

Manifestation of 18th century Literary Movement through Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*: History has been Rewritten

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Abstract

The nationalist feeling is agitating again today. As far as the new and ultra-developed global scenario is concerned, a huge facet of exotic invasiveness is up for grab. People of the modern era are in the thought process that their native country might be under serious threat; even though; they would remain silent until their entity rattles. The national tale before *Ivanhoe* reflects national character as a synecdoche of an unchanging cultural space; here patriotism is a self-evident legacy, the result of unbroken continuity and a populist community that unites aristocracy and folks. Arguably, Sir Scott for the first time, enlightens the vision of national continuity through the forcible, often violent, entry into history that does the feudal folk community become a nation. Patriotism is a positive thing for every nation and its people. It's undoubtedly a notion of proud and passion. But here in the novel *Ivanhoe*, the other aspect of patriotism has been also highlighted, which has the notion of negativity and intolerance. However, we should keep in mind the time when Sir Scott was writing the novel. This was the period where just the resentment happened between France and England. In fact, the novel *Ivanhoe* was published (1819) just after few years of Napoleonic Wars, where eventually, England went on victorious after the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte at the Battle of Waterloo. Therefore, against this historical backdrop, the continuous struggle in *Ivanhoe* between domineering Normans (French) and honest Englishmen (Saxon and their allies) took on center stage to redefine the concept of patriotism.

Subject Areas

Historical Linguistics

Keywords

Patriotism, Provincialism, Normans, Saxons, 18th century

1. Introduction

Sir Walter Scott must be remembered not only as a pronounced narrator of 18th-century literary movement but also as one of the sheering forces in upcoming modern English literature. The concept "literature is not only for few, rather it's for the public as well" was revolutionized all through the works of Sir Scott. The literature prior to

Scott was confined to an extremely narrow circumference that included few patrons and critics. Prior to Scott, English literature was overwhelmingly restricted to rational romanticism that focused on relationship between two or three individuals. The principal theme during that period was "emotionally satisfying and optimistic ending." (The romance genre overview, 2013). Sir Walter Scott was the first one who broke the shekels and propagated the literary campaign among the public. "Sir Walter Scott was the Luther of literature. He reformed, and he regenerated. To say that he founded a new school is not saying the whole truth; for there is something narrow in the idea of a school, and his influence has been universal." (Landon 123). Scott's poetry like *Marmion* as well as *Lady of the Lake* evoked through the minds of people and of course developed a resounding response throughout the country with overwhelming enthusiasm. Moreover, for the first time in history, romantic poetry became extensively popular among all ages.

Again, looking back to the prose of Sir Scott, that how much it showcased the men and women who probably for the first time, believed in themselves and thoroughly enjoyed the charm of reality. His novels draw the minds of millions of readers and audiences who hitherto were the part and parcels of the previous patrons of the Romantic era. It's worth mentioning, readers who were having little idea what modern literature was all about, were eventually mesmerized as Sir Scott's *Ivanhoe* percolated through the veins of them. However, some critics may call his prose and poetry lacking poetic excellence, but to be honest, regarding end to end actions, excess of youth, rapid and realistic approach made Sir Scott a significant force to be reckoned with in modern English literature.

Research Questions:

1. How can we correlate the historical perspective of Sir Scott's *Ivanhoe* in the relevance of the past public consciousness?
2. How can we depict the notion of patriotism and provincialism/regionalism in Sir Scott's *Ivanhoe*?
3. What is the significance of *Ivanhoe* now in concurrence of modern global perspective regarding the conflict of ideology of patriotism and its resolution?

2. Literature Review

Concentrate by Sir Scott's writings, go back to his write up in details we would see that there are as many as two different sets of approach in his literary profile. The previous successors of Romantic Era, deeply engrossed Sir Scott and at the same time, he was extremely keen to relate and diversify the romantic perception equivocally among the Scottish isles. In fact, little interest was made to merge romance and reality before the *Waverley*.

In *Ivanhoe*, possibly for the first time, romanticism and realistic thoughts were mixed. People around the world saw how 18th-century romance and 18th-century mannerism blended to absolute homogeneity. In other words, Sir Scott set the

manifesto of 18th- century manners in a historical frame of literary creation.

Like several of Sir Scott's novels, *Ivanhoe* is a historical novel or romance, revolved around the middle ages. It uses the central literary device that is the perfect blend of simile and allegory that reflects to enlighten the contemporary issues by looking at the parallel debates of the distant past.

