Chapter Four
Towards a Theory of Fictional Modes

Studies of the universal elements of narrative, and discriminations and comparisons of literary works based on such studies, are generally grouped under structuralist poetics. Of the two different aspects of structuralist poetics—micropoetics and macropoetics—only the latter one has been considered here. The most significant study of macropoetics of fiction, in recent years, has been Northrop Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism* (1971). Frye, in his book, makes an attempt to organize a system of narrative genres. His attempt at systematization of narrative genres illustrates the major difficulties and advantages of ‘generic structuralism.’

Austen Warren’s article, “The Nature and Modes of Narrative Fiction,” is an attempt at reducing literature to an intelligible order. He points out the status of the novel as a “new genre” and the problem of the poor quality and quantity of criticism concerned about it. His view is that “literature must always be interesting; it must always have a structure and aesthetic purpose, a total coherence and effect,” and that it should stand in “recognizable relation to life” (*Approaches to Novel* 5-6). For him the relation of life to literature is various: in literature life can be heightened or burlesqued or antithetized.

The two important generic systems relating to fiction, formulated by Frye, are the system of ‘modes’ and the system of ‘forms.’ He organizes his system of modes according to the ‘hero’s power of action’ in relation to other men and their environment. Of the nine modes of his
system he actualizes the following five possibilities:

1. myth (the hero superior in kind to both other men and their environment).
2. romance (superior in degree to both).
3. High mimesis (superior in degree to men but not to their environment).
4. Low mimesis (superior in no way).
5. Irony (inferior). (Anatomy 33-34)

Frye's conception of fictional modes makes many traditionally used literary terms such as 'romantic' and 'realistic' more flexible. Here, these terms are used not to designate any particular work or group of works; they only illustrate certain tendencies in literature. Many modes may enter into a curious mixture in a single literary work. These modes which we identify in the present day literature may also be traced back in to the literature of the past. Thus Chaucer, while being a medieval poet specializing mainly in romance ('romance' constitutes the underlying tonality of his work), at times reveals 'low mimetic' and 'ironic' modes.

Frye's theory, nevertheless, fails to classify many works of fiction systematically. His theory of 'continuous forms' also poses some difficulty for critics. For example, the distinction he finds between novel and romance (the novel as "extroverted and personal," and the romance as "introverted and personal") fails to find consistent application (Anatomy 308). Here, it is not clarified whether the extroverted-introverted dis-
tinction applies to the character or the point of view.

With the birth of romanticism, the term romance becomes a literary quality rather than a literary genre. This tendency influences other literary terms such as ‘realism,’ ‘irony,’ ‘picaresque,’ ‘comedy,’ ‘tragedy’ et al. as well. Hence Robert Scholes, in his *Structuralism in Literature*, prefers the term ‘romance mode’ to ‘romance,’ and ‘tragic mode’ to ‘tragedy’ (132). In his model theory of fictional modes all fictional works are reduced to three primary modes—‘satire’ which represents a degraded fictional world, ‘romance’ that presents an ideal and heroic world, and a "mimetic world of history" that represents actual events and real people as their province. On his model spectrum of fictional modes he finds place for seven primary modes—satire, picaresque, comedy, history, sentiment, tragedy and romance (Figure 1). He reminds his reader that these terms do not represent any forms of stories that are customarily associated with them, but they refer only to the respective qualities of their fictional worlds. Scholes’s ‘model theory,’ to a remarkable extent, suits to the works of most of the well-known writers such as Swift, Smollet, Fielding, Boswell and Richardson. However, while formulating his theory, he was aware of its inadequacy to accommodate certain works of fiction. Figure 2 of Scholes is a modification of figure 1. It represents the fictional worlds of Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, Tolstoy, Turgenev, George Eliot, Dickens, Thackeray, Meredith, Hardy and even the latest trend-setters of the twentieth century.5
Satire  Picaresque  Comedy  History  Sentiment  Tragedy  Romance

Swift  Smollet  Fielding  Boswell  Richardson  Scott

Figure 1 (Structuralism in Literature 137).

Figure 2 (137).
In figure 2, the shaded middle segment represents the classical novel (the novels of Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, Tolstoy, Turgenev, George Eliot et al.) the two diverging axes represent the increasing divergent tendencies in fiction. The modern twentieth century fiction that presents a fragmented and distorted world falls beyond the central shaded segment, farther somewhere on the central dotted axis. Scholes, here, acknowledges the special status of *Don Quixote* which seems to “partake all the attributes named here” (135).

With reference to his theory of fictional modes Scholes writes:

> Romance offers us superhuman types in an ideal world; satire presents subhuman grotesque, enmeshed in chaos. Tragedy offers us heroic figures in a world which makes their heroism meaningful. In picaresque fiction, the protagonists endure a world which is chaotic beyond ordinary human tolerance, but both the picaresque world and the world of tragedy offer us situations closer to our own than those of romance and satire. In sentimental fiction, the characters have unheroic virtues, to which we may well aspire; in comedy, human feelings which we, too, may strive to correct. Comedy is the lightest and brightest of the low worlds; it looks toward romance frequently, offering a limited kind of poetic justice. And sentiment is the darkest and most ordinary of the high worlds. It looks to-
ward the chaos of satire, and it may see virtue perish without the grace of tragic ripeness. In a sense comedy and sentiment overlap—in that comedy suggests a world somewhat superior to its protagonists and sentiment offers us characters somewhat superior to their world. (133-34)

Scholes’s figure 2 is a diagrammatic presentation of this model theory.

Scott’s novels are neither tragedies nor comedies. Are they histories? Are they pure romances or picaresque stories or sentimental stories? His stories often give the impression of conventional tragi-comedies “... whose waters, like those of a fountain, play for a while in the air, only to return, as clear as ever, to the basin from which they seemed to rise ...” (Lascelles 202). All his heroes and heroines and villains “will meet their desert in the timeless world of tragi-comedy” (202).

