Chapter Two

Wherein Are the Origins?

Whether the novel is a bourgeois creation or a descendent of Renaissance prose fiction, or whether it is a progeny of the Romance or of the Epic, is still a dispute. This question, with no less emphasis, applies to the historical novel as well. Many critics have attempted to give insight into this issue; still, the answer remains a vague one.

Modern criticism has a tendency to divorce realism from romance. However, critics of earlier period were not comfortable with this separation. George Saintsbury held the view that "the separation of romance and novel--of the story of incident and the story of character and motive--is a mistake logically and psychologically" (The English Novel 24). Sir Walter Raleigh also had understood the problem involved in the separation of romance and novel. He acknowledged the influence of romance on the novel, and observed that after the romantic revival, the romance eclipsed the novel by accommodating "all the strengths of the novel, comedy and realism, reflection and humour, as auxiliaries to the more purely poetical virtue of the main story" (276-77). It is for the same reason that Wilson Follet finds the difference between romance and novel in their content, not in their mode of expression (The Modern Novel 61). Arnold Kettle's thesis regarding the origin of the novel also establishes this view. His view is that the novel arose "as a realistic reaction to the medieval romance and its courtly descendants of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the eighteenth century novels are nearly all anti-romances" (An
Eighteenth century critics of romance detected a slow progression from romance to novel. Clara Reeve, in her book, *The Progression of Romance* (1785), expressed the view that it was a change in the taste of the reader that made the romance decline and the novel come up. The rise of literary criticism engendered a new 'historical sense' which, in turn, brought about a sense of change and development in history. The new historical sense also embodied a sense of national identity. Under the influence of the new historical sense, the old genre approximated itself closer to reality and credibility. The slow progression from romance to novel marks a moving away from the unreal and the incredible in the direction of the real and the credible. Rene Wellek traces the awakening of this new historical sense to the middle of the eighteenth century and recognizes it as an attitude emerging from a renaissance conception of progress (*History of Modern Criticism*, 1: 24). The new sense of national identity did not renounce the tradition of Greece and Italy. Samuel Daniel, in 'A Defense of Rhyme' (1607), argues that "all our understandings are not to be built by the square of Greece and Italy." (*Elizabethan Critical Essays* 2: 364). The practice of following the line of the ancients, he found, unpatriotic and linguistically unnatural. Similarly, Ben Jonson, in spite of his great admiration for Aristotle as a great philosopher, wrote of him: "nothing is more ridiculous than to make an author a dictator as the schooles have done Aristotle." (*The Historical Point of View in English Literary Criticism* 74). In all these
views one can find a demand for artistic independence and a distinct national character in literature. We find an extension of this view in Francis Bacon's *De Argumentis* (1623). However, in Thomas Rymer's *Tragedies of the Past Age Considered and Examined by the Practice of the Ancients and by the Common Sense of All Ages* (1678), and in William Temple's essays on *Ancient and Modern Learning. Poetry and Heroic Virtue* (1690), we find a determination to stand up by the ancients and their rules. Addison in his *Spectator* (No 409) condemns rules. Even Alexander Pope, the leader and spokesman of the Neoclassical rule, admits that "to judge Shakespeare by Aristotle's rules, is like trying a man by the laws of one country, who acted under those of another" (*Shakespeare: The Critical Heritage* 406). It is in this sense of unease with strict rules that Wellek finds a turning point in criticism. This new sense shows the emergence of a historical sense in criticism. Gillian Beer's observations have been a major breakthrough in tracing the origin of the novel. He views the realist novel as a "mutation of the romance rather than as replacing it" (*The Romance* 47). Beer makes the following observations on the history of the Romance genre:

The Romance was an important genre in English literature in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; in the Elizabethan period; in the eighteenth century, with its gradual polarization of the romance and the novel. The Gothic romance and the romantic movement gave new significance to the form, and in the nineteenth century the romance was developed as
a challenge to the deterministic French novel as well as being revived intact by the Pre-Raphaelites. (6)

