Literary Texts for Translators (1)

وقل رب زدني علما
جامعة دمشق
Damascus University

Syrian Arab Republic
Damascus University Publications
Open Learning Center
Department of Translation

Literary Texts for Translators (1)

Waddah Al-Khatib, Ph.D.

313

Damascus University

وقل رب زدني علما
جامعة دمشق
Damascus University

Table of Contents

1. Introduction: What is Poetry	7
-English Poetry: *historical overview*	8
Old English	9
Middle English	10
Modern English	13
2. Elizabethan Poetry	17
- William Shakespeare:	20
Sonnet No. 20	21
- Ben Jonson:	23
To Celia	24
3. The Seventeenth & The Eighteenth Centuries	**27**
-George Herbert:	30
Jordan (1)	31
-Richard Lovelace:	33
To Althea from Prison	34
-Katherine Philips:	37
A Married State	38
-Alexander Pope:	40
Of the Character of Women	41
4. The Romantic Period	**45**
-Mary Wollstonecraft:	47
A Vindication of the Rights of Women	48
-William Wordsworth:	52
Nutting	53
- S.T. Coleridge:	57
Kubla Khan	58
-George Gordon, Lord Byron:	65
Written After Swimming from Sestos to Abydos	67
The Say that Hope is Happiness	70
-Percy Bysshe Shelley:	72
To a Skylark	73
-John Keats:	80
To Fanny Brawne	82
To Percy Bysshe Shelley	85

5. Victorian & Modern Texts **89**
-Alfred, Lord Tennyson: 89
Tithonus 90
-Robert Browning: 95
My Last Duchess 96
-William Butler Yeats: 100
Easter 1916 101
-T.S. Eliot: 106
The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock 106
- Virginia Woolf: 114
Profession for Women 114

6. Index of Literary Terms **124**

7. Bibliography **143**

8. Reviewers **144**

Damascus University

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS POETRY?

Robert Frost is reported to have said once that "poetry is what gets lost in translation."[1] This non-definition by one of the most famous and celebrated American poets of the twentieth century constitutes a memorable contribution to the numerous attempts by English poets, intellectuals, and literary critics, to define the nature of poetry. Whereas Frost's statement represents an amusing, or at one extreme a frustrating comment, it also stands as a testimony to the difficulties related to the attempt to define what poetry is or is not.

These difficulties are more apparent in the case of poetry than they are in prose or drama, since a poem, in its very nature, "conveys heightened forms of perception, experience, [and] meaning."[2] In other words, poetic production is more condensed, more intense than prosaic language. It often attempts to relay an understanding of an experience or an explication of an idea with a sense of urgency in terms of space (the compactness of the text) and time (the compactness of meaning).

---

[1] *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) 219:16. The quotation is attributed to Frost and does not appear in any of his written works.

[2] Alex Preminger & T.V.F. Brogan, eds., *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 938. Henceforth referred to as NPE.

The beginnings of poetry in most cultures are found in the quintessential human need, individual or collective, to communicate in memorable words the widest spectrum of human activities. This is why the beginning of poetry is often associated with singing and music. Before the invention of writing as a way to record and preserve for posterity the annals of a given culture or society, oral poetry with its *rhythms, rhymes* and repetitive sound patterns prevailed as a vehicle for collective consciousness and identity (NPE, 863). It is safe to presume that poetic production at one stage acquired an important religious status in many cultures where the lines between the sacred and the artistic were not as clearly defined as they are in many literary traditions of the world today.

ENGLISH POETRY: ***historical overview***

The story of the evolution of English poetry is closely related to the history of the English language itself. Unlike Arabic for example, the English language has undergone tremendous changes in its syntax, morphology and spelling over the last millennium. This is why scholars of the history of the English language speak of Old English (ca. 650-1066), Middle English (ca. 1066-1500) and Modern English (ca. 1500-present day). Each is a language that is not mutually comprehensible with the other two. As a result an educated native speaker of

Modern English needs to take a specialized course in Middle English before being able to read most documents written in that language.

The structures of English poetry, its rhythms, and at times, its very themes, often reflect these changes in the language itself, and in the culture as a whole. So, Old English poetry is foreign not only to the modern British ear, but also to the sensibilities and taste of the people who speak the language natively today.

Old English

Old English traces its beginning to the Anglo-Saxon conquest of the southern parts of Britain. The Angles[1] and the Saxons were Germanic tribes that poured into Britain in successive waves of conquest and migration. The origin of these tribes explains why Old English "displays its kinship with other Germanic languages…much more clearly than does contemporary British and American English."[2] To the ears and eyes of the native speaker of Modern English, Old English sounds and reads like a very foreign language.

---

[1] English takes its name from the *Angles* who first committed their dialect to writing. For more, see *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985) 319. Henceforth referred to as OCEL.

[2] M. H. Abrams, ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Major Authors* 7th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001) 1. Henceforth referred to as NAEL.

Old English poetry survived "thanks to the early Christian conversions of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms[1] and to the literacy associated with monastic culture" (NPE, 333). The connection between the spread of literacy and the advent of Christianity in Britain explains the religious themes and subject matter of Old English poetry, although strong secular pre-Christian themes and motifs continued to manifest themselves in the literary production of that era.

Middle English

In 1066 The French-speaking Normans conquered Britain. Within few years of the decisive battle of Hastings that scaled the fate of the British Islands, the predominantly Anglo-Saxon population of Britain found itself under the control of a French-speaking ruling class. Old English had to gradually give way to what we call today Middle English, a new variety of English that was greatly and increasingly exhibiting marked French influences.

Added to influence already exerted by Latin, the sacred language of the Catholic Church, the transmutation of French vocabulary, idioms and grammatical structures into Old English meant that by the 13th century we see examples of poems mixing

[1] The conversion of the inhabitants of ancient Britain from their animistic religions to Christianity started with the arrival of St. Augustine to Kent in 579.

French, English and Latin (NPE, 335). This rich inter-linguistic exchange and cross-cultural fertilization resulted not only in the emergence of novel venues for poetic expression, but also in superb works of literature. Unarguably the most notable contributions are those of Geoffrey Chaucer in the 14th Century whose life and work exhibit marked French influences (OCEL, 188). Chaucer's most celebrated work is *The Canterbury Tales*, a collection of stories narrated by pilgrims on their way to visit the shrine of the famous English saint Thomas à Becket. The following lines from the *Canterbury Tales* may serve as a good example of how Middle English looked and sounded:

Why sholde I noghte as wel eek telle yow al
The portreiture that was upon the wal
Withinne the temple of myghty Mars the rede?
Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and brede,
Lyk to the estres of the grisly place
That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace
In thilke colde, frosty regioun
There as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.

In Modern English, the above lines would be:

Why should I not as well also tell you
Of the paintings that were upon the wall
Inside the temple of mighty Mars the Red?
The walls were covered in paintings, in length and breadth

Similar in style to the interior of the terrible place
That is known as the great temple of Mars, in Thrace.
It is in that cold and frosty area
That the home of Mars is to be found.[1]

The reader would most likely notice the differences in spelling between the two versions. Some are easily noticed (rede/red and wal/wall). Others are more difficult to detect (brede/breadth and sovereyn/sovereign). More challenging for the reader of Modern English are the archaic words such as *eek* (also) and *portrieture* (painting).

The above passage is also significant in that in exemplifies a shift that we see in English poetry, indeed in most European traditions of the late Medieval and early Renaissance periods, an interest in classical allusions and themes. The reference to Mars, the ancient god of war shows the tension that begins to rise between the sacred and the profane or the secular. One of the pilgrims of Chaucer's work is depicting an image in the center of which stands the temple of a pagan god. As has been mentioned above, the pilgrims were telling stories on their way to another, albeit figurative "temple," that of a Christian saint. This conflation of the sacred (the Christian, or the dogmatic) with the secular or the profane (the non-Christian or the anti-Christian)

[1] Both the original text and the translation are from *English Literature: A Student Guide* 3rd ed. by Martin Stephen (Essex: Pearson Education ltd., 2000) 97.

becomes an important trend to follow throughout the history of not only English literature, but European literatures and arts in general, even to the present day.

Modern English

Unlike the circumstances that led to the emergence of Middle-English language and literature, no sudden or singular traumatic event leads to the next stage of transformation that resulted in the birth of Modern English. A host of factors contributed to the surfacing of the English that we know today, which was founded on the dialect of the East Midlands in Middle English (OCEL, 319). This is the language of such great poets in the English literary tradition as Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Wordsworth, and T.S. Eliot. It is a language that had undergone, and continues to undergo tremendous changes through time. Although we speak of Modern English as a language that begins roughly around the beginning of the 16th century, the first serious attempt at standardizing the spelling of this language, and canonizing the usage of its vocabulary did not come until the 18th century in the monumental work of Samuel Johnson. In 1755, Johnson published his *Dictionary of the English Language*, which contained "definitions of over 40.000 words, illustrating them with about 114.000 quotations drawn from every field of

learning and literature from the time of Sidney onwards (OCEL, 514).

Success in defining the beginnings of modern English poetry may appear to be as elusive as the attempt to define all the factors that led to the birth of the Modern English language. For all intents and purposes, however, it is generally agreed upon that we can consider as a starting point those poets whose works exhibit a genuine impact of Renaissance style and sensibilities, and a marked departure from medieval spirit. The first such poet to consistently reflect such a shift is Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-42). The editors of the *New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* explain the significance of Wyatt's precursory work:

> A generation after [Wyatt's] death, Puttenham[1] commended him and Surrey[2] for introducing Italian polish into "our rude and homely manner of vulgar poetry," and praised them as "the first reformers of our English metre and style...Wyatt's love poems...express the laments of the unrequited or deserted lover rather than the joys of mutability; and his sonnets introduce many of the [themes and motifs] that became so popular in the Elizabethan[3]

[1] George Puttenham was a 16th century literary critic to whom the authorship of *The Art of English Poesy* is often attributed (OCEL, 800).

[2] Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey was a contemporary poet of Wyatt Like Wyatt, he studied Italian models of poetry especially the sonnets of Petrarch (OCEL, 950).

[3] Reference to the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603).

> sonnet[1]: sexual love as a hunt, the lover as a ship running aground on the rocks. Technically, Wyatt is important for the musical quality of his lyrics…Scholars have argued—and still disagree—whether the broken, hesitant rhythms of his lyrics result from our ignorance of 16th century pronunciation or are a deliberate departure from regularity in the interests of artistic expressiveness (339).

The impact of the poets of that period appears, therefore, to be multifaceted. Modern English poetry, and by extension literature, began with shifts in *meter* and *style*. These changes reflected influences from the Italian tradition, and were enhanced by a departure from Middle English forms and themes. The Elizabethan period marks the beginning of these changes, and of Modern poetry.

[1] The sonnet, a type of poem, will be discussed later in this book.


وقل رب زدني علما
جامعة دمشق
Damascus University

ELIZABETHAN POETRY

Damascus University


وقل رب زدني علما
جامعة دمشق
Damascus University

ELIZABETHAN POETRY

The age of Queen Elizabeth I marks a period that one can justifiably call the first Golden Age of English poetry. Until the beginning of the sixteenth century "the English language had almost no prestige abroad, and there were those at home who doubted that it could serve as a suitable medium for serious, elevated, or elegant discourse" (NAEL, 315). That perception changes dramatically during that century. The reason for that change can be attributed largely to the profusion of creative authors who, it appears, lived within the right cultural climate that promoted and encouraged their literary endeavors. Other factors include the increasing exposure by a substantial number of English clerics, government officials, and intellectuals to the influence of Renaissance Humanism that flourished in Italy and other parts of the Continent.

On the literary level, humanism meant a rediscovery of the classical literature of ancient Rome and Greece. With that discovery came new ideas, themes, and motifs that poets and playwrights explored and emulated. At the center of these ideas is the concept that Man was free to feel and act as if humanity

was the locus of meaningful cosmological existence. The Italian influence is unquestionable:

> In the brilliant, intensely competitive, and vital world of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, the submission of the human spirit to the penitential discipline gave way to unleashed curiosity, individual self-assertion, and a powerful conviction that man was the measure of all things (NAEL, 317).

