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Contemporary Fiction between Theory and Practice:

***A Monster Calls* By Patrick Ness as a Case Study**

A Thesis submitted to the Department of English in partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of M.A in English Literature and Civilization.

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The study is meant to examine the fundamental structure of the narrative fiction and the possible functionality of the world outside the literary fictional text.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this Master's thesis, entitled "The Contemporary Fiction between Practice and Theory in selected work by Patrick Ness", is a result of my own work and that all sources which were used are listed on the Works Cited and Bibliography pages.

Merahi Mokhtaria, Saida.

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Dedication

For my sun and moon, Father and mother

For every minute, second and moments

For each wrinkle and gray hair, I was the reason behind

For my beloved sister

And for my dear brothers.

Abstract

The readers across the world took novels as a way to gain experience and knowledge about new views, people's opinions, thoughts, lifestyle, and even contemporary issues from different perspectives. Likewise, issues had changed with the constant change of time. Writers were obliged to change not only their style but also their themes. This led to the creation of a new type of literature: "contemporary fiction". This form may be the most satisfactory to read, for it has different genres, such as adventure, fantasy, social, mystery, realistic...

The aim of this thesis is to offer answers to the questions about whether the contemporary fiction reflects the complete image of the modern issues, social traditions and does the character represent a model of typical persons or not? Moreover, if the contemporary fiction novels offer different views about issues and also offers different experiences, so how do they contrast and why? On the other hand, this thesis will analyze what the author suggests about contemporary issues, and how does the writer develop issues as fiction. Through Patrick Ness's novel *A Monster Calls*.

The work will be divided into three chapters. The first will be devoted to the definition of the contemporary fiction and its genre. The second chapter will deal with themes; social issues and ethical morals in literature also the effects of literature in contemporary fiction, and finally, the third chapter will deeply analyze the novel titled *A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	IV
Dedication	V
Abstract	VI
Table Of Contents	VII
General introduction	08
1. Chapter I (Theoretical Background)	
• Introduction to Contemporary Fiction	10
• Primarily Reviews	15
2. Chapter II	
• The key Concept of Contemporary Fiction	20
• The Themes, Issues and the Ethical Problems, in Contemporary Fiction	28
• The Effects of Literature in Contemporary Fiction	42
3. Chapter III	
• The Monster Calls through the Lens of Contemporary Fiction.	46
4. Conclusion	61
5. Glossary and Cited Work	63

General introduction

The rise of creative fiction began in the late of 1960's and developed by time to become the most read and written form. It cannot be defined as a genre, a movement nor be categorized, for it has no specific characteristics nor a specific theme. For that reason, contemporary fiction is considered to be a great issue for theorist and authors, who agreed to define it as the current state of the written fiction.

moreover, the contemporary fiction is considered as the most suitable form of literature, for it embodies many genres that satisfy all the types of readers, This latter was the main reason that the new creative writers used it as a door to speak directly to the readers' minds and reflect their ideas, issues, fears and thoughts. One of those writers is Patrick Ness who chooses contemporary fiction in his novel *A Monster Calls*, to deal with sensitive modern issues that concern young adults, parents, teachers, and even grandparents.

Contemporary fiction is considered as the most read and written form of literature, furthermore the writers have no limited number of themes, issues, and point view to affect the readers, in other words contemporary fiction can insert ethical believes, ideas and principles in the readers mind indirectly, moreover this thesis will examine how contemporary fiction affect the reader.

This thesis aims to shed the light on how all the genres of contemporary fiction, such as contemporary realistic fiction, contemporary fantasy, and sports fiction..., can sensibilize and give the reader a view on different modern issues.

The present work attempts through Ness' novel to give an answer: to how the writer develops issues and characters? Does it reflect a complete image of the modern issues? Does the character represent a model of typical persons?

On the other hand, what the author suggests about these issues? Also, put into scrutiny as well as seeing whether contemporary fiction novels offer different views about this modern issues different experiences, and the way they contrast.

Furthermore, this thesis hypothesise that through reading, contemporary fiction helps the readers to develop opinions, overviews, reactions and experiences, These latter are developed by the reader because s/he feels that they are strongly related to contemporary novels. These feelings are by reason of the novels, which are built in the same time and world of the readers. It means that the character of the contemporary novels deals with same events as real persons.

The contemporary fiction was always studied as a subject, either by studying its meaning such as Eaglestone's book *Contemporary Fiction A Very Short Introduction*, or its contribution to literature such as the thesis titled *Monstrous Losses And Broken Fairy Tales: Fantasy, Loss And Trauma In Young Adult Literature* by Dabrowski, this latter proved that contemporary fiction can add to history. However, this thesis will study the way that contemporary fiction influences the readers' identity. The choice of this topic was based on the importance of the contemporary fiction's influence, and how much helpful way it is to educate and sensitize the young and old about every issue faced on a daily basis.

However, this thesis will be limited by one novel *A Monster Calls* to study how the writer (Patrick Ness) could develop issues, characters and themes through fiction. The choice of the novel was due to being the bestsellers for last years, which means the writer succeeded to affect a large group of readers.

The thesis will apply the critical reading as method to study the way used by contemporary fiction to affect the readers. This method was chosen for it can be used by all types of readers and writers.

The first chapter will be divided into two parts, the first one will provide a definition of the contemporary fiction since this latter has always presented a changing point, also it will describe the genres of contemporary fiction with examples. The second part, however, will deal with the primarily literature reviews on both contemporary fiction and Patrick Ness' novel *A Monster Calls*.

Furthermore, the first part of the second chapter will focus the elements of fiction, and the second part will deal with themes, issues, and the ethical problems of contemporary fiction. Additionally, the third part will be about the effects of literature in contemporary fiction.

Finally, the last chapter is the analysis of the contemporary novel *A Monster Calls*, and the issues that have been spoken about by the author Patrick Ness.

Chapter I: Introduction to Contemporary Fiction

Literature is where ideas are investigated, lived out, explored in all their messy complexity, sometimes these ideas look quite simple [...] sometimes they might appear more complicated how can I reconstruct my memory of an event I can't recall? Perhaps to "think" is not the right word: think is too limiting a description of a range of what a novel can do with ideas. In any event, the way literature thinks is bound up with what it's like to be us, to be human. Literature is how we make ourselves intelligible to ourselves. And contemporary fiction matters because it is how we work out who we are now, today (Eaglestone 01)

According to Eaglestone, the contemporary fiction has to do with shaping our identities, and our action on the daily basis. However, before questioning the relationship between the reader and contemporary fiction, the real question is: How to define the contemporary fiction? And when has it appeared?

"Definition of contemporary, it is only to discover that time, in its hurry appears to have accelerated out of time altogether" (Luckhurst, Marks. 2)

The word "contemporary" means something or someone belongs to or occurring in the present times. Additionally, Fiction means a literature in a form of prose that describes imaginary events and people. Nevertheless, when the two words are linked together, it gives a new term which is best defined as a fictional book/novel where all the characters, events, settings are not real, but it is set in contemporary or present times.

Likewise, if the contemporary fiction is related to time, and if contemporary means now, but when that period of time passes by, it is over, it means we know the end of every contemporary novel, but when did this form has started?

As any form of literature, the contemporary fiction is deeply related to history, and its beginnings were related to major historical events, for instance in Western Europe, it starts by the end of the Second World War (1945). In Spain, it started by the end of The Civil War (1975), and the beginning in Germany was until the end of the cold war (1989). Furthermore out of Europe, in India, the contemporary fiction appeared just after the independence from Britain (1947).

Far from history, the contemporary fiction came to announce the end of any literary movement. It means it appeared just after the postmodernism; however, this latter (the postmodernism) was also marked by major historical events such the Second World War. For that reason, it was preferable to define the history of contemporary fiction with historical events and dates.

All this dates and events lead to another question, which is why it appeared? Well, the answer is also part of history. It happens that by the end of the Second World War, the novel was dead, by reason of the readers, who were no more interested in reading the classical novels. This would enhance the writers to change their style, among them: Samuel Beckett, Julio Cortàzar, Thomas Pynchon and Robert Coover who choose to break all the writing's rules to create something recent that is suitable to the readers of their time. Emerging from this new creative writings appeared the contemporary fiction which deals with wide range of contemporary issues.

“If literature knows something or knows of something, then we shall need at some stage to ask what literary forms know or know of” (Eaglestone Wood 6).

Likewise, contemporary fiction is not considered as literary movement or a genre of literature. It is more as a form; this latter has been defined as the outside shape. However, in this specific case, the word “form” is a relative concept that cannot be defined. Because contemporary fiction cannot be related to one subject, or an issue not even limited by rules or techniques. It is best characterised as a current model of the written fiction that has developed since the late of 1960’s, to become an unstoppable force.

Chapter I: The Genres of Contemporary Fiction

Contemporary fiction is the most suitable form for writers who show a talent not only writing stories, but also examining contemporary issues, and problems that face the reader, for this form has been divided into genres.