Scott's outlook towards the historical romance is to amalgamate the real history with fictional monologues, using drastic fictional scaffoldings to resurrect the thoughts and feelings of people in the distant past by mixing research and literary imagination. I would like to quote John Henry Newman, an Anglican priest, poet and theologian who claimed Scott, "had first turned men's minds in the direction of the Middle Ages". Furthermore, Carlyle and Ruskin pointed similar assertions on Scott and his influence on the revival, through the publication of *Ivanhoe*. (Chandler, 1965) It's worth mentioning that apart from Balzac in France, no other novelists of that era approached history in such a way how Scott did during that period. In this context, Mitchell quoted admirably; "I cannot always pin Scott down to a medieval source to the exclusion of other possible sources. In such cases, it is altogether conceivable that three or four or more literary works from different periods of literary history were on his mind at the same time" (Mitchell 79).

He was the first man who through his individualistic approach introduced men and women into the volumes of historical cascade and attracted the minds of all ages as depicted by Thomas Carlyle; "This historical novels have taught this truth.....unknown to writers of history: that the bygone ages of the world were actually filled by living men, not by protocols, state papers, controversies, and abstractions of men" (Carlyle 51).

The first of the scholarly works on Sir Scott's novels was perhaps represented in Sidney W. Cornish's *The Waverley Manual or Hand-Book of the Chief Characters, Incidents, and Descriptions in the Waverley Novels with Critical Breviates from Various Sources* (Adam & Charles Black, Edinburgh, 1871, viii, 504 pp). It described in the Preface as a humble attempt to facilitate reference to his works, and to their most striking features, by extracts drawn from the best contemporary criticisms.

Next scholarship on Scott should be Mary Rogers' *The Waverley Dictionary. An Alphabetical Arrangement of all the Characters in Sir Walter Scott's Waverley Novels with a Descriptive Analysis of each Character, and Illustrative Selections from the Text* (S.C. Griggs, Chicago; Trubner, London, 1879, 357pp.). It provides a list of the novels arranged by the period in which they are set; a list in chronological order of publication; and then, for each novel its plot, perhaps including Scott's own description; brief notes; its location and period; an alphabetical list of characters; and a chapter-by-chapter synopsis.

Bradley (1975) manifested a major piece of scholarship on Sir Walter Scott's novels in *An Index to the Waverley Novels* (The Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, NJ, 1975, xiv, 681pp). It locates persons, things, places, words, phrases, proverbs, etc., which

appear in the *Waverley Novels*, and to arrange several persons by trade or profession, and of things by subject.

It would be far from over if we cannot include the scholarly works of Jane Millgate's *Scott's last Edition: A Study in Publishing History* (Edinburgh University Press, 1987, x,154pp). It is a full account of its genesis, preparation and printing, together with studies of Scott's work on the interleaved set, its transcription and proofs, revision and annotation, and the Magnum's place in the transmission of Scott's text and the development of nineteenth century publishing.

Furthermore, Iain Gordon Brown's "*The exile and return of the Magnum*"; and Patrick Caddell's "*The Pforzheim Scott Manuscripts*" are equally worth reading as scholarly research on the novels of Sir Walter Scott.

3. Limitations and Delimitations

The most important limitation of this study is the time limit. We know already that the period where we are concentrating is vast regarding information and historical perspective as well. Another limitation of this study is the lack of flow of information. The data I have gathered although is potentially sizeable, still more data are necessary to make the study more concrete. The delimitation of this study is the idea on which we have pondered over. This is not only cultured here but also can be nurtured in the days to come by as this hypothesis holds a major part of modern English literature.

4. Findings and Discussions

Sir Walter Scott was appreciably a devoted son of his native land. As we go to the in-depth analysis of his work we would find fulcrum is the passion and loyalty towards his native country. He wrote *Ivanhoe* with astonishing vigor. This enumerates loyalty and belief towards Scottish Isles of that Era. Characters were ranging from as high as king to the lowest social chronology such as beggar.

Scotland remains unrevealed if we cannot read the novels of Sir Walter Scott. Scotland comes in front of our eyes through the writings of Sir Scott as we alter each page of his novels.

During Sir Scott, Scotland was under the rules of British Empire. But Scotland was by no means given the respect and colors by the British dynasty. Sir Scott took up his writing pen to showcase that his very own country is no push over's. Eventually, in 1819 he catered this fact of ignorance towards Scotland by the British dynasty of that time. In *Ivanhoe*, he showed how Queen and his Dynasty ignored Scotland during that period.

As a patriot he continued with his writings in an abrupt way, emphasizing on rapid and quick actions, not on mellow dramas. He revolved around the fact if society is not good enough to give due respect to its cultural domains and heritage, it should be subjected to change.

He continued to cater his works among the people, especially, to young and

adolescents, whom he believed, the "potential revolutionist" of society. Even though he was in all respect a true Scottish, but he was never biased in his approach. He distinguished between patriotism and regionalism. He believed patriotic work differs from regionalism in that; it is founded in love of your country and not resentment or envy of others. It can, therefore, speak volume for itself to change because the patriot recognizes, as Scott did, that all societies are subjected to change.