During the medieval period, such an exposure to, and celebration of the ethos of classical literature and arts would have been seen as nothing short of blasphemy. The presence of a queen who was staunchly fighting to maintain the "Englishness" of her kingdom and to ensure her independence from the once formidable power of the Church of Rome facilitated the break away from old traditions and modes of expression. The competition among the aristocracy to become patrons of the art provided a canopy of protection for poets and playwrights.

The most common lyrical form of expression, indeed the most popular, was the sonnet. A short poem of 14 lines with a fixed rhyme scheme and meter, the sonnet was first introduced to English by Wyatt. During the Elizabethan period, the most common form of the sonnet was the Petrarchan, in which the poem is divided into two parts, the *octave* and the *sestet*. The octave constituted the first eight lines which usually presented a

problem or a dilemma or posed a question. The sestet, the last six lines, often gave a solution to the problem or an answer to the question of the sonnet.

Another common form of the sonnet during that time was the Shakespearean, in which the poem was divided into three quatrains and a concluding couplet. The quatrains often introduced aspects of an idea or comparisons between more than one idea, while the couplet offered a conclusion or a sense of closure to the idea(s).

Damascus University

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

We know less about Shakespeare's life than we know bout that of almost any other major English writer. He was born the third of eight children in Stratford-on- Avon. Shakespeare probably attended the Strafford grammar school, but received no university education.

The first record of him after his christening dates from 1582, when he married Anne Hathaway; they had a daughter in 1583 and twins in 1585. For most of his career he was an actor and shareholder in, and principal playwright of, the successful theatrical company of his time. He quickly gained a reputation as the "most excellent" English dramatist in both comedy and tragedy and was well known for his history plays, narrative poems, and the "sugared Sonnets" that were circulated" among his private friends. After the turn of the century he composed in rapid succession his tragic masterpieces *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. He apparently retired to Stratford around 1610, and during his later years worked mainly in the genres of romance and tragicomedy. When he died, no collected edition of his works had been played; `irst Folio,

a collection of his plays (but not his narrative poems or sonnets) appeared only in 1632.[1]

Sonnet No. 20

Quatrain
A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the master mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart but not acquainted
With shifting change as is false woman's fashion;

An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,[2]
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
A man in hue all hues in his controlling,
Which steals men's eyes and woman's souls amazeth.

And for a woman wert thou first created,
Till Nature as she wrought thee fell a-doting,[3]
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.

Couplet
But since she pricked[4] thee for woman's pleasure,
Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their treasure.[5]

---

[1] Unless otherwise stated, this and all short biographies of the poets and authors in this book are taken from *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. 4th ed., Margaret Ferguson et. al. eds. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996.
[2] In contemporary English: roving.
[3] Crazy, or infatuated.
[4] Marked.
[5] (1) Sexual enjoyment or (2) interest (as in usury).

I. Read the sonnet, then:

- ➔ **Identify all the words that you could not find in a dictionary.**
- ➔ **Think of reasons why you could find these words in your dictionary.**
- ➔ **Look at the end of each line. Identify any pattern you can detect. Follow the example in quatrain I**
- ➔ **In the appendix entitled *literary terms* find out the meanings of the following terms: *quatrain, couplet, meter, rhyme, metaphor, pun, alliteration.***
- ➔ **Find examples of the above literary terms in the sonnet above.**
- ➔ **Discuss your findings with your instructor.**

II. Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor and classmates.

III. Discuss with your instructor the general theme of this sonnet.

IV. Translate the first quatrain and discuss your translation with your classmates and instructor.

Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

Ben(jamin) Jonson was born in London after the death of his father, a clergyman. He was Educated at Westminster School. Jonson volunteered for military service, and after returning to England began a career in the theater, first as an actor, then as a playwright. In 1598 he killed a fellow actor in a duel but escaped hanging by claiming "benefit of clergy," that is, by demonstrating his ability to read a verse from the Bible. His conversion to Catholicism in that same year no doubt contributed to the charges of "popery" and treason leveled against him after he published his neoclassical tragedy *Sejanus* (1606), which dramatized conspiracy and assassination. Jonson soon gained the king's favor, however, with the series of court masques he began to create in 1605.

In 1616, after he had published his *Works* and had returned (in 1610) to the Church of England he received a substantial pension from the king and effectively occupied the position of poet laureate. Learned in the classics and skilled in a varicty of poetic and dramatic forms, Jonson acquired fame as the author of "comedies of humors" satirizing the eccentricities and "ruling passions" of his characters. In addition to his many successful plays-*Volpone* (1605), *The Alchemist* (1610), for instance – Jonson wrote poetry in a variety of forms, including epigrams, epitaphs, songs (both free standing and designed for

plays and masques), and occasional poems celebrating events and people. In contrast to his contemporary Shakespeare, whose plays were collected only posthumously, Jonson was concerned with constructing an imposing authorial persona. Modeling himself in part on such classical writes as Martial and Horace, he was the first English poet to inspire a "school": the "sons" and "tribes" of Ben that included such poets are Robert Herrick and Thomas Carew.

Song: To Celia[1]

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine:
But might I of Jove's[2] nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.
I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee,
As giving it a hope that there

[1] These lines are not entirely Jonson's composition. The poem is a mix of prose lines borrowed from the work of Philostratus, a Greek sophist of the 3rd century A.D.
[2] A reference to Jupiter the god of gods in the Roman pantheon.

It could not withered be.
But thou thereon didst only breath,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee.

I. Read the poem, then:

- **Identify all the words that you could not find in a dictionary.**
- **Think of reasons why you could not find these words in your dictionary.**
- **Give more than one reason why this is not a sonnet.**
- **Count the syllables in four consecutive lines. Do you see a pattern?**
- **What is the pattern? And what kind of effect do you think it creates?**
- **In the appendix entitled *literary terms* find out the meanings of the following terms: *classical allusion, diction, hyperbole.***

➔ **Find an example of a classical allusion in the poem**

➔ **Identify any poetic exaggeration or hyperbole that you see in the poem.**

II. Discuss with your instructor your own paraphrasing of the poem.

III. Discuss with your instructor the general theme of this song.

IV. Discuss with your instructor the *diction* of this poem.

IV. Translate the last eight lines and discuss your translation with your classmates and instructor.

Damascus University

THE SEVENTEENTH & THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

Damascus University


وقل رب زدني علما
جامعة دمشق
Damascus University

THE SEVENTEENTH & THE EIGHTEENTHCENTURIES

Queen Elizabeth died in 1603. There were no possible heirs to her throne so her cousin, King James VI of Scotland, took over and was rechristened King James I of England. The smooth bloodless transition of power was a great relief to the people of England. It did not appear, at that time, to be a prelude to one of the bloodiest centuries in English history. Within less than half a century after James became king, England would be embroiled in a civil war that would result in the execution of his son King Charles I, and the beginning of the only "republic" in English history. It was called the Commonwealth, and was lead by the puritan leader Oliver Cromwell.

Literature was not insulated from the turbulent events that shook England, nor were poets who found themselves torn apart between two warring camps. Arguably, the poetry of the first half of the century was shaped entirely by the civil war and its repercussions, while the poetry of the second half exhibited a marked consciousness of the lessons learnt from the chaos of the war, and the dictatorial rule of Oliver Cromwell.

Poetic themes, motifs, topics, and varying styles in, and approaches to writing almost invariably reflect conscious reactions to the social, religious and political changes that befell England during the seventeenth century. After the Restoration of

the monarchy to England in 1660, it only seemed natural that the literature of the period would reflect a twofold tendency towards decorum and extravagance. This may appear to be contradictory, but is understood when one looks into the situation in England during the reign of Cromwell. Decorum and an unprecedented interest in form and order appear to be reactions to the excesses of the civil war while extravagance a reaction to the sober austerity of the Puritanism that ruled England for over twenty years.

Within less than half a century of the Restoration of the monarchy to England the trauma caused by the century of the civil war was replaced by a sense of confidence, vitality, and achievement. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the sense of decorum and order that became prevalent after the return of Charles II to England from his exile in France transmuted in literature into what we now know as the Augustan age. The name was after the Roman Emperor Augustus whose reign was marked by stability and splendour that nourished such great Roman poets as Virgil, Horace, and Ovid.[1]

Great authors of the eighteenth century were not content with a nominal allusion. The classical models of literature became the main, at times the only, source of inspiration for such

[1] Martin Stephen, *English Literature, a student guide* (England: Pearson Education, 2000) 176.

great authors as Dryden, Pope, and Swift. The authors of the eighteenth century emulated the classics in form, style, and themes. Resurrecting the classical interest in rhyme and meter, Pope perfected the form of the heroic couplet. Dryden on the other hand attempted to rewrite stories of Shakespearean plays in order to show how great stories can be narrated by adhering to the rules of ancient authorship. The age of Dryden and Pope, as a result, acquired a new name: the Neo-classical age.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, three revolutions would raise doubts about the Augustan ideals, as we will see in the Romantic Age.

Damascus University

George Herbert (1593-1633)

George Herbert's father died when the poet was only three. At sixteen, when he was a student at Westminster School and King's Scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, he wrote two accomplished and devout sonnets. His mother received the two poems with a letter announcing the young Herbert's dedication of his poetic powers to God. His fellowship at Trinity required him to join the clergy within seven years, but after being elected public orator (a springboard into higher positions at court) he left his university duties to proxies while he pursued a secular career. Two terms as a member of the parliament evidently disillusioned him. He was ordained deacon, installed as canon of Lincoln Cathedral, and in 1630, having been ordained priest, received a living as rector of Bemerton. In 1629 he married his stepfather's cousin, and they adopted his two orphaned nieces. In addition to a prose treatise, he wrote many poems in both English and Latin. Shortly before his death, he sent his English poems to his friend, the Anglican clergyman, Nicholas Ferrar, asking him to publish them if he believed that they could "turn to the advantage of any dejected soul;" otherwise, Ferrar was to burn them. The poems collected in *The Temple* (1633) represented Herbert wrote, "a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed betwixt God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my master." Like John Donne, Herbert uses colloquial language

and ingenious conceits and dramatizes the meeting of a powerful intellect and intense faith.

Jordan (1)

Who says that fictions only and false hair
Become a verse? Is there in truth no beauty?
Is all good structure in a winding stair?
May no lines pass, except they do their duty
Not to a true, but painted chair?[1]
Is it no verse, except enchanted groves
And sudden arbors shadow coarse-spun lines?
Must purling streams refresh a lover's loves?
Must all be veiled, while he that reads, divines,
Catching the sense at two removes?[2]
Shepherd are honest people: let them sing;
Riddle who list[3], for me, and pull for prime:
I envy no man's nightingale or spring;
Nor let them punish me with loss of rhyme,
Who plainly say , *My God, My King*.[4]

[1] It was customary to bow before a throne, whether a king was sitting on it or not. The poet is ridiculing the concept of bowing to a throne in a painting (NAEL, 662 n).
[2] "removes" here means "attempts."
[3] "list" here means "wishes"
[4] A reference to the Bible: Psalm 145:1.

I. Read the poem, then:

- ➔ **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- ➔ **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**
- ➔ **Think of the title of poem and relate it to your understanding of it.**
- ➔ **Read the question in line 2. What is the poet trying to say here? Identify similar questions in the poem.**
- ➔ **Describe the *tone* of these questions (you may want to check the meaning of the word *tone* in the literary terms appendix).**

II. Translate the first *Stanza* of the poem. Discuss your translation in class.

III. Discuss the following:

- ➔ **Supposed purpose of the poet in writing this poem.**
- ➔ **Success in explicating the theme.**
- ➔ **The *diction* of the poem.**

Damascus University

Richard Lovelace (1618-1657)

Richard Lovelace was born in England to a wealthy Kentish family and was educated at the Charterhouse School and Gloucester Hall, Oxford. Handsome and witty, he lived the life of a cultured courtier before taking arms for the king in the Scottish expeditions of 1639-40. He was imprisoned by Parliament in 1642 for presenting a Royalist petition, and he was jailed again in 1648 after returning to England from battles where he had fought with the French against the Spanish. Although he was released from prison after the king's execution in 1649, Lovelace spent his final years in poverty. One of the group of Royalist writers now known as "Cavalier" poets[1], he was strongly influenced by Ben Jonson. Lovelace is best known for occasional poems and lyrics that were written mostly during his periods of imprisonment; his "To Althea, from Prison" regained popularity after its inclusion in Percy's *Reliques*[2] *of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), as did his "To Lucasta, Going to the Wars." The name Lucasta ("from Lux -casta [Latin] . "pure light ") probably refers to Lucy Sacheverell, Lovelace's fiancée, who married another man after receiving a false report of Lovelace's death. She is honored in the title of Lovelace's one volume of poems published during his lifetime (*Lucasta*, 1649) and again in the

[1] A group of poets who supported Charles I during the Civil War. They were not a formal group, but were all influenced by Jonson. (OCEL, 179).
[2] *Relic* in modern spelling

posthumous collection published by Lovelace's brother (*Lucasta Poems Posthume*, 1659).

