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Dr. Nayef al-Yasin

Damascus University

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Preface

This book is meant to introduce students to four kinds of literary writing: the novel, the short story, literary criticism and drama.

The book is divided into six parts. Part one is introductory and aims at providing the essential tools for the study of the novel and the short story in particular. Part two gives a brief examination of the short story and the novella. Part three gives a number of excerpts from novels. Each piece is given a heading which indicates a certain technical aspect the student is encouraged to examine in particular. Part four presents two short stories by two prominent short story writers. Part five includes a number of extracts from articles or studies in literary criticism which represent different approaches to literature. Part six starts with a brief introduction to drama and dramatic arts and then gives the first act of *Ghosts*, a play written by Henrik Ibsen, one the world's most prominent playwrights.

Each part, or sometimes section, is followed by an activity in which a number of questions are raised to insure that the most important points are stressed.

PART I
THE NOVEL

1. Introductory Definitions

According to the Oxford English dictionary a novel is 'a fictitious prose narrative or tale of considerable length in which characters and actions representative of the real life of past or present times are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity.'[1] The novel is fictitious - *fiction,* as we often refer to it. It depicts imaginary characters and situations. A novel may include reference to real places, people and events, but it cannot contain only such references and remain a novel. However, even though its characters and actions are imaginary they are in some sense 'representative of real life'; although fictional they bear an important resemblance to the real. What exactly this resemblance is has been a matter of much discussion and dispute amongst literary critics, and it is arguable that it varies in kind from novel to novel. But this resemblance to *real* life is one of the features that distinguishes the novel from other forms such as the epic and the romance, however much we recognize that the term 'real

life' is a problematic concept. It is common knowledge that people can 'lose themselves' in a novel. In other words, even though the novel presents us with a recognizable world, we exercise our fantasy and our imagination to live within this world for short periods of time. Drama typically 'tells' less and 'shows' more than narrative, although theorists of fiction have given such showing a higher standing than telling.

The novel has *characters, action(s),* and a *plot*: it presents the reader with people who do things in a total context ruled over by some sort of connective logic: chronology, cause-and-effect, or whatever. There is, moreover, in most novels a connection between these three elements such that they form some sort of unity. A poem does not have to contain characters or a plot - or, indeed, any action - but it is only very rare novels which dispense with one of these elements, and in such unusual cases it is often a matter of dispute as to whether the net result is recognizable as a novel.

And finally, the novel is of a certain length. A poem can be anything from a couplet to a thousand pages or more, but we feel unhappy about granting the term 'novel' to a tale of some forty or fifty pages. Of course it is not just a question of

length: we feel that a novel should involve an investigation of an issue of human significance in such a manner as allows for complexity of treatment, and by common consent a certain length is necessary to allow for such complexity. In practice, therefore, we usually refer to a prose narrative of some twenty or thirty pages or less as a short story, while a work that seems to hover on the awkward boundary between 'short story' and 'novel', having a length of between forty or fifty and a hundred pages, is conventionally described as a novella (plural: novelle or novellas). A *nouvelle* is characterized by a concern with a single episode or state of affairs, although its treatment of this may cover many pages.

2. The History of the Novel

There is a running debate between those who see prose fiction as 'a universal and ancient form with a continuous history', and those who prefer to emphasize the distinctiveness of that which emerged in the early eighteenth century, and who speak of the novel as a new form which had its birth then.

The disagreement is an important one, and involves detailed debates about the extent to which those 'novel' works

produced by writers such as Defoe, Richardson and Fielding in the first half of the eighteenth century were in direct line of descent from the French fiction of the late 17th century, hundreds of titles of which were translated into English and published in England at this time.

It should not, however, prevent us from recognizing that even if the novel can be said to emerge as a new literary genre in the eighteenth century, it still owes much to traditions and works, literary and non-literary, from earlier times. No serious student of the novel would deny, for example, that its development in the eighteenth century was profoundly influenced by works such as François Rabelais's *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua* (1532 and 1534) and Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1605-15) - whether or not one agrees to describe these works as novels themselves. One of the things which sets the novel apart from many other literary genres is its ability to incorporate the most disparate elements from human life and experience in itself. It would be a serious mistake to assume that to trace the novel's descent we need to examine only a sequence of written forms, or of oral narratives. We should rather picture a family tree in which certain lines of descent involve various written forms, certain

involve a succession of oral narrative forms, but others involve a wide range of very different elements: introspective self-analyses, both in diary and in unspoken form; joke-telling; sermons; travel accounts; letters. What distinguishes the novel is, among other things, the heterogeneity of its ancestry, a heterogeneity that Bakhtin has argued is mirrored in the variety of different 'voices' to be found in any single novel.

Another problem is that in comparison to other literary genres, the conventions governing the novel are extremely flexible. Thus some novels have relatively unindividualized characters; others seem a long way away from the real life of past or present times, and some (even today) seem closer to poetry than to the prose of, for example, a newspaper report.

This can be expressed in a rather different way. It may well be that the novel today is so prestigious and dominant a genre that we pack into it all sorts of works which would, even half a century ago, have been accorded separate and more specific categorizations. The example of Joseph Conrad is a case in point. The titles of his fictional works include a variety of generic indicators: 'Confession', 'Tale', 'Romance', 'Story', 'Narrative', 'Reminiscence'.

Nowadays we have no difficulty in distinguishing the novel from the romance. The chivalric romance developed in twelfth-century France and depicted not epic heroes but a highly stylized and idealized courtly life founded upon rigid but sophisticated conventions of behaviour. Like the epic (which it displaced) it often involved supernatural elements - another factor which in general terms distinguishes it from the modern novel. The distinction with which we are familiar can be found in the eighteenth century, the century in which the novel appears in its recognizable modern form in England.

The novel typically presents us not just with the ordinary, but with the extraordinary, the hidden, the repressed, to be found in the ordinary.

In his excellent introductory book on the novel the critic Arnold Kettle suggests that most novelists show a bias towards either 'life' or 'pattern' in their approach to writing: towards, in other words, either the aim to convey the vividness and feel of living, or that of conveying some interpretation of the significance of life. According to Kettle the novelist who starts with pattern often tries to 'inject' life into it, while the novelist who starts with life tries to make a pattern emerge out of it. He relates these two very general tendencies to, on the

one hand, such sources and influences as the parables of the Bible, the Morality plays of the Middle Ages, and the sermons which common people listened to every Sunday ('pattern'), and on the other hand to the seventeenth and early eighteenth century prose journalism and pamphleteering of such as Thomas Nashe and Daniel Defoe (who, we should remember, was a political journalist before he was a novelist).

3. The Emergence of the Novel

If we accept that the novel emerges in its recognizably modem form in the Europe of the eighteenth century, then we must confront the fact that the novel is a young genre, a tiny infant indeed in comparison to poetry and drama, both of which seem to be about as old as humanity. Crucial to its emergence and development are a number of rather different factors, of which it is worth stressing the following.

(i) The rise of *literacy*: The novel is essentially a written form, unlike poetry which exists for centuries prior to the development of writing, and still flourishes in oral cultures today. There have been cases of illiterate people gathering to hear novels read - part of Dickens's audience was of this sort,

and during the Victorian period the habit of reading aloud within the family was much more widespread than it is today. But the novel is typically *written* by one individual in private and read silently by another individual who has no personal relationship with the author.

(ii) *Printing:* the modem novel is the child of the printing press, which alone can produce the vast numbers of copies needed to satisfy a literate public at a price that they can afford.

One of the things that print brought with it was a change in the relationship between reader and writer: print allows for a more impersonal, even anonymous writing - but one that, paradoxically, by cutting the reader off from a known writer, allows him or her to feel that the reading of a novel is a personal, even intimate experience. The novel is read *in private* by an individual. Experiencing a novel is thus a much less collective and public matter than experiencing a performed play can be, where we are very conscious of how the rest of the audience is reacting.

The intimate relationship established here between writer and reader feeds off a living tradition of oral storytelling at the same time that it exploits the potentialities

inherent in the privacy and anonymity central to the reader-writer relationship associated with the novel.

(iii) *A market economy*: The 'sociology of the novel' is based very much upon a market relationship between author and reader mediated through publishers. In contrast to earlier methods of financing publication or supporting authors such as patronage (a rich patron would support a writer while a book was being written) or subscription (rich potential readers would subscribe money to support a writer in order that a particular work might be written), a market economy increases the relative freedom and isolation of the writer and decreases his or her immediate dependence upon particular individuals, groups, or interests. The growth of a market economy is of course an aspect of the rise of capitalism - the system which had displaced feudalism in Britain by the eighteenth century. In different ways literacy, printing and a market economy can all be related to the growing dominance of capitalism in the period during which the novel emerges.

(iv) The rise of *individualism and secularism*. Ian Watt sees as typical of the novel that it includes 'individualization of ... characters and ... the detailed presentation of their environment'. Unlike many of the narratives that precede it

the novel does not just present us-with 'type' characters; we are interested in Tom Jones, David Copperfield and Paul Morel as distinct individuals with personal qualities and idiosyncrasies.

It certainly seems to be the case that the new spirit that accompanies the early development of capitalism infuses the emerging novel. Along with a stress on individualism goes, too, a growing concern with the inner self, the private life, subjective experience. As the individual *feels* him or herself an individual, rather than a member of a static feudal community with duties and characteristics which are endowed at birth, then he or she starts more to think in terms of having certain purely personal rather than merely communal interests. And this gives the individual something to *hide*. Without wishing to oversimplify an extremely complex and far from uniform historical development we can say that in a certain sense the private life as we know it today is born with capitalist society, and that the novel both responds and contributes to this development.

The early association of the novel with town rather than country life is also significant. There are novels set in the country of course, but from its earliest days the novel appears

to have had a special relationship with town life, and both the readers and the writers of novels were more likely to be town-dwellers than country-dwellers in the eighteenth century. If we look at what has a fair claim to be one of the first modem novels - Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) we can see that the town and the novel form have much in common. Both involve large numbers of people leading interdependent lives, influencing and relying upon one another, but each possessing, nevertheless, a core of private thoughts and personal goals.

It is interesting, however, to note that from its earliest days the novel seems often to split not just between novels where the author starts with 'life' and those in which the author starts with 'pattern' - to use Arnold Kettle's terms - but between novels in which the author is more interested in the public world and novels in which the author is more interested in private life. Again, it is only the very greatest novels that seem to combine the two such that we feel no sense of subordination of either. Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749) and Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1747-8) can be taken as representative here, with the former's greater interest in a masculine, public life of movement, action and life in the

larger social world in sharp contrast to the latter's concentration upon a feminine, more inward life of feeling, personal relationships, and personal moral decision.

ACTIVITY

1. From your experience of novel reading, try to write a more elaborate definition of the novel.
2. Write a short paragraph on the importance of the fictional aspect of the novel.
3. What the are the major elements of the novel?
4. What are the major factors that affected the emergence and development of the novel?
5. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in this section.

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4. Narrative Technique

We have explained that everything we read in a novel comes to us via some sort of 'telling'. We are told what happens in a novel; no matter how successful the novelist is in making a scene seem dramatic it is never dramatic in the way that a play or a film is. We may feel that we 'see', but we see as a result of what we visualize in response *to* a narrative not an enactment. Even in those rare cases in which a novelist makes use of the present tense, a technique which gives an added sense of immediacy to the narrative, we are still *told* what is happening rather than witnessing this happening directly as we can with a play or a film. The fact that when reading a novel we know that we can flip forward a page or a chapter, or look at the last page, is thus worth thinking about: it explains that sense we have that in reading a novel we are going through what *has already happened,* that which is being *re*counted to us.

However in one respect the writing of a novel is comparable to the making of a film. When we watch a film we seem to be seeing 'things as they are'; 'reality'. But a director has *chosen how* we see these things, this reality; he or she has

decided whether the camera will be placed high or low, whether there will be rapid cuts from one camera angle to another or not, whether a camera will follow one character as he or she walks along a street - and so on. One scene in a film could be shot innumerable ways, and each of these ways would produce a different effect upon the audience. Even with a simple conversation between two characters the audience's attitude towards each character can be affected by different camera angles, cutting, and so on.

The novelist has a far greater range of choices open to him or her than does the film director. Let us go through some of the most important of these alternatives.

To start with, the author can have the story told through the mediation of *a personified narrator,* a 'teller' recognized by the reader as a distinct person with defined individual human characteristics.

Some narrators may even have names and detailed personal histories, as does Nick Carraway, the narrator of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925). Other narrators may just indicate to us that they are persons - perhaps by the occasional use of 'I' in their narrative - but will tell us no more about themselves than this. We thus have a continuum of

possibility: (i) personified named, and with a full human identity; (ii) human but anonymous; (iii) not fully comparable with any human perspective.

Many critics have found it useful to distinguish between *reliable* and *unreliable* narrators. We can also note that, reliability apart, we associate some narrative choices more with the views and position of actual authors, and some not at all (or far less) with their creators. In general we can say that a single, consistent, unpersonified voice is more likely to be associated with authorial beliefs than is a personified narrator in a novel with many narrators, although of course in both cases this depends upon the attitudes expressed in and revealed by the narrative.

Consistency is a crucial issue here. An inconsistent narrator cannot, logically, be wholly reliable, although we may recognise in fiction as in life that inconsistency may be the result of a continued and painful attempt to be truthful and accurate. The fact that Swift's Gulliver in his *Gulliver's Travels* seems to vary from book to book, being alternatively percipient and obtuse, blindly patriotic and unchauvinistically humanistic, warns us that we can relax into no unguarded acceptance of his statements or opinions. On the other hand,

although few if any readers of *Wuthering Heights* can identify totally with Mr Lockwood he is consistently portrayed, and so we feel more and more confident at assessing his opinions in the light of our view of his personality and character.

In addition to choosing a narrator and (perhaps) an implied narrative medium, the novelist has to select a *form of address* for his narrator. In so doing, he or she normally helps to define what has been termed a *narratee:* that is, the person to whom the narrative is addressed.

Narratives can also involve such elements as *complicity, intrusion,* and *intimacy* - things instantly recognized by readers but often tricky to analyse. Take for example the following brief extract from chapter 3 of E.M. Forster's *Howards End,* in which Mrs Munt is talking at cross-purposes to Charles Wilcox, believing him to be engaged to her niece Helen:

> 'This is very good of you,' said Mrs Munt, as she settled into a luxurious cavern of red leather, and suffered her person to be padded with rugs and shawls. She was more civil than she had intended, but really this young man was very kind. Moreover, she was a little afraid of him: his

> self-possession was extraordinary. 'Very good indeed,' she repeated, adding: 'It is just what I should have wished.'
> 'Very good of you to say so,' he replied, with a slight look of surprise, which, like most slight looks, escaped Mrs Munt's attention.

That final narrative comment is the culminating stroke in a process whereby the reader is sucked into complicity with the narrator. We are amused with the narrator at Mrs Munt's obtuseness and self-importance, and as a result of such passages we are likely to be far more malleable in the hands of the narrator, far more willing to accept his value judgements and assessments of characters.

In Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness,* for instance, his narrator Marlow tells a story-in which he personally has been involved. The 'outer', unnamed narrator in this same novella is also in a sense involved in the outer action (the 'frame') of the story, but clearly this narrator's relationship to events in the work is very different from Marlow's. In Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1860-61) the narrator Pip is telling us his life story, but the great difference of age and maturity between the narrating and the narrated Pip means

that the narrator can be either very involved or relatively uninvolved in the story at different times. Indeed, when we are talking about fictional narratives such as this it is a good idea to shake off the habit of treating the mature narrating person and the youthful narrated person as the same, and to see them *in narrative terms* as essentially two separate people.

In *Wuthering Heights* Mr Lockwood is in a sense involved in present-time events in the novel (and the novel's time sequence is complicated enough to give us a number of different 'present times'), but he is really an observer of the key events in the work which are narrated by Nelly Dean to him. And, finally, the narrator of the interchapters in Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* exists on a different plane from the characters and events in the rest of the story, upon the fictive nature of which he comments directly.

It is, in conclusion, important to be able to see narrative techniques in their historical context and development, as well as appreciating the 'internal' technical reasons for developments in narrative technique. The rise of the epistolary novel in the eighteenth century cannot be understood apart from the much greater importance of letter-writing at that time, and the emergence of the stream of

consciousness novel in the twentieth century has to be related to the development of modern psychology and the increasing interest in mental operations that accompanies it. The following factors are all important in assessing the significance of a particular narrative technique:

1. Changes in the dominant modes of human communication (think of the enormous effect that the telephone has had on us and that the computer is having).
2. The effect of different world-views, philosophies, and ideologies (there is clearly a parallel between a belief in a God who sees every thing, and novelists' use of omniscient narrators; loss of belief in such a God seems to have been paralleled by a disenchantment with the possibilities of narrative omniscience).
3. Changes in readership patterns and habits (it is perhaps harder to feel intimate with a larger, more amorphous and anonymous set of readers - or to feel at ease with readers mainly of the opposite sex from oneself).
4. Larger changes in human life and modes of consciousness (think of the growth of urban living, of mass communication, of modern science and politics).

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5. Character

We should realize that characters in novels aren't quite like real people. In every day life we sometimes meet a person with an unusually appropriate name: the very tall person called Long or the radio engineer called Sparks. But the peculiar appropriateness of Heathcliff's name, for instance, is surely hardly ever met with in real life. And what about Dickens's Esther Summerson - who acts like a 'Summer sun' in *Bleak House,* dispelling the shadows with which the work is, initially, filled? Even 'Tom Jones' with its resolute *lack* of connotations or associations seems extraordinarily appropriate a name for the non-aristocratic, normally healthy hero of Fielding's novel.

'Tom Jones' is a rather different name from 'M'Choakumchild' – the name given by Dickens to one of his characters - however, and this reminds us of an important point: there are different *sorts* of literary character. Of course there are different sorts of people in ordinary life, but think of Meursault in Albert Camus's *The Outsider* and Mr Guppy in Charles Dickens's *Bleak House.* Both are young men who have problems communicating with others and who both have

an odd relation to their mothers. But there are also important differences between them, and if we were asked to explain these differences we would have to talk not just about them as if they were ordinary human beings, but in a way that recognizes that they are literary characters which exist within very different sorts of novel.

Let us try to explore some of the differences that exist between literary characters. We have some well-established terms to draw on initially: major and minor characters, flat and round characters, stock characters, 'types', caricatures, and so on.

A novelist may use a character for purposes quite other than 'characterization'; to say that there are different types of character is to say in effect that novelists portray human individuals for a range of different purposes. This is why it is a mistake always to talk about characters in a novel as if they were real people; clearly the novelist relies upon our knowledge of and reactions to real people in his or her creation of character, but characters are often created by novelists for purposes other than that of investigating human personality or psychology. They can be used to tell a story, to exemplify a belief, to contribute to a symbolic pattern in a

novel, or merely to facilitate a particular plot development.

What are the most important methods of characterization available to the novelist? There are four that are worth thinking about. First by description or report. In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* we know a very large amount about Mr Kurtz before ever he appears before us; other characters in the novella have talked about him so much, have reported on his actions and beliefs, that we feel it is almost as if we had met him ourselves. The description of physical characteristics - and especially of physiognomy - is a very traditional means whereby the writer can suggest what sort of character with which we are faced.

Second, character can be established by *action*; when Insarov in Turgenev's *On the Eve* (1859) throws the insolent German into the water - an action of which his effete Russian companions are palpably incapable - then we learn something about him which pages of description could not give us.

Third, through a character's *thought* or *conversation*. Dialogue in particular is a wonderful way of revealing character: think how much we learn about Miss Bates in *Emma* merely through her conversation - so much so that comment from Austen's narrator is really not needed. Modern

novelists have shown how much we can learn about a character merely by following his or her thoughts; in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* Clarissa Dalloway and Peter Walsh actually *do* very little, but by the end of the novel we feel that we know them quite well just by having followed so many of their thoughts.

And finally the novelist can use *symbol* or *image* to reveal and develop a character.

6. Plot

Let us start with a definition: a plot is an ordered, organized sequence of events and actions. Plots in this sense are found in novels rather than in ordinary life; life has stories, but novels have plots and stories. As E.M. Forster puts it, a story is a narrative or events arranged in their time-sequence, whereas a plot is a narrative of events with the emphasis falling on *causality.* Not all commentators would agree that causality is the distinguishing feature, but all would agree that there is a necessary distinction to be made between the incidents about which we are told in a novel in their chronological order, and the actual narrating of these events in

perhaps quite a different order in the novel.

