

## THE MAIN PECULIARITIES OF THE ENGLISH HISTORICAL NOVEL

### ( ON THE BASIS OF WALTER SCOTT'S NOVELS)

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#### ABSTRACT

This article illustrates the analysis of Walter Scott's historical novels. The aim of this work is to determine the peculiarities of the use of real historical figures in the works of the famous English writer Walter Scott. Achieving this goal led to the solution of the following tasks: consider the depiction of history in Walter Scott's novels, to identify the description of English historical figures and literary hero in Scott's novels. The focus of the research are the English historical novels "Waverly or Tis sixty years since" and "Ivanhoe". The main research method is comparative analysis. The relevance of the work is determined by the need for further study of the genre of a historical novel in literature and the use of real life and artistic elements in Walter Scott's novels.

**Key words:** *romanticism, history, artistic skill, hero, historical novel, protagonist, ancestors, a legendary hero.*

#### INTRODUCTION

Walter Scott holds a special place in the history of 19th century English literature. His historical works on the rise of English romanticism mark the early stages of the transition from romanticism to realism. The author left his mark on the history of literature as the creator of a historical novel with pronounced features of realism. Scott's novels marked an important stage in the development of the social novel genre of the 19th century, marking a new stage in its development compared to the genius novel of the 18th century. While Balzac considered his historical novels to be a model of artistic skill, Stendhal considers him the father of modern novelists. Goethe also spoke of him only positively, Belinsky proudly praised his works, and Pushkin called him a "Scottish wizard" [7; 9]. For many readers, Walter Scott is a writer, founder of the historical novel genre. However, he began his career by writing poetry, ballads, songs, poetic epigraphs. Walter Scott's first poems were rich in content, artistic dimensions and rhymes and played an important role in the development of lyric poetry. Born Walter, the ninth

of thirteen children in the family, he spent his childhood in Sandino, where his grandparents lived in the mountains, where doctors told him that the only way to remain paralyzed was to live in nature. Unfortunately, it was not possible to fully restore mobility and Sir Walter remained disabled for life. All we know from the history of literature, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries many English writers published their works anonymously or used pseudonyms instead of their names. Literature published anonymously, such as “The Lyric Ballads of Coleridge and Wordsworth” (1798), Mary Edgeworth's first novel “Castle Reckrent” (1800), Byron's collection of poems “The English Bards and Scotch Reviewers” (1809) and the Englishwoman. These include works by Jane Austen and playwright Henry Mackenzie, the “patriarch” of Scottish literature, as well as works by Walter Scott. However, the authors often hid their names for understandable reasons: unsure of success, they were afraid of ridicule in front of critics and the public.

### **MAIN PART**

“Waverly, or Tis Sixty Years since” is a historical novel by Walter Scott, published in 1814. The novel, which was published anonymously, was the author's first prose and his first historical novel. The work captivated readers with its charm and vivid reflection of history. The writer very closely acquaints the reader with the events of the past that happened sixty years ago. According to the author, he deliberately returns to such a short time. Scott's works occupy a special place in literature. Echoes of these works can be found both in English authors and in writers from other countries. The Russian poet Alexander Pushkin wrote his work “The Captain's Daughter” inspiring by Scott. He tried to repeat the Waverly's plot in Russian. Walter Scott influenced the whole of Europe with his works, including Russian literature. While enjoying the literature of this period, you will come across the name of Walter Scott in all aspects of literary criticism. when he submitted his work for publication there was little known about Scott. As previously mentioned, it was originally published anonymously. Subsequent novels such as “Rob Roy”, “The Puritans”, “Ivanhoe”, and “Quentin Durward”, written before February 23, 1827, were also called Waverly novels. Finally, in 1829, it was all published in a collection called “The Waverly Novels” when the author himself acknowledging that its author was Walter Scott.

