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**TRACING THE CRITICAL RECEPTION OF WALTER SCOTT IN ITALY:
1945-2020**

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To Freddy, Eliot, and Kali.
Because you are, and always be, my best friends.

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Introduction

In *The Reception of Sir Walter Scott in Europe*¹ (2007), edited by Murray Pittock, it emerges that when speaking about the European reception of Walter Scott, there is not a dedicated chapter to his reception in Italy. Although the Italian situation is briefly treated in various sections of the volume, the editor himself states in the introduction that ‘it proved impossible to get satisfactory coverage of Portugal or Italy’.² From this admission one might ask: Why was it impossible for Pittock to collect enough material to devote a chapter to Scott in Italy? Although there are some studies regarding the reception of Scott, the entirety of the material dealing with the subject is scattered and difficult to find. Furthermore, it is possible to assume that, given that these studies were written in Italian, they were largely inaccessible to Professor Pittock.

Among the most recent studies dedicated to the Italian reception of Scott one can list: Anna Benedetti’s *Le traduzioni italiane da Walter Scott e i loro anglicismi*³ (*The Italian Translations from Walter Scott and Their Anglicisms*) 1974; Franca Ruggieri Punzo’s *Walter Scott in Italia (1821-1971)*⁴ (*Walter Scott in Italy (1821-1971)*), 1975; Michela Mancini’s *Immaginando Ivanhoe: romanzi illustrati, balli e opere dell’Ottocento italiano*⁵ (*Imagining Ivanhoe: Illustrated Novels, Ballets, and Opera of the Italian Nineteenth Century*) 2007, and Erminia Irace’s and Gabriele Pedullà’s article ‘Walter Scott in Italia e il romanzo storico’⁶ (*Walter Scott in Italy and the Historical Novel*), 2012. However, these studies mainly focus on the analysis of Scott’s early reception in the nineteenth century, leaving uncovered the entire period from the second half of the twentieth century until today. Although Punzo, Irace, and Pedullà briefly introduce Italian criticism on, and the influence of, Scott in Italy in the second half of the twentieth century, they do not provide a detailed account of his reception in the last seventy-five years.⁷ The necessity to investigate Scott’s reception from 1945 onwards arose

¹ *The Reception of Sir Walter Scott in Europe*, ed. by Murray Pittock (London: Continuum, 2007).

² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³ Anna Benedetti, *Le traduzioni italiane da Walter Scott e i loro anglicismi* (Firenze: Olschki, 1974).

⁴ Franca Ruggieri Punzo, *Walter Scott in Italia (1821-1971)* (Bari: Adriatica, 1975).

⁵ Michela Mancini, *Immaginando Ivanhoe: romanzi illustrati, balli e opere dell’Ottocento italiano* (Milano: Mondadori, 2007).

⁶ Erminia Irace e Gabriele Pedullà, ‘Walter Scott in Italia e il romanzo storico’, in *Atlante della letteratura italiana: dal Romanticismo a oggi*, ed. da Sergio Luzzatto e Gabriele Pedullà, 5 vols (Torino: Einaudi, 2012), III, pp. 47-50.

⁷ Punzo analyses Scott’s Italian critical reception from 1821 to 1971, while Irace and Pedullà provide only an overview on Scott’s presence in Italy from 1820 to 1990.

from the will to fill this gap in the existing literature and give an original contribution to the Italian scholarship on Scott.

Indeed, the questions from which I started to build this doctoral project were: how is it possible that such an important and universally recognised author is so little studied or read in Italy? Why do Italian institutions not dedicate adequate time and space to studying the father of the historical novel? How many critical studies have been recently devoted to Scott and his work? Who dedicated monographs and articles to the Scottish author in recent years? Is it true that Walter Scott has disappeared from the Italian literary and cultural scene?

At the end of these three years of research, the answers to these questions became the main concerns of this thesis. Even if it is generally thought that Scott has ceased to interest the Italian public and scholars, Scott is still a presence in Italy. Especially in recent years, thanks to the influence and enthusiasm reawakened by the Edinburgh Editions of the *Waverley Novels*, new critical studies on Scott have been produced. Furthermore, the largest Italian publishing houses still publish new Italian editions of Scott's novels today. In most cases, these new editions are also preceded by informed and detailed prefaces that give crucial insights into interpreting Scott's novels. In addition, other media, such as cinema and television, have perpetuated the fame of some of Scott's stories. That is the case of *Ivanhoe*, which is still internationally recognised as the most iconic of Scott's novels, having seen several adaptations for cinema and television⁸ during the twentieth century.

Studying the critical reception of Scott in Italy implies considering several factors:

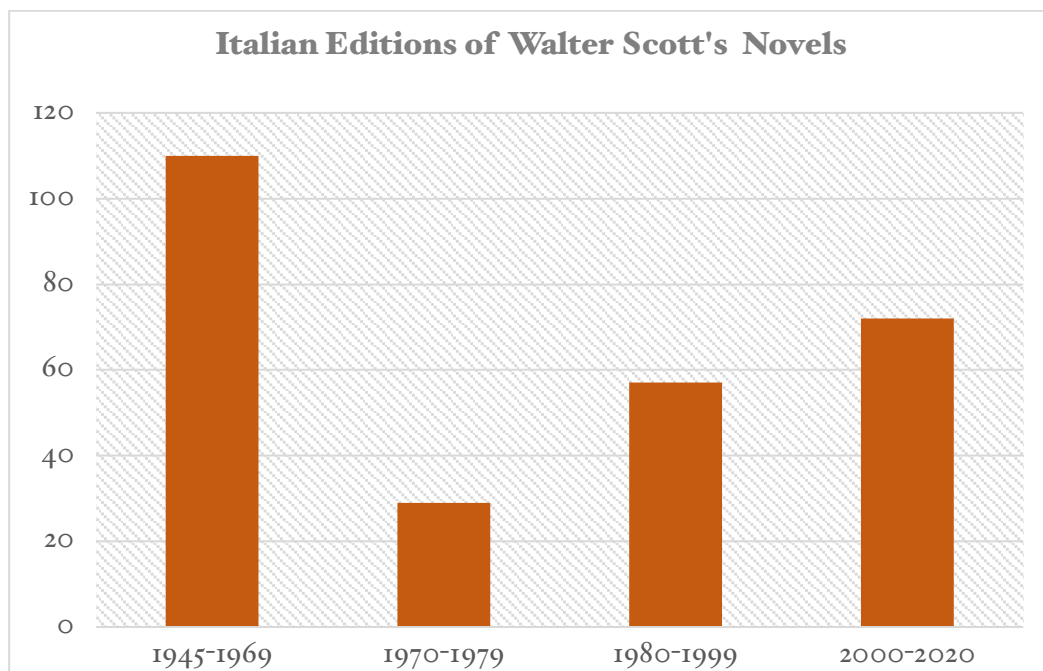
- understanding the historical and cultural context in which his works appeared;
- studying the society that welcomed Scott's poetic and prose works;
- looking at what critics have written about the author;
- listing the editions of Scott's novels and poetic works published from 1945 to 2020.

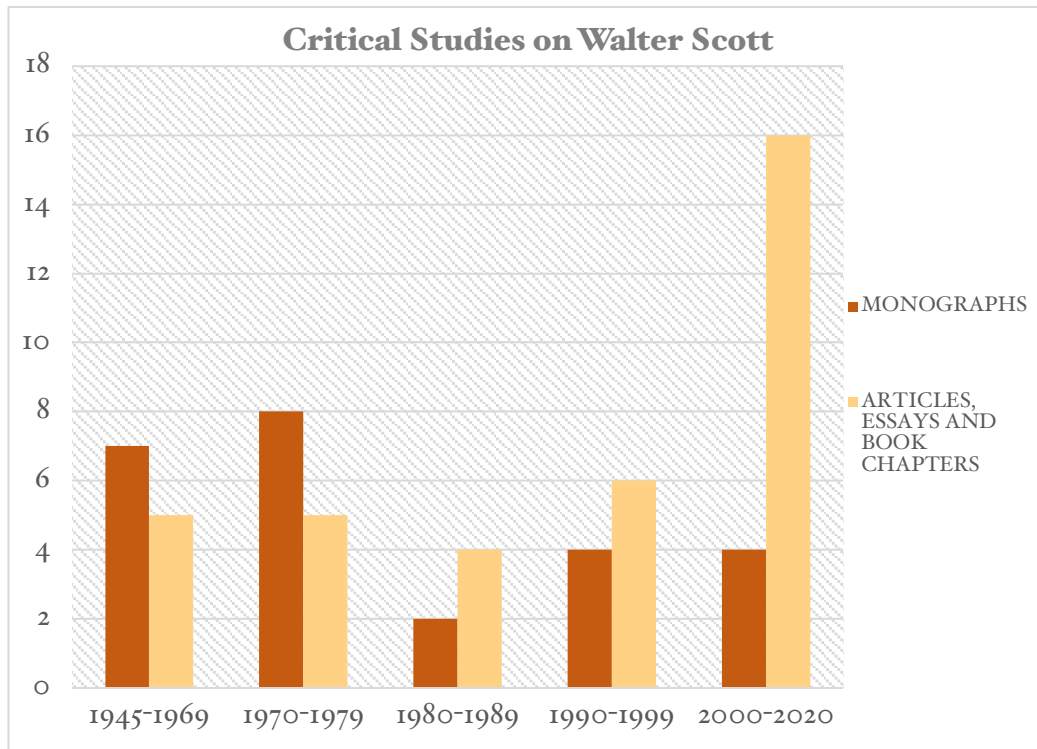
Although the study of Scott's presence in other artistic channels such as theatre, cinema, and television is important to understand his reception in Italy, a whole discourse on new media will not be included in the thesis. The number of adaptations of Scott's novels for big and small

⁸ The case study *The Never-Ending Popularity of Ivanhoe* at the end of this thesis is dedicated to the on-going popularity of *Ivanhoe* in Italy.

screens will only be mentioned in the sections titled ‘Translations and Editions’ at the end of each chapter of the second part of the thesis. That is because, I intend to dedicate a more extensive study on Scott in new media in future research. The only exception will be the case study on *Ivanhoe* in Italy, where TV series and films, based on the novel, are discussed.

To outline Scott’s Italian reception, I created two graphs, which may summarise the findings of this research:





As the graphs show, the trend of the Italian editions of Scott's works has never been parallel to the one of the critical studies dedicated to him. This is because Scott's reception is linked to several factors: firstly, the fortunes of Italian historical fiction; secondly, the history of the Italian publishing industry, and lastly, the critical currents that have marked different periods of history. At a first look, it is possible to say that, since during the post-war years and the 1970s the Italian publishing industry was expanding, there was a higher number of printed books – including the ones of Scott. From the 1980s onwards, shorter contributions dedicated to Scott became more popular. These contributions started to be included in wider studies on the English Novel, Gothic Fiction, and Romanticism – linked to the renewed interest in the study of the novel's sub-genres. It is also evident that from 1980s, the number of Italian editions of Scott's novels suffered a sharp decline. This trend suggests that the reading public was, and is, generally not interested in reading Scott anymore. At the same time, studies dedicated to him flourished in the academic field in the last forty years.

Given these premises, I have decided to divide this study into two parts: the first section focuses on the birth and development of the Italian historical novel. Here, I have analysed the influence of Scott on the sub-genre in Italy and studied the interconnection between the success

of Italian historical fiction and the reception of Scott's works;⁹ the second part is dedicated to investigating the Italian critical reception of Scott from 1945 to 2020, where I have collected all the critical studies devoted to Scott and reported their central arguments.

To carry out this research, it was necessary to use different tools and apply different methodologies. First of all, it was essential to look at the National Library's Catalogue (OPAC) and build a timeline of the Italian editions of Scott's works. Secondly, it was useful to search in the BOSLIT Catalogue (The Bibliography of Scottish Literature in Translation) to verify Italian translations of Scott's works. Although the two catalogues made possible to draft the largest part of the timeline of the Italian editions of Scott's works, unfortunately they did not always prove to be complete nor reliable. I have arranged and expanded the timeline by looking at other resources, as far as possible. These resources included: websites or e-commerce such as Amazon.it or Ibs.it or Maremagnum.com – for older editions; the lists of translations reported at the end of some recent Italian editions of Scott's novels – such as of Garzanti or Mondadori – and additional data recollected while studying pivotal Italian critical studies on Scott – such as Punzo's *Walter Scott in Italia (1821-1971)*, 1975.

The extended search in the catalogues and the resources listed above also made it possible to understand the geographical distribution of Scott's novels over this seventy-five year period, noticing that the highest number of editions of Scott's works were published in the North of Italy. Milan is by far the city whose publishing houses published the highest number of Scott's novels. Indeed, throughout the period examined, publishing houses such as Fabbri, Rizzoli, Garzanti, and Mondadori were the ones that printed Scott's works the most. Following closely behind, there is the city of Turin with the publishing houses SAS, Chiantore, and UTET.

Some crucial findings also emerged from the timeline obtained:

- *Ivanhoe* has been the most-published and most-translated novel in Italy since its first appearance in 1821;
- many abridged versions and adaptations of Scott's novels were made from 1945 to 2020;

⁹ In this section, it is highlighted that in certain phases of Italian literary history some historical novels have been able to revive the interest in historical fiction, and specifically in Scott's work. That is the case of the publication of *The Leopard* (1957) and *The Name of the Rose* (1980). In other periods, instead, the success of Italian authors overshadowed Scott's popularity – as in the years following the Union of Italy (1860).

- *Richard the Lionheart* is one of the most appreciated novels attributed to Scott. It is an interesting case study since it is an abridged version of *The Talisman*. Noteworthy, the novel enjoyed greater success in the post-war years before completely losing its appeal;
- the largest publishing houses in Italy continue to publish new editions of Scott's works;
- in very recent years, smaller publishing houses – such as Gondolin in Verona or Segni d'autore in Rome – also began to publish some of Scott's most iconic works, such as *Ivanhoe*, *Waverley*, and *Rob Roy*.

Secondly, after building the timeline of the editions and translations of Scott's works from 1945 to 2020, it was essential to collect the largest number of critical studies that have been devoted to the Scottish author during the last seventy-five years. Trying to gather the whole bibliography dedicated to Scott proved to be the most complicated task while writing the thesis, as it is not possible to trace all the writings that have cited or discussed Scott and his work. This is because many scholars examine briefly Scott's novels in the context of larger studies and also because some critical studies have a misleading title impossible to attribute to the studying of Scott.¹⁰ Nevertheless, I managed to create two different timelines that will be included as appendices in this Ph.D. dissertation. I wanted these timelines to be as precise and complete as possible. However, as I mentioned, it may be that some editions and writings have not been included.

To enrich the Italian and international scholarship on Scott, I provided English translations of every Italian work I quoted in parenthesis or footnotes. I wanted this contribution to be accessible to everyone who wants to discover more about Scott's Italian reception in the last seventy-five years. Therefore, every Italian translation found in the text is mine. I tried to translate the titles of the works and the citations as faithfully as possible, occasionally deviating from the literal translation to make a meaning faithful to the original one. In addition, I tended not to give the same translation twice (including titles).

To conclude this introduction, I want also to briefly address to the meaning of 'influence', since this word will be used throughout the thesis. Following The Cambridge Dictionary, 'to influence' means 'to have the power to have an effect on people or things or someone or

¹⁰ An example is Maria Teresa Bindella's *Storia umile, storia pittoresca: saggio sul romanzo storico inglese dell'Ottocento (Humble History, Picturesque History: An Essay on the English Historical Novel of the Nineteenth Century)*, 1984, which is, despite its title, entirely dedicated to Scott.

something having such power'¹¹. Scott influenced with his model of writing historical novels a large number of authors during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Specifically, the features used in his novels – setting the story in a recent or distant past, depicting the life of different strata of society, paying attention to the reliable recounting of historical events, and describing the inhabitants of the past as people not distant from us in the way of thinking and behaving – can be found in the works of the most famous exponents of the long-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Italy, Scott's model inspired many authors before and after the *Risorgimento*. That is the case of Alessandro Manzoni, Giambattista Bazzoni, Francesco Guerazzi, and Cesare Cantù. Also, at a European level, Scott inspired authors such as Alexandre Dumas, Victor Hugo, Leo Tolstoy, and many others. What is relevant is that we can still find many characteristics of Scott's books in recent historical fiction. For example, in Italy, if we consider Umberto Eco's works, such as *The Name of the Rose* (1980) or *The Mysterious Flame of Queen Loana* (2004), we will notice that many textual and meta-textual devices can be traced back to Scott's agenda. Discussion about the most recent influence of Scott will be found in the first part of the thesis.

¹¹ See definition of 'influence' in The Cambridge Dictionary website page:
<<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/it/dizionario/inglese/influence>> [accessed March 2023]

Part 1

Walter Scott and the Historical Novel in Italy

1.1 The Origins of the Historical Novel

In his celebrated *The Historical Novel*¹² (1937), György Lukács (1885-1971) sees historical fiction as the product of a series of political upheavals that marked Europe between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The scholar believes that, after the French Revolution, Industrial Revolution, and Napoleonic Wars, people started to perceive history as a long process characterised not only by political and military events but as a result of a *continuum*, a synthesis given by the work and experience of the previous centuries in which they had played an active part. For example, before the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, armies were formed by professional soldiers. From the French Revolution onwards, battles began to be fought by ordinary people. Wars evolved into a mass experience, lived first-hand by citizens called to fight.

A new sense of historicalness connected to the idea that history was a mass experience engendered the awakening of national historic interest. Understanding history, searching for origins and traditions laid the foundations both for the idea of Romantic nationalism and for what would become the historical novel. Indeed, Lukács suggests that the will to communicate a sense of national history became more and more compelling after those political events. He consequently adds that it is no coincidence that Walter Scott's novels appeared immediately following these great European upheavals. He describes Scott's works as resulting from those significant changes transforming the continent, together with Scott's will to depict the life of the rising bourgeoisie class.

However, in addition to the theories of Lukács on the birth of the historical novel, there is more recent criticism that seeks the origins of the sub-genre before the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars. For example, John MacQueen, in *The Rise of the Historical Novel*¹³ (1989), suggests that the origins of modern historical fiction can be found in the eighteenth century at the time of the Scottish Enlightenment.

¹² György Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, trans. by Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (London: Merlin Press, 1989).

¹³ John MacQueen, *The Rise of the Historical Novel* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1989).

MacQueen posits that some of the ability attributed to Scott¹⁴ – ‘to describe the quality of a specific period of time and dramatise the features common of human nature at all times, while taking into account the failures and imperfections of human knowledge and its transmission’¹⁵– are to be reconducted to the agenda of the Scottish Enlightenment. He states that the historical novel born with Scott was not an innovative product, but was the culmination of a cultural process started decades before *Waverley*. At the same time, he argues that *Waverley* was the first manifestation of the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment in fictional form. Indeed, the main change brought by the Scottish Enlightenment – the concept of historical movement and development – can be found in Scott’s *Waverley* and subsequent historical novels. In this respect, he affirms:

The particular concept of historical time developed in the Scottish Enlightenment entailed the idea of movement and change, which was at least partially unpredictable, and of contrast between one era, or one population group, and another, even when the two were closely adjacent. [...] The present, no less than the past, entered the novelist’s work as a special creation of movement of history.¹⁶

He also posits:

It might seem inevitable that the historical novel should have become the main imaginative outlet for the experience of the Scottish Enlightenment, in particular where that experience drew directly upon seventeenth and eighteenth-century developments. [...] The historical novel is thus uniquely the discovery of the Scottish Enlightenment.¹⁷

Scott’s work was therefore strongly shaped by the Scottish Enlightenment, experienced first-hand by the author during his higher education at the University of Edinburgh. As Jana Davis highlights in her article ‘Sir Walter Scott and Enlightenment Theories of the Imagination: *Waverley* and *Quentin Durward*’¹⁸ (1989):

¹⁴ Not only to Scott, but also to other Scott’s contemporary Scottish writers such as James Hogg or John Galt.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁸ Jana Davis, ‘Sir Walter Scott and Enlightenment Theories of the Imagination: *Waverley* and *Quentin Durward*’, *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 43.4 (1989), 437-64.

[...] when Scott attended university there [at the Edinburgh University] in the 1780s and early 1790s he studied logic with John Bruce and moral philosophy with Dugald Stewart, both synthesizers of eighteenth-century Scottish thought.¹⁹

In particular, Stewart's ideas on the relationship between imagination and reality, influenced Scott when he was attending his classes of moral philosophy. Stewart believed in finding a halfway between the exaggeration of rationality – typical of John Locke (1632-1704) and later Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) – and the exaltation of the imagination's powers – promoted by David Hume (1711-1776) and Adam Smith (1723-1790)²⁰. Stewart recognised the important role of imagination, but, at the same time, he was aware of its potential 'for causing error, immorality and unhappiness'.²¹ From here, it derives a lot of Scott's thought, who through his novels always tried to reconcile the historically accounted events with the fantastic hemisphere.

Another example of more recent scholarship that differs with Lukács' theories is Katie Trumpener's illuminating volume *Bardic Nationalism*²² (1997). Trumpener posits that the awakening of national historic interest can instead be traced back to national tales: 'a genre developed in Ireland, primarily by women writers, over the decade preceding the publication of *Waverley*'.²³ In her study, Trumpener remaps the origins of the historical novel and suggests that the sub-genre is the result of a process that involved the novel in English as a whole. Indeed, she argues that 'most of the conceptual innovations attributed to Scott were in 1814 already established commonplaces of the British novel'.²⁴

Tackling the birth and development of the historical novel is therefore a complex task. Its origins are not attributable only to the European upheavals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, because its roots go back to a more distant past. Taking for certain the folkloristic and historical cultural baggage handed down by national tales, it is possible to identify the prototypes of the genre in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, long before the publication of *Waverley*. During these two centuries, French, German, and English authors

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 439. The addition in square brackets is mine.

²⁰ For a comprehensive study on the Scottish Enlightenment see: *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. by Alexander Broadie, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

²¹ Davis, p. 441.

²² Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

²³ Ibid., p. 131.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 130.

already used elements drawn from documented history in their books. However, they did not pay too much attention to historical accuracy nor realistic details. For example, they included historical personages, narrated memorable historical periods, and used particular settings from the past as picturesque backgrounds for their stories without being meticulous. In this sense, the first *pseudo*-historical novel can be considered *La Princesse de Clèves* written by Madame de La Fayette and published in 1678. In this book, the author describes a disastrous period of French history when Henry II was on the throne. In those years – the second half of the sixteenth century – France was going towards the outbreak of the religious wars, which marked a particularly bloody and terrible period in French history. M.me La Fayette decided to set her story in this specific period, creating a fictitious narrative where a young girl makes her debut at court. At the same time, she paid attention to the faithful depiction of the historical setting, including historically recognisable figures such as Henry II to make the novel more reliable. *The Cambridge Companion to Fiction in the Romantic Period*²⁵ identifies this novel as the first one to have attempted the concept of probability, or *vraisemblance*:

It was fiction that was supposed to be probable whereas in history anything could happen; historical fiction was situated on the cusp between these two aesthetics.²⁶

Later, during the period of greatest success of German Romanticism, or *Sturm und Drang*, major writers such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) and Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) posed the problem of how to represent history in poetry. In 1773, an historical tragedy, inspired by an actual soldier, was published: Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773). The tragedy narrates the life of this soldier who lived between 1480 and 1562, combining for the first time the psychological sphere of the main character with the historical context in which he lived. Interestingly, Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* was translated into English in 1799, by Walter Scott himself.

Some traits of the modern historical novel can also be found in Gothic fiction, which flourished in England in the second half of the eighteenth century. The first Gothic novel, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, appeared in 1764. In the preface, Walpole states that

²⁵ *The Cambridge Companion to Fiction in the Romantic Period*, ed. by Richard Maxwell and Katie Trumpener (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 65.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

the story narrated was taken from a manuscript he found in ‘the library of an ancient catholic family in the north of England’.²⁷ The found manuscript, as the historical source of the events narrated, is a literary device that will be often used in subsequent historical novels – starting by Scott and then, in Italy, by Manzoni, and Umberto Eco – to give the reader the illusion of reliability and verisimilitude. Indeed, even if the *The Castle of Otranto* is far from what we consider today as a historical novel, it helped shaping the main traits of the sub-genre. It is interesting to note that Scott wrote the introduction to the 1811 edition of John Ballantyne & Co.²⁸ of *The Castle of Otranto*. As Scott admitted in his manual *Lives of Novelists*²⁹ (first edition published in 1825), he was a great admirer of Gothic fiction and particularly fascinated and inspired by the works of Walpole and Clara Reeve.

Despite these early attempts to include history, the novels prior to *Waverley* and generally all of Scott’s novels, could not be called historical novels as we classify them today, since they did not blend documented historical events with fantastical elements in a balanced way. Gothic fiction, for example, used medieval settings only to create a picturesque frame for the story, while German and French historical prototypes do not focus on faithful descriptions of the past but just employ elements taken from a specific period of history to enrich their narratives. In this sense, Scott is considered the father of the historical novel in the modern sense since he was the first one able to harmoniously mix historiography and fiction. When *Waverley* appeared in 1814 it was the first time that history was used not only as a fascinating background but also as a *continuum* characterised by significant historical events experienced by real human beings. As Jerome De Groot states in *The Historical Novel*³⁰ (2010), ‘the union of these two elements is Walter Scott novels’ key’.³¹ Scott created a narrative which ‘combines strong characterisation with historical background’.³² The historical novel born with Scott recounts a near or distant past with particular attention to the people who inhabited it, and with the specific purpose to faithfully depict costumes and manners. Scott’s attention to details and descriptions, supported by meticulous documentation – often reported in footnotes – made it possible for the readers to have a sense of what the past might have been like. He communicated historical events through ordinary people who experienced those events first-hand, making history something near, still connected to the present.

²⁷ Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, with intr. by Walter Scott (New York: Collier Books, 1967) p. 15.

²⁸ Publishing house established in Edinburgh in 1808.

²⁹ Walter Scott, *Lives of the Novelists* (New York: A. Denham & Co, 1872).

³⁰ Jerome De Groot, *The Historical Novel* (London: Routledge, 2010).

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.7.

³² *Ibid.*

Both Lukács and – in Italy – Mario Praz³³ affirmed that Scott described the life of the emerging middle class, emphasising the decay of the old ruling classes. Indeed, one element typical of Scott's novels is the depiction of specific moments of the past when the old and the new world conflicted. Scott believed that the 'progress' of history results from this clash – just as the bourgeoisie emerged from the old feudal and aristocratic system's decay. Another characteristic of Scott's narrative is the presence of unremarkable heroes belonging to this new social class. They usually find themselves halfway between pure conservatism and revolutionary impulses. For instance, Edward Waverley 'wavers' between the Whig establishment he serves as an English gentleman and his affection for the Jacobite cause. Scott wanted to describe ancient manners and costumes while narrating the passions that animated his protagonists. He also affirms in the preface to *Waverley* that with the description of 'the state of society in the northern part of the island' he was able to 'vary and illustrate the moral lesson', which he considered 'the most important plan of [his] plan'.³⁴

In the preface, Scott explains that he threw:

[...] the force of [his] narrative upon the characters and passions of the actors; those passions common to men in all stages of society, and which have alike agitated the human heart, whether it throbbed under the steel corslet of the fifteenth century, the brocaded coat of the eighteenth, or the blue and white dimity waistcoat of the present day.³⁵

With their way of acting and emotions, Scott's protagonists could engage with the reader, creating a new sense of empathy. Through their actions, language, and passions, they become universal characters with whom the reader could identify. Indeed, Lukács believed that:

Scott's greatness lies in his capacity to give living human embodiment to historical social-types. The typically human terms in which great historical trends become tangible had never been so superbly, straightforwardly, and pregnantly portrayed.³⁶

³³ See Mario Praz, *La crisi dell'eroe nel romanzo vittoriano* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1952).

³⁴ Walter Scott, *Waverley* (London: Penguin Classics, 1985), p. 36.

³⁵ Scott, *Waverley*, pp. 35-36.

³⁶ Lukács, p. 35.

As already stated, Scott was much inspired by Gothic fiction, German Romanticism, and the Scottish Enlightenment. However, another factor needs to be taken into consideration when tracing the origins of the *Waverley Novels* and generally of Scott's method of conceiving the novel: the influence of the Irish writer Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849). Scott himself, in the *General Preface to Waverley (Magnum Opus* edition 1829-1833), explains his admiration for Miss Edgeworth and cites her as a model:

Without being so presumptuous as to hope to emulate the rich humour, pathetic tenderness, and admirable tact, which pervade the works of my accomplished friend, I felt that something might be attempted for my own country of the same kind with that which Miss Edgeworth so fortunately achieved for Ireland.³⁷

Edgeworth had in fact described Ireland in her books as Scott would describe Scotland in his novels, placing attention on the costumes and habits of past societies. In the famous *Castle Rackrent*³⁸ (1800) for example, the Irish author describes the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Irish society, satirising it. She depicts the rural life of the lower classes and landlords, giving a historical account of what had been Irish society in the near past.

After having framed in this section Scott's work, understood its characteristics, and place it in a particular moment in European history, we can proceed with the study of his first reception in Italy. The early critical response to Scott will build the essential background to understand the development of historical fiction in Italy and subsequently Scott's most recent reception. It will be also interesting to see that Italian authors who initially followed Scott's model, were still inspired by many of the textual and meta-textual devices findable in Scott's novels.

1.2 Walter Scott's Early Italian Reception

Even if the most recent Italian critical response to Scott hasn't been discussed by any scholars, some pivotal studies reflect on Scott's early reception: Benedetti's *Le traduzioni italiane da*

³⁷ Scott, *Waverley*, p. 523.

³⁸ Full title: *Castle Rackrent, an Hiberian Tale: Taken from Facts, and from the Manners of the Irish Squires, Before the Year 1782.*

Walter Scott e i loro anglicismi (1974); Punzo's *Walter Scott in Italia: 1821-1971* (1975), and Pedullà and Irace's article 'Walter Scott in Italia e il romanzo storico' (2012). Thanks to these studies, it is possible to build the essential background in order to later understand the Italian critical response to Scott's works during the last seventy-five years. This part of the thesis will therefore focus on tracing the early reception of Scott starting from the very first translations of his novels. It will then explore the evolution of historical fiction in Italy during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The first Italian translation of one of Scott's novels appeared in 1821, when Gaetano Barbieri translated *Kenilworth*. In the same year, Cavaliere Pallavicini and Giuseppe Indelicato produced two Italian versions of the poem *The Lady of the Lake* – which, thanks to opera, was already known by the Italian public.³⁹ After these three Italian translations many others followed: *Waverley*, *Ivanhoe*, *Il nano nero (The Black Dwarf)*, *La leggenda di Montrose (The Legend of Montrose)*, and *I puritani di Scozia (Old Mortality)* appeared in 1822, while *Il paggio della regina (The Abbot)*, *La prigioniera di Edimburgo (The Heart of Midlothian)*, *Il monastero (The Monastery)*, and *L'Antiquario (The Antiquary)* were published in 1823. Numerous Italian translations of Scott's works continued to appear throughout the next twenty years, between 1821 and 1840, so that this period can be considered the most successful moment of the Scottish author in Italy. To get an idea of the extent of the Italian publications of Scott's works, it is sufficient to consider the number of translations published in these years: 370 instances of Scott's poetry and prose appeared between 1821 and 1840.⁴⁰

The success of Scott's works resulted in launching a new trend throughout Italy. A large segment of society read his novels and drew inspiration from his stories on how to dress and behave. In fact, Francesco Pezzi, an Italian journalist of the time, wrote in *Lo spettatore lombardo (The Lombard Spectator)* in 1823 that 'si può credere che d'or innanzi non si parlerà, non si mangerà, non si dormirà che alla [...] l'*Ivanhoe*, il *Kenilworth*.⁴¹

If Scott enjoyed great praise from the reading public it cannot be said that he received the same consideration from the most influential critical voices of the time. In general, Scott's works arrived in Italy at a time when the debate between the Classicists and the Romantics was

³⁹ *The Lady of the Lake* was translated by Andrea Leone Tottola and transposed into opera by Gioachino Rossini. It was staged for the first time at Teatro San Carlo in Naples, in 1819.

⁴⁰ Cfr. Irace and Pedullà, 2012. For a complete review of Scott's Italian early translators: Gioacchino Brognoligo, 'Traduttori italiani di Walter Scott', *Rassegna critica della letteratura italiana*, 33 (1918), 233-64.