Recent narrative theorists have performed a useful function in providing terms and concepts such that we can more accurately analyse how and why the plot of a novel deviates from strict and simple chronological progression.

First of all are a number of terms connected to what is termed *order*. The plot of a novel may move backwards and forwards in time, instead of proceeding steadily forward in chronological order. Any deviation from such strict chronological progression is termed an *anachrony* by narrative theorists, and there are a large number of such deviations possible. The most frequent are *analepsis* (or flashback) and *prolepsis* (or flashforward).

Second, a novel's plot may include gaps, omissions, absences. These can be referred to collectively as *ellipses* - the same term as is used to refer to the succession of dots in a text that indicates that something has been omitted. Thus in *Wuthering Heights* we never get to know what Heathcliff does after his sudden disappearance and up to the time of his reappearance. This is what can be termed a (relatively) *unmarked* ellipsis - in other words, the text does not display the fact that something is not there. Other ellipses may be

marked, that is to say, we have our attention drawn to the gap by the *text.* A novelist typically uses a marked ellipsis to get the reader's imagination working: what has happened her? Why are we not told? An unmarked ellipsis usually involves the novelist's having skipped over a period of time during which nothing of artistic significance can be represented as having happened.

Third, the element of *duration* is also of great significance. Nearly all works of prose fiction vary the relationship between narrating and narrated time.

Fourth, narrative theorists also isolate the important topic of *frequency,* and note the following fundamental possibilities:

(i) one event narrated once *(singulative frequency)*

(ii) a repeated event narrated the same number of times that it occurs *(multiple frequency)*

(iii) one event narrated many times *(repetitive frequency)*

(iv) many events narrated once *(iterative frequency)*

(i) is probably the most usual; many events that are depicted in a novel are recounted to the reader only once. But the same event can be recounted many times, as in (iii).

We can describe plots in two ways: either in terms of the dominant human activities which form the motivating principle in them or which are induced in the reader by them, or in more technical ways. In the first category we can include plots structured around *conflict* as in many ways the plot of *Nostromo* is; around *mystery* as are many of Dickens's novels; around *pursuit* or *search* as is *The Castle;* around a *journey* as is *Gulliver's Travels;* or, finally, around a *test* as is Joseph Conrad's *The Shadow-Line.*

7. Structure

Structure and *plot* are closely related to each other, and it might have made sense to include this section as a sub-section of 'Plot'. But the term 'structure' does, properly, refer to something rather different from plot. If we can think of the plot of a novel as the way in which its story is arranged, its structure involves more than its story, encompassing the work's total organization as a piece of literature, a work of art. Nor are the terms 'structure' and 'form' to be confused; the latter term does not normally include thematic elements in the work (see my comments later on concerning 'theme') whereas

these are involved in a novel's structure. Structure involves plot, thematics, and form: it refers to our sense of a novel's overall organization and patterning, the way in which its component parts fit together to produce a totality, a satisfying whole - or, of course, the way in which they fail so to do.

Very often the *chapter* and *section* divisions made by the author impose a structure upon a work - or bring out one that is implicit but not overt in it already. It is interesting to read Conrad's *The Shadow Line* in his manuscript version, in which there are no section divisions, and then to see how differently the published text of the novel reads with these divisions included. Very often such divisions perform the useful function of telling the reader when he or she can pause and put the book down for a bit, and as it is at these points of time that we think backwards over what we have read and forwards to what we hope for or expect, such divisions can be very significant.

Order and *chronology* - issues upon which we touched when talking of plot - can be crucial to the matter of structure. The difference between a novel's 'story and its plot can tell us much about its structure.

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8. Setting

'Setting' is one of those terms about which recent literary critics have felt increasingly uneasy. Does the term not suggest a perhaps too-simple relationship between characters and action on the one hand and the context within which these take place on the other? Doesn't it sound rather unsatisfactory to talk about the Nottinghamshire 'setting' of D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* or the Yorkshire 'setting' of *Wuthering Heights,* as if the same actions might conceivably have taken place elsewhere - in Tunbridge Wells or Minnesota? The fact that so many characters in Emily Brontë's novel have names that are also the placenames of towns and villages around her native Haworth suggests a relationship between character and environment too organic, we feel, to be described with the term 'setting'.

But it is important to be aware of the context within which the action of a novel takes place - and this does not just mean its geographical setting; social and historical factors are also important.

Sometime the choice of a suitable setting helps an author to avoid the need to write about things that he or she is

not good at, or interested in, writing about. It was convenient for Conrad, for instance, that his ships often contained no women. A setting in the historical past can often help an author to avoid contemporary issues about which he or she feels confused; the setting that E.M. Forster chooses for *Howards End* enabled him to avoid writing about the very poor. It is generally agreed that Jane Austen chose settings for her novels which allowed her to exercise and conceal her weaknesses so far as her knowledge of different sorts of people and of human experiences was concerned.

Moreover, Dickens's frequent choice of London as setting for his novels was convenient in other ways: the mass of concealed relationships, indirect forms of human communication, and innumerable secrets to be found in London offered a perfect opportunity to a novelist whose plots contain all of these elements in like abundance. Dickens understood that human values and experiences could be displayed in the physical environment; a novel such as *Bleak House* sees the physical state of the London streets to mirror and to announce the values and inner lives of the people and institutions to be found on and around them. A classic example of this vision is to be found in this novel's opening,

one that has been analysed so many times that further discussion of it is probably unnecessary.

9. Theme

'Theme' is a much used word in the literary criticism of the novel, and a favourite word for use by lecturers and teachers in essay and examination questions. 'Discuss the treatment of the theme of evil in *Crime and Punishment'*; 'Write about the theme of escape in *Huckleberry Finn'*; 'the theme of alienation in *The Castle'*, and so on.

Some critics find it useful to distinguish between theme and thesis. The simple distinction here is that although both pose questions, a thesis also suggests or argues for answers. A theme, in contrast, can involve the establishing of a set of issues, problems, or questions without any attempt to provide a rationale or answer to satisfy the demands these make of the reader. Traditionally, novels dominated by a thesis have been valued less highly than those in which certain themes are raised or treated: in contrast to earlier generations of readers perhaps, some recent critics have preferred our novels not to be overtly didactic, to be open-ended rather than pointed

towards solutions at which the author has already arrived. We should ask whether such an attitude is always justified; novels that are filled with their creators' crusading zeal or commitment to a belief or a cause constitute a very substantial part of the body of fiction, and since its birth the modem novel added a significant commitment to didacticism.

10. Symbol and Image

In E.M. Forster's *Howards End* the motor-car plays an important role. We could respond to this fact by pointing out that the car had not been around for very long at the time that the novel was written, and that Forster was merely incorporating a piece of contemporary reality into his novel for the purpose of increased verisimilitude.

The motor-car in *Howards End* clearly *stands for or represents* something; it is not merely a means of transport but a *symbol* in the novel. By this we mean that it carries with it various ideas, associations, forms of significance that in ordinary life it might not have in people's minds: 'the new and destructive of the traditional'; 'the mechanical as against the organic'; 'unfeeling social change'; 'violence and death'; 'the

selfish pursuit of personal comfort by the rich' - and so on.

Notice that there is no suggestion that the car in *Howards End* stands for just one, fixed thing; it is characteristic of symbols that they do not have a simple one-to-one relationship with what they stand for or suggest.

Symbols are not limited to literature and art: they are central to all known human cultures. When a woman gets married in white she makes use of the symbolic force of that colour for dress within our culture - a symbolic force that has existed for an extremely long time. Any writer incorporating this convention in a novel would be taking what we can call a public symbol and adapting (or challenging) it for use within his or her work.

Although it is not always easy to distinguish symbols from images, the following points are worth remembering:

1. Images are usually characterized by *concrete qualities* rather than abstract meanings; images normally have a more sensuous quality than symbols - they call the taste, smell, feel, sound or visual image of the referred-to object sharply to mind.
2. symbols, in contrast, because they *stand for* something other than themselves bring to mind not their own concrete

qualities so much as the idea or abstraction that is associated with them.

11. Speech and Dialogue

One of the extraordinary achievements of realism (and not just in the novel) is that it gives us something that to us resembles the world even though it is formed and constrained by conventions of representation different from those that operate in the real world.

The novelist follows conventions in the representation of speech and dialogue with which we are so familiar that we are unaware of any conventionality. People in novels tend to talk in complete sentences, with few indicated hesitations, mistakes of grammar, 'ums' and 'ers', and so on.

The novelist has to convey exclusively in words what in ordinary conversation we convey by words, tone of voice, hesitations, facial expression, gesture, bodily posture - and by other means. Learning how to do so was not accomplished overnight, and we can note a great difference between the way novelists in most of the eighteenth century represented dialogue and the way later novelists have done so. If, for

example, you open Henry Fielding's novel *Joseph Andrews* (1742) at Chapter 5, which is the chapter directly parodying Richardson's *Pamela* ill which Lady Booby attempts to seduce her servant Joseph much as Mr B- in Richardson's novel had attempted to seduce Pamela, then you will notice something odd about the layout of the page. Although conversation takes place all through this short chapter, the prose is set out in one continuous unparagraphed stream. Thus Fielding has to keep including 'tag-phrases' such as 'he said' and 'she replied'. The result is not just that reading the chapter is rather hard work, but that the guiding presence of the narrator keeps intruding: we have narrative tag phrases in addition to the actual words spoken by the characters.

If we move to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* we see a very different picture. Dialogue is presented in a recognizably modem form, with each new utterance by a different character given a new paragraph. Here the narrator may intrude or remain hidden at will. If necessary the characters can be left to speak for themselves with no interruption from anyone. This certainly increases the *dramatic* effectiveness of scenes involving dialogue; we feel that we are actually witnessing conversations taking place

rather than being instructed by an intrusive stage manager who keeps pointing out what we have to notice.

The narrator can now use the different possibilities available to create an appropriate effect. Take the conversation between Mr Bennet and his wife that we are given on the first page of *Pride and Prejudice:*

> 'My dear Mr Bennet,' said his lady to him one day, 'have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?' Mr Bennet replied that he had not.
>
> 'But it is,' returned she; 'for Mrs Long has just been here, and she
> told me all about it.'
> Mr Bennet made no answer.
>
> 'Do not you want to know who has taken it?' cried his wife impatiently.
>
> 'You want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it.'
> This was invitation enough.

Note how Jane Austen wrings so much significance out of her use of Direct and Indirect Speech here. 'Mr Bennet replied

that he had not' must be one of the most economically sarcastic lines in English literature: the shift to Indirect Speech somehow conjures up Me Bennet's weary, long-suffering response to his wife's importuning. We can see that the narrative comments here are more like touches on the tiller than fuller-scale intrusions; we feel that we are witnessing a real conversation but with someone beside us whispering in our ear comments concerning the participants in the discussion.

ACTIVITY

1. What kind of narrators are there in terms of personification?
2. What are the difference between the reliable and unreliable narrators?
3. What is the narratee?
4. What kind of narrators are there in *Heart of Darkness*?
5. What are the factors involved in assessing the significance of a particular narrative technique?
6. Write a paragraph about the types of characters that might exist in a novel?
7. What are the different ways through which a novelist

presents his/her characters?

8. What are the most important terms used in relation to plot?
9. What are the main possibilities in terms of the frequency of events in a novel and the way they are presented?
10. What is meant by the structure of a novel?
11. Do you think the setting of a novel is important and why?
12. What is the difference between theme and thesis?
13. How can symbols and images be distinguished from each other?
14. Are there differences between the way speech used to be presented in 18th- century novels and the way it is presented in modern novels?
15. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in this section.

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PART II

The Short Story and the Novella

It has been suggested that our familiar tripartite division of prose fiction into the novel, the short story and the novella is one that simplifies a more complex and varied reality.

If the novel is very much the child of print. One might assume that at least superficial resemblances between the short story and oral narratives - tales, anecdotes, and so on - might suggest that the short story has much older parents. But Frank O'Connor, one of the first major critics and theorists of the short story, resists this idea. He argues that the short story, like the novel, 'is a modern art form; that is to say, it represents, better than poetry or drama, our own attitude to life'.

Is the short story perhaps a genre that offers a more detached view of characters and events than do many novels? One reason for this may be that, as another Irish critic of the short story, Sean O'Faolain, has argued, there can be no development of character in the short story. Of course, characters in a short story may undergo shocking experiences and they may experience dramatic illuminations, such that

they are not the same at the end as at the start of the story - and indeed many critics have suggested that such experiences are an almost essential component of the short story. For O'Faolain, at the heart of the short story has to reside the writer's ability to make tiny bits of life speak for the whole of life. And this carries with it a range of technical necessities. In particular, the short story writer must be adept at replacing *direct telling* by *suggesting.*

The short story is normally read at one sitting - Edgar Allan Poe in fact suggested that this was a necessary feature of the short story. Because of this the reading of a short story tends to be less reflective and more concentrated an experience; we rarely stop several times for prolonged thought in the middle of reading a short story. The short story typically limits itself to a brief span of time, and, as O'Faolain argues, rather than showing its characters developing and maturing will show them at some revealing moment of crisis - whether internal or external. Short stories rarely have complex plots; again the focus is upon a particular episode or situation rather than a chain of events. Thus much of the skill of the short story writer has to be devoted to making characters appear three-dimensional in spite of the fact that we

see them for only a very short period of time. In addition, care has to be taken to render atmosphere and situation convincingly.

The *novella* has had less theoretical attention devoted to it than has the short story, and especially in its modem and its Anglo-Saxon manifestations. This is a pity, because it is clear that it does represent what we can perhaps call a sub-genre, one which is possessed of very distinct and interesting characteristics, in spite of its close affinities with both the novel and the short story. It is usually rather longer than a short story, and would not normally be read in one sitting. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* can be seen as a classic novella, and any reader of this work will probably understand that the terms 'novel' and 'short story' seem somehow inappropriate to describe it.

The novella has flourished far more in Germany than elsewhere, and theories of the novella are often constructed with particular reference to the German novella tradition. This apart, it does seem to be the case that the novella often has a dominant symbol or complex of symbols at its heart, and that it is these rather than the complexity of its plot that give the novella its depth and significance. The novella is typically

more limited in its concerns, often restricting itself to a single state of affairs, set of relationships, or setting. It thus has some of the concentrated power of the short story, but without the frequent one-dimensionality that characterizes many short stories. It is hard to imagine many short stories that could have generated the enormous body of interpretative responses that *Heart of Darkness* has done, and this has something to do with the symbolic richness of many novellas.

ACTIVITY

1. Write a long paragraph on the major differences between the novel and the short story.
2. Write a short paragraph on the differences between the short story and the novella.
3. Write a paragraph about the common features between the novel, the novella and the short story.
4. Translate the most important literary terms in this section.

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PART III
EXCERPTS FROM NOVELS

1. Showing and Telling

"You are too much inclined to passion, child, and have set your affections so absolutely on this young woman, that, if G - required her at your hands, I fear you would reluctantly part with her. Now, believe me, no Christian ought so to set his heart on any person or thing in this world, but that, whenever it shall be required or taken from him in any manner by Divine Providence, he may be able, peaceably, quietly, and contentedly, to resign it." At which words one came hastily in, and acquainted Mr Adams that his youngest son was drowned. He stood silent a moment, and soon began to stamp about the room and deplore his loss with the bitterest agony. Joseph, who was overwhelmed with concern likewise, recovered himself sufficiently to endeavour to comfort the parson; in which attempt he used many arguments that he had at several times remembered out of his own discourses, both in private and public (for he was a great enemy to the passions, and preached nothing more than the conquest of

them by reason and grace), but he was not at leisure now to hearken to his advice. "Child, child," said he, "do not go about impossibilities. Had it been any other of my children, I could have borne it with patience; but my little prattler, the darling and comfort of my old age - the little wretch to be snatched out of life just at his entrance into it; the sweetest, best-tempered boy, who never did a thing to offend me. It was but this morning I gave him his first lesson in *Quae Genus*. This was the very book he learnt; poor child! it is of no further use to thee now. He would have made the best scholar, and have been an ornament to the Church; - such parts and such goodness never met in one so young." "And the handsomest lad too," says Mrs Adams, recovering from a swoon in Fanny's antis. - 'My poor Jacky, shall I never see thee more?" cries the parson. - "Yes, surely," says Joseph, "and in a better place; you will meet again, never to part more." - I believe the parson did not hear these words, for he paid little regard to them, but went on lamenting, whilst the tears trickled down into his bosom. At last he cried out, "Where is my little darling?" and was sallying out, when, to his great surprise and joy, in which I hope the reader will sympathize, he met his son in a wet condition indeed, but

alive and running towards him.

Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews* (1742)

ACTIVITY

1. Re-write the passage taken from Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* using dialogue only.
2. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

2. Introducing a Character

A few minutes later, Sally herself arrived.

"Am I terribly late, Fritz darling?"

"Only half of an hour, I suppose," Fritz drawled, beaming with proprietary pleasure. "May I introduce Mr Isherwood - Miss Bowles? Mr Isherwood is commonly known as Chris."

"I'm not," I said. "Fritz is about the only person who's ever called me Chris in my life."

Sally laughed. She was dressed in black silk, with a small cape over her shoulders and a little cap like a page-boy's stuck jauntily on one side of her head:

"Do you mind if I use your telephone, sweet?"

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"Sure. Go right ahead." Fritz caught my eye. "Come into the other room, Chris. I want to show you something." He was evidently longing to hear my first impressions of Sally, his new acquisition.

"For heaven's sake, don't leave me alone with this man!" she exclaimed. "Or he" seduce me down the telephone. He's most terribly passionate."

As she dialled the number, I noticed that her finger-nails were painted emerald green, a colour unfortunately chosen, for it called attention to her hands, which were much stained by cigarette-smoking and as dirty as a little girl's. She was dark enough to be Fritz's sister. Her face was long and thin, powdered dead white. She had very large brown eyes which should have been darker, to match her hair and the pencil she used for her eyebrows.

"Hilloo," she cooed, pursing her brilliant cherry lips as though she were going to kiss the mouthpiece: "Ist dass Du, mein Liebling?" Her mouth opened in a fatuously sweet smile. Fritz and I sat watching her, like a performance at the theatre.

Christopher Isherwood, *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939)

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ACTIVITY

1. Write a paragraph about the differences between the two different ways of characterization in *Middlemarch* and *Goodbye to Berlin*.
2. Turn the passage from *Goodbye to Berlin* into a sequence of cinematic shots.
3. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

3. Symbolism

"The fool!" cried Ursula loudly. "Why doesn't he ride away till it's gone by?" Gudrun was looking at him with black-dilated, spellbound eyes. But he sat glistening and obstinate, forcing the wheeling mare, which spun and swerved like a wind, and yet could not get out of the grasp of his will, nor escape from the mad clamour of terror that resounded through her, as the trucks thumped slowly, heavily horrifying, one after the other, one pursuing the other, over the rails of the crossing.

The locomotive, as if wanting to see what could be done, put on the brakes, and back came the trucks rebounding on the iron buffers, striking like horrible cymbals, clashing

nearer and nearer in frightful strident concussions. The mare opened her mouth and rose slowly, as if lifted up on a wind of terror. Then suddenly her fore-feet struck out, as she convulsed herself utterly away from the horror. Back she went, and the two girls clung to each other, feeling she must fall backwards on top of him. But he leaned forward, his face shining with fixed amusement, and at last he brought her down, sank her down, and was bearing her back to the mark. But as strong as the pressure of his compulsion was the repulsion of her utter terror, throwing her back away from the railway, so that she spun round and round on two legs, as if she were in the centre of some whirlwind. It made Gudrun faint with poignant dizziness, which seemed to penetrate to her heart.

D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (1921)

ATCIVITY

1. Can you think of any other ideas motivated by the symbols used in the passage?
2. Do you think that the use of symbols serves a functional purpose in the passage?

3. In what way does the use of symbols enrich the literary text as exemplified in the above passage?
4. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

4. Beginning

Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her. She was the youngest of the two daughters of a most affectionate, indulgent father, and had, in consequence of her sister's marriage, been mistress of his house from a very early period. Her mother had died too long ago for her to have more than an indistinct remembrance of her caresses, and her place had been supplied by an excellent woman as governess, who had fallen little short of a mother in affection.

