



Romanticized History in the Novels of Nasīm Ḥijāzī and Sir Walter Scott

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Abstract

The relationship between history and fiction has remained a significant concern in comparative literary studies, particularly in relation to the ways novelists reconstruct the past to address contemporary cultural and ideological concerns. This study examines the representation of romanticized history in Sir Walter Scott's Waverley and Ivanhoe and Nasīm Ḥijāzī's Andheri Raat ke Musafir and Yūsuf bin Tāshfīn. Although both novelists have been extensively studied individually, comparatively little attention has been devoted to examining their approaches to historical romanticization from a cross-cultural perspective. Employing Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion within comparative literary studies, the research uses qualitative textual analysis to explore how Scott and Ḥijāzī transform historical events into narratives of heroism, cultural memory, national consciousness, and collective identity. The findings demonstrate that Scott romanticizes medieval English history through chivalric ideals, heroic characters, and themes of social reconciliation, whereas Ḥijāzī reconstructs the Islamic past through idealized leadership, religious commitment, moral values, and civilizational achievement. Despite their distinct historical, cultural, and ideological contexts, both writers selectively reshape historical realities to create emotionally engaging narratives that connect the past with the aspirations of their respective societies. The study argues that romanticized history is not merely a literary technique but also a cultural and ideological discourse through which historical memory is interpreted and contemporary identities are constructed. By bringing Scott and Ḥijāzī into comparative dialogue, this study contributes to scholarship on historical fiction, comparative literature, nationalism, cultural memory, and the literary representation of the past.

Keywords:

Sir Walter Scott, Nasīm Ḥijāzī, Historical Fiction, Romanticized History, Cultural Memory, National Consciousness, Heroism, Islamic History, English History, Ideology, Nationalism, Historical Novel.

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1. Introduction

The relationship between literature and history has long occupied a central position in literary scholarship, with historical fiction serving as a significant medium through which the past is interpreted, reconstructed, and reimagined. Rather than merely reproducing historical facts, historical novels often reshape historical realities by integrating ideological, cultural, and imaginative elements that reflect the concerns of particular societies and historical periods. This process of historical romanticization enables authors to transform historical events, personalities, and cultural memories into narratives that evoke emotional, moral, and national consciousness among readers. Consequently, historical fiction functions not only as a literary genre but also as a cultural mechanism that influences collective memory and perceptions of historical identity (Lukács, 1962; White, 1973).

The romanticization of history has been particularly influential in the development of historical novels since the emergence of Romanticism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Romanticism challenged the rationalist principles of the Enlightenment by emphasizing emotion, imagination, individualism, heroism, and cultural nationalism (Lazarou, 2015). Historical novelists operating within this tradition frequently employed selective representations of historical events to construct narratives that celebrate virtues such as patriotism, sacrifice, chivalry, and moral idealism. Such representations often privilege emotional authenticity and cultural significance over strict historical accuracy, thereby producing idealized visions of the past that resonate with contemporary social and ideological concerns (Hutcheon, 1988). Historical fiction, therefore, occupies a unique position at the intersection of historical documentation and imaginative storytelling, allowing authors to negotiate the relationship between historical reality and literary creativity.

Among the most influential practitioners of historical romanticization is Sir Walter Scott, who is widely regarded as the founder of the modern historical novel. Scott's works, particularly *Waverley* (1814) and *Ivanhoe* (1819), established a literary model that integrated historical events with fictional narratives, creating representations of national identity, heroism, and cultural memory that profoundly influenced European literary traditions (Lukács, 1962). Scott's historical imagination transformed historical events into narratives of emotional and cultural significance, presenting history not merely as a sequence of facts but as a dynamic process shaped by human experience and collective consciousness. His novels emphasized themes of patriotism, chivalry, honor, and social transformation, thereby contributing to the construction of romanticized historical identities (Rotari, 2015).

Similarly, in the South Asian literary tradition, Naseem Hijazi emerged as one of the most prominent historical novelists whose works significantly contributed to the romanticization of Islamic history and cultural identity. Through novels such as *Andheri Raat Ke Musafir* and *Yusuf bin Tashfeen*, Hijazi reconstructed historical events and personalities to emphasize themes of heroism, sacrifice, religious commitment, and collective struggle. His historical narratives frequently portray Islamic civilization through idealized representations that seek to inspire moral consciousness, cultural solidarity, and national identity among readers (Ghaznavi & Shabir, 2021). Like Scott, Hijazi employs historical fiction not merely as a means of narrating past events but as a vehicle for shaping cultural memory and ideological perspectives.

