

Q. 3 Write a detailed note on the development of the 20th century novel.

[1] Introduction :

Like modern poetry, twentieth-century novel also came to be influenced by the developments taking place in the world. The note of scepticism(नलस्तिक्तल) and uncertainty creeping into the works of the late Victorian and Edwardian fiction further deepened. World War II and the attendant(अनुसर) social and political happenings deepened the sense of uncertainty and exposed human mind to new forms of experience. Eliot and Pound looked towards French poetry for rejuvenating(नवीकरण) English poetry while Yeats went to his native Irish resources, similarly, novelists like Henry James. James Joyce and Virginia Woolf found the much-needed dynamism(गतिशीलता) in the French and Russian traditions of novel writing.

"Besides literature, a great deal was taking place in the world of ideas and scientific research in Europe, which had serious bearings on the new English fiction....."

Many novelists contributed theirs best in the genre of the novel of the Twentieth Century.

[2] The Contribution of Henry James :

Henry James was a great novelist of his era who gave no attention to plot construction in the traditional sense, since he was essentially an impressionist. There is a major intellectual element in his fiction which went on increasing with his development. There is little scope for elemental passions and sensationalism. James's interest lies in the character's mental energy, their motives and urges; he begins, unlike George Eliot and George Meredith, from the external surface of their lives and goes on to probe the inner life, as can be seen in the portrayal of Meally Theale, and Isabel Archer, Euphemia and Lambert Strether. James attached considerable importance to the idea that an artist should seize upon whatever impressions life afforded him. James considered the greatest blessing of art to be its ability to make him intimate with experience that otherwise he could never hope to know.

He wrote such momentous works as **Roderick Hudson** (1876), **The American** (1877), **The Europeans** (1878), **Washington Square** (1881), **The Portrait of a Lady** (1881), **The Bostonians** (1884), **The Wings of the Dove** (1902), **The Ambassadors**(1904), **The Golden Bowls** (1904), and stories such as **What Daisie Knew**, **Turn of the Screw**, **The Real thing**, etc. He also wrote works of autobiographical interest like **A Small Boy and Others** (1913), **Notes of a Son and Brother** (1914), **The Middle Years** (1917).

James was a remarkable innovator aiming to

"Compel us to love not the infinite variety of life, but life as fine consciousness and conscience".

G.S.Fraser calls him the novelist of the;

"privileged beings, extremely rich, the terribly innocent, the splendidly self-sacrificing rich, the terribly innocent, the splendidly self-sacrificing, the fine ruthless takers, and the gallant sufferers".

The contribution of Henry James is enormous (ପ୍ରଭୁ) in that he took novel quite seriously by writing a kind of aesthetics of it and practicing his theories in his own works. What T.S. Eliot did for poetry Henry James did for fiction.

[3] The Role of Joseph Conrad :

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) was another master novelist whose interest focused on the character, the human spirit labouring under stress of critics. He served on British cargo ships and it is here that he learned English. His experiences on the sea and voyages to difficult lands enriched over 20 years at the end of which he wrote his first novel *Almayer's Folly* (1895). It is at this time that Conrad came in contact with Ford Madox Ford who must have initiated him into a new use to which novel writing could be put. As Harry Blamires says,

"Conrad and he found themselves equally dissatisfied with the traditional method of shaping fiction in a series of dramatic situations."

Conrad was fascinated by situations that tested men's strength and stamina and was attracted by the physical reality. His realities are, however, clothed in romantic charm and 'adventurous exaltation'. Fidelity in human relations preoccupies him **Under Western Eye** and **Lord Jim** focussing on the moral values rather than metrical ones. He himself wrote;

" .. (it is) my primary conviction that truth alone is the justification of any fiction which makes the least claim to the quality of art. "

Joseph Conrad created narrator like Marlowe who took over partly the all-controlling, all-knowing qualities of the traditional author.

