

## The Legacy of the Great Unknown: Sir Walter Scott as the Precursor of the Modern Novel

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### Abstract

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This article illustrates how historical romance, the genre invented by Sir Walter Scott, with its great fictional and narrative potential, gave rise to the modern novel. Even though Scott's genre ran into disrepute after a short stay, it was not simply dying out, but was permeating into the entire fictional fabric of the later period. For his fiction, Scott drew from the poets and philosophical historians of the past, assimilated the fictional world of romance with the realistic world of history, added to it a dramatic element and the fictional worlds of sentiment, tragedy, comedy, picaresque and satire, and thus created a highly composite fictional world. This new form of fiction influenced the novelists of the nineteenth and twentieth century's all over the world, and gave rise to the modern novel.

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**Keywords:** Genre, Romance, History, Inter textuality, Structuralism, Precursor

### 1. Introduction

The intent herein is to illustrate how the historical romance, the genre invented by Sir Walter Scott, by virtue of its highly composite and inclusive fictional and narrative potential, gave rise to the modern novel. The genre, which sprang up in the early nineteenth century with unprecedented success, but ran into disrepute after a short stay, played a pivotal role in the development of the novel genre. A close examination of the post-romantic novel reveals that Scott's tradition was not simply dying out, but was permeating into the fictional world of his later period, thereby shaping out the twentieth century modern novel.

### 2. The new form

From a "feminine" genre dominated by female writers like Ann Radcliffe, Maria Edge worth and Jane Austen, Scott created his "serious" and "masculine" form of fiction by assimilating into the novel, elements of epic, romance and history. Scott's interest in traditional ballads, his fondness for themes from the Middle Ages and his reactionary tendency to oppose the ideals of the French Revolution — as Lukacs points out—gave new dimensions to his new form of writing (1962, p. 24). Thus, Scott's model of fiction became much more composite and inclusive than the social novel.

The composite fictional world of Scott calls for critical attention to the sources of his work. When Jane Millgate finds the source of the *Waverley Novels* in medieval romance (p. 270), Jerome Mitchell traces Scott's sources to Chaucer and medieval romance, especially, the Middle English romances (Kelley, 1989, p. 134). In Garry Kelley's view, in addition to the above sources, "Shakespeare, the Bible, and other literary 'classics,' the Enlightenment or ancient historians, popular balladry or chapbook fiction, and so on..." also have influenced Scott's fiction (p. 135).

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In Friedrich Hebbel's judgment, "what of Shakespeare came alive again in England was manifested in Walter Scott ...." (qtd. in Lukacs, p. 24). In George Dekker finds in Scott the influence of the poets and philosophical historians whom he had read in his youth, the Romantic Revival with its enthusiasm for things ancient, the Gothic novel, and the novels like *Moll Flanders* and *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker* with their historical spirit, and Goethe and his historical drama *Goetz von Berlichingen*. In Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Dekker finds many things in common with Goethe's work (1987, p. 32-54).

Northrop Frye's view on Scott's fiction as "a realistic replacement of romance," which adjusts romance's formulaic structure "to a roughly credible context," points to the composite character of Scott's fictional world (1976, p. 36). A look into Scott's fiction from the perspective of Frye's generic structuralism (*Anatomy of Criticism*) reveals this unique feature of Scott's fictional world (1971). Robert Scholes' theory of fictional modes (1974), which is a modified version of Frye's theory, also would reveal this special character of Scott's fictional world. For instance, if viewed from Scholes' perspective, Scott's most successful work *Ivanhoe* would reveal a highly composite fictional world and a great repertoire of fictional possibilities for future writers. The book draws its subject primarily from the neutral world of history. The adventures of its heroes, their exhibition of superhuman valour and triumphs bring into it the mode of romance. In addition to these basic modes, the story of the Jew and the Jewess and Scott's critical view of the violence and bloodshed of the heroic age bring into the book sentiment, tragedy, comedy, picaresque, and satire. In the history of the suppressed Jewish race with the noble but unfortunate character sketch of Rebecca with its heroic grandeur and pathos the reader finds the modes sentiment and tragedy overlapping each other; Scott's criticism of the negative aspects of the age of heroic romances such as violence and bloodshed is strong satire. In addition, the character of Athelstane brings into the novel a picaresque mode. Of the twelve forms – travel, history, biography, tale, joke, gossip, diary/letter, confession, polemic, essay, epic and romance--of Jane Smiley's theory, "The Circle of the Novel" (2005, p. 178-2003), Scott's fiction comprises of at least nine, excepting only joke, gossip and diary.