Despite the considerable geographical, cultural, and historical differences between Scott and Hijazi, their works reveal significant thematic affinities in their approaches to historical representation. Both authors employ literary strategies that emphasize heroism, chivalry, patriotism, sacrifice, and cultural identity, thereby transforming historical realities into emotionally compelling narratives. These similarities suggest that historical

romanticization transcends national and cultural boundaries while remaining deeply rooted in specific ideological and historical contexts. Comparative analysis of these writers, therefore, provides valuable insights into the mechanisms through which literature constructs historical consciousness and collective memory (Bassnett, 1993).

The present study employs Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek's (1998) model of thematic inclusion as its primary theoretical framework. Zepetnek's interdisciplinary approach to comparative literature emphasizes the analysis of thematic similarities and differences across literary traditions while incorporating historical, cultural, social, and ideological perspectives. Unlike traditional comparative approaches that focus primarily on textual influence or literary genealogy, thematic inclusion facilitates the exploration of cross-cultural affinities and divergences without privileging one literary tradition over another (Tötösy de Zepetnek, 1998). This methodological framework is particularly appropriate for examining historical romanticization because it enables scholars to investigate how authors from diverse cultural backgrounds employ similar thematic structures to construct historical narratives.

The theoretical foundation of thematic inclusion is further supported by interdisciplinary scholarship that emphasizes the interaction between literature and broader social structures. Bakhtin's (1981) concept of dialogism highlights the dynamic relationship between texts and cultural discourse, while Bourdieu's (1993) theory of cultural production demonstrates how literary works are shaped by social and ideological forces. Similarly, Klein (1990) argues that interdisciplinary approaches promote broader understanding by transcending disciplinary boundaries, whereas Spivak (2003) advocates comparative methodologies that challenge Eurocentric literary frameworks through cross-cultural analysis. These theoretical perspectives collectively provide a robust foundation for investigating the relationship between historical representation, cultural identity, and literary imagination.

This study comparatively examines the historical novels of Sir Walter Scott and Naseem Hijazi to investigate how both authors romanticize historical events and construct idealized representations of the past. Specifically, it explores the thematic dimensions of heroism, chivalry, patriotism, cultural identity, nostalgia, and moral idealism within their narratives. By employing Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion, this research aims to identify the similarities and differences in the historical romanticization practices of these authors and to examine how their literary representations influence readers' perceptions of history and cultural identity. Ultimately, this study contributes to the fields of comparative literature, historical fiction, cultural memory studies, and interdisciplinary literary scholarship by demonstrating the enduring significance of romanticized history in shaping collective consciousness across diverse cultural tradition

2. Literature Review and Research Gap

The historical novel has long been recognized as a significant literary genre that bridges the gap between historical reality and imaginative reconstruction. Since the nineteenth century, scholars have debated the extent to which historical fiction represents historical truth while simultaneously serving ideological, cultural, and aesthetic purposes. Historical novels not only reconstruct the past but also influence collective memory, national consciousness, and cultural identity. According to Lukács (1962), the historical novel emerged as a literary form that sought to represent historical processes through individual experiences and fictional narratives. He argues that historical fiction enables readers to understand the social, political, and cultural realities of previous eras while simultaneously engaging with contemporary concerns.

The emergence of Romanticism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries profoundly transformed the representation of history in literature. Romantic writers rejected the rationalist principles of the Enlightenment and emphasized emotion, imagination, heroism, nationalism, and individual experience (Lazarou, 2015). Historical novelists influenced by Romanticism frequently reconstructed the past through idealized representations

that privileged emotional and cultural truth over strict historical accuracy. Consequently, themes such as heroism, chivalry, patriotism, sacrifice, and moral idealism became central components of romanticized historical narratives. These representations contributed significantly to the formation of collective memory and national identity (Hutcheon, 1988).

