extends to emotional insanity; Benjamin has to deal with his traumatic case; he is afraid of society's expectations about his marriage; he is even being accused again that he is in fact Roger Button and "that he is John Wilkes Booth in disguise—and, finally, that he had two small conical horns sprouting from his head" (Fitzgerald 18). The gothic creates suspense about the character's personality and shape, and the reader struggles to define whether the characterization is true or just a hallucination of Benjamin's society; the description is creepy, and horns often depict the devil's appearance or Satan as being ugly and harmful. People appear to be condemned for sensualising everything that is different; their tendency is blended with discomfort about 'the other' as well as a stark reminder of mortality. These senses are not purified as insanity dispositions; however, they emancipate habitual delusion and war shellshock.

Roscoe's disappointment and passivity towards Benjamin denote another stage of anxiety; his ultimate focus on his father's 'age' makes him lose his conscious equilibrium. Psychopaths often experience a condition of "monomania," where certain objects or occurrences herald a stressful fixation in the mind. Even after twenty years, Benjamin's apocalyptic case is renewed, as if 'the strange' is repeating itself and initiating a new way of trauma with every character. As a flashback, when Benjamin returns from the Spanish War, his wife's wintry status and anaemic face make him so eccentric that he no longer controls his behaviour but rather searches for a substitute for his wife's beauty.

The problematic here is a confession of Benjamin's madness and mind flaws; the pressure Ross feels again from his father's age makes him severely project his anger and overwhelmed

attitudes to his father. This has gone too far to be a joke. It isn't funny any longer. You behave yourself! (24). The idea that he and his father look alike sanitizes his inner complexity and finally makes him reject his father's willingness to attend a prep school.

The above situation presents a sociopathic disorder. Roscoe shows no empathy for his father, even though he has seen his grief, and he tries to manipulate others by ordering Benjamin to call him uncle. Insanity comes in disguise to show the harsh and dark reality of the human condition. Benjamin's crisis leads him to express himself (Sublimation), despite his societal hardship; in one scene, he imagines himself as a young and eligible soldier that is fitting for World War II; disillusion is thus a symptom of his mental illness that his identity is ostensibly ostracized. Benjamin receives a letter; this last concludes a lesson of life, the invitation is a message of death where Benjamin is either going to come back from the army or eventually dies.

The fear of Hildegard rises consequently for she may lose Benjamin or her beauty fondness shrivel in his three years spent in the army. This range between insanity, fear, disorder and mental illness create elements of the gothic; the suspenseful plot of *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* contributes psychological distress among characters which interestingly uplift feelings of paranoia in readers and make them suspect events. The analysis above manifests the dilemma of the uncanny in its vertical meaning, this theme is viewed by Fitzgerald in other people around him mainly in his 1920th society, either ways the gothic is a prominent notion that is found in many decent literary works. Madness is a reminder of those who have fear of eerie settings and atmosphere, as hospital and war in the case of Benjamin which is calculatedly discussed in the next title.

3.5 Gothic Setting: Hospital and War's Atmosphere

The Gothic setting in the 18th-century genre involves tunnels and abounded places like basements and passages, yet the modern era prioritizes contemporary spaces. *In The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, Fitzgerald describes Roger's journey with his child in a Maryland private hospital; the place is not fully described until Roger encounters Dr. Keene, and the character is doomed by certain gloominess. Hospitals are often considered an area of unease with dark and long corridors where patients are condemned by suffering and pain, and everyone is depicted in a rush to wound themselves or save someone else. Through Lines, the doctor stands waiting for the father with an unsettled irritation and curious expression, while Roger is in a gasping rush and has no idea of the harsh reality he is going to face; he just thinks that he is rewarded by 'Triplets'. The notion through the story prioritizes that life is cyclical, passing through birth, growth, and death, which profoundly dictates a symmetrical orientation and a systematic way of portraying Benjamin's life process.

Readdressing controversial figures and dark place psychology introduces the concept of the Gothic and tantalizes its primacy in understanding modern libertinage. Dr. Keene reminds Roger how he bought him into life but orders him to take his son and never comeback. The sentence is establishing something mysterious and outrageous; why would the doctor ask Roger to flee from the hospital? Roger becomes worried about entering Ladies and Gentlemen's Corner. Fitzgerald, in this instance, describes the halls as being opaque and gloomy (Fitzgerald 4), where the nurse is waiting at the desk. Roger is forcing himself to take some steps. The nurse seems to jump from the window out of her unpleasant face; screams and clanks extend from the basin to the floor, and she clarifies that "the hospital will never have the ghost of reputation after ____" (5); the father

reaches the room, which is apparently known as the ‘Crying Room.’ The area is often where children express their weeping and anxieties freely; Benjamin’s birth is transformative, fatal, and speculated as it shares this melancholy with the father, nurses, and doctor.

A certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread of outer, unknown forces must be present, and there must be a hint of that most terrible conception of the human brain, a malign and particular suspension or defeat of those fixed laws of nature that are our only safeguard against the assaults of chaos and the demons of unplumbed space. (Lovecraft qtd. in Aldana 7)

The use of supernatural events adds to the dimness and darkness of the hospital’s atmosphere. Roger stars at one of the cribs where there is an old man, whom appears to be his child; the scene elaborates a sort of rage for him that he is falling into ‘some ghastly hospital joke’ (Fitzgerald 5). However, the occurrence is real, and horror transcends when the old man whines in his bed and asks for a wink of sleep. Mr. Button sank down and concealed his face with panic. Benjamin’s first words in the hospital’s bed resemble Jesus prophecy as a boy, mainly when he speaks to his people in the cradle.

Fitzgerald sustains cultural and historical context but shows his cynicism toward twentieth-century alternative evocations; again, Benjamin’s shape is experimental occupation, not just in its literate context but through subversive free-thinking that prioritizes revolutionary thoughts. Modern subjectivity has to transgress oppressive and dark settings to draw society’s frustration. The Gothic subverts oppressive institutions and indicates their corruption of norms. Dr. Keene, in his meeting with Roger Button, opens no chance for discussion or understanding Benjamin’s case. He rather chooses to hide the peril and save the hospital’s reputation. Roger is stunned by hypocrisy and

abuse, and the nurse orders him to go town and buy his son some clothes, for no one in the corridor recognizes the new baby.

Francis, through the Gothic, is trying to determine his spiteful nihilism from his own culture; much of the place's choices and characters roles are personal modulations. Fitzgerald criticizes his society and its inclination toward the northern part. The hospital is in a county in Northeast Megalopolis, and Scott emphasizes that the North has no exception without the past. Anticipating American gravity opens up a coherent interpretation of its modern fragmentation. The characters are doubled and scattered to suit the contemporary setting. The reader's response to this critical enchantment intertwines with Benjamin's collision with nineteenth- and twentieth-century roughness and profundity.

Along with Roger's frustration, he wishes his son to be black. His son describes the pathos of racial scenes and extreme apartheid; often private hospitals do not welcome black women who are about to give birth or black children, a case that is still convenient, but Benjamin's case is mystifying in that it surpasses black segregation. The American consciousness about the material world plays a supplementing role; for Fitzgerald, characters are shaped through space and time; a protagonist is committed to an idealistic superficiality, which might seem to the narrator as a confusion of reality, while the reader emotionally perceives it as energy for the character to follow his faith.

When Benjamin's death is near, he goes back to camp Mosby. Camps or brigades in their factual reality are fatalistic and dark. Indeed, the events are always symbolic and follow an allegorical pattern. Benjamin asks the colonel to get out of his horse. He is still disillusioned that he is the early lieutenant colonel and that things have not changed anyway. The Gothic element makes

events unexplained; Benjamin's status is questioned all his life; the colonel roared with laughter (26); Benjamin is captivated by modern extravagant life while the colonel is consequently attached to his work. The situation resembles this contradiction between the past and contemporary, where the original Gothic that emerged in the 18th century collides with the modern Gothic subgenre, as Catherine Spooner has argued, as a "site of struggle between incipient modernity and an unenlightened past (qtd.in Aldana 4). The events mirror the merciless chaos of existence and human beings' pessimism in the temporal world. Settings prioritize crowded and distorted areas while they are articulated and Gothicized to transfer the qualified involvement of man in life. *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* becomes revisionist; it emancipates to suit the multidisciplinary interests of popular culture; its projected romance and gothic are deliberate through visual and animated film, where everything is transitory and fashionable. In this respect, the story joins Fitzgerald's compatible works like *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*, which ground dramatic and trans-medial consistency.

3.6 Conclusion

Fitzgerald's use of abnormality contends with the natural and logical order of human creation; he builds the structures of juxtaposition by providing wildering events, doubts, and fragmented identities to polarize the reader and make him or her elaborate and demarcate what is behind this reconciliation with the extraordinary. Terror is demonstrated in a familiarized manner, apparent in a status of shock, abandonment, and the dilemma of an uncanny creature; those myriad Gothic features are mingled with family and social refusal. The character's shaping in the short story is established through a journey of individualism, void eagerness, mental perplexity, repression, and tragic ending.