Sixteen years had Miss Taylor been in Mr Woodhouse's family, less as a governess than a friend, very fond of both daughters, but particularly of Emma. Between them it was more the intimacy of sisters. Even before Miss Taylor had ceased to hold the nominal office of governess, the mildness

of her temper had hardly allowed her to impose any restraint; and the shadow of authority being now long passed away, they had been living together as friend and friend very mutually attached, and Emma doing just what she liked; highly esteeming Miss Taylor's judgment, but directed chiefly by her own.

The real evils indeed of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself; these were the disadvantages which threatened alloy to her many enjoyments. The danger, however, was at present so unperceived, that they did not by any means rank as misfortunes with her.

Sorrow came - a gentle sorrow - but not at all in the shape of any disagreeable consciousness. - Miss Taylor married.

Jane Austen, *Emma* (1816)

***

This is the saddest story I have ever heard. We had known the Ashbumhams for nine seasons of the town of Nauheim with

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an extreme intimacy - or, rather, with an acquaintanceship as loose and easy and yet as close as a good glove's with your hand. My wife and I knew Captain and Mrs Ashbumham as well as it was possible to know anybody, and yet, in another sense, we knew nothing at all about them. This is, I believe, a state of things only possible with English people of whom, till today, when I sit down to puzzle out what I know of this sad affair, I knew nothing whatever. Six months ago I had never been to England, and, certainly, I had never sounded the depths of an English heart. I had known the shallows.

Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier* (1915)

ACTIVITY

1. Is the beginning of the novel necessarily the beginning of the story in it?
2. Look at novels you have read. Write the first sentence in each and examine its function.
3. Look at the same novels and examine what the first page or so tries to achieve in each of them.
4. Translate the two passages into Arabic.

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5. The Intrusive Author

With a single drop of ink for a mirror, the Egyptian sorcerer undertook to reveal to any chance comer far-reaching visions of the past. This is what I undertake to do for you, reader. With this drop of ink at the end of my pen, I will show you the roomy workshop of Jonathan Burge, carpenter and builder in the village of Hayslope, as it appeared on the 18th of June, in the year of Our Lord, 1799.

George Eliot, *Adam Bede* (1859)

To Margaret - I hope that it will not set the reader against her - the station of King's Cross had always suggested Infinity. Its very situation - withdrawn a little behind the facile splendours of St Pancras - implied a comment on the materialism of life. Those two great arches, colourless, indifferent, shouldering between them an unlovely clock, were fit portals for some eternal adventure, whose issue might be prosperous, but would certainly not be expressed in the ordinary language of prosperity. If you think this ridiculous, remember that it is not Margaret who is telling you about it; and let me hasten to add

that they were in plenty of time for the train; that Mrs Munt secured a comfortable seat, facing the engine, but not too near it; and that Margaret, on her return to Wickham Place, was confronted with the following telegram:

All over. Wish I had never written. Tell no one. - Helen.

But Aunt Juley was gone - gone irrevocably, and no power on earth could stop her.

E. M. Forster, *Howards End* (1910)

ACTIVITY

1. What function does authorial intrusion serve?
2. Do you personally prefer authorial intervention or a higher degree of impartiality?
3. Historically speaking, have authors been increasingly obtrusive in their novels or the reverse?
4. Translate the two passages into Arabic.

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6. The Stream of Consciousness

Mrs Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself. For Lucy had her work cut out for her. The doors would be taken off their hinges; Rumpelmayer's men were coming. And then, thought Clarissa Dalloway, what a morning - fresh as if issued to children on a beach. What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the nap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as she then was) solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen; looking at the flowers, at the trees with the smoke winding off them and the rooks rising, falling; standing and looking until Peter Walsh said, "Musing among the vegetables?" - was that it? - "I prefer men to cauliflowers" - was that it? He must have said it at breakfast one morning when she had gone out on to the terrace - Peter Walsh. He would be back from India one of these days, June or July, she forgot which, for his letters were

awfully dull; it was his sayings one remembered; his eyes, his pocket-knife, his smile, his grumpiness and, when millions of things had utterly vanished - how strange it was! - a few sayings like this about cabbages.

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925)

ACTIVITY

1. What are the benefits of using the stream-of consciousness technique?
2. What are the drawbacks of the technique?
3. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

7. Interior Monologue

On the doorstep he felt in his hip pocket for the latchkey. Not there. In the trousers I left off. Must get it. Potato I have. Creaky wardrobe. No use disturbing her. She turned over sleepily that time. He pulled the hall door to after him very quietly, more, till the footleaf dropped gently over the threshold, a limp lid. Looked shut. All right till I come back anyhow.

He crossed to the bright side, avoiding the loose cellarflap of number seventy five. The sun was nearing the steeple- of George's church. Be a warm day I fancy. Specially in these black clothes feel it more. Black conducts, reflects (refracts is it?), the heat. But I couldn't go in that light suit. Make a picnic of it. His eyelids sank quietly often as he walked in happy warmth.

*

They came down the steps from Leahy's terrace prudently, *Frauenzimme:* and down the shelving shore flabbily their splayed feet sinking in the silted sand, like me, like Algy, coming down to our mighty mother. Number one swung lourdily her midwife's bag, the other's gamp poked in the beach. From the liberties, out for the day. Mrs Florence MacCabe, relict of the late Patk MacCabe, deeply lamented, of Bride Street. One of her sisterhood lugged me squealing into life. Creation from nothing. What has she in the bag? A misbirth with a trailing navelcord, hushed in ruddy wool. The cords of all link back, strandentwining cable of all flesh. That is why mystic monks. Will you be as gods? Gaze in your omphalos. Hello. Kinch here. Put me on to Edenville. Aleph, alpha: nought, nought, one.

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*

Yes because he never did a thing like that before as ask to get his breakfast in bed with a couple of eggs since the *City Arms* hotel when he used, to-be pretending to be laid up with a sick voice doing his highness to make himself interesting to that old faggot Mrs Riordan that he thought he had a great leg of and she never left us a farthing all for masses for herself and her soul greatest miser ever was actually afraid to layout 4d for her methylated spirit telling me all her ailments she had too much old chat in her about politics and earthquakes and the end of the world let us have a bit of fun first God help the world if all the women were her sort down on bathingsuits and lownecks of course nobody wanted her to wear I suppose she was pious because no man would look at her twice

James Joyce, *Ulysses* (1922)

ACTIVITY

1. Write a paragraph on similarities and difference between 'stream of consciousness' and 'interior monologue'.
2. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

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8. Narrative Structure

THE HAND

I smacked my little boy. My anger was powerful. Like justice. Then I discovered no feeling in the hand. I said, "Listen, I want to explain the complexities to you." I spoke with seriousness and care, particularly of fathers. He asked, when I finished, if I wanted him to forgive me. I said yes. He said no. Like trumps.

ALL RIGHT

"I don't mind variations," she said, "but this feels wrong." I said, "It feels all right to me." She said, "To you, wrong is right." I said, "I didn't say right, I said all right." "Big difference," she said. I said, "Yes, I'm critical. My mind never stops. To me almost everything is always wrong. My standard is pleasure. To me, this is all right." She said, "To me it stinks." I said, "What do you like?" She said, "Like I don't like. I'm not interested in being superior to my sensations. I won't live long enough for all right."

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I said, "Ma, do you know what happened?" She said, "Oh, my God."

Leonard Michaels, *Would Have Saved Them If I Could* (1975)

ACTIVITY

1. Write a paragraph about the importance of structure in a novel?
2. Do you find the examples provided above useful in explaining structure and how?
3. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

9. Point of View

It must not be supposed that her ladyship's intermissions were not qualified by demonstrations of another order - triumphal entries and breathless pauses during which she seemed to take of everything in the room, from the state of the ceiling to that of her daughter's boot-toes, a survey that was rich in intentions. Sometimes she sat down and sometimes she surged about, but her attitude wore equally in either case the grand air of the practical. She found so much to deplore that

she left a great deal to expect, and bristled so with calculation that she seemed to scatter remedies and pledges. Her visits were as good as an outfit; her manner, as Mrs Wix once said, as good as a pair of curtains; but she was a person addicted to extremes - sometimes barely speaking to her child and sometimes pressing this tender shoot to a bosom cut, as Mrs Wix had also observed, remarkably low. She was always in a fearful hurry, and the lower the bosom was cut the more it was to be gathered she was wanted elsewhere. She usually broke in alone, but sometimes Sir Claude was with her, and during all the earlier period there was nothing on which these appearances had had so delightful a bearing as on the way her ladyship was, as Mrs Wix expressed it, under the spell. "But *isn't* she under it!" Maisie used in thoughtful but familiar reference to exclaim after Sir Claude had swept mamma away in peals of natural laughter. Not even in the old days of the convulsed ladies had she heard mamma laugh so freely as in these moments of conjugal surrender, to the gaiety of which even a little girl could see she had at last a right - a little girl whose thoughtfulness was now all happy selfish meditation on good omens and future fun.

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Henry James, *What Maisie Knew* (1897)

ACTIVITY

1. Can a writer shift from one 'point of view' to another; if so on what condition?
2. Can the change in 'point of view' affect the way a novel affects us?
3. Can you think of any problems associated with term 'point of view'?
4. Write a paragraph about the way 'point of view' is used in television.
5. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

10. Suspense

At first, when death appeared improbable because it had never visited him before, Knight could think of no future, nor of anything connected with his past. He could only look sternly at Nature's treacherous attempt to put an end to him, and strive to thwart her.

From the fact that the cliff formed the inner face of the segment of a hollow cylinder, having the sky for a top and the

sea for a bottom, which enclosed the bay to the extent of nearly a semicircle, he could see the vertical face curving round on each side of him. He looked far down the façade, and realized more thoroughly how it threatened him. Grimness was in every feature, and to its very bowels the inimical shape was desolation.

By one of those familiar conjunctions of things wherewith the inanimate world baits the mind of man when he pauses in moments of suspense, opposite Knight's eyes was an imbedded fossil, standing forth in low relief from the rook. It was a creature with eyes. The eyes, dead and turned to stone, were even now regarding him. It was one of the early crustaceans called *Trilobites*. Separated millions of years in their lives, Knight and this underling seemed to have met in their place of death. It was the single instance within reach of his vision of anything that had ever been alive and had a body to save, as he himself had now.

Thomas Hardy, *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873)

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ACTIVITY

1. Is the use of suspense a respected technique in novel writing?
2. Can you think of examples of the use of suspense in novels, movies, or TV series and the way they affected you as a reader or a viewer?
3. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

11. Mystery

"Mr Vickery would go up-country that same evening to take over certain naval ammunition left after the war in Bloemfontein Fort. No details was ordered to accompany Master Vickery. He was told off first person singular – as a unit-by himself".

The marine whistled penetratingly. "That's what I thought," said Pyecroft. "I went ashore with him an' 'e asked me to walk through the station. He was clickin' audibly, but otherwise seemed happy-ish.

"'You might like to know', he says, 'that Phyllis's Circus will be performin' at Worcester tomorrow night. So I shall see 'er yet once again. You've been very patient with me,' he says.

"'Look here, Vickery,' I said, 'this thing's come to be just as much as I can stand. Consume your own smoke. I don't want to know any more'.

"'You! He said. 'What have you got to complain of? – you've only had to watch. I'm *it,*' he says, 'but that's neither here nor there,' he says. 'I've one thing to say before shakin' 'ands. Remember', 'e says – we were just by the admiral's garden-gate then-'remember that I am not a murderer, because my lawful wife died in childbed six weeks after I came out. That much at least I am clear of,' 'e says.

"'Then what have you done that signifies?' I said. 'What's the rest of it?'.

"'The rest,' 'e says, 'is silence,' an' he shook 'ands and went clickin' into Simonstown station".

"Did he stop to see Mrs Bathurst at Worcester?" I asked.

"It's not known. He reported at Bloemfontein, saw the ammunition into the trucks, and then 'e disappeared. Went out deserted, if you care to put it so –within eighteen months of his pension, an' if what 'e said about 'is wife was true he was a free man as 'e then stood. How do you read it off?"

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Rudyard Kipling, "Mrs Bathurst" (1904)

ACTIVITY

1. Write a paragraph about the difference between mystery and suspense.
2. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

12. Defamiliarization

This picture, I say, seemed to consider itself the queen of the collection. It represented a woman, considerably lager, I thought, than the life. I calculated that this lady, put into a scale of magnitude suitable for the reception of a commodity of bulk, would infallibly turn from fourteen to sixteen stone. She was, indeed, extremely well fed; very much butcher's meat – to say nothing of bread, vegetables, and liquids – must she have consumed to attain that breadth and height, that wealth of muscle, that affluence of flesh. She lay half-reclined on a couch – why, it would be difficult to say; broad daylight blazed round her. She appeared in hearty health, strong enough to do the work of two plain cooks; she could not plead a weak spine; she ought to have been standing, or at

least sitting bolt upright. She had no business to lounge away the noon on a sofa. She ought likewise to have worn decent garments – a gown covering her properly, which was not the case. Out of abundance of material – seven – and – twenty yards, I should say, of drapery – she managed to make inefficient raiment. Then for the wretched untidiness surrounding her there could be no excuse. Pots and pans – perhaps I ought to say vases and goblets – were rolled here and there on the foreground; a perfect rubbish of flowers was mixed amongst them, and an absurd and disorderly mass of curtain upholstery smothered the couch and cumbered the floor. On referring to the catalogue, I found that this notable production bore the name "Cleopatara".

Charlotte Brontë, *Villette* (1853)

ACTIVITY

1. Write a paragraph on the narrative function of defamiliarization.
2. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.

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13. The Reader in the Text

How could you, Madam, be so inattentive in reading the last chapter? I told you in it, *That my mother* was not a papist. Papist! You told me no such thing, Sir, Madam, I beg leave to repeat it over again. That I told you as plain, at least as words, by direct inference, could tell you such a thing – Then, Sir, I must have miss'd a page – No, Madam, - you have not missed a word. – Then I was asleep, Sir, - My pride, Madam, cannot allow you that refuge. – That, Madam, is the very fault I lay to your charge; and a punishment for it, I do insist upon it, that you immediately turn back, that is, as soon as you get to the next full stop, and read the whole chapter over again.

I have imposed this penance upon the lady, neither out of wantonness or cruelty, but from the best of motives; and therefore shall make her no apology for it when she returns back: - 'Tis to rebuke a vicious taste which has crept into thousands besides herself, - of reading straight forwards, more in quest of the adventures, than of the deep erudition and knowledge which a book of this cast, if read over as it should be, would infallibly impart with them.

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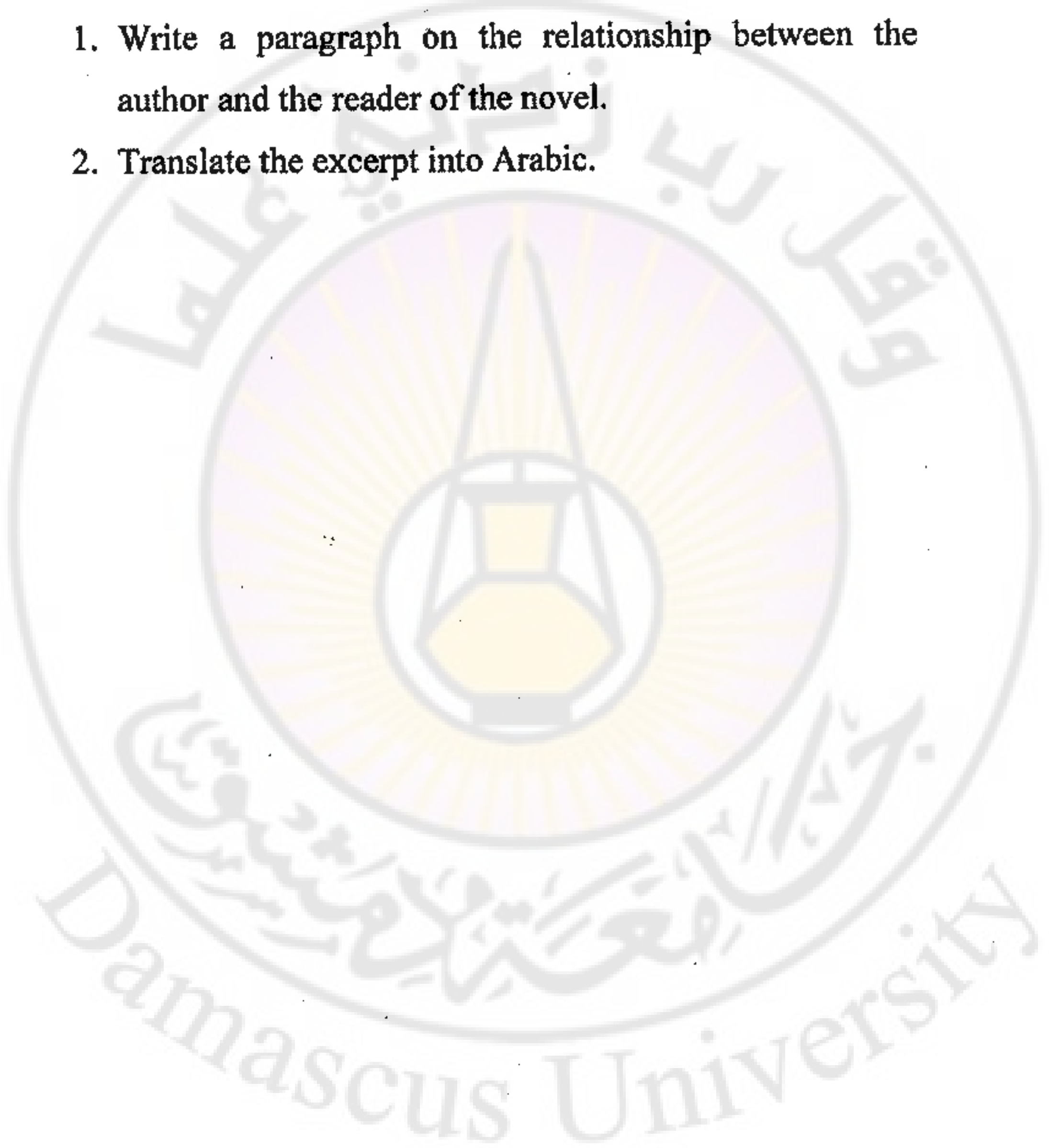
Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent.* (1759-67)

ACTIVITY

1. Write a paragraph on the relationship between the author and the reader of the novel.
2. Translate the excerpt into Arabic.



PART IV

SHORT STORIES

1

First Confession

Frank O'Connor

All the trouble began when my grandfather died and my grandmother - my father's mother - came to live with us. Relations in the one house are a strain at the best of times, but, to make matters worse, my grandmother was a real old countrywoman and quite unsuited to the life in town. She had a fat, wrinkled old face, and, to Mother's great indignation, went round the house in bare feet"- the boots had her crippled, she said. For dinner she had a jug of porter and a pot of potatoes with - sometimes - a bit of salt fish, and she poured out the potatoes on the table and ate them slowly, with great relish, using her fingers by way of a fork.

Now, girls are supposed to be fastidious, but I was the one who suffered most from this. Nora, my sister, just sucked up to the old woman for the penny she got every Friday out of the old-age pension, a thing I could not do. I was too honest, that was my trouble; and when I was playing with Bill

Connell, the sergeant-major's son, and saw my grandmother steering up the path with the jug of porter sticking out from beneath her shawl, I was mortified. I made excuses not to let him come into the house, because I could never be sure what she would be up to when we went in.

When Mother was at work and my grandmother made the dinner I wouldn't touch it. Nora once tried to make me, but I hid under the table from her and took the bread-knife with me for protection. Nora let on to be very indignant (she wasn't, of course, but she knew Mother saw through her, so she sided with Gran) and came after me. I lashed out at her with the bread-knife, and after that she left me alone. I stayed there till Mother came in from work and made my dinner, but when Father came in later Nora said in a shocked voice: 'Oh, Dadda, do you know what Jackie did at dinner-time?' Then, of course, it all came out; Father gave me a flaking; Mother interfered, and for days after that he didn't speak to me and Mother barely spoke to Nora. And all because of that old woman! God knows, I was heart-scalded.

Then, to crown my misfortunes, I had to make my first confession and communion. It was an old woman called Ryan who prepared us for these. She was about the one age with

Gran; she was well-to-do, lived in a big house on Montenotte, wore a black cloak and bonnet, and came every day to school at three o'clock when we should have been going home, and talked to us of hell. She may have mentioned the other place as well, but that could only have been by accident, for hell had the first place in her heart.

