

**Narrative Mode and Fiction**  
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**Lecture: 44**  
**Short Story and Novel - I**

Good morning and welcome back to the lecture series honoured to have mode and fiction. So, we are discussing short story and novel, we are trying to understand them on a comparative basis. We are looking at these 2 forms the short story and the novel we have already discussed them separately now we are going to make we are going to attempt a comparative understanding of the 2 generals.

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### Short Story and Novel - Definitions

- Edgar Allan Poe: "No longer than can be read in a single sitting." It should provide "a single and unique effect." "If his [the author's] very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one **pre-established design**."
- Poe draws on Schlegel in observing that short story rests on the fact that understanding of the whole precedes understanding of the parts, yet "that from which no part can be displaced without ruining the whole".
- According to Georg Lukacs, this quality of perceiving the **pattern** or **all-encompassing discourse** before perceiving the parts makes the short story the "**most purely artistic form**."
- So short story's onus is on the **larger aesthetic pattern**, the overall design or plan, than **finer mimetic details** comprising insignificant individual actions.

So, let us see what Edgar Allan Poe has to say. According to Poe, no, no, a short story should be no longer than can be read in a single sitting, it should provide a single and a unique effect. And then Poe goes on to say that if his meaning the author's very initial sentence, tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition, there should be no word written off which the tendency direct or indirect is not to the one pre established design, unquote.

So when we talk about the short story, we are talking about a pre established design the theme, the plot that has been envisioned by the author beforehand, Poe draws on Schlegel, in observing

that the short story rests on the fact that understanding of the whole precedes understanding of the parts, and yet that from which no part can be dispensed without ruining the whole support roles or schlagen, in observing that the short story rests on the fact that understanding of the whole precedes.

Understanding of the parts and yet, that from which no part can be dispensed without ruining the whole. According to Georg Lukacs at the quality of perceiving the pattern or all encompassing discourse before perceiving the parts makes a short story most purely artistic form. So short stories, onus is largely on the aesthetic pattern, right the overall design or plan rather than the final mimetic details, comprising insignificant individual actions.

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### Short Story and Novel - Definitions

- C.S. Lewis – Story becomes a story through a series of events; yet through these events the reader is supposed to grasp something else that is beyond the sequence and larger than it. The events are a means to this broader meaning or end. Beyond the events, this **meaning** renders a **state** or a **quality** to the story. Events, when placed one after another, leads to a significance.
- However, a good novel is closer to the way real life is, where the succession of everyday events are **by chance, arbitrary**, and mostly do not always translate to a meaning of **larger significance**. At least, at the immediate level, such a meaning is **neither embodied nor obvious**.
- For Ernest Hemingway, short story is a modern art form that is **spare** and **concrete**, and yet **riddled with meaning**.

C. S Lewis feels that short story becomes a story through a series of events. And yet, through these events, the reader is supposed to grasp something else that is beyond the sequence, and something that is larger than these mundane narrations, these mundane details, an overarching theme or symbol that binds the 2 binds the story together. So, the events are a means to this broader meaning, or the symbol or the archetype.

And this is the end that a successful short story seeks beyond the events, the meaning renders a state or a quality to the short story, even when placed one after another, leads to this very significance, the larger meaning. On other hand, we have the good novel, which is closer in a

way to real life. In real life, the succession of everyday events are by chance, they are arbitrary, and mostly do not always translate to a meaning of larger significance, at least at the immediate level. Such a meaning is neither embodied nor obvious.

And the novel like I said, the modern novel tries to emulate the flawed existence that life is right. For Ernest Hemingway short story is a modern art form that is spare and concrete and yet, it is riddled with meaning.

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### Short Story and Novel - Definitions

- Alfred Edgar Coppard – Short story is a **totality which the writer possesses** even before writing the first sentence – unlike in the case of the novel, the **ending is already known to the author** before s/he begins to write.
- Katherine Anne Porter confesses that she writes the last page/paragraph first and then works backwards.
- According to Coppard, if the same plot is transcribed to a novel, such a narrative will need to turn mere episodes into epic stature, where the length will be covered with “factitious” psychological readings and “bogus” mysticism (that one can do away with).

Alfred Edgar Coppard notes such short story is a totality which the writer possesses, even before writing the very first sentence, unlike in the case of the novel, where the ending is not known to the author, the ending is something that the author is trying to pursue you all the time and through. Through this discovery through this journey of novel writing, the novelist is in a way discovering an aspect of himself, and that was hitherto unknown to him or to her.