Into this world is woven the threads of history, romance, sentiment and picaresque. This is how Scott builds up his composite fictional worlds. A similar, but less composite, fictional world is found in C.V. as well.

The word ‘tragic’ is essentially related to the Aristotelean conception of tragedy which expects the work of art to arouse pity and fear in the mind of the reader. This happens in a "high mimetic tragedy" (Frye 37). In "low mimetic tragedy," as Frye writes, “pity and fear are neither purged nor absorbed into pleasures, but are communicated externally, as sensations” (38). This emotion which Frye calls "pathos" increases when the victim is unable to articulate his feelings. Frye observes that “the root idea of pathos is the exclusion of an individual on our own level from a
social group to which he is trying to belong” (39). It is this kind of a
low mimetic tragedy or pathos that the story of the suppressed Jew in-
jects into the fictional world of Scott’s Ivanhoe. Scott’s low mimetic
tragic figure, Rebecca, appears in the guise of Subhadra in the fictional
world of C.V.

For Frye the word ‘comic’ signifies a “catharsis of comic emotions”
and “the theme of the comic is the integration of the society” (43). Both
in Ivanhoe and M.V., the exploits of the historical and fictional heroes and
their heroic triumphs by driving off their enemies bring ‘low comic’ into
their fictional frames. Their love episodes add the ‘new comedy’ of Frye’s
they by presenting “... erotic intrigue between a young man and a
young woman which is blocked by some kind of opposition ... pater-

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Applying Scholes’s theory of fictional modes on Ivanhoe, a reader
may make the following observations. Ivanhoe draws its subject from
the ‘neutral’ world of history, it presents a historical crisis and hence
the mode ‘history’ comes into the novel. The adventures of the heroes,
their exhibition of superhuman valour and their triumphs bring in the mode
of ‘romance.’ The presence of Rebecca the Jewess, with her innocent
virtue that through her merciful acts proves itself superior to her world,
supplies of ‘sentiment.’ The heroic grandeur and lofty nature that she exhibits even in the face of several ordeals, with their accompanying pitch of pathos, give the story a ‘tragic’ mode.

The figure of Athelstane, his ravenous love of food and drink and his love for the hand of Rowena, supply a ‘comic’ mode to the story. His comic adventure spirit reminds us of Don Quixote, and it brings into Scott the picaresque mode of Cervantes. In the artistic history of the suppressed Jewish race we find the modes comedy and sentiment overlapping each other. The marriage of Ivanhoe and Rowena and the novel’s happy ending further strengthen the mode of comedy. At the same time, *Ivanhoe* decries certain negative aspects of the age of heroic romances. This is why, after the excitement of the tournament of the Ashby-de-la-Zouche, Scott writes of the violence and bloodshed that chivalry involves. Concluding his criticism he writes: “... Several more were disabled for life; and those who escaped carried the marks of the conflict to the grave with them ...” (*Ivanhoe* 142; Ch. 12). The tone of Scott’s criticism, here, is pure satire. The book presents a similar criticism of chivalry in Scott’s description of the siege of Torquilstone: the long dialogue between Ivanhoe and Rebecca on the virtues and vices of chivalry contains the core of Scott’s criticism. It is a dialogue between ‘romance’ and ‘realism’. But somewhere between these two modes the story assumes a ‘satiric’ dimension.

In Scott’s book the titular hero Ivanhoe is a mediatorial figure: he mediates between Saxons and Normans, and bridges the gap between the
two races. For this noble purpose he adopts chivalry. He fights heroically, helps the oppressed, proves himself a devoted follower of Richard and a defender of the religion, humbles the pride of Louis-Guilbert and finally weds the heroine. He is a typical romance hero. C.V.'s fictional hero Anantha Pathmanabhan is another perfect representative of the chivalric code. Wandering in disguise, he proves himself a faithful follower of the prince, and after his wonderful exhibition of heroism, he weds the heroine, Parukkutty.

In each book the titular hero plays a decisive role. But Scott's hero Ivanhoe, after getting wounded in the tournament, is condemned to passivity. Here it is the chivalric code that is put into passivity. It is when the romance mode is put into passivity that the modes—sentiment, satire and tragedy—come up in the story. After Ivanhoe's convalescence, again, the romance mode gets strengthened. Richard also serves to illustrate the flaws of heroic ideals. His heroism that supplies themes for bards and minstrels fails to bring any solid benefits to his country; he fails to maintain peace and stability in his country by means of his chivalry. Under his rule the old Saxon aristocracy endures suppression and ill-treatment by the Norman aristocracy and Jews, the once chosen people, are despised and persecuted by both Normans and Saxons.

Rebecca and her father Isaac, in spite of their not being the principal characters of the novel, occupy the moral heart of Ivanhoe. Here, the proverbial Jewish money-lender is an outcast who arouses sympathy in the readers. Scott, here, retains the Jew archetype, but inverts its
meaning. Rebecca’s withdrawal from the social life of England, finding it difficult to endure the unpleasant chaotic world, which is a symbolic withdrawal of virtue without attaining ‘tragic ripeness,’ intensifies the mode of satire. This fictional formula conforms to Paul Ricoeur’s view that “satire starts from the ultimate inadequacy of the visions of the world dramatized in romance, comedy and tragedy” (Time and Narrative I: 166).

In addition to these instances there are many situations in the novel that allow all these various fictional modes enter and re-enter the fictional world of the novel. C.V.’s work, however, does not present such a complex interplay of fictional modes. While glorifying the historic age C.V. never casts an ironic glance at it with a view to exposing its defects. His story never prepares a venue for romance and realism to be in conflict: his fictional hero is never a mediatioral figure and his fictional world is unidimensional.

Scott’s historical romance, thus, holds almost all fictional modes in a curious mixture in such a way that they elude the classification of Scholes’s theory of fictional modes. Scholes, in his model spectrum, places Scott near the right end (figure I), between tragedy and romance.