She lit a candle, took out a new half-crown, and offered it to the first boy who would hold one finger - only one finger! - in the flame for five minutes by the school clock. Being always very ambitious I was tempted to volunteer, but I thought it might look greedy. Then she asked were we afraid of holding one finger - only one finger! - in a little candle flame for five minutes and not afraid of burning all over in roasting hot furnaces for all eternity. 'All eternity! Just think of that! A whole lifetime goes by and it's nothing, not even a drop in the ocean of your sufferings.' The woman was really interesting about hell, but my attention was all fixed on the half-crown. At the end of the lesson she put it back in her purse. It was a great disappointment; a religious woman like that, you wouldn't think she'd bother about a thing like a half-crown.

Another day she said she knew a priest who woke one

night to find a fellow he didn't recognize leaning over the end of his bed. The priest was a bit frightened - naturally enough - but he asked the fellow what he wanted, and the fellow said in a deep, husky voice that he wanted to go to confession. The priest said it was an awkward time and wouldn't it do in the morning, but the fellow said that last time he went to confession, there was one sin he kept back, being ashamed to mention it, and now it was always on his mind. Then the priest knew it was a bad case, because the fellow was after making a bad confession and committing a mortal sin. He got up to dress, and just then the cock crew in the yard outside, and - lo and behold! - when the priest looked round there was no sign of the fellow, only a smell of burning timber, and when the priest looked at his bed didn't he see the print of two hands burned in it? That was because the fellow had made a bad confession. This story made a shocking impression on me.

But the worst of all was when she showed us how to examine our conscience. Did we take the name of the Lord, our God, in vain? Did we honour our father and our mother? (I asked her did this include grandmothers and she said it did.) Did we love our neighbours as ourselves? Did we covet our

neighbour's goods? (I thought of the way I felt about the penny that Nora got every Friday.) I decided that, between one thing and another, I must have broken the whole ten commandments, all on account of that old woman, and so far as I could see, so long as she remained in the house I had no hope of ever doing anything else.

I was scared to death of confession. The day the whole class went I let on to have a toothache, hoping my absence wouldn't be noticed; but at three o'clock, just as I was feeling safe, along comes a chap with a message from Mrs Ryan that I was to go to confession myself on Saturday and be at the chapel for communion with the rest. To make it worse, Mother couldn't come with me and sent Nora instead.

Now, that girl had ways of tormenting me that Mother never knew of. She held my hand as we went down the hill, smiling sadly and saying how sorry she was for me, as if she were bringing me to the hospital for an operation.

'Oh, God help us!' she moaned. 'Isn't it a terrible pity you weren't a good boy? Oh, Jackie, my heart bleeds for you! How will you ever think of all your sins? Don't forget you have to tell him about the time you kicked Gran on the shin.'

'Lemme go!' I said, trying to drag myself free of her. 'I

don't want to go to confession at all.'

'But sure, you'll have to go to confession, Jackie,' she replied in the same regretful tone. 'Sure, if you didn't, the parish priest would be up to the house, looking for you. 'Tisn't, God knows, that I'm not sorry for you. Do you remember the time you tried to kill me with the bread-knife under the table? And the language you used to me? I don't know what he'll do with you at all, Jackie. He might have to send you up to the bishop.'

I remember thinking bitterly that she didn't know the half of what I had to tell- if I told it. I knew I couldn't tell it, and understood perfectly why the fellow in Mrs Ryan's story made a bad confession; it seemed to me a great shame that people wouldn't stop criticizing him. I remember that steep hill down to the church, and the sunlit hillsides beyond the valley of the river, which I saw in the gaps between the houses like Adam's last glimpse of Paradise.

Then, when she had manoeuvred me down the long flight of steps to the chapel yard, Nora suddenly changed her tone. She became the raging malicious devil she really was.

'There you are!' she said with a yelp of triumph, hurling me through the church door. 'And I hope he'll give you the

penitential psalms, you dirty little caffler.'

I knew then I was lost, giving up to eternal justice. The door with the coloured-glass panels swung shut behind me, the sunlight went out and gave place to deep shadow, and the wind whistled outside so that the silence within seemed to crackle like ice under my feet. Nora sat in front of me by the confession box. There were a couple of old women ahead of her, and then a miserable-looking poor devil came and wedged me in at the other side, so that I couldn't escape even if I had the courage. He joined his hands and rolled his eyes in the direction of the roof, muttering aspirations in an anguished tone, and I wondered had he a grandmother too. Only a grandmother could account for a fellow behaving in that heartbroken way, but he was better off than I, for he at least could go and confess his sins; while I would make a bad confession and then die in the night and be continually coming back and burning people's furniture.

Nora's turn came, and I heard the sound of something slamming, and then her voice as if butter wouldn't melt in her mouth, and then another slam, and out she came. God, the hypocrisy of women! Her eyes were lowered, her head was bowed, and her hands were joined very low down on her

stomach, and she walked up the aisle to the side altar looking like a saint. You never saw such an exhibition of devotion; and I remembered the devilish malice with which she had tormented me all the way from our door, and wondered were all religious people like that, really. It was my turn now. With the fear of damnation in my soul I went in, and the confessional door closed of itself behind me.

It was pitch-dark and I couldn't see priest or anything else. Then I really began to be frightened. In the darkness it was a matter between God and me, and He had all the odds. He knew what my intentions were before I even started; I had no chance. All I had ever been told about confession got mixed up in my mind, and I knelt to one wall and said: 'Bless me, father, for I have sinned; this is my first confession.' I waited for a few minutes, but nothing happened, so I tried it on the other wall. Nothing happened there either. He had me spotted all right.

It must have been then that I noticed the shelf at about one height with my head. It was really a place for grown-up people to rest their elbows, but in my distracted state I thought it was probably the place you were supposed to kneel. Of course, it was on the high side and not very deep, but I was

always good at climbing and managed to get up all right. Staying up was the trouble. There was room only for my knees, and nothing you could get a grip on but a sort of wooden moulding a bit above it. I held on to the moulding and repeated the words a little louder, and this time something happened all right. A slide was slammed back; a little light entered the box, and a man's voice said: 'Who's there?'

"Tis me, father,' I said for fear he mightn't see me and go away again. I couldn't see him at all. The place the voice came from was under the moulding, about level with my knees, so I took a good grip of the moulding and swung myself down till I saw the astonished face of a young priest looking up at me. He had to put his head on one side to see me, and I had to put mine on one side to see him, so we were more or less talking to one another upside-down. It struck me as a queer way of hearing confessions, but I didn't feel it my place to criticize.

'Bless me, father, for I have sinned; this is my first confession,' I rattled off all in one breath, and swung myself down the least shade more to make it easier for him.

'What are you doing up there?' he shouted in an angry voice, and the strain the politeness was putting on my hold of the

moulding, and the shock of being addressed in such an uncivil tone, were too much for me. I lost my grip, tumbled, and hit the door an unmerciful wallop before I found myself flat on my back in the middle of the aisle. The people who had been waiting stood up with their mouths open. The priest opened the door of the middle box and came out, pushing his biretta back from his forehead; he looked something terrible. Then Nora came scampering down the aisle.

'Oh, you dirty little caffler!' she said. 'I might have known you'd do it. I might have known you'd disgrace me. I can't leave you out of my sight for one minute.'

Before I could even get to my feet to defend myself she bent down and gave me a clip across the ear. This reminded me that I was so stunned I had even forgotten to cry, so that people might think I wasn't hurt at all, when in fact I was probably maimed for life. I gave a roar out of me.

'What's all this about?' the priest hissed, getting angrier than ever and pushing Nora off me. 'How dare you hit the child like that, you little vixen? '

'But I can't do my penance with him, father,' Nora cried, cocking an outraged eye up at him.

'Well, go and do it, or I'll give you some more to do,' he

said, giving me a hand up. 'Was it coming to confession you were, my poor man?' he asked me.

''Twas, father,' said I with a sob.

'Oh,' he said respectfully, 'a big hefty fellow like you must have terrible sins. Is this your first?'

''Tis, father,' said I.

'Worse and worse,' he said gloomily. 'The crimes of a lifetime. I don't know will I get rid of you at all today. You'd better wait now till I'm finished with these old ones. You can see by the looks of them they haven't much to tell.'

'I will, father,' I said with something approaching joy. The relief of it was really enormous. Nora stuck out her tongue at me from behind his back, but I couldn't even be bothered retorting. I knew from the very moment that man opened his mouth that he was intelligent above the ordinary. When I had time to think, I saw how right I was. It only stood to reason that a fellow confessing after seven years would have more to tell than people that went every week. The crimes of a lifetime, exactly as he said. It was only what he expected, and the rest was the cackle of old women and girls with their talk of hell, the bishop, and the penitential psalms. That was all they knew. I started to make my examination of

conscience, and barring the one bad business of my grandmother it didn't seem so bad.

The next time, the priest steered me into the confession box himself and left the shutter back the way I could see him get in and sit down at the further side of the grille from me.

'Well, now,' he said, 'what do they call you?'

'Jackie, father,' said I.

'And what's a-trouble to you, Jackie?'

'Father,' I said, feeling I might as well get it over while I had him in good humour, 'I had it all arranged to kill my grandmother.'

He seemed a bit shaken by that, all right, because he said nothing for quite a while.

'My goodness,' he said at last, 'that'd be a shocking thing to do. What put that into your head?'

'Father,' I said, feeling very sorry for myself, 'she's an awful woman.'

'Is she?' he asked. 'What way is she awful?'

'She takes porter, father,' I said, knowing well from the way Mother talked of it that this was a mortal sin, and hoping it would make the priest take a more favourable view of my case.

'Oh, my!' he said, and I could see he was impressed.

'And snuff, father,' said I.

'That's a bad case, sure enough, Jackie,' he said.

'And she goes round in her bare feet, father,' I went on in a rush of self-pity, 'and she know I don't like her, and she gives pennies to Nora and none to me, and my da sides with her and flakes me, and one night I was so heart-scalded I made up my mind I'd have to kill her.'

'And what would you do with the body?' he asked with great interest.

'I was thinking I could chop that up and carry it away in a barrow I have,' I said.

'Begor, Jackie,' he said, 'do you know you're a terrible child?'

'I know, father,' I said, for I was just thinking the same thing myself. 'I tried to kill Nora too with a bread-knife under the table, only I missed her.'

'Is that the little girl that was beating you just now?' he asked.

''Tis, father.'

'Someone will go for her with a bread-knife one day, and he won't miss her,' he said rather cryptically. You must

have great courage. Between ourselves, there's a lot of people I'd like to do the same to but I'd never have the nerve. Hanging is an awful death.'

'Is it, father?' I asked with the deepest interest - I was always very keen on hanging. 'Did you ever see a fellow hanged? '

Dozens of them,' he said solemnly. And they all died roaring.'

Jay!' I said.

Oh, a horrible death!' he said with great satisfaction. 'Lots of the fellows I saw killed their grandmothers too, but they all said 'twas never worth it.'

He had me there fore a full ten minutes talking, and then walked out the chapel yard with me. I was genuinely sorry to part with him, because he was the most entertaining character I'd ever met in the religious line. Outside, after the shadow of the church, the sunlight was like the roaring of waves on a beach; it dazzled me; and when the frozen silence melted and I heard the screech of trams on the road my heart soared. I knew now I wouldn't die in the night and come back, leaving marks on my mother's furniture. It would be a great worry to her, and the poor soul had enough.

Nora was sitting on the railing, waiting for me, and she put on a very sour puss when she saw the priest with me. She was mad jealous because a priest had never come out of the church with her.

'Well,' she asked coldly, after he left me, 'what did he give you?'

'Three Hail Marys,' I said.

'Three Hail Marys,' she repeated incredulously. 'You mustn't have told him anything.'

'I told him everything,' I said confidently.

'About Gran and all.'

(All she wanted was to be able to go home and say I'd made a bad confession.)

'Did you tell him you went for me with the bread-knife?' she asked with a frown.

'I did to be sure.'

'And he only gave you three Hail Marys?'

'That's all.'

She slowly got down from the railing with a baffled air. Clearly, this was beyond her. As we mounted the steps back to the main road she looked at me suspiciously.

'What are you sucking?' she asked.

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'Bullseyes.'

'Was it the priest gave them to you?'

"Twas.'

'Lord God,' she wailed bitterly, 'some people have all the luck! 'Tis no advantage to anybody trying to be good. I might just as well be a sinner like you.'

ACTIVITY

1. What do you think is the theme of the story?
2. Write a one paragraph summary of the story.
3. Write a paragraph in which you analyze the narrator.
4. Describe the character of Nora.
5. Analyse the writer's treatment of the boy's imagination and language.
6. Discuss the idea of hell as presented in the story.
7. Choose a piece of the story and translate it into Arabic.

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2

A Summer's Reading

Bernard Malamud

George Stoyonovich was a neighbourhood boy who had quit high school on an impulse when he was sixteen, run out of patience, and though he was ashamed every time he went looking for a job, when people asked him if he had finished and he had to say no, he never went back to school. This summer was a hard time for jobs and he had none. Having so much time on his hands, George thought of going to summer school, but the kids in his classes would be too young. He also considered registering in a night high school, only he didn't like the idea of the teachers always telling him what to do. He felt they had not respected him. The result was he stayed off the streets and in his room most of the day. He was close to twenty and had needs with the neighbourhood girls, but no money to spend, and he couldn't get more than an occasional few cents because his father was poor, and his sister Sophie, who resembled George, a tall bony girl of twenty-three, earned very little and what she had she kept for herself. Their mother was dead, and Sophie had to take care

of the house. Very early in the morning George's father got up to go to work in a fish market. Sophie left at about eight for her long ride in the subway to a cafeteria in the Bronx. George had his coffee by himself, then hung around in the house. When the house, a five-room railroad flat above a butcher store, got on his nerves he cleaned it up - mopped the floors with a wet mop and put things away. But most of the time he sat in his room.

In the afternoons he listened to the ball game. Otherwise he had a couple of old copies of the *World Almanac* he had bought long ago, and he liked to read in them and also the magazines and newspapers that Sophie brought home, that had been left on the tables in the cafeteria. They were mostly picture magazines about movie stars and sports figures, also usually the *News* and *Mirror*. Sophie herself read whatever fell into her hands, although she sometimes read good books.

She once asked George what he did in his room all day and he said he read a lot too.

'Of what besides what I bring home? Do you ever read any worthwhile books?'

'Some,' George answered, although he really didn't. He

had tried to read a book or two that Sophie had in the house but found he was in no mood for them. Lately he couldn't stand made-up stories, they got on his nerves. He wished he had some hobby to work at - as a kid he was good in carpentry, but where could he work at it? Sometimes during the day he went for walks, but mostly he did his walking after the hot sun had gone down and it was cooler in the streets.

In the evening after supper George left the house and wandered in the neighbourhood. During the sultry days some of the storekeepers and their wives sat in chairs on the thick, broken sidewalks in front of their shops, fanning themselves, and George walked past them and the guys hanging out on the candy store corner. ~~A couple~~ of them he had known his whole life, but nobody recognized each other. He had no place special to go, but generally, saving it till the last, he left the neighbourhood and walked for blocks till he came to a darkly lit little park with benches and trees and an iron railing, giving it a feeling of privacy. He sat on a bench here, watching the leafy trees and the flowers blooming on the inside of the railing, thinking of a better life for himself. He thought of the jobs he had had since he had quit school- delivery boy, stock clerk, runner, lately working in a factory - and he was dis-

satisfied with all of them. He felt he would some day like to have a job and live in a private house with a porch, on a street with trees. He wanted to have some dough in his pocket to buy things with, and a girl to go with, so as not to be lonely, especially on Saturday nights. He wanted people to like and respect him. He thought about these things often but mostly when he was alone at night. Around midnight he got up and drifted back to his hot and stony neighbourhood.

One time while on his walk George met Mr Cattanzara coming home very late from work. He wondered if he was drunk but then could tell he wasn't. Mr Cattanzara, a stocky, bald headed man who worked in a change booth on an IRT station; lived on the next block after George's, above a shoe repair store. Nights, during the hot weather, he sat on his stoop in an undershirt, reading the *New York Times* in the light of the shoemaker's window. He read it from the first page to the last then went up to sleep. And all the time he was reading the paper, his wife, a fat woman with a white face, leaned out of the window, gazing into the street, her thick white arms folded under her loose breast, on the window ledge.

Once in a while Mr Cattanzara came home drunk, but it was a quiet drunk. He never made any trouble, only walked

stiffly up the street and slowly climbed the stairs into the hall. Though drunk, he looked the same as always, except for his tight walk, the quietness, and that his eyes were wet. George liked Mr Cattanzara because he remembered him giving him nickels to buy lemon ice with when he was a squirt. Mr Cattanzara was a different type than those in the neighbourhood. He asked different questions than the others when he met you, and he seemed to know what went on in all the newspapers. He read them, as his fat sick wife watched from the window.

'What are you doing with yourself this summer, George?' Mr Cattanzara asked. 'I see you walkin' around at nights.' George felt embarrassed. 'I like to walk.'

'What are you doing' in the day now?'

'Nothing much right now. I'm waiting for a job.'

Since it shamed him to admit he wasn't working, George said, 'I'm staying home - but I'm reading a lot to pick up my education.'

Mr Cattanzara looked interested. He mopped his hot face with a red handkerchief.

'What are you readin'?'

George hesitated, then said, 'I got a list of books in the library once, and now I'm gonna read them this summer.' He

felt strange and a little unhappy saying this, but he wanted Mr Cattanzara to respect him.

'How many books are there on it?'

'I never counted them. Maybe around a hundred.'

Mr Cattanzara whistled through his teeth.

'I figure if I did that,' George went on earnestly, 'it would help me in my education. I don't mean the kind they give you in high school. I want to know different things than they learn there, if you know what I mean.'

The change maker nodded. 'Still and all, one hundred books is a pretty big load for one summer.'

'It might take longer.'

'After you're finished with some, maybe you and I can shoot the breeze about them?' said Mr Cattanzara.

'When I'm finished,' George answered.

Mr Cattanzara went home and George continued on his walk. After that, though he had the urge to, George did nothing different from usual. He still took his walks at night, ending up in the little park. But one evening the shoemaker on the next block stopped George to say he was a good boy, and George figured that Mr Cattanzara had told him all about the books he was reading. From the shoemaker it must have

gone down the street, because George saw a couple of people smiling kindly at him, though nobody spoke to him personally. He felt a little better around the neighbourhood and liked it more, though not so much he would want to live in it for ever. He had never exactly disliked the people in it, yet he had never liked them much either. It was the fault of the neighbourhood. To his surprise, George found out that his father and Sophie knew about his reading too. His father was too shy to say anything about it - he was never much of a talker in his whole life - but Sophie was softer to George, and she showed him in other ways she was proud of him.

As the summer went on George felt in a good mood about things. He cleaned the house every day, as a favour to Sophie, and he enjoyed the ball games more. Sophie gave him a buck a week allowance, and though it still wasn't enough and he had to use it carefully, it was a helluva lot better than just having two bits now and then. What he bought with the money - cigarettes mostly, an occasional beer or movie ticket - he got a big kick out of. Life wasn't so bad if you knew how to appreciate it. Occasionally he bought a paperback book from the news-stand, but he never got around to reading it, though he was glad to have a couple of books in

his room. But he read thoroughly Sophie's magazines and newspapers. And at night was the most enjoyable time, because when he passed the storekeepers sitting outside their stores, he could tell they regarded him highly. He walked erect, and though he did not say much to them, or they to him, he could feel approval on all sides. A couple of nights he felt so good that he skipped the park at the end of the evening. He just wandered in the neighbourhood, where people had known him from the time he was a kid playing punchball whenever there was a game of it going; he wandered there, then came home and got undressed for bed, feeling fine.