This unseen omniscience (ସର୍ବଜ୍ଞତା) of the narrator given him by the author is a manner of distancing himself from the subject and yet retaining control over it. His reputation rests on three major novels, *Lord Jim* (1900), *Heart of Darkness* and *Nostromo* (1904). Besides he also wrote *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, *The Shadow Line*, *The Arrow of Gold*, *The Rescue*, *The Rover Tales of Hearsay*, *Outcasts of the Island*. His other writings include short stories, short novels, and autobiographical and critical works like the *Mirror of the Sea*, *Some Reminiscences*, *Notes of Life and Letters* and *Notes on My Books*.

Dr. F.R. Leavis called him 'very original technically'. Normally, adventure stories are told in a straightforward way, taking episodes one after the other, Conrad likes to begin in the middle, or at the climax.

[4] Literary Outputs of D. H. Lawrence :

D.H. Lawrence (1855-1930) was born Nottinghamshire and grew up amid coal mining people whom he observed and later on portrayed in his fiction. He began writing poems early in life, some of which got published in **English Review** in 1909. He travelled extensively (ଅଧିକ) to Germany, Italy, Australia, America and

Mexico. He is considered one of the finest novelists of the twentieth century, raising novel writing to the refined and cultivated level where it became a means of probing the submerged(ସଂଘାତ) urges and motives of character and unravelling those unseen ties of energy that bind men and women together. Lawrence viewed culture and civilization as "the painted fungus(ଝୁଲ) of rotteness". He believed in natural animal instinct as the true guide of men.

⇒ **Anti-culture, Anti-intellectual Stand**

Lawrence feels that man-made cultural systems have stifled(ଢାଳି) our real vitality and made us incapable of using, real natural gifts. In his novels the ugliness and distortion(ବିକୃତି) generated by cities have been highlighted. He felt that in order to regain the primeval(ଅକ୍ଷୟ) vitality man must recognise his inner muted animal instinct and release it, thus adding greater depth of significance to his life. In his greatest novel *The Rainbow* the colliers(ଖଲିଆଁ) who are always men of another darker life, wait in their warped, stiffened(ଝଟି) bodies for the great liberation; and over the sad corrupted landscape glows the premature rainbow. Related to his intensely anti-cultural stand is his view of the use of intellect as an impediment(ଘଟକ) to the proper formation of relations and recognition of one's own self. In his work *The Study of Thomas Hardy* he observes that

' the greater part of every life is underground, like roots in the dark in contact with the beyond . '

Lawrence was interested in individual life and set its goal as perfection of his/her life. He believed that every individual leads a life of isolation. In the famous essay Edger Allan Poe Lawrence writes.

"The central law of all organic life is that each organism(ଜୀବ) is intrinsically isolate and single in itself.

The moment its isolation breaks down and there comes an actual mixing and confusion, death sets in."

⇒ **Sexual Mysticism**

Out of this D.H. Lawrence constructed his unique philosophy of sexual mysticism which emphasizes that the "final aim is not to know, but to be". A strange magnetism exists between the sexes which releases a flux(ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ) of energy or primeval attraction in both directions. D.H. Lawrence makes subtle artistic use of natural features to highlight this sexual energy. He turned this into a kind of cult, a religious dogma(सिद्धांत) and novel after novel went on depicting its relevance with a moralist's insistence. He probes his character's inner world, their urges and motives, their coming together and swinging apart in big swooping(ଝୁଲ) oscillations(ଝୁଲ) through physical level of their relations. However, his descriptions of physical relation are only a way of revealing the mysterious workings of their individual instincts.

Lawrence's stories *The Fox*, *The woman who Rode Away*, *Odour of Chrysanthemums*, *The White Stocking*, *The Lovely Lady*, and his novels, *The White Peacock*, *The Man who Died* represent his whole-hearted exploration and presentation of this a strange mysticism. Lawrence was so much preoccupied with his beliefs that in his *Study of Thomas Hardy* he deals less with the author whom he admired greatly than with his philosophy of sex.