To Althea[1], from Prison

When Love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her eye,
And fettered to her eye,
The gods[2] that wanton[3] in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round,
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free,[4]
Fishes that tipple in the deep[5]
Know no such liberty.

[1] Althea is not the real name of the woman addressed in this poem. Following the tradition of Jonson, Lovelace uses a pseudonym to figuratively mask the identity of his beloved.
[2] In some manuscripts of the poem the word "birds" appears instead of "gods."
[3] "wanton" here means "play."
[4] Reference to drinking.
[5] Here a noun, meaning "sea" or "ocean."

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my king;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlarged winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quite Take
That for an hermitage.
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

I. Read the poem, then:

- ➔ **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- ➔ **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor**
- ➔ **Discuss in class the possible theme(s) of this poem.**

II. Translate the concluding *Stanza* of the poem. Discuss your translation in class.

III. Discuss the following:

- **The *mood* of the poem.**
- **The *Tone* of the speaker**

Damascus University

Katherine Philips (1632-1664)

Katherine Philips was the daughter of a London merchant and his wife. Katherine was married to a man thirty-eight years her senior, when she was sixteen, and spent twelve quiet years in Wales- the culture of which she celebrated in her poems on the Welsh language – while her husband served as a member of Oliver Cromwell's Parliament. Philips claimed that she "never writ a line in [her] life with intention to have it printed," but her poetry was being circulated before 1651, when Henry Vaughan eulogized her after her death. In 1655, her son Hector died two weeks after his birth. She lamented his death in an epitaph. Despite being born, and having married, a Puritan, Philips had Royalist sympathies, and contributed panegyrics to the returning monarchy, although her husband's fortunes declined after the Restoration. Philips gained fame, eventually becoming the best-known female poet of her age. An unauthorized edition of her poems appeared in 1664; suppressed four days later, it closely resembles the authorized edition published in 1667.

Damascus University

A Married State[1]

A married state affords but little ease
The best of husbands are so hard to please.
This in wives careful faces you may spell
Though they dissemble[2] their misfortunes well.
A virgin state is crowned with much content;[3]
It's always happy as it's innocent.
No blustering husbands to create your fears;
No pangs of childbirth to extort your tears;
No children's cries for to offend your ears;
Few worldly crosses to distract your prayers:
Thus are you freed from all the cares that do
Attend on matrimony and a husband too.
Therefore Madam, be advised by me
Turn, turn apostate to love's levity,
Suppress wild nature if she dare rebel.
There's no such thing as leading apes in hell.[4]

---

[1] Manuscript evidence suggests that the poem was written before the poet's marriage (NAEL, 673)
[2] "dissemble" here means "hide."
[3] NAEL suggests that "praise of the single life is a common topic in women's poetry" (673).
[4] An apparent reference to the state of spinsterhood.

I. Read the poem, then:

- ➔ **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- ➔ **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**
- ➔ **Identify words that appear to have a meaning in the poem that differs from the meaning that you know.**

II. Translate the poem. Discuss your translation in class.

III. Discuss the following:

- ➔ **Rhyme scheme**
- ➔ **Choice of words**
- ➔ **Tone of the speaker**

Damascus University

Alexander Pope

Alexander Pope was born in London to a Catholic linen-draper and his wife. Debarred from university because of his religion, he learned Greek, Latin, Italian, and French with the help of a local priest. At twelve he contracted a form of tuberculosis, probably Pott's Disease, which left his spine weakened, his growth stunted, and his health permanently damaged. His family moved to Binfield, in Windsor Forest where at sixteen Pope composed his "Pastorals" (published 1709). His friend the playwright William Wycherley introduced him to London literary society, and his *Essay on Criticism* (1711) attracted critical attention. *The Rape of the Lock* appeared in 1712 and the first volume of his translation of the *Iliad* into heroic couplets followed in 1715. This, together with his translation of the *Odyssey* (1725-26), brought him financial security. Later he wrote The *Dunciad* (1728-42, revised 1743), a satire on the alleged dullness of contemporary culture; the wittily and wickedly satirical "*Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*" (1735); and the *Essay on Man*, the first volume of a projected work in four books reflecting Pope's interest in philosophical and intellectual speculation.

Epistle 2. To a Lady
Of the Characters of Women

Nothing so true as what you once let fall,
"Most women have no characters at all".
Matter too soft a lasting mark to hear,
And best distinguished by black, brown, or fair.
How many pictures[1] of one nymph we view,
All how unlike each other, all how true!
Arcadia's[2] countess, here, in ermined pride,
Is, there, Pastora by a fountain side.
Here Fannia, leaning on her own good man,
And there, a naked Leda with a swan.
Let then the fair one beautifully cry,
In Magdalen's[3] loose hair and lifted eye,
Or dressed in smiles of sweet Cecilia[4] shine,
With simpering angels, palms, and harps divine;
Whether the charmer sinner it, or saint it,
If folly grow romantic,[1] I must paint it.

[1] "Ladies of the 17th and the 18th centuries were often painted in the costumes and attitudes of fanciful mythological, or historical characters" (NAEL, 1161). There is a possible pun on the word "picture" here. Discuss with your instructor and classmates.
[2] A region in Greece which has become the traditional setting of pastoral poetry. Many authors used the name of the region as a titular attraction for their readers. Sir Philip Sidney's work is the most famous.
[3] A reference to St. Mary Magdalen
[4] A reference to St. Cecilia

Come then, the colors and the ground[2] prepare!
Dip in the rainbow, trick[3] her off in air;
Choose a firm cloud, before it fall, and in it
Catch, ere[4] she change, the Cynthia[5] of this minute.

I. Read the poem, then:

- ➔ **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- ➔ **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**
- ➔ **Identify all the possible *puns* in the poem and explain their dual meanings.**
- ➔ **What is the tone of the speaker in the line:**

  All how unlike each other, all how true!

- ➔ **Discuss in class the general attitude of the poet to women.**
- ➔ **Identify rhyme patterns in the poem. What effect do you think they create.**

II. Translate the poem. Discuss your translation in class.

---

[1] The word romantic here means excessive or extravagant, and hence is used negatively.
[2] The word "ground" here refers to the first coating of paint on canvas before the actual figures are drawn in a picture (NAEL, 1162). This is also a possible pun here. Discuss it with your instructor and classmates.
[3] "trick" here means "draw" or "sketch," also a possible pun.
[4] In poetry: before.
[5] One of the names of Diana, the changeable goddess of the moon.

THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

Damascus University


وقل رب زدني علما
جامعة دمشق
Damascus University

THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

Three revolutions shaped European consciousness in the late eighteenth century, and ushered what many thinkers, intellectuals and literary critics call "the birth of the modern."[1] These were the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution.

The first started as an act of rebellion by the English-speaking colonial subjects of the King of England in the New World. Its spark was a protest against taxes levied by the Crown. It soon became a war of "independence" by the inhabitants of these colonies; a war that led to the birth of the United States of America.

The second was the French Revolution which brought to a gruesome end the most powerful monarchy in Europe. The French Revolution was the first successful popular revolt against a reigning monarch in the modern age. Its initial slogan of *Liberty, equality, and Fraternity* was a source of inspiration for all of Europe before the atrocities of the first few years disillusioned many of its enthusiasts.

The Industrial revolution was a process of transmutation that changed the methods of production and its tools in ways that invariably affected the world in which we live today. New

[1] The adjective here is used as a noun.

inventions and technologies changed for ever the relationship between man and machine, and between human beings and their natural environment.

Romanticism came to existence, some may argue, as a reaction to these three momentous events. The Romantic Age was marked by an increased awareness of the changes that were taking place in Europe and the world at large. Authors of that period reflect the hope, aspirations, and anxiety that resulted from the tremendous challenges to the "modern" man.

Romanticism also exhibited an increased interest in the individual quest for meaning. Disillusioned by both the traditional forms of authority (church/monarch) and by the alternative (demagogy), the Romantic poet sought an ideal wherein the individual soul seeks to find its own answers to troubling questions of existence. Romanticism also exhibited a tendency to humanize religious narratives and establish a counter theology of existence.

Unlike their Augustan predecessors, Romantics were more often than not uninterested in poetic forms and decorous behaviour. Poets such as Coleridge found "organic form"[1] to be more meaningful to the questing soul than the external forms upon which the Neo-classicist insisted.

---

[1] Discuss the meaning of "organic form" with your instructor in class

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797)[1]

A leading spokesperson for the rights of women in the eighteenth century, Mary Wollstonecraft had a difficult and unsettled childhood. In 1784, May, her sister, and a friend started a school. Later in life, she went to Ireland as a governess to Lord Kingsborough's children. In 1788, she returned to England and proceeded to write a number of controversial works. The radical publisher J. Johnson published some of her reviews and translations, including *A vindication of the Rights of Men*, her novel *Mary*, and her most famous work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). Mary Wollstonecraft died after giving birth to her daughter Mary Godwin, who would later become the wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley, the famous Romantic poet. After her death, Wollstonecraft's husband, William Godwin published his wife's *Posthumous Works*, which became an inspiration to a generation of radicals and revolutionaries in the 19th century, including her daughter and her son-in-law.

[1] OCEL, 1079

From *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

Introduction

After considering the historic page[1], and viewing the living world with anxious solicitude, the most melancholy emotions of sorrowful indignation have depressed my spirits, and I have sighed when obliged to confess, that either nature has made a great difference between man and man, or that the civilization which has hitherto taken place in the world has been very partial. I have turned over various books written on the subject of education, and patiently observed the conduct of parents and the management of schools; but what has been the result? – a profound conviction that the neglected education of my fellow-creatures is the grand source of the misery I deplore; and that women, in particular, are rendered weak and wretched by a variety of concurring causes, originating from one hasty conclusion. The conduct and manners of women, in fact, evidently prove that their minds are not in a healthy state; for, like the flowers which are planted in too rich a soil, strength and usefulness are sacrificed to beauty; and the flaunting leaves, after having pleased a fastidious eye, fade, disregarded on the stalk, long before the season when they ought to have arrived at

[1] "page" here means "record."

maturity. – One cause of this barren blooming I attribute to a false system of education, gathered from the books written on this subject by men who, considering females rather as women than human creatures, have been more anxious to make them alluring mistresses than affectionate wives and rational mothers; and the understanding of the sex has been so bubbled[1] by this specious homage, that the civilized woman of the present century, with a few exceptions, are only anxious to inspire love, when they ought to cherish a nobler ambition, and by their abilities and virtues exact respect.

In a treatise, therefore, on female rights and manners, the works which have been particularly written for their improvement must not be overlooked; especially when it is asserted, in direct terms, that the books of instruction, written by men of genius, have had the same tendency as more frivolous productions, and that, in the true style of Mahometanism,[2] they are treated as a kind of subordinate beings, and not as a part of the human species,[3] when improvable reason is allowed to be the dignified distinction which raises men above the brute creation, and puts a natural sceptre in a feeble land.

---

[1] The word "bubbled" in this context means confused or deluded.

[2] This is a common pejorative reference to Islam in Europe at the time. One of the many spellings of the name of Prophet Muhammad was *Mahomet*. People who believed in Islam were called *Mahometans*.

[3] This statement represents a classic example of the common misperceptions of Islam among Europeans at the time: the idea that Islam teaches that women have no souls.