Paul Ricoeur’s observations on typology are of great critical interest. In his typology ‘satire’ has a peculiar position. Of the special feature of stories constructed in the ironic mode he writes:

They defraud the readers of the sort of solution they expect of stories constructed in the romantic, comic, or tragic modes. Satire, in this sense, is diametrically opposed
to the romantic genre, which demonstrates the final triumph of the hero, but it is also opposed, at least in part, to tragedy where, in lieu of celebrating humanity’s ultimate transcendence over the fallen world, a reconciliation is conceived for the spectators, who are led to perceive the law governing the outcome. Finally, satire also takes its distance from the mutual reconciliation of human beings, society, and the world brought about in the world of comedy by its happy ending. In each case, the opposition is only partial. There can be a satirical tragedy or a satirical comedy. (Time and Narrative I: 166)

*Ivanhoe* is traditionally being looked upon as an important member of the historical romance genre. In a broader sense, it is also called a historical novel. It is of critical interest to read the historical romance for features of romance, history and novel.

The historical romance, no doubt, incorporates into it many romance conventions. In a typical romance world, the conflict between the opposing forces takes place mainly in a special world. This special world is generally psychologically different from the earlier environment of the hero. This special world, in a romance, is “usually one ridden with magic and irrational forces” (Hume 136). Commonly, the principal signals of this special world include: “(a) a forest through which the hero wanders, often getting lost; (b) water, whether as rainstorm, river, or sea; (c) a door or gate; and (d) travel, often in an unusual mode . . .” (136). Such ro-
mance conventions are numerous. Beyond doubt, Both *Ivanhoe* and *MV* include many of these primary romance signals. In each case the hero wanders through the forest and he appears in disguise. Scott's Richard, during his wanderings, comes to a hermitage, and the scene includes the themes of drinking, singing and merriment.

In a romance story, generally, the hero at some point receives help which is necessary for his success; here, help comes from a magical or a special source. Such agents of help are the 'helpers' of Frye's theory. Historical romance makes significant use of this convention. Ivanhoe and Anantha Pathmanabhan are the principal helper figures of the novels *Ivanhoe* and *MV* respectively. The novels present many other 'helper' characters. However, in these novels, the principal helper figures are also heroes, who, in turn, receive help from other helper figures. Isaac and Rebecca are the principal helpers of Ivanhoe. In these novels, as fictional equivalents for the themes of magical helpers such as a goddess, a fairy god mother, or a benevolent witch of the romance pattern, there are the human figures Rebecca, Subhadra, Isaac, Hakkim, and many others.

The historical romance also presents the same manner of reassembling of fragments as is found in the romances. In the end the hero passes out of the special world back to his own and then marries the dragon-affected princess. In the novels under study, De Bracy and Sree Pathmanabhan Thampi are the principal 'dragons' and Rowena and Parukkutty are the 'princess' figures.

Gillian Beer has identified the following features of romance:
Romance invokes the past or the society remote (2) . . . .

Sexual love is one of the great themes of the romance . . . (3). The romance as a literary kind is often exclusively associated with medieval literature (4). The romance is essentially subjective . . . We have to depend entirely on the narrator of the romance . . . Our enjoyment depends upon our willing surrender to his power. (8)

Of the properties of romance, Gillian Beer writes:

We can think of a cluster of properties: the themes 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 every day, a complex and prolonged succession of incidents usually without a single climax, a happy ending, amplitude of proportions, a strangely enforced code of conduct to which all the characters must comply. (10)

Scott, in his essay on romance, draws the following distinction between novel and romance:

We would be . . . inclined to describe a Romance as ‘fictitious narrative in prose or verse; the interest of which turn up on marvellous and uncommon incidents,’ being this opposed to the kindred form Novel . . . which we
would rather define as a fictitious narrative differing from
Romance, because the events are accommodated to the
ordinary train of human events and the modern state of soci-
ety. (The Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott
1: 554) 6

Scott's definition sets the romance apart from the novel's modern-
ity and commitment to realism. He further points out the difference
between novel and romance in his 1830 introduction to The Monastery
(1820):

Many excellent romances have been composed in this view
of human life, where the hero is conducted through a variety of detached scenes, in which various agents appear and
disappear, without having any permanent influence on the
progress of the story. Such is the structure of Gil Blas,
Roderic Random and the lives and adventures of many other
heroes. . . . But though such an unconnected course of
adventures is what most frequently occurs in nature, yet the
province of the romance writer being artificial, there is more
required from him than a mere compliance with the simplic-
ity of reality; just as we demand from the scientific gardener
that he shall arrange in curious knots and artificial parterres,
the flowers which 'nature boon' distributes freely on hill and
dale. (The Monastery xxvii-xxviii)

Scott was unwilling to declare himself to be on the side of either
romance or novel, and he called his fiction "romantic composition," a term that escapes the distinction. Yet, the fact remains that "with all his romantic predilections Scott could not help being a realist" (The History of the English Novel 6: 212). He uses the term novel to signal an innovation to the field of fiction or its departure from the author's earlier works. For him the principal attraction of romance was its ability to incorporate various techniques and to show-case large historical issues. His merging of history and fiction--the fact of the rising of 1745 and the romance of a fictional hero--served as a test case for his 'novel' strongly indebted to the romance. His Waverley contained both the "ordinary train of human events" of history and the "marvellous and uncommon incidents" of romance. Waverley bore similarities to the Castle of Otranto (1764). As Scott writes, Walpole's object was "to draw such a picture of domestic life and manners, during feudal times, as might actually have existed, and to paint it checkered and agitated by the action of supernatural machinery, such as the superstition of the period received as matter of devout credulity." Thus Walpole reconciled his 'romance' to the taste of his own age by associating the "natural parts of the narrative" skillfully with "the marvellous occurrences" (Sir Walter Scott on Novelist and Fiction 87). 7