Among the pioneers of historical romanticization, Sir Walter Scott occupies a distinguished position in literary history. Widely regarded as the founder of the modern historical novel, Scott established a literary tradition that combined historical authenticity with imaginative reconstruction. His historical novels transformed the perception of history by presenting it not merely as a sequence of events but as a dynamic interaction between individuals, societies, and historical circumstances. Scholars have extensively examined Scott's literary contributions from historical, cultural, postcolonial, political, and aesthetic perspectives (Rotari, 2015).

Research on Scott's literary background demonstrates that his Scottish heritage, religious upbringing, and familial traditions profoundly influenced his historical imagination. His extensive exposure to Scottish folklore, ballads, border legends, and historical narratives shaped his literary vision and contributed to his romanticized representation of Scottish history and culture (Lotha, 2024). Scholars have argued that Scott's strong attachment to Scottish national identity enabled him to reconstruct historical events through themes of heroism, patriotism, honor, and cultural nostalgia. His historical narratives frequently depict the medieval and early modern periods as eras of moral grandeur, national unity, and heroic struggle.

Several studies have examined Scott's use of landscape and setting as mechanisms of historical romanticization. Bisson (2015) argues that Scott's picturesque descriptions of the Scottish Highlands transformed geographical spaces into symbolic representations of cultural identity and historical memory. Similarly, Beers (1918) emphasizes Scott's ability to integrate natural scenery, folklore, and historical events into emotionally compelling narratives that evoke admiration for the past. Scott's novels, particularly *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe*, employ vivid descriptions of castles, battlegrounds, forests, and rural landscapes to create a sense of nostalgia and historical authenticity. These aesthetic representations contribute significantly to the romanticization of history by transforming historical settings into emotionally charged cultural spaces.

The historical novels *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe* have received substantial scholarly attention from various theoretical perspectives. Shaw (1983) argues that historical fiction combines factual history and imaginative storytelling to produce narratives that educate readers while simultaneously entertaining them. Scholars such as Tapash (2018) have examined *Ivanhoe* through the lens of nationalism and patriotism, arguing that Scott portrays loyalty and national identity as fundamental values that unite societies across social divisions. Similarly, Rotari (2015) emphasizes that *Waverley* transformed historical fiction by presenting history as a living reality rather than a decorative background for fictional events. These studies collectively demonstrate Scott's role in establishing historical fiction as a genre that shapes cultural consciousness and national identity.

Recent scholarships have expanded the interpretation of Scott's works through postcolonial and ideological frameworks. Dhannoon (2022) analyzes *Waverley* from a postcolonial perspective, employing concepts such as "subalternity" and "otherness" derived from the theories of Homi Bhabha and Edward Said. This research demonstrates how Scott's narratives represent power relations, colonial authority, and cultural conflict. Similarly, Marxist analyses of *Ivanhoe* have explored issues of class conflict, social hierarchy, and ethnic marginalization, particularly in relation to the representation of Normans, Saxons, and Jewish communities. These studies reveal the ideological complexity underlying Scott's romanticized historical narratives.

In South Asian literary traditions, Naseem Hijazi occupies a similarly influential position in the development of historical fiction. Hijazi's novels have attracted considerable scholarly attention because of their portrayal of Islamic history, cultural identity, religious ideology, and political consciousness. His works frequently reconstruct periods of Islamic glory and resistance, emphasizing themes of heroism, sacrifice, patriotism, faith, and moral righteousness. Through these representations, Hijazi contributed significantly to shaping Muslim historical consciousness and collective identity in South Asia.

Several studies have investigated Hijazi's representation of Islamic ideology and cultural nationalism. Khudadat et al. (2022), in their analysis of *Aakhri Maarka*, argue that Hijazi's historical narratives construct a strong ideological distinction between Islamic and non-Islamic civilizations. Their findings suggest that Hijazi's historical imagination serves not only literary purposes but also ideological and cultural functions. Likewise, Ghaznavi and Shabir (2021) emphasize Hijazi's role in promoting themes of resistance, sacrifice, and liberation, portraying him as a literary figure committed to preserving Muslim historical consciousness and identity.