So, Katherine Anne Porter confesses that she raised the first page of the first paragraph of a short story first and then works backwards. According to Edgar coppeded, if the same plot is transcribed to a novel so, if a plot of a given short story is transcribed to a novel, such a narrative will need to turn mere episodes into epic stature where the length will be covered with factitious psychological readings and bogus mysticism that one can actually do away with.

So, we have different authors who have their own, they will have their owners who have their own, you know, liking and disliking regarding the different genres, the ones that prefer short stories, consider the novel as you know, full of fat tissues, extraneous information that could be done away with. On the other hand, the novelist says that that is the story is a question that only a lame and a non literary person can ask. The novel does not focus on the story obviously the novel is more about the stylistic devices.

And to be able to appreciate that one needs to have you know certain skills as a reader as a literary person. So one needs to be trained in a way in order to understand grasp will appreciate the modern and postmodern novel.

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## Short Story and Novel - Definitions

- Tagore: *"Nahin totto nahi upodesh. Ontore otripto robe. Shango kori mone hobe. Shesh hoyeo Hoilo na shesh."* (Translated: No theories no didacticism. The reader's heart will desire for more. After completing the reading one would think, it ended yet it did not).
- Early 20<sup>th</sup> century has sometimes regarded short stories as a cheap bag of tricks, tagged it as O Henryism with manipulative "surprise ending."



Next I would go to Rabindranath Tagore definition of short story he has his own collection of short stories and when we quote him in Bengali, he says **(FL)** so when translated it means no theories, no didacticism, the readers heard will desire for more after completing the reading, one would think it ended yet it did not. Early 20th century has sometimes regarded short stories as a cheap bag of tricks. And short story has also been tagged.

As O Henryism with manipulative surprise endings. So we have, you know, like I already said different groupings, some even among the authors, and some prefer short story to the novel, and vice versa.

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## Short Story and Novel

- Mircea Eliade – short story has a **sacred element** and is like **momentary perceptions of spirit**, whereas novel develops from the short story and is like a **structured theological framework**.
- According to Philip Wheelwright, short story traces back to **myths**, as the latter expresses an **inner meaning through telling a story**.
- **Sacred motivation of short stories** persisted throughout the Middle Ages in the form of **small verse narratives** (eg. *Genesis, Exodus, Judith*, drawing on Judaeo-Christian myth and their moral purpose).
- Boccaccio's *The Decameron* marks a **shift of the short fiction** from the religious to the secular during the Renaissance - (1492 in Italian, 1886 in English)

Mircea Eliade notices that short story has a sacred element and is like a momentary perception of spirit as an epiphany, a sudden revelation or realisation that occurs towards the end of the short story, on the other hand, according to the novel, develops from the short story and therefore, it is more like a structured theological framework. So she's looking at novel and short story, from some areas looking at novel and short story through the lens of religion and spirituality.

While short story is like a moment to Revelation, a spiritual realization novel is more like an established, institutionalized religion, or whose framework whose premises are clearly laid out. According to Philip Wheelwright short story traces back to myths, as the latter expresses an inner meaning through telling a story. Sacred motivation of short stories persisted throughout the Middle Ages in the form of small verse narratives.

We have several examples in Old and New Testaments of Bible, such as Genesis, Exodus, Judith, which draw on the Judaeo Christian myth and the emphasis the moral purpose. Boccaccio's the Decameron marks a shift of the short fiction from the religious to the secular during the Renaissance period, the renaissance that had its inception in Italy, in 1492. And in England, in the English literature in 1886.

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## Short Story and Novel

- From Dante's *Divine Comedy* to Boccaccio's *The Decameron* (1308-1320, pub. 1472), the shift is from the **ultra/supra-human** to the **profane world of everyday reality**, from the **world of spirits** to the **world of nature**, from **God and Providence** to **chance occurrence**.
- 15<sup>th</sup> century onward, the short narrative shifted from poetry to prose, and its purpose shifted from **moral edification** to **entertainment**.
- Short fiction in mid-17<sup>th</sup> century England (1660-1700) - precursor of 18<sup>th</sup> century realist novel. As a result of French influence, there was a growing interest in **psychological analysis** and **verisimilitude with life**.
- The Age of Romanticism is marked by the folktale, which hitherto existed as a **received story in vacuum**, being infused with the **voice** and **subjectivity** of the **storyteller** and **poet**.