For a few weeks he had talked only once with Mr Cattanzara, and though the change maker had said nothing more about the books, asked no questions, his silence made George a little uneasy. For a while George didn't pass in front of Mr Cattanzara's house any more, until one night, forgetting himself, he approached it from a different direction than he usually did when he did. It was already past midnight. The street, except for one or two people, was deserted, and George was surprised when he saw Mr Cattanzara still reading his newspaper by the light of the street lamp overhead. His impulse was to stop at the stoop and talk to him. He wasn't

sure what he wanted to say, though he felt the words would come when he began to talk; but the more he thought about it, the more the idea scared him, and he decided he'd better not. He even considered beating it home by another street, but he was too near Mr Cattanzara, and the change maker might see him as he ran, and get annoyed; so George unobtrusively crossed the street, trying to make it seem as if he had to look in a store window on the other side, which he did, and then went on, uncomfortable at what he "Yas doing. He feared Mr Cattanzara would glance up from his paper and call him a dirty rat for walking on the other side of the street, but all he did was sit there, sweating through his undershirt, his bald head shining in the dim light as he read his *Times*, and upstairs his fat wife leaned out of the window, seeming to read the paper along with him. George thought she would spy him and yell out to Mr Cattanzara, but she never moved her eyes off her husband.

George made up his mind to stay away from the change maker until he had got some of his softback books read, but when he started them and saw they were mostly story books, he lost interest and didn't bother to finish them. He lost his interest in reading oilier things too. Sophie's magazines and

newspapers went unread. She saw them piling up on a chair in his room and asked why he was no longer looking at them, and George told her it was because of all the other reading he had to do. Sophie said she had guessed that was it. So for most of the day, George had the radio on, turning to music when he was sick of the human voice. He kept the house fairly neat, and Sophie said nothing on the days when he neglected it. She was still kind and gave him his extra buck, though things weren't so good for him as they had been before.

But they were good enough, considering. Also his night walks invariably picked him up, no matter how bad the day was. Then one night George saw Mr Cattanzara coming down the street towards him. George was about to turn and run but he recognized from Mr Cattanzara's walk that he was drunk, and if so, probably he would not even bother to notice him. So George kept on walking straight ahead until he came abreast of Mr Cattanzara and though he felt wound up enough to pop into the sky, he was not surprised when Mr Cattanzara passed him without a word, walking slowly, his face and body stiff. George drew a breath in relief at his narrow escape, when he heard his name called, and there stood Mr Cattanzara

at his elbow, smelling like the inside of a beer barrel. His eyes were sad as he gazed at George, and George felt so intensely uncomfortable he was tempted to shove the drunk aside and continue on his walk.

But he couldn't act that way to him, and, besides, Mr Cattanzara took a nickel out of his pants pocket and handed it to him.

'Go buy yourself a lemon ice, Georgie.'

'It's not that time any more, Mr Cattanzara,' George said,

'I am a big guy now.'

'No, you ain't,' said Mr Cattanzara, to which George made
no reply he could think of.

'How are all your books comin' along now?' Mr Cattanzara asked. Though he tried to stand steady, he swayed a little.

'Fine, I guess,' said George, feeling the red crawling up his face.

'You ain't sure?' The change maker smiled slyly, a way George had never seen him smile.

'Sure I'm sure. They're fine.'

Though his head swayed in little arcs, Mr Cattanzara's eyes were steady. He had small blue eyes which could hurt if you looked at them too long.

'George,' he said, 'name me one book on that list that you read this summer, and I will drink to your health.'

'I don't want anybody drinking to me.'

'Name me one so I can ask you a question on it. Who can tell if it's a good book maybe I might wanna read it myself.'

George knew he looked passable on the outside, but inside he was crumbling apart.

Unable to reply, he shut his eyes, but when-years later - he opened them, he saw that Mr Cattanzara had, out of pity, gone away, but in his ears he still heard the words he had said when he left: 'George, don't do what I did.'

The next night he was afraid to leave his room, and though Sophie argued with him he wouldn't open the door.

'What are you doing in there?' she asked.

'Nothing.'

'Are you reading?'

'No.'

She was silent a minute, then asked, 'Where do you

keep the books you read? I never see any in your room outside of a few cheap trashy ones.'

He wouldn't tell her.

'In that case you're not worth a buck of my hard-earned money. Why should I break my back for you? Go on out, you bum, and get a job.'

He stayed in his room for almost a week, except to sneak into the kitchen when nobody was home. Sophie railed at him, then begged him to come out, and his old father wept, - but George wouldn't budge, though the weather was terrible and his small room stifling. He found it very hard to breathe, each breath was like drawing a flame into his lungs.

One night, unable to stand the heat any more, he burst into the street at one a.m., a shadow of himself. He hoped to sneak to the park without being seen, but there were people all over the block, wilted and listless, waiting for a breeze. George lowered his eyes and walked, in disgrace, away from them, but before long he discovered they were still friendly to him. He figured Mr Cattanzara hadn't told on him. Maybe when he woke up out of his drunk the next morning, he had forgotten all about meeting George. George felt his confidence slowly come back to him.

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That same night a man on a street corner asked him if it was true that he had finished reading so many books, and George admitted he had. The man said it was a wonderful thing for a boy his age to read so much.

'Yeah,' George said, but he felt relieved. He hoped nobody would mention the books any more, and when, after a couple of days, he accidentally met Mr Cattanzara again, *he* didn't, though George had the idea he was the one who had started the rumour that he had finished all the books.

One evening in the fall, George ran out of his house to the library, where he hadn't been in years. There were books all over the place, wherever he looked, and though he was struggling to control an inward trembling, he easily counted off a hundred, then sat down at a table to read.

ACTIVITY

1. Write a brief analysis of the passage, "Unable to reply, he shut his eyes, but when-years later he opened them, he saw that Mr Cattanzara had, out of pity, gone away, but in his ears he still heard the words he had said when he left: 'George, don't do what I did.'
2. Do you think George is right in assuming that Mr

Cattanzara was the one who spread the rumour about George reading a lot of books?

3. What is the morale of the story?
4. Choose a piece of the story and translate it into Arabic.

PART V

LITERARY CRITICISM

1. Literary Criticism

Literary Criticism is the discussion of literature, including description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of literary works like literature, criticism is hard to define. One of the critic's tasks is to challenge definitions of literature and criticism that seem too general, too narrow, or unworkable for any other reason. Whatever it is, literary criticism deals with different dimensions of literature as a collection of *text* through which authors evoke more or less fictitious worlds for the imagination of readers.

We can look at any work of literature by paying special attention to one of several aspects of its language and structure, its intended purpose, the information and worldview it conveys, or its effect on an audience. Most good critics steer clear of exclusive interest in a single element in studying a text's format characteristics. For example, critics usually recognize the variability of performances of dramatic works and the variability of readers' mental interpretations of a text.

In studying an author's purpose, critics acknowledge that forces beyond a writer's conscious intentions can affect what the writer actually communicates. In studying what a literary work is about, critics often explore the complex relationship between truth and fiction in various types of storytelling. In studying literature's impact on its audience, critics have been increasingly aware of how cultural expectations shape experience.

Because works of literature can be studied long after their first publication, awareness of historical and theoretical context contributes to our understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of them. Historical research relates a work to the life and times of its author. Attention to the nature, functions and categories of literature provides a theoretical framework joining a past text to the experience of present readers. The tradition of literary criticism surveyed here combines observations by creative writers, philosophers, and, more recently, trained specialists in literary, historical and cultural studies.

What follows is a collection of extracts from critical works which represent different critical approaches to different literary genres.

2. William Wordsworth

Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, 2nd ed. (1800)

The principal object, then, proposed in these poems was to choose incidents and situation from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: "chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language, because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural

life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupation, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated experiences. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of

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expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites, of their own creation,

But whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to posses, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him, must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious, that while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will

depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and, the more industriously he applies this principle, the deeper will be his faith that no words, which *his fancy* or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellencies of another kind for those which are unattainable by him, and endeavours occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand, who talk of Poetry as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as

indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, or Frontiniac or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said that poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion: truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

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William Wordsworth, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (2nd edn. 1800), *Poetical Works*, ed. Thomas Hutchinson (London: Henry Frowde, Oxford UP, 1895), pp. 935, 937-8).

ACTIVITY

1. What is the literary genre discussed by the piece?
2. What is the difference, according to Wordsworth, between poetic writing, on the one hand, and historical and biographical writing on the other?
3. What kind of language does Wordsworth advise poets to use?
4. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in the excerpt.

3. Percy Bysshe Shelley

***A Defence of Poetry* (1821)**

But poets, or those who imagine and express this indestructible order, are not only the authors of language and of music, of the dance, and architecture, and statuary, and painting; they are the institutors of laws, and the founders of

civil society, and the inventors of the arts of life, and the teachers, who draw into a certain propinquity with the beautiful and the true, that partial apprehension of the agencies of the invisible world which is called religion. Hence all original religions are allegorical, or susceptible of allegory, and like Janus, have a double face of false and true. Poets, according to the circumstances of the age and nation in which they appeared, were called, in the earlier epochs of the world, legislators, or prophets: a poet essentially comprises and unites both these characters. For he not only beholds intensely the present as it is, and discovers those laws according to which present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present, and his thoughts are the germs of the flower and the fruit of latest time. Not that I assert poets to be prophets in the gross sense of the world, or that they can foretell the form as surely as they foreknow the spirit of events: such is the pretence of superstition, which would make poetry an attribute of poetry. A poet participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one; as far as relates to his conceptions, time and place and number are not. […]

Lord Bacon was a poet. His language has a sweet and majestic rhythm, which satisfies the sense, no less than the

almost super-human wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect; it is a strain which distends, and then bursts the circumference of the reader's mind, and pours itself forth together with it into the universal element with which it has perpetual sympathy. All the authors of revolutions in opinion are not only necessarily poets as they are inventors, nor even as their words unveil the permanent analogy of things by images which participate in the life of truth: but as their periods are harmonious and rhythmical, and contain in themselves the elements of verse; being the echo of the eternal music. [...]

Dante was the first awakener of entranced Europe; he created a language, in itself music and persuasion, out of a chaos of inharmonious barbarisms. He was the congregator of those great spirits who presided over the resurrection of learning; the Lucifer of that starry flock which in the thirteenth century, shone forth from republican Italy, as from a heaven, into the darkness of the benighted world. His very words are instinct with spirit; each is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought; and many yet lie covered in the ashes of their birth, and pregnant with the lightning which has yet found no conductor. All high poetry is infinite; it is as

the first acorn, which contained all oaks potentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never exposed. A great poem is a fountain for ever overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all its divine, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight. [...]

Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to the determination of the will. A man cannot say, 'I will compose poetry'. The greatest poet even cannot say it; for the mind in creation is as fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; this power arises from within, like the colour of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our natures are unprophetic either of its approach or its departure. [...]

Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our own mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but

elevating and delightful beyond all expression; so that even in the desire and the regret they leave, there cannot but be pleasure, participating as it does in the nature of its object. It is as it were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own; but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only as on the wrinkled sands which pave it. These and corresponding conditions of being are experienced principally by those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination; and the state of mind produced by them is at war with every base desire. The enthusiasm of virtue, love, patriotism, and friendship is essentially linked with such emotions; and friendship is essentially linked with such emotions; and whilst the last self appears as what it is, an atom to universe. Poets are not only subject to these experiences as spirits of the most refined organization, but they can colour all that they combine with the evanescent hues of this ethereal world; a word, a trait in the representation of a scene or a passion will touch the enchanted chord, and reanimate, in those who have ever experienced these emotions, the sleeping, the cold, the buried image of the past. Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful

in the world; it arrests the vanishing apparitions which haunt the interlunations of life, and veiling them, or in language or in form, sends them forth among mankind, bearing sweet news of kindred joy to those with whom their sisters abide – abide, because there is no portal of expression from the caverns of the spirit which they inhabit into the universe of things. Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man.

Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed; it marries exultation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change; it subdues to union under its light yoke all irreconcilable things. It transmutes all that it touches, and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes: its secret alchemy turns to potable gold the poisonous waters which flow from death through life; it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty, which is the spirit of its forms.

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Percy Bysshe Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry* (1821), *The Prose Works*, ed. R. H. Shepherd, 2 vols (London: Chatto & Windus, 1888), II. 4-5, 8, 27, 32-4.

ACTIVITY

1. What is the role of the poet, according to Shelly?
2. What is Shelly's definition of poetry?
3. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in the excerpt.

4. Roland Barthes

"Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives" (1966)

Claims concerning the 'realism' of narrative are to be discounted. When a telephone call comes through in the office where he is on duty, Bond, so the author tells us, reflects that 'Communications with Hong Kong are as bad as they always were and just as difficult to obtain.' Neither Bond's 'reflection' nor the poor quality of the telephone call is the real piece of information: this contingency perhaps gives

things more 'life' but the true information, which will come to fruition later, is the localization of the telephone call, Hong Kong. In all narrative imitation remains contingent. The function of narrative is not to 'represent,' it is to constitute a spectacle still very enigmatic for us but in any case not of mimetic order. The 'reality' of a sequence lies not in the 'natural' succession of the actions composing it but in the logic there exposed, risked, and satisfied. Putting it another way one could say that the origin of a sequence is not the observation of reality, but the need to vary and transcend the first *form* given man, namely repetition: a sequence is essentially a whole within which nothing is repeated. Logic has here an emancipatory value – and with it the entire narrative. It may be that men ceaselessly reinject into narrative what they have known, what they have experienced; but if they do, at least it is in a form which has vanquished repetition and instituted the model of a process of becoming. Narrative does not show, does not imitate; the passion which may excite us in reading a novel is not that of a 'vision' (in actual fact, we do not 'see' anything). Rather, it is that of meaning, that of a higher order of relations which also has its emotions, its hopes, its dangers, its triumphs. 'What takes

place' in a narrative is from the referential (reality) point of view literally *nothing;* 'what happens' is language alone, the adventure of language, the unceasing celebration of its coming. Although we know scarcely more about the origins of narrative than we do about the origins of language, it can reasonably be suggested that narrative is contemporaneous with monologue, a creation seemingly posterior to that of dialogue. At all events, without wanting to strain the phylogenic hypothesis, it may be significant that it is at the same moment (around the age of three) that the little human 'invents' at once sentence, narrative, and the Oedipus.

Roland Barthes, 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative', *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), pp. 123-4.

ACTIVITY

1. What is the literary genre examined by the piece?
2. What does the piece say about realism?
3. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in the excerpt.

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5. Alain Robbe-Grillet

"A Future for the Novel" (1956)

It seems hardly reasonable at first glance to suppose that an entirely *new* literature might one day – now, for instance – be possible. The many attempts made these last thirty years to drag fiction out of its characters, the development of its plot. A 'good' novel, ever since, has remained the study of a passion – or of a conflict of passions, or of an absence of passion – in a given milieu.

Even the least conditioned observer is unable to see the world around him through entirely unprejudiced eyes. Not, of course, that I have in mind the naïve concern for objectivity which the analysts of the (subjective) soul find it so easy to smile at. Objectivity in the ordinary sense of the word – total impersonality of observation – is all too obviously an illusion. But *freedom* of observation should be possible, and yet it is not. At every moment, a continuous fringe of culture (psychology, ethics, metaphysics, etc.) is added to things, giving them a less alien aspect, one that is more comprehensible, more reassuring. Sometimes the camouflage

is complete; a gesture vanishes from our mind, supplanted by the emotions which supposedly produced it, and we remember a landscape as *austere* or *calm* without being able to evoke a single outline, a single, determining element. Even if we immediately think, 'That's literary,' we don't try to react against the thought. We accept functions like a grid of screen set with bits of different coloured glass that fracture our field of vision into tiny assimilable facets.

And if something resists this systematic appropriation of the visual, if an element of the world breaks the glass, without finding any place in the interpretative screen, we can always make use of our convenient category of 'the absurd' in order to absorb this awkward residue.

But the world is neither significant nor absurd. It *is*, quite simply. That, in any case, is the most remarkable thing about it. And suddenly the obviousness of this strikes us with irresistible force. All at once the whole splendid construction collapses; opening our eyes unexpectedly, we have experienced, once too often, the shock of this stubborn reality we were pretending to have mastered. Around us, delaying the noisy pack our animistic or protective adjectives, things *are there.* Their surfaces are distinct and so both, *intact,*

neither suspiciously brilliant nor transparent. All our literature has not yet succeeded in eroding their smallest corner, in flattening their slightest curve.

The countless movie versions of novels that encumber our screens provide an occasion for repeating this curious experiment as often as we like. The cinema, another heir of the psychological and naturalistic tradition, generally has as its sole purpose the transposition of a story into images; it aims exclusively at imposing on the spectator, through the intermediary of some well-chosen scenes, the same meaning the written sentences communicated in their own fashion to the reader. But at any given moment the filmed narrative can drag us out of our interior comfort and into this proffered world with a violence not to be found in the corresponding text, whether novel or scenario.

Anyone can perceive the nature of the change that has occurred. In the initial novel, the objects and gestures forming the very fabric of the plot disappeared completely, leaving behind only their *significations:* the empty chair became only absence or expectation, the hand placed on a shoulder became a sign of friendliness, the bars on the window became only the impossibility of leaving. But in the cinema, one *sees* the

chair, the movement of the hand, the shape of the bars. What they signify remains obvious, but instead of monopolizing our attention, it becomes something added, even something in excess, because what affects us, what persists in our memory, what appears as essential and irreducible to vague intellectual concepts are the gestures themselves, the objects, the movements, and the outlines, to which the image has suddenly (and unintentionally) restored their *reality*.

It may seem peculiar that such fragments of crude reality, which the filmed narrative cannot help presenting, strike us so vividly, whereas identical scenes in real life do not suffice to free us of our blindness. As a matter of fact, it is as if the very conventions of the photographic medium (the two dimensions, the black-and-white images, the frame of the screen, the difference of scale between scenes) help free us from our own conventions. The slightly 'unaccustomed' aspect of this reproduced world reveals, at the same time, the unaccustomed character of the world that surrounds us: it, too, is unaccustomed insofar as it refuses to conform to our habits of apprehension and to our classification.

Instead of this universe of 'signification' (psychological, social, functional), we must try, then, to construct a world

both more solid and more immediate. Let it be first of all by their *presence* that objects and gestures establish themselves, and let this presence continue to prevail over whatever explanatory theory that may try to enclose them in a system of references, whether emotional, sociological, Freudian or metaphysical.

In this future universe of the novel, gestures and objects will be *there* before being *something;* and they will still be there afterwards, hard, unalterable, eternally present, mocking their own 'meaning,' that meaning which vainly tries to reduce them to the role of precarious tools, of a temporary and shameful fabric woven exclusively – and deliberately – by the superior human truth expressed in it, only to cast out this awkward auxiliary into immediate oblivion and darkness.

Henceforth, on the contrary, objects will gradually lose their instability and their secrets, will renounce their pseudo-mystery, that suspect interiority which Roland Barthes has called 'the romantic heart of things.' No longer will objects be merely the vague reflection of the hero's vague soul, the image of his torments, the shadow of his desires. Or rather, if objects still afford a momentary prop to human passions, they will do so only provisionally, and will accept the tyranny of

significations only in appearance-derisively, one might say – the better to show how alien they remain to man.

The revolution which has occurred is in kind: not only do we no longer consider the world as our own, our private property, designed according to our needs and readily domesticated, but we no longer even believe in its 'depth.' While essentialist conceptions of man met their destruction, the notion of 'condition' henceforth replacing that of 'nature,' the *surface* of things has ceased to be for us the mask of their heart, a sentiment that led to every kind of metaphysical transcendence.

Thus it is the entire literary language that must change, that is changing already. From day to day, we witness the growing repugnance felt by people of greater awareness for words of a visceral, analogical, or incantatory character. On the other hand, the visual or descriptive adjective, the word that contents itself with measuring, locating, limiting, defining, indicates a difficult but most likely direction for a new art of the novel.

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Alain Robbe-Grillet. "A Future for the Novel', in *For a New Novel: Essays in Fiction,* Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, 1965). pp. 15, 18-22, 24.

ACTIVITY

1. What is the subject of a good novel, according to Robbe-Grillet?
2. What are the similarities and difference between a novel and a movie, according to Robbe-Grillet?
3. What is the revolution Robbe-Grillet writes about?
4. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in the excerpt.

6. E. D. Hirsch, Jr

The Aims of Interpretation (1976)

In resisting some claims of current 'metaphysical hermeneutics' I must admit to at least one metaphysical assertion: an interpreter is not necesarily so trapped in historicity that he loses his freedom; he is free to choose his aims, and within the context of those aims and the broad

conventions of language, he is free to choose his meanings. I therefore understand the current controversy over historicity as a conflict not of abstract theories, but of values. When we are urged to adopt present relevance rather than original meaning as the 'best meaning,' we find ourselves repeating the old pattern of controversy between the medieval allegorists (the Heideggerians of an earlier day) and the later humanists. While this conflict cannot be resolved by mere analysis, its issues can be clarified, and clarification may bring unforeseen agreement.

