

The Journey of the “Historic -Romantic Novel” Princess Nora bint Abdulrahman University

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Abstract: *The problematic relationship between history and novel has preoccupied many scholars. Though the question of where facts stop and art starts is not the only question to be discussed, it is the basic question that the Romantic historic novel was based on. This relationship is explicit in the Romantic Literary production where the romantic theme and the tumultuous political-historical events of a period are clear. The study of the development of the theory of novel writing and critical reading make the question of relationship between romantic novel and history eligible, since both history and novel consist of a discourse that gains its power from its language with its impact on the recipient and its role, regardless of its factual and historical references. This paper examines nineteenth and late twentieth-century novel in terms of changing configuration of the 'historic novel' and its function and appeal. It focuses on the historical, theoretical, literary as well as cultural aspects that assist in assimilating the valid meaning of the relationship between history and novel. It examines two texts written by two well known writers from different eras and cultures: one belongs to the nineteenth century England, Sir Walter Scot, and the other to an Arab modern one, Ameen Maalouf. The choice of the two different writers is to universalize the problematic the relationship between history and novel. The focus is on the historic novel, its characteristics, meaning, and how far we can consider it a history.*

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Introduction

This paper examines nineteenth and late twentieth-century novel in terms of changing configuration of the 'historic novel' and its function and appeal. It focuses on the historical, theoretical, literary as well as cultural aspects that assist in assimilating the valid meaning of the issue. It examines two texts written by two well known writers from different eras and cultures: one belongs to the nineteenth century England, Sir Walter Scot, and the other to an Arab modern one, Ameen Maalouf. The choice of the two different writers is to universalize the problematic the relationship between history and novel. The focus is on the historic novel, its characteristics, meaning, and how far we can consider it a history.

Researchers identify history as “the study or record of a series of chronological events” (Wolfreys 50) and its concern is man and his constantly changing conditions throughout times. It is linked to past events that have occurred and are related to human beings. In fact, there is no history without documentation of the past incidents and that means history must be a written art, or something written. This reliance on the document and the impact of the human element behind it is what distinguishes historical writing from other types of narrative writing, which means that the assumption of the reality of the incidents and characters is what makes history. On the other hand, the novel according to the NTC's

Dictionary of Literary Terms is a “NOVEL, that attempt to re-create an historically significant personage or series of events.”

So the novel is a text told or derived from transformation of news and anecdotes, and here it meets with history in having events as their core being. This similarity between the novel and history either on the level of the label or on the level of content makes this relationship attractive among researchers, and because of the nature of this relationship emerged a novel called the 'historic novel' whose subject is history. It is derived from historical events and characters and this leads to the question: where does history stand in relation to the historic novel? Following that comes the question about the function of the historic novel. Is history the main concern of the historic novel in the sense that its goal is to narrate history, which means narrating and documenting an era with all its cultural, political, and social impact from the writer's point of view?

Therefore, it is important to consider George Lukacs' book *The Historical Novel* as one of the most important books that sought to look at the historic novel and provide a deep insight into it. It says that the historic novel provides a faithful picture of the era specified in the novel; it depicts all the problems of common life that led to the historical crisis it represents, and it does so through fictional characters (12). These characters are opposing parties clashing through dialogue, that is closely linked to trying to

portray a historical situation as if it were a fact. Hence, it is important in the historic novel to stimulate emotions for the characters who have emerged in these events, and bring them back to life again to understand the social and human motivations that led them to think, feel and behave as they did in the historical reality. Therefore, the historic novel is an attempt to form a history of an era. To construct a real historical era that responds to the circumstances of historical truth, it should correspond to that age and offer a good representation of the era and give a comprehensive picture of what took place so the reader becomes involved and aware of what took place in that era. What concerns us here is that the historic novel, as seen by Lukacs, is an attempt to provide a true picture in all aspects of the historical period provided by the writer who uses what he knows to reveal what no one knows. Lukacs also believes that the real objective of the historic novel is not presenting a real historical era but presenting human greatness (59).