⇒ Charge of obscenity

Lawrence has always remained at the centre of controversy. His frank treatment of sex led to charges of obscenity(अश्लीलता) and pornography(कामरेखा अंग्रेजु साहित्य) against him. *The Rainbow* was dragged into the court and the book was banned for some time. Similarly, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* contained passages that he was forced to delete. Lawrence was also a good painter, some of his drawings depicted nudity and sexual acts which got him into trouble.

D.H. Lawrence wished to rid mankind of the shame complex which led men and women to associate sex with the idea of indecency.(निर्लज्जपणु) It was blasphemy(निंदलम्क) in the opinion of the author. He said;

"I want men and women to be able to think of sex, fully, completely honestly and cleanly"

He was disturbed by the manner in which sex was generally treated, dragging it through mud and shame.

⇒ The Invention of Stream of Consciousness Novel :

In the early years of the twentieth-century some bold experiments were made in order to enable the writer to equip with proper narrative methods so that the essence of the modern experience could be accurately expressed. One such bold step was taken by authors like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf who wrote their novels in the stream of consciousness technique heralding(अग्रदूत) a revolutionary change in the way the novelists used their techniques and perceived reality.

The 'Stream of consciousness novels' reflect the disintegration of established values, experimentation with form, the blurring of objective reality and dissolution of certainties in all fields of thought. This kind of novel represents a withdrawal from the external reality into the dim twilight world of the character's private emotions and sense impressions. Apparently though it may appear that the writer is withdrawing into his inner world, the phenomenon may also be regarded as deliberate effort to render literary medium a new realization of experience as a process of dynamic renewal. Stream of consciousness fiction was very much influenced by psychological findings of Carl Jung, and Sigmund Freud and the "free-association school."

The novelist, interested in the 'inner drama' of mind, finds the stream of consciousness technique wonderfully suited to his purpose, revealing the hidden side of the characters consciousness. He therefore, resorts to evocative symbols which stand for values and significance derived from experience. He tries to discover a pattern in this apparently confused collection of impressions, memories and obsessive images.

It has exposed the serious limitations of traditional novelists like Arnold Bennett, H.G. Wells, John Galsworthy and others, and brought into the centre of debate the question of what constitutes Reality- external observable bits and pieces, or the hidden vortices(वर्तुणु) of impressions. This stand establishes that character is a process and not state and only through stream of consciousness can this be brought to light.

It was William James who first used the phrase 'Stream of Consciousness' in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890) to describe the flux of conscious and sub-conscious thoughts and impressions. A parallel description can be found in Bergson's account (1889) of élan(style) vital popularized in England by Shaw. However, its true practioners were James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson and William Faulkner. Dorothy Richardson's *Pointed Roofs* (1915) is the first of the series of novels known as *Pilgrimage* (1935). Though the technique solely dominated the works of these novelists from 1915 to 1941 it was a part of the larger fictional framework with such authors as Graham Greene, Katherine Anne Porter, Eudora Welty, Robert Penn Warren, and Elizabeth Bowen.

[5] The Literary Contribution of James Joyce :

James Joyce (1882-1941) is recognised as a great proponent(promoter) of the experimental novel who gave a new depth to the psychologically oriented fiction. The psychologist Carl Gustav Jung is said to have expressed amazement at the depth of understanding which Joyce displays in *Ulysses* in dealing with the thoughts and desires of a woman. His magnificent use of the stream of consciousness technique still remains unsurpassed.

James Joyce began by writing short stories that were collected in a volume *Dubliners* (1914). These stories are written in plain and simple style and focus on the lives of the slum dwellers of Dublin. He was highly admired by T.S. Eliot, Pound and Samuel Beckett. He was always in conflict with the Irish Catholics and the Irish nationalistic movement.

The volume *Dubliners* seeks to show these things, to betray "the soul of the hemiplegia(पुल्लुलु) or paralysis which many consider a city" as C.P. Curran wrote *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was published in 1916. Critics regard it as a proclamation(खुडेरुलु) of his breaking away from Ireland- its society religion, politics. It's an autobiographical novel. Its hero Stephen Dedalus reflects the author's early years of growing up.