Sometimes, for instance, the conflict between proponents of original and of anachronistic meaning is shown by analysis to be no conflict at all. These arguments about meaning sometimes originate in a failure to notice that meaning and significance – two different things – are being given the same name.

For some time now literarily theorists, particularly the New Critics, have attempted to preserve this distinction under a different guise, and have deplored the use of biographical or historical information for restricting textual meaning to its original historical or biographical circumstances. Even if Shakespeare had written *Richard II* to support the rebellion of

Essex (which of course he didn't) that wouldn't limit the meaning of the play to its original application. When the followers of Essex brought out the play's significance to their political aims, however, no great violence was done to its original meaning. Nor would any important distortion result from documents that showed autobiographical impulses in Shakespeare's original meaning could be equally innocent of distortive influence. For a self-identical meaning (original or anachronistic, simple or complex) has the great advantage of flexibility; being very sure of itself, of its self-identity, it can enter new worlds and play new roles with confidence.

If one resists confusing meaning and significance, one gets the impression that most controversies in interpretation do not really involve a conflict over original versus anachronistic meaning. Usually the debates can be readily transposed into disagreement over the proper *emphases* of an interpretation, over whether it is better to explain original meaning or to bring out some aspect of the significance of meaning, for the interpreter or for present-day readers. The followers of Essex took the second course, without necessarily distorting Shakespeare's meaning.

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In examples like these, original meaning is tacitly assumed even while original significance is ignored. Whenever interpretive conflicts are concerned only with emphasis in the conduct of a commentary, then they are conflicts about immediate aims and not about meanings. Most interpreters retain a respect for original meaning, and recognition of this might mollify some of our disagreements.

No doubt, what I am saying could never bring together certain extreme controversialists like Roland Barthes and Raymond Picard who have recently acted out the old dilemmas of original versus anachronistic meaning in their polemics over Racine. What can one say by way of reconciliation if Barthes claims to be uninterested in Racine's original meaning, and Picard argues that Racine could not have meant what Barthes construes from the texts? It is difficult for a non-specialist to judge the true facts of this noted case, but I have the impression that the controversy provides an unusually pure modern example of the rival claims between original and anachronistic meaning. Most recent conflicts between ancients like Picard and moderns like Barthes are not so clearly drawn, since most of us would be chagrined to learn that we had made elementary mistakes in

construing the language of an early period, and our very embarrassment would indicate that we recognized the co-equal and harmonious claims of original meaning and modern significance, even if Barthes does not. At the same time, most interpreters would reject the opposite excess (even if Picard does not) of ignoring the difference between original meaning and original significance an oversight that is the occupation vice of antiquarians.

Let me state what I consider to be a fundamental ethical maxim for interpretation, a maxim that claims no privileged sanction from metaphysics or analysis, but only from general ethical tenets, generally shared. *Unless there is a powerful overriding value in disregarding as author's intention (i.e. original meaning), we who interpret as a vocation should not disregard it.* Mere individual preference would not be such an overriding value, nor would be the mere preferences of many persons.

E.D Hirsch. *The Aims of Interpretation* (Chicago and London: Chicago UP, 19:6). pp. 85, 87-9).

ACTIVITY

1. What is the difference, according to Hirsch, between meaning and significance?
2. What does Hirsch mean by 'anachronistic' meaning?
3. What is the main conclusion of this piece in relation to meaning?
4. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in the excerpt.

7. Vladimir Propp

Morphology of the Folktale (1928)

Let us first of all attempt to formulate our task. As already stated in the foreword, this work is dedicated to the study of *fairy* tales. This existence of fairy tales as a special class is assumed as an essential working hypothesis. By 'fairy tales' are meant at present those tales classified by Aarne under numbers 300 to 749. This definition is artificial, but the occasion will subsequently arise to give a more precise determination on the basis of resultant conclusions. We are undertaking a comparison. We shall separate the component

parts of fairy tales by special methods; and then, we shall make a comparison of tales according to their components. The result will be a morphology (i.e., a description of these components in relation to each other and to the whole). What methods can achieve an accurate description of the tale? Let us compare the following events:

1. A tsar gives an eagle to a hero. The eagle carries the hero away to another kingdom.
2. An old man gives Sucenko a horse. The horse carries Sucenko away to another kingdom.
3. A sorcerer gives Ivan a little boat. The boast takes Ivan to another kingdom.
4. A princess gives Ivan a ring. Young men appearing from out of the ring carry Ivan away into another kingdom, and sop forth.

Both constants and variables are present in the preceding instances. The names of the *dramatis personae* change (as well as the attributes of each), but neither their actions nor functions change. From this we can draw the inference that a tale often attributes identical actions to various personages. This makes possible the study of the tale *according to the functions of its dramatis personae.* [...]

The observations cited may be briefly formulated in the following manner:

1. *Functions of characters serve as stable, constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled. They constitute the fundamental components of a tale.*
2. *The number of functions known to the fairy tale is limited.*

If functions are delineated, a second question arises: in what classification and in what sequence are these functions encountered.

The sequence of events has its own laws. The short story too has similar laws, as the organic formations. Theft cannot take place before the door is forced. Insofar as the tale is concerned, it has its own entirely particular and specific laws. The sequence of elements, as we shall see later on, is strictly *uniform*. Freedom within this sequence is restricted by very narrow limits which can be exactly formulated. We thus obtain the third basic thesis of this work, subject to further development and verification.

The sequence of functions is always identical.

Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, trans. Laurence Scott (2nd edn. Austen and London: University of Texas Press, 1968, pp. 19-20, 21, 22).

ACTIVITY

1. What does Propp mean by morphology?
2. What is meant by *dramatis personae*?
3. What are the three main observations about the structure of the fairy tale?
4. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in the excerpt.

8. Pierre Macherey

***A Theory of Literary Production* (1966)**

The speech of the book comes from a certain silence, a matter which it endows with form, a ground on which it traces a figure. Thus, the book is not self-sufficient; it is necessarily

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accompanied by a *certain absence,* without which it would not exist. A knowledge of the book must include a consideration of this absence.

This is why it seems useful and legitimate to ask of every production what it tacitly implies, what it does not say. Either all around or in its wake the explicit requires the implicit: for in order to say anything, there are other things *which must not be said.* Freud relegated this *absence of certain words* to a new place which he was the first to explore, and which he paradoxically named: *the unconscious.* To reach utterance, all speech envelops itself in the unspoken. We must ask why it does not speak of this interdict: can it be identified before one might wish to acknowledge it? There is not even the slightest hint of the absence of what it does not, perhaps cannot, say: the disavowal *(denegation)* extends even to the act that banished the forbidden term: its absence is unacknowledged.

It must then be possible to examine a work from an accurate description which respects the specificity of this work, but which is more than just a new exposition of its content, in the form of a systematization, for example. For as we quickly come to realize we can only describe, only remain

within the work if we also decide to go beyond it: to bring out, for example, what the work is *compelled* to say in order to say what it *wants* to say, because not only would the work have wanted not to say it (which is another question), but certainly the work did not want to say it. Thus, it is not a question of introducing a historical explanation which is stuck on to the work from the outside. On the contrary, we must show a sort of splitting within the work: this division is *its* unconscious, in so far as it possesses one – the unconscious which is history, the play of history beyond its edges, encroaching on those edges: this is why it is possible to trace the path which leads from the haunted work to that which haunts it. Once again it is not a question of redoubling the work with an unconscious, but a question of revealing in the very gestures of expression that which it is not. Then, the reverse side of what is written will be history itself.

Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production*, trans. Geoffrey Wall (London, Henley and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978, pp. 85, 94).

ACTIVITY

1. What are the main ideas in this peace?
2. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in the excerpt.

9. Malcolm Bradbury

***The Social Context of Modern English Literature* (1971)**

In liberal western society, then, the artist's role is recognized and respected but its not institutionalized; it functions on a *laissez faire* basis. If he can find the means to exist, in the economics of the market or by some form of patronage, he has great independence of creative action. He need not live in the same country as his audience or serve them in any other way than by impersonal publication. He can, through that market, make considerable profit and win considerable prestige. The situation has been one favourable to the production of a major art, expansive, varied, original, qualitatively and humanly dense and rich. The classically successful environment for the liberal artist is of course that of the nineteenth century: in that environment art became a centrally independent way of

knowing, acquiring many of the functions formerly associated with religion and religious wisdom, enlightening men and alleviating their sorrow, advancing their comprehension and their sensibilities. To read any major study of the mid-Victorian literary scene – for instance, Gordon Haight's recent brilliant life of George Eliot – is to discover how a liberal exercise of the artistic function could produce writing consonant with the shared intellectual and emotional activity of a literate, intelligent and inquisitive middle-class. That sort of expanding community between a freely placed writer and an audience themselves humanistic and engaged with art obviously represents an ideal version of the liberal relations between artist and society. But this humanist view of art – an art that contained and lived alongside man enlarging his conduct and sympathies, testifying in his humanity, introducing him to sectors of the world of which he had no experience, serving as a secular and open-ended wisdom – now seems to us to have been thrown into doubt. A number of important modern writers have embodied it with a profound authority – E.M. Forster or George Orwell, for instance – but many have not.

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Hence another aspect of our modern view of the arts. For, while we believe that art should and can be free, we also believe that we live in a time and society exceptionally difficult for the production of art – a view that has also played a big part in our expectation about writers and the work they give us. I have shown that there are sound enough reasons for this belief, just as there are for the conviction that the free writer has the profoundest significance – reach back to the Romantic movement, in the country and even more in America, Russia or France. For the right to freedom was often held to involve a necessary quest into loneliness, and to involve a risky journey into the dangerous, Promethean dimensions of artistic knowledge.

Malcolm Bradbury, *The Social Context of Modern English Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971, pp. 114-115).

ACTIVITY

1. What is the relationship between art and society according to Bradbury?
2. Translate into Arabic the most important literary terms in the excerpt.

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PART VI
DRAMA

1. Drama and Dramatic Arts

Drama is a form of literature-either prose of verse, usually in dialogue form intended for performance. Dramatic arts are the components necessary to writing and producing the drama, such as playwriting acting and costume and scenic design. The word *drama* comes from a Greek word meaning "to do", and thus drama is usually associated with the idea of action. Most often, drama is thought of as a story about events in the lives of characters. As the adjective dramatic indicates, the ideas of conflict, tension, contrast and emotion are usually associated with drama.

2. Types and Uses of Theatre

If theatre is viewed simply as a branch of literature or only as a form of narrative, however, then large segments of theatre history are inevitably slighted. Some periods of cultures have emphasized dramatic literature – plays – but others have

stressed aspects of theatrical production. Some cultures see the theatre's value as a means of storytelling, others see it as religious spectacle, or entertainment.

Theatre has been used as an extension of religious festivals, as a means for spreading political ideas or propagandizing mass audiences, as entertainment and as a form of art. Through much of history, theatre has existed on three levels simultaneously as loosely organized popular entertainment, as a mainstream public activity, and as an elitist art form. At the level of popular entertainment, it consists of individuals or small groups, usually working outside established theatrical channels, performing anything from circus skills to farcical plays for a mass audience. This form predates the oldest known plays and is exemplified today by commercial television. Theatre as a mainstream public activity is most commonly literary drama performed at public theatres, it is usually commercial or else state supported for the general public. Greek tragedy, medieval morality plays, and contemporary Broadway theatre all fall into this category. Theatre as an elitist art form is most simply defined by its intended audience, a limited group with specialized tastes.

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This form ranges from the court performances of the Renaissance to modern avant-garde theatre.

3. Elements of Theatrical Performance

A performance has only two essential elements: a performer and an audience. The performance may be pantomimed or may use language. The performer need not even be human. Puppet drama has been popular throughout history, and mechanical or machine plays have been presented. A performance may be enhanced by costume, makeup, scenery, props, lighting, music, and special effects. These are used to help create the illusion of a different character, place, and time or to enhance the special quality of the performance and differentiate it from everyday experience.

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4

GHOSTS

by

Henrik Ibsen

CHARACTERS

MRS HELENA ALVING, widow of, Captain Alving, late Court chamberlain

OSVALD ALVING, her son, an artist

PASTOR MANDERS

ENGSTRAND, a carpenter

REGINA ENGSTRAND, in service with Mrs Alving

The action takes place in Mrs Alving's country house by a large fjord in Western Norway

ACT ONE

A large garden-room, with one door in the left wall and two in the wall to the right. In the middle of the room is a round table; at it there are chairs, and on it are books, newspapers, and magazines. In the foreground to the left is a window, with a small sofa and a work-table in front of it. At the back, the room opens on a conservatory, rather smaller, and walled

with large panes of glass. From the right of this conservatory a door leads into the garden. Through the glass, a view of a gloomy fjord, half-hidden by continual rain, can be made out.

[ENGSTRAND, *the carpenter, is standing at the garden door. His left leg is rather deformed, and the sole of his foot is built up with wood,* REGINA, *with an empty garden syringe in her hand, is barring his way in.]*

REGINA *[lowering her voice]:* What do you want? Stay where you are, you're dripping wet!

ENGSTRAND: It's God's good rain, my girl.

REGIN A: It's the devil's rain, that's what it is!

ENGSTRAND: Lor', what a way to talk, Regina. *[He limps a step or two into the room.]* What I wanted to say was

REGINA: Don't clump about with that foot, man! The young master's asleep upstairs.

ENGSTRAND: Asleep? At this hour of the day?

REGINA: That's no business of yours.

ENGSTRAND: Now *I* was out on the spree last night -

REGINA: I can well believe it!

ENGSTRAND: Well, my girl, we all *have* our weaknesses -

REGINA: We certainly have.

ENGSTRAND: - and the snares of this world are manifold, you know. . . but all the same, I swear I was at work by half past five this morning.

REGINA: All right, all right, but get along now. I'm not going to stand here and have a *rendezvous* with you.

ENGSTRAND: You're not having a what?

REGINA: I'm not having anyone find you here. So go on get out!

ENGSTRAND *[coming a little nearer]:* Damned if I'm going before I've had a little talk with you. I'll have finished my job down at the school this afternoon, so I'll be off back to town by tonight's steamer.

REGINA *[under her breath]:* Pleasant journey!

ENGSTRAND: Thank you, my girl. You see, tomorrow'll be opening day at the Orphanage and there's bound to be a great to-do and plenty of liquor - and I'm not having anyone say Jakob Engstrand can't resist temptation when it comes his way.

REGINA: Ha!

ENGSTRAND: Besides, there'll be a lot of smart people here tomorrow. And they're expecting Pastor Manders to come from town.

REGINA: As a matter of fact, he's coming today.

ENGSTRAND: Well, there you are, you see; I'm damned if I'll give him a chance to say anything against me.

REGINA: Oh, so that's it!

ENGSTRAND: What is?

REGINA *[giving him a shrewd look]:* What are you trying to diddle Mr Manders out of now?

ENGSTRAND: Sh! Are you off your head? Now, would *I* diddle Mr Manders out of anything? Oh no, Mr Manders has been far too good to me for that. But that's what I wanted to talk to you about; you see, I'm going back home tonight -

REGINA: The sooner the better, *I* say!

ENGSTRAND: - and I want you to come with me, Regina.

REGINA *[open-mouthed]:* What? You want *me* . . . ?

ENGSTRAND: I said I wanted you back home with me.

REGINA *[scornfully]:* You're never getting me back home with you!

ENGSTRAND: Oh? We'll see about that!

REGINA: We'll see, all right! What, *me?* When I've been brought up by a lady like Mrs Alving? - treated almost like one of the family here? *Me* go back with you - to a place like that? Tcha!

ENGSTRAND: What the devil. . . ? Are you setting yourself up against your father, you little slut?

REGINA *[under her breath, not looking at him]:* You've always said I was none of yours.

ENGSTRAND: Pooh, why worry about that?

REGINA: Just think of all the times you've sworn at me and called me a . . . *Fi donc* !

ENGSTRAND: I'm damned if I ever used a dirty word like that.

REGINA: You needn't tell *me* what word you used!

ENGSTRAND: Well, that was only when I'd had a drink or two. . . the snares of this world are manifold, Regina -

REGINA: Ugh!

ENGSTRAND: - or when your mother started making a scene, and I had to find some way of getting even with her. Always giving herself airs, she was. *[Mimicking her]* 'Let me be, Jakob, let me go! I was three years in service with the Alvings at Rosenvold, and he was a Chamberlain I' *[Laughing]* Lord help us, she could never forget that the Captain was made a Chamberlain while she was working here.

REGINA: Poor Mother, you certainly drove her to an early grave.

ENGSTRAND: *[with a shrug]:* That's right - blame it all on me!

REGINA *[under her breath, turning away]:* And then that leg-ugh!

ENGSTRAND: What's that you say, my girl?

REGINA: *Pied de mouton!*

ENGSTRAND: That's English, I suppose?

REGINA: Yes!

ENGSTRAND: Ah, you've had education out here, Regina; that'll come in handy now.

REGINA *[after a moment]:* Just what do you want me in town for?

ENGSTRAND: Need you ask why a father wants his only child? Aren't I a poor lonely widower?

REGINA: Don't you come to me with that tale! What do you want me for?

ENGSTRAND: Well, I'll tell you: I've been thinking of going in for something new.

REGINA *[with a snort]:* Oh, you're always doing that, and it never comes to anything!

ENGS TRAND: Ah, but this time, Regina, you'll see – devil take me if -

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REGINA *[stamping her foot]:* None of that language!

ENGSTRAND: Sh! Sh! You're quite right, my girl. All I wanted to say was this: I've put by quite a bit of money, working on this new Orphanage.

REGINA: Have you ? That's nice for you.

ENGSTRAND: After all, what's there to spend anything on out here in the country?

REGINA: Well?

ENGSTRAND: Well you see, I thought of putting the money into something that'd pay - a sort of lodging-house for seamen.

REGINA: Ugh!

ENGSTRAND: A really high-class lodging-house, you know - not some sort of pigsty for common sailors. No, damn it, it'll be a place for ships' captains and mates and and really high-class people, you know.

REGINA: And what should I -?

ENGSTRAND: You'd give a hand, of course. Just for the look of the thing, you see. You wouldn't have a hell of a lot of work; you could do just what you felt like.

REGINA: Oh? Well?

ENGSTRAND: Because there'll have to be some women about the place - that's as clear as daylight. We'll have to

cheer things up a bit in the evenings, with singing and dancing and so on. Remember these are wayfaring men, from the seven seas. *[Coming nearer]* Now don't be a fool and stand in your own way, Regina. What future is there for you out here? All this education that your mistress has paid for - is it going to be any good to you? I hear you'll be looking after the children in this new Orphanage. What's the use of that to *you,* eh? Are you all that keen to go and work yourself to the bone for a lot of dirty kids?

REGINA: No. If things go the way I want. . . and they *might* - they very well might. . . .

ENGSTRAND: What might?

REGINA: Never you mind. Have you saved a lot of money up here?

ENGSTRAND: What with one thing and another, it must be seven or eight hundred kroner.

REGINA: That's not bad.

ENGSTRAND: Enough to make a start with, my girl.

REGINA: You didn't think of giving *me* any of it?

ENGSTRAND: No, by God, I didn't.

REGINA: You didn't even think of sending me a length of stuff for a dress?

ENGSTRAND: Just you come down to the town with me and you'll have plenty of dresses.

REGINA: Pooh! I could get them for myself if I wanted.

ENGSTRAND: Ah, but you'd be all the better for a father's guiding hand, Regina. There's a nice little house I can get in Little Harbour Street; they're not asking too much down, and it could be like a sort of Seaman's Home, you know.

REGINA: But I don't want to go with you, - I don't want to have anything to do with you. So clear out!

ENGSTRAND: You wouldn't be with me all that damned long, my girl - no such luck - not if you know the ropes. You've turned into a pretty little thing this last year or two.

REGINA: Well?

ENGSTRAND: It wouldn't be long before some ship's officer came along - a captain, even. . .

REGINA: I'm not marrying anyone like that. Sailors have no *savoir vivre.* ENGSTRAND: Haven't got *what?*

REGINA: I know what sailors are, I tell you. They're not the ones to marry.