Beer, in his book, identifies two major types of romance—"aristocratic and popular." The distinction between the two, he finds, not in their theme, but in their scale. He identifies the former as a large-scale work composed of many narrative threads, and the latter as far more simple, telling a single story. He points out two important turning points in the history of this genre—the publication of Shelton's translation of Cervantes's Don Quixote in 1612 and 1620, and the romantic revival. Cervantes's parody of romance, presented by means of the burlesque adventures of Don Quixote, points out the conflict between the world of romance and the real world. In all literary genres of the later period we can find the properties of Romance turning up. Beer, in the following passage, identifies the properties of the genre:

... the theme of love and adventure, a certain withdrawal from their own societies on the part of both reader and romance hero, profuse sensuous detail, simplified characters (often with a suggestion of allegorical significance), a serene intermingling of the unexpected and the everyday, a complex and prolonged succession of incidents usually without a single climax, a happy ending, amplitude of proportions, a strongly enforced code of conduct to which all the characters must comply. (10)

In seventeenth century literature Beer finds the romance form sur-
viving in three forms—the aristocratic French romance, religious allegory, and criminal romances, which, later, Defoe made use of for his fiction. By the middle of the eighteenth century the romance form came to be looked upon as a thing of the past, as a pernicious influence on the novel. However, in spite of the tendency to renounce the 'romance,' the genre continued to exert great influence on eighteenth century novelists, and it still continues to have its hold on the modern novel. Cervantes and the eighteenth century novelists—Defoe, Smollet, Richardson and Fielding—are generally believed to have condemned the romance. Still, one would detect in all these writers, not a mere condemnation of romance, but an interplay of realism and romance. Beer calls Don Quixote “the most famous victim of the deluding power of romance” (41); at the same time, he points out Cervantes's work as the best instance of all kinds of fiction partaking the features of romance. He finds in Milton's Paradise Lost the use of the language of chivalric romance. According to him, John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress (1678) is a "reinterpretation of romance motifs in terms of religious allegory" (49). Similarly, one cannot help acknowledging the picaresque features of the journey of Fielding's Tom Jones. Likewise, the startling turns in the life of Moll Flanders reveal the influence of romance tradition. Thus the romance continues to be an archetype in literature. The influence of this archetype may be excavated from classical myths, Greek romances, European folks that are numerous, and from many medieval and renaissance works. In the course of literary history this archetype made alliance with magic and supersti-
tion, with religions, with history and then with contemporary society. The history of the evolution of literature is thus a history of alliances and divorces of the romance archetype. In the writers of nineteenth and twentieth centuries such as Stendhal, Flaubert, Kafka, Woolf and Joyce, one can find the romance tradition continuing in disguise. The following extract from Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary* may be taken as illustration:

[The romances] were all about love and lovers, damsels in distress swooning in lonely lodges, postillions slaughtered all along the road, horses ridden to death on every page, gloomy forests, troubles of the heart, vows, sobs, tears, kisses, rowing-boats in moonlight... gentlemen as brave as lions and gentle as lambs, too virtuous to be true, and weeping like fountains. And so for six months of her sixteen years, Emma soiled her hands with refuse of the old lending libraries. Coming later to Sir Walter Scott, she conceived a passion for the historical and dreamed of oak chests, guard rooms, minstrels. (50)

In modern fiction, the principal romance signals—dragon killing, wandering of the hero through the forest, the hero’s getting lost in wilderness, travel, disguise—all are present. However, in them, these romance signals may be confined to the dreams or imagination of the character. In science fiction, the hero may travel to other planets or into the past or the future.