Yet, because I am a woman, I would not lead my readers to suppose that I mean violently to agitate the contested question respecting the equality or inferiority of the sex; but as the subject lies in my way, and I cannot pass it over without subjecting the main tendency of my reasoning to misconstruction, I shall stop a moment to deliver, in a few words, my opinion. -- In the government of the physical world it is observable that the female in point of strength is, in general, inferior to the male. This is the law of nature; and it of doesn't appear to be suspended or abrogated in favour of woman. A degree of physical superiority cannot, therefore, be denied – and it is a noble prerogative! But not content with this natural pre-eminence, men endeavour to sink us still lower, merely to render us alluring objects for a moment; and women, intoxicated by the adoration which men, under the influence of their senses, pay them, do not seek to obtain a durable interest in their hearts, or to become the friends of the fellow creatures who find amusement in their society.

Damascus University

I. Read the text then:

- ➔ Identify the main themes in the excerpt from Wollstonecraft's text.
- ➔ Discuss the themes with your instructor and classmates.
- ➔ Discuss the effectiveness of the author's arguments.
- ➔ Write a statement in support of her arguments.
- ➔ Write a statement against her arguments.
- ➔ Discuss the metaphor of women as flowers. Explain the metaphor, then attempt to translate it into Arabic in a manner that would capture the tone of the English text.
- ➔ Discuss with classmates what the author means by suggesting that men consider "females rather as women than human creatures."
- ➔ Compare with classmates and instructor the *theme* and *tone* of this work and of Popes *Epistle to a Lady*.
- ➔ Attempt to provide a critique of the justifications on the part of the author to have such a negative view of Muslim women.

Damascus University

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

Wordsworth is considered the father of English Romanticism. After getting an excellent education at the prestigious St. John's College, Cambridge, he took a walking tour of Europe in his early twenties, which brought him into contact with the throes of the French Revolution, whose ideals he supported until the onset of the "Reign of Terror." Upon returning to England, he settled in the Lake District where he remained for most of the rest of his life with his sister Dorothy. In 1795 he met the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the two became the most famous literary friends in the history of English literature. Together, they published *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) which is considered one of the most important works in English literature, both for its innovative poetry, and for the preface which Wordsworth wrote to its second edition (1800). Many critics consider 1798 the inaugural year of Romanticism because of the tremendous impact of the *Lyrical Ballads*.

Later in life, Wordsworth retracted from the radical ideas of his youth, and grew increasingly conservative. Many of his former devotees accused him of apostasy. His poetry, however, remained influential and formative of modern ideas about poetry that the scope of his achievement is easily overlooked. In his preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, he attacked the poetic diction and

elaborate figures of speech characteristic of 18th century poetry. He advocated for poetry to use the "language really used by men." Wordsworth also rejected poetic hierarchy ranking epic and tragedy over the subjective mode of the lyric, and declared "incidents and situations from common life" as fit subjects for arts.

Nutting

----------It seems a day
(I speak of one from many singled out)
One of those heavenly days that cannot die;
When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth
With a huge wallet o'er my shoulder slung,
A nutting–crook in hand; and turned my steps
Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint
Tricked out[1] in proud diguise of cast-off weeds[2]
Which for that service had been husbanded,[3]
By exhortation of my frugal Dame[4]–

[1] Tricked out: dressed.
[2] Clothes.
[3] harvested or collected.
[4] Reference to the woman with whom he stayed when he was at grammar school

Motley accoutrement, of power to smile
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles, - and, in truth,
More ragged than need was! O'er pathless rocks,
Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,
Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook
Unvisited, where not a broken bough
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
Of devastation; but the hazels rose
Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,
A virgin scene! – A little while I stood,
Breathing with such suppression of the heart
As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
The banquet; --or beneath the trees I sate
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;
A temper known to those, who, after long
And weary expectation, have been blest
With sudden happiness beyond all hope[1].
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
The violets of five seasons re-appear
And fade, unseen by any human eye;
Where fairy water-breaks[2] do murmur on

[1] Much more than what they hoped for.
[2] A reference to places where the flow of water through the stream is broken by the rocks.

For ever; and I saw the sparking foam,
And- with my cheek on one of those green stones
That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep-
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure,
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose;
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash
And merciless ravage: and the shady nook
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
Their quiet being: and, unless I now
Confound my present feeling with the past,
Ere from the mutilated bower I turned
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.-
Then, dearest Maiden,[1] move along these shades
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand

[1] addressing his sister Dorothy

Touch – for there is a spirit in the woods.

I. Read the poem, then:

- ➔ **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- ➔ **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**
- ➔ **Identify the mood shifts in the poem.**
- ➔ **Summarize the story of the poem in your words.**
- ➔ **What is the *moral* of the story?**
- ➔ **Are there rhyme patterns in this poem? If so, can you identify them?**
- ➔ **Analyze the use of language (choice of words, flow of ideas…etc) in the poem.**
- ➔ **Compare the language and the rhyme patterns with Pope's poem. Are there differences? If so, to what do you attribute them?**

II. Translate the poem. Discuss your translation in class.

Damascus University

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in Ottery St. Mary, a rural village in Devon, and raised in London. He was educated at Jesus College, Cambridge, but fell into a dissolute lifestyle. In 1795 he met Wordsworth, with whom he published *Lyrical Ballads* (1798). From the age of thirty, Coleridge largely gave up poetry for philosophy and criticism. He is credited with introducing the works of the philosophers Immanuel Kant, Friedrich von Schlegel, and Friedrich von Schelling[1] to England.

At the height of his powers, he became addicted to opium, which had been prescribed to relieve agonizing physical pains that Wordsworth said were so unbearable they drove Coleridge to "throw himself down and writhe like a worm upon the ground." He spent his last years in the care of a clergyman, writing and attempting to be reconciled with estranged family and friends.

In an age dominated by skepticism and empiricism, Coleridge held fast to his belief in the powers of the imagination, which he believed capable of leading humanity to Truth–not through appeals to reason, but to the sense. Like Wordsworth, he strove to express "natural thoughts with natural diction" and to use simple syntax. His accessible style reached its culmination in his meditative, blank verse "Conversational poems," which

[1] Kant, Schlegel, and Schelling are three leading German philosophers and proponent of Romanticism in Europe.

influenced many future authors such as T.S. Eliot and Robert Frost.

If Wordsworth determined the content of a century or more of English poetry, Coleridge determined its shape. His theories on "organic form" provided a basis for the development of a freer poetic environment, and may have been the progenitor of many twentieth-century experiments in free verse.

Kubla Khan[1]

Or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment[2]

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm house between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somersett and Devonshire.

In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effect of a which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in *Purchas's Pilgrimage*: "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto: and thus ten miles of fertile ground were enclosed with a wall. The author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which

[1] A reference to "*Qubali Khan*" who was one of the greatest Mongol Emperors.
[2] The word "fragment" is used to refer to incomplete works.

time he has the most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast, but, alas! Without the after restoration of the latter:

> Then all the charm
> Is broken-all that phantom-world so fair
> Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
> And each mis-shape[s] the other. Stay awhile,
> Poor youth! Who scarcely dar'st[1] lift up thine eyes-
> The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon

[1] "dare" in modern spelling.

The vision will return! And lo! He stays,
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror.

[From Coleridge's *The picture; or, the Lover's Resolution.* lines 91-100]

Yet from the still surviving recollections in his mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him…[1] But the tomorrow is yet to come.

As a contrast to this vision, I have annexed a fragment of a very different character, describing with equal fidelity the dream of pain disease.- 1816.

In Xanadu[2] did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where *Alph* the sacred river ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:

[1] In the original text, Coleridge quotes from the Greek classics, in Greek, the phrase: *I shall sing a sweeter song tomorrow.*
[2] Name of a legendary place in China

And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.
But oh! That deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! As holy and enchanted
As e'er[1] beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently[2] was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragment vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's fail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the scared river ran,
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale[3] the scared river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far

[1] In poetry: ever
[2] Immediately
[3] In poetry: valley

Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer[1]
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian[2] maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! Those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!

[1] A musical instrument similar to the lute but smaller in size.
[2] Reference to Abyssinia in modern-day Ethiopia.

His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

I. Read the poem, then:

- ➔ **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- ➔ **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**
- ➔ **Identify the tonal shifts in the poem.**
- ➔ **Summarize the story of the poem in your words.**
- ➔ **Look-up the meaning and origin of the word *assassin* in an English-English dictionary. Do you find the meaning and origin relevant to the poem? If so, how?**
- ➔ **Analyze the use of language (line-length, internal rhythms and music) in the poem.**

II. Translate the poem. Discuss your translation in class.

Damascus University

George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)

George Gordon Byron was born near Aberdeen, Scotland, to dissolute aristocratic parents who had fallen on hard times. Their difficulties were alleviated when Byron inherited his title at the age of ten. Upon graduation from Trinity College, Cambridge, he embarked on a two year tour of Portugal, Spain, Malta, Greece, and Asia-Minor, during which he gathered much of the material for his most important poems.

He became a celebrity overnight in 1812 with the publication of his first collection of poems, but notoriety supplanted fame when Byron's affair with his half –sister, whom he had met as an adult, became public knowledge. His marriage collapsed and he was forced to leave England in 1816. He followed the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley to Geneva and Italy, then went on to Greece where he organized a contingent of soldiers to fight for Greek independence from the Ottoman Turks. After he fell sick in the woods during a training exercise and died, he was mourned as a national hero throughout Greece.

Byron's work was widely known in Europe and was immensely influential on the major European writers of his day.

Perhaps his most significant contribution to literature was the development of the Byronic hero, a doomed but impassioned wandered, often driver by guilt and alienated from his society, but superior to it. Byron's work was deeply rooted in the literary

tradition; he turned to the past for models, drawing heavily on the Cavalier tradition of paying elaborate compliments to ladies, the satiric tradition of launching witty criticism of modern civilization, and the narrative tradition.

In *Don Juan*, his masterpiece, he uses the narrator to attack such institutions as the government, the church, and marriage; criticize such vices as hypocrisy, greed, and lust; and subtly extol such virtues as courage, loyalty, and candor. Although many critics considered the poem a wanton celebration of the misadventures of a profligate, Byron himself called it "the most moral of poems."

Damascus University

Written after Swimming from Sestos to Abydos[1]

May 9, 1810

1

If in the month of dark December
Leander[2], who was nightly wont
(What maid will not the tale remember?)
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont![3]

2

If when the wintry tempest roared
He sped to Hero[4], nothing loth,
And thus of old thy current pour'd,
Fair Venus! How I pity both!

3

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I've done a feat to-day.

4

[1] A Reference to the narrow strait between Asia and Europe, known as the Dardanelles. The swim is a reference to an ancient myth in which a young lover living on the Asian side of the strait swam nightly to visit his beloved who was a priestess of the goddess Venus, living on the European side. On a stormy night, the young lover was drowned as he made his attempt. Byron swam the distance on May 3rd 1810.
[2] The name of the mythical lover.
[3] Ancient name of the Dardanelles.
[4] The name of Leander's lover, the priestess of Venus.

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,
According to the doubtful story,
To woo-and –Lord knows what beside,
And swam for Love, as I for Glory;

5

'Twere hard to say who fared the best:
Sad mortals! Thus the Gods still plague you!
He lost his labour, I my jest:
For he was drown'd, and I've the ague.

I. Read the poem, then:

- ➔ **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- ➔ **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**
- ➔ **Describe the tone of the poem. Compare it with the tone of Wordsworth's *Nutting*.**
- ➔ **Identify stanza divisions and rhyme patterns.**

II. Translate the poem. Attempt to bring out the sense of rhyme in your Arabic translation. Discuss your translation in class.

They say that Hopes is happiness

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.[1]

VIRGIL

1

They say that Hope is happiness
But genuine Love must prize the past;
And Mem'ry[2] wakes the thoughts that bless:
They rose the first they set the last.

2

And all that mem'ry loves the most
Was once our only hope to be:
And all that hope adored and lost
Hath melted into memory.

3

Alas! It is delusion all—
The future cheats us from afar:
Nor can we be what we recall,
Nor dare we think on what we are.

[1] From Latin, meaning: "happy is he who has been able to learn the causes of things."
[2] Memory in modern spelling.