ENGSTRAND: Well then, *don't* marry - that can pay just as well. *[More confidentially]* That Englishman - the one with the yacht - he gave three hundred dollars, he did. . . and she

wasn't any prettier than you.

REGINA *[advancing on him]:* Get out!'

ENGSTRAND *[retreating]:* Now, now - you wouldn't hit me!

REGINA: I would! Just you talk about my mother again and I'll hit you. Get out, I tell you I *[She drives him towards the garden door.]* And don't bang the doors young Mr Alving -

ENGSTRAND: - is asleep, I know! It's funny how anxious you are about young Mr Alving. *[Softly]* Aha! Now it couldn't be *him,* could it?

REGINA: Outside-and quick about it! You're a fool! No, not that way - here comes Pastor Manders. Off with you down the back stairs.

ENGSTRAND *[going to the right]:* All right, all right! Now you talk to him when he comes; he's the man to tell you what a child owes its father. Because I *am* your father, you know; I can prove it by the Parish Register.

[He goes out by the farther door which REGINA *has opened for him.* REGINA *takes a quick look at herself in the glass, fans herself with a handkerchief and straightens her collar, then busies herself with the flowers.*

PASTOR MANDERS, *wearing an overcoat, carrying an*

umbrella, and with a little travelling satchel on a strap over his shoulder, comes through the garden door into the conservatory.]

PASTOR MANDERS: Good morning, Miss Engstrand.

REGINA *[turning in pleased surprise]:* Why, good morning, Pastor. Is the steamer in already?

PASTOR MANDERS: It's just arrived. *[He comes into the room]* What terrible weather we've been having lately.

REGINA *[following him]:* But it's good for the farmers, Pastor.

PASTOR MANDERS: Yes, of course you're right; we towns people don't think of them. *[He begins to take off his overcoat.]*

REGINA: Let me help you. . . . There! Oh it *is* wet! I'll just hang it in the hall. Give me your umbrella too - I'll open it so that it can dry.

[She takes the things out through the farther door on the right. PASTOR MANDERS *takes off his satchel and puts it and his hat on a chair. Meanwhile* REGINA *comes back.]*

PASTOR MANDERS: Ah, it's good to get indoors! And is everything going well out here?

REGINA: Yes, thank you very much.

PASTOR MANDERS: Rather busy though, I expect, getting ready for tomorrow.

R'EGINA: Yes, there's a lot to do.

PASTOR MANDERS: Mrs Alving's at home, I hope?

REG I N A: Oh yes; she's just gone upstairs with a cup of chocolate for the young master.

PASTOR MANDERS: Ah yes, tell me - I heard down at the quay that Osvald should be here?

REGINA: Yes, he came the day before yesterday. We weren't expecting him till today.

PASTOR MANDERS: Fit and well, I hope?

RE'GINA: Yes, quite well, thank you - but terribly tired after the journey. He came all the way from Paris in one trip. . . . I mean, he made the whole journey without a break. I think he's having a little sleep now, so we ought to talk a bit quieter.

PASTOR MANDERS: Sh! We'll be very quiet!

REGIN A *[moving an armchair up to the table]:* Do please sit down, Pastor, and make yourself at home. *[He sits, and she puts a footstool under his feet.]* There! Is that comfortable?

PASTOR MANDERS: Excellent, thank you. *[Looking at her]* Do you know, Miss Engstrand, I really do believe you've grown since I saw you last!

REGINA: Do you think so, Pastor? Madam says I've filled out, too.

PASTOR MANDERS: Filled out? Well, yes, I think you *have,* a little. . . but very becomingly.

[A short pause.]

REGINA: Shall I go and tell Madam?

PASTOR MANDERS: Oh, there's no hurry, thank you, my dear child. Tell me, Regina, how has your father been getting on out here?

REGINA: Oh, pretty well, thank you, Pastor.

PASTOR MANDERS: He came to see me the last time he was in town.

REGINA; Did he? He's always so pleased when he can have a talk with you.

PASTOR MANDERS: And you're a good girl and go down and see him every day?

REGINA: I? Oh yes, I do - whenever I have the time. . .

PASTOR MANDERS: Your father isn't a very strong character, Miss Engstrand; he badly needs a guiding hand.

REGINA: Yes, I know he does.

PASTOR MANDERS: He needs someone by him whom he can cling to - someone whose judgement he can rely on. The

last time he was at my house, he admitted that, himself, quite frankly.

REGINA: Yes. . . he said something of the sort to me. But I don't know if Mrs Alving could do without me - especially now, when we'll have the new Orphanage to manage. Besides, I should be terribly sorry to leave Mrs Alving she's always been so kind to me.

PASTOR MANDERS: But my good girl, a daughter's duty . . . Naturally we should have to get your mistress's consent first.

REGINA: But I don't know if it would be quite right for me, at my age, to keep house for a single man.

PASTOR MANDERS: What? But my dear Miss Engstrand, we're speaking of your own father!

REGINA: Yes, maybe, but all the same. . . now if it were in a good house, with a real gentleman -

PASTOR MANDERS: But my dear Regina -

REGINA: - someone that I could like and respect, and be like a daughter to. . . . PASTOR MANDERS: But my dear good child...!

REGINA: Because I'd like to go back to the town; it's terribly lonely out here, and you know yourself, Pastor, what's it's like to be all alone in the world. I can honestly say that I'm able

and willing. Don't you know of a place like that for me, Pastor?

PASTOR MANDERS: Who, me? No, I certainly do not.

REGINA: But dear, dear Pastor, you will think of me, won't you, if ever...?

PASTOR MANDERS *[getting up]:* Yes, Miss Engstrand, I will.

REGINA: Yes, because if I -

PASTOR MANDERS: Perhaps you'll be kind enough to let Mrs Alving know I'm here.

REGIN A: I'll fetch her at once, sir. *[She goes out to the left.]*

[PASTOR MANDERS *walks up and down the room once or twice, then stands for a while at the back, with his hands behind him, looking out into the garden. Then he comes back to the table, picks up a book, and looks at the title page. He gives a start, then looks at several more.]*

PASTOR MANDERS: Well... really!

[MRS AIVNING *comes in from the left, followed by* REGINA *who immediately goes out again by the nearer door to the right.]*

MRS ALVING: Ah, Pastor, I'm-very glad to see you.

PASTOR MANDERS: How do you do, Mrs Alving, Here I

am, as I promised.

MRS ALVING: Punctual as ever!

PASTOR MANDERS: It wasn't easy to get away, though, you know. All those blessed committees and boards that I'm on....

MRS ALVING: All the kinder of you to come so early; now we can get our business settled before luncheon. But where's your luggage?

PASTOR MANDERS *[hastily]:* My things are down at the village shop; I'm staying there tonight.

MRS ALVING *[suppressing a smile]:* Can't you really be persuaded to stay the night here this time?

PASTOR MANDERS: No, no, Mrs Alving, thank you very much all the same. I shall stay down there as usual - it's so convenient for catching the boat.

MRS ALVING: Well, you must do as you like. All the same, I do think a couple of old people like us . . .

EASTOR MANDERS: Good gracious, what a thing to say! Still, you're naturally in particularly good spirits today, what with the celebrations tomorrow, and having Osvald home, too.

MRS ALVING: Yes, isn't it lucky for me? It's over two years since he was home last, and now he's promised to stay the whole winter with me.

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PASTOR MANDERS: Has he indeed? That's very nice and dutiful of him; because I should think life in Rome or Paris must offer many more attractions.

MRS ALVING: Ah, but you see, here he has his mother. He's a dear good boy, and he still has a soft spot for his mother.

PASTOR MANDERS: It would be very distressing if leaving home and taking up such things as Art were to blunt his natural feelings.

MRS ALVING: Yes, I agree; but there's no danger of that with him, I'm sure. It'll be interesting to see if you know him again. He'll be down soon; he's just resting for a bit on the sofa upstairs. But do sit down, my dear Pastor.

PASTOR MANDERS: Thank you. Now would this be a convenient time. . . ?

MRS ALVING: Yes certainly. *[She sits at the table.]*

PASTOR MANDERS: Good; then I'll show you. . . . *[He goes to the chair where his satchel is, and takes a bundle of papers from it. Then he sits at the opposite side of the table and tries to find a space to put the papers.]* Now, to begin with, we have. . . *[breaking off]* Tell me, Mrs Alving, how did these books get *here?*

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MRS ALVING: These books? *I'm* reading them.

PASTOR MANDERS: Do you read that sort of thing?

MRS ALVING: Of course I do.

PASTOR MANDERS: Do you feel any better or happier for reading this sort of book?

MRS ALVING: I think it makes me somehow more - confident. PASTORMANDERS: Extraordinary! How is that?

MRS ALVING: Well, they seem to explain - or confirm a lot of things that I've been thinking myself. Yes, that's, the extraordinary thing, Mr Manders - there's really nothing particularly new in these books - nothing more than what most people think and believe already. It's just that most people either don't take much account of these things, or won't admit it.

PASTOR MANDERS: But good heavens, do you seriously believe that most people. . .?

MRS ALVING: Yes, I really do.

PASTOR MANDERS: But surely not in this country? Not among us here?

MRS ALVING: Oh, yes, among us too.

PASTOR MANDERS: Well really, I must say.. .!

MRS ALVING: Besides, what have you actually got against

these books?

PASTOR MANDERS: What have I -? You surely don't imagine I waste my time examining that sort of publication?

MRS ALVING: Which means that you know nothing at all about the thing you're denouncing.

FASTOR MANDERS: I've read quite enough about such books to disapprove of them.

MRS ALVING: Yes, but your own opinion.

PASTOR MANDERS: My dear lady, there are many occasions in life when one must rely upon the opinions of others. That is the way of this world. And rightly too - how else could society continue?

MRS ALVING: Oh well, you may be right.

PASTOR MANDERS: Apart from that, naturally I don't deny that there may be a considerable fascination about such works. Nor can I blame you for wishing to make yourself acquainted with the intellectual trends which, I'm told, prevail out in the great world - where you have allowed your son to wander for so long. But…

MRS ALVING: But...?

PASTOR MANDERS *[lowering his voice]:* But one doesn't talk of it, Mrs Alving. One is really not obliged to account to

all and sundry for what one reads and thinks within one's own four walls.

MRS ALVING: Of course not - I quite agree.

PASTOR MANDERS: You must realize, too, that you owe some consideration to this Orphanage - which you decided to found at a time when, so far as I can judge, your opinions on intellectual matters were very different from what they are now.

MRS ALVING: Yes, I fully admit that. But it was about the Orphanage -

PASTOR MANDERS: It was about the Orphanage that we were going to talk, yes. Still - discretion, dear lady. . .! And now to business. *[He opens an envelope and takes out some papers]* You see these?

MRS ALVING: The deeds?

PASTOR MANDERS: All of them, and in perfect order. I don't mind telling you, it wasn't easy to get them ready in time - I even had to bring a certain amount of pressure to bear; the authorities are almost painfully conscientious when it's a matter of documents! But here they are: *[He goes through the pile.]* This is the Conveyance of the plot known as Solvick, being a part of the Rosenvold estate, together with the

buildings newly erected thereon, namely the Schoolhouse, the Staff Quarters, and the Chapel. And this is the legal Authorization for the endowment, and for the rules of the Institution. Here, you see: *[reads]* 'Regulations for the Captain Alving Memorial Children's Home'.

MRS ALVING *[after a lone look at the documents]*: So, here it is!

PASTOR MANDERS: I've chosen 'Captain' rather than 'Chamberlain' for the title; 'Captain' seemed less pretentious.

MRS ALVING: Oh yes, whatever you think best.

PASTOR MANDERS: And here's the account of the capital in the Savings Bank, that will provide the interest to cover the running expenses of the Orphanage.

MRS ALVING: Thank you; but it'd be more convenient if you'd be kind enough to look after that.

PASTOR MANDERS: Willingly. To begin with, I think, we'll leave the money in the Savings Bank. Certainly the, interest's not very attractive: four per cent and six months' notice of withdrawal. Later on, if we could find a good mortgage - it would have to be a first mortgage, of course, with unimpeachable security - we could reconsider the matter.

MRS ALVING: Yes, you know best about all that sort of

thing, dear Pastor Manders.

PASTOR MANDERS: I'll keep my eyes open, anyhow. And now there's one other thing that I've been meaning to ask you about for some time.

MRS ALVING: What is that?

PASTOR MANDERS: Shall the Orphanage buildings be insured or not? MRS ALVING: Of course they must be insured.

PASTOR MANDERS: Ah, but just a moment, Mrs Alving; let's look into the matter rather more closely.

MRS ALVING: I always have everything insured - Buildings, contents, crops, and stock.

PASTOR MANDERS: Naturally, on your own estate. I do the same, of course. But this, you see, is quite different; the Orphanage is, as it were, to be consecrated to a higher purpose.

MRS ALVING: Yes, but even so...

PASTOR MANDERS: Speaking entirely personally, I certainly shouldn't see the least objection to our covering ourselves against all eventualities -

MRS ALVING: No, I quite agree.

PASTOR MANDERS: - but what would be the general feel-

ing in the neighbourhood? You'd know that better than I should.

MRS ALVING: Hm, the general feeling....

PASTOR MANDERS': Would there be any considerable body of opinion - really responsible opinion - that might be shocked at it?

MRS ALVING: What exactly do you mean by really responsible opinion?

PASTOR MANDERS: Well, I'm thinking particularly of men of independent means in such responsible positions that one cannot help attaching a certain weight to their opinions.

MRS ALVING: Yes, there are a good many people like that here, who might well be shocked if -

PASTOR MANDERS: There, you see! We have plenty of them in the town, too - all my fellow-pastors' congregations, for a start. They might so very easily come to the conclusion that neither you nor I had a proper trust in Divine Providence.

MRS ALVING: But my dear Pastor, you must know yourself that you're -

PASTOR MANDERS: Oh, I know, I know. My conscience is clear - that's perfectly true; but all the same we shouldn't be

able to escape grave misrepresentation, and that could very easily hinder the work of the Orphanage.

MRS ALVING: Ah well, if it's going to do *that,* then. . .

PASTOR MANDERS: Nor can I entirely shut my eyes to the difficult - I might even call it the *painful* position that I might find myself in. Influential people in the town are taking a great interest in the Orphanage. Indeed, it is intended partly for the benefit of the town as well, and it is hoped that it will have a not inconsiderable effect in lowering our Poor Rate. And since I've been your adviser, and have looked after the business side, I fear that the more fanatical might well blame *me,* first and foremost.

MRS ALVING: Oh no, you mustn't risk that.

PASTOR MANDERS: Not to mention the attacks that would certainly be made on me by certain papers and periodicals which -

MRS ALVING: Say no more about it, my dear Pastor Manders - that settles it completely.

PASTOR MANDERS: Then you won't have it insured?

MRS ALVING: No, we'll leave it.

PASTOR MANDERS *(leaning back in his chair]:* But if there *did* happen to be an accident - you never know – would you

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be able to make good the damage?

MRS ALVING: No, I can tell you quite definitely I shouldn't do anything of the sort.

PASTOR MANDERS: Well, you know, Mrs Alving, we're taking a great responsibility on ourselves.

MRS ALVING: But what else *can* we do, do you think?

PASTOR MANDERS: No, that's just it - there's nothing else we can do. We mustn't lay ourselves open to misrepresentation, and we've no right to offend public opinion.

MRS ALVING: Certainly not you, as a clergyman.

PASTOR MANDERS: And I really think, too, that we may take it that an Institution like this has good fortune on its side - that it's under a Special Protection.

MRS ALVING: Let's hope so, Mr Manders.

PASTOR MANDERS: Then shall we leave it at that?

MRS ALVING: Yes, certainly.

PASTOR MANDERS: Good, just as you wish. *[Making a note]* No insurance, then.

MRS ALVING: It's odd that you should happen to mention that today. . . .

PASTOR MANDERS: I've been meaning to ask you about it

for some time.

MRS ALVING: - because we nearly had a fire down there yesterday.

PASTOR MANDERS: Really?

MRS ALVING: Oh, it wasn't anything much - some shavings caught fire in the carpenter's shop.

PASTOR MANDERS: Where Engstrand works?

MRS ALVING: Yes, they say he's often very careless with matches.

PASTOR MANDERS: He has a lot on his mind, poor man - so many temptations. Thank God, I hear he's now trying to live a blameless life.

MRS ALVING: Oh? Who told you that?

PASTOR MANDERS: He told me so himself. And he's certainly a very good workman.

MRS ALVING: Yes - as long as he's sober.

PASTOR MANDERS: Ah, it's a sad failing. But he tells me he's often driven to it by his bad leg. The last time he was in town, I was really very touched; he came and thanked me so sincerely for having found him work up here where he could be near Regina.

MRS ALVING: He doesn't really see much of her.

PASTOR MANDERS: Oh yes, he has a word with her every day- he told me so himself.

MRS ALVING: Oh well, perhaps he does. . . .

PASTOR MANDERS: He feels so strongly that he needs someone to restrain him when temptation comes. That's what's so likeable about Jakob Engstrand; he comes to you quite helplessly to confess his failings and to reproach himself. The last time he was talking to me - Look, Mrs Alving, if it should ever be really necessary for him to have Regina living at home with him again -

MRS ALVING *[rising suddenly]:* Regina?

PASTOR MANDERS: - you mustn't try to stand in his way.

MRS ALVING: But I most certainly shall stand in his way. Besides, Regina is to be on the Staff at the Orphanage.

PASTOR MANDERS: But remember, he's her father.

MRS ALVING: I know exactly what sort of a father he's been to her. No, she's never going back to him with my consent.

PASTOR MANDERS *[getting up]:* But my dear Mrs Alving, there's no need to be so vehement about it. It's sad the way you misjudge Engstrand; one would almost think you were afraid -

MRS ALVING *[more calmly]:* Be that as it may, I've taken

Regina into my house, and there she shall stay. *[Listening]* Sh! Don't say any more about it, my dear Mr Manders. *[Radiant with happiness]* Listen, there's Osvald on the stairs; now we'll think about nothing but him. [OSVALD ALVING, *in a light overcoat with his hat in his hand, smoking a large meerschaum pipe, comes in through the door on the left.]*

OSVALD *[stopping in the doorway]:* Oh, I'm sorry – I thought you were in the study. *[Coming in]* Good morning, Pastor.

PASTOR MANDERS *[staring]:* Extraordinary!

MRS ALVING: Well, what do you think of him, Mr Manders?

PASTOR MANDERS: I - I - No, can it really be.. .?

OSVALD: Yes, it's really the Prodigal Son, Pastor.

PASTOR MANDERS: Oh, my dear boy...!

OSVALD: Well, the son come home again, then.

MRS ALVING: Osvald's thinking of the time when you were so set against the idea of his becoming an artist.

PASTOR MANDERS: Many a step that seems unwise to our human judgement turns out, afterwards to be - *[Grasping his hand]* Anyhow, welcome home! Well my dear Osvald - may I still call you Osvald?

OSVALD: Of course, what else should you call me?

PASTOR MANDERS: Good. What I was going to say; my dear Osvald, was this: you mustn't imagine that I condemn the artistic life unreservedly; I'm sure there are many people who can keep their souls unspotted even in those surroundings.

OSVALD: Let's hope so.

MRS ALVING *[beaming with pleasure]:* I know someone who's kept both his soul and body unharmed. Just look at him, Pastor Manders.

OSVALD *[pacing across the room]:* All right, Mother dear, all right!

PASTOR MANDERS: Ah, certainly - that's undeniable. And you've begun to make a name for yourself already. The papers have often mentioned you – most favourably, too. Though I must admit, I don't seem to have seen it so often recently.

OSVALD *[up by the conservatory]:* No, I haven't been painting so much lately.

MRS ALVING: Even an artist must have a rest now and then.

PASTOR MANDERS: Yes, I can see that - so that he can - collect his forces and prepare himself for something great.

OSVALD: Yes... Will lunch be ready soon, Mother?

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MRS ALVING: In less than half an hour. He's got a good appetite, thank heaven.

OSVALD: I found Father's pipe in my room, so –

PASTOR MANDERS: Ah, so *that* was it!

MRS ALVING: What?

PASTOR MANDERS: When Osvald came in at the door with the pipe in his mouth, it was like seeing his father in the flesh.

OSVALD: Oh, really?