From Dante's *Divine Comedy* to book issues, the *Decameron*, we see this shift from the ultra or superhuman to the profane world of everyday reality. So, there is a marked departure from the world of spirits to the world of nature from God and discussion on Providence to chance occurrence. 15<sup>th</sup> century onward the short narrative shifts from poetry to prose and its purpose moves away from moral edification to entertainment.

So we see that it's coming down from the Divine or spiritual plane to address the mundane, you know, issues or it becomes part of the mundane matter. It incorporates mundane topics, short fiction, in mid 17<sup>th</sup> century England, is a precursor of 18<sup>th</sup> century realist novel. As a result of French influence, there was a growing interest in psychological analysis seeing literary work as verisimilitude with life.

So, word transcribing, or word as a reflection of the world, the age of romanticism was marked by the folktale which hitherto existed as a received story in back home. Now, we see in during the Romantic period, this received story is infused with the voice and subjectivity of the storyteller and the poet.

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## Short Story and Novel

- During Romanticism - **Values of the myth** seen through the **imagination of the artist and teller**.
- Real speaker speaking from his subjective position – his mediation turns the **profane and mundane** into **sacred and 'out of the ordinary'**, which leads to a short story.
- The Romantic Movement gave rise to **Gothic Literature** that focused on the **insane** and the **fantastic**. With the **rise of the Gothic fiction** in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the precursors of short story, **such as myths, verse narratives, medieval sermons and romance, folktales, fables, ballads** came into being.
- Early 19<sup>th</sup> century short stories are full of archetypal and pictorial characters that undergo **patterned ventures**. Their extraordinary journeys call to mind **analogies with myths**.



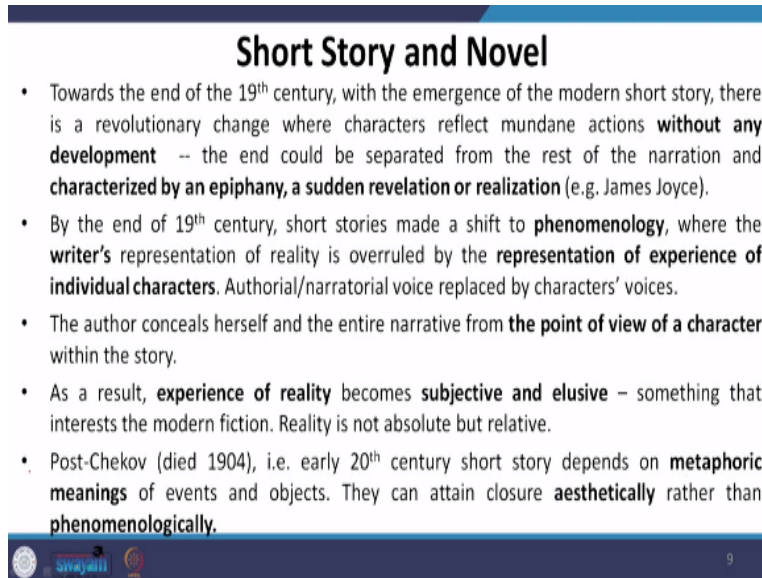
So during romanticism, values of the myth can be seen through the imagination of the artist, and the tenor, the agency, the figure, the individual presence of the artists, the mediation of the artist, in telling story, the editorial voice of the storyteller becomes very, very important, this is one this is one phenomenon that is observable during the during romanticism during the Romantic period. So real speaker, speaking from his subjective position that is the figure of the artist and the storyteller.

The artists mediation turns the profane and mundane into secret and out of the ordinary, which leads to the short story, even as the artist is talking about ordinary things of life, something that one encounters on a daily basis. There is the artistic touch, the artists, you know, fineness, skills that make a sacred and extraordinary out of the mundane. And that goes into the artistic process of churning out the short story. The remainder movement gives rise to the Gothic literature that focused on the insane and fantastic.

So with the rise of the gothic fiction in the 18th century, the precursors of short stories such as myths verse narratives, medieval sermons and Romans, folk tales, folktales, fables, ballads, all of these forms came into being. Early 19th century short stories are full of archetypal and pictorial characters that undergo pattern ventures write their events ventures, adventures, misadventures have, you know, a pattern and certain stock characters stock motifs keep coming back the extraordinary journeys have a deep angelology with meats.