Hence, according to Lukacs' view, history and art go hand in hand--history serves art first and enables it to create historic reality. The aim is to serve the general history, but in a different way, which means that historic novel is not only immediate events transmitted, but it is a case of an integrated need by the writer to live and feel the events before he represents them. The novel interprets history from another angle, besides the historical event itself. That is, it also uses history as a means to reveal the human aspects of history and as a historical text that shows the course of man in this life, thereby writing about the issues facing humans in their lives. Hence, the historic novel explains man's journey in the universe and discusses the major issues such as the issue of evil and existence and the issue of time. These issues are philosophical problems, which mean that the novel seeks to explain history by using a philosophical explanation as well as to provide a vision about existing events. This indicates that the writer is not limited to the role of the historian in recording the events, but he also provides a philosophical interpretation of history that shows man's attitude towards life, and brings to the surface factors in the movement of history like Hegel's interpretation of history which is based on controversy: "a historical force, driving events onwards towards a progressive resolution of the contradictions that characterize each historical epoch" (Blackburn 104).

However, when we come to the historical event which is documented by contemporary historians we may use Mikhail Bakhtin's remarks on Dostoevsky, on the assumption that there is only one historical fact that historians seek to detect and investigate. This does not mean the necessity or the inevitability of the existence of only one form of conscious awareness. It is possible to assume that the only truth requests multiple forms of awareness and it cannot, in principle, be comprehended within the limits of one awareness, which, by its very

nature, is accidental and generated from contact with all various forms of consciousness (Bakhtin 115).

The important thing is that when history becomes a discourse, then its dimension which is characterized by being identical with the historical incident, declines on the basis that this fact had begun to fade behind the historian who produced the discourse, because, as a man, he is influenced by the era that shaped him, and the life which he lived, and we can cite the famous dictum "history recorded by the victors" as the victors are the ones who document it. This means that they will record the incident as it appears to them, and when one reviews some of the texts, that record the memories of the leaders on an era, one finds that it reveals the difference between the multiple documentation of one incident on the basis that each historian writes from his own point of view of the incident. This effect of the historian and his role in the production of the historical event creates the distinction between the historical narrative and the historical text but that is not enough with the use of history and novel for the same techniques for both of them, and the well of the two fields to portray a particular historical period

However, the distinction between historical text or non-fiction narrative and the historic novel as genre is evident in previous studies. But what are the characteristics that distinguish the historic novel from other types of novels especially the realistic? This remains a question to be investigated. The characteristic features of the genre of the historic novel are not readily obvious. Is the historic novel concerned with a historical phase of a certain era, according to Lukacs' definition of the historical writing? Or is it concerned with recording a contemporary incident as in Muhammad Shokry's *The Dry Bread* and William Burroughs' *Naked Lunch* which document the contemporary social, political, and cultural issues? The difference becomes clear between the historic novel and other types of novel, although not on the same level in the post modern novel, which does not adhere to one structural pattern and only come in patterns of narrative based on the multiplicity of point of view. Such a type of novel could be considered as having a historical writing style as *Leon Africano*.

Since the main focus of this paper is the historic novel, a clear definition of the term is needed here. Jeremy Hawthorn identifies the historic novel as one that: sets its events and characters in a well-defined historical context, and it may include both fictional and real characters. It is often distinguished by convincing detailed description of manners, building, institutions and scenery of its chosen setting, and generally attempts to convey a sense of historical verisimilitude (57).

This definition gives some credibility to the historic novel in that the historical novel refers to a certain era and its narrative is built around a real historical

incident. But that does not mean that the novelist must adhere to the historical facts. Actually, the novelist depends mostly on his imagination to build a fictional world based in the past and that is a major difference between history and novel as Henry Ritts puts it: "realism for the historian is the belief that historical inquiry refers to a 'real' past that was once, but is no longer, present, and the written histories are valid to the extent that they accurately correspond to this real past (47). History insists on the accuracy of documentation of what happened in the past? Man's imagination should not interfere in adding or subtracting according to a certain criterion that the writer wants to reveal to his readers as the novelist does in writing his novel.

However, since its inception, the historic novel has attempted to fuse the two discourses: fictional and factual. On the one hand, it shares many characteristics with romance, from which it has striven to distance itself. On the other, it has emulated historical forms of writing in the attempt to embody some of the credibility of history. Novelists tried to provide a realistic picture of the world and the romance writers indulged in the flights of fancy and glorified the chivalric deeds of knights.