Scott himself has admitted that his aim was to present "neither a romance of chivalry, nor a tale of modern manners"; rather, it is "a description of men than manners" (qtd. in Beer 1970, p. 65). This implies that the fictional world of Scott may be located somewhere between "a romance of chivalry" and "a tale of modern manners." It is between these two polarities that he brings in a vast spectrum of other fictional modes for the creation of his new mode of fiction. Dekker observes: "Scott inaugurates the historical romance tradition with a Cervantesque guying of the old-fashioned romance of chivalry" (p. 12).

Scott was unwilling to declare himself on the side of either romance or novel; he called his fiction "romantic composition," a term that escapes the distinction. However, as Earnest Barker comments, "with all his romantic predilections Scott could not help being a realist" (1957, p. 212). Scott uses the term novel to signal an innovation to the field of fiction or its departure from his earlier works. For him, the principal attraction of romance was its ability to demonstrate various techniques and to show-case large historical issues. However, he does not expect his readers to confuse fiction with history. In him, the two modes are closely "intertwined" and not distinguishable from each other. On Scott's writing, James Kerr comments:

"The boundary between fiction and fact, romance and reality, is crossed and re-crossed repeatedly in the novels without much visible concern for philosophical and generic consistency. If history subverts romance, then romance, in turn, alters history, not merely softening and blurring its harsh outlines, changing its colours slightly, but actually re-inventing the past, making a new story out of history." (1989, p. 17) When Cervantes used *Don Quixote* to demolish the romance tradition, Scott used his historical romance to seek a neutral ground between romance and realism with the willingness for a "British compromise." Scott's tradition combines the real with the marvelous in a neutral territory. The real and the marvelous worlds "imbue" themselves with each other. Scott's greatest contribution to the English novel, as Dekker observes, was that he brought into full circle the anti-romantic fictional world of Cervantes.

### 3. Scott's fictional strategy

Scott's principal strategy for creating his mixed genre was by assimilating certain historical events into a formal pattern which he borrowed from the romantic tradition. He effected the transgression of fictional modes by shifting materials from one generic realm to another. Thus, he made his historical romance cross generic boundaries.

When Scott's fictional heroes take up the historical events, history gets fictionalized. Simultaneous with this process, the fictional heroes push their historical counterparts off the central stage, and occupy their position. Thus, Scott's fictional method is not a challenge to romance and Gothic conventions; on the contrary, it is a defamiliarized and historicized version of them. To meet the challenge of awakening the bygone age, Scott found pure history with all its limitations quite inadequate. To overcome history's inadequacies, he found it necessary to leave room for a free interaction of men with their social environment. As Lukacs writes: "The inclusion of the dramatic element in the novel, the concentration of events, the great significance of dialogue, i.e. the direct coming to grips of colliding opposites in conversation, these are intimately linked with the attempt to portray historical reality as it actually was" (p. 42).

When the historical romance brings history and fiction to the same realm of experience, the reader finds it difficult to separate the threads of history from the threads of fiction. This happens because, as the psychologist J.J. Gibson observes, "events are perceivable but time is not" (qtd. in Poidevin, 2007, p. 10). When experiences—historical and fictional—are presented in succession of actions they "intimate the passage of time." However, as a "phenomenological paradox" we perceive them as the present. As Poidevin observes, when different experiences such as "perception, memory, belief, emotion, art, and narrative" are presented in fiction, each experience appears to be a part of the present (p. 4).