Other scholars have focused on Hijazi's representation of historical heroes and Islamic civilization. Ashraf (2016) argues that Hijazi's novels glorify historical personalities such as Muhammad bin Qasim and Mahmood Ghaznavi through narratives of courage, religious devotion, military triumph, and cultural superiority. Similarly, studies on *Khak aur Khoon* have demonstrated how Hijazi employed historical fiction to represent trauma, migration, nationalism, and collective suffering during the Partition of India. These studies collectively indicate that Hijazi's historical narratives prioritize ideological and emotional engagement over historical objectivity.

Despite the extensive scholarship on Sir Walter Scott and Naseem Hijazi individually, significant gaps remain in comparative literary studies concerning their historical novels. Existing research has primarily examined these authors within their respective cultural, national, and ideological contexts, with little attention paid to their thematic similarities and comparative literary strategies. Previous studies have investigated themes such as nationalism, postcolonialism, religion, class conflict, patriotism, and historical authenticity independently, but few have explored how these themes function comparatively across Western and South Asian historical traditions.

Furthermore, no comprehensive comparative study has systematically examined Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe* alongside Naseem Hijazi's *Andheri Raat Ke Musafir* and *Yusuf bin Tashfeen* through Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion. Existing scholarship has largely overlooked the thematic affinities between these authors regarding heroism, chivalry, patriotism, cultural identity, historical nostalgia, religion, morality, and collective memory. Additionally, limited attention has been given to understanding how romanticized historical narratives influence readers' perceptions of history and contribute to the construction of cultural consciousness across different literary traditions.

Therefore, this study addresses an important scholarly gap by conducting a comparative thematic analysis of selected historical novels by Sir Walter Scott and Naseem Hijazi through the theoretical framework of Zepetnek's thematic inclusion model. By investigating the shared and divergent strategies of historical romanticization employed by these authors, this research contributes to comparative literature, historical fiction studies, cultural memory studies, and interdisciplinary literary scholarship.

3. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

3.1. Theoretical Framework

The present study employs Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion within the broader framework of comparative cultural studies to examine the romanticization of history in the selected historical novels of Sir Walter Scott and Naseem Hijazi. Zepetnek's interdisciplinary approach to comparative literature emphasizes the analysis of thematic affinities across different literary traditions while incorporating historical, cultural, social, and ideological contexts (Tötösy de Zepetnek, 1998). Unlike traditional comparative approaches that focus primarily on influence studies or literary genealogy, thematic inclusion facilitates the exploration of similarities and differences among literary texts originating from diverse cultural and historical backgrounds.

According to Zepetnek (1998), comparative literary analysis should transcend national and disciplinary boundaries by examining how literary works construct meaning through shared thematic patterns and cultural experiences. His model of thematic inclusion enables researchers to investigate recurring themes, ideological structures, and cultural representations that shape literary narratives. The approach is particularly useful for analyzing historical fiction because historical novels often combine historical events with imaginative reconstruction, thereby producing narratives that reflect both universal and culturally specific concerns.

The application of thematic inclusion in the present study allows for the comparative examination of how Sir Walter Scott and Naseem Hijazi romanticize history through similar thematic strategies despite belonging to different literary traditions. Specifically, the study focuses on themes such as heroism, chivalry, patriotism, cultural identity, moral idealism, historical memory, and collective consciousness. These themes provide a framework for investigating the ways in which both authors transform historical realities into emotionally and ideologically significant narratives.

Furthermore, Zepetnek's interdisciplinary perspective facilitates the examination of the interaction between literature, history, culture, and ideology. This approach enables the present research to explore not only the literary representation of historical events but also the broader cultural and ideological functions of historical romanticization. Consequently, Zepetnek's model provides an effective theoretical framework for identifying thematic affinities and divergences in the historical narratives of Sir Walter Scott and Naseem Hijazi while contributing to comparative literature and historical fiction studies.

3.1.1. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative comparative research design to investigate the romanticization of history in the selected historical novels of Sir Walter Scott and Naseem Hijazi. Qualitative research methodology is particularly suitable for literary analysis because it facilitates the interpretation of textual meanings, thematic structures, cultural representations, and ideological perspectives embedded within literary narratives.