Hoxie Neal Fairchild explains Scott's fictional strategy in the following words:

In terms of literary history, Scott's blending of the actual with the strange is a blending of the novel with
the romance. He himself spoke of *Waverley* as "novel or romance" and indeed his stories partake of the characteristics of both forms. They suggest the romance in their more or less remote setting, in their reliance upon adventures rather than upon a problem arising from character, and in their frequent indulgence in the strange and marvellous. They suggest the novel in the stress laid upon portrayal of character, in the rather complex, and full-bodied scheme of events, in the cheerful building upon background and social environment, in the sense of responsibility to fact and the care taken to make the marvellous seem possible. (*The Romantic Quest* 265)

Claudio Guillen found an important characteristic of the Romantic Movement in its tendency "to polarize not only writers and writings but ideas and attitudes into opposite camps" (*Literature As System* 415). Of course it is a human habit to present ideas in sets or "binary oppositions" and this devise is used in literature of all periods. However, in the historical romances of Scott's tradition it is a recurring feature and an essential constituent of the genre. The genre always brings together novel and romance, and romance and history. Thus Scott was also a great romantic. Romantic writers in general had a fascination for the natural and for things closer to nature and God. Rejecting the Augustan preference for the formal they attempted to mime the ancient forms such as
ballads and epics. Scott’s preference for such things of the past, stepping on the foundations of the present, gave his genre a well pronounced structure that operated mainly on the principle of ‘oppositions.’ This romantic tendency towards presenting oppositions assumes greater relevance and significance in the historical romance that deals mainly with conflicts (usually revolutionary or imperialistic).

Dekker reduces the genre to the following list of binary oppositions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural</th>
<th>Artificial</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Laboured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural graces</td>
<td>Studied graces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty/wildness</td>
<td>Order/boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty/mystery</td>
<td>Prose/Reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuality</td>
<td>Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sublimity</td>
<td>Correctness</td>
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</tbody>
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Of the above list the first set represents cultural values at stake in the period of conflict. These declining values of the traditional or the primitive folk are contrasted with the second set of values which is associated with the conquerors or the representatives of change or progress. To the above list, Dekker adds a list of binary oppositions that deal with the physical features connected with the parties in conflict:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mountains</th>
<th>Vales</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paths</td>
<td>Highways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>Marches</td>
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soaring fettered. (47)

In *Ivanhoe* and all other historical romances the principle of binary oppositions forms a major narrative strategy; the same is found in the works of C.V as well.

Northrop Frye calls the novel “a realistic replacement of romance” which adjusts romance’s formulaic structures “to a roughly credible context” (*The Secular Scripture* 36). According to his view, while novels like *Tom Jones* adopt romance structures to meet a demand for conformity with ordinary experience, the *Waverley* novels absorb realistic displacement into the romance itself. This view of Frye argues convincingly for Scott’s reliance upon romance by juxtaposing dream-states with reason. Scott permits his hero to participate in history and then escape back into the safety of progressive society.

The ‘passive hero’ of Scott represents an important addition that he brings into the romance. Here his protagonists neither kills dragons nor changes history. His ‘passivity’ only represents his ‘rational self-restraint’ (Welsh 36). This deviation from the romance pattern affirms the continuity of fiction.

Scott qualifies the romance differently by giving it multiple meanings, and the reader would find his calling *Waverley* a ‘romance’ perfectly justified. However, historically, Charles Edward does not qualify as a hero of romance (He had hoped to topple a Hanoverian government with little but a few loyal adherents and little financial backing to help his endeavour). Secondly, the combination of high ideals, tremen-
dous odds and the inherent drama of a lost cause gives it a “stamp of material heroics” of the old school of romance. And then, the love interest of the story with the lovers separated, makes it a different kind of romance. Thirdly, here, ‘Romance’ is closer to a romantic frame of mind, a neutral state which fails to distinguish between fantasy and reality. Scott’s correction of these romance motifs, has made him, to some critics, an anti-romantic or a realist. He has transformed romance into something beyond the plot characteristics of traditional romances and into certain philosophical issues of progress. Using the romance elements he set his historical and fictional characters of Waverley in carefully delineated geographical and historical settings.

Fielding and Richardson also have relied on history for their fiction. The history that figures in Fielding’s titles and Richardson’s discovered manuscripts, authentic letters and memoirs were challenged by history proper on the ground that an historical event “may already be so well told in history that romance ought not in prudence to meddle with it” (qtd. in Caldwell 102).⁸ Scott’s defense of history as the proper source for his fiction is found most extensively in his preface to Peveril of the Peak (16). These defensive words plead the license of fiction.

The following dialogue brings out how, even the traditionally established genres show many features in common, blurring the distinction between them:

Vespasiano: Since we have gone on so far in our reasoning just what is the romance?
Minturno: I shall not deny that it is an imitation of great and illustrious actions that are worthy of epic poetry. . . . Our writers began to imitate the romantic and classical compositions of the barbarians . . .

Vespasione: Will you teach us in what the romance differs from the heroic poem?

Minturno: The heroic poem . . . sets to imitate a memorable action carried to its conclusion by one illustrious person. The romance, they say, has as its object a crowd of knights and ladies and of affairs of war and peace, though in this group one knight is especially taken whom the author is to make glorious above all the others; he is to treat as many deeds by him and by the others as he thinks sufficient for the glory of those he is disposed to praise.

Vespasiano: Does not the father of poetry do the same; since he deals with many very illustrious deeds of Odysseus, Diomedes, the two Ajaxes, Manelaus, King Agamemnon, Nestor, and other demigods, though he intends to praise Achilles above all the others?