I. Read the poem, then:

- ➔ **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- ➔ **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**
- ➔ **Describe the mood of the speaker. Compare it with the mood of Byron's first poem. Do you find any similarities?**
- ➔ **What is the relation between the Latin quote at the beginning and the theme of the poem itself?**
- ➔ **Identify stanza divisions and rhyme pattern.**

II. Translate the poem. Attempt to bring out the sense of rhyme in your Arabic translation. Discuss your translation in class.

Damascus University

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)

Percy Bysshe Shelley was born to a well-to-do, conservative family. In 1810 he went to University Collage, Oxford, but was expelled in his first year for refusing to recant an atheistic pamphlet he had published with a classmate. He married a young school girl the following year.

In 1813 he moved to London, where he worked for a number of social causes and came under the influence of the radical social philosopher William Godwin. Shelley fell in love with Godwin's daughter, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (author of the novel *Frankenstein*), and eloped to Europe with her. Byron joined them in Switzerland in 1816 and followed them to Italy in 1818.

Shelley was drowned when his small boat was caught in a squall on the Gulf of Spezia. Lord Byron eulogized him as "without exception, the best selfish man I ever knew." The superlative opinion of friends did not reflect public opinion at large, however. Due to his unorthodox lifestyle, Shelley had few admirers in his lifetime. An avid student of Hume and Plato, he was deeply influenced by skeptical empiricism and idealism; he distrusted all claims to certainly--he never confessed a religious or philosophical creed--but held fast to his faith in the redeeming powers of love and the imagination. It is the latter that especially informs his poetry. In the influential essay "A Defence of

Poetry," he asserts: "A Poet is a nightingale who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds."

To a sky – Lark

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert-
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest[1]
Like a could of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken Sun—
O'er[2] which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run;

[1] the suffix –*est* was a common poetic suffix in 19th century poetry, invoking archaic spelling of English.
[2] In poetry: over.

Like an unbodied[1] joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight,
Like a star of Heaven
In the broad day-light
Thou art unseen,— but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see—we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voices is loud,
As when Night is bare
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams—and Heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not

[1] without a body.

Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a Poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace-tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour,
With music sweet as love—which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden[1]
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves—

[1] Unseen.

By warm winds deflowered—
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-winged thieves:[1]

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, Sprite[2] or Bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine;
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine:

Chorus Hymeneal[3]
Or triumphal chaunt[4]
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,

[1] Reference to the "warm winds in same stanza.
[2] Spirit.
[3] Related to marriage, a reference to Hymen, the Greek God of marriage.
[4] Chant in modern spelling.

A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
    Of thy happy strain?
What fields or waves of sky or mountains?
    What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? What ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
    Langour cannot be—
Shadow of annoyance
    Never came near thee;
Thou lovest—but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
    Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
    Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a chrystal stream?

We look before and after,
    And pine for what is not —
Our sincerest laughter
    With some pain is fraught—

Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate and pride and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound—
Better than all treasures
That in books are found—
Thy skill to poet were, thou Scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then- as I am listening now.

Damascus University

I. Read the poem, then:

- ➔ **Attempt to identify the main ideas of the poem.**
- ➔ **Underline stanzas that you have found to be difficult to understand.**
- ➔ **Discuss with your classmates and instructor the symbol of the skylark**
- ➔ **Discuss with your classmates and instructor the relationship between the skylark and the speaker in the poem.**
- ➔ **Analyze language and theme.**

II. Translate the first 20 lines of the poem. Discuss your translation in class.

Damascus University

John Keats

John Keats was born in London, the son of a livery stableman and his wife. At the age of fifteen he was apprenticed to an apothecary surgeon, and on completion of his apprenticeship, he continued his training at a London hospital. After getting his qualifications, Keats abandoned Medicine for poetry.

In 1818 he fell in love with Fanny Brawne, but was prevented from marrying her by financial difficulties. In 1819 he produced all of his great odes, in addition to many other poems. That year was indeed his *annus mirabilis*. The following year, he developed tuberculosis, the disease that had killed his mother and younger brother. He traveled to Italy in the hope of prolonging his life, but died in Rome within a year.

At the time of his death at the young age of twenty six he had published only fifty four poems. He probably died unsure about his reputation as a great poet.

In his poetry, he tried to make sense of life. Surrounded with death and disappointment all of his short life, he attempted to deal with the misery, heartache and pain that lived with him. His consciousness of death is pro. .bly most evident in the tendency of his poems to be more interested in the material than in the abstract in life.

Keats is also remembered as one of the greatest letter writers in English. His letters to a myriad of friends and relatives reveal at once his pain and his philosophy in life. Particularly touching are his letters to Fanny Brawne. Of interest to students of literature are his letters to Shelley who eulogized his friend Keats, and his own in *Adonais*, one of Shelley's most enigmatic poems.

Damascus University

To Funny Browne

[FANNY BRAWNE AS KEATS'S "FAIR STAR"]

My sweet Girl,

I hope you did not blame me much for not obeying your request of a letter on Saturday: we have had four in our small room playing at cards night and morning leaving me no undisturb'd[1] opportunity to write. Now Rice and Martin are gone I am at liberty. Brown to my sorrow confirms the account you give of your ill health. You cannot conceive how I ache to be with you: how I would die for one hour—for what is in the world? I say you cannot conceive; it is impossible you should look with such eyes upon me as I have been all day employ'd in a very abstract Poem and I am in deep love with you—two things must excuse me. I have, believe me, not been an age in letting you take possession of me; the very first week I knew you I wrote myself your vassal; but burnt the Letter as the very next time I saw you I thought you manifested some dislike to me. If you should ever for Man at the first sight what I did for you, I am lost. Yet I should not quarrel with you, but hate myself if such a thing were to happen—only I should burst if the thing were not as fine as a Man as you are as a Woman. Perhaps I am too vehement, then

[1] Undisturbed in modern spelling

fancy me on my knees, especially when I mention a part of your Letter which hurt me; you say speaking of Mr. Severn[1] "but you must be satisfied in knowing that I admired you much more than your friend." My dear love, I cannot believe there ever was or ever could be any thing to admire in me especially as far as sight goes—I cannot be admired, I am not a thing to be admired. You are, I love you; all I can bring you is a swooning admiration of your Beauty. I hold that place among Men which snub-nos'd brunettes with meeting eyebrows do among woman—they are trash to me—unless I should find one among them with a fire in her heart like the one that burns in mine. You absorb me in spite of myself—you alone: for I look not forward with any pleasure to what is call'd being settled in the world; I tremble at domestic cares – yet for you I would meet them, though if it would leave you the happier I would rather die than do so. I have two luxuries to brood over in my walks, your Loveliness and the hour of my death. O that I could have possession of them both in the same minute. I hate the world: it batters too much the wings of my self-will, and would I could take a sweet poison from your lips to send me out of it. From no others would I take it. I am indeed astonish'd to find myself so careless of all charms but yours remembering as I do the time when even a bit of ribband matter of interest with me. What softer words can I find

[1] A friend of the poet.

after this – what it is I will not read. Nor will say more here, but in a Postscript answer any thing else you may have mentioned in your Letter in so many words – for I am distracted with a thousand thoughts. I will imagine you Venus tonight and pray, pray, pray to your star like a Heathen.

Damascus University

To Percy Bysshe Shelley[1]

[LOAD EVERY RIFT WITH ORE]

MY dear Shelley,

I am very much gratified that you, in a foreign country, and with a mind almost over occupied, should write to me in the strain of the Letter beside me. If I do not take advantage of your invitation it will be prevented by a circumstance I have very much at heart to prophesy[2]—There is no doubt that an English winter would put an end to me, and do so in a lingering hateful manner, therefore I must either voyage or journey to Italy as a soldier marches to a battery. My nerves at present are the worst part of me, yet they feel soothed when I think that come what extreme may, I shall not be destined to remain in one spot long enough to take a hatred of any four particular bed-posts. I am glad you take any pleasure in my poor Poem;[3]—which I would willingly take the trouble to unwrite, if possible, did I care so much as I have done about Reputation. I have received a copy of the Cenci,[4] as from yourself from Hunt.[5] There is only one part of it I am judge

[1] Written in response to an invitation by the Shelleys for Keats to spend a winter with them in Pisa, Italy.
[2] Referring to his own death.
[3] Referring to *Endymion*, a poem which Shelley praised highly.
[4] A highly controversial poem that Shelley wrote about a case of incestuous rape.
[5] Hunt was a publisher for, and friend of both poets.

of; the Poetry, and dramatic effect, which by many spirits now a days is considered the mammon. A modern work it is said must have a purpose,[1] which may be the God – an artist must sever Mammon[2]—he must have "self concentration" selfishness perhaps. You I am sure will forgive me for sincerely remarking that you might curb your magnanimity and be more of an artist, and "load every rift" of your subject with ore. The thought of such discipline must fall like cold chains upon you, who perhaps never sat with your wings furl'd for six months together. And is not this extraordinary talk for the writer of Endymion? whose mind was like a pack of scattered cards—I am pick'd up and sorted to a pip. My Imagination is a Monastery and I am its Monk – you must explain my metap[cs3] to yourself. I am in expectation of Prometheus[4] every day. Could I have my own wish for its interest effected you would have it still in manuscript—or be but now putting an end to the second act. I remember you advising me not to publish my first-blights, on Hampstead heath—I am returning advice upon your hands. Most of the Poems in the volume I send you have been written above two years, and would never have been publish'd but from a hope

[1] Referring to Wordsworth's *Preface* to the *Lyrical Ballads*, in which he insisted that each work of art should have a purpose

[2] There reference here is to Mathew 6.24 and Luke 16.13 in the New Testament: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

[3] Metaphysics.

[4] Referring to Shelley's poetic drama *Prometheus Unbound*.

of gain; so you see I am inclined enough to take your advice now. I must express once more my deep sense of your kindness, adding my sincere thanks and respects for M Shelley .In the hope of soon seeing you I remain.

most sincerely yours,

John Keats—

Damascus University


وقل رب زدني علما
جامعة دمشق
Damascus University

Victorian & Modern Texts

Damascus University


وقل رب زدني علما
جامعة دمشق
Damascus University

Victorian & Modern Texts

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

Alfred, Lord Tennyson was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he met Arthur Henry Hallam, whom he later immortalized in *In Memoriam* (1850). Tennyson began to write when a child, largely to escape the oppressiveness of his home life, made miserable by his father's drinking and violence.

He published some of his best-known poems, such as "Mariana" and "The Kraken," when he was only twenty; in "Mariana," he displays his early, and ending, gift for using objects and landscapes to convey states of mind and particular emotions.

Between 1833, the date of Hallam's death, and 1843, when Tennyson received an annual government pension to support his writing, he was especially hard-hit by the melancholia that would plague him all his life and so dominate h. oetry. In the wake of Hallam's death, Tennyson's work assumed a decidedly darker note. He expressed his grief abstrusely in such poems as "Ulysses" and "Break, Break, Break" and directly in *In Memoriam*, which Tennyson began within days of Hallam's death and continued to write over a period of seventeen years. With the publication of *In Memoriam*, he finally attained the

public recognition long denied him. He remained immensely popular until his death.

His last major work was *Idylls of the King*, a project that occupied him for nearly fifty years. In this work, which popularizes the legend of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, Tennyson upholds medieval ideals such as community, heroism, and courtly love, and compares the decay of the Round Table to the moral decline of his own society.

Tithonus[1]

The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
The vapours weep their burthen to the ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,
And after many a summer dies the swan.
Me only cruel immortality
Consumes; I wither slowly in thine arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,
A white –haired shadow roaming like a dream
The ever-silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn.
Alas! For this grey shadow, once a man—

[1] Tithonus is a Trojan prince loved b the goddess of the dawn, Eos who obtained for him the gift of living forever but neglected to obtain for him the gift of everlasting youth. (NAEL, 1931).