The study employs purposive sampling to select four historical novels: Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814) and *Ivanhoe* (1819), and Naseem Hijazi's *Andheri Raat Ke Musafir* and *Yusuf bin Tashfeen*. These novels were selected because they represent significant examples of historical romanticization within Western and South Asian literary traditions and contain recurring themes relevant to the objectives of the study.

The primary data consists of textual extracts, narrative episodes, character portrayals, historical representations, and thematic patterns identified within the selected novels. Secondary data includes scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and critical studies related to historical fiction, comparative literature, romanticized history, and Zepetnek's comparative cultural studies framework.

The analytical procedure is based on Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion. The selected texts are examined through close textual reading and comparative thematic analysis.

The analysis focuses on identifying and comparing major thematic categories, including heroism and chivalry, patriotism and nationalism, cultural and religious identity, moral idealism, historical nostalgia, and collective memory. These thematic categories are subsequently analyzed within their respective historical, social, cultural, and ideological contexts.

The study further employs comparative textual analysis to identify both thematic affinities and divergences between the selected novels. This approach facilitates an understanding of how authors from distinct literary traditions utilize similar narrative strategies to romanticize historical events while simultaneously reflecting their unique cultural and ideological perspectives.

By integrating qualitative textual analysis with Zepetnek's interdisciplinary comparative framework, the present study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the processes through which historical narratives are romanticized and how such representations contribute to the construction of cultural identity, historical consciousness, and collective memory across diverse literary traditions.

3.1.2. Research Questions

1. How do the historical novels of Naseem Hijazi and Sir Walter Scott romanticize historical facts through literary representation?
2. How do Naseem Hijazi and Sir Walter Scott construct nostalgia through the romanticized portrayal of history in their historical novels?
3. What thematic affinities exist between the historical novels of Naseem Hijazi and Sir Walter Scott according to Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion?

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Heroism and Chivalry

Heroism and chivalry constitute one of the most significant thematic affinities between Sir Walter Scott and Naseem Hijazi. According to Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion, thematic categories such as heroism function across cultural boundaries while reflecting distinct ideological contexts. Both authors romanticize historical reality by constructing idealized heroic figures who embody courage, sacrifice, loyalty, and moral superiority.

In Naseem Hijazi's *Yusuf bin Tashfeen*, heroism is inseparable from Islamic faith and moral responsibility. Hijazi portrays his protagonists as defenders of religion and civilization whose bravery emerges from spiritual conviction. For example, during a battle scene, Hijazi writes:

لیکن مد مقابل نیزوں اور تلواروں کے سامنے ان کی پیش نہ کی چل سکی۔ چند لمحوں کے اندر اندر ڈاکوؤں کے کئی آدمی ہلاک ہو چکے تھے۔

("But they could not withstand the opposing spears and swords. Within moments, several of the robbers had been killed.") (Hijazi, *Yusuf bin Tashfeen*, p. 30).

A close reading of this passage reveals Hijazi's use of martial imagery and rapid narrative movement to emphasize courage and military superiority. The lexical choices "spears," "swords," and "killed" construct an atmosphere of heroic struggle, while the swift progression of events glorifies the protagonists' bravery. Importantly, violence is not presented as brutality but as a moral necessity for the protection of faith and civilization. Hijazi transforms historical warfare into a romanticized narrative of religious heroism and sacrifice.

Similarly, Scott's *Ivanhoe* romanticizes medieval heroism through the ideals of chivalry and patriotism. Scott repeatedly associates heroism with honor, loyalty, and sacrifice. In *Waverley*, Scott describes the Highland warriors' attitude toward battle as:

"The love of battle was the food upon which we lived" (Scott, *Waverley*, p. 463).

This metaphorical expression functions as a powerful romantic image that elevates warfare from a political activity to a cultural and existential necessity. The phrase "food upon which we lived" transforms military conflict into an essential component of identity and

survival. Scott's use of first-person collective expression creates a sense of communal heroism and shared sacrifice. Unlike Hijazi's religiously motivated heroism, Scott's romanticization derives from feudal loyalty, patriotism, and national honor.

Although both authors glorify courage and sacrifice, their ideological foundations differ significantly. Hijazi's heroes derive legitimacy from religious commitment, whereas Scott's heroes embody secular chivalric traditions. Nevertheless, both writers transform historical figures into idealized cultural symbols, thereby contributing to the romanticization of historical experience.