The distinction between the two types of writing is not easy for the reader. And the tension between romance and history is perhaps nowhere so conspicuous as in the historic novel which by definition brings history and fiction together. The historic novel's nature brings it closely to history and both use one medium to reveal themselves to the reader which is narration as Robert Berkhofer explains about history: Contextualism and narrativization are two sides of the same historiographical coin. Normal history, as a consequence of its contextualist search of unity in diversity, presupposes narrative as its main way of describing the past. Conversely, in normal historical practice contextualism operationalizes the narrativization of the past as history (36).

This brings us to view history as a story as Berkhofer continues to speak about the historical narration: A story presents a sequence of events or actions, but just as a chronology is not a history, so a story is not just one random thing after another but rather one thing because of another Whether or how historical narrative explains is a controversial topic, but a one-thing-after-another sequence is customarily labeled an "annal" or a "chronicle", while a one – thing-because-of-another sequence is termed a proper "history". The author or narrator connects the events and actions of the story through a plot, and the action and events from a plot through a causal network of narration (37).

Hence, the subject of history and novel is the past events or famous historical figures. But the historic novel has more freedom in combining two or more different characters from different eras in one work

though no historical evidence exists confirming that they have even met. Moreover, fictional and historical persons interact with each other. Of course, this is a violation and a distortion of the historical record from the historian's point of view. But that did not stop the historic novels from assuming historical authenticity: "Like histories, most historic novels have until recently tended toward invoking the authenticity of the time they describe" (Berkhofer 67). Nevertheless, fiction contributes greatly to history for as Bertons says though here he means the new historic approach but it is applicable here too: The ideological constructions that authors live in, and have internalized, inevitably become part of their work, which is therefore always political and always for power Because it plays an active role in the creation and consolidation of power relations, literature actively contributes to history (147).

The historic novel in England started with Sir Walter Scott and was regarded as a modern genre. It was modern because it chooses a different approach than what was prevailing at that time of using ballads and poetry as a narrative medium and replaces that with prose narrative real novel here. George Lukacs explained the aim of this kind of novel as to create "an artistically faithful image of concrete historical epoch" (19). The major features of this new type of novel are: the combination of tradition and romance in which Scott and other writers combined, the integration of historical events and imaginary heroes and the vitality of the past. This genre indulged itself in the love for the strange, the exotic and the distant which raise a new interest in history and especially in the Middle Ages, the historic period that was loved by the romantic writers. The romantic writers revisited the past through their imagination. Lord Chesterfield describes some of the characteristics of this novel in a letter to his son as follows: It is a little gallant history, which must contain a great deal of love, and not exceed one or two small volumes. The subject must be a love affair; the lovers are to meet with many difficulties and obstacles, to oppose the accomplishment of their wishes, but at last overcome them all (qtd Hawthorn 22).

The adventure is based in the past and the author acts as an intermediary between the past and present and this is a very romantic aspect as David Mores says: "The artist is essentially a mediator, a go-between, who connects the natural with the civilised, the imaginary with the real" (qtd English Poetry 298).

Scott's novels have all the romantic elements: the romance of the past, and the union of historical events and imaginary heroes. For example, in *Ivanhoe* (1820), the hero, is not King Richard the Lionheart but Wilfred of Ivanhoe an imaginary Saxon nobleman. Themes of love and chivalry, the fascination of the supernatural, the love of nature with brilliant description, the use of

fictitious content and passionate, adventurous and idealistic attitudes are to be found in the historic novel. The vitality of the past is another characteristic of the historical romance. For example, Walter Scott's novel *Ivanhoe* captures the spirit of an age and the causes of historical events of a period giving vitality to the past. Not only that, but he was also "an excellent historian and critic of the novel and deeply interested in and concerned about the cannon and the social function of literature" (Romantic Revolution 172).

The novel *Ivanhoe* is one of Sir Walter Scott's famous romantic novels. The novel is set in the Middle Ages when chivalry and knights were everyday elements of the time. It is very interesting for it combines many characters and events from different periods into one story. The novel is divided into three parts, each of them centering on a particular adventure or quest. The novel's hero, Wilfred of Ivanhoe, is the son of Cedric, a Saxon nobleman. Cedric wishes to marry his ward Rowena, a descendant of Alfred the Great, to Athelstane of Coningsburgh, a descendant of Edward the Confessor. But *Ivanhoe's* love for Rowena threatens his father's plans, so Cedric disinherits him. Therefore, *Ivanhoe* joins the Crusade, and, fighting alongside Richard the Lionheart in the Holy Land. He wins the King's favour. The novel begins with *Ivanhoe's* return to England, where Prince John is plotting to depose his brother Richard, who has been taken captive in Austria on his way home from the Crusades.