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### Short Story and Novel

- Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the emergence of the modern short story, there is a revolutionary change where characters reflect mundane actions **without any development** – the end could be separated from the rest of the narration and **characterized by an epiphany, a sudden revelation or realization** (e.g. James Joyce).
- By the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, short stories made a shift to **phenomenology**, where the **writer's** representation of reality is overruled by the **representation of experience of individual characters**. Authorial/narratorial voice replaced by characters' voices.
- The author conceals herself and the entire narrative from **the point of view of a character** within the story.
- As a result, **experience of reality** becomes **subjective and elusive** – something that interests the modern fiction. Reality is not absolute but relative.
- Post-Chekov (died 1904), i.e. early 20<sup>th</sup> century short story depends on **metaphoric meanings** of events and objects. They can attain closure **aesthetically** rather than **phenomenologically**.

Towards the end of the 19th century with the emergence of the modern short story form there is a revolutionary change the characters reflect mundane actions without any development. So the end of the short story per se could be separated from the rest of the narration and characterized by an epiphany, the end in itself as a sudden revelation, or realization. This is something that we see a lot in James Joyce's writings.

That the end of the 19th century short stories make a shift to phenomenology, where the right is a representation of reality is overruled by the representation of experience of individual characters. So we do not have one perspective anymore. We have the question of inter illumination coming in the characters illuminating into each other's souls into each other's possibilities and perspectives. The authorial or narratorial voice is replaced duly by the characters, voices, the narrative becomes more LED.

So the question of you know, for diglossia, the question of voices coming from different waters arise, the author conceals herself and the entire narrative from the point of view of a character within the story. So, the author's voice could be well hidden within the story, within the plot itself, the author could guard as one of the characters and posit his or her point of view, through the character. As a result, experience of reality becomes subjective and use with the question of phenomenology and the phenomenological experience, reality is more elusive.



It is more relative more subjective, there is the absolutist meaning is gone. So, this is also something we have already discussed, that interests the modern fiction, reality as not absolute but existing only as a relative meaning or relative truth. Post Anton chekov of chekov died in 1904. We are talking about early 20th century short stories, and they depend on metaphoric meanings of events and objects, they can attain closure, aesthetically rather than phenomenologically.

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## Short Story and Novel

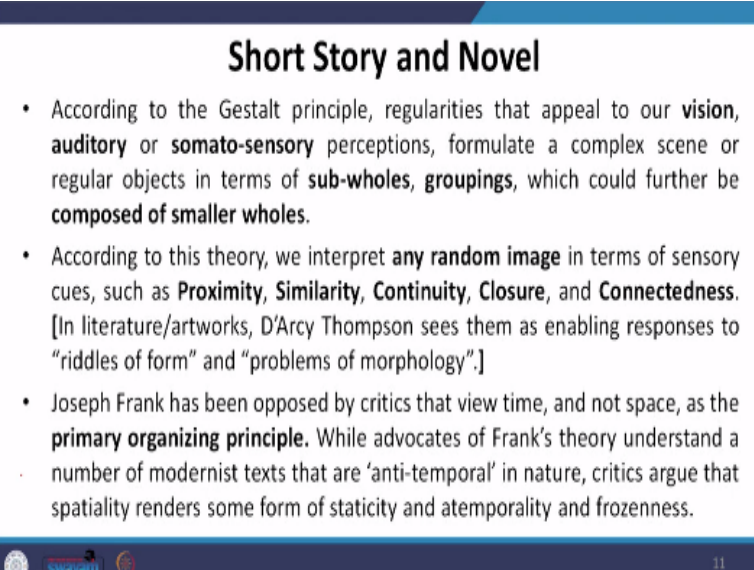
- Further, well into 20<sup>th</sup> century, postmodernism reflects in short stories through the feature of **anti-story**, where plots are often struggling with cause-and-effect relationships, characters are **burdened with artifice** and **complex symbolic meanings**. **Linearity** is replaced by **time arrested in an eternal present**.
- According to Joseph Frank, modernist literary works (particularly by Eliot, Pound, and Joyce) are informed by "**spatial forms**" insofar as they replace history and impede linear narrative sequence and disrupt the normal continuities of English prose with disjunctive syntactic arrangements. Such texts are characterized by **simultaneity** and **discontinuity**.
- Modern works of fiction bear certain **signs, referents** and **connections** embedded in the text that organize as Gestalt groupings. The reader can grasp these groupings through responding with a sense of spatial form.

Further, well into 20th century we see post modernism reflects in short stories through the feature of the anti story, where plots are often struggling with cause and effect relationships, characters are burdened with artiphys Add complex symbolic meanings are being formed through these characters. Linearity is flouted. It is replaced by time arrested in an eternal present where the story is struggling to move forward.