However, with the decline of its popularity, the romance genre has
been dropped from the concerns of the novel. Gillian Beer's view of the realist novel as a "mutation of the romance rather than as replacing it" coincides with Scott's own view of the Gothic novel as a combination of the romance with the modern novel. In his Introduction to Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (John Bellantine's edition of 1811), Scott remarks:

> [Walpole's object was] to unite the marvellous turn of incidents and imposing tone of chivalry, exhibited in the ancient romance with that accurate display of human character and contrast of feelings and passions which is, or ought to be, delineated in the modern novel... (qtd. in Beer 64).

Earnest A. Baker places the historical romance at the end of a long continuous progression. This progression passes from the dimly remembered facts recorded by historian or romancer, through the more formalized kinds of the romance cycles such as the Arthurian and Charlemagne cycles, through their prose redactions such as Malory's *Morte D'Arthur* (1485), and through the Elizabethan pastoral romances. However, Baker, in his book, does not recognize the conflict which necessitated the emergence of the novel from the romance tradition. Thus the romance is 'a perdurable pattern' in prose fiction. Then what are the principal factors that facilitated the development of the historical romance? The answer to this question centres around a new historical sense and a new desire to return to the Middle Ages.

The new historical sense is visible in many major works of the
second half of the eighteenth century such as Edward Young's *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759), Thomas Warton's *Observations on the Fairy Queen of Spenser* (1754) and Bishop Richard Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762). It is this historical sense that considerably influenced the development of the historical romance; Sir Walter Scott definitely owes something to it.

The new genre that Scott brought into the literary arena tempered all the excesses of the French heroic romance with realistic details. It inculcated in readers an interest in history, and made a new assessment of the possibilities of romance. The form of chivalric romance that Malory's *Morte D' Arthur* and the Spanish cycle imported into England from France, by way of translations, was almost an adventure story, much like a biographical chronicle, profuse in myths and legends. The idealization and allegorization of characters which was an essential feature of the form found its way also into the Arcadian romances. This quality continued also into Euphistic romances of the kind of Lyly's *Eupheus* (1578-80). In all these forms, there is an idealizing strain. This idealizing strain points to a connection between the French heroic romance and the nineteenth century historical romance.

The history of the French heroic romance shows another line of progression—the comic-satiric mode in which the idealized heroes are replaced by their comic and immoral counterparts—as in Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* and Petronius's *Satiricon*. Works such as Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1627) represent another mode in this progression which
introduces situations and persons that are political and allegorical. Here we find a realistic trend gradually taking shape within the genre.

Nineteenth century historical romance manifests certain interesting trends—romantic antiquarianism and archaeology and historical genre painting. With historicism comes a belief in the emotions of the individual and in the irrational factors that influenced the formation of the individual. This new attitude also involves the application of scientific methods of thought. For Friedrich Meinecke, this new outlook is “far more than simply the application of the scientific method of thought. The essence of historicism is the substitution of a process of individualizing observation for a generalizing view of human forces in history” (*Historicism: The Rise of a New Historical Outlook*, iv).

The historicism of the historical romance is much indebted to Goethe and his historical drama *Goetz von Berlichingen* (1772). The chief historical source for Goethe’s drama was the memoir written by a German Baron who was a free Knight of the Holy Roman Empire at the time of the Peasants’ War. The play has many more things in common with Scott’s *Ivanhoe*. The Knight, Goetz, is an anachronistic figure, and he is in conflict with the worldly Renaissance bishops and merchants of the new German society. As the conflict progresses, it brings into the fictional frame the legendary hero Robin Hood and the miseries of the civil war. Scott made this paradigm available to the world in the medium of prose fiction. As Dekker writes, it was Goethe who first understood that “the truly great events of history were not changes in dynasty, but shifts in
economic, social, religious, and political structures" (51). Dekker thus concludes: "I believe that no Shakespearean play had, or could have had, the kind of impact on the historical romance that Goetz had on the Waverley novels of the succeeding generation" (54).