D. D. Devlin shows how Scott's manner of treating history marks a break with the old traditional conception of history and paves way for the modern conception of history; his observation that "the historical novel need have no historical person, no incident in it need ever 'really' have happened" (1968, p. 75), brings him closer to the modern conception that "the historical is a special case of fictional" (Learner, 1988, p. 12). In Scott, we find an assimilation of historical material to the great tradition of realism. H. Butterfield finds it "a glory;" however, E.A. Freeman strongly criticizes Scott for his historical inaccuracy (Wilson, 1984, p. vii-ix). Scott strongly defends his stance, calling himself the "the author of a modern antique romance" (p. ix). Supporting this view, Feuchtwanger argues: "[The historical novelist is] ... not re-creating history for its own sake but uses the costume or disguise of history as the simplest stylistic means for achieving the illusion of reality...its sole purpose is to enable the reader or the viewer to re-experience the author's immediate experience of history" (Feuchtwanger, 1963, p. 140-142). Lukacs observes: "Scott's novels...marched towards the great heroes in the same way as history itself had done when it required their appearance. The reader, therefore, experiences the historical genesis of the important historical figures, and it is the writer's task from then on to let their actions make them appear the real representatives of these historical crises (p. 39-40). Lukacs also defends the freedom Scott took with the language by dropping the archaic language and using instead the language of his own time for the artistic expression of a "growing historical understanding of the problems of contemporary society" (p. 276).

David Lodge acknowledges some new trends that Scott brought into the novel. He writes: "Scott started a vogue for using quotations, old songs and ballads as epigraphs for chapters - a kind of overt intertextuality." He recognizes two functions of such quotations: "one is thematic," which in his view becomes "components of the plot;" and the other is to "establish the credentials of the authorial narrator as a well-informed and reliable guide to Scottish history, culture and topography" (1992, p. 165).

Scott was aware of the absurdities of chivalrous ways of life; like Cervantes, he was repelled by them. Still, his treatment of romance, and the history of the age of romance, is not simply an attempt to mock the past. This attitude of Scott is manifest in his conception of the character of Brian de Bois Guilbert in *Ivanhoe*. The Templar is consumed with pride, and he is an embodiment of evil. Still, he has something admirable in him. His honour and courage, in a way, compensate for his pride and frenzy. He says to Rebecca: "Many a law, many a commandment have I broken, but my word never" (*Ivanhoe*, p. 252).

Thus Scott places the Templar somewhere between the brutality of the Scottish barons like Front-de-Boeuf and De Bracy and the sterling heroism of Richard Coeur de Lion and *Ivanhoe*. Here Scott reverses "a whole historical tradition of fiction, the line of which begins with Cervantes and which, with his British imitators, Fielding and Smollet, may be said to have established the English novel" (p. 15). A.N. Wilson writes: "*Ivanhoe* stands in a great chain which has its origin in fancy and its end in the transformation of the nineteenth century England" (p. xviii).

In addition to bringing together novel and romance, and romance and history, Scott presents in binary pattern, his "light" and "dark" stereotypical heroines: two traditional stereotypes that have been recognizable since the period of classical antiquity. Magie Tulliver of George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, Hetty of *Adam Bede*, and George Sand's Corinne in *Corinne*, all are fictional re-creations of Scott's stereotype Rebecca. In Scott's stories, the "light" heroine is a virgin heiress whose marriage to the hero reconciles the warring sections of the historical theme. Traditionally, the "dark" lady would be a wife or a mistress whose sexual infidelity allures humans or the hero and takes the kingdom to its fall. Examples of such stereotypes are found in Homer, Shakespeare, Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot, Hardy and many others. Scott, in his fiction, created such stereotypical pairs that provided fresh models for later writers. The three important stereotypical "light"- "dark" pairs that he introduced are Rose Bradwardine and Flora Macivor of *Waverley*, Jeanie and Effie Deans of the *Heart of the Mid-Lothian*, and Rowena and Rebecca of *Ivanhoe*.