⁴¹ Punzo, p. 45. Original quotation taken from Francesco Pezzi, in *Lo spettatore lombardo*, 6.2 (Milan 1823), p. 77. Translation: one may believe that henceforth no one will speak, think, eat or sleep except at [...] *Ivanhoe* and *Kenilworth*.

beginning to open: on the one hand, the former drew inspiration from ancient Greek and Latin culture and exalted the idea of order, rationality, and balance. They were conservative about Italian culture and were anchored to the idea that the higher genre to educate and entertain the public was poetry. On the other hand, the other emphasised the role of emotional sensitivity and individual subjectivity. They were beginning to suffer the reformist and cultural influences of the Romantic currents that had developed in England and France and spread throughout Europe.

In Italy, the two publications of the nineteenth century which coincided with the beginning of the Classical-Romantic debate were: the article ‘Sulla maniera e utilità delle traduzioni’ (*On The Manner and Utility of Translations*) by Madame De Staël (1766-1817), published in *Biblioteca italiana (The Italian Library)* in 1816, and the reply letter of the translator and critic Pietro Giordani (1774-1848) titled ‘“Un italiano” risponde al discorso della Staël’ (*“An Italian” Responds to De Staël’s Speech*) published in the same year in *Biblioteca italiana*⁴² – it is noteworthy that it was Giordani himself who translated De Staël’s article.

In the first essay, De Staël reproached Italian intellectuals for having remained nostalgically tied to past literature and for being reluctant to welcome new European Romantic influences. She believed that Italian culture was at risk of being blocked and excluded from the literary and artistic innovations that were spreading in the continent. Furthermore, she admonished them for not having translated some of the most fascinating works of modern European authors.

Giordano’s reply letter, instead, served to defend the values and ideas of the Classicists, arguing that it was European literature to be in decline. He urged Italian writers to keep on being inspired by Dante, Tasso, Ariosto or Greek and Latin literature since these were unlimited sources of values and beauty. He replied to De Staël arguing that if scientists are always looking for something new, intellectuals can dwell on it and look no further once they have found it. This is because De Staël had underlined that the Italian scientists were recognised at a European level while new Italian writers were not bringing anything innovative.

The Classicists or conservatives were the predominant group and monopolised almost all of the Italian critical thought of the early nineteenth century. The prejudices against the genre of the novel and, in this case, the historical novel, were therefore still strong. An example of this tendency were the various sceptical comments published in the *Biblioteca italiana*

⁴² Excerpts of these texts can be found everywhere in the Internet. On the Classicist-Romantic debate cfr. Giulio Ferroni, *Storia della letteratura italiana: dall’Ottocento al Novecento*, 4 vols (Milano: Mondadori università, 2012), III.

regarding Scott's works. For example, in volume 25 of 1822, the *Biblioteca* ruled on Scott's high earnings in Britain, arguing that such a reward 'per un lavoro così frivolo è senza esempio'.⁴³ At the same time, the *Biblioteca* urged Italian authors to take Scott's example and write more valid historical novels. It implied that Italian writers could produce better and more interesting pieces of literature than the ones of Scott, achieving the same great success. Generally, nineteenth-century criticism tended to diminish Scott's work, or at least was not very interested in it. On the one hand, it witnessed Scott's enormous success, and on the other was limited to expressing small sceptical judgments or gossip about the author's life – on the construction of Abbotsford, for example, or his earnings.

Only a few dared to differ from the general disinterest and scepticism promoted by newspapers and critics. Among these, the Italian critic Francesco De Sanctis expressed, in a few occasions, his admiration for Scott. For example, in *La giovinezza (Youth)*, 1883, he wrote:

A noi pareva la rivelazione di un mondo nuovo. Come ho pianto per quel povero Tressilian.⁴⁴ E ne movevo rimprovero alla bella Amy, che preferiva a quel uomo dotto e buono, il galante Leicester.⁴⁵

While in *Lettere a Virginia (Letters to Virginia)*, published posthumously in 1917, he advised one of his former students to read Scott: 'La lettura di Walter Scott ti farà bene. Nessun libro è più atto ad arricchire la fantasia e riempire l'anima di sentimenti e immagini'.⁴⁶

Although De Sanctis considered Scott's work as simple and light reading – especially suited to female audiences – he recognised several interesting and fascinating elements in his works. Among these certainly the narration of human passions and the ability of the protagonists to enter the reader's heart.

⁴³ 'Prezzo dei lavori letterari di Walter Scott', *Biblioteca italiana*, 25 (1822), p. 369. Translation: for such frivolous works it is without compare.

⁴⁴ Tressilian, Amy Robsart and the Count of Leicester are the protagonists of *Kenilworth*.

⁴⁵ Francesco De Sanctis, *La Giovinezza* (Napoli: Guida, 1883), pp. 6-7. Translation: It seems to us the revelation of a new world. How much I wept for the poor Tressilian. And I reproached the beautiful Amy for this, who preferred the gallant Leicester to that learned and good man.

⁴⁶ Cfr. Francesco De Sanctis, *Lettere a Virginia*, ed. da Benedetto Croce (Bari: Laterza, 1917), p. 27. Translation: Reading Walter Scott will do you good. No book is more capable of enriching the imagination and filling the soul with feelings and images.

1.3 Walter Scott and the Birth of the Italian Historical Novel

In the beginning, Scott's novels were translated from the French versions of Auguste-Jean-Baptiste Defauconpret (1767-1843). It is interesting to note that Defauconpret, as Paul Barnaby explains in his study 'Restoration Politics and Sentimental Poetics in A.-J.-B. Defauconpret's Translations of Sir Walter Scott'⁴⁷ (2011), was not a promoter of new Romantic aesthetics nor values, since he remained:

a conservative in both politics and poetics. He proclaimed his loyalty to the restored Bourbon monarchy, and his literary tastes were firmly rooted in the eighteenth century. In prefaces and footnotes, and in the annual surveys of British literature that he published between 1820 and 1826, Defauconpret constantly reaffirmed his belief in classical aesthetics and disparaged the formal innovation of Romanticism.⁴⁸

It follows that Defauconpret modified Scott's novels according to his belief, needs and censures of the early nineteenth-century French society. For example, he tended to cut or neutralised parts of Scott's texts against Bourbon monarchy or the Catholic Church. In *Old Mortality* (1816) – Defauconpret's first translation of Scott– set during the battles between the Covenanters and Charles II's army, he:

[...] reduces intricate politico-religious conflict to a battle between a sympathetic Royalist majority and a fanatical and plebeian Republican minority, elides debates over church government and civil rights, and ultimately obscures the success of the Revolution of 1689.⁴⁹

Despite the changes due to these intermediary translations, there is no doubt that the innovative features promoted by Scott helped the flourishing of the historical novel sub-genre in Italy and influenced nineteenth-century Italian writers. In fact, not only did Scott determine the rising of

⁴⁷ Paul Barnaby, 'Restoration Politics and Sentimental Poetics in A.-J.-B. Defauconpret's Translations of Sir Walter Scott', *Translation and Literature*, 23.1 (2011), 6–28.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Italian historical fiction, he also influenced the birth of the very first Italian novel: *I promessi sposi* (*The Betrothed*), 1827, by Alessandro Manzoni. Indeed, *I promessi sposi* is at the same time the first novel and the first historical novel published in Italy. In his volume, Pittock defines Manzoni's work as the first and most significant example of an autochthonous novel inspired by Scott:

Alessandro Manzoni's *I promessi sposi* is arguably the greatest novel deriving from the influence of Scott [...] Two of Scott's chief traits, the use of the Picturesque to frame a situation, and the historiographical philosophizing over the problems of a historical era, into which he nevertheless entered with gusto, are evident in Manzoni's text.⁵⁰

Given this premise, it is consequential to understand how important the new model introduced by Scott influenced the entire literary-cultural panorama of the Italian nineteenth century. Scott had been the engine that started the process of the creation and development of the Italian novel. Thanks to the great success of *I promessi sposi*, the historical novel acquired the authority it had never had before, engaging itself with didactical purposes by reporting in great detail real facts. Thanks to the narrative pact at the base of the historical composition, which sees the readers trust the authors' faithfulness and attention to the historical events recounted, this literary sub-genre achieved immense popularity.

Scott's and Manzoni's literary relationship is widely documented in many critical studies published until recent years. For example, *Appunti per un parallelo fra Manzoni e Scott*⁵¹ (*Notes for a Parallel between Manzoni and Scott*), 1886, by Francesco D'Ovidio, Francesco Loi's *Affinità scottiane in Alessandro Manzoni*⁵² (*Scott's Affinities in Alessandro Manzoni*), 1976, Matteo Sarni's *Il segno e la cornice: I promessi sposi alla luce dei romanzi di Sir Walter Scott*⁵³ (*The Sign and the Frame: The Betrothed in the Light of Sir Walter Scott's Novels*), 2013, and 'Affinità simboliche fra Manzoni e Scott'⁵⁴ (*Symbolic Affinities between*

⁵⁰ Pittock, p.7.

⁵¹ Francesco D'Ovidio, *Appunti per un parallelo fra Manzoni e Scott* (Napoli: Tipografia e stereotipia della regia università, 1886). Online version:

<https://books.google.it/books?id=TVQITwXv6Y8C&printsec=frontcover&hl=it&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false> [accessed September 2021]

⁵² Francesco Loi, *Affinità scottiane in Alessandro Manzoni* (Livorno: Biblioteca Labronica, 1976).

⁵³ Matteo Sarni, *Il segno e la cornice: I promessi sposi alla luce dei romanzi di Walter Scott* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2013).

⁵⁴ Matteo Sarni, 'Affinità simboliche fra Manzoni e Scott', *Lettere Italiane*, 67.1 (2015), 166-66.

Manzoni and Scott), 2015. All of these studies testify to the strong affinity between the two authors. But, despite the similarities highlighted in these studies, some scholars tended – more than others – to stress the idea that Manzoni developed some different characteristics from the Scottish author's *oeuvre*. According to these critics, the significant difference between *I promessi sposi* and Scott's works lies in the Italian writer's desire to invest his novel with a stronger didactic function. They believed that Manzoni paid much more attention to the Italian seventeenth century's detailed description, going so far as to dedicate entire sections to the Italian social and political condition. Indeed, in *I promessi sposi*, the historical digressions were no longer reported in the footnotes but became separate chapters.

Manzoni was also the author of the famous treatise *Del romanzo storico e, in genere, de i componimenti misti di storia e d'invenzione*⁵⁵ (*On the Historical Novel and, in General, On the Mixed Compositions of History and Fiction*), 1850, where he discussed the peculiar and contradictory features of historical composition. This long essay was addressed to Goethe, who had reviewed *I promessi sposi* in the *Conversation with Eckermann* and to all the critics dubious about the historical novel as a hybrid genre. Indeed, Goethe wrote in the letter to Eckermann, that despite being an excellent poet, Manzoni was sometimes too historically accurate, to the detriment of his novel aesthetic value. In the treatise, Manzoni responded to Goethe and the critics, discussing the two main concerns related to the historical composition. On the one hand, critics believed that the genre confused the reader who could not distinguish between what was historically 'real' – what Manzoni calls 'il vero positivo'⁵⁶ – and what was invented. On the other hand, contrary to the previous idea, critics advised the historical novel's authors not to be too precise because historical *excursi* can break the rhythm of the narration.

As mentioned above, the first accusation moved against *i componimenti misti di storia e d'invenzione* was that there was no distinction between what belonged to History (Manzoni wrote 'history' with capital H in the text to indicate what was documented in annals and official documents) and what was invented by the author. Subsequently, the reader could not find education nor amusement being confused by the plot's inaccuracies. Manzoni reports the main thoughts of some critics against historical novel's writers:

⁵⁵ Alessandro Manzoni, *Del romanzo storico e, in genere, de i componimenti misti di storia e d'invenzione*, ed. da Silvia De Laude, con intr. di Folco Portinari e premessa di Giovanni Macchia, 36 vols (Milano: Centro nazionale studi manzoniani, 2000) XIV, pp. 3-85.

⁵⁶ Translation: the positive truth.

Istruzione e diletto erano i vostri due intenti; ma sono appunto così legati, che, quando non arrivate l'uno, vi sfugge anche l'altro; e il vostro lettore non si sente diletto, appunto perché non si trova istruito.⁵⁷

As a response, Manzoni suggested that the paradox behind the historical composition, which is, as the title suggests, a mixture of real facts and fiction, was necessary to the novel's existence. It was not possible to ask authors to continuously distinguish facts from fiction because the clarification would break the homogeneity of the story:

Gli prescrivete l'impossibile, niente meno. E per esserne convinti, basta che badiate un momento come queste cose devono esserci mescolate, affinché possano far parte d'un racconto medesimo.⁵⁸

The peculiarity of the genre is the contamination of History with fictitious characters, anachronisms, and invented events. These two elements cannot be separated because they constitute the essence of the historical novel.

In addition, Manzoni suggested that it is possible to preserve the integrity of the story without breaking it and enhancing the story's veracity. The author of historical novels must conscientiously dose the fictional elements and historical facts, creating a perfect balance capable of giving truthfulness to the story. Manzoni also argued that the profession of the historian and that of the writer must remain separate. He concluded by stating that the two accusations moved against the historical novel writers, were both right. At the same time, he reprimanded critics for asking historical fiction to choose between two essential conditions: be historically accurate and a product of fantasy. Indeed, critics used to ask 'cose giuste, cose indispensabili; ma le chiedono a chi non le può dare'.⁵⁹ According to Manzoni, the historical novel is, as a matter of fact:

[...] un componimento, nel quale riesce impossibile ciò che è necessario; nel quale non si possono conciliare due condizioni essenziali, e non si può

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 5. Translation: Education and pleasure were your two aims; but they are in fact so tied up that when you do not get one, the other escapes you too; and your reader does not feel delighted, because he is not educated.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 8. Translation: You prescribe the impossible, no less. And to be convinced of this, just take a moment to look at how these things must be mixed with it, so that they can be part of the same story.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 14. Translation: right and indispensable things; but they ask to those who cannot give them.

nemmeno adempirne una, essendo inevitabile in esso e una confusione repugnante alla materia, e una distinzione repugnante alla forma un componimento, nel quale deve entrare e la storia e la favola, senza che si possa né stabilire, né indicare in qual proporzione, in quali relazioni ci devano entrare; un componimento insomma, che non c'è il verso giusto di farlo, perché il suo assunto è intrinsecamente contraddittorio.⁶⁰

1.4 After *I promessi sposi*: the Italian Historical Novel in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

From 1827, when Manzoni's *I promessi sposi* was published, several other authors began to write historical novels, focused on the Italian past. Indeed, the years between 1827 and 1840 are considered the heyday of Italian historical fiction as well as the period of Scott's novels greatest popularity. In these years, Giambattista Bazzoni's *Il castello di Trezzo* (*The Castle of Trezzo*), 1827, Massimo D'Azeglio's *Ettore Fieramosca* (*Hector Fieramosca*), 1833, Tommaso Grossi's *Marco Visconti*, 1834, Francesco Guerrazzi's⁶¹ *L'assedio di Firenze* (*The Siege of Florence*), 1836, and Cesare Cantù's *Margherita Pusterla*, 1838, were published. These were all examples of historical books imitating Scott's and Manzoni's models. According to their moral commitment and educational function, these works may be grouped into two main trends. The first trend followed Scott's writing mode and was characterised by more picturesque and medieval settings, and less attention to historiography. It also preferred to narrate battles and duels. The second one shared the same didactical purposes promoted by Manzoni and was characterised by a greater desire to educate the reader while displaying historical events more precisely.

The evolution of the genre after *I promessi sposi*, and the polymorphism, or the variety of forms, that defined the Italian historical novel's production, is well documented in several articles. A few examples are: 'Il romanzo storico e la modernità'⁶² (*The Historical Novel and*

⁶⁰ Ibidem. Translation: A kind of composition, in which what is necessary turns out to be impossible; in which two essential conditions cannot be reconciled, and one cannot even be fulfilled, being inevitable, it is a confusion repugnant to the matter, and a distinction repugnant to form a composition, in which history and fable must enter, without that we can neither establish, nor indicate in what proportion, in what relations they must enter; a composition, in short, where there is not the right way to do it, because its assumption is intrinsically contradictory.

⁶¹ Francesco Guerrazzi was already known for being the author of the historical novel *La battaglia di Benevento* (*The Battle of Benevento*) published in 1827.

⁶² Rosario Atria, 'Il romanzo storico e la modernità', in *Moderno e modernità: la letteratura italiana*, ed. da C. Gurreri e altri (Roma: Sapienza Università, 2009), pp. 1-13.

Modernity), 2008, by Rosario Atria; ‘Dal romanzo storico alla “storia del romanzo”: romanzo storico, antistorico, neostorico’⁶³ (*From the Historical Novel to “the History of the Novel”: Historical, Anti-Historical, and Neo-Historical Novel*), 2012, by Giovanna Rosa, and ‘Il romanzo storico nel Novecento tra moderno e postmoderno’⁶⁴ (*The Historical Novel in the Twentieth Century, between Modernism and Postmodernism*), 2006, by Elisa Dei. These articles retrace the history and fortunes of this hybrid genre in Italy, remarking on its importance in the evolution of Italian culture and society. The historical novel, indeed, represented the vehicle through which new patriotic ideas, and the desire to educate a larger number of readers, found its realization. In this respect, Atria writes in ‘Il romanzo storico e la modernità’ that:

La necessità per la letteratura di divenire interprete della coscienza del popolo in una dimensione educativa e civile, l’esigenza di veicolare su larga scala idee e temi politici, mediate attraverso la lezione di Manzoni, si compendiano nella frequentazione, sempre più assidua da parte degli scrittori, del componimento misto di storia e d’invenzione.⁶⁵

In his contribution, Atria acknowledges the role of historical fiction in the Italian literary culture, recounting the fundamental steps in the evolution of the sub-genre. He delineates why it appealed to and transformed Italian nineteenth-century society while explaining how the novel changed throughout the 1800s. He contextualises the socio-political background that permitted the birth of the historical novel in Italy, evoking both the importance of the translations and the circulation of Scott’s works and Lukács’ well-known thesis regarding the affirmation of the new concept of history in Europe. He explains that in Italy, during the 1820s, this type of novel encountered:

⁶³ Giovanna Rosa, ‘Dal romanzo storico alla “storia del romanzo”, romanzo storico, antistorico, neostorico’, in *Le forme del romanzo italiano e le letterature occidentali dal Sette al Novecento*, ed. da S. Costa e M. Venturini (Pisa: ETS, 2010), pp. 45-70.

⁶⁴ Elisa Dei, ‘Il romanzo storico nel Novecento tra moderno e postmoderno’, *Moderna*, 8.1-2 (2006), 205-27.

⁶⁵ Atria, p. 3. Translation: the need for literature to become an interpreter of the conscience of the people in an educational and civil dimension, the need to convey political ideas and themes on a large scale, mediated through the lesson of Manzoni, are summarised in the increasingly frequent attendance by writers, of the mixed composition of history and invention.

[...] il più fertile spazio vitale nella declinazione, tra le tante tipologie morfologiche, come romanzo storico, dalla cui eterogeneità discendono in fondo le ragioni della fortuna: sul piano propriamente letterario il finzionale, giocato su intrecci appassionanti, assolve alla funzione di catalizzare l'attenzione del lettore, mentre l'elemento-storia (con la sua capacità di veridizione) contribuisce con forza alla legittimazione della materia romanzesca in un contesto culturale notoriamente refrattario alle innovazioni e immancabilmente ostile a quanto esuli dal 'canone'.⁶⁶

Atria lists the main historical novels published in the first half of the twentieth century. He also points out that the Revolution of 1848 – better known as the Spring of the Nations – marked a turning point in the history of the sub-genre throughout Europe. From the mid-century onwards, the political changes that occurred worldwide determined a modification of the novel and the conception of history. If the upheavals that rose against European monarchs permitted the triumph of the bourgeois, at the same time, there was a sort of regression where the bourgeois was thought no longer able to understand deeply the mechanisms of history. Atria quotes Lukács, who, in *Il romanzo storico* (1970) suggested that:

[...] sul piano culturale si assiste da questo momento a una generale regressione borghese rispetto alla comprensione dei meccanismi profondi della storia, con conseguente crisi del modello storico classico: epigono del quale è Balzac, cui si deve il passaggio dalla 'rappresentazione della storia passata' secondo l'esempio di Scott alla 'rappresentazione del presente come storia'; la nuova era si apre invece nel segno di Flaubert e prosegue nel nome di Zola.⁶⁷

After quoting Lukács, Atria affirms:

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 4. Translation: the most fertile living space in the declination, among the many morphological typologies, as a historical novel, from whose heterogeneity the reasons for fortune descend: on a strictly literary level, the fictional, played on exciting plots, fulfills the function of catalyzing the attention of the reader, while the element-history (with its capacity for verisimilitude) strongly contributes to the legitimation of the fictional matter in a cultural context notoriously refractory to innovations and invariably hostile to what is outside the 'canon'.

⁶⁷ György Lukács, *Il romanzo storico*, trad. da Eraldo Arnaud, intr. di Cesare Cases (Torino: Einaudi, 1970). pp. 99-100. Translation: From this moment onwards, on the cultural level we are witnessing a general bourgeois regression with respect to the understanding of the deep mechanisms of history, with the consequent crisis of the classical historical model: the epigone of which is Balzac, to whom we owe the passage from the 'representation of the past', following to Scott's model, to the 'representation of the present as history'; the new era opens instead in the sign of Flaubert and continues in the name of Zola.

[...] si tratta di anni, questi che immediatamente seguono lo spaccato del secolo, in cui le aspirazioni risorgimentali alla libertà e alla nazionalità trovano progressivamente il proprio coronamento, la borghesia si sostituisce de facto all'antica classe dirigente e il mutare del quadro politico istituzionale sollecita la letteratura ad intraprendere nuove direzioni: la periodizzazione storiografica lukácsiana, come è noto, demarca all'altezza del 1848, l'anno della 'primavera dei popoli', la svolta per il romanzo storico europeo con l'allontanamento dall'alveo classico.⁶⁸

The scholar continues by highlighting that, in Italy, the development of the historical novel was slower than in the rest of Europe. That is because the sub-genre went through a period of discontinuity after the Union of Italy, which occurred in 1860.

The works that characterised the post-unification period began to move away from Scott's model to embrace a more intimate way of telling history. In this respect, two significant works were published: *Le confessioni d'un italiano* (*Confession of an Italian*) by Ippolito Nievo and *Cento anni* (*One Hundred Years*) by Giuseppe Rovani, published respectively in 1867 and 1868. In these two novels, 'il vero positivo', or the historical truth, is filtered through the protagonist's memory. Historical narration became more subjective and, consequently, less trustworthy. As a result, these two novels lead to a profound transformation of the sub-genre. To quote Atria:

La soluzione omodiegetica, con l'abbandono dell'impersonalità e la ricostruzione degli eventi affidata al filtro soggettivo della memoria individuale, sposta l'asse del rapporto storia-narrazione sensibilmente verso il romanzesco. Ma per contro emergono due elementi che caratterizzeranno la narrativa successiva: l'avvicinamento prospettico della storia alla contemporaneità: molti dei romanzi storici (o antistorici) successivi avranno ambientazione contemporanea o ultra-contemporanea; il prevalere della microstoria sulla macrostoria ('in primo piano il particolare della storia quotidiana e in secondo piano, sullo sfondo, l'universale dei grandi eventi politici').⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Atria, p. 7. Translation: these are years that immediately follow the cross-section of the century, in which the Risorgimento aspirations for freedom and nationality gradually find their fulfilment. The bourgeoisie replaces the ancient ruling class and the change in the institutional political framework urges literature to undertake new directions: the historiographic periodisation of Lukács, as is well known, marks the turning point for the European historical novel at the height of 1848, the year of the 'Spring of the people'.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 11. Translation: The homodiegetic solution, with the abandonment of impersonality and the reconstruction of events entrusted to the subjective filter of individual memory, significantly shifts the axis of the story-narrative relationship towards the novel. But, on the other hand, two elements emerge that will

At this point, it is evident that it increased the necessity for a more psychological and subjective representation of historical events and past eras, closer to the writer's own experience. To sum up, the historical novel landed on the psychological and autobiographical composition while maintaining its purpose of educating the public on the values of national unity. At the same time, this didactic need gradually turned into explicit patriotic propaganda, where, through the denunciation of the past, authors could criticise and give voice to the disillusionment of their present. In fact, during the second half of the nineteenth century, the trust in historical progress and the positive and revolutionary spirit that culminated in the Unità d'Italia soon turned into a feeling of disappointment regarding history. The urgency arose to recount the disillusioned present, give voice to the lower classes, and express the general distrust:

I romanzieri del periodo post-unitario raccontano l'Italia reale, che vive nelle campagne e nelle piazze, nella miseria e nella frustrazione, provvedendo alla demistificazione delle molte verità confezionate ad arte dalla storiografia ufficiale asservita al potere politico. La sfiducia nella storiografia non è che un riflesso del conflittuale rapporto con la storia, luogo dell'oblio e della violenza.⁷⁰

After reporting some interesting points in Atria's contribution and summarising the very first phase of historical fiction in Italy, it is possible to move on looking at the historical novels of the post-unification period. The most famous writers of the late nineteenth century were Matilde Serao with *Il ventre di Napoli (Naple's Womb)*, 1884, and Federico De Roberto with *I Viceré (The Vicerés)*, 1894.

In particular, *I Viceré* perfectly embodies the new spirit of disillusionment. It narrates the aftermath of the union of Italy, stressing how the political changes brought by it did not

characterise the subsequent way of narrating: the perspective approach of history to contemporaneity. Many of the following historical - or anti-historical - novels will have a contemporary or ultra-contemporary setting, and the prevalence of micro-history over macro-history ('in the foreground the detail of everyday history and in the background, the universal of great political events').

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 12. Translation: The novelists of the post-unification period tell of the real Italy, made of people who live in the countryside and in the squares, in misery and frustration, providing for the demystification of the many truths artfully crafted by official historiography subservient to political power. Distrust in historiography is only a reflection of the conflicting relationship with history, a place of oblivion and violence.

improve the social condition of Italian people. *I Viceré* appeared between the ‘sunset’ of the romantic – or *risorgimentale* – historical novel and the emergence of the Italian realist novel (*Verismo*) at the end of the nineteenth century and constituted a turning point in the historical novel production. In a pivotal study titled *Il romanzo storico in Italia*⁷¹ (*The Historical Novel in Italy*), Margherita Ganeri acknowledges the innovations brought by De Roberto’s novel, also highlighting that it is not possible to place *I Viceré* within a specific literary genre. She believes that this is because the novel is infused by naturalistic and realistic elements, which can be more easily associated with the works of Giovanni Verga and Émile Zola – namely, two representatives of the Italian Verismo and French Naturalism. She suggests that De Roberto’s story can be considered halfway between the historical novel – with its great use of historical excursions and meticulous documentation – and the realist novel – with the attention to daily life, small realities, and the scientific description of a bourgeois family.

In *I Viceré*, the historical event is the Italian unification, which is presented through the Uzeda family’s micro-history. Despite the attention to historical details, the novel has been considered a socio-realistic novel rather than an historical one. One of the reasons was De Roberto’s choice of setting his story in a contemporary period of history instead of in a distant past. In this respect, Gianni Grana, an influential Italian critic of the twentieth century, believed that:

I Viceré è estraneo ai canoni ‘storici’ del primo romanticismo italiano [...] A parte il divario prospettico, e quindi il diverso impegno filologico e critico derivante dalla scelta di un’epoca contemporanea [...], la presentazione dei fatti e caratteri così somiglianti al vero da farsi credere reali non ha niente della passione conoscitiva, della partecipazione e ‘sincerità storica’ del Manzoni.⁷²

On Grana’s consideration, I would argue that it is not useful to be so strict regarding the historical novel’s classification. Indeed, when taking into consideration only the novels set in a

⁷¹ Margherita Ganeri, *Il romanzo storico in Italia: il dibattito critico dalle origini al postmoderno* (Lecce: Piero Manni, 1999).

⁷² Ibid., p. 71. Quoted from Gianni Grana, *I Viceré e la patologia del reale: discussione e analisi storica delle strutture del romanzo* (Milano: Marzorati, 1982), pp. 120-23. Translation: *I Viceré* is alien to the ‘historical’ canons of early Italian Romanticism [...] Apart from the perspective gap, and therefore the different philological and critical commitment deriving from the choice of a contemporary era [...], the presentation of the facts and characters, so similar to be believed real, has nothing of Manzoni’s passion for knowledge, participation, and ‘historical sincerity’.

distant past, there is the risk to exclude many Italian books that are instead historical. Grana's schematic view does not consider the many forms and hues the genre can assume.⁷³ As Ganeri posits, '*I Viceré* sono qualcosa di meno e qualcosa di più di un romanzo storico'.⁷⁴

Another influential critic who tries to classify *I Viceré* is Vittorio Spinazzola. In *Il romanzo antistorico (The Anti-Historical Novel)*, 1990, Spinazzola defines De Roberto's *I Viceré*, Pirandello's *I vecchi e i giovani (The Old and the Young)*, and Tomasi di Lampedusa's *Il Gattopardo* as anti-historical novels⁷⁵. He argues that in these books there is an overthrow of the historicist-romantic paradigm of history as a progressive *continuum*.⁷⁶ The three authors shared an attitude of mistrust and disillusion towards historical progress and believed that the human condition does not change over time:

La vittoria apparente e il fallimento sostanziale della rivoluzione patriottica in Sicilia, quindi nel Mezzogiorno e nell'Italia intera; l'esito delusivo del processo risorgimentale viene peraltro assunto come prova dell'inaffidabilità di ogni ideologia, ogni mitologia di progresso, giacché nulla cambia nelle vicende umane, e se una evoluzione si produce è verso il peggio, non verso il meglio.⁷⁷

This definition underlines De Roberto's mistrust of history, which he mostly expresses through the use of irony: *I Viceré* is thus a parody of the Italian nineteenth-century historical novel, which was based on an optimistic sentiment, trust of history and led by the ideals of the Risorgimento:

La prospettiva storica dei *Viceré* è caratterizzata da un esasperato carattere contestatario, che nega il concetto di progresso, in senso sia politico che economico, sia sociale che culturale. Con le lenti di una critica spietata, ironica e sarcastica fino al grottesco e alla deformazione, De Roberto demistifica le

⁷³ Cfr. Ibidem.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 73. Translation: They are something less and something more than a historical novel.

⁷⁵ Vittorio Spinazzola, *Il romanzo antistorico* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1990).

⁷⁶ Cfr. Ibidem.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 8. Translation: The apparent victory and the substantial failure of the patriotic revolution in Sicily, therefore in the South and in the whole of Italy; the disappointing outcome of the Risorgimento process is also taken as proof of the unreliability of every ideology, every mythology of progress, since nothing changes in human affairs, and if an evolution occurs it is towards the worse, not towards the better.

ideologie progressiste e ne rovescia e sfata i paradigmi di pensiero in una rappresentazione lucidamente rigorosa e disillusa della storia.⁷⁸

Due to its originality, *I Viceré* did not enjoy immediate success. Critics, such as Verga, argued that one of the reasons for its poor fortunes was the use of too many lengthy descriptions. He considered *I Viceré* an intricate and complex novel and always preferred other lighter narratives of De Roberto such as *Processi verbali (Verbal Processes)*, 1890.⁷⁹ Only after the publication of *Il Gattopardo*, *I Viceré* regained some sort of recognition. With it also the other Italian novels on the *Sicilian Risorgimento*.⁸⁰

1.5 The Italian Historical Novel in the First Half of the Twentieth Century

In the beginning of the twentieth century, the rise of the avant-gardes and the consequent literary genres' devaluation⁸¹ contributed to the destabilisation of the nineteenth-century Romantic historical novel's *status quo*. Indeed, historical fiction suffered from a sudden de-escalation, considering the number of books published from the 1890s to the 1950s. However, despite the small number of new publications, it is possible to identify two different strands that characterised the first half of the twentieth century. On the one hand, works such as Maria Bellonci's *Lucrezia Borgia* (1939) and Anna Banti's *Artemisia* (1947) introduced a new and feminist perspective on history, intending to highlight the viewpoint of the discriminated classes. They went back to the historical meticulous documentation while giving new keys to interpret history, especially tied to the will of 'far emergere punti di vista storicamente discriminati come quello femminile, alla luce di problematiche socio-culturali attuali'.⁸² On the other hand, the *romanzo siciliano (Sicilian novel)*, or anti-historical novel expressed its mistrust

⁷⁸ Ganeri, p. 75. Translation: The historical perspective of *I Viceré* is characterised by an exasperated contesting personality, which denies the concept of progress, both in the political and economic, in both the social and cultural sense. With the lenses of a ruthless, ironic, and sarcastic criticism up to the grotesque and deformation, De Roberto demystifies progressive ideologies, overturns, and debunks their paradigms of thought in a rigorous and disillusioned representation of history.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 66.