According to Joseph Frank, love Frank devices, this concept of special forms. According to Frank, modernist literary works, particularly those by TS Eliot, Ezra Pound, and James Joyce, all these words are informed by special forms insofar as replace history and impede lenient relative sequence disrupting the normal or the normative meaning of continuity. That has been encounter heater 2 in English prose and discontinuity is revisited, this continuity is frustrated through disjunctive syntactic arrangements.

Such texts, such modernist works are characterized by simultaneity and discontinuity. Modern works of fiction bear, certain signs, reference and connections that are embedded in the text which organize as Gestalt groupings. The reader can grasp these groupings through responding with a sense of special form. So a narrative of work that is being, you know, approached in terms of the meaning exuded from its speciality, its special meaning and this also the focus being on the special meaning.

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### Short Story and Novel

- According to the Gestalt principle, regularities that appeal to our **vision, auditory** or **somato-sensory** perceptions, formulate a complex scene or regular objects in terms of **sub-wholes, groupings**, which could further be **composed of smaller wholes**.
- According to this theory, we interpret **any random image** in terms of sensory cues, such as **Proximity, Similarity, Continuity, Closure, and Connectedness**. [In literature/artworks, D'Arcy Thompson sees them as enabling responses to "riddles of form" and "problems of morphology".]
- Joseph Frank has been opposed by critics that view time, and not space, as the **primary organizing principle**. While advocates of Frank's theory understand a number of modernist texts that are 'anti-temporal' in nature, critics argue that spatiality renders some form of staticity and atemporality and frozenness.

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Let us see what the Gestalt principle says according to the Gestalt principle, regularities that appeal to our vision, auditory or somato sensory perceptions, formulate a complex scene, or regular objects in terms of sub wholes in terms of certain groupings, which could further be composed of smaller wholes. So, we are looking here at a pattern where we have a circle inscribed by a larger circle and so forth.

According to the Gestalt principle theory we interpret any random image in terms of sensory cues such as proximity, similarity, contiguity, closure and connectedness. So, literally worth artworks Darcy Thompson sees these insensitive accusers enabling responses to the riddles of form and the problems of morphologic here we are, I mean, entering into the structuralist discussion, where the basic premise of the structuralist school is that the world is available, as in the form of a lot of information.

Information that flows into us at very high frequency. And unless we classify these informations, so its very difficult for us to grasp the meaning unless we categorize the arbitrary way in which the world exists, we have structures inside our heads that enable us to organize the meaning of the world out there. So Joseph Frank has been opposed by several critics that view time and not space as the primary organizing principle.

So we have these 2 kinds of reaction towards Joseph Frank's you know, understanding of narrative even around the meanings of space while the advocates of Frank's theory understand a number of modernist texts that are anti temporal in nature. Critics of Frank argue that speciality renders some form of staticity and atom for illness, thereby freezing the narrative, you have to understand especially the result always deny temporality.

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### Short Story and Novel

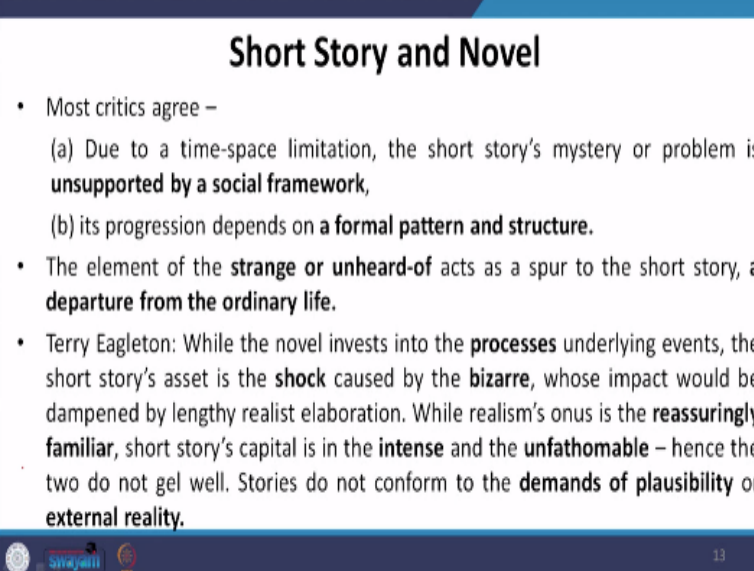
- However, spatiality does not always deny temporality. Narrating time and the temporal language requires a mediation of space and spatial imagery.
- E.g. *Ulysses* provides an overriding sense of time, as a conjunction of clock and calendar governs the passing of a day.
- E.g. On the other hand, *Madame Bovary* functions so much without time that it imperils Flaubert's position as a novelist. There are no dates, time is available only as spirit and seasons, whereas description of space and a bland nature allegorically reflects Emma's mind.