So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he seemed
To his great heart none other than a God!
I asked thee, "Give me immortality."
Then didst thou grant mine asking with a smile,
Like wealthy men who care not how they give.
But thy strong Hours indignant worked their wills,
And beat me down and marred and wasted me,
And though they could not end me, left me maimed
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
And all I was in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, though even now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with tears
To hear me? Let me go; take back thy gift.
Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance[1]
Where all should pause, as is most meet for all?
A soft air fans the cloud apart; there comes
A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.
Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals
From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure,

[1] What is pre-determined and ordained for human beings.

And bosom beating with a heart renewed.
Thy cheek beings to redden through the gloom,
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,
Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team
Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,
And shake the darkness from their loosened manes,
And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.
Lo! Ever thus thou growest beautiful
In silence, then before thine answer given
Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek.
Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,
And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be true?
"The Gods themselves cannot recall their gifts."
Ay me! Ay me! With what another heart
In day far-off, and with what other eyes
I used to watch—if I be he that watched—
The lucid outline forming round thee; saw
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;
Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my blood
Glow with the glow that slowly crimsoned all
Thy presence and they portals, while I lay,
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-warm
With kisses balmier than half-opening buds

Of April, and could hear the lips that kissed
Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,
Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,
While Ilion[1] like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not forever in thine East;
How can my nature longer mix with thine?
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam
Floats up from those dim fields about the homes
Of happy men that have the power to die,
And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
Release me, and restore me to the ground.
Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my grave;
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn,
I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

I. Read the poem, then:

- **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**
- **What is Tithonus's dilemma?**

[1] Another name for the city of Troy

- **How does he want to resolve this dilemma?**
- **What could be a possible *purpose* behind writing the story of Tithonus in poetry?**
- **Compare the language of this poem with Shelley's Skylark.**
- **Which of the two poems was easier for you to read and understand? Why?**

II. Translate the last 13 lines of the poem (beginning with Yet hold me…).

Damascus University

Robert Browning (1812-1889)

Robert Browning was born in a suburb of London. He attended London University, but received most of his education by reading voraciously in his father eclectic library. In 1846 he eloped with the poet Elizabeth Barrett and lived with her in Italy until her death in 1861.

His early work, which included drama and poetry, was poorly received by the public, but brought him the respect of such influential figures as John Forster, Thomas Carlyle, Charles Dickens, and Alfred, Lord Tennyson. With the publication of *Dramatis personæ* in 1861, followed by the popular *The Ring and the Book* in 1864, Browning's reputation grew prodigious. Writing drama schooled Browning in the art of the dramatic monologue, which he used masterfully in his middle period.

At their best, his monologues hide their careful construction under the guise of conversational language, a poetic commonplace now, but a startling innovation in an age that prized poetic diction. He frequently selected subject matter from obscure historical scenes in which he found parallels to his own age and through them discussed such issues as the nature of good and evil, the right use of power, the purpose of art, and the role of

faith in modern life, but without making overt moral pronouncements about them.

My Last Duchess[1]

Ferrara

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive, I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's[2] hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
" Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot

[1] The speaker in this poem is the Duke of Ferrara in Italy. He is addressing a messenger who has come to negotiate with him the Duke's proposed marriage to his master's daughter. As they come down the stairs the Duke tells the messenger the story of his late first wife.

[2] A made up name for an imaginary painter.

Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wirst too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat": such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart – how shall I say? – too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace-all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men – good! but thanked
Somehow- I know not how- as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech – (Which I have not) – to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,

Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, forsooth, and made excuse
-E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whener'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's know munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretense
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
As starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea horse, though a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck[1] cast bronze for me!

I. Read the poem, then:

➔ **Paraphrase it in your own words.**

➔ **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**

[1] Another imaginary or unknown artist

➔ **Check up the meaning of the term *dramatic monologue* in the index of literary terms. Is this poem a dramatic monologue? Why?**

➔ **Describe in a short paragraph (50 words) the character of the Duke of Ferrara.**

➔ **Does the conversational style of the poem remind you of a similar tradition in Arabic poetry? If so, what is it?**

II. Translate the first 24 lines of the poem. Discuss your translation with your instructor

Damascus University

William Butler Yeats (1865- 1939)

William Butler Yeats was born in Dublin, but spent over half his life outside Ireland. He studied painting at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art before turning his full attention to literature. Central themes of his poetry are Irish history, folklore, and contemporary politics. His early work belonged to the "Celtic revival" school and, in long allegorical poems and verse dramas, showed the influence of Shakespeare, Blake, and Shelley.

A major aspect of his life was his love for the beautiful revolutionary Maud Gonne, whose politics at first excited, then as they led to violence and betrayal, repulsed him. Another abiding interest, in mysticism and the occult, provided a source of poetic symbols, as well as a philosophical "key" to his writing, A Vision (1925, 1937). Though he sought respite in his imagination and its artifices and venerated the "immortal world" of the intellect and the soul, Yeats never rejected the sensuous world of the mortal body. Exploring the tensions between mortal and immortal, he raged against his diminishing physical powers in his later years and grounded his poetry in "the foul rage-and-bone shop of the heart."

Perhaps his greatest achievement lay in his ability to create poems of extraordinary lyricism or dramatic intensity from the idiom and syntax of ordinary speech. He said that his estranging

vision of extraordinary experience evoked "monstrous familiar images" that "bewilder" and "perturb the mind." Far from frozen by these images, the mind continued to explore, to question, to explain.

Easter 1916[1]

I have met them at close of day
Coming with vivid faces
From counter or desk among grey
Eighteenth-century houses.
I have passed with a nod of the head
Or polite meaningless words,
Or have lingered awhile and said
Polite meaningless words
And thought before I had done
Of a mocking tale or a gibe
To please a companion

[1] The poem was written in on the occasion of the Irish nationalist revolt against British occupation during the Easter holiday of 1916. The revolt was unsuccessful and a number of its leaders were executed by the British. The poet knew these leaders personally and wrote his poem in their memory.

Around the fire at the club,
Being certain that they and I
But lived where motley is warm:
All changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

That woman's[1] days were spent
In ignorant good-will
Her nights in argument
Until her voice grew shrill.
What voice more sweet than hers
When, young and beautiful,
She rode to harriers?
This man had kept a school[2]
And rode our winged horse;
This other his helper and friend[3]
Was coming into his force;
He might have won fame in the end,
So sensitive his nature seemed,
So daring and sweet his thought.
This other man I had dreamed[1]

[1] Referring to Constance Gore-Booth, a woman whom Yeats disliked initially for what her perceived as her ultra-nationalist leanings.
[2] Padraic Pearse, a school master and leader of the movement to restore Gaelic (the national Irish language) as a language of instruction in schools.
[3] Thomas MacDonagh, a friend of Pearse.

A drunken, vainglorious lout.
He had done most bitter wrong
To some who are near my heart,
Yet I number him in the song;
He, too, has resigned his part
In the casual comedy;
He, too, has been changed in his turn.
Transformed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

Hearts with one purpose alone
Through summer and winter seem
Enchanted to a stone
To trouble the living stream.
The horse that comes from the road,
The rider, the birds that range
From cloud to tumbling cloud,
Minute by minute they change;
A shadow of cloud on the stream
Changes minute by minute;
A horse-hoof slides on the brim,
A horse plashes within it;]
The long-legged moor-hens dive,

[1] Major John MacBride. Maude Gonne had married MacBride and left two years later.

And hens to moor-cocks call;
Minute by minute they live:
The stone's in the midst of all.

Too long a sacrifice
Can make a stone of the heart.
O when may it suffice?
That is Heaven's part, our part
To murmur name upon name,
As a mother names her child
When sleep at last has come
On limbs that had run wild.
What is it but nightfall?
No, no, not night but death;
Was it needless death after all?
For England may keep faith
For all that is done and said.
We know their dream; enough
To know they dreamed and are dead;
And what if excess of love
Bewildered them till they died?
I write it out in a verse—
MacDonagh and MacBride
And Connolly and Pearse

Now and in time to be,
Wherever green[1] is worn,
Are changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

I. Read the poem, then:

- **Paraphrase it in your own words.**
- **Discuss your paraphrasing with your instructor.**
- **Check up the meaning of the term *elegy* in the index of literary terms. Is this poem an elegy? Why?**
- **Check up the meaning of the term *refrain* in the index of literary terms. Is there a refrain in this poem? What effect do you think it has?**
- **Many critics suggest, justifiably so, that the tone of the poet in the poem is apologetic. Can you identify lines, passages where you think this is true?**

II. Translate the first 24 lines of the poem. Discuss your translation with your instructor.

[1] The national color of Ireland.

The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock

By: T.S. Eliot

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherised upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless night in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster shell:
Streets that follow like a tedious agreement
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question…
Oh, do not ask, What is it?
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.
The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,

Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;
There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;
There will be time to murder and create,
And time for all the works and days of hands
That lift and drop a question on your plate;
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go
Taking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time
To wonder, Do I dare? And, 'do I dare?'
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair-
(They will say:'how his hair is growing thin!')
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,

My necktie rich and modes, but asserted by a simple pin-
(they will say:'but how his arms and legs are thin!')
Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have know them all already, known them all-
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;
I know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a father room.
So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all-
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
Then how should I begin
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?
And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all-
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare

(But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!0
Is it perfume from a dress
That makes me so digress?
Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.
And should I then presume?
And how should I begin?

. . .

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows?
I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

. . .

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!
Smoothed but long fingers,
Asleep…tried…or it malingers,
Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.
Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,
Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bad) brought in
upon a platter,
I am no prophet – and her's no great matter;

I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,
And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,
Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,
Would it have been worth while a smile,
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,
To have squeezed the universe into a ball
To roll it toward some overwhelming question,
To say: 'I am Lazarus, come from the dead,
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all'-
If one, settling a pillow by her head,
Should say: 'That is not what I meant at all.
That is not it, at all.

And would it have been worth it, after all,
Would it have been worth while,
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,
After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that along the floor-
And this, and so much more?-
It is impossible to say just what I mean!
But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen:

Would it have been worth while
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,
And turning toward the window, should say:
'That is not it at all,
That is not what I meant, at all.'

. . .

No! I am Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
Am an attendant lord, one that will do
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
Advised the prince; no doubt, an east tool,
Deferential, glad to be of use,
Politic, cautions, and meticulous;
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous-
Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old ..... I grow old...
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.
Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea –girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

I. Find out information about T.S. Eliot from literary anthologies, encyclopedias or on-line resources.

II. Find out commentary and/or literary analysis on "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.

III. Read the poem then:

- ➔ Outline the main sections of the poem
- ➔ Identify the main themes of the poem
- ➔ Make a list of the difficult line(s) and/or passages
- ➔ If you were to translate this poem into Arabic, what are the difficulties that you expect to face? Discuss your findings in class.

Profession for Women

By Virginia Woolf

When your secretary invited me to com here, she told me that your Society is concerned with the employment of women and she suggested that I might tell you something about my own professional experiences. It is true I am a woman; it is true I am employed; but what professional experience have I had? It is difficult to say. My profession is literature; and in that profession there are fewer experience for women than in any other, with that exception of the stage- fewer, I mean, that are peculiar to women. For the road was cut many years ago – by Fanny Burney, by Aphra Behn, by Harriet Martineau, by Jane Austen, by George Eliot – many famous women, and many more unknown and forgotten, have been before me, making the path smooth, and regulation my steps. Thus, when I came to write, there were very few material obstacles in my way. Writing was a reputable and harmless occupation. The family peace was not broken by the scratching of a pen. No demand was made upon the family purse. For ten and sixpence one can buy paper enough to write all the plays of Shakespeare – if one has a mind that way. Pianos and models, Paris, Vienna, and Berlin, masters and mistresses, are not needed by a writer. The cheapness of writing paper is, of course, the reason why women have succeeded as writes before they have succeeded in the other professions.

But to tell you my story – it is a simple one. You have only got to figure to yourselves a girl in a bedroom with a pen in her hand. She had only to move that pen from left to right –from ten o'clock to one. Then it occurred to her to do what is simple and cheap enough after all – to ship a few of those pages into an envelope, fix a penny stamp in the corner, and drop the envelope into the red box at the corner. It was thus that I became a journalist; and my effort was reward on the first day of the following month – a very glorious day it was for me – by a letter from an editor containing a cheque for one pound ten shillings and sixpence. But to show you how little I deserve to be called a professional woman, how little I know of the struggles and difficulties of such lives, I have to admit that instead speeding that sum upon bread and butter, rent, shoes and stockings, or butcher's bills, I went out and bought a cat – a beautiful cat, a Persian cat. Which very soon involved me in bitter disputes with my neighbours.