⁸⁰ For example, *I vecchi e i giovani* by Pirandello, published in 1913.

⁸¹ The devaluation of literary genres was especially supported by the criticism of Benedetto Croce (1866-1952), who was one of the most influential critics of those years.

⁸² Ganeri., p. 84.

towards history and progress and highlighted the failure of the Italian Risorgimento. It followed the model and motifs of De Roberto's *I Vicerè*.

The first Italian historical novel of the first half of the twentieth century worth quoting is *I vecchi e i giovani* by Luigi Pirandello published in 1913. This is an example of the Sicilian novel, belonging to that group of anti-historical fiction. As in the case of *I Vicerè*, Pirandello's novel did not obtain any praise when it first appeared. It only gained a little more consideration in the 1950s when the famous and successful historical novel *Il Gattopardo* by Tomasi di Lampedusa was published. The poor initial fortunes of Pirandello's *I vecchi e i giovani* and its relation to *Il Gattopardo* is explained again in Ganeri's study:

Nel periodo che va dal triennio 1906-1909, in cui Pirandello compose *I vecchi e i giovani*, fino al 1957, in cui Tomasi di Lampedusa completò *Il Gattopardo* (pubblicato postumo l'anno seguente) si assiste innanzitutto a un ribaltamento dell'asse critico e dei giudizi ricorrenti sul romanzo storico. L'insuccesso del primo, analogo a quello del suo predecessore diretto *I Vicerè*, viene in un certo senso vendicato, dopo cinquant'anni, dal destino opposto riservato al romanzo del principe di Salina [...] Il clamoroso successo di vendita [of the *Gattopardo*] sanciva la rivalutazione da parte del pubblico [...] di un genere ritenuto ormai obsoleto. Ed è emblematico che la sua ribalta si sia verificata grazie a un'opera apparentemente non polemica, e anzi per molti versi nobilitante la tradizione ottocentesca, mentre un romanzo corrosivo e contestatario come *I vecchi e i giovani* era relegato nell'ombra.⁸³

The story of *I vecchi e i giovani* is set in Agrigento, during the Sicilian upheavals of 1893. It recounts the story of two generations of the Laurentano family. As the title suggests, the whole novel is centered on the contrast between the old generation, *i vecchi*, who took part in the battles for the Italian unification, and the young generation, *i giovani*, who believed in socio-political reforms after the Union.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 87. Translation: In the period 1906-1909, in which Pirandello composed *I vecchi e i giovani*, up to 1957, in which Tomasi di Lampedusa completed *Il Gattopardo* (published posthumously the following year), there is first of all an overturning of the critical axis and of the recurring judgments on the historical novel. The failure of the former, similar to that of its direct predecessor *I Vicerè*, is in a certain sense vindicated, after fifty years, by the opposite fate reserved for the novel of the *Principe di Salina* [...] The resounding sales success of *The Leopard* sanctioned the re-evaluation by the public [...] of a genre considered obsolete by now. And it is emblematic that its limelight occurred thanks to an apparently non-controversial work, and indeed in many ways ennobling the nineteenth-century tradition, while a corrosive and contesting novel like *I vecchi e i giovani* was relegated into shadow.

As said before, although *I vecchi e i giovani* was an experimental novel that perfectly fitted the avant-garde literary and cultural trends of the first half of the twentieth century, it was almost ignored by critics when it first appeared. With its re-evaluation, towards the 1960s, critics started to acknowledge its importance in the evolution of the sub-genre and pinpoint its key traits and significant innovations. For example, the omniscient narrator – typical of the nineteenth-century historical novels – is replaced in the book by free indirect speech, which allows the main characters to express their thoughts and feelings. The free indirect speech serves as a vehicle to express the inner thoughts of the protagonists. The shift from the objective narrative of history to the subjective one had already begun to contaminate historical fiction from the 1860s – as we have seen when talking about *Cento anni* by Nievo and *Le confessioni di un italiano* by Rovani. In *I vecchi e i giovani*, as in the books just mentioned, the story is told and filtered through the experiences and subjectivity of each of the protagonists. Consequently, it lacks that component of trust that was instead typical of pre-Risorgimento historical novels.

Another author worth quoting in this section dedicated to the first half of the twentieth century is Riccardo Bacchelli. He boasted a rich production of historical novels that were published from 1927 to 1959. For example, two of his most successful novels are: *Il diavolo al Pontelungo (The Devil at the Long Bridge)* 1927, and *Il mulino del Po (The Mill of the Po)*, 1938-40. Bacchelli's works constitute a kind of historical novel that is still different from those analysed up to now. In fact, in this case, history is neither documented in detail nor subjectively described. As Giorgio Squarotti states in his study, 'I tempi del rinnovamento' (*Times of Renovation*), these two novels used history as a container.⁸⁴ According to this definition, history is used only as a picturesque frame, as did the several novels published before the ones by Scott. It marked a return to history as a mere accessory in which fictional characters could be inserted in the background of poor historiographical documentation: 'La storia viene a essere posta decisamente sullo sfondo, ed è richiamata soltanto in quanto viene a lambire o anche a toccare personaggi di invenzione'.⁸⁵

In *Il mulino del Po*, Bacchelli tells the story of four generations of the Scarceni family over a period of one hundred years. In the book history is used only as a fascinating setting:

⁸⁴ Giorgio Barberi Squarotti, 'Il problema del romanzo storico', in *I tempi del rinnovamento*, ed. da Serge Vanvolsem e altri, 2 vols (Roma: Bulzoni; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995), I, pp. 19-47.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26. Translation: History is placed in the background, and is recalled only when it comes to touch the fictitious characters.

[...] opera d'invenzione che si serve dello sfondo di cent'anni di storia italiana per avvalorare e rendere più fortemente incardinato nella tradizione nazionale la struttura del romanzo ciclico di una famiglia, capace di raccogliere al proprio interno tutte le varietà dei casi sentimentali, economici, ideologici, dei rapporti, delle avventure, ma dando loro l'ordinamento abbastanza rigoroso che nasce dalla continuità delle generazioni, dal trasmettersi delle stesse attività lungo gli anni, dalla nettezza dello spazio ben circoscritto e accuratamente descritto che fa da sfondo agli avvenimenti.⁸⁶

Following Bacchelli's model of using history as a picturesque frame, it is worth mentioning Alessandro Bonsanti's *I capricci dell'Adriana* (*Adriana's Tantrums*), 1934, and *Racconto militare* (*Military Tale*), 1937.

The last historical novel mentioned in this section is *L'Alfiere* (*The Bishop*) by Carlo Alianello, published in 1942. This book takes up the faithful description of several historical events and describes in a precise and detailed way the social conditions of the people who experienced them. In this case, it can be said that the work of Carlo Alianello is very similar to the stories of Scott and Manzoni, since history is described as lived by real people. *L'Alfiere* is the first of a series of novels set in the South of Italy.⁸⁷ It narrates the social and political conflicts in the period of transition from the Bourbonic kingdom to the unification of Italy. In this novel, the description of the people who played an active role in these historical events is fascinating: it is a masterly account of men and women who did not bow their heads in the face of the new regime possessed of weapons and ferocity but who defended their traditions, their flag, and their oath of allegiance to the end. The novel aims at depicting the condition of ordinary people who were deliberately excluded from the annals of official history. The same purpose will be the base of Leonardo Sciascia's novels, published from the 1960s, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁸⁶ Ibidem. Translation: [it is a] work of invention that uses the background of a hundred years of Italian history to validate and make the structure of the cyclical novel of a family more strongly rooted in the national tradition. It is only able to gather, within itself, all the varieties of sentimental, economic, ideological, relationships, adventures, but gives them the fairly rigorous order that arises from the continuity of generations, from the transmission of the same activities over the years, from the clarity of the well-circumscribed and carefully described space that is the background to the events.

⁸⁷ Other Alianello's novels set in the South of Italy are *Soldati del Re* (*The King's Soldiers*), 1952, and *L'eredità della Priora* (*The Inheritance of the Prioress*), 1963.

1.6 The Italian Historical Novel after 1945

During the 1950s, and especially after the publication of *Il Gattopardo* (1958), historical fiction regained popularity and experienced a revival. Due to the multiplicity of forms, however, it is not easy to catalogue the historical novels from the 1950s onwards and distinguish them from other forms of fiction. One of the main reasons is the presence of different elements belonging to a great variety of other sub-genres. Indeed, the historical novel was no longer a fixed and rigid genre characterised by specific features, as it was in the nineteenth century.⁸⁸ Along with the mixture of historical and fictionalised elements, historical novels in the second half of the twentieth century are contaminated by other narrative and fictional sub-genres. Indeed, elements borrowed from the psychological, realist, detective, and anthropological novel can be found in post-war historical works. In addition, what makes the identification of these novels even more problematic is the concept of space and time. It is common to find historical novels that focus on contemporaneity rather than on the past, or that describe both, thereby reducing the time jump that divides them.

Another characteristic of the second half of twentieth-century historical fiction is that it becomes closer to Escapist literature.⁸⁹ The past narrated in the novels often becomes a place to escape from a compelling and dreadful reality, especially during the World Wars. As we have seen when citing Bacchelli's novels, the use of history as a container becomes popular.⁹⁰ The historical settings are just accessories of the narrative, capable of attracting a heterogeneous audience, from the educated readers to the ordinary ones. In this sense, it is possible to affirm that in these years, historical fiction tended to lose its traditional essence, which involved telling the past through universal characters with rigorous documentation in order to entertain and educate the reader.⁹¹

The reasons behind the revival of the historical novel lie in these two characteristics: from the end of the Second World War, historical fiction becomes 'multi-genre' and part of Escapist literature. These new features suited the readers' and critics' expectations in the Italian post-war period and were closer to the post-modernist trends of the twentieth century. In *Il problema del romanzo storico*, quoted before, Squarotti highlights:

⁸⁸ Nineteenth-century novels mainly focused on reporting history with detailed descriptions in order to instruct and entertain the reader.

⁸⁹ Escapist literature is that kind of literature that provides relief and distraction to the readers' unpleasant reality. It mainly includes works of fantasy.

⁹⁰ To know more about history as a container, see Squarotti, 1995.

⁹¹ Cfr. *Ibidem*.

Ecco che, allora, si può rilevare un'altra ragione della fortuna del romanzo storico: sorvolata la rappresentazione, troppo difficile e problematica, del presente, la storia finisce per essere un luogo neutrale, che non comporta responsabilità di idee da parte dello scrittore. Il romanzo storico viene a negare proprio la funzione di ammaestratrice della storia e della concezione che ogni storia è sempre storia contemporanea, che parla di uomini non diversi da quelli di oggi, onde attraverso le loro azioni, i loro sentimenti, le loro idee, le loro passioni si conosce più a fondo se stessi e il proprio presente e meglio si comprendono le forze che vi operano. Il romanzo di argomento storico viene a essere un puro intrattenimento [...] ⁹²

For the second time in the development of Italian fiction,⁹³ history started to be perceived and narrated in a more subjective way. This preference, consequently, led to the creation of many autobiographical and memorial works. Also, the subjectivation of history resulted in the devaluation of the status of historiography. Indeed, according to post-modernist ideologies, history was no longer authoritative since it is always filtered through personal experience. It results that historical truth was considered impossible to grasp.

Despite the innovations and changes that marked Italian historical fiction in the second half of the twentieth century, some scholars⁹⁴ recognise common traits. These similarities make it possible to identify a *continuum* in the evolution of the sub-genre through more than two centuries. As in the nineteenth century, the mixture of history and fiction still lies at the base of the modern historical novel, anti-historical novel, neo-historical novel, and post-modernist historical novel. Whether in a distant epoch or a determined past, authors blended at least one historical, documented event with invented characters and episodes. Besides, authors still try to use adequate and 'reliable' sources as a starting point for their narratives. In this respect, it is useful to quote the innovative study by Ruth Glynn: *Contesting the Monument: The Anti-*

⁹² Ibid., pp. 35-36. Translation: Here, then, we can detect another reason for the fortune of the historical novel: once the too difficult and problematic representation of the present has been flown over, history ends up being a neutral place, which does not involve the writer's responsibility. The historical novel denies its role to teach history and the conception that every story is always a contemporary history, which speaks of men no different from those of today. Through their actions, feelings, ideas, and passions, they get to know themselves and their present better. Also, they better understand the forces that operate in their present. The historical novel becomes pure entertainment.

⁹³ As seen in previous sections, Ippolito Nievo, Giuseppe Rovani, and Luigi Pirandello already narrated a historical period through the lens of their characters.

⁹⁴ For example: Ganeri, 1999; Dei, 2006; Gigliola De Donato, *Gli archivi del silenzio: la tradizione del romanzo storico in Italia* (Bari: Schena, 1995); Rosa, 2010; Squarotti, 1995.

*Illusionist Italian Historical Novel*⁹⁵ (2005). The volume presents an innovative way to look at the historical novel production in Italy since it traces some of the post-modernist devices in the production of Scott and many other Italian writers of the Risorgimento. Glynn's new approach to the studying of historical novel will be treated in more detail when discussing the post-modernist Italian historical fiction – in particular, Umberto Eco's masterpiece *Il nome della rosa*, 1980.

After the two World Wars, some of the most influential and successful Italian historical novels appeared: *Il Gattopardo* by Tomasi di Lampedusa in 1958; *Il consiglio d'Egitto* (*The Council of Egypt*), 1963, by Leonardo Sciascia; *La Storia* (*History*), 1974, by Elsa Morante, (1974); *Il sorriso dell'ignoto marinaio* (*The Smile of the Unknown Mariner*), 1976, by Vincenzo Consolo; *Il nome della rosa*, 1980, by Umberto Eco; *La chimera* (*The Chimera*), 1990, by Sebastiano Vassalli, and *Q*, 1999, by Wu Ming. Since the post-war years marked a turning point in the fortune of Italian historical fiction, and since the inquiry of this dissertation is tracing the reception of Scott from 1945 onwards, it is useful to dedicate a paragraph to each decade and specifically to the novels that most influenced those years. Even if these books are not strictly related to Scott's production,⁹⁶ their fortunes certainly boosted the success of the historical novel in general, and marginally influenced Scott's reception in Italy. In addition, at the basis of these novels lie foundational features brought by Scott and his mode of writing historical fiction.

1.6.1 *Il Gattopardo* (1958) and the Historical-Detective Novel

Il Gattopardo played a fundamental role in revaluing the historical novel sub-genre and reawakening the debate around it. Published in 1958, it immediately excited critical and public interest. One of its merits was combining the tastes and expectations of the lower and middle classes through the sense of regionalism and the description of nineteenth-century Sicilian society. In addition, the recounting of the aftermath of Italian unification through the point of view of the dying Sicilian aristocracy was praised. Due to its high number of sales, *Il Gattopardo* constituted a true publishing success:

⁹⁵ Ruth Glynn, *Contesting the Monument: The Anti-Illusionist Italian Historical Novel* (Leeds: Northern Universities Press, 2005).

⁹⁶ Certainly, some of the main traits of these novels can be traced back to Scott's agenda, but generally these authors did not explicitly imitate Scott.

[with *Il Gattopardo*] Si assiste ad un ribaltamento dell'asse critico e dei giudizi ricorrenti sul romanzo storico. Il clamoroso successo di vendita sanciva la rivalutazione da parte del pubblico, di un genere ritenuto ormai obsoleto. [...] Nella positiva ricezione del *Gattopardo* si realizza l'intreccio fino alla reciprocità del gusto di due pubblici, una intellettualità aristocratica, rappresentata fra l'altro anche da Montale, che ne apprezzava proprio l'ideologia nostalgica ed elitaria, e un contesto piccolo borghese.⁹⁷

[...]

Le recensioni furono numerosissime e i recensori si divisero in due schieramenti contrapposti, per i quali furono conati gli epiteti di 'gattopardisti' e 'antigattopardisti'. [...] Indipendentemente dal modo in cui veniva giudicata, la portata restaurativa del *Gattopardo* era in genere largamente condivisa.⁹⁸

Il Gattopardo belongs to the triad that Vittorio Spinazzola defined as anti-historical novels. As mentioned in the previous section, anti-historical novels are a series of books characterised by a mutual negative perception of history (see 1.4). De Roberto's *I Viceré*, Pirandello's *I vecchi e i giovani*, and Tomasi di Lampedusa's *Il Gattopardo* shared the same negative feeling towards historical progress: a sense of mistrust and scepticism regarding the realisation of a better society and the improvement of human condition. To quote, again, Squarotti:

Viene colpito nel romanzo il concetto di progresso inarrestabile necessario alla storia, che l'ideologia comunista aveva profondamente inciso nella cultura del dopoguerra. L'idea di rivoluzione come trasformazione radicale delle istituzioni e dei rapporti di potere all'interno della società viene

⁹⁷ Ganeri, p. 87. Translation: [with *Il Gattopardo*] It is possible to witness a reversal of the critical axis and the recurring judgments on the historical novel. The resounding sales success sanctioned the re-evaluation by the public of a genre considered obsolete. [...] In the positive reception of *Il Gattopardo*, the reciprocity of the taste of two audiences is realised. There is an intellectual aristocracy - represented among others by Montale - who appreciated its nostalgic and elitist ideology, as well as the focusing on the small bourgeois context.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p 95. Translation: The reviews [on *Il Gattopardo*] were very numerous. The reviewers were divided into two opposing groups, for which the epithets of 'Gattopardists' and 'Anti-Gattopardists' were coined. [...] Regardless of how it was judged, the restorative scope of *Il Gattopardo* was generally widely shared.

ironicamente e con superiore agio intellettuale raffigurata come mistificazione, un inganno, una menzogna.⁹⁹

Il Gattopardo moves away from the idea of history as progress, demystifying the ideals of the Italian Risorgimento. It also emphasises how events and revolutions do not lead to any political and social change. Together with the anti-historical attitude, the innovation *Il Gattopardo* brought to the Italian historical novel was the use of space and time. In Tomasi's novel, the events do not follow the canonical chronological order but are told following an 'elliptical' shape:

La sequenzialità logico-cronologica monolineare con cui lo storicismo organizzava la successione dei fatti viene scardinata. [...] pochi quadri spazio-temporali giustapposti coprono una *fabula* di cinquant'anni rappresentandone solo alcuni episodi centrali nella vicenda privata della famiglia Salina. La grande storia è relegata negli interstizi tra un blocco e l'altro e recuperata attraverso la tecnica narratologica dell'analessi.¹⁰⁰

The narration is thus fragmented and reported through Don Fabrizio's perspective. Don Fabrizio pays for his social failure in solitude, and through his micro-history, it is possible to understand the aristocracy representatives' lives in decline. Hence, the latent decadence that pervades the whole work leads to another fundamental theme of the novel, death. In *Il Gattopardo*, death is considered the only result of historical progress. There is no improvement. Every event, revolution, or change leads to the ultimate death, 'Il romanzo storico si propone come un'epica di fallimento e di morte, non diversamente da quanto era accaduto ne *I vecchi e i giovani*, ma con una radicalità più cupa e ironica'.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Squarotti, p. 31. Translation: In the novel, the concept of the unstoppable progress of history is struck. This concept was impacted by the Communist ideology popular in the post-war culture. The idea of revolution as a radical transformation of institutions and the power of social relations is portrayed as a mystification, a deception, a lie, with irony, and superior intellectual attitude.

¹⁰⁰ Dei, p. 213. Translation: The monolinear logic-chronological sequence with which historicism organised the succession of events is [in this novel] undermined. [...] a few juxtaposed space-time paintings cover a fifty-year-old *fabula* representing only some central episodes in the private life of the Salina family. The great history is relegated to the interstices between one block and another and recovered through the narratological technique of the flashback.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 32. Translation: The historical novel is an epic of failure and death, like *I vecchi e i giovani*, but with a darker and more ironic radicality.

When discussing historical fiction between the 1960s and the 1970s, it is necessary to mention Leonardo Sciascia. He introduced the idea of falsehood. According to him, historical accounts cannot be objective since they have been written by a human being, who, in a certain sense, can ‘manipulate’ the data. Sciascia put historical accounts under juridical investigation since he believed they were contaminated by lies and omissions. To him, official documents obscured a significant part of history, the one made by human victims of the ruling classes. In this respect, Sciascia proposes a new form of historical fiction: the historical-detective novel where the main goal is to unmask what is still ambiguous and mysterious about historical official documents. Among his principal works it is worth mentioning: *Il consiglio di Egitto*, 1963, *La morte dell’inquisitore (The Death of the Inquisitor)*, 1964; *I pugnatori (The Stabbers)*, 1976, and *La strega e il capitano (The Witch and the Captain)*, 1987.

In Sciascia’s novels:

Episodi apparentemente marginali e passati sotto silenzio dalla tradizione storiografica ufficiale offrono a Sciascia l’occasione di denunciare le ipocrisie e la corruzione delle classi dominanti (*I pugnatori*, 1976) e di ricostruire le ragioni degli sconfitti (*La morte dell’inquisitore*, 1964, *La strega e il capitano*, 1986).¹⁰²

Sciascia gives voice to the ‘defeated’, to the ‘forgotten’, the ones marginalised from the annals. According to his idea, ‘dalla storia rimangono esclusi tutti quei soggetti sociali, quelle identità culturali che, non avendo accesso ai canali istituzionali, sono destinati a non lasciare testimonianza di sé’.¹⁰³ In his novels, the use of official sources aims to testify to the partiality and unreliability of any history’s transmission.

Vincenzo Consolo is another historical novelist who resumes the concept of falsehood and investigates the veracity of official documents. Like Sciascia, he believes that lies and omissions contaminated history in annals and wants to demonstrate that this history is just the version written by the upper classes. Besides, Consolo implements a further modification by making his novels experimental and expressive:

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 213. Translation: Episodes that seem marginal pass over in silence by the official historiographical tradition. They offer Sciascia the opportunity to denounce the hypocrisies and corruption of the ruling classes (*I pugnatori*, 1976) and to reconstruct the reasons of the defeated (*La morte dell’inquisitore*, 1964, and *La strega e il capitano*, 1986).

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 214. Translation: From documented history are excluded all social subjects and cultural identities which, having no access to institutional channels, are destined not to leave testimony of their life.

In Consolo il tentativo di recuperare la voce dei ceti esclusi dalla Storia 'ufficiale' passa dall'essere oggetto della riflessione metastorografica ad essere principio di poetica.¹⁰⁴

In *Il sorriso dell'ignoto marinaio* (1976), the historical accounts are the result of the protagonist's personal reconstruction. They are thus contaminated by social, linguistic, and ideological factors. In addition, the narration is broken up by historical documented records related to the anti-Bourbon revolt in Cefalù in 1956 and the popular uprising in Alcara Li Fusi in 1960:

L'effetto che ne ricava è di gettare su di esse [the historical records] una luce straniante che dimostri come la Storia sia 'una scrittura continua di privilegiati' e come ogni testimonianza sia falsata dal filtro non neutro del linguaggio in cui è scritta.¹⁰⁵

In Consolo's novels, the written history is claimed to result from the ruling classes' selected memories. The perspective of the lower class is often overlooked, excluding the reader from a complete knowledge of the past.

Distant from historical-detective novels is *La Storia* (1974) by Elsa Morante. It constitutes another significant work that characterised Italian historical fiction in the 1970s. Like *Il Gattopardo*, *La Storia* represents a literary case as it achieved enormous success in sales and criticism. Set in Rome during the Second World War, the novel recounts the experiences of the people who lived the war's horrors first-hand. Unlike the novels already cited, *La Storia* deliberately becomes part of mainstream literature. Morante's idea was, indeed, based on the desire to attract a large number of readers belonging to both the most sophisticated and popular mainstream audiences. It follows that Morante's commercial goal influenced both the structure and content of her work:

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem. Translation: In Consolo, the attempt to recover the voice of the classes excluded from 'official' history goes from being the subject of metastorographic reflection to being the principle of poetics.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 215. Translation: The resulting effect is to cast an alienating light on them [the historical records] that demonstrates how history is 'a continuous writing of privileged people' and how every testimony is distorted by the non-neutral filter of the language in which it is written.

Il progetto della Morante tende al coinvolgimento emotivo (più che critico) di un pubblico quanto più ampio ed eterogeneo (culturalmente e socialmente) sia attraverso la scelta di moduli narrativi di stampo ottocentesco, che facendo ricorso all'uso strumentale del patetico.¹⁰⁶

Thus, history is a device for the public's entertainment rather than a starting point for critical investigation. The historical events are filtered again through the protagonists' own experiences. These protagonists do not take an active part in the historical events, but the course of history passively transports them:

Nella Storia domina la riflessione antropologica ed esistenziale. Scompare la categoria storiografica, benjaminiana, dei 'vinti' sostituita da un nuovo referente, gli 'umili' (a cui sono da ascrivere i personaggi principali del romanzo: Ida, Nino e soprattutto Useppe), attraverso cui la Morante identifica un'umanità antropologicamente 'pura', estranea alla Storia, senza consapevolezza di sé.¹⁰⁷

In the novel, the anthropological analysis plays a central part. The protagonists' private and personal lives are placed in the foreground, while historical accounts are separate from the plot and relegated to dedicated chapters at the beginning and the end of the novel.

1.6.2 The Italian Neo- and Post-Modernist Historical Novel: *Il nome della rosa* (1980)

Starting from the 1980s, Italian historical fiction began to look back at the classic models of the nineteenth century, such as the ones of Manzoni and Scott. The phenomenon, according to which there is a partial return to the more traditional form of the historical novel, is not to be

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 218. Translation: Morante's project tends towards the emotional – rather than critical – involvement of an audience as broad and heterogeneous - culturally and socially – as possible, both through the choice of nineteenth-century narrative modules, and by resorting to the instrumental use of the pathetic.

¹⁰⁷ Ibidem, but the original quotation is taken from Romano Luperini, *Marxismo e intellettuali* (Padova: Marsilio, 1974) p. 238. Translation: In history anthropological and existential reflection dominates. The historiographic category, Benjaminian, of the 'vanquished' has disappeared, replaced by a new referent, the 'humble' (to whom the main characters of the novel are to be ascribed: Ida, Nino and above all Useppe), through which Morante identifies a humanity anthropologically 'pure', foreign to history, without self-awareness.

considered specific to Italian literature. The advent of the New Historicism¹⁰⁸, especially from overseas, has undoubtedly influenced the perception and creation of historical works in the second half of the twentieth century all over the world. Generally, the neo- and post-modernist historical novels break away from avant-garde experiments to return to a more linear type of narration while bringing some innovations in their content and structure. In Italy, from the publication of *Il nome della rosa* (1980), many Italian authors started to share the desire to re-establish un *ritorno all'ordine* (*return to order*) in their narrative:

Con la rinascita del romanzo storico si identifica, infatti, almeno in Italia, la stagione di un generale ritorno all'ordine. La parabola di Umberto Eco, partito dall' 'opera aperta' per approdare al romanzo tradizionale 'ben fatto', testimonia paradigmaticamente un'esperienza generazionale.¹⁰⁹

Umberto Eco's *Il nome della rosa* is the first and most important example of post-modernist historical fiction. Published in 1980, it tells the story of the old monk Adso da Melk, who recounts a series of events that happened when he was a young monk living with his master Guglielmo da Baskerville. The story takes place inside a Benedictine monastery and is divided into seven days, marked by the rhythms of monastic life. The novel represents another fundamental stage in the development of the historical sub-genre in that it permitted a further revival of the historical genre in the second half of the twentieth century – as *Il Gattopardo* did almost twenty years before. Scholars agree to define *Il nome della rosa*'s great editorial success as symptomatic of a renewed interest in historical compositions:

Negli ultimi decenni, la narrativa dedicata alla rievocazione della storia ha conquistato una notevole visibilità. All'incremento della produzione è corrisposto un crescente apprezzamento da parte del pubblico. L'exploit commerciale del nuovo romanzo storico, che in Italia si data a partire dagli anni Ottanta, apertisi con il clamoroso successo del *Nome della rosa* (1980)

¹⁰⁸ Noteworthy, Hayden White who is the most radical theorist of New Historicism. He is the author of *Metahistory; The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

¹⁰⁹ Ganeri, p. 102. Translation: In fact, at least in Italy, the season of a general return to order is identified with the rebirth of the historical novel. The parable of Umberto Eco, who started from the 'open work' to arrive at the traditional 'well done' novel, paradigmatically testifies to a generational experience.

di Umberto Eco, ha spinto da più parti a celebrare la rinascita del genere ‘misto di storia e d’invenzione’.¹¹⁰

Eco’s novel is also considered an *iper-romanzo* (*hyper-novel*) due to the multiplicity of genres it includes. His novel is indeed a mixture of historical, philological, anthropological, and detective novel. However, its main characteristic is the use of several metanarrative strategies that appear throughout the text.

The metatextual references and the desire to treat the past with *un’ ironia smaliziata e straniata*,¹¹¹ detach the work from the rest of the previous Italian historical novel production. As Eco states in his *Postille* to the novel, he desired to create a novel that could please a double audience of readers, from the most cultured to the ‘mass’ one.¹¹² Many critical studies had already analysed in depth the characteristics of Eco’s novel,¹¹³ consequently, they will not be treated in this section. However, it is interesting to report some of the main ideas behind the novel to comprehend the innovations *The Name of the Rose* brought to the sub-genre and to see the similarities between Eco’s and Scott’s works, highlighting the on-going inspiration brought by the latter to Italian modern authors.

As stated in the beginning of this section, some of the metanarrative strategies used by Eco can already be found in the work of Scott – and Manzoni – suggesting that in the 1980s it still existed a subtle interconnection between the model proposed by Scott and the novels of new Italian writers. Surely, one of the characteristics of Eco’s novel that binds it most to the works of Scott is the use of the past to investigate the problems of the present. Indeed, Eco believed that all the problems of modern Europe were formed in the Middle Ages and we need to look back at it to understand the present.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Ibidem. Translation: In recent decades, the narrative - dedicated to the re-enactment of history - has gained noteworthy consideration. The increase in production is matched by the growing appreciation from the public. The commercial exploit of the new historical novel, which in Italy dates back to the 1980s, and which began with the sensational success of *Il nome della rosa* (1980) by Umberto Eco, has led many parts to celebrate the rebirth of the genre ‘mixed of history and invention’.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 104. Translation: a shrewd and alienated irony.

¹¹² Umberto Eco, *Il nome della rosa* (Milano: Bompiani, 2016). See *Postille*, pp. 600-2.

¹¹³ See for example: Gianni Renato, *Saggi sul nome della rosa* (Milano: Bompiani, 1985); Erik Shilling, ‘Umberto Eco between Postmodernism and Narrative: *Il nome della rosa*, *Il pendolo di Foucault*, and *La misteriosa fiamma della regina Loana*’, *Forum Italicum*, 39.3 (2015), 800-11; Paula Onofrei, ‘Medieval Symbols in *The Name of the Rose*, by Umberto Eco’, *Anastasis: Research in Medieval Culture and Art*, 5.1 (2018), 230-37, and Beniamino della Galla, ‘“Ovviamente”, il Medioevo? Note per una lettura metastorica de *Il nome della rosa* di Umberto Eco’, *Griseldaonline*, 21.1 (2022), 143-56.

¹¹⁴ For more details about Eco’s relationship with the Middle Ages, see, for example, Umberto Eco, ‘Dieci modi di sognare il Medioevo’, in *Sugli specchi e altri saggi* (Milano: Bompiani, 1985).

The reflections on the nature of the novel that Eco does in the beginning of his novel and in the *Postille* are also one of the main topics of the prefaces of Scott. As Alison Lumsden highlights in *Walter Scott and the Limits of Language*¹¹⁵ (2010), starting from his first novel *Waverley*, Scott discusses the nature of the novel in the prefaces and often through his fictitious narrators – who, I would add, are often his alter egos.¹¹⁶ Metatextual strategies, self-referentiality, and a vocabulary rich in ancient and modern linguistic references are visible in both Scott and Eco. The use of Latin, Scottish, Gaelic words and specialised register taken from several different fields (law, religious, nautical terms etc.) are indeed implemented by both authors. These similarities denote that Scott’s model might have inspired Eco as well as other post-modernist Italian authors.