On his way, *Ivanhoe*, disguised as a pilgrim, visits his father's house. Here, he saves the life of Isaac, a rich Jew of York, by warning him of a planned ambush. At Ashby, *Ivanhoe*, with the help of the King who has returned to England in disguise, vanquishes all of King John's supporters, including his great personal enemy, the Templar Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert and the brutal baron Front-de-Boeuf. *Ivanhoe* is wounded in the tournament and Isaac's daughter Rebecca nurses him back to health. Bois-Guilbert and Front-de-Boeuf then assist a mercenary leader Maurice de Bracy in a plan to abduct Rowena. Her travelling party, which includes Cedric, Athelstane, Isaac, Rebecca, and the still-recovering *Ivanhoe*, is attacked and all are led captive to Front-de-Boeuf's Castle of Torquilstone. The castle is successfully besieged by a band of Saxons and outlaws, led by Locksley (Robin Hood) and King Richard himself, and the prisoners are liberated except Rebecca. At the last moment, *Ivanhoe* appears as her champion to face a reluctant Bois-Guilbert who has been commanded to represent his order. At the first pass, Bois-Guilbert falls dead from his horse. At the end, Richard reconciles *Ivanhoe* and Cedric, Athelstane withdraws his claim to Rowena's hand, and *Ivanhoe* and Rowena marry. Rebecca, stifling her love for *Ivanhoe*, accompanies her father to Spain.

In this novel, Scott drew in his portrayal of Saxon England, on Robert Henry's *The History of Great Britain*, Sharon Turner's *The History of the Anglo-Saxons from the Earliest Period to the Norman Conquest*, and Joseph Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*. The characterization of Richard I, Scott depends on Henry again and on David Hume's *The History of England* (web). In many areas of the novel, however, literary sources proved as important as scholarly works. In his depiction of medieval England, Scott takes much from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Numerous details are suggested by Joseph Ritson's *Robin Hood: A Collection of All the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads* (web). The novel depends greatly on real historical incidents as "the battle of Hastings", which is a crucial historical element of the novel and the Crusades. The characters too are historical figures as king Richard I and Robin Hood as Isaac the Jew in the novel mentions: "And him whom the Nazarenes of England call the Lion's Heart-assuredly it were better for me to fall into the hands of a strong lion of Idumea than into his" (297).

Though Scott drew heavily on history, he does not restrict himself to historical accuracy or chronology as he himself admits in the introduction to *Ivanhoe* that he "may have confused the manners of two or three centuries" (Chew and Altick 1215). The novel presents a splendid fusion of history and romance. Since Scott was writing fiction and not history, he uses the poetic license and blends different periods into *Ivanhoe* as for example the character of Robin Hood who belonged to a later period. Cedric and Athelstane are real figures who lived in earlier time and they are mentioned in the novel: "For shame, noble Athelstane," said Cedric (491), whereas Edward the Confessor had no descendants.

Therefore, *Ivanhoe* is a historical romance novel and though its subject is history it meets the criterion given in Scott's definition that romance is: "a fictitious narrative in prose or verse, the interest of which turns upon marvelous and uncommon incidents" (Chew and Altick 1214). This is equally true of all Scott's writings. *Ivanhoe* is a glorification of chivalry and romantic adventure rather than expressing historical realism. Also, the action is guided by the romantic spirit rather than the moral values.

To sum up, as a literary movement, English Romanticism including the historic novel presented a clear and sharp break with the emphasis on reason, common sense and realism that had characterized the Augustan Age. It encouraged individualism and the free expression of personal feelings and turned to emotion and imagination and distance as sources of inspiration.

However, the historic novel nowadays takes a different turn. It does not go back to history to celebrate old values of chivalry or to glorify it. History is used to open the way for multi-readings and

interepretations of man's life, meaning of cultures and humanity.

The second writer to be discussed in this paper is Amin Maalouf. His novel *Leon the African* adopts historical structure in its composition. Historical genre is determined by several components, shown by the personal history of the protagonist and historical events. The paper will explore that in detail.