#### 4. Modern Traits of Scott's Fiction

Lukacs rightly observed the modern traits of Scott's fiction. In his view, Scott's grasp of the psychology of his people as revealed in his work, as in old epics, and the way he reproduces their lives in their totality are lacking even in works like Flaubert's *Salambo*. Lukacs comments: his [Scott's] is "a world of historically exact 'costumes and decorations,' no more than a pictorial frame within which a purely modern story is unfolded" (p. 224-225). In Lukacs' view, the central role the "world historical individual" plays in the historical process of all periods is an open acknowledgement of the role of Scott's model in the development of the novel as a genre. He points out how Scott's "anti-biographical method" by which he presents the prehistory of his important figures continues into the later realist tradition of fiction in a variety of ways (p. 337). As Lukacs observes, when in a Scott novel the historical hero makes his physical appearance, in Stendhal's *The Red and the Black*, the historical figure Napoleon never appears in person; but his spirit of romantic heroism permeates the entire story. In Balzac, the historical hero makes his presence not as an individual, but in the form of the contemporary bourgeois society; in Flaubert's *Temptation of St. Antony*, there is the Scottian evocation of the bygone age, but no historical hero; whereas in his *Madame Bovary*, Scott's romance lives in Emma's mind. And in Emile Zola's naturalist world, in the background, there is the contemporary society of the Second Empire; but the historical characters are all un-heroic or anti-heroic figures.

The complexity of attitude Scott's fiction exhibits is something that anticipates modern fiction. For instance, in *Ivanhoe*, his treatment of the characters such as Gurth, Wamba, Isaac and Rebecca brings out Scott's sympathetic attitude towards oppressed people. The conversation between the two serfs on how many of the commonest Saxon terms were replaced by the conquerors by their Norman equivalents reveals the psychological conflict between the two races. Similarly, the book reveals two opposing views of the code of chivalry; in chapter 12, page 142 of the novel, he speaks sharply against the chivalric code. The siege of the Castle of Front de Boeuf in chapter 29, which presents an artistic picture of the fight which goes hand in hand with a well-managed discussion on the merits and vices of chivalry is yet another instance; the heated debate on chivalry between Ivanhoe and Rebecca in this chapter brings out the author's complexity of attitude towards the chivalric code. Ivanhoe is the representative of the chivalric code: he possesses a native humanity and love of life as well as heroic chivalric qualities, and his picture is that of the protector of others. However, Rebecca calls chivalry a "demon of vainglory" that brings "sufficient rewards for the sacrifice of every kindly affection, for a life spent miserably that yet may make others miserable" (*Ivanhoe*, p. 317-318).

Here, we find a meeting ground of realism and romance, of two ideologies mutually opposing and entering into an intellectual clash. The clash leads, not to the overthrow of one point of view, rather, it leads to a reconciliation of the two. For Scott, this is the reconciliation of the conflicting social factions. In his fictional world, Saxons and Normans are people in conflict, but in the end, they become a single people. Scott's society leaves room even for the despised Jews. Similarly, when romance would present the ancient rabbins as having acquaintance with occult science, with cabalistic and supernatural arts, Scott attributes their "wonderful cures" to their close acquaintance with the "craft of herbs." By the picture of Isaac the Jew, Scott reverses the Shakespearean conception of Shylock as an avaricious usurer by presenting him as one who is being fed upon by the lazy and gluttonous Saxons and Normans. Lukacs calls Scott's stories "genuine novels;" but, in his view, "Scott does not command the significant, profound psychological dialectics of character which distinguishes the novel of the last great period of bourgeois development" (p. 34).