It is interesting to know what fills the gap between Scott's translation of Goethe's Goetz and his own writing of historical romances. During this interval, Scott made his literary reputation mainly by means of his popular heroic narrative poems such as The Lay of the Last Minstrel (1805), Marmion (1808), and The Lady of the Lake (1810). These heroic narrative poems were followed by his historical drama Halidon Hill (1822). This play conforms more to the narrative than to the dramatic mode, may be because it was intended mainly to be read and not to be enacted. Here, one cannot forget the fact that when Scott wrote this historical drama the historical plays of Shakespeare were popular among the reading public and many important writers of this period were following the tradition set by Shakespeare. While attempting to trace the development of the historical romance, one cannot ignore Scott's indebtedness to Shakespeare: Ivanhoe includes many of the then popular themes of Shakespearean plays. The theme of the traditionally maligned Jew in Ivanhoe, undoubtedly, bears similarity to the Jew of the Shakespearean play. This view helps one understand better how epic and dramatic elements came into the narrative frame of Scott's work. In Scott's historical romance one can find an attempt to revive the epic tradition by making it adapt to the changed social and literary traditions.
Scott's historical romance, like the Epic in general, observes "mimetic fidelity to nature," it contains the elements of romance and it is the "portrait of a whole community" (Dekker 55).

Georg Lukács, in his discussion of the historical drama and the novel, tries to draw the distinction between the two clearly. In his view, both epic (or novel) and drama portray the "totality of life," but the epic demands "an artistic image of human society which produces and reproduces itself in the same way as the daily process of life," while the drama "generalizes a typical fact of life and makes of it an intense experience" (The Historical Novel 92-99). The "world historical figure" with dramatic potential is destined to be the "central figure" in the drama. However, the drama deals with "inner" psychological truth and the novel with external social truth. While the drama takes as its hero a historical character, the novel must choose a fictional character upon whom the forces of history can act. To bring out the distinction between the two forms of literature, Lukács draws the following passage from the writings of Otto Ludwig:

If one were to think of Lear as a novel, then Edgar would probably have to be the hero... If, on the other hand, one wanted to turn Rob Roy into a drama, then Rob Roy himself would have to be the hero, but the story would have to be considerably changed, Francis Osbaldiston would have to be omitted entirely. (qtd. in The Historical Novel 149-50)

Lukács calls the novel "the epic of modernity." Still, he finds re-
markable difference between the epic and the novel. When, in the epic, the events are "always already formed," and when its world is a "bounded" one, the novel lacks all such limits; it presents an unbounded world. The novel which is "a representation of a developmental process" is always threatened by a "bad infinity." It is the forms in the novel that counter this threat. Of its two forms, "outward" and "inner," the former is responsible for the biographical nature of the novel with its "temporal ordering" which makes it a life history with "beginning" and "ends." This life history that traces the development of a man is the "outer" form of the novel. The "inner" form is the process of the problematic individual's journeying towards himself. This individual becomes "problematic" because he does not know who he is and with the progress of the novel he has to discover himself creatively. Here, the "problematic" nature of the individual becomes the basic condition for the writer to trace his life in the context of his "social marginality" (The Philosophy of the Novel 147-51). This problematic nature of the individual and things associated with him is an important feature of the historical romance.

The epithet 'epic' often applied to Henry Fielding's Joseph Andrews (1742) may be better applied to Scott's historical romance. Of the epic dimension of historical romance, especially of Ivanhoe, William Gilmore Simms writes:

The modern romance is the substitute which the people of the present day offer for the ancient epic. The form is changed; at all events, it differs much more seriously from
the English novel than it does from the epic and the drama, because the difference is one of material, even more than of fabrication. The reader who, reading Ivanhoe, keeps Richardson and Fielding beside him, will be at fault in every step of his progress. (The Yamassee 5-6)

It was W.P. Ker who has given the best scholarly account of the world of epic and romance in his book Epic and Romance (1896). He described the epic as a form that is “more inclusive” than the romance. For him chivalric romance presents marvellous adventures of but one social class, whereas the epic is much more inclusive which “could contain romance, but romance could not contain epic” (367). Ker writes: “Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde is the poem in which medieval romance passes out of itself into the form of the modern novel. What Cervantes and what Fielding did was done first by Chaucer” (367). Thus the novel emerges as a form which has in it the substance of both epic and romance.