The following table contains some examples of the contemporary fiction's genres according to "*the Writer's Encyclopaedia*" (Boyd 1996).

Genre	Definition	Frequently found elements	Examples
Contemporary Realistic fiction	Realistic fiction creates imaginary characters and situation that depict our world and society; it focuses on themes of growing up and social problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Young adult stories ● Realistic events that push the character to grow, mature and understand the world ● Themes are contemporary and may tend to be controversial. ● Current political and social issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wonder Novel by R.J. Palacio (2012) ● Holes by Louis Sachar (1998) ● The Fault in Our Stars by John Green and Rodrigo Corral (2012)

<p>Contemporary Fantasy</p>	<p>It tells imaginary stories about people and creatures, where the character fight against evil, most of the fantasy takes a place and time in the current world, however, the characters extend beyond the real world</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magical creatures • Apoplectic dangers • Unexplainable events occur that is not realistic nor logical • Supernatural beings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neverwhere by Neil Gaiman (1996) • American Gods By Neil Gaiman (2001) • The Magicians By Lev Grossman (2009)
<p>History</p>	<p>Imaginative stories and characters that are either related to the past. Or telling their stories about the history</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some events that really happened such as the world war • The major historical event may be an essential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two Koreas by Don Oberdorfer (1997) • Atonement by Ian McEwan (2001)

The contemporary fiction has a different genre to satisfy different types of readers, for that reasons contemporary fiction can influence majority with the ideas and lessons sent by the writers.

Chapter I: Primarily reviews

More than this the contemporary novel is the best way of thinking about who we are now because fiction is also the freest of all the arts despite many attempts to create one there is no real watertight definition of fiction, it is not simply made up it does not just tell story originally 'definition' meant the setting of bounds and limits: it is not at all clear what the limits of fiction or indeed if there are any (Eaglestone 2)

According to Eaglestone, the contemporary fiction is the ideal way to think about our true identity in the present moment. It also means that it is the way the writer uses to change thoughts and draw attention to the main issues that the individuals suffer from in the modern society. On the other hand, fiction has no limits which give the writer a total freedom to describe whatever he wants in any way he wants. For that reason, the writer chooses to write the things that interest him/her in the first place.

This unbound freedom of fiction in combination with the huge number of novels published every year [...]also means that in contemporary fiction there can be no real experts [...]some book reviewers and journalists perhaps inadvertently, suggest that we can only appreciate the novel in the context of the writer's life (some writers play up to this, often means that we pay attention to correlation between the two stories [...] the story of the novel (or a bad summary of the novel) and the story of the writer's life, or in the case of contemporary fiction we can listen to the author her-or himself tell about what

a book is about both of these mean we no longer pay attention to the novel ”
(Eaglestone 6)

However, Eaglestone sees that misuse of contemporary fiction can lead out of the borders, and no one could take any benefits from it. Because the new way that all the journalist and reviewers push the readers to believe that book has a deep relation to the writer’s life. That is one of the marketing plans that use the feelings of the reader as an example: the feeling of empathy, or the feeling of security, and in the same time make the reader ignore the truth about the novel? Which could be boring, unhelpful, badly written, or not interesting at all.

Additionally, the thesis titled *The Illuminating Power of Fiction: A Reading of A.L.Kennedy’s Day, Ian McEwan’s Atonement, and Jonathan Safran Foer’s Everything Is Illuminated* was conducted to answer one major question which is: Can contemporary fiction add to history?. Through a profound investigation of the three contemporary novels “Day, Atonement and Everything is Illuminated”. The thesis could prove that the contemporary fiction gives another view to history. For that reasons that thesis proves and highlight the aim of this thesis, which is the importance of contemporary fiction and its influence on the readers.

The three novels are interesting because of the broad spectre of “real” stories they provide, written by post-memorial generational authors. The thesis claims that novels like these can provide additional and different perspective on WWII, and by that contribute something valuable to general history – the history that we all live in, which means our understanding of the world and of

reality and of life itself. They can also be said to be testimonies of the post-memorial generation's relation to the war (Farestveit 30)

On the other hand, there have been numerous critical writings concerned with Patrick Ness' winning awards contemporary novel *A Monster Calls*. Covering all the sides of the book, from the style of writing to the development of the story and the character analysis. This is some reviews by the Book Smugglers, which is one of the known as award-winning publishing houses and the second one is by The New York Times.

I don't know what I was expecting from *A Monster Calls* but it most certainly wasn't this...this explosive awesomeness. I did not expect this book to be this exceptional and there is really no better word for it. How can a book be about lessons without being about lessons? How can a book be subtle and yet so completely obvious? How can a book be funny and yet so tremendously sad? How can a story be so kind when it deals with such harsh realities? How can a book speak about humanity in general and about one person in particular and make sense and connect both in all of their greyness? How can a book have so many truths inside its pages that it makes me feel like it was written for me (The Book Smugglers)

According to the article published by book smugglers publishing house, *A Monster Calls* contains many lessons to each and every person. It is also a picture of the life circle and the full truth of what it could be faced in daily life. The book was never about one person but all, for it deals with a tragedy "Death" that we all face one day.

This is one profoundly sad story. But it's also wise, darkly funny and brave, told in spare sentences, punctuated with fantastic images (Her scariest frown burnt into her face like a scar) and stirring silences. Past his sorrow, fright and rage, Conor ultimately lands in a place — an imperfect one, of course — where healing can begin. "*A Monster Calls*" is a gift from a generous storyteller and a potent piece of art. It's enough to make me wonder: How often does grief — and the balm to heal it — arrive packaged together so neatly in the same envelope, on the doorstep? (The New York Times, 2011)

In the two reviews, by readers, book reviewers, and journalists, it proves the thesis' statement rightness, when it comes to the role of contemporary fiction in the first place and its irresistible way to catch the attention of readers from all types and ages. In the second place, It highlights how this form of literature could teach the reader about many issues with unlimited angles to examine it. Furthermore, the readers could experience joy, pain, love; loss and more feelings reading one book. it may be the same feelings as reading the classics, but surely it is stronger for it has a deep relationship with our time. This means it makes the reader feel more attached to the novel, the issues and the characters.

This thesis has chosen Ness' novel, *The Monster calls* as a study case, for many reasons. Among all the novel's idea was by Siobhan Dowd a British writer, but unfortunately, she died of cancer before she finishes it. It means that this book has two writers' views of the contemporary fiction. Besides, the book is deeply related to what any reader could face in the present time. Because the story is about a thirteen years old boy, who suffers in silence, his mother was terminally ill, his father was married to another woman in America, and his grandmother was a cold stubborn rich woman. Moreover, he

was bullied at school, the teachers ignore his existence, and he had nightmares that kept him from sleeping. It may seem a simple stereotype story. However, it deals with many issues such death, acceptance, suffer; the circle of life; family, isolation.

Chapter II: The Key Concept of Contemporary Fiction

Though the most dominant form and genre of fiction are relatively recent, the storytelling and narrative are as old as the human existence. It is facts that the civilization is traced by its historical records, this latter include folk tales, mythology, legends and ...others. This all started orally, passed from generation to generation. And with the constant change of technology, the writers start recording this narrative form, for example, The Iliad and Odyssey (8th century) by Homer, And The Aeneid by Vergil (1557) are models of short stories. The reason why the two stories are categorized in a time where such genre was not known is the elements of fiction which remained the same through history.

Moreover, this element was first written and analyzed by Aristotle, who happened to be the first who wrote a book of literary analysis and criticism titled *Poetics* which was published between 384-322 av. B.C. According to Aristotle, every fiction should have, a plot, setting, characters, point of view, symbols, themes, and last but not least motifs. These elements will be defined in the following part.

➤ Plot

This element (plot) is the basic foundation of the novel, for it is the part responsible for the general structure, which held all the other elements together. The literary term “Plot” is used to describe the arrangement of the events that make a story. According to *The Narrative Environments How Do They Matter?* (Parsons 03). The plot is divided to:

- Simple plot (the linear narrative): is when the events reflect the chronological order of the story.
- Complex plot (the non-linear narrative): is when the events are out of chronological order (de-chronologise) such as the crime fiction.

Furthermore, according to Sternberg (*Telling In Time (II): Chronology, Teleology, Narrativity. Poetics Today* (1992) Aristotle recommended the complex plot. As he divided it into beginning, middle and end.

According to Aristotle each part of the plot have its own chronology. Likewise, Sternberg notes the story begins at chronological beginning through the chronological middle and toward the chronological end.

However, through *Sterne's Tristram Shandy: Stylistic Commentary* (1921), Viktor Shklovsky argues that the plot is not only the arrangement of story's events. But it also includes all the devices and stratagems, which are used to delay narrative.

On the other hand, *The Living Handbook Of Narratology* (2014) denotes That Freytag's pyramid is the model basic of the plot. And it aims to systemise the development of narrative interests. According to Freytag, the plot has five primary elements.