However, he approves of the kind of change Scott brought into the concept of hero and calls this virtue “a renunciation of Romanticism, a conquest of Romanticism, a higher development of the realist literary traditions of the Enlightenment in keeping with the new times” (qtd. in Devlin, p. 96). And he finds Scott’s objectivity and willingness to sacrifice his political views something that made him a great realist of the kind of Balzac or Tolstoy. On Scott’s narrative strategy, Ina Ferris observes that Scott’s novels were “usually languid in their commencement and abrupt in their close: too slowly opened and too hastily summed up” (1988, p. 73-82). When Scott’s critics strongly condemn his expository writing with too much of authorial intervention and his poor conclusions, Ferris finds it something “central to the form of the historical novel invented by Scott.” In her view, it is by facilitating this “move of the narrative out of known into relatively unknown and uninterrupted historical spaces...that Scott creates the modern historical novel” (p. 74). Ferris quotes Scott’s own analogy between “the progress of a narrative” and that of “a stone rolled down a hill.” “Such a stone,” Scott wrote: “moves at first slowly ... but when it has attained its full impulse, and draws near the conclusion of its career, it smokes and thunders down . . . becoming more furiously rapid in its course when it is nearest to being consigned to rest forever” (p. 70). Here, it is clear that Scott was very careful in the choice of his narrative modes; when he used considerable use of ‘description’ for expository purpose; he used ‘comment’ sparingly in imbedded forms. It seems he was aware that too much of comment spoils a work of art. He used the mode at times, mainly for explaining his persons and places, not for evaluation, discussion, reflection, or philosophical interpretation. He never used this mode to conclude a narrative.

It is the anonymity which Scott attributed to his works that won him the title “the Great Unknown” (Johnson, 1970). John Mullan finds this feature an evidence of Scott’s “creatively useful reticence.” By this method “the author was able to remove from himself” the “first person speaker who is ready with local history, geographical knowledge and antiquarian lore” (Mullan, 2007, p. 27). Hence, Mullan observes: “His [Scott’s] anonymity was a way of turning his personal experience into impersonal fiction (p. 28).

Scott’s narrative strategies show a transition and then a break away from that of his predecessors. For instance, in *Ivanhoe*—his most successful novel-- no doubt, the basic mode of narration is authorial. However, as the story proceeds, the author allows his voice to be superseded by the arguments, explanations and points of view of the important characters. In the novel, initially, the point of view is located in the author; however, it gradually leaves him, and in due course, finds itself located in the consciousness of certain important characters. Scott’s view of chivalry and his picture of the Saxon and Norman races and of the oppressed Jews largely emanates from the consciousness and points of view of his characters. This view seems to be a compromise between what the Saxon chief feels for the race of his oppressors and what the Normans feel towards the oppressed. Scott’s view of chivalry is expressed mainly through the long conversation between Ivanhoe and Rebecca at the time of the final siege. This careful use of internal point of view plays a significant semiotic role in Scott.

## 5. Scott’s Influence

Scott’s new form of fiction won admirers and followers all over the world. He was compared to Dante and held “the equal of Homer and Shakespeare,” and was described as “living mythological personage and ranked among the chief wonders of the world” (Gordon, 1971). Under Scott’s influence, novelists of the nineteenth century, all over the world, tried their hand at the historical novel. Scott’s method of paying close attention to minute details found its way into the works of Balzac, Zola, Flaubert, Tolstoy, and many others. Scott’s novels were in great vogue in France. Legouis remarked in 1971: “If recognition is measured by the debt contracted, that of our country to Scott has no superior. ... A whole chapter of our literary history is to be placed under his name” (Yost, 1985). Victor Hugo called Scott “a man of genius,” and creator of “a genre, without model, and ... as yet no rivals.” Balzac wrote his first signed novel under the banner of Scott, and Alexander Dumas said: he was “thunderstruck on reading *Ivanhoe*.” According to Legouis, Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris*, Delavigne’s *Louis XI*, Balzac’s *Les Chouans*, Merimée’s *Chronique du Temps de Charles IX*, and Dumas’ *Les Trois Mousquetaires* are indebted to Scott. George Sand’s *Mauprat* as a historical novel is found to have “marked resemblances to Scott” (p. 318). Vigny, Merimee, Keratry, Sismondi, Nodier, Soulie, Eugene Sue and Dumas are found to have imitated Scott (Dargan 1934. p. 599-629) And acknowledging the profound admiration for Scott in Russia, Gleb Struve writes: “foreign pilgrims to Abbotsford included a large proportion of Russian writers, diplomats, and soldiers” (Struve, 1950. p. 307).