Another example of metatextual discourse common to both authors is the reflection on the text. Eco gives in the *Postille* the keys to interpret the novel, starting from the explanation of the title. The intention to guide the reader in the interpretation of the text is already found in *Waverley*. We can recall Scott’s discussion regarding the choice of the title. He writes that ‘the title of this work has not been chosen without the grave and solid deliberation which matters of importance demand from the prudent’.¹¹⁷ Scott continues with a long disquisition regarding the choice of the title and the keys to read the novel. Eco does the same by explaining the title *Il nome della rosa* to his readers. He affirms that a title needs to ‘confondere le idee, non irreggimentarle’.¹¹⁸

In addition, among the expedients of *Il nome della rosa* has taken from nineteenth-century novels one can list the use of the ‘old found manuscript’ as a historical source from which the narration is then developed. Although the manuscript is the historical source of the story, Eco urges his readers not to take it as undisputable as the ‘original’ manuscript had been translated by a French abbot who apparently did not exist. In the first pages of the book, Eco-narrator confesses ‘il caso superava ogni ragionevole pessimismo. Incominciai a ritenere che mi fosse capitato tra le mani un falso’.¹¹⁹ Always questioning historical ‘truth’ and thus doubting

¹¹⁵ Alison Lumsden, *Walter Scott and the Limits of Language* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

¹¹⁶ For example, Jonathan Oldbuck in *The Antiquary*. I presented a paper titled ‘Bibliophilism and Collecting in Scott’s *The Antiquary* (1816) and Umberto Eco’s *The Mysterious Flame of Queen Loana* (2004): Two Alter Egos Compared’ at the Twelfth International Walter Scott Conference held in Edinburgh (6th-8th July 2021). In the paper, I discussed the role and the affinities of the two main characters of these novels.

¹¹⁷ Scott, *Waverley*, p. 32.

¹¹⁸ Eco, p. 581. Translation: to confuse the ideas not regiment them.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.11. Translation: The negligence of French scholars in giving bibliographical indications of some reliability is known, but the chance surpassed any reasonable pessimism. I began to think that I had come across a fake.

official sources is one of the main characteristics of post-modernist historical fiction, which had already been implemented by Consolo and Sciascia and – in part – Scott.

1.6.3 Luigi Malerba's *Il fuoco greco* (1990) and Sebastiano Vassalli's *La chimera* (1990)

The mixture of detective and historical fiction can also be found in Luigi Malerba's work, particularly in *Il fuoco greco* (*The Greek Fire*), 1990. In this respect, Glynn affirms that 'the investigation of the truth-reality relationship takes [in this novel] the form of a pseudo-detective story which recalls Eco's novel.'¹²⁰ Indeed, *Il fuoco greco* is the story of court intrigues connected to the theft of il 'fuoco greco''s secret formula, a powerful weapon that belonged to the Byzantine emperors. The plot is thus set in the city of Byzantium during the empire of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in the tenth century. With his novel, Malerba aims to create an allegory of the present by using past settings, where corruption and political power lead to a series of crimes and injustices. In *Il romanzo storico in Italia*, Ganeri affirms:

Entro un tessuto narrativo figurale fino alla rarefazione, la rievocazione storica è in questi romanzi strutturata come un'allegoria, in genere politica. I riferimenti ai fatti storici sono scarni, quasi pretestuosi: sul passato si riflettono le ombre del presente politico oscuro e corrotto.¹²¹

As Sciascia and Consolo did before, Malerba reintroduces the concept of falsehood and manipulation of historical documents. Indeed, the latter are the results of the selected memories of the upper-class, which omit a large portion of history. He also expresses the evasive nature of historiography by implying a very challenging language. For example, syllogisms and sophisms are used to give this sense of manipulation of history and historical accounts. Thanks to this particular use of language, he stresses the post-modernist belief according to which it is impossible to access historical truth. Glynn recognises Malerba's use of language as one of the principal features of the anti-illusionist historical novel. Besides, she suggests that Malerba

¹²⁰ Glynn, p. 129.

¹²¹ Ganeri, 1999. Translation: Within a figural narrative fabric to the point of rarefaction, the historical re-enactment in these novels is structured as an allegory, generally political. References to historical facts are sparse, almost spurious: the shadows of the dark and corrupt political present reflect on the past.

turns the attention ‘to the underlying intimate relationship between language and power in the context of bureaucracy and corruption’.¹²²

Generally, the main concepts behind the post-modernist and anti-illusionist historical novels are the results of Hayden White’s¹²³ reflection on metahistory, Brian McHale’s considerations on post-modernist fiction, and Kurt Sprang’s philosophy of language. The use of different voices, dialects, and registers makes the narration fragmentary and the use of metanarrative discourse, as in chapter 26 of *Il fuoco greco*, where Malerba investigates the relationship between history and literature, renders the novel one of the most notable post-modernist Italian historical works of recent years.

Published the same year as *Il fuoco greco*, *La chimera* is another example of an anti-illusionist historical novel. However, in this case, the story focuses on its protagonist’s micro-history. Set in Piedmont in the seventeenth century, the novel tells the true story of Antonia, an orphan woman bred by the nuns in the city of Novara who later moves to the tiny village of Zardino. The plot develops over twenty years of Antonia’s life, from her childhood to her death at the stake because accused of heresy. As many historical novelists did before him, Vassalli aims at providing a history ‘from the point of view of the loser in the historical process – the witch – in an effort to redress the age-old trend of history and to challenge the notion of ‘Objectivity’ in historical discourse’.¹²⁴ Antonia’s story allows the reader to uncover the injustices, horrors, and prejudices of Italy in the seventeenth century. In addition to this period, marked by the women’s persecutions for witchcraft, Vassalli tells the life in the fields of *risaioli* (*rice farmers*), whom Antonia herself discovers, having been chosen for their poor mental and physical conditions by the ruling classes. In fact, given their physical or mental impediments, they are unable to rebel against the power and continue to work diligently in the fields.

The title is also interesting itself, *La chimera*. Besides being the well-known mythological creature, *la chimera* is also the name Vassalli attributes to the Italian mountain *Monte Rosa* (*Mount Rose*). From the city of Novara, it is possible to see the top of the mountain, which seems to accompany Antonia throughout her life. *La chimera* is thus the peak of the

¹²² Glynn, p. 126.

¹²³ Cfr. Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London-New York: Rutledge, 1989); Kurt Spang, ‘Apuntes para una definición de la novela histórica’, in *La novela histórica: Teoría y comentarios*, ed. by Ignacio Arellano and Carlos Mata Induráin (Pamplona: Eunsda, 1995), pp. 63-125.

¹²⁴ Glynn, p. 81.

mountain, always present but impossible to reach. It is the lingering presence that appears all throughout the plot, untouchable and ephemeral.

Regarding the novel's post-modernist and anti-illusionist main characteristics, the author's constant incursions are evident in the plot where he warns against the veracity of the historical sources, or *certe carte*, which contained Antonia's story. Indeed, Vassalli repeatedly stresses the impossibility of a faithful narration of history because of the incompleteness of those documents. In addition, he includes several intertextual references to reinforce the idea that his story is fragmentary and it is the product of several different 'voices'. Those references are, for example, legal documents, extracts from biography, literary allusions and quotations that 'suggest a departure from a single master narrative'¹²⁵ resulting in the pluralisation of histories.

Despite the post-modernist features of the novel, *La chimera* was also deeply influenced by the most important Italian historical novel of the nineteenth century: *I promessi sposi* by Manzoni. Manzoni's influences on *La chimera* are evident in the setting chosen (north of Italy in the seventeenth century), in the historical sources Vassalli used to base his story (those *certe carte* drawn on the manuscript brought to light by Manzoni), and in the similarities between the main characters (Antonia and Lucia). Both authors try to research the historical truth by digging into forgotten documents and uncover the injustices of the past from the point of view of the lower classes, focusing on their struggle against the ruling classes' abuse of power. The intertextual relationship between the two novels has been analysed by many scholars, including, as Ruth Glynn suggests, Verina Jones in his paper titled 'Intertextual Patterns: *I promessi sposi* in *La chimera*', published in 1992.¹²⁶

1.6.4 Luther Blissett/Wu Ming, *Q* (2000)

To conclude this section, it is necessary to mention *Q* by Luther Blissett, later known as Wu Ming. *Q* is a complex historical novel written by four young writers, namely Roberto Bui, Giovanni Cattabriga, Luca Di Meo, and Federico Guglielmi, under the pseudonym of Luther Blissett, and published in February 2000. It is also the first Italian novel subjected to copyleft (an anti-copyright formula that permits its free reading in the telematic form). Set in the years

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 83.

¹²⁶ See Verina Jones, 'Intertextual Patterns: *I promessi sposi* in *La chimera*', *Italian Studies*, 47.1 (1992), 51-67.

of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, the novel tells the story of the invented character Tiziano, an Anabaptist preacher who travels throughout Europe.

The plot is divided into four main sections: 'Il conciliatore' (*The Conciliator*); 'Un Dio, una fede, un battesimo' (*A God, a Faith, and a Baptism*); 'Il beneficio di Cristo' (*The Benefit of Christ*), and the 'Epilogo' (*Epilogue*). As mentioned before, the story is very complex because it is fragmented into continuous flashbacks and flashforwards and blends historical events with invented characters and episodes. Besides, having four authors, the novel conveys a plurality of perspectives and meanings. This particular structure already suggests that the novel belongs to the genre of anti-illusionist and post-modernist fiction since it does not give a unified and coherent recount of history and it is open to multiple interpretations. While exploring the relationship between religion, power, modernity, post-modernity, morality and politics, *Q* is also a spy and an adventure story, which follows the growth of its protagonist Tiziano through 'tradizione e innovazione, fra potere ed emancipazione, fra autorità istituite e sforzi per la liberazione dell'umanità'.¹²⁷ Furthermore, by choosing the sixteenth century, the author manages to denounce the Italian political and social situation after the upheavals of the '68, without the risk of censorship.

Sandra Waters wrote a fascinating paper, which analyses the main features of *Q* and, at the same time, puts it in relation to the second novel published by Wu Ming, *54* (2002). The article, titled 'Luther Blissett and Wu Ming: The End of History?'¹²⁸ analyses the post-modernist characteristics of both novels (pluralisation, multiple meanings, fragmented plots etc.). It also suggests a change in *54*'s philosophy of history, expressing the idea of *the end of history*. She affirms that at the base of *54* lies the concept of the end of the monumental history that characterised and fueled previous historical novels. Indeed, the history considered monumental is the one 'heroic and unquestionable history celebrated in early historical novels [that] permeates the latter part of the 20th century and continues today'¹²⁹. She believes that the 'end of the monumental history' also characterised the majority of the twenty-first century's historical works.

¹²⁷ See online review < http://www.lafrusta.net/rec_blisset.html > [accessed October 2022]. *La Frusta* is an online literary review magazine. Its issues include recent criticism on several Italian authors, current affairs, and book reviews. Translation: tradition and innovation, between power and emancipation, between established authorities and efforts for the liberation of humanity.

¹²⁸ Sandra Waters, 'Luther Blissett and Wu Ming: The End of History?', *Forum Italicum*, 49.1 (2015), 56–73.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58. But this original concept is taken from the works of two recent critics: Gianni Vattimo, and Fredric Jameson: Gianni Vattimo, *The Transparent Society* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Friedrich Jameson, *Postmodernism: Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991).

To conclude, the historical novels that most influenced the Italian literary panorama after 1945 can mostly be considered post-modernist or anti-illusionist novels since they draw on some elements typical of the traditional nineteenth-century historical works while including post-modernist innovations. The list of historical works discussed in this section shows that there is a *continuum* in the genre's development rather than a series of ruptures, and that to talk about a *rebirth* of the historical novel after the 1950s is not correct. Indeed, the term *rebirth* implies that the historical novel ceased to exist at some point in Italian history. On the contrary, the genre never disappeared from the Italian literary panorama, even if going through significant changes and even if experiencing some periods of low popularity. Undoubtedly, the Italian novel was deeply influenced by the works of Scott, as we have seen when looking at Manzoni's *I promessi sposi*, as well as the Romantic currents developing all around Europe in the nineteenth century. The historical novel became the predominant literary genre in Italy starting from the publication of *I promessi sposi* (1827), and it continued to appeal and interest a large number of readers and writers up to the present day. Whether talking about the historical novel of the Risorgimento, *anti-storico*, *contro-storico*, *neo-storico* and *post-moderno*, the historical novel always maintained its key traditional features: the mixture of historical and fictitious elements and the desire to engage with the reader while using the past as a territory for a better comprehension of the present. All of these elements can be attributed to Scott's agenda. To quote Remo Ceserani:

L'idea che questo genere narrativo vecchiotto e imbalsamato, ottocentesco e lukácsiano, ogni tanto ridiventi arzillo e, per obbedire alle mode letterarie, si rimetta in ghingheri e venga a fare qualche giro di ballo fra noi postmoderni, è un'idea che può venire in mente a qualche sociologo improvvisato [...] La verità è che il romanzo storico, così come la narrazione storica, è sempre stato fra noi, in tante forme e versioni diverse, e non c'è bisogno di fare nomi per ricordare come esso abbia fatto parte integrante non solo dell'esperienza romantica e realistica, ma di tutta l'esperienza della modernità.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Cfr. Ganeri, p. 112. The original quotation is taken from: Remo Ceserani, 'Cinque domande sul ritorno al passato', in *Tirature '91*, ed. da Vittorio Spinazzola (Torino: Einaudi, 1991), pp. 25-36. Translation: The idea that this old and embalmed, nineteenth-century and Lukácsian narrative genre, every now and then becomes spry again and, to obey literary fashions, gets dressed up and comes to do some dance rounds among us post-moderns, is an idea that can come in the mind of some improvised sociologist [...] The truth is that the historical novel, as well as the historical narrative, has always been among us, in many different forms and versions, and there is no need to mention names to remember how it has constituted an integral part not only of the romantic and realistic experience, but of the whole experience of modernity.

Part 2

The Italian Critical Reception of Walter Scott: 1945-2020

2.1 Walter Scott in the Post-War Years: 1945-1960s

The post-war years were a period of great political, social, and cultural changes creating fervor all around Europe. In Italy, after the fall of the Fascist regime, a new era began with the birth of the Democratic Republic (June 2, 1946). This new phase in Italian history was characterised by a hunger for culture freely consumed, and the need to return to free expression and evaluation of the surrounding reality. This is because the Fascist hegemony politically manipulated and limited Italian culture for almost twenty years. After the end of the War, Italy experienced two decades, the 1950s and the 1960s, of significant economic, industrial, and demographic growth, witnessing the birth of the modern consumer society. In the years following the end of the Second World War, Socialist and Marxist ideologies returned to the foreground and became predominant in the Italian cultural panorama. These schools of social, economic, and political thought were born in the previous century from the theories of Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895), and were initially spread in Italy thanks to the works of intellectuals such as Antonio Labriola (1843-1905), Giovanni Gentile (1875-1944), and Benedetto Croce (1866-1952). After the end of the Second World War, the Frankfurt School (a group of Neo-Marxists), the Marxist Hungarian critic György Lukács (1885-1971), and, in Italy, Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) contributed to making these theoretical currents popular. Also, Existentialism had great resonance throughout the 1940s and 1950s, influencing philosophy, literature, cinema, music, etc. Although the origins of Existentialism can be found during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this current became particularly popular in the post-war years. It was initially associated with the theories expressed by philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) and Albert Camus (1913-1960). The reawakening of Existentialism was mainly due to the horrors experienced in the two World Wars, which awakened the impulse of philosophers and intellectuals to return to a reflection on the role of human beings and their existences. In Italian literature and criticism, Existentialism particularly influenced the surrealist and Kafkaesque works of Dino Buzzati¹³¹ (1906-1972), who

¹³¹ Dino Buzzati (1906-1972) wrote, for example: *Il deserto dei Tartari* (*The Tartar Steppe*) 1940; *Sessanta racconti* (*Sixty Stories*) 1958, and *Un amore* (*A Love Affair*), 1963.

concentrated on describing the condition of human beings in the post-war period through metaphors and allegories, and Alberto Moravia¹³² (1907-1990), who mainly focused on describing the alienated and indifferent condition of human beings. As demonstrated in this chapter, although Existentialism affected several artistic fields, it did not influence literary criticism on Scott.

Unlike Existentialism, Marxist and Socialist theories influenced much of the Italian criticism on Scott starting from the post-war years. Indeed, these theories impacted a major part of the Italian militant criticism of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, spread by newspapers such as *Rinascita*¹³³ (*Rebirth*) founded by Palmiro Togliatti in 1944, *Letterature moderne*¹³⁴ (*Modern Literatures*) founded in 1950 by the anti-fascist intellectual Francesco Flora, and *Nuovi Argomenti*¹³⁵ (*New Topics*) established in 1953 by Alberto Carocci and, again, Alberto Moravia.¹³⁶ These currents became the most popular in the evaluation of all forms of art, including literature. The main aim of Marxist and Socialist theories was to analyse the forms, styles, and meanings of artistic works by looking at the historical and political context that produced them. They conceived all artistic forms in a materialistic way and proposed a political evaluation. They specifically looked at the socio-economic materialistic basis of which the forms of art were an expression. Marxist criticism could not think of artistic forms, including literature, as autonomous and detached from the material production of life. This type of evaluation, however, had the defect of ending up with the political exploitation of artistic forms, losing sight of their purely aesthetic value.¹³⁷ Indeed, Marxist and Socialist intellectuals tended to conceive literature as a vehicle for propaganda or to use their evaluation in order to address political issues. In Italy, Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) was the only member of this current to advance the need to evaluate a work of art both from a political and a purely aesthetic point of view. His criticism was certainly able to restore a balance between the militant criticism, which otherwise would have produced judgments merely conditioned by socialist and political ideologies.¹³⁸ Since Marxist criticism is understood as a combination of sociological literary

¹³² Alberto Moravia (1907-1990) wrote, for example: *Il conformista* (*The Conformist*) 1951, *La noia* (*Boredom*) 1960, and *La vita interiore* (*The Inner Life*) 1978.

¹³³ *Rinascita* was a monthly Socialist political and cultural magazine founded in 1944 by Palmiro Togliatti. It will end its publication in 1991.

¹³⁴ *Letterature moderne* was a bimonthly founded and directed by Francesco Flora, published in Milan by Bocconi University from 1950 to 1962.

¹³⁵ *Nuovi Argomenti*: it was a quarterly newspaper founded in 1953 in Rome by Alberto Carocci and Alberto Moravia.

¹³⁶ Numerous were the political and literary newspapers of this period, the ones quoted in the text are just a few.

¹³⁷ Cfr. Francesco Muzzioli, *Le teorie della critica letteraria* (Roma: Carocci, 2021).

¹³⁸ Cfr. *Ibidem*.

criticism and historicist literary criticism, it is consequential that the interest in the historical novel with its realistic elements returned to the fore. In fact, the two main concepts of this critical school were: the research and study of realism, which was understood as the realistic reproduction of society, and the analysis of the typical elements that have characterised societies in given historical periods (language, ideologies, actions...).¹³⁹

In the Italian cultural context marked by Marxist and Socialist criticism, particularly important for Scott's reception was the publication of *The Historical Novel* by Lukács, translated into Italian in 1965. The volume still represents one of the most significant contributions to the study of Scott and his works. Lukács investigates the social and political history that led to the creation of the historical novel, highlighting how it was the product of the great revolutions that upset Europe between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Lukács evaluates the role of the masses in the war and outlines the need for writers to narrate specific historical periods from the point of view of the ordinary people who lived them. Also, particularly important in Lukács' study is the analysis of Scott's average hero. The protagonists of Scott's novels are in fact fictional characters and not famous historical personalities. These characters embody the spirit of an era and describe the life and social conditions of a specific historical period. It is in the choice of the average hero that, for Lukács, lies much of Scott's greatness as a writer.¹⁴⁰ Lukács' model influenced most of the writings devoted to Scott in the 1960s and in the following decades, returning attention to the historical novel and giving new keys to understanding Scott's work.¹⁴¹

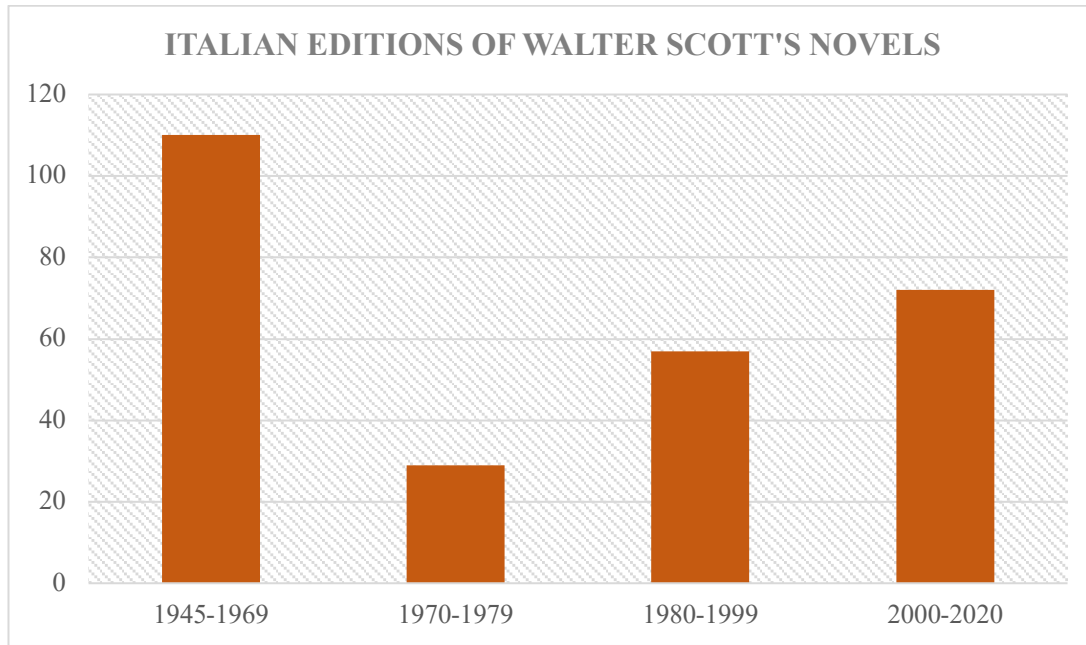
In addition to Marxist criticism and the publication in Italian of *The Historical Novel*, the economic and industrial boom of the post-war years influenced Scott's Italian reception in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. The expansion of the Italian publishing industry saw the publication of numerous books, including new titles, classics, and works of Italian and foreign authors. *Il Gattopardo* by Tomasi di Lampedusa, published in 1958, was undoubtedly among the most famous titles of these years and among those that most impacted upon Scott's reception. Indeed, as Lukács' study did in the context of criticism, Tomasi di Lampedusa's historical novel contributed to bringing the historical genre back into fashion and led to the

¹³⁹ See some pivotal Italian studies on literary criticism that treated in detail Marxism: Muzzioli, *Le teorie della critica letteraria*, 2019; Arcangelo Leone De Castris, *La critica letteraria in Italia dal dopoguerra a oggi* (Bari: Laterza, 1991), and Giorgio Baroni e Rosanna Alhaique Pettinelli, *Storia della critica letteraria in Italia* (Torino: UTET, 1997).

¹⁴⁰ Cfr. Lukács, 1970.

¹⁴¹ To read more about Lukács' Italian reception, see, Andrea Manganaro, 'Il romanzo storico di György Lukács in Italia', *Moderna*, 8.1-2 (2006), 51-60.

reconsideration of nineteenth-century historical classics, including those of Manzoni and Scott. The boom in the Italian publishing industry and the impact it had on the Italian publication of Scott's novels is visible in the graph below:



As can be seen, the number of editions of Scott's works is mainly concentrated in the 1940s-50s-60s. After these thirty years, the production of Italian editions of Scott experienced a period of decline until the 2000s, when it will be possible to lay claim to another phase of popularity.

Alongside the increase in book production, it is necessary to mention the expansion of the new media market. Among these, cinema and television were establishing themselves as new means of communication capable of reducing the distance that separated the intellectual elite, more dedicated to reading books, and the popular masses.¹⁴² It is no coincidence that in the 1950s Italian television and cinema broadcast and released several films based on Scott's novels. For instance, the famous Hollywood version of *Ivanhoe* in 1952, *Il Talismano* (*The Talisman*) in 1954, and *Quentin Durward* in 1955. These transpositions certainly contributed in boosting Scott's popularity in the second half of the twentieth century.

¹⁴² Cfr. Gian Carlo Ferretti, *Storia dell'editoria letteraria in Italia: 1945-2003* (Torino: Einaudi, 2004).

The last factor to be included in the study of Scott's Italian reception in the post-war years is the influence of critics such as Benedetto Croce, Emilio Cecchi, and Mario Praz, who influenced the evaluation of Scott's works, from the beginning of the twentieth century. In several of their publications, they expressed not very favourable judgments on Scott, generally believing that he was a mediocre author. For example, in *Storia della letteratura inglese nel secolo XIX (History of English Literature in the Nineteenth Century)*, published in 1915, Cecchi tried to identify the main characteristics of Scott's novels. He concluded by stating that Scott's books were superficial and more suitable to popular culture since they did not convey intellectual, thematic nor psychological depth.¹⁴³ Another example is Croce's essay on 'Walter Scott',¹⁴⁴ published in the newspaper *La Critica (The Criticism)* in 1923, and, in the same year, included in *Poesia e non poesia*¹⁴⁵ (*Poetry and Non-Poetry*). In his contribution, he devoted a whole section to Scott. His intention seemed to be to produce a balanced judgment on Scott's *oeuvre*, highlighting his ability to entertain readers through picturesque characters, fascinating settings, and dramatic plots, and, on the other hand, emphasising his limits and defects. In the end, since in this writing Croce separated 'true poetry' from literary attempts of little poetic value, he concluded that Scott could not be considered 'true poetry'. That is to say that Scott's work is not artistic nor poetic as it is aimed at the entertainment of the popular masses.¹⁴⁶

Finally, Praz mentioned Scott on several occasions. Two of the most significant contributions on Scott were the essay on 'Walter Scott' published in *La Stampa (The Press)* in 1932, and later in *Studi e svaghi inglesi*¹⁴⁷ (*English Studies at Leisure*), 1937, and *La crisi dell'eroe nel romanzo vittoriano*¹⁴⁸ (*The Crisis of the Hero in the Victorian Novel*), 1952. His ideas about Scott were very similar to the ones expressed by Cecchi and Croce. Indeed, Praz affirmed that after reading five of Scott's novels he could state that he was a boring author,

¹⁴³ Cfr. Emilio Cecchi, *Storia della letteratura inglese nel secolo XIX* (Milano: Fratelli Treves, 1915).

To discover about Cecchi, Croce, and Praz's criticism, also see Punzo's *Walter Scott in Italia (1821-1971)*, pp. 207-36.

¹⁴⁴ Benedetto Croce, 'Walter Scott', *La Critica*, 21.1 (1923), 1-9.

¹⁴⁵ Benedetto Croce, *Poesia e non Poesia* (Bari: Laterza, 1923).

¹⁴⁶ Cfr. *ibidem*. It is interesting to note that this perception of Scott's work recalls the main trend of criticism in the U.K. in the first half of the twentieth century, according to which to entertain the public did not go hand in hand with artistic seriousness. We can consider *The Great Tradition* by F.R. Leavis published in 1948. Indeed, he discards the novels of Scott from the 'great tradition' affirming that although he was a very smart man he did not differ from the bad tradition of the nineteenth-century. This generally negative judgement on Scott will influence large part of the twentieth-century criticism. To read more about Leavis's belief on Scott see Frank Raymond Leavis, *The Great Tradition* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1948), or *The Cambridge Companion to English Novelists*, ed. by Andrian Poole (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 116-31.

¹⁴⁷ Mario Praz, *Studi e svaghi inglesi* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1937).

¹⁴⁸ Praz, *La crisi dell'eroe nel romanzo vittoriano*, 1952.

maybe more suitable for children's literature. He argued that Scott's long descriptions of Scottish customs and traditions made the rhythm of the reading slow and boring and the plots static. The descriptions that Scott made of Scotland and in general of the settings he chose for his novels will be taken up again by Praz in the second most influential of his contributions: *La crisi dell'eroe nel romanzo vittoriano*, which will be analysed later in this chapter.

When we outline the cultural landscape of Italy in the post-war years up to the 1960s, it can therefore be said that Marxist and Socialist ideologies have helped the return of interest in the studying of the historical novel, as did Tomasi di Lampedusa's novel, but that at the same time, some negative judgments expressed in the previous decades, especially by Cecchi, Croce, and Praz, were still strongly influential in Scott's critical reception. It is also necessary to note that, by looking at the list of critical studies, there are no contributions entirely dedicated to Scott. It is, therefore, impossible to divide the critical review into monographs and shorter contributions, as it will be done for the next decades. Italian scholars tended to discuss aspects of Scott's life and work within the context of the studying of Italian historical fiction or in comparison with Manzoni. Given these premises, it seemed helpful to create an organic discourse on Scott's reception in the 1940s-1950s-1960s by analysing the critical writings devoted to him chronologically. Furthermore, since the studies on Scott published in the post-war years were discussed in detail by the scholar Franca Ruggieri Punzo in her manual *Walter Scott in Italia, 1821-1971* (1975), it also seemed unnecessary to quote all of them in this chapter. For the complete list of critical studies published on Scott, see the timeline reported at the end of this dissertation.

The critical writings that we will look at in this chapter are: Mario Praz's *La crisi dell'eroe nel romanzo vittoriano*, published in 1952; Arcangelo Leone De Castris's *La polemica sul romanzo storico (The Quarrel around the Historical Novel)*, 1959; Giorgio Manganelli's introduction to *L'Antiquario (The Antiquary)*, Garzanti edition of 1961; Fernanda Maria Poli's *Letteratura italiana e letterature comparate (Italian Literature and Comparative Literatures)*, 1966; Giorgio Petrocchi's *Il romanzo storico nell'800 italiano (The Italian Historical Novel in the Nineteenth Century)*, 1967, and Giovanni Macchia's *Il romanzo storico (The Historical Novel)*, 1969.

2.1.1 1945 - 1950s

The first monograph published in the post-war years that is worth looking at is *La crisi dell'eroe nel romanzo vittoriano* (1952) by Mario Praz. As explained in the introduction to this chapter,

Praz was one of the greatest and most influential Italian critics of the twentieth century. In this volume, he supports the thesis that Dutch and Flemish painters inspired Romantic writers and built the basis for the subsequent Victorian novel. As the scholar Roland Ball explains in his review of Praz's book,¹⁴⁹ published in the literary magazine *Comparative Literature* (1954), the influence of such painters upon particular writers:

[...] is the implicit demonstration that the concern of Flemish painters for details of everyday life, with ordinary men rather than with the noble or the heroic, represented the same evaluation of human life which brought about the gradual *imborghesimento* of Romanticism in English literature and the apotheosis of the antiheroic in the Victorian novel.¹⁵⁰

From the seventeenth century, Dutch and Flemish painters managed to faithfully depict scenes from ordinary life and domesticity instead of idealised warriors, saints, or mythological figures. According to Praz, the nineteenth-century novel, first Romantic and then Victorian, was influenced by this pictorial school as it too began to focus on the domestic dimension of daily and middle-class life.

In the book, Praz devotes a chapter to Scott where he summarises his main critical thoughts about him expressed in previous years, adding new fascinating considerations. He claims that Scott was responsible for making the novel a bourgeoisie product since he was able to describe the nascent bourgeois society, meeting the tastes of his contemporary public. Also, Praz makes a parallel between Scott and one of his contemporary painters: the Scottish artist David Wilkie (1785-1841). The two artists continued the tradition of Flemish painters by depicting middle-class life, but, as Praz argues, they never reached the 'vero intimismo olandese'.¹⁵¹ Praz recalls a famous scene from the novel *The Antiquary* where the characters are gathered around the body of the drowned sailor and affirms that Wilkie offered the exact match in paintings of Scott's descriptions.¹⁵² Furthermore, it was Scott himself that in the novel wrote: 'in the inside of the cottage was a scene which our Wilkie alone could have painted, with that exquisite feeling of nature that characterises his enchanting productions'.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Roland Ball, 'La crisi dell'eroe nel romanzo vittoriano', review of *La crisi dell'eroe nel romanzo vittoriano* by Mario Praz, *Comparative Literature*, 6.1 (1954), 79-82.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54. Translation: true Dutch intimism.

¹⁵² Praz, 1952, p. 53.

¹⁵³ Walter Scott, *The Antiquary* (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2009), p. 298.

To sum up, what Praz wants to demonstrate in his volume is that the origins of the Victorian realist and bourgeois novel are to be found in the works of seventeenth-century Flemish painters and that Scott was able to depict the rise of bourgeois society as these painters did before. Scott thus played a fundamental role in initiating the process of ‘gentrification’ of the novel, which was to have its peak in the second half of the nineteenth century with the Victorian novel. What is also interesting about Praz’s book is that he outlines again the merits and the defects of Scott’s work, concluding that Scott cannot be considered a particularly brilliant writer. This volume is the demonstration that Scott still enjoyed little recognition from the most influential critics of these times, who recognised his role in creating the modern historical novel, but, at the same time, did not see in him any characteristics of a gifted novelist. As already noted, the influence of Praz, Cecchi, and Croce continued until the 1970s, when Scott’s work was critically reconsidered.