Enlightenment history was grounded mainly on the methods of natural science for the study of man and society. Scientific reasoning became skeptical about the existing traditions and institutions. This mistrust that reason brought about compelled the enlightenment thinkers to make generalizations about human nature: they found no natural difference between men. Scott also shared this attitude. His Ivanhoe does not renounce even the traditionally maligned Jew; the novel ends with a reconciliation between Saxons and Normans. This tradition connects the modern man with his ancestors, and with men of all nationalities of all ages and climes.
Historical romance shows a close connection between history and fiction. Many nineteenth century critics and reviewers held that the historical romancer should compensate history’s literary inadequacy by his imagination. Macaulay strongly believed that the interesting details of historical romances are worthy of being elements of historical narratives. R.G. Collingwood calls history “a re-enactment of the past in the mind of the historian” (The Idea of History 164-65). According to W.B. Gallie, the historical romance which is only another kind of story must approximate the same methods which history makes use of. J.A. Froud, in “The Sense of History,” insists that “history should be written like drama” (Short Studies in Great Subjects 12). He writes: “let us not be told about this man or that. Let us hear the man himself speak; let us see him act, and let us be told to form our own opinion about him” (34).

The very name of the genre, historical romance, would make one concerned about the history in it. Scott’s new kind of novel which mixed ‘history’ and ‘story,’ made critics worry about the amount of history in historical romances, its general nature and the proportion between history and fiction in them. The general agreement among the representatives of the genre is that to be historical, a historical romance must have at least one historical figure in it who made a name for himself in history. Harry Shaw, in his book The Forms of Historical Fiction, differentiates ‘historical novels’ from the novels of ‘recent past’ (38). For him, Henry Esmond is a historical novel whereas Vanity Fair is a “novel
of the recent past" and hence not a member of the genre. Can the measurement of a book's remoteness alone be a criterion for deciding its 'historical' status when modern narratology obliterates the distinction between the historical and the fictional?

From the very beginning Romance incorporated into its world history and realistic details. Its main object was not a fictional re-creation of human experience, but to have an insight into that experience through artistic detachment. John C. Stubbs expresses this view in his book The Pursuit of Form: A Study of Hawthorne and the Romance:

The nineteenth century romancer's professed goal was to order the random happenings of experience into artful patterns so that the reader could comprehend the experience either intellectually or emotionally... an approach much more ordered, much more patterned than the reader's chaotic meeting with experience in his daily life, or even in the novel. (6)

Sociological explanations about the novel's origin marks another breakthrough in the study of the origin of the historical romance. "Novel as bourgeois literature" theories link genres to certain period and class. It was Georg Lukacs who made the most noteworthy remarks on the background of the historical novel. He described the novel as bourgeois creation--"a product of a world in which all the models have disappeared" (qtd. in Bernstein 155). He observed that the historical novel arose as a genre at about the time of Napoleon's collapse (The
Historical Novel 15). This observation establishes a historical basis for Scott’s novels. History writing, as he observes, was an ideological preparation for the French Revolution, and it was the Revolution and Napoleon’s rise and fall that “made history a mass experience.” The new concept of progress the revolution brought about, wished to preserve the achievements of the revolution. This view considers Scott as a champion of the cause of human progress who found in English history a “consolation that the most violent vicissitudes of class struggle have always finally calmed down into a glorious ‘middle way’” (31). Lukacs writes “Thus, out of the struggle of the Saxons and Normans there arose the English nation, neither Saxon nor Norman” (31). However, George Dekker criticizes Lukacs for exaggerating the gap between the historical novel of Scott and the historical drama of Shakespeare, and for ignoring the rise of historicist thought in pre-revolutionary Scotland and Germany. Dekker writes: “He [Lukacs] largely ignores the rise of historicist thought in pre-revolutionary Scotland and Germany and exaggerates the gap between the historical novel of Scott and the Historical drama of Shakespeare and eighteenth century Shakespearean imitators” (10).