What could be easier than to write articles and to buy Persian cats with the profits? But wait a moment. Articles have to be about something. Mine, I seem to remember, was about a novel by a famous man. And while I was writing this review, I discovered that if were going to review books I should need to do battle with a certain phantom. And the phantom was a woman, and when I came to know her better I called her after the heroine

of a famous poem, The Angel in the house. It was she who bothered and wasted my time and so tormented me that at last I killed her. You who come of a younger and happier generation may not have heard of her – you may not known what I mean by The Angel in the House. I will describe her as shortly as I can . She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught she sat in it – in short she was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathise always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all – I need not say it – she was pure. Her purity was supposed to be her chief beauty – her blushes, her great grace. In those days – the last Queen Victoria – every first words. The shadow of her wings fell on my page; I heard the rustling of her skirts in the room. Directly, that is to say, I took my pen in my hand to review that novel by a famous man, she slipped behind me and whispered:' My dear, you are a young woman. You are writing about a book that has been written by a man. Be sympathetic; be tender; flatter; deceive; use all the arts and wiles of our six. Never let anybody guess that you have a mind of your own. Above all, be pure. 'And she made as if to guide my pen. I now record the one act for wish I take some credit rightly belongs to for which I rake some credit to myself, though the

credit rightly belongs to some excellent ancestors of mine who left me a certain sum of money – shall we say five hundred pounds a year? – so that it was not necessary for me to depend slowly on charm for my living. I turned upon her and caught her by the throat. I did my best to kill her. My excuse, if I were to be had up in a court of law, would be that I acted in self-defence. Had I not killed her she would have killed me. She would have plucked the heart out of my writing. For, as I found, directly I put pen to paper, you cannot review even a novel without having a mind of your own, without expressing what you think to be the truth about human relations, morality, sex. And all these questions, according to the Angel of the House, cannot be death with freely and openly by women; they must charm, they must conciliate, they must – to put it bluntly – tell lies if they are to succeed. Thus, whenever I felt the shadow of her wing or the radiance of her halo upon my page, I took up the inkpot and flung it at her. She died hard. Her fictitious nature was of great assistance creeping back when I thought I had despatched her. Though I flatter myself that I killed her in the end, the struggle was server; it was an experience that was bound to befall all women writes at that time. Killing the Angel in the house was part of the occupation of a woman writer.

But to continue my story. The Angel was dead; what then remained? You may say that remained was a simple and common

object – a young woman in a bedroom with an inkpot. In other words, now that she had rid herself of falsehood, that young woman had only to be herself. Ah, but what is 'herself'? I mean, what is a woman? I assure you, I do not know. I do not believe that you know. I do not believe that anybody can know until she has expressed herself in all the arts and professions open to human skill. That indeed is one of the reasons why I have come here – out of respect for you, who are in process of providing us, by your experiments what a woman is, who are in process of providing us, by your failures and successes, with that extremely important piece of information.

But to continue the story of my professional experiences. I made one pound ten and six by my first review; and I bought a Persian cat with the proceeds. Then I grew ambitions. A Persian cat is all very well, I said; but a Persian cat is not enough. I must have a motor-car. And it was thus that I became a novelist – for it is a very strange thing that people will give you a motor-car if you will tell them a story. It is a still strange thing that there is nothing so delightful in the world as telling stories. It is far pleasanter than writing reviews of famous novels. And yet, if I am to obey your secretary and tell you my professional experience as a novelist, I must tell you about a very strange experience that befell me as a novelist. And to understand it you must try first to image a novelist's state of mind. I hope I am not

giving away professional secrets if I say that a novelist's chief desire is to be as unconscious as possible. He has to induce in himself a state of perpetual lethargy. He wants life to proceed with the utmost quite and regularity. He wants to see the same faces, to read the same books, to do the same things day after day, month after month, while he is writing, so that nothing may break the illusion in which he is living – so that nothing may disturb or disquiet the mysterious nosing about, feeling round, darts, dashes, and sudden discoveries if that very shy and illusive spirit, the imagination. I suspect that this state is the same both for men and women. Be that as it may, I want you to imagine me writing a novel in a state of trance. I want you to figure to yourselves a girl sitting with a pen in her hand, which for minutes, and indeed for hours, she never dips into the inkpot. The image that comes to my mind when I think of this girl is the image of a fisherman lying sunk in dreams on the verge of a deep lake with a rod held out over the water. She was letting her imagination sweep unchecked round every rock and cranny of the world that lies submerged in the depths of our unconscious being. Now came the experience that I believe to be far commoner with women writers than with men. The line raced through the girl's fingers. Her imagination had rushed away. It had sought the pools, the depths, the dark places where the largest fish slumber. And then there was a smash. There was an

explosion. There was foam and confusion. The imagination had dashed itself against something hard. The girl was roused from her dream. She was indeed in a state of the most acute and difficult distress. To speak without figure, she had thought of something, some thing about the body, about the passions which it was unfitting for her as a woman to say. Men, her reason told her, would be shocked. The consciousness of what men will say of a woman who speaks the truth about her passions had roused her from her artist's state of unconsciousness. She could write no more. The trance was over. Her imagination could work no longer. This I believe to be a very common experience with women writers -- they are impeded by the extreme conventionality of the other sex. For though men sensibly allow themselves great freedom in these respects, I doubt that they realized or can control the extreme severity with which they condemn such freedom in women.

These then were two very genuine experiences of my own. These were two of the adventures of my professional life. The first—killing the Angel in the House—I think solved. She died. But the second, telling the truth about my own experiences as a body, I do not think I solved. I doubt that any woman has solved it yet. The obstacles against her are still immensely powerful - and yet they are difficult to define. Outwardly, what is simpler than to write books? Outwardly, what obstacles are there for a

woman rather than for a man? Inwardly, I think, the case is very different; she has still many ghosts to fight, many prejudices to overcome. I Indeed it will be a long time still, I think, before a woman can sit down to write a book without finding a phantom to be slain, a rock to be dashed against. And if this is in literature, the freest of all professions for women, how is it the new professions which you are now for the first time entering?

Those are the questions that I should like, had I time, to ask you. And indeed, if I have laid stress upon these professional experience of mine, it is because I believe that they are, though in different forms, you also. Even when the path is nominally open—when there is nothing to prevent a woman from being a doctor, a lawyer, a civil servant- there are many phantoms and obstacles, as I believe, looming in her way. To discuss and define them is I think of great value and importance; for thus only can the labour be shared, the difficulties be solved. But besides this, it is necessary also to discuss the end and the aims for which we are fighting, for which we are doing battle with these formidable obstacles. Those aims cannot be taken for granted; they must be perpetually questioned and examined. The whole position, as I see it – here in this hall surrounded by women practicing for the first time in history I know not how many different professions – is one of extraordinary interested and importance. You have won rooms of your own in the house labour and effort, to pay the rent.

You are earning your five hundred pounds a year. But this freedom is only a beginning; the room is your own, but it is still bare. It has to be furnished; it has to be decorated; it has to be shared. How are you going to furnish it, how are you going to decorate it? With whom are you going to share it, and upon what terms? These, I think are questions of the utmost importance and interest. For the first time in history you are able to ask them; for the first time you are able to decide for your selves what the answers should be. Willingly would I stay and discuss those questions and answers – but not tonight. My time is up; and I must cease.

I. Find out information about Virginia Woolf from literary anthologies, encyclopedias or on-line resources.

II. Find out commentary and/or analysis on Woolf's position on the status of women.

III. Read the text then:

- ➔ Identify the main themes in her speech
- ➔ Compare her position and her argument with those of Mary Wollstonecraft.

➔ Write a short paragraph about your own opinion of the argument that the author is making in her speech.

IV. Translate the first paragraph of the speech.

Damascus University

Index of literary Terms

Damascus University


وقل رب زدني علما
Damascus University

Index of literary Terms

A

Allegory is a story illustrating an idea or a moral principle in which objects take on symbolic meanings. In Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, Dante, symbolizing mankind, is taken by Virgil the poet on a journey through Hell, Purgatory and Paradise in order to teach him the nature of sin and its punishments, and the way to salvation. The journey becomes an allegory of the path to the salvation of man.

Alliteration is used for musical effect, usually in poetry, it is a repetition of the initial sounds of several words in a group. The following line from Shakespeare's "Ariel's Song" in *The Tempest* provides us with an example of alliteration: "*Full Fathom five thy father lies.*" The repetition of the (f) sound creates a sense of drowning and swallowing water, emphasizing the sense of the father's death.

Allusion is a reference in one literary work to an element of another literary work. T. S. Eliot, in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" alludes (refers) to the biblical figure John the Baptist in the line:

Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter.

The allusion is to the story of Salome and John the Baptist, whose head according to the Bible, was brought on a silver platter to the seductive Salome.

Analogue is a comparison between two similar things. In literature, an analogue is a work which resembles another work either fully or in part. If a work resembles another because it is derived from the other, the original work is called the *source*, not an analogue of the later work.

Anecdote is a very short tale told by a character in a literary work.

Antagonist is a person or force which opposes the protagonist in a literary work. The tension between protagonist and antagonist is what drives action in a work of art. See *Protagonist* for more information.

Apostrophe is a figure of speech wherein the speaker directly addresses something nonhuman, be it animate or inanimate. In a

line from one of Sir Philip Sidney's sonnets "*With how sad steps, Oh Moon thou climb'st the skies,*" the poet speaks to the moon as if it were his friend.

Assonance is the repetition of the same vowel sounds in a literary work, especially in a poem. In Keats's *Ode on Melancholy:*

> For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
> And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

Here, we notice the repetition of the same vowel sound in "drowsily" and "drown". See *Consonance* for comparison.

B

Ballad is a story in poetic form, often about tragic love and usually sung. Ballads were passed down from generation to generation by singers.

Blank Verse is a poem written in unrhymed iambic pentameter. See *Meter* for more information.

C

Cacophony/Euphony

Cacophony is an unpleasant combination of sounds. Euphony, the opposite, is a pleasant combination of sounds. These sound

combinations can be used intentionally to create an effect, or they may appear unintentionally.

Caesura is a pause within a line of poetry which may or may not affect the metrical count (See *Meter*).

Canto is a subdivision of an epic poem. Famous examples of epic poetry in English are John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Lord Byron's *Don Juan*.

Carpe Diem is a Latin phrase which translated means "Seize (Catch) the day," meaning "Make the most of today." The phrase originated as the title of a poem by the Latin poet *Horace*, and the philosophy behind it is to live the moment with little or no consideration for the future.

Classicism is a movement or tendency in art, music, and literature to retain the characteristics found in work originating in classical Greece and Rome.

Classical allusion: is s reference to mythology (stories about the actions of gods and other supernatural creatures.

Climax: The decisive moment in a play, a poem, or a novel, a climax is the turning point of a work of art to which the rising action leads. It is the part of action which determines the outcome of the conflict.

Conceit is an extended or far-fetched simile or metaphor. A conceit occurs when the speaker compares two highly dissimilar things. Wyatt uses conceits when he compares love to a warrior, or the lover's situation to that of a storm-tossed ship (NAEL, 2845).

Concrete Poetry A poem that visually resembles something found in the physical world. A concrete poem can for example be written to look like a building, a human being of a fruit.

Consonance is the repetition of patterns of consonant sounds with changes in the adjacent vowel sounds in words near each other in a line or lines of poetry. Consider the repetition of words such as *hall* and *hell*, *years* and *yours*, or *reader* and *raider*. Cf. *Assonance*.

Couplet: A stanza of two lines, usually rhyming. The following lines by Andrew Marvell are an example of a rhymed couplet:

Had we but world enough and time,

This coyness, lady were no crime.

D

Diction refers to an author's choice of words. A writer's choice of words can have great impact in a literary work. The author, therefore, must choose his words carefully.

Didactic Literature is literature written with the explicit purpose of moralizing in mind. It is meant to instruct the reader.

