

SCUOLA SUPERIORE – UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI UDINE
CONCORSO DI AMMISSIONE A.A. 2022/23 – CLASSE UMANISTICA

II PROVA SCRITTA

INGLESE

Choose ONE of the tasks below:

1. The following is an extract from Guido Mazzoni's *Theory of the Novel* (2017):

The “nineteenth-century novel” (or the “realistic nineteenth-century novel”) is more than anything else an abstraction: first, because a substantial portion of the narrative fiction written during the 1800s shunned any pretense to realism; second, because there are wide divergences between works labeled as realistic; and third, because the texts viewed as true to reality by nineteenth-century culture were judged as implausible by later literary periods. I will use this stereotype as if it had invisible quotation marks around it, and to refer to the subject at hand, I will use the more specific and less ambiguous expression “the nineteenth-century paradigm.” [...]

In the first half of the 1800s, the serious mimesis of daily life appeared primarily *in a melodramatic form*. Between the late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, what was called “melodrama” in French theater was a popular genre composed of sensational incidents, violent conflicts, and pivotal scenes. Initially, the texts had musical parts, as in the Italian genre of the same name; the music later disappeared. The genre was related to the *drame bourgeois*, whose features it exaggerated, and to the gothic novels of Walpole, Radcliffe, and Lewis, some of whose techniques and atmospheres it inherited. It had a direct influence on the French novel of the early nineteenth century: on Balzac, Eugene Sue, Dumas the Elder, and, generally, on the whole tradition of the *roman feuilleton* from the 1830s and 1840s.

But even before its direct influence, melodrama was important as a striking example of a way of representing reality that is implicit to theatre as a form. This approach arose conspicuously out of the plays of the late eighteenth century and met with considerable success in the nineteenth century novel with writers who aimed at the general public (Sue, Dumas), with writers who used popular expedients to create ambitious works (Scott,

Manzoni, Balzac, Stendhal, Dickens, Hugo), with a writer who defies categorization, like Dostoevsky, and with a markedly highbrow writer like Henry James. Similar approaches spread everywhere in the literature of the early nineteenth century. Melodrama survived the disciplining of the novel advocated by naturalism as well as by modernism and the avantgarde: the works of Zola and Conrad would be unimaginable without devices dating back to this mimetic mode. In the second half of the twentieth century, works like Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* or Elsa Morante's *History* picked up on melodramatic techniques. Contemporary popular fiction, midcult fiction, and mainstream film are still based on the melodrama as well as on the romance. How does this form work?

Melodrama is the histrionic expression of theatricality that pervaded the nineteenth-century paradigm because it heightens scenic devices, starting with the way human action in the present tense is represented. The public sphere becomes the site of clashes between universal forces embodied in individuals (good and evil, innocence and wickedness, adherence to ethical constraints and personal ambition, class warfare); the conflicts are often underpinned by the primary human bonds between the adversaries (fathers against sons, brothers against brothers, friends against friends). Melodrama magnifies and turns outward: the protagonists are statuesque and grandiose; the characters publicly express their inner life and behave unrestrainedly; passions are expressed through eloquent signs, poses, and confessions; the plot is dense, packed, crafted around stylistic gestures that are clear and centripetal, full of momentous confrontations and pivotal scenes. Coincidences and recognitions abound, as if the world and chance collaborated in weaving the characters' destinies. In every domain of the text, the planets crush the satellites: the protagonists are governed by a dominant passion, character is always expressed in action, and the action has no centrifugal movements—those arising from the segments of our divided self, from changes of mind and trivial contingent facts. There are nothing but unequivocal and defining gestures.

TASK: Explain the content of this text in detail using your own words and examples to clarify its meaning for a fellow student. Authors you may wish to refer to are Mary Shelley, Walter Scott, Charlotte and Emily Brontë, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Robert Louis Stevenson, Thomas Hardy but you are welcome to include other writers of your own choosing.

2. The following excerpt has been adapted from the web (www.traveller.com.au)

«The 10 biggest issues in travel today» by Michael Gebicki (2017)

[...]

CONNECTED TRAVEL

Google Maps directs our footsteps, Facebook tells us when our friends have a cold, some will Instagram their food before it passes their lips and "digital detox" has entered the travel lexicon. We now expect to be online even when far from home, and most of the world obliges with free or low-cost Wi-Fi at cafes, shopping centres, airports and the most humble of guesthouses. Our smartphones now pack a massive punch when we're on the road, booking restaurant tables and train tickets, checking the weather and our bank balance.

THE AIRBNB REVOLUTION

Born in 2008, Airbnb is now the world's largest accommodation listing service, matching travellers with anyone who wants to rent out a house, an apartment or a spare room in almost 200 countries. The hotel industry cries foul and legislation makes it almost impossible for Airbnb to operate in cities such as New York, Amsterdam and San Francisco but travellers are voting with their wallets, and what's not to like? Why pay \$350 a night to stay in a three-star hotel in Venice or London when you can rent a studio apartment for about half the price?

RISE AND RISE OF CRUISING

The number of travellers taking a cruise has almost doubled over the past decade, and the ships they sail on are also expanding. Australians are among the world's most enthusiastic cruisers. Figures from the Cruise Lines International Association show the number of Australians taking a cruise grew by 21 per cent in 2016 to more than 1.25 million. That's one in every 19 Australians, the highest ratio of any nationality.

TERROR ATTACKS

Paris, London, Nice, Istanbul – some of our favourite world cities are not only high on our own wish lists, they're also on the radar of those who would do us harm. As the murderous sociopaths who go under the Islamic State banner lose ground in the Middle East, they are exporting their brand of horror and wreaking havoc. Airlines are a target, but with the single exception of Metrojet Flight 9268 flying from Egypt to Russia in 2015, measures designed to keep travellers safe in the air have been effective over the past decade.

THE POWER OF ONE

Sisters are doing it for themselves – and by themselves. In tandem with the rise of the single-person household, an ever-increasing number of women are choosing to travel solo and the group-tour segment of the travel industry is catching on. There is now a growing number of specialist travel operators organising tours exclusively for women. All are designed by and for women and the best bring creativity and imagination to their task, with themes that range from classical music to shopping, food, yoga to hardcore adventure.

INDUSTRY GROWTH

Tourism now accounts for one in every 11 world jobs, the biggest employer after agriculture. In 2016 the world logged 1.235 billion international travellers, an increase of 45 per cent over the decade. Such numbers have their casualties, particularly in Europe. Paris, with a population of 6.75 million, saw 36.5 million tourists in 2016. Barcelona – population 1.6 million – saw 32 million. Some in the city are kicking back, asking for limits on the number of available beds while Iceland is pondering tourism caps and higher taxes to put the lid on spiralling visitor numbers.

LACK OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

While North American and European travellers have statutory protection from shonky travel operators and compensation for flight delays or being offloaded from overbooked flights, Australian travellers have taken a backwards step since the termination of the Travel Compensation Fund in 2014. When you buy a ticket aboard an Australian airline, for example, the operator is contracted to get you to your destination, nothing more. Travellers with a grievance are left with state or territory consumer affairs as the go-to option if things don't turn out as they should.

TASK: write a composition addressing at least three of the issues mentioned above and say why they constitute a challenge for sustainable tourism development.