*La polemica sul romanzo storico*¹⁵⁴ by Arcangelo Leone De Castris was published in 1959. Ironically, it can be said that the argument is about Scott’s influence on Italian literature rather than the historical novel. Indeed, De Castris believes that Scott played no part in the birth of Italian historical fiction and that the enormous success he experienced elsewhere (he speaks about France for example) was not comparable to the little critical fortune he encountered in Italy. Even if De Castris acknowledges the fortunes of Scott’s novels among the public, who welcomed any foreign fashion with voracious and naive sympathy,¹⁵⁵ he also believes that:

La cultura italiana [he is talking about Italian criticism in particular] abbia in realtà ignorato Scott fino a quando la sua eventuale lezione non apparve ridimensionata ed utilizzata in una problematica culturale tipicamente nostrana.¹⁵⁶

De Castris also affirms that it was only thanks to the success of Manzoni that Scott gained a little critical consideration as, otherwise, he would have remained just a passing trend. Indeed, he posits that after the publication of *I promessi sposi* in 1827, Scott’s *oeuvre* finally obtained charisma, consideration, and dignity.¹⁵⁷ De Castris suggests:

¹⁵⁴ Arcangelo Leone De Castris, *La polemica sul romanzo storico* (Bari: Cressati, 1959).

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 8.

¹⁵⁶ Ibidem. The comment in brackets is mine. Translation: Italian culture has actually ignored Scott until his lesson appeared reduced and used in a typically local cultural problem.

¹⁵⁷ Cfr. Ibid., p. 9.

[...] è lecito insomma affermare che, senza Manzoni e l'opera sua e la forza culturale della sua lezione d'arte e il fascino popolare del suo romanzo, la critica italiana avrebbe continuato a guardare a Scott come ad una delle passeggere mode, che, di tanto in tanto, di là delle Alpi facevano capolino nei nostri confini culturali, bene difesi peraltro dalla severa intransigenza delle tradizionali norme del gusto letterario: una moda e un genere assolutamente inferiore, non pericoloso perché non degno di entrare nell'agone dei generi tradizionali, e pertanto libero di interessare le zone più popolari e inconsapevoli della nostra cultura.¹⁵⁸

The quotation above is harsh and openly polemical. Although it is true that Scott, as soon as his works arrived in Italy, did not enjoy favourable critical judgments – he was almost ignored by critics because he brought a new genre still considered humble – it is also true that his works greatly influenced both the birth of Italian historical fiction and Manzoni's novel. Several studies demonstrate the great influence of Scott at the European and Italian level, starting from *The Historical Novel* by Lukács. Besides, De Castris calls Scott's *oeuvre* 'this absolutely lower trend and genre' and that is probably linked to the patriotism that distinguished Italian criticism of these years, as will also be seen in the next critical writings discussed in this chapter. Beyond my critical opinion on De Castris' contribution, the main points regarding Scott in *La polemica sul romanzo storico* can be summarised in the quotation below:

Prima di Walter Scott, se non poteva dirsi nato in Italia il nuovo genere, erano dunque presenti tuttavia le condizioni della sua nascita e già espliciti gli spunti di una discussione generale sui romanzi: i germi cioè della discussione sul romanzo storico.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 10. Translation: In short, it is legitimate to say that, without Manzoni, his work, the cultural strength of his artistic lesson, and the popular charm of his novel, Italian criticism would have continued to look to Scott as one of the passing trends, which from beyond the Alps appeared in our cultural boundaries, well defended by the severe intransigence of the traditional rules of literary taste: an absolutely lower trend and genre, not dangerous because it is not worthy of entering the agone of traditional genres, and therefore free to affect the most popular and unaware areas of our culture.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 13. Translation: Before Walter Scott, if the new genre was not born in Italy, the conditions of its birth were yet present as well as the ideas of a general discussion on the novels were already explicit: i.e., the germs of the discussion on the historical novel.

To conclude, what De Castris wants to demonstrate is that the origins of the Italian historical novel must be sought well before Scott's arrival, in the cultural changes that began in the eighteenth century, and that very little is owed to the influence of Scott. This thesis is very similar to the one that will be proposed by Fernanda Maria Poli in her volume *Letteratura italiana e letterature comparate*, published in 1966. Certainly, De Castris' writing fits perfectly into the trend of the post-war years and the 1960s in which literary critics, who devoted their studies to the historical novel, tried to identify its origins and the reasons for its birth. Furthermore, they tended to diminish the importance of Scott in the creative process of Italian historical fiction, arguing that the genre was born almost exclusively as a result of European Romantic trends and needs to narrate history, which had matured during the previous century. De Castris was an Italian critic and academic who was a great supporter of Communism and therefore very close to Marxist ideologies. Hence his interest in the study of the historical novel and its political, social, and cultural origins.

2.1.2 1960s

In 1961, a Garzanti¹⁶⁰ edition of *L'Antiquario* (*The Antiquary*) translated by Fernando Ferrara was published. The interesting part about this publication is the introduction written by Giorgio Manganelli, which explains much about Scott's reception in the post-war years and the 1960s. Manganelli, an Italian writer, journalist, and critic, wrote a very harsh introduction to the novel, demonstrating his scepticism towards Scott. After briefly giving Scott credit for having been a highly successful author – he acknowledges that his name was a sort of guarantee in the nineteenth century¹⁶¹ – he develops a critical and wary discourse about his writing skills. In the very first pages of his introduction, he writes:

¹⁶⁰ Garzanti publishing house was, and still is, one of the most powerful and famous major among Italian publishing houses.

¹⁶¹ Manganelli's preface to *L'Antiquario* is also contained in the recent edition of *L'Antiquario* by Garzanti, 2019. The next quotations will be taken from this recent publication. Manganelli, in the first pages of the preface, writes: 'Walter Scott è un marchio, una insegna, una garanzia, né forse volle mai cosa diversa, quest'uomo tanto attento alle voglie dei suoi lettori, e ansioso di secondarle. Ma non è, la sua, corpulenza tutta sana: quella sua inesausta vena di narratore, quel discorrere non per frasi o periodi, ma per pagine, quinterni, tomi, ci lascia disorientati e diffidenti. Oggi, insomma le fortune critiche di Scott, che parvero saldissime, sono perplesse, dubbiose'. Translation: Walter Scott is a brand, a sign, a guarantee, and perhaps he never wanted anything different, this man who is so attentive to the wishes of his readers, and eager to support them. But his corpulence is not wholly healthy: his inexhaustible vein as a narrator, that talks not in sentences or periods, but in pages,

Diciamo tutto e subito: le sue storie sono messe assieme con fantasia meccanica, sono insieme prevedibili e assurde, vi ricorrono espedienti come l'agnizione, incredibili quanto rozzi i personaggi si ripetono, il respiro psicologico è limitato, non v'è posto per sottigliezze di indagine, per le astuzie della dialettica interiore, della diplomazia morale; il suo stile è greve, ineguale, prolisso, e talora, specie nelle parti descrittive, impacciato da decorazioni scolastiche.¹⁶²

Manganelli makes a severe judgment. This initial refusal draws heavily on the criticisms previously expressed by Cecchi, Croce, and Praz. In addition to being affected by the judgments of these important Italian intellectuals, the attitude of Manganelli is linked to his being a passionate scholar and critic of Italian literature.¹⁶³ He belongs to that group of Italian critics who are always a little wary of foreign authors.¹⁶⁴ Generally, he tended to emphasise the skills of Italian authors at the expense of rationally recognising Scott's merits and talent. It is sufficient to bear in mind that, in this particular case, it is evident that Manganelli denigrates Scott in an almost exaggerated way.

Despite his harsh opinion on Scott, the critic identifies some good qualities in his novels. First of all, he believes Scott's stories can touch the readers' soul and convey 'un'esperienza viva, tangibile e dinamica',¹⁶⁵ which affects our deep self in the memory of what were the past times. He also affirms that Scott makes the reader perceive the habits and customs of a past society and make us empathetic towards it. Manganelli then reviews the novels of the Scottish trilogy: *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, and *The Antiquary* and acknowledges Scott's ability to describe Scotland not only as a mythological land where people lived and died, but as a reality

five sheets format volumes, tomes, leaves us disoriented and distrustful. Today, in short, Scott's critical fortune, which seemed very solid, is perplexed and doubtful.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 516. Translation: Let's say it all right away: his stories are put together with mechanical fantasy, they are both predictable and absurd, they use devices such as recognition, absurd and rude, there is a repetition of characters, the psychological scope is limited, there is no room for subtleties of investigation, for the tricks of the inner dialectic, of moral diplomacy; his style is heavy, uneven, verbose, and sometimes, especially in the descriptive parts, hindered by school decorations.

¹⁶³ He dedicated all his life to the studying of Dante in particular.

¹⁶⁴ The debate between Italianists and Anglists, as well as between Classicists and Romantics, influenced much of Scott's critical reception since the late nineteenth century. These aspects have been discussed in detail by the Ganeri in her volume *Il romanzo storico in Italia: il dibattito critico dalle origini al postmoderno*.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 517. Translation: a living, tangible, and dynamic experience.

in which we can identify an ‘extraordinarily intense’ example of daily disillusionment that accompanies the death of values.¹⁶⁶

To sum up, Manganelli’s contribution does not seem entirely negative. It begins with very severe and discriminating judgments on Scott, but, in the end, it concludes on a positive note. Scott’s ability to describe Scotland’s past is the characteristic that in the two centuries of his Italian – and probably European – reception has earned him the most consideration and praise. It is therefore difficult, even for these severe Italian critics, to deny Scott’s ability to vividly paint Scottish landscapes, manners and costumes, even if those critics remain strongly prejudicial towards Scott’s method of writing. What it is strange considering Manganelli’s introduction, is that the publisher Garzanti chose this preface to introduce *L’Antiquario*. Indeed, a preface should act as the author’s business card. In this case, on the other hand, Manganelli does not seem to want to contribute to the success nor enjoyment of the work.

Another monograph of note for understanding Scott’s Italian reception in the 1960s is *Letteratura italiana e letteratura comparate* (1966) by Fernanda Maria Poli. Her judgments on Scott and his method of writing historical novels are based on theories already expressed by Italian critics such as D’Ovidio, Brognoligo, and Rovani¹⁶⁷ who, in the past, had denied the originality of Scott and his way to historical novels. Indeed, there is not anything particularly relevant or new regarding Scott studies. On the contrary, Poli’s section dedicated to Scott is full of old nationalistic prejudices according to which the origins of the historical novel are to be found in old chivalric Italian poetry and especially in the work of Ariosto. Following this thesis, Poli denies that Scott’s work influenced Italian literature and led to the creation of the Italian historical novel. It is also interesting to read that the scholar does not believe that Scott is the initiator of the historical genre at all. Poli supports the idea that he drew much upon the Italian writer, Ludovico Ariosto, author of *Orlando Furioso* (*The Frenzy of Orlando*), and also that these Italian novelists produced historical works some time before him. According to Poli, Ariosto represents the true model that inspired writers like Scott. Once again, we are faced with an openly nationalist criticism that tends to emphasise the importance and originality of Italian literature to the detriment of foreign authors. This is another example of how the post-war years and the 1960s were still strongly marked by patriotism and a lack of openness to the foreign

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 519.

¹⁶⁷ To read more about Italian critics such as Rovani, D’Ovidio and Brognoligo, see, Ganeri, *Il romanzo storico in Italia*, 1999.

world. Furthermore, we still see how much Scott is overshadowed despite his undeniable influence on European literature.

Along the lines of Poli's study, is Giorgio Petrocchi's *Il romanzo storico nell'800 italiano* (1967). As the title suggests, this is not a study devoted to Scott, but rather a short contribution dedicated to the birth and development of the Italian historical novel in the nineteenth century. After a brief introduction on the beginning of the genre and the impact of Scott, Petrocchi lists the most significant Italian nineteenth-century historical writers, dedicating a chapter to each. He discusses the works of Alessandro Manzoni, Francesco Domenico Guerazzi, Giuseppe Rovani, Giovanni Verga, Emilio De Marchi, and Federico De Roberto, and analyses their main characteristics.

Petrocchi dedicates part of the first chapter to Scott. He challenges the impact critics claim Scott has had on the inception of the Italian historical novel. Even if he acknowledges the popularity of Scott's works in nineteenth-century Italy – from the first Italian translation of *Kenilworth* (1821) – he believes that the origins of Italian historical fiction are to be found at least two or three centuries earlier in the epic-chivalric Italian poetry:

I veri romanzi italiani dal Cinque al Sei-Settecento, erano poemi epici. Essi avevano infatti sostituito alla materia cavalleresca, sovente ridotta nella forma del poema eroicomico, un'appassionata ricostruzione di fatti e personaggi basata su episodi della storia italiana o di quella europea, ma con personaggi italiani. Il romanzo in prosa arriva quindi tardi perché l'esigenza narrativa era già stata soddisfatta dal poema epico.¹⁶⁸

Petrocchi then underlines that in the nineteenth century some profound cultural changes prepared the ground for the birth of the Italian historical novel. He affirms that Italian writers and readers started to be more and more interested in historical issues, especially thanks to the influence of Manzoni's tragedies¹⁶⁹ – inspired by Italian history – Berchet's response to the

¹⁶⁸ Giorgio Petrocchi, *Il romanzo storico nell'800 italiano* (Torino: Eri, 1967), pp. 12-13. Translation: Italian novels of the sixteenth – seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries were epic poems. They had replaced the chivalry elements, often reduced to the form of a heroic-comic poem, with a passionate reconstruction of facts and characters based on episodes of Italian or European history, with Italian characters. Therefore, the novel in prose arrives late because the narrative need had already been satisfied by the epic poem.

¹⁶⁹ Manzoni's tragedies include: *Il conte di Carmagnola* (*The Count of Carmagnola*) 1820, and *L'Adelchi* (*Adelchi*) 1822.

provoking article of Madame de Staël,¹⁷⁰ the foundation of the newspaper *Il Conciliatore* (*The Conciliator*) – founded in 1818 and devoted to contemporary history and politics – and the first short stories in verse on historical subjects.¹⁷¹

Il romanzo storico appare [...] in parte come conseguenza di tale rinnovamento, e cioè per l'assorbimento entro la struttura tradizionale del romanzo [...] di tutte quelle esigenze e tendenze e interessi per la storia italiana che il Romanticismo europeo aveva così profondamente avvertito ed espresso, a partire dagli stessi iniziatori settecenteschi del movimento.¹⁷²

What is interesting about Petrocchi's contribution is that it follows once again the critical trend according to which the Italian historical novel owes very little to Scott's direct influence. It is rather that the sub-genre in Italy was generated as a consequential product of the cultural upheaval brought about by European Romanticism. Petrocchi enriches his speech by identifying the Italian 'fatal year'¹⁷³ for the historical novel, that is 1827. This was a fundamental date for the genre because four of the most famous and representative historical novels were published: Manzoni's *I promessi sposi*; Bazzoni's *Il castello di Trezzo*; Guerazzi's *La battaglia di Benevento*; and Carlo Varese's *Sibilla Odaleta*.

Petrocchi concludes by stating that it is not correct to consider *I promessi sposi* as the first Italian historical novel since, as we have seen, in 1827 several others appeared simultaneously. He supports the idea that the first authentic attempt of writing an historical novel was instead Manzoni's *Fermo e Lucia* (*Fermo and Lucia*), which he began in 1821. It constituted the prototype and first structure of *I promessi sposi*. Petrocchi (1921-1989), critic, professor of Italian literature, and a great lover of Alessandro Manzoni and Dante Alighieri, does not fully fit into the critical Marxist and Socialist context mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. It is evident, however, that he was influenced by the search for the origins of the historical novel, a topic that has come back into vogue thanks to these schools of thought.

¹⁷⁰ Giovanni Berchet published a letter of response to Madame de Staël: 'Lettera semiseria di Grisostomo al suo figliolo' (*Half-Serious Letter from Grisostomo to His Son*), where he acknowledges the urgency to renew Italian culture.

¹⁷¹ Petrocchi, pp. 5-6.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 6. Translation: The historical novel appears [...] in part as a consequence of this renewal, that is, due to its absorption within the traditional structure of the novel [...] of all those needs, tendencies, and interests for Italian history that European Romanticism had so deeply felt and expressed, starting from the same eighteenth-century initiators of the movement.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

The last critical piece dedicated to Scott published in the 1960s is contained in the volume *Storia della letteratura italiana (History of Italian Literature)* and it is called ‘Il romanzo storico’¹⁷⁴ (*The Historical Novel*), written by Giovanni Macchia. This contribution is part of the volume devoted to nineteenth-century Italian literature. Macchia’s chapter is important since it provides a brief but detailed account of Scott’s life and work. Furthermore, it differs from previous contributions for its general tone, which is not as nationalistic as the ones of Poli or Petrocchi. The chapter explores the reasons behind Scott’s choice of becoming a novelist and, at the same time, gives interesting insights into Scott’s way of thinking while writing the *Waverley Novels*. Furthermore, Macchia outlines the narrative innovation that Scott’s historical novel brought into nineteenth-century European literature recognising his role in creating the new historical genre. After explaining that Scott chose to write novels because of the success of Lord Byron – Scott started his career as a poet and then became a novelist – Macchia reports part of Scott’s preface to *Waverley*. In the preface, Scott explains to his readers the main topics of the book and the way it was written. For example, he warns that readers will not find ‘neither a romance of chivalry, nor a tale of modern manners’.¹⁷⁵ At this point, Macchia affirms that Scott was able to mix ‘la storiografia illuminista con il ricco memorialismo che aveva secoli di vita’.¹⁷⁶ Before proceeding with Macchia’s consideration of Scott, it is worth remembering that Scott grew up in the enlightened Edinburgh of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and he believed that it was possible to narrate a fictitious story while bearing in mind the concept of concreteness and verisimilitude. Knowing Scott’s infancy and early life spent in the Scottish Borders and later his education at Edinburgh University – where intellectuals of the Enlightenment such as Dugald Stewart and Adam Ferguson used to teach – it is comprehensible that he produced a new genre where historical facts and fiction perfectly blended (see the ‘Introduction’ to this thesis).

Thanks to the monographs, book chapters, and essays discussed in this section, it is possible to understand the general trend of Italian critics in the post-war years, that is to minimise the role and influence of Scott and promote Italian authors, their innovations, and autonomy.

¹⁷⁴ Giovanni Macchia, ‘Il romanzo storico’, in *Storia della letteratura italiana*, ed. da Emilio Cecchi e Natalino Sapegno, 10 vols (Milano: Garzanti, 1969), VII, pp. 448-51.

¹⁷⁵ Scott, *Waverley*, p. 34.

¹⁷⁶ Cfr. Ibidem. Translation: Enlightenment historiography with rich memorialism that had centuries of life.

2.1.3 Translations and Editions

As anticipated in the introduction to this chapter, the Italian publishing industry experienced a period of great fervor in the post-war years up to the 1960s. Publishing houses released numerous volumes comprising non-fiction and fiction by native and foreign authors. This is because, after the period of censorship and the general Fascist cultural monopoly, Italian publishers and readers felt the need to feed their desire for culture. It is, therefore, no coincidence that these years saw the publication of several of Scott's novels. However, it is interesting to note that not one of his poetic works was published in this period. This phenomenon followed the general trend that saw the poetic works of Scott far more neglected than his novels in the last seventy-five years.

From 1945 to 1969, it is possible to count fifty-nine editions of *Ivanhoe*, comprising the original novel as well as abridged versions for children and young adults. The fame of the novel was also boosted by the release of the TV series, like the one starring Roger Moore, which was broadcast by Italian television in the 1960s. The second novel that was most frequently published during these years was *Riccardo Cuor di Leone* (*Richard the Lionheart*), with eighteen editions. This is a very interesting case because, as outlined in the 'Introduction' to this thesis, it was an abridged version of Scott's *The Talisman*. It appeared mainly adapted for children since its themes - the heroic knight fighting in the Crusades - presumably seemed perfect to feed the imagination of children. It is also interesting to note that, in the list of Scott's works published in the second half of the twentieth century, *Riccardo Cuor di Leone* lost its popularity with the passing of decades. I argue that the same topics that have seen the success of this story in children's literature will also be the same that will decree its decline in popularity in most recent years. Indeed, the story disappeared from bookshelves starting from the 1980s. This is likely due to the growing awareness of society on issues such as racism, religion, violence, and inequality. Also, it is worth noticing that abridged versions for children of Scott's works were also gaining popularity in the UK. Many of Scott's novels were reduced to mere moral tales for children and consequently, the original versions were starting to be perceived as not worth reading anymore.

Following the numerical order, it is possible then to find *La sposa di Lammermoor* (*The Bride of Lammermoor*) published nine times, respectively seven times under the title *Lucia di Lammermoor* and twice under the title *La sposa di Lammermoor*. The title *Lucia di Lammermoor* clearly recalls the play by Gaetano Donizetti that was staged for the first time in Italy in 1835 at the San Carlo Theater in Naples. The choice of publishers to keep this title is

perhaps due to the fact that the Italian public came into contact with Scott's book through theater and therefore knew how to trace the novel back to that representation. *Lucia di Lammermoor* was also staged several times in the course of the twentieth century, but the determining factor for its popularity - among Scott's novels - was its transposition into films for Italian television. *Lucia di Lammermoor* was adapted twice, one version broadcast in 1946 and directed by Piero Ballerini, and the second for Italian Rai television in 1959, directed by Mario Lanfranchi. After *La sposa di Lammermoor*, it is possible to mention *Il paggio della regina*, or *Il paggio fedele della regina*, or *Il paggio di Maria Stuarda (The Abbot)*, which was published six times, and *Quintino Durward (Quentin Durward)*, which was also published six times.

Waverley appeared five times, mainly in the translation of Corrado Alvaro, and in combination with *Ivanhoe*. The first translation of *Waverley* by Alvaro was published in 1934 and represented an important contribution to Italian scholarship on Scott. Indeed, Alvaro was one of the most influential anti-fascist intellectuals of the first half of the twentieth century. He translated *Waverley* for one of the biggest Italian publishing majors: Mondadori. He also added an introduction to this edition where he describes *Waverley* as the perfect autobiography of Scott: 'opera narrativa nutrita dai primi ricordi e delle impressioni di vita'.¹⁷⁷ Those memories are the ones made by spending his infancy in the Borders and in Georgian Edinburgh. Alvaro faithfully followed Scott's original introduction to his novel, occasionally paraphrasing the author's own words. Interesting in this preface is the critical speech that Alvaro makes after introducing the story. He affirms that Manzoni's *I promessi sposi* owes a lot to *Waverley* and that Manzoni and Scott in turn share the same dependence on Cervantes.

Although other novels by Scott were published in this period, perhaps just once or twice, the works cited above are the ones that were most present in Italian bookstores between 1945 and 1969.

2.2 The Revival of Walter Scott's Critical Studies in the 1970s

The critical studies published in the 1970s dedicated to Scott are still affected by the great impact of the work of György Lukács, translated into Italian in the previous decade. Although *The Historical Novel* was written by a Marxist critic, it remained the starting point for the research of Italian and foreign scholars in the following decades. Thanks to the rekindled

¹⁷⁷ Walter Scott, *Waverley*, prefazione di Corrado Alvaro (Milano: Mondadori, 1934). Translation: narrative work nourished by the first memories and impressions of life.

interest in the historical novel, promoted by Lukács, thirteen new critical studies on Scott appeared in these years, divided into eight monographs and five articles. The number in itself may seem small, but compared to the publications of previous decades, it takes on a new value. Indeed, between 1945 and 1959 six critical studies devoted to Scott appeared; the same number is visible in the 1960s. In the 1980s there were only six studies on the author. In order to witness the second revival of Scott's critical studies, it will be necessary to wait until the 1990s and, above all, the 2000s.

In addition to the crucial role played by the Italian translation of *The Historical Novel*, new trends of criticism deeply influenced the Italian production on Scott in the 1970s: Post-structuralism and Reception Studies. On the one hand, Post-structuralism brought back to the foreground the study and categorisation of the literary genres, including the novel and the historical novel itself. On the other hand, Reception Studies started to look at the critical reception of the works of some authors, analysing the historical and cultural context in which they are placed. However, if these two currents began to influence Scott's critical studies in the 1970s, they did not reach a peak in popularity until the next decades, as the next chapters of this research will demonstrate. In addition to the two critical currents mentioned above, also Comparative Studies and the study of English Romanticism marked Scott's Italian criticism of the 1970s.

Even if Post-structuralism, Reception Studies, and Comparative Studies affected Scott's critical reception the most, they were not the only currents in vogue in Italy during this decade. Two other critical approaches became more and more popular in the Italian cultural panorama of the 1970s: Hermeneutics and Psychoanalysis applied to literary criticism. These two critical currents did not stick to rigid and pre-established schemes for the study of the text – as Structuralism had done before. They used tools from other disciplines and applied them to literary analysis. For example, the application of Psychoanalysis to literature made it possible to explore the intimacy and experience of the authors in order to better understand their work. It had its foundations in the early twentieth century, when Freud's theories profoundly changed the conception of human beings and their actions. Indeed, Freud investigated mental illnesses not from a medical but from a neurophysiological point of view. He also had a clear vision of art and literature which he expressed in his talk called 'Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming' (original German title: *Der Dichter und das Phantasieren*) during a conference held in 1907. On this occasion, Freud posed two main questions: Why do authors choose a specific subject (psychologically speaking)? And how do they express it through their works? These two questions were then taken up years later by Psychoanalytic criticism, which placed its interest

on the study of the author's life, childhood traumas, and experiences. The focus then shifted to the psychological analysis of the works, characters, and actions described in a text. As Francesco Muzzioli points out in his study, this type of criticism, however, had the defect of not taking into consideration the will of the authors and of giving too much importance to the interpretations of literary critics. These critics believed that they could know and interpret everything about the authors and their work, losing sight of the authors' perspectives and ideologies.¹⁷⁸ The Psychoanalytic criticism prevalent in the 1970s gave rise to other similar currents in the following decades, such as Feminist and Post-colonial criticism. These two ways of criticism will investigate the psychology, origins, and factors related to the social and gender determinants of the authors and their work.¹⁷⁹

The second critical current that gained popularity during the 1970s was Hermeneutics. This current was meant as a method for the interpretation of the world and art. Also in this case, this methodology was born for the study and interpretation of religious texts and then shifted its interest to art in general, including literature. This critical current became especially predominant in the 1980s. Hermeneutics applied to literary criticism was promoted by the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer,¹⁸⁰ who argued that to understand a text it is not necessary to explain it. As can be seen, this attitude was in clear contrast with the Marxist and, above all, Structuralist literary criticism. Critics had the task of acting as mediators between the work and the reader, and not of producing aesthetic evaluations. They must facilitate the understanding of the text without putting forward interpretative hypotheses that place themselves above the authority of the author.¹⁸¹

The newfound interest in Scott's historical novels – especially boosted by Post-structuralist ideas and Reception Studies – is named, in this dissertation, *The Revival of Walter Scott's Critical Studies* to indicate a prolific period in his Italian reception. In particular, four monographs contributed the most to enriching the existing literature on Scott in Italy. The first one is Luciano Bottoni's *Scott e Manzoni 1821: tecniche descrittive e funzioni epistemologiche* (*Scott and Manzoni 1821: Descriptive Techniques and Epistemological Functions*) published in 1970. The second monograph is Giorgio Spina's *Il romanzo storico inglese: Sir Walter Scott* (*The English Historical Novel: Sir Walter Scott*), published in 1971, which is inspired by the

¹⁷⁸ Cfr. Muzzioli, pp. 159- 81.

¹⁷⁹ Cfr. Ibidem.

¹⁸⁰ Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) is known worldwide for developing Hermeneutics. His major work is *Truth and Method* (original version in German *Wahrheit und Methode*, published in 1960).

¹⁸¹ Cfr. Muzzioli, pp. 190-95.

study of the historical novel made by Lukács, as well as Post-structuralist ideas. The third study is Anna Benedetti's *Le traduzioni italiane da Walter Scott e i loro anglicismi*, published in 1974, which focuses on Scott's early Italian reception in the nineteenth century. Lastly, Franca Ruggieri Punzo's *Walter Scott in Italia (1821-1971)*, published in 1975, which focuses on the critical reception of Scott until 1971, when Francesco Russo's polemical article appeared in the *Espresso* magazine.

Along with these monographs, numerous essays, and articles were published throughout the 1970s in major literary journals. Contributions such as Francesco Russo's 'Diede del tu alla storia' (*He Called History by Name*) published in the *Espresso* magazine in 1971, and Francesco Loi's 'Affinità scottiane in Alessandro Manzoni' (*Scott and Manzoni's Affinities*), which appeared in *Biblioteca Labronica*, quaderno n.1 in 1976, demonstrate the new interest in Scott as one of leading exponents of English Romanticism, studied on his own as the 'father' of the modern historical novel, and in comparison with the work of Alessandro Manzoni. As stated, the comparative study of Manzoni and Scott, which marked most of the literary criticism in the nineteenth century, was re-proposed and treated in its various aspects during the second half of the twentieth century. The relationship between Scott and Manzoni remains a central theme in Italian studies on the historical novel, from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day as testified by the most recent publications including Matteo Sarni's *Il segno e la cornice. I Promessi sposi alla luce dei romanzi di Walter Scott (The Sign and the Frame. The Betrothed in the Light of Walter Scott's Novels)*, 2013, and 'Affinità simboliche fra Manzoni e Scott' (*Symbolic Affinities Between Manzoni and Scott*), 2015.

2.2.1 Monographs

As explained in the introduction to Scott's reception in the 1970s, the rekindled interest in the study of the historical novel and English Romanticism deeply influenced Italian criticism on Scott in the 1970s. This renewed enthusiasm is well visible in the first monograph mentioned here: Kalikst Morawski's *Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolińskich Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk (Italian: Il romanzo storico italiano all'epoca del Risorgimento; English: The Italian Historical Novel at the Time of the Risorgimento)* published in 1970. The study does not focus entirely on Scott, but still gives important insights on his impact on the birth of Italian historical fiction in the nineteenth century. Scott is indeed named throughout the volume as a member of the English Romantic movement, which contributed to the creation of the historical

novel in Italy. In this regard, Morawski affirms that ‘lo sviluppo del romanzo storico in Italia non può prescindere neanche dalla corrente romantica, preponderante in tutti i paesi europei’.¹⁸² When discussing the influence of the English Romanticism, he writes that two authors in particular played a crucial part in bringing Romantic ideals to Italy: Walter Scott and Lord Byron. The former, Morawski states, inspired with a new form of literature ready to be imitated. The scholar affirms that ‘il merito maggiore di Scott fu dunque di riempire le lacune della nostra conoscenza della storia e di spiegare i retroscena di molti avvenimenti parzialmente noti’.¹⁸³ That is, the main merit of Scott is to have shown new perspectives of history by enlightening the surface beneath great historical events, and, above all, describing past eras inhabited by real men and women with great attention to details including historical settings, manners, and costumes. After the introduction focusing on the English Romanticism and the influence of Scott, Morawski makes a list of the most famous Italian writers of the *Risorgimento*, underlining that in each of their works it is possible to identify a dependence on Scott’s novels, starting from *I promessi sposi* by Manzoni to *Cent’anni (One Hundred Years)* by Rovani (with a few exceptions including Cesare Cantù and Tommaso Grossi’s novels). Contrary to the contributions analysed in the previous chapter, this study shows the revaluation of Scott’s role in shaping Italian literature typical of this decade. It fits the new trend of criticism that saw the regained recognition of Scott’s work.

Another monograph not entirely dedicated to Scott but in which his name appears connected to Manzoni’s career and evolution as a writer, is Giovanni Getto’s *Manzoni Europeo (European Manzoni)* published in 1971. In this book, again, a new approach to studying Scott’s work is visible. After the general underestimation of his influence on Italian historical fiction, this critical piece evidences the opposite. The main topic discussed in the book is the European influxes that inspired the novel of Manzoni, starting with the acknowledgment of Shakespeare’s great impact on him and Scott. For the first time after some decades, Getto states that Manzoni was deeply affected by the works of Scott. Indeed, since he was avidly reading Scott’s books in the French translations during the 1820s, Getto suggests that the fascination with Scott’s works pushed Manzoni to write his own historical novel. To support this thesis, he reports the beliefs of another Italian critic, Giorgini, who also suggested that the reading of Scott’s

¹⁸² Italian version: Kalikst Morawki, *Il romanzo storico italiano all’epoca del Risorgimento* (Breslavia: Ossolineum, 1970), p. 3. Translation: the development of the historical novel in Italy cannot be separated from the Romantic current, which prevails in all European countries.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 12. Translation: Scott’s greatest merit was therefore to fill in the gaps in our knowledge of history and to explain the background of many partially known events.

historical novels made Manzoni want to write a short story 'of the same genre'. In addition to Shakespeare's and Scott's influence, Getto recognises the role of Cervantes in inspiring the works of Manzoni and Scott. Later in the volume, Scott is again discussed in relation to the debate around the historical novel ignited by Torraca and D'Ovidio in the second half of the nineteenth century. The volume by Getto traces the main critical thoughts around the Manzoni-Scott relationship without adding anything particularly original. At the same time, it clearly shows a new favourable perspective that exalts Scott's role in Italian fiction.