Scott's success in changing the outlook of people is admirable. He ignited the people all over, to think and believe in them. His success speaks volume for itself, as we may say he is the writer among his contemporaries who sent the message to the people that "if you have self-belief, you will overcome all obstacles, only keeping in mind, what you have to do."

However, authors like *Kenilworth*, *Nigel*, *Woodstock* gave Sir Scott tremendous respect and recognition and showed his potential and grasp in modern English literature. It's now obvious, that through his writings, civilians of Scottish Isles reached the highest picks which had never been possible up to that time. *Count Robert*, *The Talisman*, and *Ivanhoe* showed how he was able to merge the romance and rapid prolific actions in the same pot.

A brief account of historical novels and its implications

Historical novels pertain to a position in the chronology of modern English literature. It started far back in 1678 in France, where Gothic stories named *La Princesse de Clèves*, was published. Since then, so many historical fiction and stories have been written and of course, Sir Scott's contribution among them supposed to be immense. However, critics may say that his deviations were quite prominent, but this does not mean that Scott's writing does not worth values. Taken into consideration that Scott's works might not have so much of literary amplitudes, but we can say without any doubt, Sir Walter Scott personified social demography through his collections of short stories and bunch of novels including *Ivanhoe*.

Sir Walter Scott was thoroughly impressed by his previous authors regarding the historical cascade of events. Moreover, since the very early days of his career he was a lover of his native land. During the British Empire and the Queen, her dynasty marched along and propagated its wings across the world by invading millions of Ecorse of land.

However, among this life of growing economy and continuous prosperity, Scotland was merely forgotten, as this very land was just a part of British Isles. Not to mention the rich historical heritage and cultural background of Scottish domain were considered as remnants of British Empire.

All these events circulated through the veins of Sir Scott and the concept of patriotism came through his literary prolificacy in the years to come. He convinced the native people to believe in themselves again. He attracted millions of his readers and admirers and stamped the meanings of patriotism in their minds for their native land.

He was not at all bias in his approach. He distinguished between patriotism and narrow provincialism. Therefore, the hypothetical paradox between true patriotism and narrow provincialism is resolved to a considerable extent as we depicted Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* stretching almost every corner of his literary aspect.

Ivanhoe undoubtedly is one of the greatest historical novels that erase the gap between provincialism and patriotism to a considerable extent. The very fact of cooperation is thoroughly established with the concept of providence. But we should always remember it was the crisis, of an era which was far back and accordingly it was resolved to keep in mind the socio-economy and political aspect of that period.

In contrary, the ultra-developing world of modern time exhibit an array of crisis and those can't be resolved only by the act that is being shown in *Ivanhoe*. Moreover, the central character, as we go through the facets of the story, is mostly confined to sidelines which by every means, is a contradiction of the novel itself. The same thing stands as well. A role model can't be in disguise most of the times, and of course, it is quite ambiguous regarding modern global perspective as well.

5. Conclusion

We have been discussing time and again how prolific Sir Walter Scott was to erase the gap between social justice and judgment during the 18th century social hierarchy is concerned. This makes the scenario to have a belligerent and centralized ruler in a nation. *Ivanhoe* raised the bar against social injustice but at the same time argued its resolution in a nonviolent manner. In fact, we find the fact in various facets of the novel as we go along.

To say in few words, he was inspiring, wholesome and manly. In conjunction with that, I would wish to quote, Anne Scott, a historian on the chronology of Scottish and British Isles, who said " The difference between the English and Scottish trials reflects the different legal systems. Ironically, the acquittals made the loyalist case—that England was a country where a man could have a fair trial." Furthermore, Sir Scott taught people to believe in their capabilities to overcome any obstacles and initiated the seed of patriotism in their heart (Higgins, 2010). The chief arts writer and critic Charlotte Higgins admirably quoted in this regard, " Scotland's image-maker Sir Scott invented English legends." He added that, " The author of *Ivanhoe* and the *Waverley* novels was not only crucial in creating the idea of Scotland as it persists today, but also "invented England".

My work is multifaceted that would allow exploring some themes and ideas and co- relate the aspects of Scott's work with past, present and future perspectives of nationalism and provincialism in Sir Scott's novel *Ivanhoe*. I would like to track that exotic invasiveness, import of foreign culture and ideas have been always up for grab as we can see this in the conflict between Norman and Saxon counterparts in the novel *Ivanhoe*. In conjunction with that, I would also like to draw the recent scenario that is being reverberated in the various geographical pockets of Asia Minor. Several

communities of the respective countries of this territory are now raising the bars, appealing for separate domain. The future, however, we can only assume, but to say the least, novels of Sir Walter Scott, including *Ivanhoe*, we can use as the roadmap to settle the issues that are obvious. However, more vivid research and studies should be conducted in these areas in the coming days to achieve more data and information.

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