Near the end of his life Scott turned temporarily from historical subject to research: the result is the monumental work, Life of Napoleon Bonaparte. This great work of Scott took for its subject the great struggle between the forces of progress and reaction—the French Revolution. Scott, in this book, in addition to narrating the principal events
taking place in Paris, also describes and reviews their consequences for England, France and America. It is the counter-revolutionary French guerrilla campaigns that Scott describes in his book that form the subject of Balzac's novel *The Chouans*.

In his first novel Scott presented a model of revolutionary or imperialistic conflict that results in the overthrow of a heroic society by the modern post-feudal state. The 'heroic' society may be a 'primitive' or 'aristocratic' one which observes certain traditional values and memorializes its heroic deeds in sagas and epic poems. For the historical romancer this is an ideal society that has existed for a long period unfragmented. This ideal society is later being invaded and occupied by a new alien civilization. This conflict is carried on with a simultaneous progression of a "progressivist" social philosophy (Dekker 42). The general tone of the narrative favours the defeated party." This happens, probably, because of the writer's being skeptical about the blessings of progress and conscious about the cost of colonizations and revolutions. Thus the historical romances of Scott's tradition deal with the causes and effects of revolution and imperialism. The theme takes relevance in all places and in all times.

The fact that he was setting a new model of fiction, probably, was not clear to Scott himself when he wrote his *Waverley*. The treatment of similar subjects in the books that followed--*Guy Mannering* (1815), *The Antiquary* (1816), and the sequence of novels dealing with the history of the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century Scot-
land—Old Mortality (1816), Rob Roy (1817), The Heart of the Midlothian (1818), and The Bride of Lammermoor (1819)—made it clear to Scott that he was setting a new model which dealt not simply with the struggles between Jacobites and Hanoverians, but with the kind of conflicts for which there are numerous instances in the recent history of other countries. Thus Scott's novel assumed a pattern that has universal applicability and adaptability. In this new mode of writing Scott's primary concern was not with the great leaders and the high political intrigues and battles, but with the way these leaders and conflicts influenced the common people and were influenced by them. Thus he was more concerned about looking into the causes of revolutions rather than merely attempting a description of them.

Writers like Donald Davie, Avrom Fleishman and Harry Shaw considerably fill the gaps in Lukacs's theory of the development of the genre. These three writers contributed their views not only on the political and the sociological aspects of the genre, but on its social, intellectual and thematic aspects as well.6

Scott's blending of elements of romance with historical subject can be considered as a bringing together of the old and the new seeking a "middle way." This blending of diverse elements is the reason for the 'oxymoronic' nature of his work.7

The evolution of literature cannot be independent of the evolution of the society. Thinkers who have attempted to formulate theories of social change have always been divided between two different ideas of
social change—the idea of progress taking place in a trajectory and the idea of it taking place in an orbit or a cycle. The former theory considers the process of social change as something that does not return to itself: "... one of improvement; a tendency towards a better and a happier state." The pessimism of this view was questioned by many who found the social change as a negative force that brings diminution of wealth, status and power. It is interesting to note how this "trajectory" theory has influenced the development of the historical romance and its practitioners.