A landmark in the critical study of Walter Scott in Italy is Giorgio Spina's *Il romanzo storico inglese: Sir Walter Scott (The English Historical Novel: Sir Walter Scott)* published in 1971. The volume is, together with Benedetti's and Punzo's studies, the most complete and important monograph dedicated to Scott in the second half of the twentieth century. Spina, an influential contemporary Italian critic, in addition to having contributed to Scott's scholarship, also translated *Ivanhoe* in 1984, published by Garzanti. Furthermore, he also dedicated several studies to British authors, such as *La nascita del romanzo inglese moderno. Daniel Defoe (The Birth of the Modern English Novel. Daniel Defoe)*, 1972; *I romanzi provinciali di Thomas Hardy (Thomas Hardy's Provincial Novels)*, 1977, and *Il romanzo psicologico di Virginia Woolf (Virginia Woolf's Psychological Novel)*, 1980.

Il romanzo storico inglese (Sir Walter Scott) is divided into eight chapters that explore in great detail various aspects of Scott's writings, as well as his fortunes in Italy and Europe. The eight chapters are: 'Il romanzo agli albori dell'Ottocento' (*The Novel at the Dawn of the Nineteenth Century*); 'Sir Walter Scott: l'uomo e l'opera' (*Sir Walter Scott: The Man and His Work*); 'L'Ivanhoe' (*Ivanhoe*); 'Matrici e impronte del romanzo storico' (*Matrices and Footprints of the Historical Novel*); 'Struttura dei romanzi di Sir Walter Scott' (*The Structure of Sir Walter Scott's Novels*); 'I personaggi' (*Characters*); 'Fortuna di Scott e del romanzo storico' (*The Literary Fortunes of Scott and the Historical Novel*), and 'Appendici' (*Appendices*). Furthermore, at the end of the book there is a rich bibliography dedicated to Scott and the critical studies dedicated to historical fiction published both in Italy and abroad.

The first chapter discusses the birth of the historical novel by analysing the factors that contributed to the creation of the *Waverley Novels*. Tracing Lukács' thesis, the author identifies three major influences that set the proper context for the creation of Scott's historical novels: English Romanticism with its predilection for history; the Gothic novel and the use of historical settings, and the great ideologies of political and artistic freedom, together with the new conception of history, brought about by the French Revolution.

Regarding English Romanticism, Spina begins by recalling that with the publication of Wordsworth's and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, in 1798 – often identified as the starting point of English Romanticism – a new period started. This cultural phase was characterised by a climate of literary innovations:

[...] l'inizio di un periodo in cui i vari sintomi di un cambiamento nel gusto e nella sensibilità, verificatisi negli ultimi decenni del Settecento, furono seguiti da uno schiudersi vasto e improvviso di manifestazioni, tali da giustificare l'esistenza di un nuovo clima e quindi di un nuovo periodo letterario.¹⁸⁴

In particular, the predilection of history, the taste for the exotic, the return to nature, and the call of national traditions became predominant themes, many of which were later taken up in Scott's novels.

Subsequently, the author reports the thesis of Carlo Izzo – another Italian literary critic – who in his *Storia della letteratura inglese (History of English Literature)*, 1968, identifies Gothic elements in the novels of Scott. He especially highlights the presence of the 'villain', an evil character, in both the Gothic novel and Scott's books (for example, Front-de-Boeuf in *Ivanhoe*). In addition to some stereotypical characters, the use of historical settings passed from the Gothic novels to Scott's ones. The main difference is that in Gothic fiction, settings such as castles, monasteries, ruins, obscure and underground passages, were chosen only to tickle the imagination of the readers whereas in Scott's novels those settings were further opportunities to describe some characteristics of the past. It follows that in Gothic fiction history was just a picturesque background.

Another determining factor for the birth of the historical novel is the influence of the French Revolution, which changed the concept of historicity. It introduced the idea of the active role people played in the progress of history. Also, the ideals of nationalism and political and artistic freedom allowed the consolidation of a favourable cultural climate for the birth of Scott's work.

¹⁸⁴ Giorgio Spina, *Il romanzo storico inglese: Sir Walter Scott* (Genova: Fratelli Bozzi, 1971), p. 3. Translation: [...] the beginning of a period in which the various symptoms of a change in taste and sensitivity, which occurred in the last decades of the eighteenth century, were followed by a vast and sudden unfolding of manifestations, such as to justify the existence of a new climate and therefore of a new literary period.

Finally, Spina acknowledges the significant influence on Scott by the Irish writer Maria Edgeworth and emphasises the role she played (within the factors mentioned above) in inspiring his work and preparing the cultural context for the *Waverley Novels*. That is one of the first times that a critical study discusses Scott in relation to Maria Edgeworth and picks up Scott's own reflection with their relationship. In this regard, it is possible to affirm that Spina's study represents an original contribution to the already existing literature.

The only key factor lacking from the contribution mentioned above is the impact of the Scottish Enlightenment on Scott. Indeed, he grew up in eighteenth-century Scotland when the ideologies of the Scottish Enlightenment were at the peak of their popularity. As stated in previous sections, he was also taught, during his university career, by some of the most influential exponents of the movement, such as Adam Ferguson and Dugald Stewart.

The second and third chapters, 'Sir Walter Scott: l'uomo e l'opera' and 'Ivanhoe', are dedicated to the biography of the author and to close reading of his most famous novel, *Ivanhoe*. The second chapter narrates Scott's infancy, beginning with the history of his family. It then talks about his early years in the Scottish Borders, where Scott tried to recover from polio - an illness that affected him since he was very young. It continues by recounting his university career and how he became first a poet and later a novelist. The second chapter also gives a brief summary of the plots of some of his most known novels such as *Waverley*, *Ivanhoe*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, *Quentin Durward*, and *Redgauntlet*. The third chapter is a close reading and analysis of *Ivanhoe*, which Spina believes to be the most interesting and well-written of his novels. Indeed, he affirms that: 'la palma a *Ivanhoe* che può essere considerato il prototipo del romanzo storico scottiano'.¹⁸⁵ Spina then gives a detailed account of *Ivanhoe*'s historical setting - the struggle between the Normans and Saxons during the twelfth century - and its main characters. He finally quotes various excerpts from the text of which he gives his interpretation and explanation.

The fourth chapter is again dedicated to the origin of the historical novel and more precisely to the pre-historical ones. Following again Lukács' study, Spina clarifies that Scott was able to synthesise in his works those historical elements that were already present in the novels of the eighteenth century. Into his novels, Scott was able to infuse a dose of realism inherited from the works of Smollett, Defoe, and Fielding.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, as Spina discusses

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 45. Translation: the prize to *Ivanhoe*, which can be considered the prototype of Scott's historical novel.

¹⁸⁶ Cfr. Ibid., pp. 93-94.

in the first chapter of his volume, also Gothic literature contributed to the creation of the historical novel.

The most exciting and original parts of Spina's contribution are the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters titled 'Struttura dei romanzi di Walter Scott', 'I personaggi', and 'Fortuna di Scott e del romanzo storico'. These chapters represent valuable additions to the literature on Scott published during the second half of the twentieth century. Indeed, before Spina, no one in Italy in the nineteenth century had given such a detailed guide to interpreting and studying Scott's *Waverley Novels*. Although international criticism already existed on the study of the themes and structure of Scott's books, this is the first comprehensive Italian study on the topic. In 'Struttura dei romanzi di Sir Walter Scott' the author quotes the theories expressed in those foreign critical studies dedicated to Scott. He mentions, for example, Michael Shane Reynolds's *Critical Opinions of Scott as an Historical Novelist with an Analysis of Waverley* (1960), and Marian H. Cusac's *Narrative Structure in the Novels of Sir Walter Scott* (1969). The latter takes up the key themes proposed by Gustav Freytag, and in particular the study of dramatic structures, which can be verified in the novels of Scott.

In the fifth chapter, Spina translates the theories proposed by these two authors and in particular focuses on the study of Marian H. Cusac, reporting the taxonomy with which the scholar had classified the *Waverley Novels* based on their narrative structure. According to Cusac, Scott's twenty-six novels can be divided into eighteen 'Romances' and eight 'Chronicles'. The Romances require a further distinction: the adventurous ones, in which there is an active protagonist and also a happy ending; and the tragic ones, where the protagonist is passive in the progress of the events and there is an unhappy ending. In turn, both the adventurous and the tragic Romances present three different types of structure: 1) parabolic structure, where the three dramatic moments are the fact, crisis, and catastrophe; 2) progressive structure, where the three dramatic moments are the fact, development, and resolution; 3) culminating structure, where there is only one dramatic situation, at the end of the novel.

Spina's volume concludes with a section dedicated to the fortunes of Scott's works in Italy and the development of the sub-genre throughout Europe. Another fascinating part of his study is the 'Appendici' where he taxonomises – as Cusac did before – the novels and divides them into Romances and Chronicles. He also gives a list of their main themes.

The second most important critical contribution published on Scott in the 1970s is Anna Benedetti's *Le traduzioni italiane da Walter Scott e i loro anglicismi*, (1974). Unlike the studies of Spina and Punzo, Benedetti focuses on the linguistic aspects of Scott's first Italian translations. The study is divided into four parts. The first one recounts the early reception of

Scott in Italy, from 1821 to 1839; the second one gives a list of Scott's Italian translators; the third one looks at Italian translations, quoting several excerpts, and analyses the phenomena of piracy and censorship that affected the circulation of Scott's novels; the fourth part is devoted to the *anglicismi* recurring in the Italian translations. In relation to the fourth part, Benedetti also adds a consistent glossary dedicated to the explanation of those English expressions.

Since Benedetti's study represents an original and fascinating contribution to the Italian scholarship on Scott, it is worth looking at some of its contents in more detail. In the second part of the study, the scholar looks at the first Italian translations, highlighting their close dependence on French versions. Indeed, a number of omissions and modifications implemented by the French are found in many Italian editions of Scott's novels. For example, in the dialogue between Bothwell and Balfour de Burley,¹⁸⁷ in both the French and Italian versions of *Old Mortality*, lines of dialogue are cut to remove religious matter, which were too abstruse for the foreign reader. Additionally, many titles were similarly modified by French and Italian translators: *Old Mortality* (1816) was, indeed, translated into French as *Les Puritains d' Ecosse* (1817) and later into Italian as *I puritani di Scozia* (1822); *A Legend of Montrose* (1819) was translated into French as *L'Officier de fortune* (1819) and later in Italian as *L'Officiale di fortuna* (1822). It is important to bear in mind that the modifications to Scott's original texts implemented by French translators, influenced the interpretation of Scott's novels in Italy. In the first half of the nineteenth century, indeed, Italian public was not reading the original versions of Scott's books. People were mostly reading his novels filtered through French interpretations (see 1.3 and Barnaby's contribution). Despite these changes in the titles and plots, Italian translations – derived from French –succeeded in fostering Scott's popularity throughout the peninsula and encouraged Italian authors to write historical novels following his model. At the end of Benedetti's volume, there is an extensive part dedicated to the glossary of English terms used by Scott. She contextualises these words reporting some excerpts from Scott's novels and making a comparison with French translations.

The last of the three monographs dedicated to Scott is Punzo's *Walter Scott in Italia (1821-1971)* published in 1975. Punzo's volume represents an original and very important contribution to Scott's studies in Italy. In fact, the scholar traces, for the first time, the critical fortunes of the Scottish author from the first translation of *Kenilworth* into Italian – in 1821– up to the early 1970s - with Francesco Russo's article in the *Espresso* magazine.

¹⁸⁷ Benedetti, 1974, pp. 53-54.

Punzo collected essays, reviews, introductions to Italian novels, and excerpts from Italian and English literature anthologies to trace Scott's presence in Italy. She divides Scott's critical reception into decades, or twenty-to-thirty-year periods, and names all the author that devoted their research to the Scottish author. Even though Scott has generally been treated marginally by critics, who have mostly linked him to the development of the Italian historical novel, Punzo's critical recollection highlights his unceasing influence throughout two centuries. What is relevant in her study is her claim that Scott has always been present in Italian literary history and has always been discussed in relation to the birth and development of Italian historical fiction. Despite Scott's fluctuating fortunes, Punzo suggest that critics have always recognised the role of his influence on the Italian novel. She also asserts that critics such as Francesco De Sanctis, Luigi Fassò, Benedetto Croce, and Mario Praz have been the most influential voices whose opinions had a decisive impact in terms of the flourishing or declining of Scott's popularity. I would add that, considering the main points of Punzo's study, what is different from the reception he experienced in the UK and other European nations – particularly France, Germany, and Russia – is that Scott had not been comprehensively studied in Italy before the 1970s.

Punzo dedicates the introduction to the Italian literary history, underlining that, in the nineteenth century, the novel was still considered a lesser literary genre. Despite the poor reputation of this new form of literature, Scott's historical fiction received great praise when it first arrived in Italy. In particular, it enjoyed great popularity among the upper-class Italian readers and especially among the female audience. He was received with general enthusiasm between the years 1821 to 1840, before his popularity started to decrease. This happened especially in the aftermath of the Union of Italy, which brought big changes to the historical novel in Italy and consequently less consideration for Scott's *oeuvre*. In addition to that, Punzo suggests that Scott found his place between two different tendencies:

[On the one hand] Un clima di censura e di rifiuto nei confronti di un genere ritenuto umile perché senza una chiara traduzione classica, oppure di benevola ironia, a difesa delle incertezze di fondo, dall'altro il gusto per le traduzioni con cui si accoglieva l'esortazione di M.me De Staël e il nuovo entusiasmo per la storia.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁸ Punzo, p.15. Translation: [On the one hand] A climate of censorship and rejection of a genre considered humble because without a clear classical translation, or of benevolent irony, in defense of the underlying uncertainties; on the other, the taste for translations with which the exhortation of Madame De Staël and the new enthusiasm for history were received.

After discussing the early reception of Scott and the subsequent decline after the year of the Italian *Risorgimento*, Punzo lists the most influential critics of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, whose contributions deeply marked the trend of Scott's reception. She firstly analyses the role of Francesco De Sanctis, one of the first admirers of the *Waverley Novels*, who defined Scott's works as a great example of how to depict Scotland, its local colors, and traditions. However, as we have seen in previous sections and as Punzo outlines a few years after the writings of De Sanctis, the tendency to study Scott in comparison with Manzoni began to take shape – a critical trend, which remains present to this day. Scott's novels began to be underestimated and negatively criticised by the reading public and critics, while his writing skills started to be questioned. In this respect, a significant example Punzo reports is the one of Cesare Cantù, who began the argument regarding the supremacy of Manzoni over Scott – especially in his *Storia della letteratura italiana (History of Italian Literature)* in 1862. On Cantù's attitude in this writing, Punzo comments:

Cantù rappresenta l'ulteriore inasprirsi della polemica contro Scott da parte di quei letterati italiani aulici, moralisti, nazionalisti, paladini dell'eccellenza dei contenuti e dei fini del Manzoni, contro le frivolezze di assunti e intenti di Scott, quasi come se l'eccellenza dell'uno escludesse la serietà dell'altro.¹⁸⁹

The scholar continues her recollection of Scott's Italian reception by analysing the discourse on the origin of the historical novel, which flourished between 1884 and 1906. The protagonists of the debate, such as A. Borgognoni, Gamma, D' Ovidio, Terrace, and Fenaroli, denied the influence of Scott on Italian historical novel writers, arguing that, in the majority of cases, Scott had followed the example of Ariosto, an Italian author of the Renaissance to write his novels. Not only did he take inspiration from Ariosto, but also from the Spanish writer Cervantes and *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (1606-1616). Borgognoni was the only one who still considered Scott the inventor of the genre and claimed that Manzoni was inspired by Scott's works when writing *I promessi sposi*. Indeed, Borgognoni wrote 'Walter Scott è il padre di Manzoni' (*Walter Scott is the Father of Manzoni*), an essay published in 1886 and later included in his

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 95. Translation: Cantù represents the further escalation of the controversy against Scott by those stately Italian writers, moralists, nationalists, champions of the excellence of the contents and of the purposes of Manzoni, against the frivolity of Scott's assumptions and intentions, almost as if the excellence of one excluded the seriousness of the other.

collection of papers *Disciplina e spontaneità dell'arte (Discipline and Spontaneity of Art)*, 1913, edited by Croce.

After quoting the most influential critics of the nineteenth century, who took part in the historical novel debate and generally underestimated Scott as a writer,¹⁹⁰ Punzo explains that the beginning of the twentieth century can be considered a watershed in Scott's reception. Some critics – such as L. Fassò, R. Ripari, and G. Mazzoni – started to delve deeper into Scott's *oeuvre* and to place him at the centre of the European Romantic movement, while others – such as Cecchi, Croce, and Praz – still shared a general negative consideration of his works (see 2.1 and 2.1.1).

In the last two chapters of *Walter Scott in Italia (1821-1971)*, Punzo describes the main trends in Scott criticism from 1939 to 1971. In particular, she notes how Scott is mentioned in several Italian and English literature anthologies. His role as the creator of the historical novel is taken for granted, but little more is added about his novels and poetry. She believes that this accounts for the marked decline in interest in him and shows how the study of his works and his artistic qualities were no longer worthy of consideration.

Contrary to the thesis supported by Punzo, I would affirm that the interest in Scott did not disappear after the 1970s. As evidenced by the collection of critical studies in this research, Scott's works have continued to be studied in Italy, even though their popularity is not comparable to that achieved in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the last seventy-five years, numerous scholars dedicated their studies to his novels and poetry. Also, several publishing houses included – and still include – his best-known books in their series of classics. On this last aspect, it will be interesting to see – in the case study on *Ivanhoe* – the role of the paratextual apparatuses in some of Scott's Italian editions, in particular in the latest editions of *Ivanhoe* by Garzanti, Mondadori, and Newton Compton. These apparatuses constitute an important contribution to recent critical studies of Scott in Italy.

2.2.2 Articles, Essays, and Book Chapters

Together with the monographs mentioned in the previous section, several essays, articles, and book chapters were dedicated to Scott during the 1970s. They especially focus on the birth of

¹⁹⁰ In this regard, the study by Margherita Ganeri about the debate around the historical novel in Italy is crucial: *Il romanzo storico in Italia: il dibattito critico dalle origini al postmoderno*, 1999.

the historical novel in Italy, highlighting the great impact Scott had on it. They also compare the works of Scott to the novel of Manzoni, following the general trend that characterised much of Italian criticism on Scott from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day. Since some contributions simply repeat the earlier observations, it is the aim of this section to look at only few of them. The complete list of articles, essays, and book chapters dedicated to Scott in the 1970s can be found at the end to this research.

The first shorter contribution analysed here is the long contradictory article written by Francesco Russo and published in the *Espresso* magazine in 1971. The article, titled ‘Diede del tu alla storia’, appeared on September 5th on the occasion of the Edinburgh festival held in September 1971 for the bicentenary of Scott’s birth. Russo begins the article acknowledging the relevance of Scott in the birth of the historical fiction, affirming that *Waverley* is the finest example of the historical fiction sub-genre. He also considers it the first of Scott’s masterpieces: ‘si ricorda che *Waverley* è il primo, anche in ordine di tempo dei capolavori di Scott e secondo Goethe “una delle cose più belle che siano mai state scritte”’.¹⁹¹ The first column is then dedicated to the events and exhibitions held in the city to commemorate Scott, followed by a brief mention of Scott’s monument in Edinburgh, defined as ‘inno al gothic revival’ (*Hymn to Gothic Revival*).

The article then proceeds discontinuously, passing from one topic to another. Initially, Russo reports the main critical thoughts shared by Scott’s contemporary critics, according to which Scott has been ‘molto grande ma ha anche difetti molto grandi’.¹⁹² He quotes, for example, F. R. Leavis who did not like the works of Scott. Russo then notes that there is no exhaustive study of Scott’s work in the U.K. He then goes on to acknowledge Scott’s great influence, especially on some fundamental and cultural aspects of Britain. Among these, he draws attention to Scott’s role in promoting Scottish tourism in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the members of the wealthy middle-class used to organise little tours – vs. the Grand Tour in Europe – in Scotland to see the places described in Scott’s novels and poems – as for example Loch Katrine.

A section dedicated to György Lukács entitled *La lode di Lukács (Lukács Praise)* follows, in which the main critical thoughts of the Hungarian author are revisited. Unlike English criticism, Lukács identifies all the positive and fundamental traits of Scott’s work,

¹⁹¹ Francesco Russo, ‘Diede del tu alla storia’, *Espresso* (Settembre 25, 1971) 16-17 p. 16. Translation: It is worth remembering that *Waverley* is the first, also in chronological order of Scott’s masterpieces and according to Goethe "one of the most beautiful things that have ever been written.

¹⁹² *Ibidem*. Translation: a great author with great flaws.

underlining how the *Waverley Novels* influenced the whole of European literature. Russo himself believes Scott to be the ‘father’ of the historical novel and underlines his enormous impact on many European authors. He indeed wrote a whole section entitled ‘cosa ha lasciato in prestito’ (*His Literary Heritage*) divided into three parts: Manzoni, Balzac, and ‘mille altri’ (*Manzoni, Balzac, and Thousand Others*).

At the same time, Francesco Russo believes that Scott’s writing career can be divided into two very different phases. He argues that Scott produced a number of masterpieces from 1814 to 1819, and that afterwards he started to write merely to make money. The first phase includes novels such as *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, and *The Heart of Midlothian*. He praises Scott’s artistic skills, underlining his being at the same time a Romantic and a Realist with the ability to blend the world of fiction with that of reality. Despite the general tone of underestimation of the article, it is fascinating to note that Russo grasped the dual essence of Scott: his being a writer of transition who synthesises the trends of two centuries.¹⁹³ However, he argues that the second phase includes a series of poorly written novels composed with great haste in order to earn and afford Abbotsford’s excesses.

Contrary to Russo’s article, Bruno Stagnitto and Francesco Loi’s articles do not focus entirely on Scott, but still name the author in several sections, especially when discussing the birth and evolution of the historical novel sub-genre in Italy and Manzoni’s literary influences. Indeed, Stagnitto’s essay ‘Il 1827, l’anno del romanzo storico’ (*1827: The Year of the Historical Novel*), 1973, is part of the extensive collection of critical studies highlighting Scott’s influence on the Italian historical novel and especially on Manzoni. The article was published in 1973 but later reprinted in the volume *Il romanzo storico (The Historical Novel)*, 1978, edited by Leonardo Lattaruolo. The Scottish author is recognised as the promoter of this new literary sub-genre in Europe and Italy, influencing the whole literary production from the 1820s onwards. Stagnitto affirms that Italian writers of historical novels, imitators of Scott, drew on his works driven by the desire to promote the sub-genre as an entertaining kind of literature capable of meeting the tastes of a wider audience. Scott is also defined as an ‘industrial’ writer, archetype of the future consumer literature (or ‘paraliterature’). Scott, indeed, is widely recognised as the first best-selling author. His novel *Waverley* sold nearly fifty thousand copies from 1814 to 1830 – the year of the edition of Scott’s *Magnum Opus*.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ On Scott being a Romantic and a Realist, more will be added in the case study on *Ivanhoe* in Italy.

¹⁹⁴ In the last years of his life, Scott re-collected his novels to create a final version called *Magnum Edition* or *Magnum Opus*. He added introductory texts and explanatory notes to each of his novels and made a few adjustments to the texts. It was the first complete edition of Scott’s fiction. It appeared in 48 volumes issued

Stagnitto describes the year 1827 as particularly relevant in Italian literary history since it saw the publication of many historical novels influenced by the success of Scott. These texts include: Giambattista Bazzoni's *Il castello di Trezzo*, Francesco Domenico Guerazzi's *La battaglia di Benevento*, and Carlo Varese's *Sibilla Odaleta*. Scott established himself as a mentor for all authors who ventured into this new literary genre that combines history and fiction. Stagnitto is probably one of the few scholars who believes that all Scott's 'imitators' produced no contribution of artistic value, with the only exception of Manzoni. He affirms that: 'in Italia le risposte [to Scott's *oeuvre*] furono soprattutto caratterizzate dalla loro debolezza e dall'incessante ruotare del romanzo storico italiano attorno alla *forma* scottiana, nel tentativo di capirne il segreto'.¹⁹⁵ According to Stagnitto, Manzoni's masterpiece is the only one that can be considered a valuable product derived from Scott's literary heritage. He adds that 'si fa fatica ad assimilare il romanzo manzoniano all'area di realizzazioni letterarie di così scarso valore artistico, che il tempo ha oltretutto condannato alla dimenticanza'.¹⁹⁶

2.2.3 Translations and Editions

From 1970 to 1979, twenty-nine novels of Scott were published in Italy. *Ivanhoe* and *Riccardo Cuor di Leone* (*Richard the Lionheart*) were the most popular novels and appeared in different versions. In general, especially fruitful were children and young adult editions. The illustrated editions for young children of *Riccardo Cuor di Leone* appeared in 1972 and 1973 published by Fabbri and AMZ publishing houses. It saw several re-editions in the next years. *Ivanhoe*'s illustrated version was published in 1973, again by Fabbri and AMZ publishing houses, in 1975 by La Scuola, Malipiero, and Dami publishing houses. In total, it is possible to count seventeen editions of *Ivanhoe* out of twenty-nine publications. *Riccardo Cuor di Leone* accounts for six editions out of twenty-nine. *Quentin Durward* was published as an illustrated version for children in 1972 under the name of *L'arciere del re* (*The King's Archer*) for La Sorgente

monthly and was in part produced to repair Scott's debts after the bankruptcy of his publishing house. See the official website of Edinburgh University Press: <https://edinburghuniversitypress.com/book-introductions-and-notes-from-the-magnum-opus.html> last accessed April 28th, 2022.

¹⁹⁵ Bruno Stagnitto, 'Il 1827, l'anno del romanzo storico', in *Il romanzo storico*, ed. da Leonardo Lattarulo (Roma: Editori riuniti, 1978), p. 269. Translation: in Italy the responses were mainly characterised by their weakness and by the incessant rotation of the Italian historical novel around Scott's form, in an attempt to understand his secret.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 270. Translation: it is difficult to assimilate Manzoni's novel to the area of literary achievements of such little artistic value, that time has moreover condemned to oblivion.

publishing house, which specialised in children's literature. Belonging to the same trend of children literature is the book *Lance e Spade: I tre moschettieri, Robin Hood; Ivanhoe* (*Spears and Swords: The Three Musketeers, Robin Hood; Ivanhoe*) a collection of three stories, one by Alexandre Dumas and two by Scott, published in 1979 by Edibimbi, another company specialising in children's editions. In addition to the just mentioned abridged versions for children, also *Il paggio fedele* (*The Abbot*) was published twice by Fabbri in 1973 and 1975. *Waverley* appeared just once in 1972 for Casini publishing house and in a volume together with *Ivanhoe*.

As it is possible to see by this brief list of Scott's publications, the majority of his novels were published as abridgements. The 1970s constituted a turning point in Scott's critical reception; however, it seems that the same interest did not reach adult readers. These years are, in fact, important for Scott's Italian scholarship, but poor for his fortune in the general editorial market.

2.3 Walter Scott and the Studies on the English Novel in the 1980s

During the 1980s, the main critical currents in vogue in Italy were Post-modernism and Post-structuralism.¹⁹⁷ The two critical schools in part arose in contrast with the ideas promoted by two important ideological and critical movements that mostly developed in the first half of the twentieth century: Modernism and Structuralism. What Post-modernism and Post-structuralism have in common is the idea that there are infinite interpretations of a text and that there is not a unique truth. Indeed, it is not possible to understand and interpret the world according to pre-established or socially constructed structures. These critical schools leave space for the reader's interpretation of the text, while at the same time judging the readers as being unreliable as they filter what they read according to their own experience and personal perspective. As seen in the introduction to Scott in the 1970s, Post-modernism is deeply connected to another critical trend developed in the second half of the twentieth century: Hermeneutics. The latter, promoted by

¹⁹⁷ Post-modernism embraces several critical approaches including Post-structuralism and Deconstructionism. The major exponents of Post-modernism and Post-structuralism were: the French literary theorist Roland Barthes (1915-1980) famous for his collection of essays *Mythologies* (1957), and the essay 'The Death of the Author' (1967); The Algerian-French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) known especially for *Of Grammatology*, *Writing and Difference*, and *Speech and Phenomena* (all published in 1967), and the intellectual historian and philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984), who wrote pivotal studies such as *Madness and Civilization* (English 1964), *The Order of Things* (English 1970), and *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* (1981-82).

Hans-Georg Gadamer,¹⁹⁸ is considered a type of methodology for the interpretation of different arts and discipline – architecture, literature, philosophy, and religion. Hermeneutics and Post-modernism believe one's own prejudices and experiences to be unavoidable in the interpretation of a text.¹⁹⁹

Contrary to the ideas and methodologies proposed by these critical currents popular in the 1980s, the studies published on Scott in Italy fit perfectly into the trend of studies on the theorisation of the novel published internationally. Generally, these studies demonstrate the will to frame Scott's work within a specific sub-genre. They mainly focus on the description of Scott's novels main features. This attitude arises in contrast to the critical theories cited at the beginning of this chapter, which, on the contrary, believed in the great ambiguity of texts, language, and literary genres. Indeed, if we look at the major publications dedicated to Scott in the 1980s, especially from the English-speaking world, it is possible to note that the interest in his work goes hand in hand with the study of the genre of the novel, and in particular of the historical novel. In fact, at the international level, it is possible to mention: James Anderson's *Sir Walter Scott and History: With Other Papers*²⁰⁰ (1981); Harry E. Shaw's *The Forms of the Historical Fiction: Sir Walter Scott and His Successors*²⁰¹ (1983); Jane Millgate's *Walter Scott: The Making of the Novelist*²⁰² (1984); Judith Wilt's *Secret Leaves: The Novels of Walter Scott*²⁰³ (1985), and James Kerr's *Fiction Against History: Scott as Storyteller*²⁰⁴ (1989). Italian critics started, in turn, to work in a more international critical context being aware of the pivotal studies published in the English-speaking world. They started the same process of modernisation regarding the study of Scott, which saw a further implementation in the 1990s after the publication of the Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels and the Fourth Scott International Conference.

In addition to foreign influences that affected Italian critical studies on Scott, also crucial for his reception was the publication of Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* in 1980. Umberto Eco's masterpiece is the first Italian post-modernist historical novel. Even if it cannot be linked to the traditional model left by Scott, it helped to rekindle interest in the historical novel in

¹⁹⁸ Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) is known worldwide for developing Hermeneutics. His major work is *Truth and Method* (original version in German *Wahrheit und Methode*, published in 1960).

¹⁹⁹ Cfr. Muzzioli, 2021.

²⁰⁰ James Anderson, *Sir Walter Scott and History: With Other Papers* (Edinburgh: Edina Press, 1981).

²⁰¹ Harry E. Shaw, *The Forms of Historical Fiction: Sir Walter Scott and His Successors* (Ithaca-New York: Cornell University Press, 1983).

²⁰² Jane Millgate, *Walter Scott: The Making of the Novelist* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984).