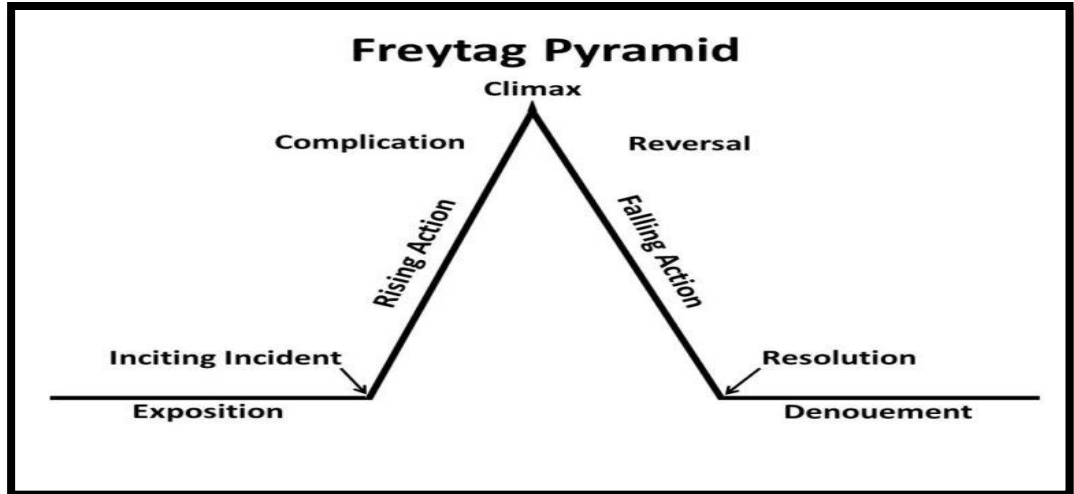


Figure 1 The Pyramid of Freytag (read.write.think/international literacy association)

The following definitions of the five primary elements are According to Freytag:

1. The exposition: the beginning of the story where the main characters, setting and even conflict are described.
2. The rising action: the changing of events that lead the main character to try getting over the obstacles and struggles
3. The climax: it is the core of the plot, where events change, this part is considered the most important since it leaves the reader sink in excitement and wonders about the following events.
4. The falling action or denouement. : is the part where all the mystery and conflicts start to resolve.
5. The resolution is the conclusion, either happy, tragic, or an opened ending, it depends on the writer and it changes from one to another.

➤ Setting

The setting is place (geographical location), time (when the story's events are set), weather conditions, social conditions, and mood or atmosphere (what feeling is created at the beginning of the story). This element is extremely important in contemporary fiction because the time is what determines if the novel is or isn't a part of it.

➤ Characters

The character is the most significant element. According to Aristotle, it was called the characters in action. In which he meant that the nature of human beings obliges him to reveal or narrate his activities through fiction in any work of art. Characters are the mental, emotional, and social qualities to distinguish one entity from another whether they are people, animals, spirits, automatons, pieces of furniture, or other animated objects. Thus the character refers to people's outward appearance, behaviour and also their inner emotional, intellectual, and moral qualities.

Most stories have main characters usually called the protagonist whose personality traits move the plots forward and contribute to conflicts. According to the book *Types of Characters, Characteristic of Types* (David Fishlov 422-439), there are the following types of characters:

1. Confidante Character: is a central character or a thought. For example Hercule Poirot *Murder On Orient Express* by Agatha Christie
2. Dynamic Character: is a character that changes during events (behaviours, not physical appearances). For example Ebenezer Scrooge, in *A Christmas Carol* by Dickens.

3. Flat Character: is a static character, who remains the same during the story.
4. Foil Character: is a character that shows the contrast, it is generally between the hero and the villain. For example Cinderella's grace and beauty as opposed to her self-centered stepsisters.
5. Round Character: is a dynamic character that shows a contrast in behaving and traits. For Examples: Harry Potter, Ronald Weasley, Hermione Granger (*Harry Potter Books*).
6. Stock /Stereotype character: is a character that has a certain trait that allows any reader to reckon him/her, as an example of the genius one, or the clumsy one. For Example Lydia the sister of Elizabeth Bennet. She represents the young arrogant girl that always falls in troubles (*Pride And Prejudice By Jane Austin*).
7. The protagonist: is the one which the entire story is about, the character that faces the conflicts, generally, this character represents the good For example Huckleberry Finn (*The Adventure Of Huckleberry Finn By Mark Twain*).
8. Antagonist: the one who is against the protagonist, or which is reckoned as the villain. For example Voldemort "*Harry Potter books*"

➤ Point of view

A REAL EVENT maybe - and usually is - experienced by more than one person, simultaneously. A novel can provide different perspectives on the same event - but only one at a time. And even if it adopts an "omniscient" narrative method, reporting the action from a God-like altitude, it will usually privilege just one or two of the possible "points of view" from which the story could be told, and

concentrate on how events affect them. Totally objective, totally impartial narration may be a worthy aim in journalism or historiography, but a fictional story is unlikely to engage our interest unless we know whose story it is. (Lodge 26)

Point of view: is the writer or the narrator point of view, it matters for it is the way that the readers see and understand the story. In addition, it is the one angle that the writer or the narrator wants the reader to see from. According to Lodge, these elements is the part responsible for the readers' response emotionally and morally.

“Henry James was something of a virtuoso in the manipulation of point of view” (Lodge 26). According to lodge, there are three types of points of view.

Lodge described the first when the narrator tells the story through one character. It means the narrator knows only what the character know nothing more. He could only tell the story from this character point of view and opinion. Lodge also denote that if the Narrator change character, the story will change.

In *What Maisie Knew* he presents a story of multiple adulteries - or adulteries thinly legitimized by divorce and remarriage - exclusively through the eyes of a child who is affected by, but largely uncomprehending of them (Lodge 26)

The second point of view is multiple. Lodge indicate that in this point of view the narrator moves from one character point of view to another, to share many angles with the reader.

Furthermore, Lodge called the third “omniscient narrative method”, he described it as reporting the action from a God-like altitude. It means the narrator tells the story through one character but he has knowledge of other things the character does not know.

➤ Symbols

The word symbol is derived from "symballein, meaning 'to throw together', from the Greek 'symbolon' and Latin 'symbolum', which meant token sign" (Webster, 2003: 1190).

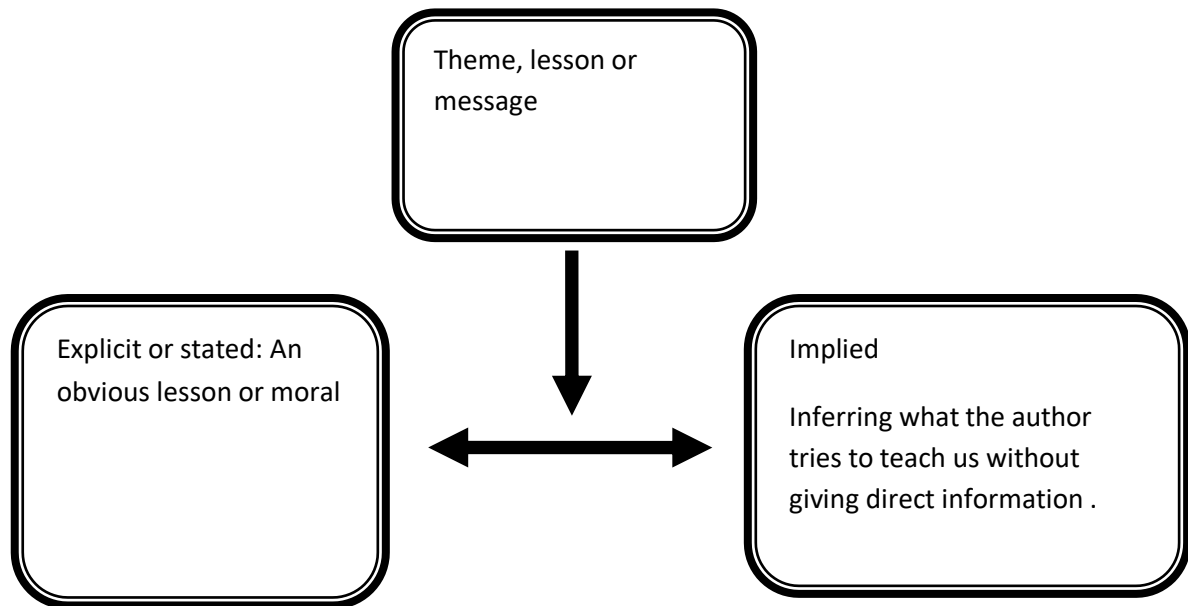
According to Perrine, in literature symbols means more than what it is. It could be an object or, a person, an action. For example a Tree: It is the symbol of growth and the sign of immortality (Gostaniong, 1377: 10). Symbols deals with many domains of human life.

According to Shamisa (6) symbols are divided into :

- 1) Arbitrary symbols: are the common and known symbols. which the reader could easily reckon. For example, the spring that represents youth.
- 2) Personal symbols: are new and fresh which the writer or the poets newly creates.