The novel portrays the personal life of an Arab, who spent his childhood in Andalusia, then immigrated to Morocco after the fall of Andalusia in the hands of the Spaniards. He grew up in Morocco, and there he started his education at *alkutab*, reciting and studying the Koran. His working life started there. He joined his uncle as a messenger in the service of the King of Fez to one of the African kingdoms. Later he worked in trade, but was forced to flee Fez because his brother-in-law killed one of the king's men. He went to Egypt and remained there, where he met Noor, Circassian lady and the wife of Aladdin, the nephew of the Turkish governor Salim Pasha, and from there he moved to the Turkish court where he realized that the Ottomans are planning to attack Egypt. Later, Sultan Selim attacked Egypt, killing Tumanbay. The narrator and hero Hassan Bin Mohammed Al Wazzan travelled from Egypt to the Hajj (Makkah) and then went back to his family in Tunisia but he was captured by Italian pirates and was presented as a gift to the Pope at the Vatican and called by the Pope's name and became one of his followers, and learned Turkish, Italian, and Hebrew. Also, he studied the Bible, and therefore, converted to Christianity. He witnessed the movement of the Lutherans and their impact on the Christian movement and conflict within Christianity in Europe and the assault on the Vatican and the burning of Rome until he traveled back to his people in Tunis and died there.

These names have been mentioned in historical sources: Leon the African, Ottoman Selim, Tumanbay, Sultan Qansuh, Lyon tenth. But this does not mean that the names and characters have actually existed in the discussed historical era, but the writer is inspired by the age and the nature of people's lives, and he created other characters complementing the event and its image. As an example of the fabricated characters, is the female slave, donated to him when he was with his uncle serving the king, and his cousin Fatima and the way he married her, which is not usually found in history books, but it commensurates with the habits of people at that time, as it appears in folk tales and stories that are contained in poetry and literature, where truth and fiction are mingled. The construction of Lyon African's character confirms that the imagination has its part in it. It is totally not real especially if one takes into consideration the events that passed by and the experiences he lived.

The second element which the novel is based on is the historical events. The plot is built around real

events, such as the fall of Andalusia, evangelizing the Arabs, and the confiscation of their money, the Inquisition's persecution of them, then Arabs and Muslims' escape to Morocco, and the Spaniards' chase of the Arabs to the Moroccan coast at a time when the Ottoman state was at its peak, the young man is captivated by Italians and he writes a book *Describing Africa* in the Italian language.

These events are all historical, but the author has furnished the rest of the novel with imaginative events and characters. Like what happened with his brother-in-law, Aaron, who joined the pirates to fight against the Portuguese, to become later the prime Minister of the Ottoman Sultan.

In the fusion of these two elements: history and fiction, imagination interferes with reality. It is not text based on fiction alone, nor on solid truth, but of both representing complementary elements. The novel is a text-based fantasy. This fantasy is initially brought about by certain facts but later the truth about the era itself is revealed.

However, the goal of this kind of text is not didactic, i.e., presenting history from an artistic point of view and making it convincing through the reflection of the greatness of those figures as in the classic novel, for the simple reason that the main character of the novel does not represent or reflect a nation. It is true that the character is a man of personal glory, but he is not an aristocratic or a national hero who presents certain values and strives to achieve these values. He is a traveler and merchant who manages to live anywhere and copes with all circumstances; he is more like the popular character of Sinbad- more of an example than a real person. Therefore, the character does not belong to one nation at all, but to many nations. The character moves among different nations, and each time he becomes part of the new nation. When he is in Morocco he is Moroccan and then he goes to Egypt and becomes an Egyptian, and while being at the Vatican he becomes an Italian, and a follower of the Pope.

This means that the novel can not be a classic one in the traditional sense of the term, but it is more of a fantasy novel than a historical one. However, the presence of this character in history books, and the existence of the book *Describing Africa* which is written in Italian give the novel a historical dimension. This historical dimension imposes the issue of the impact of historical discourse on the fictional text. The historical discourse's characteristics are exemplified in the facts referred to earlier and the author's adoption of them in the construction of his novel, and the discourse which is determined by the historical heroes. The real events give the novel a historical background, and a convincing dimension through the possibility of the occurrence of the narrated events which implies what the novel suggests. The fantasy aspect of the narrative is the movement of the protagonist among different

nations, cultures, languages, religions, and his transformation from one attitude to another. This transformational process created some sort of cultural circle: he is an Arab Muslim, his neighbors and friends are Christians and Jews, who speak Castilian and Arabic. He moves to Morocco to become an Arab Muslim only, and no Christian or Jew around him, and then he himself converts to Christianity and becomes an Italian.