Speaking in general, for philosophical historians—to name a few, Adam Ferguson, William Robertson and Dugald Stewart—social change takes place mainly through four stages, each of which is associated with a certain mode of subsistence (a) a “savage” stage of hunting and fishing (b) a “barbarian” stage of herding (c) a “civilized” stage of agriculture and (d) a stage of commerce and manufacturing (Dekker 75). This theory of social change in four stages is known as “stadialist theory.” Works like Ferguson’s *An Essay on the History of French Society* (1767) show interest in primitive literature and lives of savages. However, the second stage of development, the stage of “barbarians” was the main interest of many philosophical historians. The principal literary sources that brought information on the lives and actions of the barbarians were Hebrew scriptures and the writings of Homer. Many writers considered these sources as a world of cultural totality and attempted to understand this world from the points of view of Homer or the writ-
ers of Hebrew scriptures. Their imaginative exercises which were attempts to 'humanize' their barbarian world became a source of historical fiction which is inauthentic in its particulars, but realistic and "historistic" in its general spirit. The following words of Thomas Jefferson provide a fairly comprehensive formulation of the stadialist thesis:

Let a philosophic observer commence a journey from the savages of the Rocky Mountains, eastwardly towards our seacoast. These he would observe in the earliest stage of association living under no law but that of nature, subsisting and covering themselves with the flesh and skins of wild beasts. He would next find those on our frontiers in the pastoral state, raising domestic animals to supply the defects of hunting. Then succeed our own semi-barbarous citizens, the pioneers of the advance of civilization. And I have observed this march of civilization advancing from the seacoast, passing over us like a cloud of light, increasing our knowledge and improving our conditions. And where this process will stop no one can say. Barbarism has, in the meantime, been receding before the steady step of amelioration; and will in time, I trust, disappear from the earth. (qtd. in Dekker 81-82)

We have Scott's own words to testify to his stadialist inclination. He writes:

The history of colonies has in it some points of peculiar
interest as illustrating human nature. On such occasions the extremes of civilized and savage life are suddenly and strongly brought into contact with each other and the results are as interesting to the moral observer as those which take place on the mixture of chemical substances are to the physical investigator (qtd. in Dekker 91)

Scott found Goethe's "barbarian" world of Goetz, the portrait of German feudal society, an image of the Scottish rival border clans. The cultural likeness which Scott found between the Scottish life and the German Feudal life was not a mere accident or a mere surface level similarity, rather it was "outward signs of an inner identity of mind and spirit" (77). The other historical romancers of Scott's tradition found in Scott similar "signs of an inner identity of mind and spirit." It is this 'identity' that brings different writers of different nationalities on to a single literary platform. Each historical romancer who is a novelist and a "cultural-nationalist" shared this identity of Scott; he combined in his work this identity that is something "universal" with something "local." Hence the principal difference between two historical romancers of two different nationalities would be the difference in the "local" aspects of their work; it is the "universal" that brings them together.

Lukacs finds the evolution of literature a "spiraling historical movement." In this connection John Frow 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 re-emergence 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. (Marxism and Literary History 10)

Lukacs expresses his view on the development of the historical novel in the following passage

...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. (The Historical Novel 200)

Lukacs's view on how historicism became 'pseudo-historical' with the fall of Napoleon also sheds some light into the origin of the historical romance (24). The fall of Napoleon made a reactionary tendency to oppose the ideals of the revolution. This reactionary tendency expressed itself in an attempt to sweep out from history many events related to the revolution. Lukacs finds in this 'pseudo-historicism' a desire to return to the Middle Ages.
Is the ‘novel as a bourgeois creation’ theory fully acceptable? Is it acceptable that the novel sprang into being suddenly in the eighteenth century? A close analysis of the works of Richardson and Fielding that are generally called ‘new’ would reveal that they are reshapings of some pre-existing fictional possibilities. Fielding’s ‘comic epic’ in prose was inspired by Petronius’s *Satyricon* and it was a successful attempt to bring into its fictional frame diverse traditions of fiction. Richardson himself has claimed that he had invented a "new species of writing" (*Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson* 41). One of Richardson’s professed aims in writing *Pamela* was to decry “such novels and romances as have a tendency to inflame and corrupt” (46-47). But Richardson’s method of decrying them, knowingly or unknowingly, partook many romance elements. He writes: “I am endeavouring to write a Story, which shall catch young and airy minds, and when Passions run high in them, to show how they may be directed to laudable Meanings and Purposes in order to decry such Novels and Romances” (46-47). But the method of catching the readers of conventional romances made Richardson adhere to the conventional formula of romance. Then what was ‘new’ in Richardson? As Richardson himself has claimed, his main object was to inculcate virtue in his readers. But the writers of fiction who wrote years before Richardson had made such claims.