4.2 Patriotism and National Identity

Patriotism and national identity represent another major thematic affinity between Scott and Hijazi. Both authors utilize historical narratives to construct collective memory and reinforce cultural consciousness.

Hijazi frequently employs nostalgia and historical grandeur to inspire cultural pride. Referring to the Ottoman Empire, he writes:

"دجلہ اور فرات سے لے کر ڈینیوب کی وادیوں تک"

("From the Tigris and Euphrates to the valleys of the Danube.") (Hijazi, 1974, p. 290).

Hijazi's novels are closely related to the construction of Muslim identity, especially for South Asian readers. Revisiting historical figures and times inspires pride in Islamic heritage and advocates a return to its values. Hijazi's nostalgia is motivated by his longing for a revival of Islamic principles and harmony in a contemporary world that he views as morally and spiritually lost. His characters often embody the virtues he wishes to see resurrected. A close reading of this geographical imagery demonstrates how Hijazi constructs historical grandeur through spatial expansion. The extensive geographical references symbolize political authority, cultural unity, and civilizational achievement. By invoking the vast territorial boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, Hijazi creates nostalgia for a lost Islamic civilization and encourages readers to reconnect with their historical identity.

Similarly, Scott constructs national identity through cultural conflict and historical nostalgia. In *Ivanhoe*, the Saxon character laments:

"Had I been born a Norman, as I think thou art, I would have had luck on my side" (Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 103).

This statement reflects the unequal power relationship between the Saxons and Normans. Through the first-person expression of deprivation and longing, Scott dramatizes national subordination and cultural displacement. The contrast between "Norman" and "Saxon" identities constructs a narrative of historical injustice while simultaneously generating nostalgia for a lost national past. Scott's representation of ethnic conflict ultimately contributes to the romanticization of English national identity.

3.4 Moral Idealism and Sacrifice

Moral idealism functions as a central mechanism of historical romanticization in both authors' narratives. Historical conflicts are transformed into moral struggles between virtue and corruption.

In *Yusuf bin Tashfeen*, Hijazi constructs a strong ethical contrast between pious characters and corrupt individuals:

"رَمِکیہ یہ سمجھتی ہے کہ اشبیلیہ کی ہر شریف اور پاکباز عورت اس کا تمسخر اڑا رہی ہے"

("Ramekiya believed that every noble and virtuous woman of Seville was mocking her.") (Hijazi, 1951, p. 135).

Hijazi clearly shows the difference of beliefs in a society where morality and piety are in danger because of the unethical beliefs of others (Hijazi, 1951, p. 135). Zepetnek's model aids in analyzing this as a fundamental explanation for the general cultural concern about the erosion of traditional values, and hence our love of historical narratives as bastions of virtue.

The portrayal of Rameekiya as someone who sees modesty and chastity as a threat to her existence helps to increase the role of moral struggle.

Similarly, Scott emphasizes moral honor through cultural tradition. In *Waverley*, he writes:

"Nothing but honour in the Baron of Bradwardine... though he came with blood in his hand" (Scott, *Waverley*, p. 147).

The phrase "blood on his hand" symbolizes violence and conflict, yet Scott juxtaposes it with hospitality and honor. This contrast elevates traditional Highland values above personal revenge and demonstrates the moral superiority of cultural customs. Through this romanticized representation, Scott transforms historical behavior into timeless ethical ideals.

Conversely, Scott links morals and virtues with traditions and personal liability in his novel like *Waverley*. He investigates moral and ethical problems by juxtaposing personal accountability, loyalty, and honour in an age of cultural and historical unrest. Scott believes in moral and ethical values and associates them with the ideal Highland and feudal traditions. This strengthens the moral intricacies of personal actions weighed against traditional norms. In his novel *Waverley*, Scott relates ethics and dignity to the customs of a particular group of people who believe in customs and traditions rather than revenge "nothing but honour in the Baron of Bradwardine" and "guest that comes hither from him should be welcomed, though he came with blood on his hand" represent true colors of displaying ethics while welcoming a guest even if he is a murderer (Scott, 1814, p. 147). Scott's presentation of faith in cultural values is mirrored in these lines although there is an inner dispute due to a battle between right and wrong. Then Scott uses the phrase "though he came with blood in hand" that instead of vengeance from the enemy, a morally and culturally upright person welcomes a guest whether that guest is a murderer. He demonstrates a cultural protocol where integrity and generosity dominate individual judgment. The firm respect for dignity and generosity suggests the chivalric principles that are essential for romanticized historical novels. These principles are illustrated as timeless virtues, creating a sense of direction for the cultural traditions of the Highlanders.

