

Literary Terms Related to Novel (Part-2)

[BA (Hons.), Part-1, Paper-1]

Mr. Subrata Kumar Das

Head, Dept. of English

VSJ College, Rajnagar

subrata.hcu@gmail.com

- 1. Anti-novel:** A form of experimental fiction that dispenses with certain traditional elements of novel-writing like the analysis of characters' states of mind or the unfolding of a sequential plot. The French novelist Alain Robbe-Grillet's name is usually connected with this modernist tendency of novel-writing, while in English Flann O'Brien's novels fall within this genre. Robbe-Grillet's *Jealousy* presents only a sequence of visual perceptions from which the readers who share with the character infer the hyperacute observations of a jealous husband.
- 2. New Novel/Nouveau Roman:** The French term 'nouveau roman' (New Novel) is applied to experimental novels by a group of French novelists of the 1950s who rejected many of the traditional elements of novel writing, such as the sequential plot and the analysis of characters' minds. A kind of *nouveau roman* is the anti-novel, as practised by the French novelist Alain Robbe-Grillet whose *Jealousy* presents only a sequence of visual perceptions from which the readers who share with the character infer the hyperacute observations of a jealous husband.
- 3. Bildungsroman:** A German word that literally means 'development novel.' It was coined by critics to describe Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Apprenticeship*. This kind of

novel follows the development of the hero or heroine from childhood or adolescence into adulthood, through a troubled quest for identity. Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*, Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March* and R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* fall within this genre.

4. **Kunstlerroman:** A kind of bildungsroman which traces the development of an artist. The term literally means 'Artist Novel'. Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* (on the music composer Leverkühn) and James Joyce's autobiographical *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Hero* are two examples.
5. **Utopia:** The term was coined by Sir Thomas More from two Greek words 'outopia' ('no place') and 'eutopia' ('good place') to mean an imaginary ideal or political state. It now denotes, after Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, a work of fiction that presents such a society. Bacon's *New Atlantis*, William Morris' *News from Nowhere*, Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* and Butler-Lytton's *The Coming Race* are some of the examples of the Utopian fiction.
6. **Dystopia:** Literally meaning 'bad place', it is the modern term invented to denote a work of fiction opposite of utopia that presents an alarming unpleasant imaginary world, usually of the projected future. Dystopian writing is exemplified in H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine*, Orwell's *1984*, Huxley's *Brave New World* and Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*.
7. **Epistolary Novel:** Derived from 'epistle' or letter, the epistolary novel is novel written in the form of a series of letters exchanged among the characters of the story, with extracts from their journals, sometimes attached. This form of novel was

prevalent in the 18th century. Important examples include *Pamela* and *Clarissa Harlowe* of Samuel Richardson and the recent *The Colour Purple* by Alice Walker.

8. **Historical Novel:** A novel in which the action takes place during a specific historical period well before the time of writing and which attempts to depict accurately the customs and mentality of the period. The pioneers of this genre were Walter Scott and James Fennimore Cooper. Scott's *Waverley* sequence of historical novels set the pattern. Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* is set in Paris and London during the French Revolution, George Eliot's *Romola* in the Renaissance Florence and Tolstoy's *War and Peace* is set in the period of Napoleon's invasion of Russia.