Ulysses, his masterpiece, was published in Paris in 1922 in which he is supposed to have made the best use of stream of consciousness technique. While it is praised by one group of scholars as inaugurator of a new style of experimental fiction, there is another school of critics that deplore it as unnecessarily introducing complexity which brings novel to the dead-end. Set in Dublin, it depicts the wanderings of Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus through the streets of Dublin on a particular day. 16th June, 1904, attends a funeral, indulges in scopophilia, eats a meal, worries about his wife, his money, his daughter, his head and meets Stephen whom he rescues from a drunken brawl(कुडुडु) outside a brothel.(वेशुडुडु)

Its incoherent style has discouraged many from reading it willingly, the reason being an "unending stream of Bloom's conscious poring out his half articulate (અર્ધવર્ણ) impressions of the day".

The stream of consciousness technique presents the inner working of the character's mind which often sounds like "a catalogue of Bloom's mental furniture" and also a catalogue of everything that Bloom does and sees and hears. Joyce turned to Homer's *Odyssey* to provide the basic structure to his work and emphasize the universality of his story.

[6] The Contribution of Virginia Woolf :

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) was another powerful writer whose use of the stream of consciousness technique remains the finest example till today. She was the daughter of the great Victorian critic and scholar Sir Leslie Stephen and showed great originality as a thinker of her times which is exemplified in her wonderful book *A Room of Her own* which is regarded as a feminist work. Her earliest novels, *The Voyages out* (1915) and *Night and Day* (1919) are conventional but soon she felt dissatisfied with the style of Beckett-and-Galsworthy tradition, and turned away from it. She adopted the psychological method of James Joyce seeking to explore the essential truth. She was interested in the life of the spirit.

Her great novels were written in the 1920s and 1930s. *Mrs. Dalloway* came out in 1925; *To the Light house* in 1927, *Orlando* in 1928 and *The Waves* in 1931. They are the works on which the eminence (મોટાઈ) of this courageous innovative novelist rests. Woolf did not give much value to the plot, and the external world is quite limited and unimportant therefore, her characters also are quite limited. She belonged to the Bloomsbury Group, which included E.M. Foster, Lord Keynes, Roger Fry, Clive Bell, Lytton Strachey, Desmond Mac Carthy among others. The Group was under the influence of philosopher G.E. Moore, who emphasized not the importance of God, politics or history but pleasant states of feeling that originated from the enjoyment of love, or friendship or the admiration of beauty, in art, in nature, or in human beings. In *The Waves* we find a maturation of her experimentation the interior monologue style which shows the essentially fluid form-lessness of the nature of personality. The critics of Virginia Woolf point out those weak points in her which are so strongly criticised in James Joyce: magnifying the trivial incidents.

[7] The Role of Dorothy Richardson :

Dorothy Richardson (1873-1957) has the reputation of initiating the installments or serial novels in which the story is told over several books. Her *Pilgrimage* (1915-31) is one such work divided into thirteen separate books. The first of these novels is entitled *Pointed Roofs* (1915). As Blamires observes,

"She brought the stream of consciousness method into English fiction out of determination to match the masculine novel of objective reality with a feminine subjectivity. Richardson transmuted her own experience into fiction by projecting herself in her heroine, Miriam Henderson."

Her relationship with H.G. Wells led to some memorable turn of events in her life, the science fiction writer was portrayed as Hypo Wilson in Richardson's work. Though she started to show everything through heroine's senses, M.S. Richardson is said to have made certain compromises failing to carry through with logical consistency the experiment upon which she started.

[8] Conclusion :

To conclude we may say that the novels of the Present Age enrich the English literature. In this age novel achieves the zenith of the popularity. Stream of Consciousness Novel is the new product of the 20th century. In this century novel has fully developed in may sense.