Minturno: Yes, that is true; but he makes all spring from one beginning, and directs all to one end. This is not done in the romance. (rpt. in Topics in Criticism)
The above dialogue shows that the search for the laws and rules of literary genres and the theory of artistic and literary kinds have always posed difficulties for critics. Artists, while feigning obedience to them, have really only disregarded these laws. "Every true work of art has violated some established genre and upset the ideas of the critics, who have thus been obliged to enlarge the number of genres, until finally even the enlargement has proved too narrow, owing to the appearance of new works of art, which are naturally followed by new scandals, new upsettings, and new enlargement" (rpt. in *Topics in Criticism*). The following speech of Polonius in *Hamlet* criticizes such minute generic distinctions. "The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individuale, or poem unlimited" (II, ii 424).

Shklovsky, the Russian Formalist, is of the view that new art forms are canonization of inferior genres like folk or oral literature. Andre Jolles has said that all the new genres are compounds of the 'primitive or elementary genres' 'legend,' 'saga,' 'mythe,' like 'Ratsel,' 'Spruch,' 'kasus,' 'Memorabile,' 'Marchen,' 'Wilz' (Theory of Literature 236). Thus Wellek and Warren conclude:

The history of novel appears an instance of some such development: behind its arrival at maturity in *Pamela* and *Tom Jones* and *Tristram Shandy* lie such 'cinfa che formers' as the letter, diary, the travel book (or imaginary voyage) the memoir, the seventeenth century
'character', the essay, as well as the stage comedy, the epic, and the romance. (236)

Scott affirms that romance derives "... its first original from the pure font of history." He writes: "The European Romance, wherever it arises, and in whatever country it begins to be cultivated, had its origins in some part of the real or fabulous history of that country" (The Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott 1: 567). Both prose and metrical romances came from the same historical sources. The prose romances that surpassed their metrical ancestors in popularity, added "some insight into nature, or at least into manners; some description of external scenery, and a greater regard to probability both in respect of the characters which are introduced, and the events which are narrated" (567). It is from this point of view that he sees Fielding as the first to create in English a new kind of fiction. The term "minor romance" points to the line of descent that Scott was tracing.

Of the mode of Scott’s writing, Priestley writes:

Scott and Byron, who for many years dominated romantic movement throughout the Western world were not the kind of Romantics that Rousseau produced, and at heart did not belong to the movement at all... he belonged far more to the old Eighteenth century than he did to the new age... Scott is a great romancer who does not belong to romanticism. (Literature and Western Man 153)
The increasing popularity of historical fiction blurred the sharp distinction between novel and romance. Critics were willing to grant it approval provided the genre could give “the truth of history without its monotony--the interest of romance without its unreality” (qtd. in Caldwell 101).11 Austen Warren identifies the ‘romance’ and the ‘novel’ as two chief modes of narrative fiction and calls Mrs. Radcliffe, Sir Walter Scott and Hawthorne, writers of ‘romance.’ He finds the romances of the English writers like Scott and Brontes, a part of “a mysterious Northumbrian renaissance, a Romantic reaction against the new industrialism in the Midlands, which also produced the poetry of Wordsworth and Burns and the philosophy of Carlyle” (Approaches to the Novel 32-33). Thus he observes that an important theme in the bourgeois novel should be the parody of the romance and its ideals. He finds the tradition established by Don Quixote continuing in the modern novel “which looks at a romantic situation from its own point of view, so that the conventions of the two forms make up an ironic compound instead of a sentimental mixture. Examples range from Northanger Abbey to Madame Bovary and Lord Jim” (33).

Austen Warren’s view considers Scott’s books more as romances than as novels. But an objective examination of Scott’s Ivanhoe would show that the book falls not with the tales of chivalry but with the tradition established by Don Quixote, which, later, continued into books like Madame Bovary. Austen Warren writes:

The novel tends to be extroverted and personal, its
chief interest is in human character as it manifests itself in society. The romance tends to be introverted and personal: it also deals with characters, but in a more subjective way. (Subjective here refers to treatment, not subject-matter. The characters of romance are heroic and therefore inscrutable; the novelist is freer to enter his characters' minds because he is more objective). (35)

Georg Lukacs in *The Historical Novel* attempts to draw a clear distinction between historical drama and novel. According to him 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." (106) while the drama generates a typical fact of life and makes of it an intense experience. The world historical figure, with his dramatic potential is destined to be the "central figure" in the drama. However, the drama deals with 'inner' psychological truth, not with external social truth. While the drama takes as its hero a historical character, novels must choose a fictional character upon whom the forces of history can act. Lukacs draws this distinction from the writings of Otto Ludwug:

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. Similarly in
Waverley, Vich Ian Vohr would have to be the tragic hero
and in The Antiquary the countess Glenallen. (qtd. in The
Historical Novel 149-50)

Lukacs 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 its world is a "bounded" one,
the novel lacks all such limits; it presents an unbounded world. The novel
that 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 the two forms "outward" and "inward," the former is responsible for
the biographical nature of the novel with its "temporal ordering" which
makes it a life history with "beginnings" 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" (qtd. in Bernstein 148). 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. In the historical romance it is the
problematic nature of the individuals that becomes the basic condition for
the writer to trace their lives; the writer traces their lives in the context
of their "social marginality."

Dekker finds a very important, modern aspect of the historical ro-
mance in its myth-making power. The historical romance shows the
author’s “awareness of the human need for myth in all ages” (27). Myths never die and they are not confined to any particular age. Scott’s bringing together of historical and fictional events and characters on to a single temporal frame is a successful attempt at mythification of history. This mythification of history ‘liberates’ experience. As Tate puts it, “it liberate[s] experience ‘from the conditions that we usually know to attach to it’” (qtd. in Dekker 27-28).