➤ Themes

The central topic, the main idea in any written fiction is called the theme. Which is the most important because all the element gathered as one to achieve one aim, which is the total understanding of the theme. The reader can discover the theme by questioning and examining the meaning from details in the story. In other words, the authors' underlying lesson or message is told in the theme. The story contains and it has two types:



Conflict is also influenced by social environment, economic condition, or even psychological condition. The resolution for each conflict is also different according to who resolves the conflict (Little 02)

The theme can be supported by conflicts and issues. According to Simpson (02), the types of conflict in fiction have been codified as man against man, man against nature, and man against himself.

- A. The character versus self: it is an inside conflict between the character and his inner self
- B. The character versus the society: it is the conflict when the character's beliefs are against the norms of society

C. The character versus nature when the character finds him self-suffering
from one of the natural disasters

In contrast, there are thousands of issues to be used in fiction, it is either economic, social, cultural..., the issue's use is limited only by the imagination of the writer and his/her interest, it is generally chosen according to what the society as an individual is dealing with.

Chapter II: The Themes, Issues and Ethical Problems in Contemporary Fiction

Themes in Contemporary Fiction

In the previous chapter, we have attempted to sum a definition to the literary term “Theme”. And it is mentioned that this element is the most important component in the novel. We also it explained how issues and conflicts are partly used to successfully send the message behind the theme.

It may happen that every writer has his/her own interest; when choosing a subject which leads to create a countless number of themes. However, there are common themes or which are called: “Universal ideas”, this latter are lessons that all the writers agreed on, to send the message and teach a lesson. Even to light the flame of hope in the cold hearts of the readers. For more understanding of these universal themes, this thesis has offered universal ideas, used by Patrick Ness in his novel.

These themes are defined according to the article published by The Writers Academy under the title *A Handy Guide to The Most Common Themes in Literature* (the illustrated examples with each theme are novels, which used that specific theme as a major idea through the book).

1. Crime Doesn't Pay

This idiomatic expression is the most popular theme between writer, and a stereotyped idea among the readers. It is used to show that every criminal will pay his deeds in the end, and this character – generally the antagonist- will eventually get punished for all his/her action. This theme is used to teach the reader that good

is always there waiting, and evil or wrong will always lose as an example: *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S Lewis.

2. Own Worst Enemy

It is the conflict between the person and his/her inner self. It happens that the characters have low self-esteem, or doubting their selves. It is that fear and doubts that keep them away from greatness and throw them into the deep dark holes where they could be never saved. On the other hand, this theme teaches the reader that he/she is the key to the door of his own happiness, not others, and he/she is the hero of his-or-her life.

3. Coming of Age (Bildungsroman):

This theme is generally found in young adult novels, which is about the moral and psychological growth of the main character. The theme is used to teach the reader that growing up is not easy. This idea explores the struggle that a person faces and the oppression made by society, events, self or family. That can lead the character to change forever. It is more like climbing the wall to cross from childhood to adulthood as an example: Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*

4. The individual vs. society

This theme draws the image of how society influences the person's authenticity. It is a fact that everyone is different from the others. We are not all the same. For that reason, the human should respect the differences. This is the reason why writers use this theme,

mainly to shed the light on the uniqueness killed by society when treating a person as an outsider as an example: *The Giver* by Lois Lowry and *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak.

5. Good Vs. Evil

This theme could be found in any genre, but in different shapes, this theme generally expresses that the protagonist is completely good, and the antagonist is rotten and evil to the bones. And between these two there will be an eternal fight that could end up only if one of them disappeared for example Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

6. Circle of Life

Each one's life starts with birth and ends up with death, this fact is known everywhere in this universe. However, this theme is used to remind the reader to live not only exist. It is a way to mention that life is short, and the person spends half of it sleeping, so the writers try to push the reader to go beyond their fears and above their dreams, as an example "*The Sun Also Rises*" by Ernest Hemmingway.

7. Family

The family is the cell of society, and through novels, we could see different types of families, and struggles that each one faces. It is also a way to explore family ties, and sometimes see what other members feel. This theme describes how important the family could be as an example *Wonder* by R.J Palacio.

8. Suffering

It is divided into two types, physical or internal suffers. This theme is most popular in contemporary fiction. For the society nowadays criticized every and each individual without seeing what is beyond a tear in the eye, burn at the hands or a fake smile on the face. This theme calls the readers to put themselves in the others' shoes before hearing a word. This theme describes what the characters face and how much pain they feel but they keep standing. As an example *The Old Man and The Sea* by Ernest Hemmingway.

9. Death

Life without death has no meaning. It is a part of life, but a tragedy of death hid among the living characters. Who refuse to accept the loss or their beloved one. Likewise, writers use this fact to teach people that getting over is not a crime, but a part of life. Or they use the image of people who live isolated without love, dream, and higher aim as dead people. As an example: *Tinkers* by Paul Hard

10. Alienation

Isolation of the character from others, this one always fails to bind to society and the environment. The reason for this isolation goes back to many factors as technology or the modern culture as an example: *The Catcher In The Rye* by J.D Salinger.

11. Relations

This theme sheds the light on every relation the human has including parenthood, sorority, brotherhood, marriage, friendship. In a term to cherish this relation that shapes the human in general. As an example: *A Handful Of Dust* by Evelyn Waugh.

Chapter II: The Themes, Issues And Ethical Problems In Fiction

The Main Issues in Contemporary Fiction

The genres, forms and style of fiction had changed with the constant change of the time. Nevertheless, when it comes to themes, writers tried to be authentic and original, while giving the readers a taste of something new. But these themes and issues have always existed in societies and literature. Some of the issues took new form changing the outside shapes, but all they kept the same old core as an example: discrimination had always existed in societies. However, the external shape had changed. For instance, in the 1960's there was racism against Black, Asian, woman and many categories of other people, But now discrimination is against the poor, so in the beginning, it was physical and now turned to be economical.

Furthermore, there exist other issues that were not noticed since they affected only some minorities, as a model: the issue of Immigration, or the issue of disease. Nonetheless, when this new form of literature (Contemporary fiction) along with globalization rose, it permitted everybody to be an author in. Furthermore, this incorporates a rising of a boundless number of issues: social, economic, political, cultural, and these issues are seen from every angle.

It may occur that the issues dealt with are different conflicts and subjects and each has its own field of study. However, all these issues have one common point, or in other words, it leads to one destination. This is recognition of the self. It means that all these issues are a way to sculpture the identity. According to theorist Martin Heidegger and Lucy Lippard, through their major work *Identity and Difference* (1957) and *The Lure Of The*

Local: Sense Of Place In A Multicentered Society (1997). Identity can be influenced by many things as an example: culture, environment, idols, time, place and space. On the other hand, identity has a strong link with every other issue. For this latter (issues) influence identity directly or indirectly.

One of the major issues that are popular among contemporary fiction's writers is the coming of age or Bildungsroman, which means a novel of education or educational formation. It focuses on its protagonists' education toward an idea of himself and his role in the world. According to the article titled *Manly Virtue and Quest for Self: The Bildungsroman of Mori Ogai* (Washburn 01-32). The issues faced by the protagonist along with his integration in society and its value, lead him/her to the realization of self-identity, as a famous example *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee.

Previously, contemporary fiction focused on traditional families, where the mother is the image of tenderness; and responsible for the major work inside the house (housewife). As well as the father who represents the economic source of the family. However, in the modern society, there is no stable image of a family. Accordingly, the writers focus more on the issues that the modern family faces, such as, divorce, the absence of the parents and most of all the single parents' issues.

Increasingly, in the article titled *How Literature Imagined Television 1880-1950* (Willaert 591). The writers did not ignore the television issues and its consequences, and they argued that what is displayed in T.V. have affected the children minds. The media escort to many consequences as profanity that is much more common, violence, issues of premarital sex, homosexuality, and sexual development. Even what was considered

abhorrent has changed over the years like interracial marriages, multi-ethnicity, and racism. As a conclusion, in literature, these issues are discussed to explain the origin of these phenomena in the current society. And the writers try to give a point of view to enrich the readers' knowledge.

The relationship between personal identity and ethics remains one of the most intriguing yet vexing issues in philosophy. It is commonplace to hold that moral responsibility for past actions requires that the responsible agent is in some respect identical to the agent who performed the action. Is this true? On the other hand, can ethics constrain our account of personal identity? Do the practical requirements of moral theory commit us to the view that persons do remain identical over time? For example, does the moral status of abortion or stem cell research depend on whether personal identity is based on psychological or biological properties? Or is it the case that personal identity is not, in fact, relevant to ethics? (Shoemaker 96)

According to Shoemaker, there is a relation between identity and ethics. On the other hand, there is a relation between themes, issues and ethics. Furthermore through his book *Personal Identity and Ethics* (Shoemaker 96). Shoemaker examined this relation through major philosophers such as Plato, Lucretius, Martin and Barresi. Additionally, the book proved that ethics which include self-regarding and other-regarding. And these latter are concerned with an identity which includes survival, value, happiness, misery... etc. conversely the person adapts ethics and adjusts his identity to gain some notion such as happiness and avoid other notions such as isolation and misery.