However, though the novel is considered a historic novel as it tells the story of a historical figure at a certain period in history, the implied dimension or what can be described as the perspective behind the text goes beyond the desire to portray a particular historical era. The historical era during which the novel takes place is not one of the golden periods in Muslims' history. It recalls the fall of Alandalus and the wars among Muslims. It does not also present events for their morals and didactic purpose. It actually presents the author's point of view of the relation among different cultures where they establish a circle with no beginning and that is what Leon the African or Muhamad Alwazan symbolize. This character who is created from different cultural and racial elements is the model for the cultural relationships and identity where they are created from each other and carrying the other element within it. As Maalouf says in his book *Les Identites Meurtrieres* when he refers to his origins that he is Lebanese and French and that he is from Arabic origins that moved from the south of the Arab peninsula and embraced Christianity a long time ago. He speaks the language of the Koran and belongs to it and he points out that: When we consider identity as a group of multiple affiliations, some of them tied to an ethnic history and some are linked to a religious heritage, we see in our being, roots and course tributaries of the contributions and hybrids variety of different kinds and effects, some are accurate and some are contradictory. A different relationship with others is born, as well as the clan to which we belong and the issue is not any more us and them (48 Tran.)

This circuit in the relationship between cultures and the different personalities which is embodied by Leon the African, reflects a relationship between the cultures in which the novel tries to express where they become one circle with no beginning or end. No distinction is obvious between one part and the other, but it is one whole part since the author does not adopt the usual method of evaluating the relationship between these cultures usually presented by different characters. Each is a representative of a culture and they deal with each other in a civilized manner and these manners express the relation among these different cultures. But the author creates this diversity through one character who confirms the meaning of diversity in the idea of culture, and it can not be separated despite the similarity, this is confirmed by the character's attitude

towards Christianity according to the religious culture that he learned at the time of his conversion to Islam, and not refusing to take advantage of the first to understand the second to analysis it (Lion 318). When the protagonist was conversing with his friend Aaron he said: "For peace. Is it not great for Mediterranean Christians and Muslims to be able to live and trade together?" (Lion 362).

Thus the novel becomes an intellectual independent discourse because it uses the power of narrative and story to present to the receiver a cultural vision, using history as a great reference to enhance the persuasive aspect and transfer the imagination to reality. This makes fact and fiction blend at this point and, because this point of view about the relationship among cultures is idealistic, it might be impossible to apply it. This idealism creates a dreamy romantic view of life of which even the protagonist is aware in his conversation about it in the last dialogue between him and Aaron. He comments on Aaron when the latter says: "I know what differentiates between Constantinople and Rome, and between France and Constantinople is religion, and what brings them closer is their interest either a noble or despicable one; do not talk to me about peace nor the book because the issue is not this, and this is not what our masters think about", saying "I have never won a discussion with Aaron since we were children and in my reply there was an indication of surrender" (Lion 363).

The relationship between history and fiction is more complicated than what it seems to be. They are linked to each other in the core of their existence. The novel in terms of its function provides a complete picture of the times in which it is written, whether on the level of the community or on the level of culture. It reflects facts, emphasized by the famous saying attributed to Tolstoy of the novel as the history of the middle class. Hence, the novel is the history of nations. Despite the imaginative dimension in the narrative text, the novel functions the same as history in recording and portraying a certain era. Therefore, it presents historical incidents, records deeds, and preserves customs and traditions, which is exactly what myths do for the indigenous people of Canada as in the study of Levi Strauss, whereby he considers the myth as capable of preserving the man's life as history (29-37). Of course the myth is not a novel but it shares with the historic novel man's point of view of the events and how he explains them.

Hence, the novel becomes part of the historical discourse, which is subject to the writer's point of view of the events and how they can be interpreted and recorded. Also, one of the major thrusts of literary study lately is to understand the impact of a fresh understanding of historical events upon the message and interpretation of the literary texts, for history is not a series of written facts but a narrative representation of incidents which interact with other disciplines.

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