MRS ALVING: No, you can't say that! Osvald takes after me.

PASTOR MANDERS: Yes, but there's a look about the corners of his mouth - something about the lips - that definitely reminds me of Alving. Especially now he's smoking.

MRS ALVING: I don't agree. *I* think Osvald has much more of a clergyman's mouth.

PASTOR MANDERS: Yes - yes - several of my colleagues have just that expression.

MRS ALVING: But put your pipe away, my dear boy; I won't have smoking in here.

OSVALD *[putting the pipe down]:* Of course. I only wanted to try it - I smoked it once before, as a child.

MRS ALVING: You?

OSVALD: Yes, it was when I was quite small; I remember I went up to Father's study one evening when he was in a particularly good mood. . .

MRS ALVING: Oh, you don't remember anything of those days.

OSVALD: Yes, I remember it distinctly - he picked me up and put me on his knee and let me smoke his pipe. 'Smoke it, boy,' he said, 'go on, boy, smoke away!' And I smoked as hard as I could, till I felt myself turning pale, and great drops of sweat broke out on my forehead. Then he burst out laughing.

PASTOR MANDERS: How extraordinary.

MRS ALVING: My dear Pastor, it's only something Osvald must have dreamed!

OSVALD: No, I'm sure I didn't dream it, Mother. Because, don't you remember, you came in and carried me off to the nursery. Then I was sick, and I saw that you were crying. Did Father often play tricks like that?

PASTOR MANDERS: When he was young, he was full of high spirits. . . .

OSVALD: And yet he managed to achieve so much in the

world - so much that was good and useful – although he died so young.

PASTOR MANDERS: Yes, you've certainly inherited a worthy name from an industrious man, my dear Osvald Alving. Let's hope it'll be an inspiration to you.

OSVALD: It certainly ought to be.

PASTOR MANDERS: Anyhow, it was good of you to come home for the celebrations in his honour.

OSVALD: That was the least I could do for my father.

MRS ALVING: But best of all is that I shall have him here for so long.

PASTOR MANDERS: Yes, I hear that you're going to stop at home for the winter.

OSVALD: I'm staying here indefinitely, Pastor. Oh it's good to be home again! MRS ALVING *[beaming]:* Yes, isn't it?

PASTOR MANDERS *[looking at him with sympathy]:* You went out into the world very young, my dear Osvald.

OSVALD: I did - I sometimes wonder if it wasn't too early… .

MRS ALVING: Oh, not in the least; it's the best thing for a healthy boy - especially when he's an only child; he shouldn't stay at home with his father and mother and get spoilt.

PASTOR MANDERS: That's a very moot point, Mrs Alving; a child's proper place must always be his father's house.

OSVALD: Yes, I agree with you there, Pastor.

PASTOR MANDERS: Look at your own son - oh yes, we can say it to his face - what has it done to *him?* At twenty-six or twenty-seven years old, he's never had a chance of knowing what a real home is like.

OSVALD: Oh no, I'm sorry, Pastor, but you're quite wrong there.

PASTOR MANDERS: Oh? I thought you'd been living almost entirely in artistic circles.

OSVALD: So I have.

PASTOR MANDERS: And chiefly among the younger artists.

OSVALD: Yes.

PASTOR MANDERS: Well, I shouldn't think most of those people could afford to set up a home and support a family.

OSVALD: Many of them certainly can't afford to marry, Pastor.

PASTOR MANDERS: That's exactly what I'm saying.

OSVALD: But they can still have a home; and several of them have - very pleasant, comfortable homes, too.

[MRS ALVING, *who has been listening intently, nods but*

does not speak.]

PASTOR MANDERS: Ah, but I'm not talking about bachelor establishments. By a home, I mean family life, where a man lives with his wife and children.

OSVALD: Yes, or with his children and his children's mother.

PASTOR MANDERS. *[with a start, clasping his hands]:* But good heavens. . . ! OSVALD: Well?

PASTOR MANDERS: Lives with - with his children's mother?

OSVALD: Yes. Would you rather he abandoned his children's mother?

PASTOR MANDERS: So these are illicit relationships you're referring to? What are known as 'irregular unions'.

OSVALD: I've never noticed anything particularly irregular about these people's lives together.

PASTOR MANDERS: But how could a young man or a young woman with any sort of decent upbringing bear to live like that - and quite openly, too?

OSVALD: But what else can they do - a poor young artist or a young girl? It costs a good deal of money to get married. What are they to do?

PASTOR MANDERS: What are they to do? Well, Mr

Alving, I'll tell you what they can do. They should keep away from each other from the beginning, that's what they should do.

OSVALD: That sort of advice wouldn't get you very far with warm-blooded young lovers.

MRS ALVING: No, it wouldn't.

PASTOR MANDERS *[continuing]:* And to think that the authorities permit such things - allow them to go on quite openly! *[To Mrs Alving]* How right I was to be so deeply concerned about your son! In circles where open immorality is accepted - and even honoured.

OSVALD: Let me tell you something, Pastor: I often used to spend Sunday at some of these 'irregular' homes.

PASTOR MANDERS: On Sunday, too!

OSVALD: Yes, the day when one should relax - but I've never heard an objectionable word, and certainly never seen anything that could be called immoral. No, but do you know when I *have* come across immorality in artistic circles?

PASTOR MANDERS: No, thank heaven!

OSVALD: Let me tell you, then: I've met it when one or two of your model husbands and fathers have come abroad to have a little look round on their own account, and have done the

artists the honour of calling on them in their humble lodgings. Then we learned a thing or two; those gentlemen could tell us about places and things we'd never dreamed of.

PASTOR MANDERS: What? Do you mean to tell me that respectable men from home here would. . .

OSVALD: Haven't you ever heard these respectable men, when they got home again, holding forth about how rampant immorality is abroad?

PASTOR MANDERS: Yes, of course.

MRS ALVING: I have, too.

OSVALD: Well, you can take their word for it - some of them are experts! *[Clasping his head]* Oh, I can't bear to hear the wonderful, free life over there degraded like that!

MRS ALVING: You mustn't get so excited, Osvald, it only upsets you.

OSVALD: No, you're right, Mother, it isn't good for me. It's because I'm so infernally tired, you see. I'll go out and have a little walk before lunch. Forgive me, Mr Manders; I know you can never agree with me about it, but I had to speak out. *[He goes out by the farther door on the right.]*

MRS ALVING: My poor boy!

PASTOR MANDERS: You may well say that! So this is what

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he's come to! [MRS ALVING *looks at him without speaking;* PASTOR MANDERS *paces up and down.]* He called himself the Prodigal Son. . . oh, the pity of it - the pity of it! [MRS ALVING *continues to look at him.]* And what have you to say to all that?

MRS ALVING: I say that Osvald was right in every single word.

PASTOR MANDERS: Right? Right to have standards like that?

MRS ALVING: Living all alone here, I've come to think along those same lines, Mr Manders, though I've never had the courage to put it into words. Now, thank goodness, my boy can speak for me.

PASTOR MANDERS: You are much to be pitied, Mrs Alving. But now I must have a serious talk with you. I'm not here now as your man of business and adviser, nor even as your late husband's old friend. I stand here as a priest; just as I stood before you at the most critical moment of your life.

MRS ALVING: And what has the priest to say to me?

PASTOR MANDERS: First let me refresh your memory. This is an appropriate moment - tomorrow is the tenth anniversary of your husband's death. Tomorrow a memorial

is to be unveiled in his honour; tomorrow I shall have to speak to all the assembled company. But today I want to speak to you alone.

MRS ALVING: Well, Pastor, go on.

PASTOR MANDERS: Do you remember how, after less than a year of married life, you stood on the brink of a precipice? How you left your home, how you ran away from your husband? Yes, Mrs Alving, ran away - ran away and refused to go back to him in spite of all his prayers and entreaties.

MRS ALVING: Have you forgotten how utterly miserable I was in that first year?

PASTOR MANDERS: Craving for happiness in this life is the sign of an unruly spirit. What right have we mortals to happiness? No, we have our duty to do, Mrs Alving; and it was your duty to cleave to the man you had chosen, and to whom you were joined in holy matrimony.

MRS ALVING: You know perfectly well the sort of life my husband was leading in those days, and the excesses he was guilty of.

PASTOR MANDERS: I know only too well the rumours about him that were going round, and - if those rumours were true - I should be the last to approve of such conduct in a

young man. But it's not a wife's place to judge her husband. When a Higher Power had laid a cross on you for your own good, it should have been your duty to bear it with patience. Instead of which, you rebelled you cast off the cross, you deserted the sinner whom you should have helped; you went away risking your good name - and imperilling other people's reputations into the bargain.

MRS ALVING: Other people's? You mean one other person's.

PASTOR MANDERS: It was grossly inconsiderate of you to seek refuge with me.

MRS ALVING: With our priest? Our great friend?

PASTOR MANDERS: For that reason above all. Yes; you can thank God that I had the necessary strength of mind to dissuade you from your outrageous plan; and that it was vouchsafed to me to lead you back to the path of duty - and home to your rightful husband.

MRS ALVING: Yes, Pastor Manders, *that* was certainly your doing.

PASTOR MANDERS: I was only the poor instrument of a Higher Power. And haven't you been increasingly thankful, all the days of your life since then, that I made you submit, in

all obedience, to your duty? Didn't it all happen as I foretold? Didn't Alving turn his back on his dissolute ways as a husband should, and didn't he live an irreproachable and affectionate life with you from then on till the end of his days? Didn't he become a great benefactor in the district, and didn't he encourage you so much by his example that in the end you came to be his helper in all his enterprises - and a very capable helper, too. . . . Yes, I know you did, Mrs Alving - I give you your due for *that.* But now I come to the second great mistake in your life.

MRS ALVING: What do you mean?

PASTOR MANDERS: Just as you failed once in your duty as a wife, you have since failed in that of a mother.

MRS ALVING: Oh...!

PASTOR MANDERS: All your life, you've been ruled by your deplorable willfulness; your entire energy has been devoted to indiscipline and, lawlessness - you would never tolerate the slightest restraint. Without scruple or remorse, you've evaded everything in your life that was difficult - as if it were a load that you could shrug off at will. It didn't suit you to be a wife any longer, so you left your husband; you found it tedious to be a mother, so you sent your child to live

among strangers.

MRS ALVING: Yes, it's true I did that.

PASTOR MANDERS: So that now you've become a stranger to him yourself.

MRS ALVING: No no, that I'm certainly not.

PASTOR MANDERS: You are; you must be. And look how he's come back to you! Think carefully. Mrs Alving . . .you did your husband a great wrong - that memorial down there is an admission of it - now admit that you wronged your son. too. There may still be time to turn him from his sinful ways. Mend your own ways. And save what is left to be saved in him. For the truth is. Mrs Alving *[raising his forefinger].* you have failed as a mother, and I consider it my duty to tell you so.

[Pause.]

MRS ALVING *[slowly, and with self-control]:* You've spoken your mind, Pastor Manders, and tomorrow you'll make a speech in my husband's memory. I don't mean to speak tomorrow, but I'm going to speak to you now for a moment, just as you've been speaking to me.

PASTOR MANDERS: Naturally you want to make excuses for your conduct.

MRS ALVING: No, only to state facts.

PASTOR MANDERS: Well?

MRS ALVING: Of all that you've been saying about me and my husband, and of our life together after you brought me back to what you call the path of duty - of all that, you know absolutely nothing at first hand. From that moment, you, who had been our greatest friend, never set foot in our house again.

PASTOR MANDERS: You and your husband moved away from town directly afterwards.

MRS ALVING: Yes, and all the time my husband was alive, you never once came out here to see us. It was only because you had to deal with the business affairs of the Orphanage that you were finally forced to come and visit me.

PASTOR MANDERS *[in a low, diffident voice]:* Helena, if that's meant as a reproach, I can only beg you to remember -

MRS ALVING: - the respect that you owe to your cloth, yes! I'd been a runaway wife; one can never be too careful with loose women like that!

PASTOR MANDERS: My dear Mrs Alving, that is a gross exaggeration.

MRS ALVING: Yes, perhaps it is. But what I wanted to say

was that when you pass judgement on my married life, you have nothing more to go on than common gossip.

PASTOR MANDERS: Perhaps - but what of it?

MRS ALVING: Now, Mr Manders, I'm going to tell you the truth. I'd promised myself that you should hear it one day . . . and no one but you.

PASTOR MANDERS: What is the truth?

MRS ALVING: The truth is this: that my husband was just as dissolute when he died as he had been all his life.

PASTOR MANDERS *[reaching for a chair]*: What do you mean?

MRS ALVING: After nineteen years of married life, he was as dissolute - in his desires, at any rate - as he was when you married us.

PASTOR MANDERS: You call those youthful indiscretions, those irregularities - excesses, if you like - a dissolute life?

MRS ALVING: It was our doctor who used the expression.

PASTOR MANDERS: I don't understand. . . .

MRS ALVING: It doesn't matter.

PASTOR MANDERS: It almost makes my head reel. ... Do you mean that the whole of your married life - all those years with your husband - was nothing but a whited sepulchre?

MRS ALVING: That was all. Now you know.

PASTOR MANDERS: I - I don't seem able to take it in - I can't grasp it. How could you possibly -? How could a thing like that be kept quiet?

MRS ALVING: That was my continual struggle - day in and day out. After Osvald was born, I thought he reformed a little, but it didn't last. After that, I had to fight twice as hard - a desperate battle so that no one should know the sort of man my child's father was. Well, you know how charming Alving was - no one could bring themselves to believe anything but good of him. He was one of those men whose life had no effect on his reputation. . . . But at last, Mr Manders - there came something else that you must know about - the most abominable thing of all.

PASTOR MANDERS: More abominable still?

MRS ALVING: I'd put up with him, although I knew only too well what sort of life he was secretly leading outside. . . . But when it came to debauchery in this very house -

PASTOR MANDERS.: What? Here?

MRS ALVING: Yes, in our own home. *[She points to the nearer door on the right.]* It was in the dining-room that I first came across it. I was doing something or other out there,

and the door was ajar. I heard our housemaid come up from the garden with some water for the plants over there. . . .

PASTOR MANDERS: Well?

MRS ALVING: After a little while I heard my husband come in too. I heard him say something to her softly, and then I heard *[with a short laugh]* - oh, I can still hear it, it was so distressing and yet so ridiculous at the same time - I heard my own housemaid whisper: 'Leave go, sir-let me be!'

PASTOR MANDERS: A piece of unseemly high spirits on his part, Mrs Alving. . . . It can't have been more than high spirits, believe me.

MRS ALVING: I knew what to believe soon enough, Pastor Manders. My husband had his way with the girl, and the affair had its consequences.

PASTOR MANDERS *[as though turned to stone]:* And all in this house! In this house. . . .

MRS ALVING: I've endured a great deal in this house. To keep him at home in the evenings - and at night - I've had to force myself to join in his secret drinking bouts up in his room. I've had to sit alone with him - clinking glasses and drinking with him, and listening to his lewd stupid talk. I've had to fight with him, physically, to get him to go to bed.

PASTOR MANDERS *[shaken]:* You had to endure all that?

MRS ALVING: I had to endure it for my little boy's sake . . . until there was this final humiliation, with my own servant-girl. Then I vowed to myself: 'This is the end!' I took over the control of the house - complete control, over him and over everything else. He didn't dare to protest, you see, now that I had a weapon against him. That was when I sent Osvald away. He was seven then, and beginning to notice things and ask questions, as children do. I thought he might be poisoned just by the unwholesome atmosphere of this house. . . and *that,* Mr Manders, I would not endure. That's why I sent him away. And now you see why I couldn't let him set foot in this house as long as his father was alive. No one knows what it cost me.

PASTOR MANDERS: It must have been a terrible life for you!

MRS ALVING: I could never have gone through with it if I hadn't had my work. Yes, I honestly claim to have worked: all the improvements on the estate - all the modem equipment that my husband got so much credit for - do you imagine that he had the energy for anything of the sort - lying all day on the sofa reading an old Court Circular? No, and I'll tell you

something else: it was I who encouraged him when he had his few good days; and it was I Who was left to manage everything when he went back to his debauchery, or when he relapsed into whining self-pity.

PASTOR MANDERS: And this is the man whom you're building a memorial to!

MRS ALVING: There you see the power of a bad conscience.

PASTOR MANDERS: A bad....What do you mean?

MRS ALVING: I always felt that the truth must come out one day, and that everyone would believe it. The Orphanage was to refute all the rumours and dispel any doubts.

PASTOR MANDERS: You've certainly succeeded there, Mrs Alving.

MRS ALVING: There was one other reason: I didn't want Osvald, my own son, to inherit anything whatever from his father.

PASTOR MANDERS: Then it was from Alving's estate that...

MRS ALVING: Yes. The sums that I've set aside, year by year, for this Orphanage, make up the amount - I've reckoned it out very carefully - the amount that made Lieutenant Alving a good match in his day.

PASTOR MANDERS: I don't see -

MRS ALVING: That was my purchase price. I don't want that money to go to Osvald. Whatever my son inherits shall come from me and no one else.

[OSVALD ALVING *comes through the farther door on the right, having left his hat and overcoat in the hall.*

MRS ALVING *goes to meet him.]* My darling boy, are you back already?

OSVALD: Yes. What is there to do out of doors in this ever lasting rain? But I gather lunch is just ready - that's fine.

REGINA *[coming from the dining-room with a parcel]:* A parcel's just come for you, Madam. *[She gives it to her.]*

MRS ALVING *[glancing at Pastor Manders]:* The music for the choir tomorrow probably.

PASTOR MANDERS: Hm . ..

REGINA: And lunch is ready.

MRS ALVING: Thank you - we'll come in a moment, I just want to. . . *[She starts to undo the parcel.]*

REGINA *[to Osvald]:* Would you like red wine or white, Mr Osvald?

OSVALD: Both, please, Miss Engstrand.

REGINA: *Bien.* Very good, Mr Osvald. *[She goes into the*

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dining-room.]

OSVALD: I may as well help you to open it. *[He follows her into the dining-room; the door swings half-open again after him.]*

MRS ALVING: Yes, I thought so, it's the song for the choir, Pastor.

PASTOR MANDERS *[clasping his hands]:* How shall I ever be able to make my speech tomorrow with a clear conscience?

MRS ALVING: Oh, you'll manage.

PASTOR MANDERS *[quietly, so as not to be heard in the dining-room]*: Yes - we mustn't have any scandal.

MRS ALVING: And then this long hideous farce will be over. From tomorrow onwards, I shall feel as if my late husband had never lived in this house; there will be no one here but my son and his mother.

[From the dining-room comes the noise of a chair falling, and REGINA'S *voice in a sharp whisper:]*

REGINA: Stop it, Osvald! Don't' be silly! Let me go!

MRS ALVING *[with a start of horror]:* Ah! *[She stares wildly at the half-open door.* OSVALD *can be heard coughing and humming inside. A bottle is opened.]*

PASTOR MANDERS *[upset]:* What's happening? Mrs Alving - what is it?

MRS ALVING *[hoarsely]:* Ghosts! The couple in the conservatory - walking again.

PASTOR MANDERS: What do you mean? Regina. . .? Is *she*. . .?

MRS ALVING: Yes. Come - not a word! *[She takes Pastor Manders by the arm and walks unsteadily with him to the dining-room.]*

ACTIVITY

1. Why, do you think, is the play called *Ghosts*?
2. How is characterization done in a play, and in this one in particular?
3. What is the significance of the play's setting?
4. What does the Act tell us about morality?
5. How is action maintained in the play?
6. Write a short piece on the argument about the relationship between art and morality as presented in this Act.
7. What are the implications of having only one place, i.e the Alvings house, for all the events of the Act?

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8. Choose three pieces you like in the Act and translate them into Arabic.

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Damascus University

اللجنة العلمية

د. نافذ شماس، قسم اللغة الإنكليزية، جامعة دمشق

د. عابد إسماعيل، قسم اللغة الإنكليزية، جامعة دمشق

د. رامز البعيني، قسم اللغة الإنكليزية، جامعة دمشق

This book has been reviewed by:

Dr. Nafez Shammas,

English Department, Damascus University

Dr. Abed Ishmail,

English Department, Damascus University

Dr. Ramez al-Bainy,

English Department, Damascus University

جميع حقوق الطبع والترجمة والنشر محفوظة لمديرية الكتب والمطبوعات.

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