²⁰³ Judith Wilt, *Secret Leaves: The Novels of Walter Scott* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

²⁰⁴ James Kerr, *Fiction Against History: Scott as Storyteller* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

general. As described in the chapter dedicated to the birth and development of historical fiction in Italy, Eco's book owes much to the nineteenth-century historical novel of Manzoni and Scott – historical sources, settings, the found manuscript as the basis of the plot – while adding post-modernist innovations such as the use of irony, the extra-textual discourse – already present in Scott's work – several quotations taken from other pieces of literature, and the idea of the infinite interpretations of the text and the opportunity to read it at different levels.²⁰⁵

As stated, in the 1980s the critical studies on Scott are mainly focused on the theorisation of the English novel. Even if they are not entirely devoted to the analysis of Scott's *oeuvre*, they still discuss his work in the wider context of the rise of the novel. At the same time, they emphasise the crucial role of Scott in determining the passage from the chivalric romance to the nineteenth-century socio-realistic novel. They support the idea that historical fiction represents the watershed between the old medieval romance and the great novels of the nineteenth century, since it mixes elements of the fantastic with real events and characters. Not only that, but Scott also suggested, through his works, a new type of historiography – which will be taken up again and theorised by neo-historicist and post-modernist scholars. This new concept of history is based on the idea that historiography is never totally objective and faithful to what historically happened. The historian, like the novelist, filters reality according to their own experiences, beliefs, and cultural context. Scott, for example, provides readers with the tools to judge events by themselves while describing his vision of the past. As Shaw affirms in his study *The Form of Historical Fiction: Sir Walter Scott and His Successors* (1983):

Scott's sense of what it means to be true to history is obviously mediated, consciously or unconsciously, by the tacit cultural assumptions that inform his ideology. His Scottish nationalism, his class position, his training as a lawyer, and his schooling in the ideas of the Edinburgh Enlightenment clearly enter in here. Such things translate themselves, by the crooked and indirect byways of ideological mediation, into a preference for depicting certain kinds of characters and finding in history certain kinds of plots.²⁰⁶

Scott paints the socio-historical context through characters belonging to all social classes. He uses the omniscient narrator who limits himself to presenting the facts. The reader thus acquires

²⁰⁵ In the section titled *Postille of The Name of the Rose*, Eco everyone can read the novel despite their level of education. At the same time, the more the reader is educated the more he can grasp the meanings of the book.

²⁰⁶ Shaw, p. 153.

an active role in reading and judging the events and can create for themselves a vision of what a particular historical moment meant and, above all, its repercussions on the population who directly experienced it.

Even if the monographs of the 1980s are mainly based on the theorisation of the English novel, they also provide significant insights on Scott's *oeuvre*, discussing his narrative techniques, themes, and main characters. For these reasons, they are essential in the Italian reception of Scott in the second half of the twentieth century. In particular, two monographs proved to be crucial in retracing Scott's Italian reception: Sergio Perosa's *Teorie inglesi del romanzo 1700-1900: da Fielding a Dickens*²⁰⁷ (*English Theories of the 1700-1900 Novel: From Fielding to Dickens*), 1983, and Maria Teresa Bindella's *Storia umile, storia pittoresca: saggio sul romanzo storico inglese dell'Ottocento*²⁰⁸ (*A Picturesque and Humble Story: An Essay on the English Historical Novel of the Nineteenth Century*), 1984. These two volumes share a deep connection to and dependence on the theories already expressed by Lukács in *The Historical Novel*²⁰⁹ (Italian translation in 1965). In Lukács' study, as well as in these monographs, the historical and social relevance of the genre initiated by Scott is emphasised, leading to a subsequent rediscovered interest in the author and his work.

The essays and articles published in this same period are slightly different from the topics treated in the monographs. On the one hand, Aldo Morace's contribution *Un intertesto Manzoni: il Waverley di Scott*²¹⁰ (*Manzoni's Intertext: Scott's Waverley*), 1985, focuses on the relationship between Scott and Manzoni. He supports the idea that previous critics who studied the connection between Scott's novels and *I promessi sposi* – he mentions, for example, Torraca, D'Ovidio, and Borgognoni – seem to have forgotten the great impact that the first of Scott's historical novels, *Waverley*, had on the creation of Manzoni's masterpiece. On the other hand, Enrica Villari's essay 'La resistenza alla storia nei romanzi giacobiti di Walter Scott'²¹¹ (*Resistance to History in Walter Scott's Jacobite Novels*), 1985, analyses the main features of Scott's Jacobite novels, identifying some anti-historical elements such as the supernatural, the tragic, and the comic. Finally, another essay written by Enrica Villari, 'Le premesse del

²⁰⁷ Sergio Perosa, *Teorie inglesi del romanzo 1700-1900: da Fielding a Dickens, da Stevenson a Conrad* (Milano: Bompiani, 1983).

²⁰⁸ Maria Teresa Bindella, *Storia umile, storia pittoresca: saggio sul romanzo storico inglese dell'Ottocento* (Verona: Il segno, 1984).

²⁰⁹ Lukács, 1989.

²¹⁰ Aldo Morace, *Un intertesto Manzoni: il Waverley di Scott* (Messina: Herder, 1985).

²¹¹ Enrica Villari, 'La resistenza alla storia nei romanzi giacobiti di Walter Scott', in *Storie su storie*, ed. da Enrica Villari e altri (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1985), pp. 5-30.

romanzo storico. Le tre voci di Scott per l'*Encyclopedia Britannica*',²¹² 1985 (*The Premises of the Historical Novel. Scott's Three Entries for the Encyclopedia Britannica*), gives a critical interpretation of the three texts Scott wrote for the *Encyclopedia Britannica* during the 1820s. This last contribution is the only one that can fit the general tendency of the renewed interest and study of the novel as a genre and its characteristics. It gives important insights into Scott's vision regarding art. In particular, it discusses the main idea of Scott regarding romance, chivalry, and theatre. Those three entries are: 'Essay on Romance', 'Essay on Chivalry', and 'Essay on Drama'. It is also interesting to note that Villari later translated into Italian the 'Essay on Chivalry'²¹³ in 1991 for the publisher Bollati Boringhieri, who had promoted a project aimed at translating a series of works on chivalry to enhance the rekindled interest for medievalism in Italy.²¹⁴ This will be the only edition of the three entries to be published in Italian. Villari is one of the most influential of Scott contemporary scholars. She teaches at the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and devoted many brilliant studies to Scott in the last forty years. Together with Carla Sassi (professor of English Literature at the University of Verona) – and Matteo Signaroli – scholar of Scott and Manzoni – she contributed to enriching scholarship on Scott in Italy from the 1980s onwards.

2.3.1 Monographs

The first monograph discussed here is *Teorie inglesi del romanzo 1700-1900: da Fielding a Dickens* (1983), written by Sergio Perosa. As the author states in the introduction, the aim of the volume is to chronologically retrace the various passages and changes undergone by the English novel from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. The volume is divided into two parts. The first one is dedicated to the transition from the medieval, chivalric romance to the realistic nineteenth-century novel, to twentieth-century modern fiction. It outlines the fundamental steps that made possible the birth of the modern English novel, stressing the importance of the historical novel, which played a crucial role in this evolution, synthesising for the first time the fantastic and the real. The second part of the volume presents extracts by

²¹² Enrica Villari, 'Le premesse del romanzo storico. Le tre voci di Scott per l'*Encyclopedia Britannica*', *Contesti*, 1-2 (1989), 109-32.

²¹³ Walter Scott, *Cavalleria*, ed. da Enrica Villari (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 1991).

²¹⁴ I had the chance to meet prof. Villari to discuss her essays on Scott and the project related to the translation of 'Essay on Chivalry'. She explained that the project aimed to include a few writings concerning chivalry. The publisher only managed to publish three translated works before he died. The project remains, thus, unfinished.

various English novelists. It includes texts from, for example, the works of Fielding, Smollett, Dickens, Scott, Stevenson, and Conrad. The excerpts summarise the main theories on the novel that have marked three centuries of English literature. In this way, Perosa gives voice to the authors - protagonists of these three hundred years - who express their ideas and criteria regarding the novel, and underline how it has evolved in English literary history.

In the first part of the volume, Perosa discusses the birth of the English realist novel in the eighteenth century, outlining the main features of the works of Fielding, Smollett, and Thompson, who first used elements taken from real life, putting, for the first time, in the foreground the importance of verisimilitude. These aspects enabled the reader to relate to the plots and no longer perceive the work of art as something distant or a mere product of the imagination. Subsequently, Perosa examines the rising in popularity of the Gothic novel. Horace Walpole, Clara Reeve, and William Beckford's Gothic fiction forcefully reinserted in the plots fantastic and improbable elements, including the use of supernatural and irrational events. At the same time, one exception to the irrationality brought on by the Gothic novel is represented by Ann Radcliffe. Author of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), she took a step back to return to the concept of verisimilitude by explaining to the readers the supernatural episodes that occur in the plot, giving them a rational explanation.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the novels of manners – especially the ones of Jane Austen – went back to focus on reality and everyday life by reporting scenes of domestic life with great attention in the description of contemporary customs and moral values. This is also the time when the first novel of Scott appeared, *Waverley* (1814). Scott was a great synthesiser of the novel's trends of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He owes much to the Gothic novel – for his fascination for the past, the taste of the medieval, the anti-hero or villain and other factors described, for example, in the essay by Rodolfo Macchioni 'Dal romanzo gotico al romanzo storico italiano' (*From the Gothic to the Italian Historical Novel*)²¹⁵ 1994 – and to the realist novels of Fielding and Smollett, as well as, finally, to the work of the Irish writer Maria Edgeworth who depicted Ireland as Scott will describe and narrate Scotland.

In *Teorie del romanzo inglese* what is particularly significant is how the author explores Scott's relationship with the old medieval romance and the modern novel. Perosa explains how Scott looked back to chivalric romance to ideate his own type of fiction. For example, he affirms that:

²¹⁵ Rodolfo Macchioni, 'Dal romanzo gotico al romanzo storico italiano', *Rivista di letteratura*, 23.1-2 (1994), 389-416.

Walter Scott partecipa direttamente alla riscoperta e alla valorizzazione del *romance* medievale e, secondo una carriera che lo vede prima poeta e poi romanziere, teorizza dapprima il ‘poema romantico’ e poi il romanzo storico.²¹⁶

Scott skillfully uses romantic, chivalric, and fantastic elements in his plots. At the same time, he pays great attention to the concept of verisimilitude, including accurate descriptions of landscapes, costumes, and manners of past eras to emphasise the novel’s truthfulness. Despite the attention to antiquarian and historical details, he is well aware that to make the novel more effective, he would have needed to include some inaccuracies and anachronisms,²¹⁷ focusing more on the description of the characters who lived in those past eras. What matters the most for Scott is to describe men who have experienced first-hand some important changes in the past, starting from the struggles between the Saxons and Normans up to the Jacobite revolutions, as he affirms in some of his novels’ prefaces.²¹⁸ The language used by Scott is, for example, modern and anachronistic. In the ‘Dedicatory Epistle’ in *Ivanhoe* (1819) Scott synthesises his main ideas regarding his concept of the novel, for example stating that he needed to adopt modern language to make the dialogues understandable. In addition, he translated ancient manners into modern ones in order to be more comprehensible:

It is necessary, for exciting interest of any kind, that the subject assumed should be, as it were, translated into the manners, as well as the language, of the age we live in.

[...]

²¹⁶ Sergio Perosa, *Teorie inglesi del romanzo 1700-1900: da Fielding a Dickens, da Stevenson a Conrad: una grande tradizione narrativa nell'interpretazione dei suoi protagonisti* (Milano: Bompiani, 1983), p. 24. Translation: Walter Scott participates in the rediscovery and enhancement of medieval romance and, on the basis of a career that sees him first as a poet and then as a novelist, first theorises the ‘romantic poem’ and then the historical novel.

²¹⁷ See the preface to *Ivanhoe* for example.

²¹⁸ As for example in the prefaces to *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe*. Cfr. P. S. Gaston, *Prefacing the Waverley Prefaces: A Reading of Sir Walter Scott's Prefaces to The Waverley Novels* (Berna: Peter Lang, 1991).

In point of justice, therefore, to the multitudes who will, I trust, devour this book with avidity, I have so far explained our ancient manners in modern language, and so far detailed the characters and sentiments of my persons, that the modern reader will not find himself, I should hope, much trammelled by the repulsive dryness of mere antiquity. In this, I respectfully contend, I have in no respect exceeded the fair license due to the author of a fictitious composition.²¹⁹

In the second part of the volume, among other important texts and testimonies on the theorisation of the novel, Perosa reports some crucial excerpts from Scott's works, which again contain the main considerations regarding the genre of the novel and the characteristics that it should have. In these writings, Scott expresses his choices in terms of narrative techniques, main themes, settings, and characters. These excerpts are: the first chapter of *Waverley* (1814); the review of Jane Austen's *Emma*, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* (1815); the preface to *Ivanhoe* (1819) with the dedicatory epistle to Dryasdust; an excerpt from *Essay on Romance* (1824), and an excerpt written by Scott dedicated to *Daniel Defoe*, included in the *Miscellaneous Prose Works* (1827).

The second monograph discussed here is Maria Teresa Bindella's *Storia umile, storia pittoresca: saggio sul romanzo storico inglese dell'Ottocento* (1984). The volume fits into the discourse on the birth and evolution of the English novel, but it also gives a complete and satisfactory analysis of Scott's *oeuvre*. Bindella throws a new interesting light on the interpretation of Scott's novels, reasoning in depth on their main features. The scholar provides new perspectives for understanding Scott's fiction, helping to enrich the existing scholarship on the author. Therefore, her volume represents one of the richest contributions to Scott's studies published in Italy in recent years.

In the first introductory pages, she outlines the recent critical tendency according to which there is a return to studying the theory of the novel:

Proprio negli ultimi vent'anni del nostro secolo, il romanzo si è riaffacciato sulla ribalta della cultura contemporanea diventando oggetto di serio interesse da parte di una corrente critica che sembra ormai avviata a una completa riabilitazione del genere.²²⁰

²¹⁹ Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe* (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2008), pp.17-18.

²²⁰ Bindella, p. 9. Translation: In the last twenty years of our century, the novel has reappeared on the forefront of contemporary culture, becoming the subject of serious interest on the part of a critical current that now seems to be heading towards a complete rehabilitation of the genre.

She suggests that along with the theorisation of the novel, during the last twenty years – she refers to the 1960s-1970s since her volume was published in 1984 – a new interest and revaluation of the historical genre has returned to the foreground. As in Perosa's *Teorie del romanzo inglese*, the author underlines the crucial role played by the historical novel in shaping modern fiction, and in being the watershed between the eighteenth-century novel and the great socio-realistic nineteenth-century novel. She notes that historical fiction is:

Genere che, per quanto umile, essendo dotato di straordinarie qualità dinamiche, rappresenterebbe la grande forza mediatrice tra i generi letterari e una delle più significative spinte in quel processo di trasformazione che doveva produrre il romanzo realistico-sociale dell'Ottocento.²²¹

She argues that this recent rekindled interest in and consideration of the historical novel is mainly due to two factors. On the one hand, the importance and advent of New Historicism and new Historical Philosophy (New Historiography). On the other hand, the emergence of new critical-literary methodologies. Certainly, Lukács' study had already brought back the interest in the historical novel and in Scott. In addition, some characteristics of Scott's novels allowed him to be reintegrated into a shared critical interest. In this regard, Bindella believes that some elements of Scott's work adhere perfectly to the New Historical Philosophy. For instance, the fact that Scott is aware of the necessity to filter historical reality according to his cultural context and his personal vision. New-historical critics also interpreted Scott's novels by looking at the era and the cultural context in which they were written. Taking up the theories already expressed by Lukács, Bindella also recognises Scott's ability to encapsulate the spirit of an era in his characters and describe great historical conflicts from a social point of view.

The scholar subsequently takes up the classification already proposed by Shaw in *The Forms of Historical Fiction* (1983), according to which it is possible to identify two types of Scott's novels: the conjunctive novels and the disjunctive novels. Shaw's taxonomy is based on the role of the protagonists in Scott's novels and their relationship with historical progress:

²²¹ Ibid., p. 19. Translation: A genre that, however humble, being endowed with extraordinary dynamic qualities, would represent the great mediating force between literary genres, and one of the most significant impulses in the transformation process that the nineteenth-century social-realistic novel was to produce.

The heroes of disjunctive novels imply little or nothing in this respect. Their successes and failures do not translate into propositions concerning the course of history. Their fictional careers are severed or disjoined from historical process, though they can help to create other kinds of historical meaning. In conjunctive novels, by contrast, Scott's form leads us to interpret the hero's career as a commentary on historical process, though we do not take it to be a consubstantial symbol of that process.²²²

Bindella reports Shaw's quotation and gives some examples of disjunctive and conjunctive novels. She mentions, for instance, *Waverley* where the main character perfectly embodies the idea of the conjunctive novel since he is 'un turista nella storia che accompagna il lettore attraverso la sua epoca attingendo simultaneamente da essa la sua identità di personaggio'²²³ – that is to say, a tourist who leads the reader through his epoch and builds his personality out of it.

After considering the protagonists of Scott's novels, Bindella focuses on other engaging aspects of his works. In the first chapter, she analyses Scott's relationship with magic, wizardry, and old manuscripts. During his time, Scott was called 'the Wizard of the North' or 'the Enchanter' or 'the Scottish Magician' for his ability to awaken the dead of the past and give them new life, which can be understood and experienced again through the eyes of the reader. Bindella also suggests that Scott himself, through the character of Laurence Templeton in the dedicatory epistle to Dryasdust at the beginning of *Ivanhoe*, enjoys having been called 'the Scottish Magician'. In this letter, Scott shows satisfaction at being awarded the merit of resurrecting the ancient Scottish life forms.²²⁴

The scholar then quotes one of Scott's contemporary critics, Thomas Carlyle, who appreciated Scott's great ability to bring the past back to life, to 'awaken it from its long silence and immobility'.²²⁵ Owing to Scott, the past was represented through the eyes of the present. Carlyle also stated that the *Waverley Novels* represented an exemplary model, which historiography was forced to draw upon if it wanted 'to win its war against the abstractions and theorems of eighteenth-century historiography'.²²⁶

²²² Ibid., p. 22; quotation taken from Shaw, *The Forms of Historical Fiction: Sir Walter Scott and His Successors*, p. 155.

²²³ Ibid., p. 23. Translation: a tourist in history who accompanies the reader through his era, simultaneously drawing his identity from it.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 44.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 50.

²²⁶ Ibidem.

Subsequently, Bindella discusses the crucial role of Scott's historical novel in the history and evolution of English fiction. She affirms that the historical sub-genre had immensely expanded the boundaries of the novel genre by granting free admission to techniques and materials which, until that time, had been the exclusive domain of other disciplines, such as political history, economics, painting, architecture, human science, and archaeological science.²²⁷

As can be seen through this critical review, many aspects have been treated in relation to Scott's work. His skills as a writer and the role he played in shaping world literature have been outlined and emphasised. The volume continues by examining other important issues such as Scott's relationship with romance, his narrative techniques, his relationship with the Scottish Enlightenment, and the analysis of recent international criticism on Scott. For these reasons, the text by Bindella witnesses a rediscovered critical interest in Scott in Italy and constitutes a fundamental text in his reception in recent years. Although the title of the volume is misleading, since it does not suggest that the book is devoted almost entirely to the author of *Waverley*, it is clear that it is an exemplary and illuminating critical study that enriches Scott's Italian scholarship.

2.3.2 Articles, Essays, and Book Chapters

The topics treated in the three essays on Scott published in Italy in the 1980s are different from those discussed in the monographs. As anticipated at the beginning of this section, Morace and Villari do not analyse the birth and evolution of the English novel but rather concentrate on other aspects of Scott's works.

Morace, for example, devotes a long essay to the relationship between Scott's *Waverley* and Manzoni's *I promessi sposi*. This essay, included in *Nuovi annali della facolta' di magistero dell'Universita' di Messina*, volume 34, published in 1985, is another contribution exploring the dependence of the Italian author on Scott. Specifically, the author believes that the critics who focused on the controversial connection between these two historical novelists²²⁸ have

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 52.

²²⁸ He quotes, for example, Adolfo Borgognoni, 'Don Ferrante', in *Disciplina e spontaneità dell'arte*, ed. da B. Croce (Bari: Laterza, 1913), pp. 45-69, D'Ovidio's *Appunti per un parallelo tra Manzoni e Walter Scott*, in *Discussioni manzoniane* (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, 1886) pp. 75-104, and Francesco Torraca's 'Di alcune fonti dei Promessi sposi', in *Discussioni e ricerche letterarie* (Livorno: Vigo, 1888), pp. 367- 447.

forgotten to include *Waverley* in the list of works that most influenced Manzoni's novel. To support his thesis, Morace quotes another scholar who previously identified this gap in Manzoni's sources, Corrado Alvaro, who translated *Waverley* into Italian in 1934. Indeed, Alvaro wrote in his postscript to Scott's novel that:

V'è in *Waverley* tutto un filo di narrazione lungo il quale s'incontrano i personaggi da cui il Manzoni poi trasse così grande profitto. Si ripensi al ritorno di Waverley dalle Highlands, al suo arresto, ai suoi incontri di strada, alle osterie, alla pedanteria del barone Bradwardine, alle scene d'invasione, e infine al mescolarsi di questo personaggio in avvenimenti che egli non ha né preparati né capiti...²²⁹

In the quotation, Alvaro identified some similarities between *Waverley* and *I promessi sposi*. He suggested that Manzoni drew upon *Waverley* to write his masterpiece. The elements the two novels have in common are, for example: Edward Waverley's journey to and from the Highlands and his being arrested - which can be related to Renzo's journey in *I promessi sposi*; the submission of the two protagonists to the surrounding events that they often do not even understand; the characters Scott describes in the novel, which are very similar to the ones used by Manzoni - for example Bradwardine - and the settings chosen by the two novelists, specifically the description of boroughs and taverns.

Not only Alvaro believed in the great impact Scott's first novel *Waverley* had on *I promessi sposi*, but also Leonardo Sciascia suggested the same. Sciascia was an influential journalist, essayist, and writer who also produced an interesting historical novel, *Il consiglio d'Egitto (The Council of Egypt)*, in 1963 - seen in part one of this dissertation. While commenting on a translation of the Jesuit Giulio Cordara - who wrote about Stuartists' expeditions in Scotland - he listed the similarities between *Waverley* and *I promessi sposi*. Sciascia posits:

²²⁹ Morace, pp 607-43. Translation: In *Waverley* there is a whole *fil* of narration along which Scott's characters meet the ones of Manzoni. Think about Waverley's return from the Highlands, his arrest, street encounters, the taverns, the pedantry of Baron Bradwardine, the invasion scenes, and finally this character's intermingling in events which he does not understand nor is prepared for...

Molti altri sono i punti in cui l'esteriore struttura dei *Promessi sposi* combacia con quella di *Waverley*. Ma il nostro puzzle è completo. Il nome di Manzoni lo abbiamo letto come in un crittogramma.²³⁰

Morace then analyses the first reception of Scott in Italy and the great popularity he enjoyed during the 1820s-1840s. Subsequently, a large part of his article is devoted to depicting the life of Manzoni and explaining how he first came in contact with Scott's novels. Morace outlines that Manzoni first read Scott while he was in France and that he was immediately fascinated by his works. He then collects as much evidence as possible to testify to the direct influence of *Waverley* on the *Promessi sposi*.

The second article published in the 1980s is Enrica Villari's 'La resistenza alla storia nei romanzi giacobiti di Walter Scott' (1985). It does not focus on the relationship between Scott and Manzoni, but instead throws light on other compelling aspects of Scott's novels. For example, the scholar locates the presence of anti-historical elements in three of Scott's novels (*Waverley*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and *Redgauntlet*). At the beginning of the article, she states:

Paradossalmente il romanzo di Walter Scott potrebbe definirsi come un romanzo storico con identificazione in valori antistorici. Stilisticamente in contrasto con il tono medio, dell'eroe medio e del romanzesco nella storia, il soprannaturale, il comico e il tragico, delineano la zona franca di questa resistenza.²³¹

She explains the concept of 'resistance to history', which is an illusionary attempt to negate the natural progress of history.²³² In particular, three literary devices used by Scott are in opposition to the natural development of history. These three elements are: the supernatural, the comic, and the tragic. The essay is complex and rich in references taken from several of Scott's novels, hence, it is worth quoting the scholar to illustrate the article's main points:

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 614, quotation by Sciascia. Translation: There are many contact points where the exterior structure of *I promessi sposi* matches that of *Waverley*. But our puzzle is complete. We have read Manzoni's name as in a cryptogram.

²³¹ Ibidem. Translation: Paradoxically, Walter Scott's novels could be defined as historical novels with identification in anti-historical values. Stylistically in contrast to the medium tone, the medium hero, and the novel in history, the supernatural, the comic, and the tragic, outline the free zone of this resistance.

²³² Villari, 'La resistenza alla storia nei romanzi giacobiti di Walter Scott', p. 5.

Nelle aree marginali del soprannaturale, del tragico e del comico, un regressivo ritorno dell'uguale, nella forma della lettera della leggenda, della mania e della fedeltà all'identità, si oppone al divenire della storia. Le leggende attribuiscono altre cause agli effetti della storia. I personaggi comici ne negano gli effetti. I personaggi tragici la configurano come antagonista della morale. [...] la nascita della coscienza della storia come fondamento costitutivo del romanzo moderno.²³³

In some crucial moments of Scott's plots, the supernatural – prophecies, apparitions, and old legends – the comic characters – anachronistic since their exaggerated description makes fun of historical reality – and the tragic characters – whose affections and emotions are placed in contrast with historical development – are inserted to threaten what should be the natural succession of history. Villari provides many examples of this, ranging from Fergus' vision the night before the Jacobite defeat in *Waverley*, to the marriage of Edgar and Lucy and the legend of the fountain that threatens Edgard's life and family in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, to comic characters such as servants in *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *Old Mortality* up to the tragic protagonist Edgar Ravenswood in, again, *The Bride of Lammermoor*.

Another interesting aspect discussed in this article is the relationship between space and time in Scott's novels. Villari points out that very often the spatial movement corresponds to a temporal movement, since the journeys of Scott's protagonists are often journeys back in time. Edward Waverley travels to the Scottish Highlands, which are still anchored to the past compared to more modern England. Here, in fact, he finds a society still based on the feudal system led by the clan chiefs. This idea of spatial-temporal movement in Scott's novels was first discussed in *The Form of the Historical Novel* by Shaw (1983).

The last essay dedicated to Scott is 'Le premesse del romanzo storico. Le tre voci di Scott per l'*Encyclopedia Britannica*', again, written by Villari and published in 1989. This contribution is the only one that can be linked to the general rekindled interest in the study of the novel. It is a long critical review and interpretation of the three entries written by Scott during the 1820s for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*: 'Essay on Romance', 'Essay on Chivalry',

²³³ Ibid., p. 30. Translation: In the marginal areas of the supernatural, the tragic, and the comic, a regressive return of the same, in the form of letters, legends, manias, and fidelity to identity, is opposed to the unfolding of history. Some legends attribute other causes to the effects of history. Comic characters deny its effects. The tragic characters configure history as an antagonist of morality. [...] the birth of historical conscience as the constitutive foundation of the modern novel.

and 'Essay on Drama'. Here, the Scottish author expressed his main ideas and beliefs regarding the three topics while discussing his vision of history and the novel as a literary genre. Of particular note are the arguments regarding Scott's desire to save traditions from historical changes by including them in his books. Indeed, he believed that past traditions are threatened by the passing of time and historical evolution. Scott's third solution, the middle ground resulting from the conflict and collision of two aspects – the old and the new – can be the method to preserve part of the past traditions without denying progress.

The scholar analyses the three essays while keeping in mind Scott's preoccupation regarding the concept of loss and his view on historical transformations. She suggests that Scott's reconstruction and description of historical moments, when something is at risk of disappearance, follows his profound psychological law. For Scott, she affirms, repeating important events of the past marked by great changes was driven by his will to live the same traumatic events of loss over and over again.²³⁴ She then summarises the main point of Scott's three texts:

La possibilità della trasformazione è valorizzata nei tre saggi. [...] non sono le trasformazioni sociali di cui si parla, il vero soggetto dei tre saggi, quanto piuttosto la tradizione culturale che, trasformandosi, doveva testimoniarle.²³⁵

Worried about the loss of traditions and customs, Scott recharged their presence in the modern era by trying to exorcise the fear that everything could disappear. Regarding chivalry, for example, Scott argued that it has formed the basis for our modern behaviour. He emphasises that 'in the general feeling of respect to the female sex; in the rules of forbearance and decorum in society; in the duties of speaking truth and observing courtesy'²³⁶ we can distinguish the moral legacies transmitted by chivalry to modern times.

Connected to chivalry is Scott's vision of romance and the novel. The historical novel, whose origins lie in the fusion between the old romance and the realist novel, is an example of a third path aimed at preserving the past, while accepting the changes brought on by the future. Scott's novels are deeply linked to the old romance since they draw on the fantastic, medieval,

²³⁴ Villari, 'Le premesse del romanzo storico. Le tre voci di Scott per l'*Encyclopedia Britannica*', p. 11

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 117. Translation: The possibility of transformation is enhanced in the three essays. [...] social transformations are not the real subject of the three essays, but it is rather the cultural tradition which, by transforming itself, had to testify to them.

²³⁶ Ibid., p. 118.

romantic, and chivalric elements to recount past events. In his novels, he expresses the idea that the contemporary society is born from the clash between the feudal and the bourgeois world.²³⁷ Furthermore, through the use of the fantastic, Scott can conjure some aspects of the past, giving life to the beliefs, superstitions and general mentality that had characterised the inhabitants of a past era. In this respect, Villari points out:

La cauzione alla storia consentiva anche di rivalutare quei ‘marvellous and uncommon incidents’ nei quali consisteva il fascino del *romance* rispetto alla normalità di argomento del *novel*, e liberava Scott dal senso di colpa che aveva accompagnato a lungo il suo godimento della letteratura meravigliosa. [...] Il meraviglioso non era più assimilato al gioco arbitrario della fantasia; veniva identificato a ciò cui si era un tempo creduto, e *quindi* era esistito.²³⁸

Finally, Villari reports Scott’s ideas about drama. The Scottish author believed that theatre must be experienced and appreciated by everyone. ‘Il teatro per Scott non poteva essere né un gioco di corte, né l’intrattenimento mondano di una sola classe’.²³⁹ Scott went back to the tradition of the ancient Greek world in which going to the theatre was possible for every member of society. For this reason, since theatre is a collective moment and aimed at representing the world in its totality, Scott denied Aristotle’s three rules of time, space, and action. He believed that they are too limiting for an author’s creative genius and therefore cannot adequately represent the complexity of the world. Scott also supported the Shakespearean tragic tradition by praising the plurality of languages in the same scene and the inclusion of comic elements in tragedy. This is because reality does not separate the ‘top from the bottom’, nor does it align everything on the same register.²⁴⁰ Scott’s thoughts on theatre were linked to his concept of the novel genre. He supported the idea that the historical novel is not addressed to only one class of readers, such as the female audience, but it tries to reach all readers, since it speaks to the nation in its entirety, as – adds Villari – the historical plays of Shakespeare have done before.²⁴¹

²³⁷ Ibid., p. 121.

²³⁸ Ibidem. Translation: The dedication to history also allowed to reassess those ‘marvellous and uncommon incidents’ in which the charm of romance consisted with respect to the novel’s argument normality, and freed Scott from the sense of guilt that had long accompanied his enjoyment of marvellous literature. [...] The marvellous was no longer assimilated to the arbitrary game of fantasy; it was identified with what had once been believed, and therefore had existed.

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 127. Translation: For Scott theatre was neither a court game, nor the worldly entertainment of a single class.

²⁴⁰ Ibidem.

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 129.

As we have seen in this section dedicated to the studies on Scott published in the 1980s, there is a revival of the studying of the English novel and consequently of Scott. In the monographs, Scott's presence is justified by the fact that he represented a watershed in English literary history, definitively separating the eighteenth-century romance from the nineteenth-century realist novel. The great merit of Scott, which is exalted by the authors of the aforementioned critical studies, is that he synthesised the various literary trends of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Scott combined elements of the chivalric and medieval romance with those of Smollett and Fielding's realist novels, and anticipates the great attention to historical details and to reality, typical of the great nineteenth-century novel. Furthermore, part of Scott's newfound popularity in the Italian critical studies is due to the identification of some characteristics of his novels that can be linked to critical trends and new interests that arose in the 1980s – certainly, the ideas brought on by New Historicism, which reviewed many of his founding arguments in Scott's novels, then the fall of Structuralism, and ultimately the rise of Hermeneutics.

2.3.3 Translations and Editions

Looking at the results of the research in the Italian National Library's Catalogue, it is possible to observe that the number of Scott's works does not differ from that recorded in the 1970s. Generally, the number of Scott's editions will also remain almost the same throughout the 1990s. Although in these thirty years – 1970s-1990s – there has been a great increase in the critical studies published on Scott in Italy, it cannot be said that the same fortunes are also visible for the editions of his novels. After the great book production of the post-war years, in the 1950s and 1960s, a slow crisis in the publishing houses began, as evidenced by the lower number of publications in general. In addition, Italian publishers decided to promote national writers in preference to foreign authors. Another important factor for the understanding of the Italian publishing history of this period and for Scott's reception is the phenomenon according to which the large publishing houses began to take over the smaller companies in financial difficulty. The major publishers also started to focus on profit rather than the quality of the books. This attitude was the result of the desire to cope with the publishing crisis that had begun in the 1970s.²⁴²

²⁴² Cfr. Ferretti, *Storia dell'editoria letteraria in Italia: 1945-2003*, 2004.