Chapter II: The Themes, Issues and Ethical Problems In Fiction

Ethical Problems in Contemporary Fiction

The use of stories from literature is suggested as means for high school and college students to reflect on their own ethical principles as those of others in their world. The development of skills in questioning and dialogue, as well as a critical thinking disposition, are seen as useful tools to enhance the ethical reasoning process in the discussion of stories. (Smith, Kienzler 01)

Ethics is a word derived from Greek “ethos” it means a set of morals related to a group, culture or a society. It is also considered a branch of philosophy that seeks to give a method to determine whether the persons’ actions are right or wrong. The aim of the ethical behaviour or hidden messages of these lessons in the novels is to make the readers act good or to be good citizens.

Furthermore, According to the first chapter of the book titled “Theories of Ethics” (Darwall), Ethics is divided into four classes: consequentialism, deontology, natural law, and virtue ethics, to understand more about each class. This thesis has chosen one major theorist that belongs to each: Stuart Mill (consequentialism), Immanuel Kant (Deontology), Thomas Aquinas (Natural Law) and Aristotle (Virtue Ethics). The Aim of this overview is to examine how ethics are taught in novels.

The following definitions are based on Stephen L. Darwall’s book “the Theories of ethics”

➤ Consequentialism (Utilitarianism):

According to Mill's book "*Utilitarianism*" in this class, the morality of acts is determined by the consequences. In other words, the rightness or the wrongness of the acts can only view the results if this action.

The creed which accepts as the foundations of morals, utility or the greatest happiness principles, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce to reverse of happiness, By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure (Mill 04)

Mill as the major theorist of Utilitarianism insisted through his book that before determining the rightness or wrongness of the action. It must take the consideration all the people affected by the result. It means how many persons are happy and how many are in pain. Because of this action, this method and the quantity are the elements to decide whether it is right or wrong.

For instance, according to Mill, one should include the others' feelings before acting. It denotes that the one should think of the benefits for others which he desires for him/ herself. In conclusion, Mill's theory does not take only the quality into consideration but also the quantity of all those who are affected by one individual's action.

➤ Deontologism

"Nothing in the world—indeed nothing even beyond the world—can possibly be conceived which could be called good without qualification except a good will" (Kant 393)

According to Stephen L. Darwall's book "*the Theories of ethics*" (2007). This theory is based on Immanuel Kant's works, it is fundamentally the contrast of the consequentialism because Kant insisted that the act's rightness or wrongness is determined by itself not the consequences. It means the act could be determined well even if the consequences are bad. And the key to determine the action's nature (Good or Bad) is the reason and not the rule. In addition, Kant denotes that the goodwill is the source of good and one must have goodwill before acting. Which means the act will be voluntarily, and the individual will not be credited for it. Simply because the act was done with a free will, fear of punishment, good personality, or obligation.

Through "*the Theories of ethics*" Kant argued that the morality is the pure reason, for that his theory was based on three rules that every individual should use to determine what is right and what is wrong.

1. Pure Reasoning is morality, this is a universal law that could be used everywhere and by everyone, and this means the person should be truthful as an example a lie is a lie even if it saved lives.
2. As Kant said "Do unto others, as you would have others done unto you.", this law is called the principle of Reversibility. It means that the right is when you want to be treated that way.
3. The third law is called Practical Imperative, and it is based on the one's action, it means do not act right for selfish desire, but do it because it is the right thing to do.

➤ Natural Law

Stephen L. Darwall denotes that this theory was first written by Aristotle, who named it “Teleology”. It is derived from the Greek word Telos which means goal, Natural Law theory suggests that the human nature can determine what is wrong or right. For instance, Aristotle defined natural as good, and he declares that ethics aim is to have good, this latter was defined by Aristotle as the satisfaction of needs.

Furthermore, Thomas Aquinas added the faith elements to Aristotle’s theory, he said that the human of nature is fulfilled by God’s plans, in other words, according to Aquinas the human use intuition to determine what is wrong and right, it is all inside of him.

Since satisfying needs makes the person happy, means natural is good. This concludes the natural law theory, finally most people know the general rule of these ethics, as an example, Don’t steal, don’t kill, don’t lie, be kind ... etc.

➤ Virtues Ethics

According to Stephen L. Darwall’s book *“the Theories of ethics”* Aristotle’s ethical theory is all about the way to live a good life. This latter can be achieved with a fair combination of feelings and reasons, furthermore Darwall mentioned that for Aristotle, ethics include: attitude, sensibilities, and beliefs; these three together affects how people see and act which means ethics affect feelings and reason, as termination according to Aristotle, ethics is the way to live a good life This theory raises one question, what character I should be?; So, according to Aristotle this question was asked at very early age, where the kids imitate others, then with growing up, these imitated virtues become habits.

Aristotle denote that the rightness or the wrongness of the virtue is determined by the exact time of the action, he labelled this theory in the Figure below

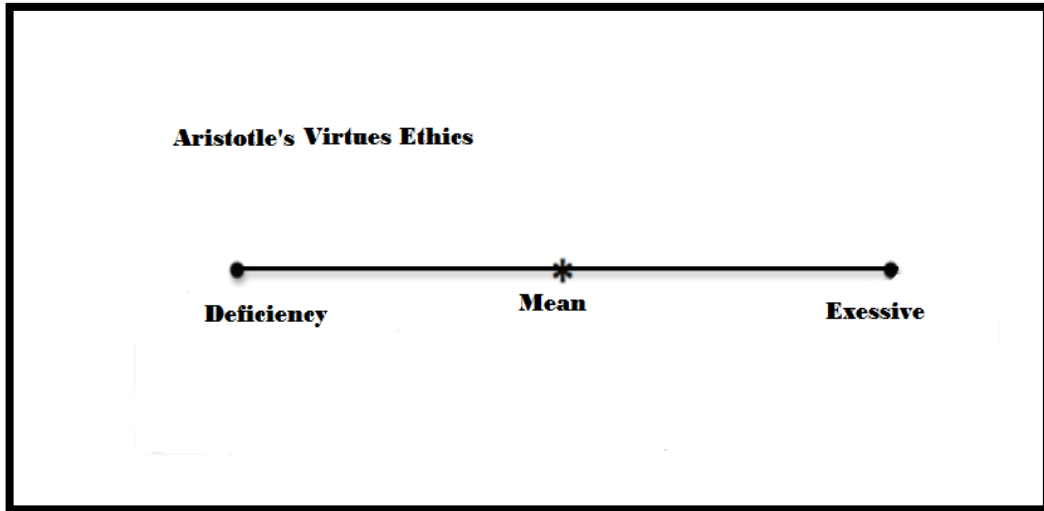


Figure 2 Aristotle's Virtues Ethics from "Encyclopaedia of Philosophy"

The virtue could be anything placed anywhere. The Mean is the right virtue of the action, and the table has illustrated examples from "Encyclopaedia of philosophy" to clarify this theory.

Setting	Defect	Mean	Excess
Danger	Cowardice	Courage	Rash
Spending Money	Tight	Thrifty	Prodigal

As a conclusion, literature in general and contemporary fiction in practical is rich with examples of the ethical behaviours. as a model every kid while reading “*Ali Baba And Forty Thieves*”, learnt that greed can lead to bad consequences. Similarly, according to Smith and Kienzler, the ethical behaviours learnt from novels is considered as an experience, it means while exploring the ethical reaction of the characters, the readers build and adopt new ethical behaviours.

Chapter II: Effects of Literature in Contemporary Fiction

Fiction literature has largely been ignored by psychology researchers because its only function seems to be entertainment, with no connection to empirical validity. We argue that literary narratives have a more important purpose. They offer models or simulations of the social world via abstraction, simplification, and compression. Narrative fiction also creates a deep and immersive simulative experience of social interactions for readers. This simulation facilitates the communication and understanding of social information and makes it more compelling, achieving a form of learning through experience. Engaging in the simulative experiences of fiction literature can facilitate the understanding of others who are different from ourselves and can augment our capacity for empathy and social inference (Mar1, Oatley 93)

Through the reading of fiction, the readers' minds take shape, ideas and words that belong to the writer, who also took it from another person, who they believed s/he have something worth sharing. This type of imitation pushed the literary scholars to suggest that literature has influenced not only thoughts but also norms, empathic ability, self-concept, beliefs, etc. Furthermore, these suggestions would lead to other questions: how does this contemporary fiction affect the readers and what is common among all types of readers?.

“A Critical Reader learns to draw inferences and arrives at conclusions based on evidence” (Carr 25). The reading process is the common point between all the readers .it improves by reading constantly to become eventually a critical reading. This latter is used

by the reader to compare the fiction to his/her life and helps to analyze the character's reaction when they face new situations and issues.