Mark Twain acknowledged the power of Scott's *Ivanhoe* with a bit of irony. He wrote: "A curious exemplification of the power of a single book for good or harm is shown by the effects wrought by *Don Quixote* and those wrought by *Ivanhoe*. The first swept the world's admiration for this medieval chivalry silliness out of existence; and the other restored it" (Staves, 1972. p. 215). This remark, in spite of its cynicism, acknowledges Scott's work as something that restored the world's admiration for medieval chivalry, and *Ivanhoe* as presenting a fictional world that is fuller and more complex than that of Cervantes. Sidney J. Krause finds the influence of Scott on Mark Twain as well. He observes that Twain's inclusion of the Walter Scott episode and naming the steamboat 'Sir Walter Scott' in the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as a specific instance of Scott's influence on him. He also points out how Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* parodies Scott's passages in *Ivanhoe* (Krause, 1965, p. 228).

Scott had imitators in India too. The Bengali writer Bhudeb Mukherji's *Anguriyavinimay* (1862), the first historical novel in India, is found to be a close imitation of Scott's model. Another Bengali writer, Bankim Chandra Chatterji's *Durgesnandini* (1865) and the Malayalee writer C.V. Raman Pillai's *Marthanda Varma* (1879) also are found to have closely followed the tradition established by Scott. C.V. Raman Pillai himself has acknowledged his indebtedness to Scott. About his novel, he writes: "This book is written with the intention of creating in Malayalam a book on the model of the English literary tradition known as historical romance" (Pillai, 1992, p. 52).

Scott's influence on novels extends much beyond the nineteenth century. Judith Wilt points out how novelists like George Eliot and Virginia Woolf made "wonderfully fertile use of Scott openly, and struggle covertly with that figure at some of the deeper roots of their own visions" and how the "central dilemmas of Scott's young men" lived in the works of Joseph Conrad, Ford Madox Ford and E.M. Forster (Wilt, 1981, p. 462). And he refers to how Scott's heroine in *Ivanhoe*, Rebecca, appears in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* as heroine, and how Thackeray "affected to rescue Rebecca from the underserved obscurity which Scott's novel had provided for by rewarding that 'rashly-formed or ill-assorted' Rebecca gracefully repressing" (p. 463).

The formative presence of Scott may be traced even into "the most individualistic writer Joyce." Scott W. Klein systematically traces the presence of Scott in *Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. At the end of the chapter five of the novel, as Klein observes, the desire that Stephen Dedalus expresses to "forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race" is Joyce's own desire to capture "historical moment" in his work (Klein, 1998, p. 1017) Even when Klein calls Scott "Joyce's particular bete noire," he establishes convincingly that Joyce was much influenced by Scott (p. 1018). To prove his point, he cites several instances from Joyce's works (p. 1019). Klein finds strong echoes of *The Bride* in Joyce's presentation of Stephen Dedalus and points out direct parallels between *The Bride* and the works of Joyce; he finds these parallels extending from the Stephen of *A Portrait* to *Ulysses*. On this point, he observes: "Further, if one follows Stephen beyond the last chapter of *A Portrait* into the opening of *Ulysses*, the parallels between the novels become even more marked" (p. 1020). The parallel, he finds between Stephen and Ravenswood and Haysten and Mulligan of *The Bride* and *Ulysses* respectively. Klein writes:

Both companions wait upon the pleasure of their aunts--Mulligan's closest relative in Joyce, Hayston's great-aunt in Scott, from whom he waits to inherit, and both companions ultimately prove to be betrayers, usurping rights that the protagonist considers his own. These usurpers bear related names. Ravenswood's rival in Scott is better known by his title: he is called 'Bucklaw' throughout the novel, for he is the laird of Bucklaw, much as Malachi Mulligan is known throughout *Ulysses* by his nickname, 'Buck,' with the same suggestion of flaunted political and familial conventions. (p. 1020) Klein asks: "How can we begin to explain these connections, without special pleading for yet another 'source' for Joyce?" (p.1021)

## 6. The evolution of the genre

George Lukacs' theory of the evolution of literature and the rise of the novel as a genre--"a product of a world in which all the models have disappeared"—sheds much light on the role of Scott's fiction in the formation of the modern novel (Bernstein, 1968, p. 155). His view of the evolution of literature as a "spiraling historical movement" clearly delineates the origin of the historical novel. In this connection, John Frown writes: "Two kinds of historical movements are implied in this account: a continuous development passing through a series of phases, and a movement of disappearance followed by reemergence in a modified form.