Edmund Leech writes about Levi Strauss’s conception of history myth-relationship “…events in the historical past survive in our consciousness only as myth and it is an intrinsic characteristic of myth that the chronological sequence of events is irrelevant” (16-17). Strauss had a structuralist view of history. He found the distinction between myth and history arbitrary. Things that are recorded and accepted as ‘true-history’ but have no historical basis are mythical in nature and hence are myths (54-55). If we follow Levi Strauss’s line of thought the re-creation of history by historical romance would appear as history from one point of view and myth from another. Hence in the historical romance many things appear historical from one point of view and mythical from another. Here, many things appear historical, fictional, legendary and mythical at the same time. It is such a complex transformation or mimesis that Scott effects while he transforms the historical subject in to the text of his novels. This new model of historical narrative that Scott developed transformed the writing of fiction and history. Of the distinction between myth and history, Edmund Leech writes:
It starts as the Bible starts, with a story of the Creation. This is necessarily mythical in all senses of the term. But the creation stories are followed by legends about the exploits of culture heroes. (eg. King David and King Solomon) which might have some foundation in ‘true history’ and these in turn lead on to accounts of events which everyone accepts as ‘fully historical’ because their occurrence has been independently recorded in some other source. The Christian New Testament purports to be history from one point of view and myth from another, and he is a rash man who seeks to draw a sharp line between the two. (54-55)

The following words of Scott about his method point to the composite nature of his work:

I would have my readers understand that they will meet in the following pages neither a romance of chivalry, nor a tale of modern manners; that my hero will neither have iron on his shoulders, as of yore, nor on the heels of his boots, as is the present fashion of Bond Street; and that my damsels will neither be clothed ‘in purple and in pall’ like the Lady Alice of an old ballad, nor reduced to the primitive nakedness of a modern fashionable at a rout. From this my choice of an era the understanding critic may farther presage, that the
object of my tale is more a description of men than manners. (qtd. in Beer 65)

This text implies that the fictional world of *Ivanhoe* may be located somewhere between "a romance of chivalry" and "a tale of modern manners" and that the gap between the two is a vast spectrum of fictional possibilities.

Scott’s historical romance belongs to the tradition established by *Don Quixote*. Dekker rightly observes that Scott’s *Waverley* begins with a “satiric history of young Waverley’s self education”. He writes: . . . Scott inaugurates the historical romance tradition with a Cervantesque guying of the old-fashioned romances of chivalry . . . ”(15). The genre couples ‘historical’ and ‘romantic,’ the two modes of which one is the “foil and ideal opposite” of the other.

Dekker finds the novel/romance opposition a legacy of Renaissance humanism which held hostility to what they found medieval “monkish ignorance and superstition” (16). *Don Quixote* which is regarded by many as the first ‘novel’ asserts this legacy by presenting a critique of romance which Cervantes found shapeless and unduly fantastic and hence corruptive. This tendency was a reflection of the newly emerging secular and scientific world view which was suspicious of the tendency of literature to surrender itself to excessive imagination.

Writers like Richardson and Fielding also belong to the anti-romantic camp. In the preface to the second volume of *Pamela* Richardson wrote: “. . . the letters which compose this part will be found equally
written to NATURE, avoiding all romantic flights, improbable surprises and irrational machinery . . . " (II. iv). Horace Walpole’s pseudo-chivalric romance, *The Castle of Otranto*, came up as a remarkable novelistic experiment. In his second preface to his book which he wrote in 1765, he qualified the book as a "new species of romance." He intended his book to be a blend of the ancient romance which presented a great deal of "imagination and improbability" with the modern novel which presented 'nature' by adhering to common life (*The Castle of Otranto* v-vi).

There were many more critics to recognize the special composite character of Scott’s fiction. Edward Channing in his review of Scott’s *Rob Roy* points out this special feature of the book. He found in the book a contrastive presentation of small and vast and ludicrous and awful 12 Nassan Senior, another early reviewer of the *Waverley* novels, observes that they “unite the most irreconcilable forms, and opposite materials. He exhibits, sometimes in succession, and sometimes intermingled, tragedy and romance, comedy and novel” (rpt. in Dekker 22) 13 In this bringing together of mutually opposing diverse elements Senior finds a scope for all kinds of literary excitement. Dekker points out that the character of being mixed or "oxymoronic" is not the feature of the historical romance alone. But he avers that the historical romance exhibits this character more than any other novelistic genre.

In Scott’s historical romances the co-existence of history and fiction brings about a realistic perception which is “defined and ratified by the vision of romance” (Kerr 9). James Kerr writes:
Romance for Scott is a construction of the imagination. A source of delight and entertainment in moments of leisure, it is also a form of false consciousness, an untrue language, a source of distortion for which the rational vision must serve as the demystifying agent and the corrective. Yet romance is valuable to Scott for those very distortions of reality which are its failings. Scott sees romance as an evasion of the real, the language of irrationality, of illusion. (9)

Scott's historiography is a complex of things historical and fictional. But he does not expect his reader to confuse fiction with history. In him the two fictional modes are closely "intertwined" and not distinguishable from each other. Of Scott's writing James Kerr writes:

The boundary between fiction and fact, romance and reality, is crossed and recrossed repeatedly in the novels without much visible concern for philosophical or 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. (17)

As Trevor-Poper points out, Scott draws materials for his historical fiction not only from standard sources of historians but also from sources from which the poets of his period such as Wordsworth and Coleridge drew their materials: from "informal private documents... legends, traditions, customary rites, ephemeral literature, popular poetry,
portraits..." (qtd. in Dekker 30). Dekker writes: from such 'humble' sources and first hand observations "Scott gleaned the vivid details that gave his narratives immediacy and verisimilitude" (30).