Narrating time and the temporal language requires the mediation of space and special imaginary as well. We could have the example of choices unisons, where the narrative provides an overriding sense of time as a conjunction of clock and calendar is constantly governing, the passing of a day, a single day, which the entire novel is all about, is the entire novel dwells on a single day from the life of a man.

On the other hand, we have a word like *Madame Bovary*, we have discussed how Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* functions, so much without time that it almost inherence Flaubert's position as a

novelist. There are no dates except one in the entire novel, and time is available only in the form of spirits and seasons. Whereas description of space is through a blonde nature that allegorically reflects a man's state of mind.

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### Short Story and Novel

- Most critics agree –
  - (a) Due to a time-space limitation, the short story's mystery or problem is **unsupported by a social framework**,
  - (b) its progression depends on a **formal pattern and structure**.
- The element of the **strange or unheard-of** acts as a spur to the short story, a **departure from the ordinary life**.
- Terry Eagleton: While the novel invests into the **processes** underlying events, the short story's asset is the **shock** caused by the **bizarre**, whose impact would be dampened by lengthy realist elaboration. While realism's onus is the **reassuringly familiar**, short story's capital is in the **intense** and the **unfathomable** – hence the two do not gel well. Stories do not conform to the **demands of plausibility or external reality**.

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So, most critics would agree that due to a time space limitation, the short stories mystery or problem is generally unsupported by a social framework, and that its progression depends on a formal pattern and structure. Elements all the strange or unheard of plays a vital role acts as a spoiler to the short story narration which is all it is a propellant is, you know, through departing from the ordinary. So, it is a departure from everydayness from the prosaic state.

Terry Eagleton observes that while the novel invests more into the processes, the underlying events, the short stories as it is shock, the shock that is caused by the bizarre or whose impact would be dampened by lengthy, and realist elaborations too much of description and we have diluted the short story enough and beyond redemption. So while realism owners is the reassuringly familiar, short stories, capital is the intense and unfathomable, hence, the 2 forms the novel and the short story do not gel well, beyond a point. Stories do not conform to the demands of plausibility or eternal reality.

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## Short Story and Novel

- Walter Benjamin: the rise of the novel is a symptom of the decline of storytelling.
- Isak Dinesen: Novel sacrifices the story for the art of narration. According to him, in novel a lot **of human intervention is visible and possible** – be it the author, the characters, or the reader. Novel is a **human product**. On the other hand, story is a divine art – **“In the beginning was the story.”**
- In the same way, Russian formalist B.M. Ejzenbaum (Boris Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum) looks at the novel as a syncretic form, whereas short story as a fundamental, elementary form.
- Instead of introducing too many characters, a short story needs to tighten sooner. With all its **moral impasse** and **ambiguity**, the short story does not **migrate** too far away **from a compact structure**.



Walter Benjamin would say that the rise of the novel is a symptom of the decline of storytelling, Isaac Dinesen further notes that, in line with Benjamin Dinesen would say that novel sacrifices, the story for the art of narration and here we are talking about once again the stylistic devices, the artistic, fine is the plot becomes more important than the story itself in the case of the novel. So according to Dinesen in novel, a lot of human intervention is visible and possible.

Think of the playing with the new editorial voice that is possible in the novel, be it the author be the characters, or even playing with the readers expectation, a lot can be done with a novel through a novel in a novel. So a novel is essentially human product, according to Dennis and on the other hand, we have this short story which is a divine art. So according to Denison in the beginning was the story referring to its provenance in the meats.

In the same way, Russian formalist Boris I can then looks at the novel, as a syncretic form whereas short stories, fundamental elementary form. Instead of introducing too many characters, the short story needs to tighten sooner due to lack of time and space, the scope is much narrower when compared to the novel. With all these small empires and the ambiguities that the short story wants to pause, the short story does not migrate too far away from a basically compact structure. With this, I would like to end today's lecture and let us meet again for another round of discussions in the answering lectures. Thank you.