Dramatic Monologue is a device in poetry very similar to soliloquy in drama. The speaker, caught at a moment of great emotional intensity usually expresses her/his innermost feelings regarding an event or occurrence. Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess" is probably the most famous example of a dramatic monologue in English Literature.

E

Elegy A lyric poem lamenting the death of someone. An elegy can be used as a device to express more than sadness for the death of a dear friend of family member. In John Milton's *Lycidas* the poet uses the occasion of the death of a colleague to present his own attack on the clergy of his time.

Epic is a long narrative poem celebrating the achievements of one or more heroes. Among the great epics of the world are *Gilgamesh* and Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is unquestionably the most famous epic in the English language.

Epigraph is a brief quotation which appears at the beginning of a literary work. A famous epigraph appears at the beginning of Coleridge's "Dejection: an Ode":

> Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
> With the old Moon in her arms;
> And I fear, I fear my Master dear!
> We shall have a deadly storm
>
> *Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.*

F

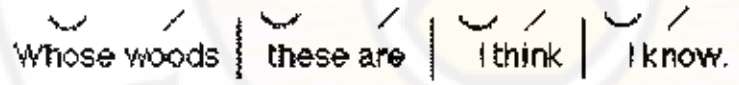
Fable is brief tale designed to illustrate a moral lesson. Often the characters are animals as in the fables of Aesop or in *Kalilah wa dimna*.

Figurative Language a way of saying one thing and meaning something else. Similes and metaphors are common examples of figurative language.

Figure of Speech An example of figurative language that states something that is not literally true in order to create an effect. Similes, metaphors and personification are figures of speech which are based on comparisons. Metonymy, synecdoche, apostrophe, oxymoron, and hyperbole are other figures of speech.

Flashback is a reference to an event which took place prior to the beginning of a story or play.

Foot is the basic unit of measurement in a line of poetry. In scansion, a foot represents one instance of a metrical pattern. A foot in English prosody is made up of at least two and at most three syllables. Feet are distinguished by the repetitions of pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables.



The meter in a poem is classified according both to its pattern and the number of feet to the line. Below is a list of classifications:

Monometer	=	one foot
Dimeter	=	two feet
Trimeter	=	three feet

Tetrameter = four feet

Pentameter = five feet

Since the line above is written in iambic meter, four feet to the line, the line would be referred to as iambic tetrameter.

Free Verse Unrhymed Poetry with lines of varying lengths, and containing no specific metrical pattern. The poetry of many modern authors in English provides us with numerous examples of free verse. Consider the following lines from Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself."

I celebrate myself and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.
I loaf and invite my soul,
I lean and loaf at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

G

Genre A literary type or form. Poetry is a genre of literature. Within poetry, sub-genres include lyrical poetry and epic poetry.

H

Hyperbole A figure of speech in which an overstatement or *exaggeration* occurs as in the following lines from Act 2, scene 2

of Shakespeare's "Macbeth." In this scene, Macbeth has murdered King Duncan. Horrified at the blood on his hands, he asks:

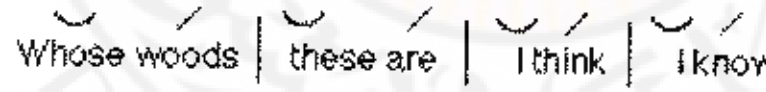
> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No. This my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red.

Literally, it does not require an ocean to wash blood from one's hand. Nor can the blood on one's hand turn the green ocean red. The hyperbole works to illustrate the guilt Macbeth feels at the brutal murder of his king and kinsman.

See *Understatement* to study the opposite of hyperbole.

I

Iamb A metrical pattern of one unstressed syllable followed by one stressed syllable. The following is an example:



See Meter for more information.

Imagery: word sequences or associations in a literary work which appeal to one or more of the senses creating a mental

image in the mind of the reader. In T. S. Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,"

> Day after day, day after day,
> We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
> As idle as painted ship
> Upon a painted ocean.

the poet uses images from the art of painting to impart upon the reader a sense of stillness and immobility.

Inference is a judgment based on reasoning rather than on direct or explicit statement. A conclusion based on facts or circumstances. For example, advised not to travel alone in temperatures exceeding fifty degrees below zero, the man in Jack London's "To Build a Fire" sets out anyway. One may infer arrogance from such an action.

Irony takes many forms. In **irony of situation**, the result of an action is the reverse of what the actor expected. In **dramatic irony**, the audience knows something that the characters in the drama do not. In **verbal irony**, the contrast is between the literal meaning of what is said and what is meant. A character may refer to a plan as brilliant, while actually meaning that he/she thinks the plan is foolish. **Sarcasm** is a form of verbal irony.

L

Lyric Poem: a short poem wherein the poet expresses an emotion or a feeling, or comments an observation from life.

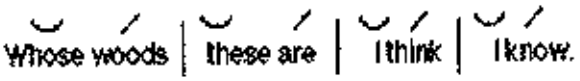
M

Metaphor: a figure of speech wherein a comparison is made between two entities in order to create a sense of memorable novelty. A simple metaphor that has become a cliché in the language is "she is a rose," meaning she is beautiful or gentle. In "his face was an iceberg," the poet may want to convey the strictness, lack of emotions, stiffness, or heartlessness of the character described.

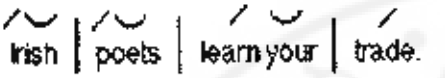
See *Simile* for comparison.

Meter A regular pattern of unstressed and stressed syllables in poetry. English meter therefore differs greatly from Arabic meter. The interplay of stressed and unstressed syllabus will make it very difficult for non-native speakers to scan English poetry properly, since rules that explain stress patterns in English are incomprehensive, and difficult to remember. Below is an illustration of some commonly used metrical patterns:

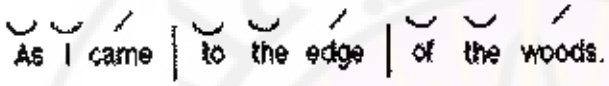
Iamb



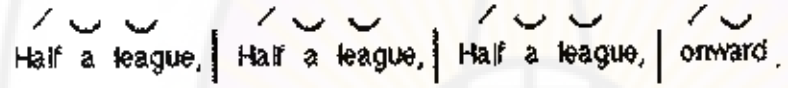
Trochee



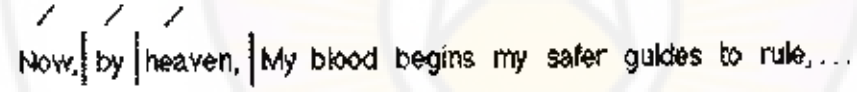
Anapest



Dactyl



Spondee



Metonymy is the substitution of one term for another with which it is closely related. Because of their cogency, metonymies are rampant in everyday speech. For example when we say the poem suggests something, we mean the poet. When we speak of a campus, we mean the university.

Mood The atmosphere or feeling created by a literary work, partly by descriptions of objects or by the style of the

descriptions. A film beginning with a turbulent thunderstorm may be attempting to create a mood of horror or suspense.

Myth: a hereditary narrative, often borne out of religious beliefs. Myths often attempt to answer existential questions and provide relief for eschatological puzzles. Mythical poems or narratives allow ample space for the supernatural making it appear believable or natural.

N

Narrative Poem: a poem which tells a story. Epics are often book-size narrative poems dealing with the supernatural.
See *epic* for comparison.

O

Ode: A long lyric poem serious in subject and treatment. The diction and language are often elevated. John Keats is most famous for his odes which are elaborate reflections on life, death and immortality.

Onomatopoeia A literary device wherein the sound of a word echoes its meaning. The words "ding dong," "squeaky," and

"roar" are examples. The following alliteration in John Keats's *To Autumn* is an example:

The hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind

The alliterative repetition of the sound /w/ is presumably onomatopoeic, since it echoes the sound of the wind.

Oxymoron A combination of two terms that in regular language use are contraries or incompatible. Milton's famous description of hell as containing "darkness invisible" is a good example. A common oxymoron in daily use is the description of the polar regions as "frozen deserts." (NAEL, 2845).

P

Parable A brief story or simple observation narrated in order to teach a moral lesson. The New Testaments relates many of Christ's parables. Christ's tale of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 30-7) is an example.

Paradox A situation or a statement that seems absurd or self-contradictory, but which turns out to have a rational meaning, usually unexpectedly.

CF. *Oxymoron*.

Parody: A literary work that imitates the style of another literary work (similar to *mu'aaradah* in Arabic literature). Parodies are often amusing, but can also be harsh and vindictive. A poet may stress the use of rhyme in a poem in order to mock its limitations.

Pastoral A deliberately conventional poem whose heroes are more often than not shepherds and their sweethearts. Pastorals were common and popular in the Latin tradition of poetry. In English, they tend to be nostalgic as they evoke a simpler style of life and a connectedness to an idealized nature. Marlowe's *"Come live with me and be my love"* is a timeless example.

Pathetic Fallacy is a variety of personification in which we attribute human characteristics to objects in nature, implying some natural empathy for the human condition. A weeping stream or a happy butterfly reflect the mood of a persona in the poem or a character in a narrative. The poetry of the Romantic poet William Wordsworth is replete with instances of pathetic fallacy.

Personification is the attribution of human qualities to an inanimate object or a non-human entity.

Protagonist: The hero or central character of a literary work. In accomplishing his or her objective, the protagonist is hindered by some opposing force which can be human, animal, or natural. The tension with this opposing force, the antagonist pushes action forth, and creates the needed complication to make a work of literature interesting.
See *Antagonist* for comparison.

Pun: A play on words wherein a word is used to convey two meanings at the same time.

Q

Quatrain: A four-line stanza which may be rhymed or unrhymed. A **heroic quatrain** is a four line stanza rhymed abab.
See *Stanza* for more information.

R

Refrain: A line or more that is repeated in a poem or a musical piece, usually but not necessarily always at the end of a stanza.

Rhyme: A pattern of repeated sounds at the end of poetic lines, used in order to create a musical and memorable effect. Sonnets of all types have specific rhyme patterns, so do certain types of

stanzas like the *ottava rima*, and *Spenserian stanza.* When one of the rhyming words occurs in a place in the line other than at the end, it is called **Internal rhyme**. **Eye rhymes** usually refer to words the endings of which look similar but which actually have different sounds such as *"gone"* and *"alone."*

S

Satire: A piece of literature designed to ridicule the subject of the work. While satire can be funny, its aim is not to amuse, but to arouse contempt.

Simile: A figure of speech which takes the form of a comparison between two unlike quantities for which a basis for comparison can be found, and which uses the words "like" or "as" in the comparison. A good example is the beginning of Lord Byron's poem, *She Walks in Beauty:*

She Walks in beauty like the night

See *Metaphor* for comparison.

Sonnet: A lyric poem of fourteen lines with a fixed rhyme scheme. In English poetry there are two main types of sonnets, the Petrarchan and the Shakespearean. Differences between the

two are in the structure of the lines and the inner divisions within the poem.

See *Meter* for more information.

Stanza: A major subdivision in a poem. A stanza of two lines is called a couplet; a stanza of three lines is called a tercet; a stanza of four lines is called a quatrain.

Symbol: A device in literature where an object or a character represents an idea.

Synecdoche: A figure of speech that substitutes the part for the whole. When we speak of "forty heads of cattle," we do not mean "heads only" but the entire animal. Another example is when we ask someone to "lend a hand," meaning to help.

T

Theme: The unifying component of a work of art, or its main idea. The theme provides an answer to the question *What is the work about?* Identifying the theme and analyzing it stands at the core of literary criticism or simply of any casual appreciation of a work of art.

Tone: By identifying the author's attitude toward his or her subject, we identify the tone of his work. Students often confuse *Tone* with *Mood*. The distinction may seem like splitting hairs. However students should keep in mind that mood is more symbiotically connected to the setting (time and place of the work).

Damascus University

BIBLIOGRAPHY

M. H. Abrams, M.H. ed., *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Major Authors* 7th ed., New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001

Ferguson, Margaret, et. al. eds., *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, 4th ed., New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996

Preminger, Alex. & Brogan, T.V.F., eds., *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Stephen, Martin. *English Literature, a student guide*, England: Pearson Education, 2000.

Damascus University


وقل رب زدني علما
جامعة دمشق
Damascus University