In C V's novel in the manner of Scott's *Ivanhoe*, sources that are in no way connected to the history of the eighteenth-century Travancore enter into the novel's composition. The most important of them are "Thekkan Pattukal" (all songs that Channan sings are taken from them), stories like "Mathilakathu Katha," "Neeli Katha," "Eravikutty Pilla Poru," "Ponnirangal Katha," "Mavaratham" have remarkably influenced the fictional composition of the novel. The epigraphs of its chapters are chosen from ancient writings such as Ezhuthachan's *Adhyatma Ramayana, Mahabharatham*, "Vethala Charithram" of Kallikulangara Raghava Pisharody et al. There are also lines from *Ramayanam*, "Bhashanaishadham Chamba," Mazhamangalam Kottayathu Thampuran's "Kirmeera Vadham," Unnayi Warrier's "Nalacharitham," Vidwan Koyithampuran's "Ravana Vijayam," Aswathi Thirunal's "Rugminee Swayam varam," Eryumman Thampi's "Keechaka Vadham," "Daksha Yagam," Manthredathu Namputhiri's "Subhadrapaharanam," Balakavi Ramashasthri's "Bana Yudham." Pettayil Raman Pillil Asan's "Harischandra Charitham" et al. - all have influenced C.V.'s work. K. Ayyappa Panickar acknowledges the composite nature of C.V.'s work in his preface to the centenary edition of *MI*.

The epithet historical novel alone does not suffice to qualify the three novels of C.V. They deserve to be included in
any novelistic category--political novel, social novel, mytho-
logical novel, war novel, psychological novel et al. They also
include certain features of detective fiction and elements that
are of mythical nature. (MIV 33)

Scott was in touch with German historical drama which he trans-
lated, with folk-ballads, and with all other possible sources of informa-
tion. All these should be considered as reasons for the composite na-
ture of his fiction. As Frye points out in his article, “Fictional Modes
and Forms”, it is a kind of fictional mixture, in which “myths of Gods
merge into legends of heroes; legends of heroes merge into plots of trag-
edies and comedies; plots of tragedies and comedies merge into plots of
more or less realistic fiction” (Approaches to the Novel 29).

Scott, by making his fictional characters and situations dominate
their historical counterparts, has used history to the aid of romance; in
his Ivanhoe it is the fictional hero who occupies the titular position. C.V,
on the other hand, has made romance subserve the historical subject; here,
the titular hero is Marthanda Varma, the historical figure himself.

A vast majority of Scott’s characters in Ivanhoe, are semi-histori-
cal; they are all made to fit into imagined circumstances. Richard and
John are the only two purely historical characters. They act as foils for
each other by representing the traditional mutually opposed characters.
Richard is the gallant and jovial knight-errant of popular tradition, and
he represents the romantic side of history. Here we find the romance theme
of Scott having a picaresque dimension. As Baker observes, “As a cre-
ative novelist and humorist, he [Scott] was more intent on the idiosyncrasies and picaresque vagaries of mankind than on the drama of human will at odds with circumstance" (VI: 184). Cedric and Athestane are unhistorical figures and so are Ivanhoe and Rebecca and her partner in distress, her father, Isaac of York. The Jewess and her father, with the grim circumstances in which they are found, are the pitiable emblems of sufferings of the Jewish race in the Middle Ages; they represent mainly the sentimental and tragic sides of the novel. In MK, Rama varma Maharajah, Marthanda Varma, Amma Thampuratti and Rama Varma Elaya Thampuran are the historical characters; all others are fictional creations. Kalliyankattu Neeli and Brahmin are characters drawn from folk-tales.

Both in Scott and C.V., all the deeds and actions represent the epic side: the heroes, both historical and fictional, are objective, "homeric men" with "no hidden doubts or secret motives" (Bernstein 59). Lukacs writes: "Where psychology begins, there are no more deeds ... and whatever requires explanations, whatever can bear explanation has already ceased to be solid and clear" (qtd. in Bernstein 57).

Scott's fiction introduces all traditional elements and stereotypes, but he inverts their meaning by viewing them from a new standpoint. In the Romance "the monster or dragon-fight" is of central importance. Frye writes: "The central form of quest romance is the dragon-killing theme" (Anatomy 189). But in Scott's historical romance the theme of dragon-killing is conveniently substituted by the theme of 'reconciliation' of the knight and the dragon. Similarly, he has in him traditional Jews with all
their characteristic traits, but his picture of them as persecuted, despised and merciful people, places them on a different and more sympathetic pedestal. Here, obviously, he draws his theme from the Shakespearean models of Shylock and Jessica, and 're-creates' these once chosen people as "more sinned against than sinning". The Jew and the Jewess are despised and persecuted by both Saxons and Normans alike. Scott brings these three peoples—Jews, Saxons and Normans—into an ironic equation: "as Jews are to Saxons, so Saxons are to Normans". Here both Jews and Saxons are dis-inherited people. Ivanhoe, the hero who is dis-inherited by his father, finally, comes to the rescue of the more 'dis-inherited' Rebecca.

The wounded Ivanhoe lies on a couch near the window of a tower and Rebecca gives him reports of the progress of the siege. Rebecca's agitated words and the Knight's enthusiastic replies take the form of a debate on the two opposing aspects of the chivalric code. The Knight is concerned only about the virtues of feudal chivalry; he speaks of its nobler qualities. He adopts the chivalric code in the highest form: helps the oppressed, fights for the cross, and, in the end humbles the pride of Bouis Guilbert. This image of Ivanhoe represents the world of Romance. But later, he is wounded and condemned to passivity, and it is in his passivity that Scott reveals the dark unpleasant aspect of the chivalric code that leaves men to die in the name of glory. Here, Scott uses Rebecca as a foil for the brilliant and pleasant aspects of chivalry. Their story also shows how history lets down innocent virtue. This feeling is only
further strengthened when Ivanhoe proves himself “too good a Catholic to retain the same class of feelings towards a Jewess” (Baker VI: 180). In the end the hero is rewarded with the hand and wealth of Rowena.

Even in his picture of the society of the Middle Ages, Scott, as Baker observes, “...endeavoured, with something like the integrity of an historian, to present the whole framework and composition of society...sports and pastimes and the like coming into the picture as inevitably as matters of graver moment” (212). Baker calls Scott “the romantic novelist, with whom must be bracketed the sentimental novelist, [who] deals in adventure” (213). Baker is of the view that “the historical novel had its origin in the Gothic Romance, and in giving it a new orientation Scott did not prune it of the ancestral attributes” (211).