Fitzgerald's vision works beyond the schema of these themes; he colours the plot with the notion of love while blending that with the troublesome of gothic. Contemporary Gothic presents different imagery settings that work to stimulate an ideological perception while it displays dark and contradictory visions about masculinity and society. Therefore, his story polarizes an obscurity by making the real and the unreal collide and the sense of the sublime fuse under the curtain of Gothic demonstrations. *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* is where Scott uplifts his most traversing knowledge, articulating a recycled America with condensing structures of social tension and modernized world. The chosen themes in this study ground a representational combination that enriches the short story and smartens its artistic parts. It highlights what an author's impressions, inclinations and styles serve and for what reason they are outwardly proliferating in the story.

General conclusion

Modern writers modulate their literary works to suit both pastoral and modern genres. Although they react to traditional conventions, they immensely capture a dual understanding of Gothic traces because this last emerged in a different period and correspondingly attributes a solid use of the supernatural. In all measures, modernism favours the Gothic as a more realistic portrayal of psychological themes and human experience. As an extension, magical realism deals with the supernatural through a subtle mechanism that shades man's definition of reality. The genres elaborate a symptom of contemporary utterance in which they both cover a fantastic matrix that is blended with realistic patterns.

Francis Scott Fitzgerald depicts this evolutionary process, saying that "There seemed to be little doubt about what was going to happen—America was going on the greatest, gaudiest spree in history, and there was going to be plenty to tell about it." (qtd. in Marcovitz 10). Relocating the dark and the extraordinary is a complex orientation; the scarcity of contemporary Gothic cannot be granted only through an immense review of modern and traditional literary works. However, Fitzgerald's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* denotes a canonical work that supplements a handful of existentialist knowledge; the writer, through the common sense approach, provides genres of "destructions of understanding the world and its deals with relativity and experimentation. The story he introduces has a spatial and circumstantial structure that is associated with American life, space, and causality. He celebrates the artistic devices of short stories through a unique reliance on symbolic, biblical, and melancholic dispositions.

Fitzgerald's intentions, through applying the genres, contribute to the richness of literature by way of forbidden topics merged into the surreal and the uncanny. He chooses to unveil the

roughness and despotism of modern society while at the same time projecting the ideal and positive side of individualism. This kind of literature puts an emphasis on the narrative techniques, characters elaborations, and reactions; what makes the style jump from dreamlike imagery to realistic performance. The events trace a heavy resonance in faith, struggle, and redemption that works as a motional representation.

The study is a systematic view of different magical realism and Gothic elements. It concludes the efficiency of non-linear narrative in dictating that America is ancient before being new; it is old in history but fragmented through perception, in which it counts those who are under modern pressure, those who choose to be in the middle, and those who are heavily antagonistic. In Benjamin's case, he was born old and copes with what is new because it is too complicated for him to be isolated. However, his life is determined by a synchronized fact that he cannot escape or change because it is part of his faith, and this last conjures a non-timeless understanding. The reality of the character through the study is an exploration of a distorted generation; their life is unfamiliar. They are curious about the present and future, which is why Fitzgerald chooses biblical and imagist attributes mainly for their subtle valorisation of beauty and long life, as well as their fear of living and experimental disorders.

The notion prioritizes Benjamin's seeking to find meaning or have this sort of pretention that is to not live in the absurd, yet what is finally or commonly expected is mortality or nowhere. Fear of human beings is represented within the self; often its extreme is projected in a harsh manner through language or gestures, and sometimes through illusion and loneliness, where Benjamin, for instance, finds his answers and peace.

Psychological problems are a testimonial to human experience and the struggle to find balance. This disorder is overlapped through metamorphosis, where the character is in dispute with creating a valid identity; his journey passes through acceptance, the hardships of adolescence, conformity, and redemption. Characters are, in fact, seen as true figures or categories that experience real banalities between freedom and commitment.

The study emancipates a touch on gothic elements and their relation to modern thought. The epoch, of course, is attached to war and its continuous effects. The complexity of modernism is linked to human reaction, where he or she is always unsatisfied by its outcomes and terrified by its distortions. He struggles to adapt its borders or conclude a compromise, and that is what distinguishes the elements of terror and the uncanny; rationality in contemporary guise is narrowed to repression. In this context, the world's notions are no longer stable; Fitzgerald, as an omniscient narrator, dismantled love temporality and man's sight of love as being free but hindered, yet the access of individualism again enchant characters and readers' perspectives with its capacity for framing material and individual authenticity. Gothic displacements in this journey dictate the merits of literature in depicting the collapse of idealism. Masculinity and societal standards declined thoughtfully to serve equivalently as evidential trauma.