Furthermore, this way of reading explains the literature's roles, which is more than describing but also gives experience and knowledge about new views, People's opinions, thoughts, lifestyle, and even contemporary issues from different perspectives. It is also considered an opened door for the writers. Because reading is not a simple practice, but a complex cognitive progression that takes our brain's full engagement; this process is divided into five aspects that all work together to achieve a complete successful reading process.

1. **Phonics:** It is the relation between the letters symbols and sounds, in this part, the one can read words, and it is considered the first step in teaching reading
2. **Phonemic awareness:** It is related to the first process(Phonics), however in this part the brain make the relation between the symbol (words) and its meaning to create a large understanding of what is written.
3. **Vocabulary:** Imagine reading and you come across a word that you don't know, and there is another one you never saw, this problem will drive the reader out of reading concentration, and s/he will start searching for meaning instead of reading, for that learning vocabulary is one of the essential processes.
4. **Fluency** is the reader's level of speed. it is the part that determines how to focus the person could be. For example, if someone can barely read cannot understand as the one who could read fluently.
5. **Reading Comprehension:** When the entire four previous elements gathered, they serve this process, which is the main reason why we read in the first place. This part

will develop with the improvement of reading experience, and it will move from reading to understanding into critical reading where we read to get experiences, thoughts, new ideas, and understand the issues; themes and conflicts.

On the other hand, it is known that after thirty years old the personality of the human is shaped and stable. Conversely, according to Djikic and Oatley's book *Reading other minds: Effects of literature on empathy*, literature has three aspects, which affect the readers' personality for the long time range, and shake this personality's establishment to eventually change the readers through the three aspects of literature according to the book *Reading other minds: Effects of literature on empathy*.

I. Imagining the lives of others :

Imagining the lives of others or what Shameem Black called Fiction across borders, through fiction, the reader could see the subjective views of the characters, and augment the social experience. It could also enrich the knowledge and background, especially, when reading realist fiction or historical fiction.

II. Destabilized the personality:

Fiction put the reader in a confusing situation similar to the protagonist's which make the reader question himself and refine his personality.

III. The indirect method of communication :

It is the aspect where the reader feels as part of the story. His mind is engaged in the events to create point views about the characters' actions and behaviours. It also starts questioning the reasons behind these behaviours and actions.

Chapter III: A Monster Calls The Lens Of Contemporary

A Monster Calls is a low fantasy contemporary fiction novel published in 2011. Originally the idea was started by Siobhan Dowd when she was mortally ill and passed to Patrick Ness after her death in 2006. The novel is considered as bestsellers and has collected many awards along with five-star reviews from major critics. It was also adopted by a movie that held the same name.

The novel is barely fantasy for it has neither magic nor a happy ending. From the very beginning to the last word, the novel tells tragic and sad events that make the hearts shiver and eyes tears. The book is more realistic fiction, however, it has a Monster that visits a thirteen-year-old boy named Conor O'Malley after midnight to tell him three stories and the Monster asked Conor to tell him the fourth.

The story started in a small town that its name did not matter for the writer to mention. Ness focused more on the description of the house which was next to a church. This latter had a graveyard and yew tree (who turned into the Monster), which Conor could see clearly from his window. This will set the reader to ask what is really special about the boy that led the Monster to pay him visits. To cut a long story short Conor was ordinary tragically different. His mother was dying, his father left long ago to America, and he started a new family, his grandmother was a severe old lady.

Furthermore, Conor had no friends. Every teacher ignored his very existence and he was bullied in school, but he did not object to it. Instead throughout the book, Conor wanted to be punished for something he did wrong or that what he thought. But this was mentioned in the fourth story which Conor had to tell.

The Monster always appeared at 12:07 which was an unsolved mystery. In the beginning, Conor thought it was only a nightmare, as the one he used to see, the one where there are screams, fire and death. But it was not. The Monster reclaimed that the three stories it told happened in the same place where Conor lives. And it (the monster) was always a part of it.

Similarly to Conor, the characters from the stories were the one who summoned the Monster. The first story happened long ago, when the place was a kingdom, which was ruled by a king and his wife, they had four sons, who all died in a young age followed by the queen, leaving the king with one Heir (His grandson) that was no more than an infant. After a while the king had to marry. His new wife was a young lady, that everybody reclaimed she was a witch. Years passed and the king died. His wife ruled, for his grandson was still young; The queen suggested that the prince should marry her. For she wanted to keep the throne, however, the prince was already fond of another woman, a farmer's daughter. The young couple ran out the kingdom, to the Safe place where they could marry. But before they reach the borders, they stopped by the yew tree and fall asleep. After midnight, the prince woke up to find himself covered in blood, and he accused the queen, of killing the farmer's daughter. As the Monster was woken by the story of the prince, and the villagers stood with their prince, they walked to the queens' castle. However, the Monster told Conor that it saved the queen and it took her back to her old house by the sea. It told him that the prince murdered the farmer's daughter for he needed the help of the villagers. However, the new king was just and good to his people and the previous queen was a witch, this story set Conor in confusion's circle for there is no good or evil, and for he thought the story was about his grandmother. However, the Monster was

clearly saying “The Monster stood to its full height, looking down on Conor from afar. It is not her you need saving from” (29)

The second story was days after the first one. It came just after the talk between the father and son. Where his father made sure Conor understand that there is no place for him in America. In other words, there is no place for Conor in his father’s life in America, for he has a daughter now. The story was about an apothecary (healer) and a Parson, the first one wanted to make medicines from the old Yew tree, for two reasons, the first is to make money and the second reason was his pure willing to help others. But with the modern healers (Doctors), the Parson stood in the apothecary's face and rejected the idea of cutting the tree. For also two reasons, the first reason was to enlighten people to move over the ideas of herbs’ healing and witchery, and the second reason was his selfish desire to protect the newly built church. Days have turned into weeks and an infection had spread in the country. Both the Parson’s daughters fell sick, no pray no medicine or remedies could heal them, the Parson begged the apothecary for help and he offered him the yew tree. But the apothecary refused. In that night the daughters died and the Monster woke up, and destroy the Parson’s house, Conor was surprised more this time, but then the Monster explained that the Parson was a man of belief but he had none. He should give the apothecary the yew tree long ago when he asks for it, but he did not. Instead he used his belief when it serves him. With Conor feeling of rage, he starts destroying the parson’s house along with the Monster, however, when he woke up he found himself in the middle of his grandmother’s sitting room after he destroyed every precious antics piece she had.

Furthermore, the third story came after Harry (the boy who used to bully him) told Conor that he no longer sees him. He was invisible. It was at the school’s dining hall when

the Monster told Conor about an invisible man who wanted people to see him, Conor asked twice how before he attack Harry. This latter was sent to the hospital for he had broken hand and nose, and for Conor, the Monster left him with only one sentence, “There are worse things than being invisible” (67). However Conor was not punished for what he has done, instead, the headmistress was nice and she sent him home.

Days after the accident, Conor did not talk to anyone, not even to his grandmother who was still angry at what he has done to her house and the headmistress call. and not to his mother who was sick in the hospital, also not to his father who had left to America for his little daughter was sick. Obviously not to his classmate or teachers.

In that one day Conor got a note from his childhood friend who apologizes and explains that she sees him always, and in that very day his grandmother picked him out of school to see his mother who told him it was her final stage, Conor who was angry did not say a word, and instead he asked to go home. He walked directly to the Yew tree where he woke the Monster up, and it was time for the fourth story. Though Conor refused to tell, the Monster made him experience the same nightmare he always sees.

It all happened in the graveyard; where the earth shakes, and his mother falls. Conor tried to hold her so tight for he did not want the darkness to take her. However, he let her slipped. Then he thought it was the end of the nightmare when he supposed to wake up, but this time he did not. He was standing in the middle of the fire and the Monster (The yew tree) was saying the same word: “speak the truth O’Malley... you let her down” (p.79)

However Conor wanted to die rather saying it, but finally, he said it, he let her go for he wanted an end for all of this. The Monster said it was a simple wish any human,

wished for, an end for pain and at the end, Conor went back with his grandmother who promised they could work things out, and he hugged his mother telling her he does not want her to go, with this words he let her go.

Patrick Ness' novel "*A Monster Calls*" grab the intention of the readers and will not let go until the last word of it. It starts with the title, *A Monster Calls*; at first, it may seem that the book is named after the Yew Monster, who tells stories, the Monster, who came to heal Conor. But at the end of the novel, the title was explained indirectly in the fourth story. The book is named after the pit Monster, who grab Conor's mother into darkness. It means the title is about death that calls upon every and each human.

Ness did not use mystery only in the title but also in the entire book, at the beginning the novel started with

The Monster showed up just after midnight. As they do. Conor was awake when it came. He'd had a nightmare. Well, not a nightmare. The Nightmare. The one he'd been having a lot lately. The one with the darkness and the wind and the screaming. The one with the hands slipping from his grasp, no matter how hard he tried to hold on. The one that always ended with— "go away," Conor whispered into the darkness of his bedroom, trying to push the nightmare back, not let it follow him into the world of waking. "Go away now." He glanced over at the clock his mum had put on his bedside table.