Of course Scott was a romantic. But his romanticism is not in conflict with his realism; in him both co-exist. He could brilliantly bring oppositions into a single fictional frame, and he excelled in that art. Of this special virtue of Scott, Baker writes:

[He] excels in putting the oppositions into one skin. Poetry is combined into banal prose, romance with common sense...The more romantic the trend of a story, the more need for the return to earth. This is what saves Ivanhoe from being only a brilliant masque, and Quentin Durward an airy romance of knight errantry....Such balancing of romance and its opposite, of the poetic or tragic and the comic, is not uncommon.
in English literature, though rare at that particular date. Charles Lamb could do it in his modest but exquisite way. But the parallel to Scott is Byron, far removed as were *The Vision of Judgment* and *Don Juan* from *Marmion*, *Old Mortality*, or *Ivanhoe*. (219-221)

The historical romances of Scott and C.V. are also political novels. As Michael Wilding writes: "What we call a political novel might also be called a novel of society or a novel of colonialism, an historical romance, a utopian fantasy or a fable. Political fiction is not something to be narrowly defined. Categories overlap" (1). These novels also show some characteristics of crime and detective fiction: many significant clues and information known to the author are withheld from the reader until the very end of the narrative. Both Scott and C.V. make some of their characters appear in disguise.

When Cervantes used *Don Quixote* to demolish the romance tradition, and Flaubert used *Madame Bovary* to destroy the sentimental illusions of the then existing reading practice, Scott used his *Ivanhoe* to seek a neutral ground between romance and realism with the willingness for a "British compromise." Scott’s tradition combines the real with the marvellous in a neutral territory. The real and the marvellous worlds "imbue" themselves with each other. Scott’s greatest contribution to the English novel was that he brought into full circle the anti-romantic fictional world of Cervantes. Susan Staves writes:

Scott appears to be setting up his novel as another
variation of the theme of the literary quixote... Scott is going to use the idea of the literary quixote—all satire dissolved—in the romantic novel. Furthermore, he wants to use his romance material in the service of what he, like Hazlitt, perceives as the highest sort of realism. (214-15)

Scott himself has declared that his interest in the historical period of Waverley was mainly due to his desire “to show the reality of men than manners” (215). With this noble aim he invented a new form of fiction which avoided all the "absurdities and unrealities" of the Gothic and sentimental fiction of the eighteenth century. This argument in favour of historical romance may appear paradoxical to the present day genre conscious popular taste. Susan Stave writes: “... to state the paradox sympathetically, the idea of literary quixote comes full circle when Scott can use it not to destroy romance but to create the romance which he sees as the most authentic realism” (215). The following words of Mark Twain aptly acknowledge the impact of Ivanhoe on literature:

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. (qtd.in Stave 215)

The words of Mark Twain, though indirectly, recognize the real nature
of the fictional world that *Ivanhoe* exhibits. As a work that brought into full circle the anti-romantic fictional world of Cervantes, and which restored the world's admiration for medieval chivalry, *Ivanhoe* presents a fuller and more complex world than that of Cervantes's work. Scott's representative in Malayalam literature, C.V., succeeds in bringing this tradition into Malayalam literature.

Thus, the historical romances under study do not simply fit into Scholes's theory of fictional modes. His theory fails to accommodate works of fiction that balance the opposites such as romance and satire, tragic and picaresque, sentiment and comedy etc. Scott brings various modes, in a significant way, into a perfect balance with history. His innovations in the art of the novel subvert the rules which the practice of foregoing authors has established. The fictional world of Scott's *Ivanhoe* gives us perspectives both on the values and vices of romance. In the novel we experience the oscillations of the narrator's vantage points between 'romance' and 'satire'. Scott's historical perspectives further realizes this realism.

In the light of the above observations let us examine figure 4 of chapter 2 once again by placing it with figure 2 of this chapter which illustrates Scholes's theory of fictional modes. Figure 4 illustrates the evolution of the novel and shows how Scott's historical romance becomes an important landmark in the history of the development of the novel. All nineteenth century realists, in varying degrees, share Scott's historical sense.
Figure 4 of Chapter 2

Figure 2 of Chapter 4
C.V.'s novel contains almost all elements of fiction such as history, adventure, exhibition of valour, love, fidelity, theme of disinheritance, disguised identity, withholding of information from the reader by the narrator etc. C.V.'s chief intention was to discover and popularize the heroic moods in the history of his state and portray great historical personages. Hence it was not necessary for him to incorporate into his fictional structure the modes 'satire' and 'picaresque'. Similarly, when Scott's romance world introduces superhuman valour and prowess that suit to a romance plot, C.V. presents bravery and heroism that suit better to a plot that is 'human' rather than superhuman. Another important difference between the fictional worlds of Scott and C.V. is that, when Scott presents characters and situations from the medieval age, C.V. presents things that are closer to our own time. Hence the epithet romance does not aptly apply itself to the fictional world of C.V. Figure 5 shows how C.V.'s fictional world differs from that of Scott's tradition. In figure 5 the shaded segment represents the fictional world of C.V.'s historical novel. However, the historical sense that he inherited from Scott may be traced into the later social novels of Malayalam literature.
Notes


3 Northrop Fry, *Anatomy of Criticism*.

4 *Anatomy* 303-314.

5 Here the reference is to the works of Joyce, Faulkner, Barthes, Hawkes et al. See *Structuralism in Literature* 138.


10 Benedetto Croce, *Aesthetic* (1907) Ch IV, tr., D. Ainslie (1909) 59-61, reprinted in *Topics in Criticism*

11 Archibald Alison, "The Historical Romance," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 58 (1845), 346.