Both authors facilitate observing struggle as a moral essential and exhibit it as an encounter between tyrants and ethical heroes. By incorporating context, it highlights the prominence of culture and religious conviction in these struggles. Scott and Hijazi explore the human dimensions of moral disagreements, weaving these struggles into larger cultural and historical narratives. Both authors aim to train and enlighten their audiences by integrating moral and dignified lessons into their narratives, separating themselves from historical events to express timeless values.

5. Conclusion

The present study investigated the romanticization of history in the selected historical novels of Sir Walter Scott and Naseem Hijazi through Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion in comparative literature. By comparatively analyzing *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe* by Sir Walter Scott alongside *Andheri Raat Ke Musafir* and *Yusuf bin Tashfeen* by Naseem Hijazi, the study explored the thematic affinities and differences that contribute to the construction of romanticized historical narratives. The findings demonstrate that, despite belonging to distinct historical, cultural, and ideological traditions, both authors employ comparable thematic strategies to transform historical events into emotionally and culturally significant literary narratives.

The analysis revealed that heroism and chivalry constitute central mechanisms of historical romanticization in the selected texts. Both Scott and Hijazi construct idealized heroic figures characterized by courage, sacrifice, loyalty, and moral integrity. However, while Scott's heroes derive their significance primarily from nationalism, feudal traditions, and chivalric values, Hijazi's heroes are rooted in Islamic ideology, religious commitment, and cultural

resistance. Through these representations, both authors transform historical personalities into symbolic embodiments of collective values and cultural aspirations.

The study further demonstrated that patriotism and cultural identity play a significant role in shaping historical consciousness in both literary traditions. Scott romanticizes Scottish and English history through narratives of national unity, cultural continuity, and historical nostalgia, whereas Hijazi reconstructs Islamic history to promote religious identity, cultural revival, and collective solidarity. In both cases, historical narratives function as mechanisms for preserving collective memory and strengthening cultural consciousness.

Another important finding of the study concerns the role of moral idealism and ethical values in the romanticization of history. Both authors portray historical protagonists as moral exemplars whose actions transcend personal interests and contribute to broader social, cultural, and ideological objectives. Although Scott's moral framework is largely shaped by chivalric ethics and humanistic values, Hijazi's moral philosophy is deeply embedded within Islamic religious principles. Nevertheless, both authors utilize moral idealization to transform historical experience into ethical and cultural instruction.

The findings also indicate that romanticized historical narratives significantly influence readers' perceptions of history by constructing collective memory, cultural identity, and historical consciousness. Through idealized representations of historical events and personalities, Scott and Hijazi encourage readers to interpret history not merely as a record of past events but as a source of moral guidance, cultural pride, and collective belonging. Their historical fiction consequently functions as a powerful instrument for shaping historical imagination and cultural memory.

The application of Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion demonstrates that historical romanticization operates as a cross-cultural literary phenomenon that transcends geographical, linguistic, and ideological boundaries. The thematic affinities identified between Scott and Hijazi—including heroism, patriotism, cultural identity, moral idealism, and historical memory—illustrate how historical fiction serves as a medium for constructing collective consciousness and preserving cultural heritage. At the same time, the differences identified in their ideological and cultural orientations reflect the influence of specific historical and socio-political contexts on literary production.

This study contributes to comparative literature, historical fiction studies, and cultural memory studies by establishing a comparative framework for analyzing historical romanticization across Western and South Asian literary traditions. Furthermore, it extends the applicability of Zepetnek's model of thematic inclusion by demonstrating its effectiveness in identifying thematic affinities and cultural divergences within historical fiction. The findings of this study suggest that historical novels function not only as literary representations of the past but also as influential cultural narratives that shape readers' understanding of history, identity, and collective memory.

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