Northrop Frye in his *Anatomy* repudiates the "novel as a bourgeois creation" theory. He writes:

The literary historian who identifies fiction with the novel is
greatly embarrassed by the length of time that the world managed to get along with the novel, and until he reaches his great deliverance in Defoe, his perspective is intolerably cramped. (303)

The view of Hubert McDermott in this regard is almost an extension of Frye's view. He observes that "fiction has developed from Homer along a continuum on which, undoubtedly, the novels of Fielding and Richardson represent a distinct highlight, but not a separate beginning" (Novel and Romance: The Odyssey to Tom Jones xi).

Hubert McDermott finds epic the "prototype of all narrative forms" and hence traces the origin of the novel back to the Epic. He argues that the novel is a successor of the ancient Epic. For him the romance is only a stage in the progression from epic to novel. The progression from epic to romance, he finds, a product of the progression of the human society from a closed state to an open state. In his theory the closed society represents the society in an age of faith and belief and the open society, one in a later anxiety-ridden chaotic age. The view implies that the Epic is the literary form of an "ancient value-based society," whereas the novel came up in the later anxiety-ridden chaotic society (3).

The following is an attempt to recapitulate the main points of this discussion, which, together, would formulate a theory of the development of the historical romance.

1. The novel is a successor of the ancient Epic
2. The theory of the development of literature involves a slow
progression from the romance to the novel.

3. The realist novel is a "mutation of the romance rather than as replacing it."

4. The development of criticism brought forth a new 'historical sense' under the influence of which the romance approximated itself closer to reality and credibility.

5. The historical novel arose at about the time of Napoleon's collapse and it wished to preserve the achievements of the revolution.

6. The evolution of literature shows a "spiraling historical movement" which involves "a form of cyclical repetition being overlaid on a linear sequence."

7. The evolution at first makes possible the historical novel and then it gets transformed into a genuine history of the present.

8. The classical form of the historical novel "arises out of the great social novel and then enriched by a conscious historical attitude flows back into the latter."

9. It shows a tendency to return to the Middle Ages.

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic representation of the theory. This figure shows the process of cyclical repetition that is being overlaid on a linear sequence. Figure 2 shows a single segment of figure 1; it represents the development of the historical novel. On applying the principle of triangulation of structuralist methodology on figure 2 we get figure 3. When we incorporate into this the other views regarding the development of the historical novel we arrive at figure 4.
In figure 4, line AB represents the social novel and the point B, history, represents the historical period that witnessed the birth of the genre. Point C stands for ‘romance’ and side BC represents the return of the social novel to romance. Point D represents realism, and side CD stands for the interaction between romance and realism. Side DB represents the historical novel’s getting enriched by a conscious historical attitude and BE represents the nineteenth century realist novel that deals with the contemporary society.

To conclude, we find the nineteenth century a meeting ground where history and literature reached a critical point in their interaction. Here, aided by a ‘historical sense’ and the rise of historicism, in Scott, the classical form of the historical novel provided a rendezvous for realism and romance.
Notes


4 This notion is the cornerstone of W.B Gallie's *Philosophy and Historical Understanding* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1964)


7 George Dekker makes these observations on Scott’s historical romances in the chapter titled ‘A Prospectus’ of his book *The American Historical Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990).

9 *The American Historical Romance* 73-78.