Hungarian literary critic George Osipovich Lukach in his monograph “The Historical Novel” wrote that much of the discussion of the historical novel begins with Sir Walter Scott and his 1814 novel “Waverly”. In his monograph, the critic argues that the French Revolution led the

entry of historical truth into literature, and that this revolution turned history into a “mass experiment”. The famous English poet George Byron, realized that Walter Scott was the author of “Waverly” and admits: "I think only Walter Scott can write the novel “Waverly”. There are many common phrases in Scott's letter from that century, and this may be compelling evidence [3; 416]. It is known that 1745 was a memorable year in the history of Scotland, as this mountainous country could only defend its full independence by taking the Scottish king to the English throne. Indeed, in the early 18th century, the British faced a paradoxical choice of dynasty: Scottish or German king on the throne: Stuart or Hanover, Catholic or Protestant. Therefore, the same confusion arose in the political positions of the British. Thus, the Jacobean uprising in Scotland in 1745 was the revolt of the "young pretender" to the kingdom of Charles Edward Stewart, hoping to seize the British throne, although his father, Jacob ("old pretender"), was still alive. This uprising ended in the defeat of the Jacobites. These historical events are illustrated by Walter Scott through the example of the Waverly dynasty, a family of English nobles: the eldest son of the family, Sir Everard Waverley protects the Stuarts and the official Anglican Church in accordance with the inheritance of his ancestors. His younger brother Richard has no choice but to literally side with Protestantism and Hanover in order to find a worthy position. The protagonist, Edward Waverley the nephew of his older brother partially takes advantage of this hereditary battle and becomes part of its victim. For Scottish people Walter Scott is not just a writer. He revived the historical memory of this nation and discovered Scotland around the world, primarily in England. Before the publication of his work, almost no one was interested in Scottish history, considering the Scots "wild" in England, especially in its capital, London. After the Napoleonic Wars, Scott's writings radically changed the attitude of educated British citizens towards this poor but proud country. In Scott's writings, events take place mainly during the Anglo-Scottish Wars. In these wars, the "wild" but sincere and very powerful highlanders, the Scots, faced the British, who were considered “civilized”.

We know that in the historical chronicles of Shakespeare, the image of "the history of kings" is important in that it reflects national history. Scott also followed Shakespeare's style. However, in his works, he put the historical figure in the background and created fantastic characters in a series of events that were influenced by a change of fate. Thus, Walter Scott showed that people are the driving force of history, and human life itself is the main object of the writer's artistic research. Scott also relies on clear facts when describing historical facts, and at the same time, he developed the phenomenon of “historical coloring”, where he skillfully

described the specifics of a particular period. Scott's contemporaries have demonstrated their remarkable knowledge by describing "history for history" thereby enriching readers' knowledge of history. However, in Scott's work, the process went differently. He studies in detail the events of the historical period, always connecting them with the modern problem, and shows how a similar problem was solved in the past. [5; 497]

The main plot of Scott's novels are related to the events that involve significant socio-historical contradictions. These include the novels based on Scottish history as "Guy Mannering" (1815), "The Antiquary" (1816), "The Puritans" (1816), Rob Roy (1818), "A Legend of Montrose" (1819). The most successful novels are "The Puritans" and "Rob Roy", which include real-life events about history. If in the novel "The Puritans", the author described the revolt of 1679 against the revived Stuart dynasty in 1660, the protagonist of the novel "Rob Roy" is a legendary hero Robin Hood.

If we generalize the events in Scott's novels, we see in them a vast panorama of life in England, Scotland, and France for several centuries, from the end of the eleventh century to the beginning of the nineteenth century and a peculiar world of events and emotions. In the 1850s, Scott's novel "Ivanhoe", while retaining a realistic basis, had a significant influence on Romanticism (especially on Ivanhoe, a twelfth-century novel). A special place in the author's work is given to the novel "Saint Ronan's well" (1824), in which the life of the nobility is critically acclaimed, and the title aristocrats are satirically depicted. In the 1820s, Walter Scott published a number of works on historical and historical-literary themes, including "The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte" (1827), "The History of Scotland" (1829-1830), and "The Death of Lord Byron" (1824). His works, such as The Biographies of Novelists (1821-1824), reveal Scott's creative connection with eighteenth-century writers, especially Henry Fielding, whom Scott considered the "father of the English novel". Most of Scott's novels are dedicated to Scotland. They are called "Scottish novels": "Waverley, or Tis Sixty Years Since, (1814), "Guy – Mannering" 1815, "The Antiquary"( 1816), "Old Mortality" (1816), "Rob Roy" (1818), "The Legend of Montrose"( 1819) [4; 206]. In these novels, Scott portrays peasants and poor people, whom the extremely wealthy realistic characters consider a gallery of types of Scottish social strata and the petty bourgeoisie. Years later, Scott's other friend and political rival (political hostility and friendship was common at the time), the famed Scottish lawyer Henry Cockburn, said that no book had been published in Waverley other than the first issue of the Edinburgh