These two modalities are not exclusive: a form of cyclical repetition is being overlaid on a linear sequence, and what this means is that Lukacs is thinking in terms of a spiraling historical movement. (1986, p. 10) The above observation clearly illustrates how a new genre takes shape. I use figure 1 to represent the above view on the formation the new genre. The spiral represents the linear progression of literature, and each vertical movement on its course represents the evolution of genres. Figure 2, a segment of the spiral, represents Scott's genre.

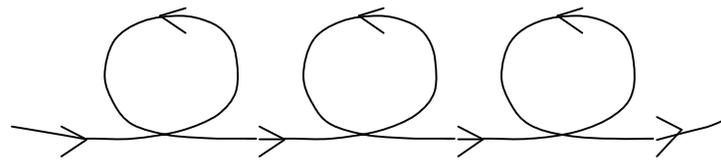


Figure 1

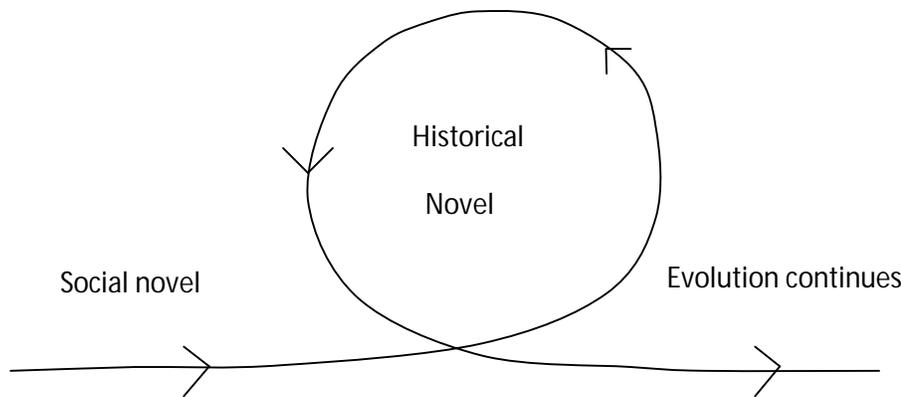


Figure 2

Lukacs perceived clearly the processes involved in the formation of the historical novel. He writes: ...its classical form arises out of the great social novel and then, enriched by a conscious historical attitude, flows back into the latter. On the one hand, the development of the social novel first makes possible the historical novel; on the other, the historical novel transforms the social novel into genuine history of the present, an authentic history of manners, something which the novel of the eighteenth century was already striving for in the works of its most eminent representatives. (p. 200) I use Figure 3 and Figure 4 to illustrate how the social novel of Richardson and Fielding, in the hands of Scott, gets "enriched by a conscious historical attitude," "flows back" and combines into its frame history, realism and romance, and then transforms the social novel into a "genuine history of the present" and "an authentic history of manners." It is this new form, which we find in the classical form of the novel-- of writers like Balzac, Stendhal, Flaubert and Tolstoy-- which in turn gets transformed into the modern novel.