12.07. Seven minutes past midnight. (01)

Throughout the novel the reader will be eager to know what is the secret Conor is hiding. And As Ness moved from reality of Conor's life to the nightmare he sees, Ness

kept always reminding the reader of this secret without mention what is it. However Ness finally explained it at the very end, when the Monster obliged Conor to speak the truth about himself.

And I started to think how much I wanted it to be over. How much I just wanted to stop having to think about it. How I couldn't stand the waiting anymore. I couldn't stand how alone it made me feel." He really began to cry now, more than he thought he'd ever done, more even than when he found out his mum was ill. And a part of you wished it would just end, said the Monster, even if it meant losing her. Conor nodded, barely able to speak. And the nightmare began. The nightmare that always ended with- "I let her go," Conor choked out. "I could have held on but I let her go." And that, the Monster said, is the truth. "I didn't mean it, though!" Conor said, his voice rising. "I didn't mean to let her go! And now it's for real! Now she's going to die and it's my fault!" And that, the Monster said, is not the truth at all. (80)

Ness' style is very clear as he used simple words, and he duplicated ideas through the book. He also mentioned the characters and repeatedly as he describes their relationship or their actions. Seeing that the novel was always in action because Ness did not take time describing what exactly happened before the nightmare. He was always concentrating in what happened after his mother got sick. And the nightmare started, Ness focused on what the issues after his mother got cancer.

Also, Ness used what Lodge described as the third person limited view. It means the story was told by a narrator. However, it was from Conor side only. For he did not mention what happened in his mother's life nor his grandmother's.

The Novel was based on only one character, as every young adult book which denied the reader to see the story from different sides. Furthermore, though there was a Monster in the story, there was no magic, no wand that put an end to the misery nor gives a happy ending. This Latter was a realistic end that every person could have, death had taken the mother and Conor was obliged to let her go and move over.

Though Conor life had described many issues, yet the three stories are the main lessons for Conor and the readers. Through the first and the second chapters titled "*A Monster Calls*" and "*Breakfast*". Ness described the state of this family, there was none, Conor was all alone and lonely. As a thirteen-year-old boy, he was having a lot of responsibilities, more than adults can ever have. He was cleaning the house and do laundry, he was cooking for himself and his mother, he had to do his homework and accept the ignorance, whispers of others from a part, and the illness of his mother along with the absence of his father from another part "Conor had to sleep on the settee every time his grandmother came to stay. But that wasn't it. He didn't like the way she talked to him like he was an employee under evaluation. An evaluation he was going to fail". (11)

Conor could not establish a relationship with his family. Ness described his grandmother as a stubborn lady that treat Conor as a worker, not a grandson. " That had been six years ago, so long now that Conor sometimes couldn't remember what it was like having a dad in the house." (15) Furthermore, Conor was very young when his

father left, for that reason he felt that he was standing alone when he faced this issues especially losing his mother to cancer. Besides the mother was the only link between Conor, the grandmother and the father. This means that Ness used the issue of a broken family to draw the image of its (family) importance and role in society and ones' lives.

It was just over a year ago that Lily had told a few of her friends about Conor's mum, even though he hadn't said she could. Those friends told a few more, who told a few more, and before the day was half through, it was like a circle had opened around him, a dead area with Conor at the centre, surrounded by landmines that everyone was afraid to walk through. All of a sudden, the people he'd thought were his friends would stop talking when he came over, not that there were so very many beyond Lily anyway, but still. He'd catch people whispering as he walked by in the corridor or at lunch. Even teachers would get a different look on their faces when he put up his hand in lessons. So eventually he stopped going over to groups of friends, stopped looking up at the Whispers, and even stopped putting up his hand. Not that anyone seemed to notice. It was like he'd suddenly turned invisible. (32)

On the other hand, as the news of his mother sickness spread, people start to treat Conor differently. And step by step they ignore him and avoid any connection with him. However, Conor accepted this isolation. Conor could not have friends or family or even someone who might care. The absence of both parents, made him feel confused, guilty and socially unstable. He refused the pity of others. As Ness developed the events he swiftly moved from family issues to isolation.

Why can't I come and live with you? Why can't I come to America?" His father licked his lips. "You mean when—" "Grandma's house is an old lady's house," Conor said. His father gave another small laugh. "I'll be sure to tell her you called her an old lady." "You can't touch anything or sit anywhere," Conor said. "You can't leave a mess for even two seconds. And she's only got internet out in her office and I'm not allowed in there." "I'm sure we can talk to her about those things. I'm sure there's lots of room to make it easier, make you comfortable there." "I don't want to be comfortable there!" Conor said, raising his voice. "I want my own room in my own house." "You wouldn't have that in America" his father said (41)

Conor refused the idea of staying with his grandmother, for he felt it was a hint of his mother's death. As he tried to revolt and find his own voice, he discovered that he was obliged to accept the situation. Because there is nowhere to go, nor a person to stand by, this truth made Conor feel guiltier especially with the secret he was holding in his chest. However Ness did not share the secret but he always mentioned the relation between Conor's guilt and nightmare.

A few days passed. Then a few more. It was hard to tell exactly how many. They all seemed to be one big, grey day to Conor. He'd get up in the morning and his grandma wouldn't talk to him, not even about the phone call from the Headmistress. He'd go to school, and no one would talk to him there either. He'd visit his mum in hospital, and she'd be too tired to talk to him. His dad would phone, and he'd have nothing to say. There was no sign of the Monster either, not since the attack on Harry (68)

Since Conor was isolated by his family and from the society, his thoughts were as poisons that were slowly killing him. The secret he hides pushed him toward an edge, and he felt the need to be punished for his action. But it seemed that no one cares because all see that they should have some empathy toward him. This latter (Empathy) was the worst thing they did for it made Conor feel tremendous pain, and though he does not deserve it. This suffering issue leads to guilt feeling, for something Conor refused to tell; he even rather died and not say. The guilt created another issue which is bully, that Conor did not refuse nor fight for it give him some relieve feelings, that he is being punished for his action.

Ness linked all the issues together, and he described that every issue was the consequence of another one. For example, isolation was the consequence of family issue and relation issue, and guilt and bully were the consequences of isolation issues.

Ness used the major idea of cancer and death along with other secondary ideas such as suffering, relation and isolation to underlines the idea, that death is upon us, and it is calling us. But he took it from a side of those teens, who are already in metamorphosis state. S/he could not decide whether they are kids or adults. This identity issue comes along with the loss of the beloved one. As Ness mentioned in his interview when he was asked about the death theme in his novel “we All been there, all the human had felt this before, the loss of someone they loved”. For Ness, this feeling of being lost after the death of beloved ones is experienced by all the reader. But he wanted to make them see what they could never notice. It means a new view from a new perspective.

Ness used the coming of age theme to describe Conor's life. From the beginning when he was lost and confused to the end, where the entire nightmares have gone, and Conor accepted the reality as a brave adult. It means Conor reached the psychological state of an adult. As he accepted the circle of life when he kissed his mother goodbye and accepted the idea of death. Also, he learnt how to apologize and accept the apology with a forgiving heart.

On the other hand, the answer given by the monster made Conor see clearly. Also, it helped him to reckon his needs, his benefits and his duties. In conclusion, Conor succeeded to build his identity and reckon himself as he faced the contemporary issues.

How can both be true?" Because humans are complicated beasts, the Monster said. How can a queen be both a good witch and a bad witch? How can a prince be a murderer and a saviour? How can an apothecary be evil-tempered but right-thinking? How can a Parson be wrong-thinking but good-hearted? How can invisible men make themselves lonelier by being seen? (81)

However, Ness broke some major themes as "good versus evil", as he explored the complexity of human nature. In the first story there were no evil nor good persons. But both sides existed in the person himself. This made Conor wonder about the contradiction of human mind, and then he learnt that the person is judged on his action not thoughts. However the second story made Conor more confused how the Monster could punish the parson who defended the Yew tree. Then he learnt that belief is not a shirt you wear whenever it suits and takes it whenever you want. Though the apothecary wanted money, and greed is what motivates him to ask the Yew tree, yet he wanted the right thing.

However the Parson was a good man but his thoughts were wrong. He was a man of belief without belief. And for the third story was about an invisible man who used violence that was the result of neglect by others. This choice made him lonelier and suffers more

Furthermore, the novel is rich with ethical behaviour that was destined to the readers. For examples, do not ignore a person, who suffers from problems, it will hurt more. And don't whisper in people's back and certainly do not bully.

Likewise, the fourth story was the major ethical lesson for both readers and characters. It was about the truth. When Conor comfort the truth of what he hides, he felt relieved, and he finally sleeps in peace without nightmares. Though what he hides was neither wrong nor hurtful. He only wanted for everything (all suffers and ignorance) to end. However, as he knew that the end will come only with his mother's death, he felt pain for wishing something like that. But a thought was not an action and according to Aristotle's *Ethics Virtue*, Conor was good never evil. He only wished for a simple human wish, a life where all pain disappears, after all, he was only a kid.