Review. He quickly became popular and did not delight the public. The novelty of the novel, the variety of unique characters, the Scottish dialect, the Scottish landscapes, the Scottish heroes, the simplicity of the style, the graphic accuracy of the descriptions - all of this attracted everyone like an electric power. I wanted to feel the excitement of that time now again [1;281] he admits proudly. The diary of Walter Scott's contemporary, George Byron, contains the following lines: It has been a long time ... I don't know exactly when it will be released ... I haven't read a great and compelling novel from Overlie [ 2;193]. This was the description given to Scott by another English representative. The second major group of Walter Scott novels is devoted to the history of England and this country, mainly the events of the middle Ages and the sixteenth century. This group includes the following works: "Ivanhoe" (1819), "The Monastery" (1820), "The Abbott"(1820) and Woodstock (1826). "Quentin Durward" (1823) chronicles the reign of Louis XI in France [4; 206]. Creating a new type of historical novel, Walter Scott also discovered a special type of literary creation, a special method of artistic thinking, which had a huge impact on the development of contemporary artistic and philosophical-historical thought. His novels were as if an answer to the problems posed to the European consciousness by the revolutionary era, and only this can explain the extraordinary success that his work enjoyed for several decades [7]. This was a discovery that, like any discovery, was prepared for a long time and gradually, through the labors of generations who built a new Europe, defended it in continuous battles and reflected on their victories and mistakes.

In Scott's novels about the middle Ages, the family-adventurous type of plot development, characteristic of essays about Scotland, fades into the background, and the hero's test for compliance with the knighthood and the ability to execute the code of honor in specific historical circumstances comes to the fore. The writer actively uses the plot-organizing motifs of medieval knightly novels and epic songs of antiquity, for example, testing the hero for identity (loyalty to love and loyalty to the knightly duty-code). If in a chivalrous novel, the heroes perform feats in order to glorify themselves and glorify their overlord or woman, which brings the novel closer to an epic adventure, then in Scott the hero, performs his concrete vassalage duty [8].

Although the author's realistic background is not so richly revealed in these works, it is in these works that Walter Scott reveals his remarkable feelings of the past, which led the French historian Augustine Terry to call him "the greatest master of historical divination of all time."

Walter Scott's depiction of history is primarily the result of external historiography, a good grasp of what is happening in the country. In this respect, the writer had a solid knowledge and astonished his contemporaries as well. The aesthetics of the historical novel of the Great Scotsman included the whole world outlook, a special view of life in society, and was not only a philosophy of form, but also, above all, a philosophy of content - that which needed to be portrayed and expressed [10].

On December 22, 1825, the first mention of the biography appears in Scott's diary: "I wrote six pages in fine handwriting, which is about twenty-four pages of printed text ... The story is so interesting in itself that there is no doubt about its success. It will come out superficial, but I am not going to give it up because of this. Better is a superficial book that presents well-known and recognized facts well and clearly, than a lifeless and boring story, interrupted at every moment to consider insignificant details [9].

The author refers to different historical periods, emphasizing in the material of each work the constant movement of history, emphasizing that the past is inevitable. He describes the events objectively, despite his conservative political views. This confirms that it is inevitable that any event will change in a new way.

## **CONCLUSION**

The themes in Walter Scott's works are always important, and no matter what period they are written about, today's reader will understand. Each of Scott's novels serves to reveal to the reader a world of important historical events and great human emotions. In general, his novels are of great importance in covering the events of the period of British and Scottish life from the end of the twelfth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

It should be noted that in describing different historical periods, the writer pays great attention to the description of the people's movements, especially with great benevolence, remembering the historical past of his homeland in expressing his understanding of the laws of historical movement. The main reason for this is the writer's interest in the destiny of human beings, so he creates his heroes based on those folk and historical events. It is clear that Walter Scott had a deep understanding of the historical role of national movements.

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