The study, in its final texture, approaches how modernity leads people to sensualise everything and fall into an escapable entrapment. The case tackles the steps of insanity and its surrounded manifestations, from depression, isolation, paranoia, and monomania. The search for a substitute and meaning in life often leads to social frustration; people no longer appreciate things that are outside their realm, so they start acting sharply and discern what is already seen as inferior. This condition is negotiated through a gothic setting, where hypocrisy and recession of institutions

prevail in a sort of discrimination or allegorical reaction to black historical conditions, as it surfaces this inclination towards the north in the expanse of the south.

The study has tried to answer the necessary question of this work: Can magical realism and Gothic reignite a whole body of thoughts about modern dynamics? If yes, what choices of elements seem to be expedient in creating this atmosphere?

Therefore, this investigation found that Fitzgerald's style of narrative, blending magical realism and gothic, reaches a palpable representation of man's most modern congruities and fears, besides their inner complexities, because gothic nowadays is linked more to psychological mechanisms. The genres commonalities stagnate in the idea that Gothic is necessary in creating a baggage of historical experiences and philosophies, while the surreal is a tool for representing reality as it is with no falsification. The elements provide a sort of entertainment and absorb how men act and react and for what reasons modern man is on the edge of imminent insanity.

Finally, what is distinguishable about these literary genres is that they ground a reference for all categories; the narrator chooses in his narration the serious, the pessimistic, and the positive to land on what solutions are plausible and what anxieties are fatalistic. Magical realism and Gothicism transport the darkest and mystical corners of the human mind and the world's most powerful elicitation.

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Résumé

L'étude choisie donne la priorité à L'Étrange histoire de Benjamin Button de Fitzgerald en tant qu'échantillon littéraire moderne, car elle vise à distinguer ses motifs Réalisme Magique et gothiques. La nécessité de cet examen attribue la validité de la combinaison de deux genres et la perfectibilité de leurs éléments. Il calcule une perspective analytique qui habite le Modernisme et ses avenues. La base de cette recherche optimise l'utilisation d'un récit unique qui englobe le récit non linéaire et la transformation, les lecteurs sur cette question pourront se fondre dans la vision de l'auteur de la réalité et comment il encourage des représentations extraordinaires comme la métamorphose et l'étrange. En conséquence, l'étude analyse différentes manifestations psychologiques qui prolifèrent dans les atmosphères sombres ; ces tempéraments sont neutralisés par la caractérisation et l'individualisme qui aident le lecteur à anticiper la fragmentation contemporaine et à adopter une attitude face aux affaires les plus discutables de la vie. L'étude réalise d'interminables réalités de discussions sociales et personnelles ; il explore des personnages fragmentés qui se heurtent à des notions distraites de morbidité, d'amour et de perte, où le personnage principal lutte pour absorber sa vie et tombe dans un statut ambivalent et des friandises sans fin de passivité et d'abus.

Mots clés : Réalisme magique, Gothicisme, Tempérament des personnages, Narration non linéaire, Métamorphose.

ملخص

يقدم البحث المختار الأولوية لـ القضية الغريبة لبنيامين بوتون لفيتزجيرالد كعينة أدبية حديثة ، لأنه يهدف إلى التمييز بين الأسس السحرية الواقعية والقوطية. يميز هذا الاستنباط ضرورة جمع نوعين من الأدب وإتقان عناصرهما. كما تختار الدراسة منظورًا تحليليًا يكمن في الحداثة وسبلها. تعمل هذه الأخيرة على تحسين استخدام السرد الفريد الذي يشمل السرد غير الخطي وميتامورفوسيس ، سيتمكن القراء في هذا الشأن إلى الغوص في رؤية المؤلف للواقع و أعماله الغير العادية مثل تصورات المسخ والغرابية. في المقابل تحلل الدراسة المظاهر النفسية المختلفة التي يتم إنتاجها في أجواء كئيبة و يتم تحديد هذا المزاج من خلال التوصيف والفردية التي تساعد القارئ على توقع التجزئة المعاصرة تجاه صفقات الحياة الأكثر إثارة للتساؤل. تجري هذه الدراسة حقائق لا نهاية لها للمناقشات الاجتماعية والشخصية كالشخصيات المجزأة التي تصطم بالمفاهيم المشتتة للمرض والحب أو ألفقدان حيث يكافح الشخصية الرئيسية لاستيعاب حياته ويسقط في حالة متناقضة وردات فعل لا منتهية من السلبية .

الكلمات المفتاحية: الحداثة ، الواقعية السحرية ، القوطية ، مزاج الشخصيات ، السرد غير الخطي ، ميتامورفوسيس .