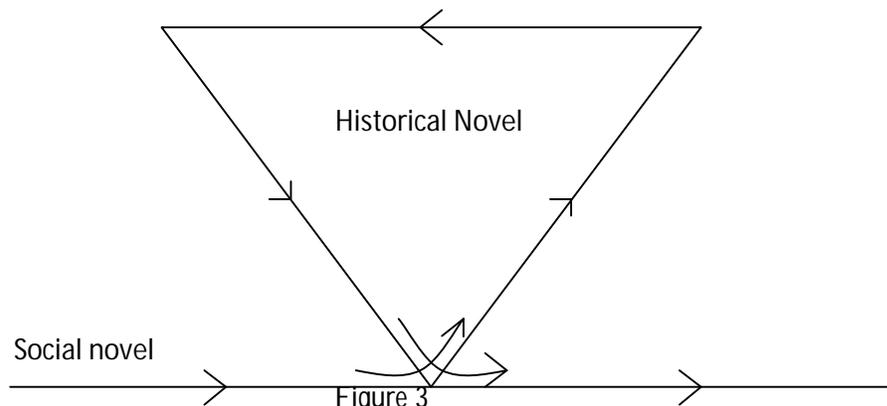


Figure 3

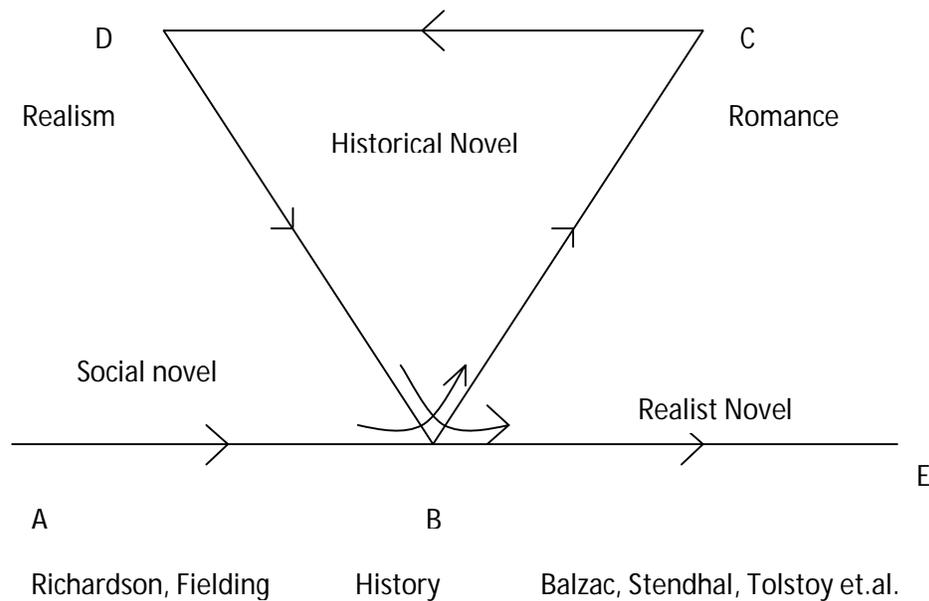


Figure 4

## 7. Conclusion

The historical novel which Scott “invented” (Leubering, *Britannica Guide*, 2010), by virtue of its highly inclusive and composite fictional world, became a great repertoire of fictional possibilities for future writers. Scott’s wonderful grasp of the psychology of his characters, his anti-biographical method, the change he brought into the concept of the hero, the way he deviated from traditional narrative strategies by initiating a transition from the authorial mode of narration to the point-of-view method that explored the consciousness and impersonalized the experiences of the characters, his dropping of the archaic language for dealing with things ancient, the vogue of intertextuality he started by using quotations, epigraphs etc for different chapters, and the sympathetic attitude he exhibited towards oppressed people, influenced writers all over the world.

Under the influence of his new form of fiction, the Victorian novel took shape as “historical novel about the present” and his description of “the whole ‘way of life’ of ordinary people” had a “profound effect on the subsequent development of prose fiction” (1992, p. 131). His admirers successfully imitated his “procedures - in narrative technique, in characterization, in description, in methods of exposition, in the place given to dialogue, and so forth” (Haggis, 1973, p. 51), and set the stage for the twentieth century novel. With the kind of strong formative influence his genre exerted on the novelists of the nineteenth century in England, France, Russia, America, Germany and India, and on all the major writers of the twentieth century such as Joseph Conrad, Ford Madox Ford, E.M. Forster, Virginia Woolf and even “the most individualistic James Joyce,” “Sir Walter Scott: the Great Unknown,” deserves the distinctiveness as the precursor of the modern novel.

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