On the other hand, Ness mentioned the church and the Parson, yet he did not mention any religious beliefs. He used the previous symbols to show that beliefs are half health. No man could live without believing. It means Ness did not explore any religious creeds or themes.

As for the Characters, Ness focused on Conor, the lonely isolated child, who suffers in silence for he did not want to trouble anyone around especially his sick mother. He was an image of his grandmother, who always kept tears inside, and show the strong face. Though she was losing her only child. After all, she is a mother. In contradiction, Conor's

father did not care, nor bothered himself to. He even used some excuses to ran away as far as he could denying his son from the father love and support.

Last but not least, the Monster, the Yew tree, it was more as the inner self of Conor as it was mention “And he felt the Monster’s voice again like it was in his own head. I made them see, it said. Conor clenched his fists even tighter. Then the Monster leapt forward to make Harry see. (64)

The Monster was not seen only by Conor though the dining hall was full of students. This has only one explanation, which is Conor’s inner self-represented the Monster. For that reason, he had no fear from it. In other words in the first story, when the prince, accused the queen, the Monster appeared. For the prince felt guilt knowing the queen was innocent. And in the second story when the parson’s daughters died the Monster appeared and destroyed the parson’s house.

It was that moment when the parsons felt guilty not giving the apothecary what he needed when he asked. And finally Conor felt guilty wishing for an end to his suffering, means he was feeling guilty. This pushed the Monster to wake and help him heal. At that very moment, Conor reckons what he wants and what he needs, it was that moment of truth and recognition. It means that Ness used the monster as inner self of every character.

As a conclusion Patrick Ness’ major lesson was to look not seeing. It means that the look should see what beyond the smiles, and the words, it was all written in the note of Lily.

For all the folding, it was only four lines Long. Four lines and the world went quiet. “I’m sorry for telling everyone about your mum, read the first line. I miss being your friend, read the second. Are you okay? Read the third. I see you, read the fourth, with the I underlined about a hundred times. He read it again. And again. He looked back over to Lily, who was busy receiving all kinds of praise from Mrs Marl, but he could see that she was blushing furiously and not just because of what Mrs Marl was saying. Mrs Marl moved on, passing lightly over Conor. When she was gone, Lily looked at him. Looked him right in the eye. And she was right. She saw him, really saw him. (69)

Conclusion

The main aim of this thesis was to find out if the contemporary fiction reflects the complete image of the modern issues, social traditions and whether the character represents a model of typical persons or not?.

Through the previously conducted study on the first chapter about the contemporary fiction, its definition and genre, along with the second chapter, which was about the fiction's elements, themes, issues and ethical problems. It is concluded that the contemporary fiction reflects a total image about every detail in the society.

Increasingly the issues and themes used in novels are taken from the real world and reflected in contemporary fiction's novels. Besides as the writer is obliged to reflect an image of society, he is also obliged to take realistic measures when it comes to characters thoughts, abilities and reactions. This was reflected in the major protagonist of *A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness.

Additionally, if the contemporary fiction novels offer different views about issues and also offer different experiences, so how do they contrast and why? .In the last chapter, Through the analysis of the novel.

It is concluded that the views and experiences are looked at through the character or the writers' eyes. It means that with the change of characters, which is based on the gender, age, culture, or with the change of the writer, the issues will be looked at in different ways, which lead to different experience and views.

In the conclusion Ness' novel *A Monster Calls* succeeded to prove the statement of this thesis. That is learning through contemporary novels is considered as the most rewarding and effective way to teach ethics and reflect issues. For the novel analysis highlighted that issues are related, from family issues to isolation, which creates more other issues. Finally, contemporary fiction novels help the reader grow, the same way it helps the characters of the story grow.

Glossary

Aristotle was an ancient Greek philosopher and scientist born in the city of Stagira, in the north of Classical Greece. Along with Plato, Aristotle is considered the "Father of Western Philosophy", which inherited almost its entire lexicon from his teachings, including problems and methods of inquiry, so influencing almost all forms of knowledge.

Immanuel Kant (22 April 1724 – 12 February 1804) was a German philosopher who is a fundamental figure in modern philosophy. Kant's theories and beliefs had a major influence on contemporary philosophy, above all the fields of metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, political theory, and aesthetics.

Michael Wood is professor emeritus of English at Princeton University. He writes in literary publications as *The New York Review of Books* and the *London Review of Books*, where he is also an editorial board member additionally, he wrote the relations between contemporary fiction and storytelling, and on figures in the modern cultural pantheon including Luis Buñuel, Franz Kafka, Stendhal, Gabriel García Márquez and W. B. Yeats.

Robert Eaglestone (born 1968) is a British academic and writer. He is Professor of Contemporary Literature and Thought in the Department of English at Royal Holloway,

University of London. He works on contemporary literature, literary theory and contemporary European philosophy,

John Stuart Mill (20 May 1806 – 8 May 1873) was a British philosopher, political economist and civil servant. One of the most significant thinkers in the history of liberalism Mill was a promoter of utilitarianism, an ethical theory developed by his predecessor Jeremy Bentham

Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 7 March 1274) was an Italian Dominican friar, a Catholic priest, and Doctor of the Church. He was an immensely influential philosopher, theologian, and jurist in the tradition of scholasticism.

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Résumé

Les lecteurs à travers le monde ont pris des romans une façon pour acquérir de l'expérience et des connaissances sur les nouveaux points de vue, les opinions des gens, les pensées, le mode de vie, et même les problèmes contemporains de différentes perspectives. De même, les problèmes avaient changé avec le changement constant du temps. Et les écrivains ont été obligés de changer non seulement leur style mais aussi leurs thèmes. Ce qui a conduit à créer un nouveau type de littérature: "fiction contemporaine". Cette forme peut être la plus satisfaisante à lire, car elle a différents genres, tels que l'aventure, la fantaisie, le social, le mystère, le réaliste ...

Le but de cette thèse est d'offrir des réponses aux questions de savoir si la fiction contemporaine reflète l'image complète des questions modernes, des traditions sociales et si le personnage représente un modèle de personnes typiques ou non ?. En outre, si les romans de fiction contemporains offrent des points de vue différents sur les problèmes et offrent également des expériences différentes, alors comment contrastent-ils et pourquoi? D'un autre côté, cette thèse analysera ce que l'auteur suggère sur les problèmes contemporains et comment l'écrivain développe-t-il les problèmes en tant que fiction? A travers le roman de Patrick Ness *A Monster Calls*.

Le travail sera divisé en trois chapitres, le premier sera consacré à la définition de la fiction contemporaine et son genres, le deuxième chapitre traitera de thèmes; questions sociales et morales éthiques dans la littérature aussi les effets de la littérature dans la fiction contemporaine, et enfin, le troisième chapitre analysera profondément le roman intitulé *A Monster Calls* par Patrick Ness.

ملخص

أخذ القراء في جميع أنحاء العالم الروايات طريقة للحصول على الخبرة والمعرفة حول وجهات النظر الجديدة ، آراء الناس ، والأفكار ، ونمط الحياة ، وحتى القضايا المعاصرة من وجهات نظر مختلفة. وبالمثل ، تغيرت القضايا مع التغيير المستمر للوقت. واضطر الكتاب إلى تغيير أسلوبهم ليس فقط ولكن أيضا مواضيعهم. مما أدى إلى خلق نوع جديد من الأدب: "الخيال المعاصر". قد يكون هذا الشكل هو الأكثر إرضاءً للقراءة ، لأنه يحتوي على أنواع مختلفة ، مثل هذه المغامرة ، والخيال ، والاجتماعية ، والغموض ، والواقعية ...

الهدف من هذه الرسالة هو تقديم إجابات على عدة الأسئلة منها هل الرواية المعاصرة تعكس الصورة الكاملة للقضايا الحديثة والتقاليد الاجتماعية وهل تمثل الشخصية نموذجًا للأشخاص العاديين أم لا؟ علاوة على ذلك ، إذا كانت الروايات الخيالية المعاصرة تقدم وجهات نظر مختلفة حول القضايا وتقدم أيضًا تجارب مختلفة ، فكيف تتناقض ولماذا؟ ومن ناحية أخرى ، سوف تقوم هذه الأطروحة بتحليل ما يقترحه المؤلف حول القضايا المعاصرة وكيف يمكن للكاتب أن يطور قضايا إلى الخيال من خلال رواية باتريك نيس "نداء الوحش"؟

سيتم تقسيم العمل إلى ثلاثة فصول ، الأولى ستخصص لتعريف الرواية المعاصرة ونوعها ، أما الفصل الثاني فيتناول المواضيع. القضايا الاجتماعية و الأخلاقية في الأدب المعاصر أيضا آثار الأدب في الخيال المعاصر ، وأخيرا الفصل الثالث سوف يحلل بعمق الرواية بعنوان نداء الوحش *A Monster calls* عن باتريك نيس.