In the 1980s, it is possible to list twenty-five editions of Scott's works out of the total two hundred sixty-eight published between the years 1945 and 2020. *Ivanhoe* was still the author's most popular novel, with fifteen editions out of the twenty-five mentioned. It is possible to see different versions of *Ivanhoe*, from the original novel to editions for children and young adults - as the ones published by Murcia and Fabbri. *I misteri del castello (Woodstock)* was published twice by the publishing house Loescher, which specialised in school manuals. The first Loescher edition was published in 1982, while the second one appeared in 1983. *La sposa di Lammermoor (The Bride of Lammermoor)* appeared only once in 1982. *Riccardo Cuor di Leone (Richard the Lionheart)* was published in 1983 and 1985. The 1985 edition of *Riccardo Cuor di Leone* is its last Italian version up to the present day. This is symptomatic of the fact that the story, after its great success in the post-war period up to the 1970s, underwent a sharp decline in interest. This change in tastes was probably due to the fact that the work began to be seen as controversial for dealing with sensitive issues, such as the struggle in the Crusades between Christians and Muslims. Although *Ivanhoe* is also set in the period of the Crusades, it does not describe in detail the religious struggles, and furthermore its themes can be studied through various modern approaches, as we will see in the section dedicated to Scott's reception in the 1990s and 2000s. An edition of *Il Talismano* was published in 1983 – after a long hiatus since its last appearance – in the form of an abridged edition for young adults.

2.4 Walter Scott in the 1990s

To understand Scott's reception in Italy in the 1990s, it is necessary to look again at the European literary panorama, and, above all, at the latest significant events occurred, and contributions published, in the English-speaking world. First of all, it is worth considering that in 1991 it was celebrated the two-hundred and twenty years of Scott's birth anniversary and, in this occasion, the Fourth Scott International Conference titled *Scott in Carnival*, was held in Edinburgh. The conference was particularly important as it was expression of a new wave of criticism concerning Scott studies. As Alison Lumsden and Kirsty Archer-Thompson highlight in their recent article 'Walter Scott at 250'²⁴³ (2022), it was a pivotal moment that 'laid the

²⁴³ Alison Lumsden and Kirsty Archer-Thompson, 'Walter Scott at 250', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 47.2 (2022), 6-24.

foundation for the shape of Scott studies in recent years'.²⁴⁴ In particular, the paper by Jill Rubenstein 'Scott Scholarship and Criticism: Where Are We Now? Where Are We Going?' demonstrated a new tendency on considering Scott's criticism. After summing up Scott scholarship until 1991, Rubenstein testified that the new criticism on Scott was no longer assuming a defensive position.²⁴⁵ New approaches began to be applied to the study of Scott's work, especially through the perspective of Feminist studies, Post-colonial theory, Deconstructionism, and New Historicism. Rubenstein concludes saying that 'what has emerged [from the recent criticism on Scott] is a Scott whose novels are "reflexive," "self-conscious," and "more or less experimental"'.²⁴⁶

Another fundamental moment in Scott's European reception was the publication of the Edinburgh Edition of the *Waverley Novels*, a great editing project started in 1994. This project, led by the University of Aberdeen, aimed to restore Scott's texts to the form in which they appeared to his first readers, with the errors generated due to the difficulties of reading Scott's hand and the speed of publication emended. To do this the editorial team returned to Scott's manuscripts, proofs and early editions and emended the text on the basis of errors made during the publishing process. They also added explanatory notes, glossaries and a history of the publication of each text to support a modern reader.²⁴⁷ The Edinburgh Edition of the *Waverley Novels* counts twenty-eight novels plus two volumes of *Introduction and Notes to Scott's Magnum Opus*.

The Edinburgh Edition and the Fourth Scott International Conference represented the peak of Walter Scott's international recent revival, giving a further boost to the study of the Scottish writer. Thanks to the new enthusiasm inspired by the project and conference's papers, many scholars around the world started to devote numerous monographs and academic articles to Scott. This recent international criticism discusses multiple and varied aspects of Scott's life, *oeuvre*, and reception, and it uses new interdisciplinary approaches to understanding his novels. Some examples of pivotal international studies recently published are: Alexander Welsh's *The*

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., p.11. Read more in Jill Rubenstein, 'Scott Scholarship and Criticism: Where Are We Now? Where Are We Going?', in *Scott in Carnival: selected papers from the fourth International Scott Conference*, ed. by J.H. Alexander and David Hewitt (Aberdeen: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 1993), pp. 594-600.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 11. Original quotation taken from Rubenstein, p. 595.

²⁴⁷ See the introduction to the Edinburgh Edition of the *Waverley Novels* by David Hewitt. For the Edinburgh Edition of the *Waverley Novels*, see the official website of the Edinburgh University Press, the section dedicated to the Edinburgh Edition of the *Waverley Novels*:

<<https://edinburghuniversitypress.com/book-the-edinburgh-edition-of-the-waverley-novels-30-volume-set.html>> [accessed March 2022]

*Hero of the Waverley Novels*²⁴⁸ (1994); John Sutherland's *The Life of Walter Scott: A Critical Biography*²⁴⁹ (1995); A.N. Wilson's *A Life of Sir Walter Scott: the Laird of Abbotsford*²⁵⁰ (1996); later in the 2000s, Andrew Lincoln's *Walter Scott and Modernity*²⁵¹ (2007), and Ian Duncan's *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh*²⁵² (2008), along with many others. Scott's revival, which began in the English-speaking countries, had, thus, a significant impact globally.

In addition to the publication of the Edinburgh Editions and the recent international criticism on Scott, it is important to look at the critical context of the 1990s to contextualise Scott's Italian reception. In particular, it is essential to see what kind of criticism was most influential in Europe and in Italy in this period. At the end of the twentieth century there was a gradual departure from Deconstructionist Criticism, a theory that was promoted by critics and scholars such as Jacques Derrida²⁵³ and Paul De Man.²⁵⁴ These theorists approached the study of literary texts with the belief in the ambiguity of the language used by an author and argued that it is never possible to grasp the ultimate meaning of a piece of literature. Deconstructionism, in this sense, was opposed to the critical current in vogue in the first half of the twentieth century, Structuralism, which, instead, exalted the reader's objectivity and believed in the infinite possibilities of interpretation.²⁵⁵ As evidenced before, alongside Deconstructionism, also Post-structuralism deeply influence the cultural panorama of the 1990s.

As an alternative to Deconstructionist and Post-structuralist theories, other critical currents such as Hermeneutics and Psychoanalytic Criticism emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. As evidenced in the section on Scott's critical reception in the 1970s, Hermeneutics and Psychoanalytic Criticism partly reflected the positivist ideas of the late nineteenth century, since they go back to studying literature by looking at a series of essential data for interpreting the text: the author's life; the historical-cultural context; the use of words,

²⁴⁸ Alexander Welsh, *The Hero of the Waverley Novels* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

²⁴⁹ John Sutherland, *The Life of Walter Scott: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).

²⁵⁰ A.N. Wilson, *A Life of Sir Walter Scott: The Laird of Abbotsford* (London: Mandarin Biography, 1996).

²⁵¹ Andrew Lincoln, *Walter Scott and Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

²⁵² Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

²⁵³ Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) was a French philosopher with Algerian origins. He was best known for developing Deconstruction Criticism. He is one of the major figures associated with Poststructuralism and postmodern philosophy.

²⁵⁴ Paul De Man (1919-1983) was an American literary critic and literary theorist. Along with Jacques Derrida, he was part of an influential critical movement that went beyond traditional interpretation of literary texts to reflect on the epistemological difficulties inherent in any textual, literary, or critical activity.

²⁵⁵ Cfr. Muzzioli, 1994.

etc. On the one hand, Psychoanalytic Criticism focuses on the life of an author and applies the concepts of psychoanalysis to the study of the text. It investigates the writer's personal experiences, searches for his past traumas, and contextualises the text in its historical context.²⁵⁶ On the other hand, Hermeneutics has great faith in tradition, believing that the latter evaluates the texts for us. Indeed, it is our tradition that brings several texts up to the present day, decreeing their value. Furthermore, this last critical current acts as a mediator between the text and the reader, facilitating the understanding of the most ancient texts and providing the keys to reading them. In this sense, Hermeneutics aims to interpret the text without giving any evaluative judgment.

In this studded landscape, it is not surprising that Italian critical studies on Scott of the 1990s appear heterogeneous. Italian scholars infected by the enthusiasm for the Edinburgh Editions of the *Waverley Novels* and new international criticism were inspired by the multitude of methodologies of the new critical currents and started to produce varied contributions on Scott. This great production also continued into the 2000s when – in addition to the literary theories just mentioned – Feminist, Post-colonial, and Cultural Studies became popular following the trends in contemporary criticism. Since it is not possible to distinguish a specific trend of interest (as in the 1980s when the main focus was the theorisation of the English novel), critical pieces on Scott of the 1990s include studies on English Romanticism, the theorisation of the novel, and the analysis of different novel sub-genres such as the Gothic. In addition, Italian scholars produced pieces entirely dedicated to either Scott's *persona* or his works. These pieces include monographs such as *La maschera e il ritratto: nascita e metamorfosi dell'autore anonimo nei romanzi di Walter Scott*²⁵⁷ (*The Mask and the Portrait: Birth and Metamorphosis of the Anonymous Author in the Novels of Walter Scott*), 1991, by Maria Teresa Bindella,²⁵⁸ and *Romanzo storico e romanticismo: intermittenze del modello scottiano*²⁵⁹ (*Historical Novel and Romanticism: Intermittences of Scott's Model*) edited by Franca Ruggieri Punzo,²⁶⁰ and essays, articles and book chapters such as Paola Luciani's 'Un eccentrico confronto: Rossini e Walter

²⁵⁶ From Psychoanalytic Criticism other critical currents will rise starting from the end of the twentieth century. These new currents will be Feminist Criticism, Post-colonial Criticism and Cultural Studies.

²⁵⁷ Maria Teresa Bindella, *La maschera e il ritratto: nascita e metamorfosi dell'autore anonimo nei romanzi di Walter Scott* (Padova: Libreria Universitaria, 1991).

²⁵⁸ The scholar already published *Storia umile, storia pittoresca: saggio sul romanzo storico inglese dell'Ottocento*, in 1984.

²⁵⁹ *Romanzo storico e romanticismo: intermittenze del modello scottiano*, ed. da Franca Ruggieri Punzo (Pisa: ETS, 1996).

²⁶⁰ Franca Ruggieri Punzo is the author of *Walter Scott in Italia (1821-1971)*, published in 1975.

Scott²⁶¹ (*An Eccentric Comparison: Rossini and Walter Scott*), 1991, Rodolfo Macchioni's 'Dal romanzo gotico al romanzo storico italiano', 1994, two articles by Enrica Villari 'Narrativa, storia e costume: Walter Scott'²⁶² (*Fiction, History and Costume: Walter Scott*), 1996, and 'Spazio nazionale e spazio romanzesco: il caso degli ebrei da *Ivanhoe* a *Daniel Deronda*'²⁶³ (*National Space and Fictional Space: the Case of the Jews from Ivanhoe to Daniel Deronda*), 1997, and, finally, Chiara Ercolani's 'Da Walter Scott agli studi storici postmoderni. *Waverley*: una finzione della storia?'²⁶⁴ (*From Walter Scott to Post-modern Historical Studies. Waverley: A Fiction of History?*), 1998. Furthermore, symptomatic of renewed interest in Scott is the publication of *Cavalleria*²⁶⁵ (*Essay on Chivalry*) translated into Italian for the first time in 1991 by Enrica Villari.

2.4.1 Monographs

The first monograph published in the 1990s is *La maschera e il ritratto: nascita e metamorfosi dell'autore anonimo nei romanzi di Walter Scott*²⁶⁶ (1991), written by Maria Teresa Bindella. It is a crucial study of Scott's Italian reception since it gives new perspectives in interpreting Scott's *oeuvre*. In addition, it fits the psychological literary criticism in vogue in this period, dealing with issues such as authorship and identity.

In *La maschera e il ritratto*, Scott's novels are compared to paintings, each having its particular frame made of paratextual apparatuses. These apparatuses – prefatory letters, introductions, and appendices – aim to contextualise the novel and give indications about the story narrated. They also convey Scott's general ideas on several issues – overall concerning the form of the novel and the relationship between history and fiction. The main focus of Bindella's study is to investigate the reasons behind Scott's choice of anonymity and how he expressed his personality through his characters. Despite the tremendous success of the

²⁶¹ Paola Luciano, 'Un eccentrico confronto: Rossini e Walter Scott', in *Teorie del romanzo nel primo Ottocento*, ed. da Riccardo Bruscaagli e Roberta Turchi (Roma: Bulzoni, 1991).

²⁶² Enrica Villari, 'Narrativa, storia e costume: Walter Scott' in *Storia della civiltà letteraria inglese*, ed. da Franco Marengo, 4 vols (Torino: UTET, 1996) II, pp. 477-96.

²⁶³ Enrica Villari, 'Spazio nazionale e spazio romanzesco: il caso degli ebrei da *Ivanhoe* a *Daniel Deronda*', in *Raccontare e descrivere: Lo spazio nel romanzo dell'Ottocento*, ed. da F. Fiorentino (Roma: Bulzoni, 1997), pp. 95-125.

²⁶⁴ Chiara Ercolani, 'Da Walter Scott agli studi storici postmoderni. *Waverley*: una finzione della storia?', *Il Lettore di provincia* (April 1998) 1-16.

²⁶⁵ Walter Scott, *Cavalleria*, trad. e intr. di Enrica Villari (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 1991).

²⁶⁶ Bindella, 1991.

Waverley Novels, Scott decided to remain anonymous until February 23, 1827, when during a theatrical fund-raising dinner, he finally revealed his authorship.²⁶⁷ The volume is divided into five sections: 1. ‘L’anonimo autore di Waverley’ (*The Anonymous Author of Waverley*); 2. Prospero e Ariele (*Prospero and Ariel*); 3. Ritratti di antiquari (*Antiquaries’ Portraits*); 4. La maschera e il libro (*The Mask and the Book*), and 5. La maschera e il ritratto (*The Mask and the Portrait*).

In the first section, Bindella explains the reasons that led Scott to remain anonymous until 1827, even if some critics in literary magazines – such as the *Edinburgh Review* or the *British Critic* – had suspected his authorship long before. Scott himself had confessed in private letters to have written *Waverley* and the subsequent novels. These letters include the ones sent to his friend and confidant, John Morritt.²⁶⁸ Bindella sums up the reasons behind Scott’s choice of anonymity: his desire to pique the curiosity of the public and create suspense; the will to protect himself from possible unfavourable criticisms – the novel did not enjoy great fame and good reputation in Scott’s time – and the preoccupation of keeping his noble profession as a lawyer detached from his ‘less’ noble profession as a novelist.

In the second section, the scholar investigates how Scott hinted at his identity through some fictitious characters. Through these characters, Scott expressed his ideas on fundamental issues such as the relationship between the novel and the surrounding reality or his doubts about undermining his reputation as a lawyer. Bindella reports the example of a dialogue in *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818) where two young lawyers, Hardie and Halkit, engage in a discussion about the novel’s reputation and its relationship with fiction. As Scott reports in this passage of the novel, the two lawyers are no strangers to this new literary genre, but reading was still considered unbecoming for those working with the law.²⁶⁹ As Bindella points out in reporting this dialogue, Scott deals with a theme very dear to his career: the relationship between law and the novel in general.²⁷⁰

In the third and fourth sections, the scholar gives examples of other fictitious characters behind whom Scott was able to reveal himself. Most of all, Scott exposed his *persona* in the characters of the editor-antiquarians. These characters usually discover an old manuscript and

²⁶⁷ The reasons and consequences of Scott’s anonymity are treated in detail by Seamus Cooney in the article ‘Scott’s Anonymity – Its Motives and Consequences’, *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 20.4 (2014), 207-09.

²⁶⁸ John Bacon Sawrey Morritt (1771–1843) was a traveller, classical scholar, and friend of Sir Walter Scott. Part of their correspondence can be found in John O. Hayden, *Walter Scott: the Critical Heritage* (London-New York: Routledge, 1995).

²⁶⁹ Cfr. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

²⁷⁰ Cfr. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

decide to edit it for the public. The plot of the novel is thus based on the found manuscript, adequately edited by the antiquarian characters. Some examples of antiquarians-editors are Laurence Templeton in the novel *Ivanhoe* (1819) and Crystal Croftangry in *The Chronicles of the Canongate* (1827). While explaining the manuscripts and editing them for the public, the Scott-antiquarian characters engage in reasoning about various topics: the relationship between the past and the present, history and fiction, costumes and tradition.

In the last section, Bindella supports the idea that the fictional character of *The Chronicles of The Canongate*, Crystal Croftangry, is a perfect mix of all the fictitious characters behind whom Scott hid his personality and authorship. Indeed, with this character, Scott summarises all the characteristics of the self-referential antiquarian of previous novels. The curious aspect about this character is that he was used by Scott even after revealing his identity as the author of the *Waverley Novels*. The scholar concludes her study by stating that Crystal Croftangry eliminates the distance between the painting and the frame, between the anonymous author and his novels. Indeed, Crystal Croftangry tells in the first person the troubling story of his life by indulging in episodes, characters, descriptions of places, and moods, guided by the pure pleasure of telling his own experiences. Croftangry's narration should have been a preface but ends up lasting five chapters, almost the entire novel.

As previously said, Bindella's volume is inspired by the psychoanalyst and biographical theories in vogue in the 1990s, as it focuses on Scott's life to better understand his works and, above all, to explain the usefulness and function of his characters. Furthermore, the study constitutes a valid contribution as, at an international level, no studies had yet appeared regarding Scott's choice of anonymity. It is a fascinating and comprehensive analysis of Scott's life and expression of his personality through his novels.

The second monograph published in 1996 is *Romanzo storico e romanticismo: intermittenze del modello scottiano*.²⁷¹ This volume is a collection of essays published in *Quaderni di filologia francese (French Philology Papers)*, which, however, presents interesting texts devoted to the tracing of Scott's Italian reception. Among the essays it is worth quoting Franca Ruggieri Punzo's 'Storia e racconto: il ciclo di *Waverley*' (*History and Narrative: The Waverley Cycle*); Cara Leri's 'Manzoni e Scott. Folle in rivolta' (*Manzoni and Scott. Crowds in Revolt*), and Giovanni Bardazzi's 'Tommaso Grossi. Tra storiografia e modelli scottiani' (*Tommaso Grossi. Between Historiography and Scott's Models*). Contrary to Bindella's study, these essays are not innovative contributions to Scott's scholarship in Italy since they do not

²⁷¹ Punzo, *Romanzo storico e romanticismo: intermittenze del modello scottiano*, 1996.

add significant details to the analysis of Scott's works, but they are nevertheless to be included in the history of his reception in the second half of the twentieth century.

In the first essay 'Storia e racconto: il ciclo di *Waverley*', Punzo takes up several ideas already expressed in previously published studies on Scott and repeats their main points. In particular the essay draws on the theories expressed by Lukács in his *The Historical Novel* (Italian version 1965). She begins by remembering the enormous success of the novel *Waverley* at the time of its first publication (1814). The scholar then describes the innovations introduced by Scott, leading to the creation of the modern historical novel. Punzo then reports Lukács' concept of the average hero and finally discusses the relationship between history and fiction. Punzo's critical approach does not differ from the one sustained by Italian and international scholars in previous years. Her didactic approach seeks to summarise what has already been seen and studied on Scott's work and on the historical novel.

The second essay, 'Manzoni e Scott. Folle in rivolta', goes back to looking at the differences and similarities between Manzoni and Scott. In this case, Cara Leri examines the representation of the 'crowd' in *I promessi sposi* (1827) and in *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818). The contribution recounts the life of Manzoni, and how he met Scott's works for the first time when he was living in France, thus in French translations. Leri then explains the great influence Scott's novels played on the creation of Manzoni's *I promessi sposi*. Subsequently the scholar concentrates on the study of the dramatisation of the crowd in the two novels just mentioned. In looking at *I promessi sposi* and *The Heart of Midlothian*, Leri identifies many similarities in the representation of the crowd in the two authors. The study shows the close dependence of Manzoni on Scott.

The third essay is 'Tommaso Grossi. tra storiografia e modelli scottiani' by Giovanni Bardazzi. This article seeks similarities between the works of Tommaso Grossi and those of Scott. It explicitly supports the dependence of Tommaso Grossi's *I Lombardi alla prima crociata* (*The Lombards in the First Crusade*), 1826, and *Marco Visconti* (1834) on Scott's novels. Although it does not focus on the study of Scott's works but instead examines the production of the Italian writer Tommaso Grossi, the article is still interesting as it demonstrates the on-going interest in studying the relationship between Scott and the Italian historical novel writers. In fact, the comparative approach of Leri and Bardazzi testifies that the study of the relationship of Scott and Italian authors is still in vogue even in recent times. As we have seen in previous chapters, this topic has always been popular in the history of Scott's Italian reception, starting from the end of the nineteenth century, when the main quarrel - in addition

to the one on the mixture of history and fiction - was that of identifying the dependence of the Italian historical novelists on Scott, and therefore identifying his imitators.

2.4.2 Essays, Articles, and Book Chapters

The contribution 'Un eccentrico confronto: Rossini e Walter Scott' by Paola Luciani is part of the series of essays contained in the volume *Teorie del romanzo nel primo Ottocento*²⁷² (*Theories of the Novel in the Early Nineteenth Century*), 1991. The scholar discusses a famous piece written by Carlo Varese published in 1832, preface to his novel *Preziosa di Sanluri o i montanari sardi*²⁷³ (*Precious of Sanluri*), and analyses its main themes.

Luciani introduces the essay by stating that it is possible to consider Varese's preface as a novelty compared to the critical panorama of those years. In fact, Varese's article places itself outside the quarrel on the historical novel sub-genre, typical of the first half of the nineteenth century. During those years, many critics argued about using real elements and fiction in literature, discussing the appropriateness of this mixture.²⁷⁴ The 'extravagance' of the title lies in proposing a new topic instead of focusing on the contrast between reality and fiction. It makes a comparison between two similar artists: Gioachino Rossini and Walter Scott.

After a brief introduction about Scott's fortunes in Italy, especially in the 1820s, the scholar affirms that the model of the historical novel employed by Scott was soon outclassed by the authors of Italian historical novels, who had more at heart the question of truthfulness at the expense of fantastic elements. Varese argues that Rossini and Scott were two 'relative' geniuses, since their works perfectly met the tastes of their era. This idea is in contrast with the 'absolute genius', whose works are universal and can fit whichever era.²⁷⁵ To support his idea, Varese states that 'Walter Scott è il Rossini della letteratura e Rossini è il Walter Scott della musica'.²⁷⁶ It is important to bear in mind that Italian Opera had been an influential vehicle through which the works of Scott had been known and appreciated by the Italian public:

²⁷² *Teorie del Romanzo nel primo Ottocento*, ed. da Riccardo Bruscaagli e Roberta Turchi (Roma: Bulzoni, 1991), p.149.

²⁷³ Carlo Varese, 'Di Rossini e di Walter Scott messi a confronto come geni d'indole identica e del romanzo in generale', in *Preziosa di Sanluri ossia i Montanari sardi romanzo storico dell'autore di Sibilla Odaleta* (Milano: Stella, 1832).

²⁷⁴ Cfr. Ganeri, 1999.

²⁷⁵ Cfr. Ibid., p. 154.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 154, quoted from Varese, pp. 5-6. Translation: Walter Scott is the Rossini of literature, and Rossini is the Walter Scott of music.

Gioachino Rossini and Gaetano Donizetti both adapted some of Scott's novels into music obtaining an immediate success in the first half of the nineteenth century. Rossini composed *La donna del lago* (*The Lady of the Lake*, performed in 1819) and *Ivanhoe* (performed in 1826), while Donizetti produced *Elisabetta al castello di Kenilworth* (*Kenilworth*, performed in 1823) and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (*The Bride of Lammermoor*, performed in 1836). The comparison between Rossini and Scott is thus supported by the close connection of the two authors, since Rossini's opera contributed to Scott's success in Italy.

Luciani reviews the similarities reported in Varese's essay while giving her own considerations. She also reports some examples taken from Scott's novels and Rossini's melodramas to support these affinities. The two geniuses share several features including the idea of 'movement'. For example, in Rossini's composition the triplets he employs prevent the ear from getting bored, and to the same extent, the movement of the dramatic scenes used by Scott prevents the reader from getting bored. Furthermore, in Scott, movement copies reality and is used as a device for truthfulness, unlike the eighteenth-century sentimental and pathetic novels, which, as Varese posits, avoid the dynamism and movement typical of real life.²⁷⁷

Luciani then discusses another characteristic that Varese identifies in both artists: the use of mannerisms – that is, the abuse of repetitive patterns. But if for Rossini the continuous 'crescendo', the mechanical recurrence in conventional places and situations, ends up interrupting the musical line of the work – therefore it is considered a defect in his works - for Scott it enriches the plots of his novels. Finally, Varese mentions two other elements common to the works of Scott and Rossini: the 'appoggiatura' and the 'transition' as devices capable of varying the text and melody while maintaining the unity of the work.

Varese's essay ends with a long defence of the historical novel genre, taking up the quarrels around the mixture of reality and fiction. Luciani concludes by supporting this defence and adds that:

[...] assumere il melodramma di Rossini quale termine di confronto per il romanzo storico significa accantonare il legame, o il conflitto, tra storia ed invenzione per accogliere un genere anch'esso 'misto' nel quale rintracciare condizioni e tecniche di racconto, subordinate, come si è visto, all'unità drammatica del testo.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ Cfr. Varese, 1832.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 160. Translation: [...] considering Rossini's melodrama as a term of comparison for the historical novel means setting aside the link, or conflict, between history and invention to accommodate a genre that is also

Even in this case, we do not have an original text giving a new interpretation to Scott's work. Luciani's essay limits reporting the comparison already proposed by Varese while adding a few comments.

The second contribution published in the 1990s is the article by Rodolfo Macchioni 'Dal romanzo gotico al romanzo storico italiano', which appeared in the May/December 1994 issue of *Rivista di letteratura italiana*. The article emphasises the influence of the English Gothic novel on the work of Scott, underlining the fundamental role it played in the conception and creation of the *Waverley Novels*. Although the influence of the Gothic novel on Scott had already been dealt with by critics such as Giorgio Spina in *Il romanzo storico inglese (Sir Walter Scott)*²⁷⁹, examined in the section concerning Scott's reception in the 1970s, the article by Macchioni provides an innovative and interesting point of view, as it identifies the Gothic elements brought by English Gothic literature and by Scott to the Italian historical novel.

Macchioni begins his article by providing a brief introduction about the birth of the Gothic novel in England, underlining the socio-cultural changes that led to the creation of the new novel sub-genre, characterised 'dalla sua forza emotiva'.²⁸⁰ He also quotes important contributions such as Edmund Burke's treatise *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1754), which definitively consolidated the new taste for horror and the sublime. Macchioni then outlines the main characteristics of Gothic fiction and identifies Horace Walpole, with *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), as its initiator. He also discusses other Gothic works, including those by Clara Reeve and Ann Radcliffe which greatly influenced Scott's work.

Among the fundamental traits of the Gothic sub-genre, which will in part be found in the historical novel, Macchioni distinguishes the taste for the picturesque and the sublime, the predilection for a horrifying nature characterised by waterfalls, rocky chasms, ruins and dense forests, the characters – such as the villain, the owner of the castle, the pursuer in contrast to the persecuted heroine, the hero who saves her, the faithful servants – and the use of fantastic and supernatural elements – such as ghostly apparitions, inexplicable events and prophecies.

The scholar posits that, during his life, Scott was a great reader of Gothic fiction and even wrote the preface to the 1811 edition of Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*. In the preface Scott acknowledges:

'mixed' in which to trace conditions and techniques of storytelling, subordinated, as we have seen, to the dramatic unity of the text.

²⁷⁹ Cfr. Spina, 1971.

²⁸⁰ Macchioni, p. 390. Translation: by its emotional power.

The Castle of Otranto is remarkable not only for the wild interest of the story, but as the first modern attempt to found a tale of amusing fiction on the basis of ancient romances of chivalry.²⁸¹

Scott not only wrote this preface, but dedicated a long praise to the work of another writer of Gothic novels in his work *Lives of the Novelists*.²⁸² For him, in fact, Ann Radcliffe, with her *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), takes here place as an author of high merit among those who created and consolidated the Gothic as a new sub-genre.²⁸³

Since Scott was a great admirer of Gothic fiction, he took some of its elements and incorporated them into his novels. These elements are analysed in the article by Macchioni. For example, the scholar states that Scott was fascinated by medieval taste, and decided to set several of his works in this distant era. The first and most famous novel set in the Middle Ages is *Ivanhoe* (1819), whose story is set at the time of the struggle between the Saxons and Normans, precisely in 1194, when Richard I returned from the Third Crusade to reclaim his kingdom. Here, however, Macchioni makes a big mistake: he also quotes *Waverley* (1814) as Scott's first medieval novel, when this work is instead set during the second Jacobite revolution of 1745.²⁸⁴ Apart from the error regarding Scott's medieval novels, Macchioni's identification of Scott's attraction to the medieval world – to tournaments, duels, knights, kings and settings – still remains true.

Another peculiar element of Gothic fiction, which Scott inserts in his novels, is the setting of the castle – especially typical of the works of Ann Radcliffe. Through Scott's novels and thanks to the Italian translations of English Gothic literature, the setting of the castle also reaches the Italian historical novels. Indeed, the castle will frequently appear in the titles and plots of Italian authors such as Bazzoni's *La battaglia di Benevento*, 1827, or Guerazzi's *Il castello di Trezzo*, 1827. Italian historical novels will not only use medieval and Gothic settings but will take inspiration from Gothic literature for the creation of some plots and characters. For example, just as Scott had introduced the villain in his novels - owner of the castle,

²⁸¹ Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, with intr. by Walter Scott (New York: Collier Books, 1967), p. 115.

²⁸² Walter Scott, *The Lives of the Novelists* (New York: A. Denham & Co, 1872).

²⁸³ Cfr. *Ibid.*, section dedicated to *Mrs. Ann Radcliffe*, pp. 306-351.

²⁸⁴ Scott's novels set in the Middle Age are instead: *The Betrothed* (1825), set in the twelfth century, *The Talisman* (1825) set during the third crusade, *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828) set around 1400, *Count Robert of Paris* (1832) set during the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenus (1081-1118), and *Castle Dangerous* (1832) set in 1306 during the Wars of Independence.

persecutor or evil character – so too Italian authors will start from these archetypes for the creation of their protagonists.

An interesting aspect treated in Macchioni's article is the role played by Italian translations of Gothic novels. The first ones appeared at the end of the eighteenth century and helped prepare the fertile ground for the reception of the *Waverley Novels*, because they introduced the taste for the horrid and the sublime in the Italian cultural panorama. In this respect, Macchioni affirms that:

La ricezione in Italia del romanzo storico scottiano e del suo retroterra gotico è favorita dal clima proromantico instauratosi nella seconda metà del Settecento, grazie all'opera dei traduttori che avevano divulgato Young, Gray, Hervey, Macpherson, e in genere la letteratura sepolcrale inglese.²⁸⁵

Finally, the scholar dedicates a large part of the article to the discussion of Gothic elements in Italian historical novels, quoting authors such as Manzoni, Guerazzi, Bazzoni, D'Azeglio, and Grossi. In the end, it is possible to affirm that this contribution is particularly important, since it gives a new perspective on Italian historical novels underlining how they draw both on Scott's work and the English Gothic novel.

The next critical pieces included in the timeline of Scott's Italian reception are two articles written by Enrica Villari, published in the mid-1990s. The first article is 'Narrativa, storia e costume: Walter Scott', sixth chapter of *Storia della civiltà letteraria inglese*, edited by Franco Marenco (1996). The second article is 'Spazio nazionale e spazio romanzesco: il caso degli ebrei da *Ivanhoe* a *Daniel Deronda*', which appeared in *Raccontare e descrivere: Lo spazio nel romanzo dell'Ottocento* edited by F. Fiorentino, 1997.

The first article discusses general aspects of the *Waverley Novels* and gives a critical analysis of their main features. It also explores the reception of Scott in Italy until the mid-twentieth century. The contribution is divided into six parts: 1. *Antefatti: il romanzo del costume locale (Background: The Novel of Local Customs)*; 2. *I Waverley Novels*; 3. *Spazio della descrizione e statuto del personaggio (Space of Description and Character's Status)*; 4. *La storia come crisi (History as Crisis)*; 5. *Storia e romanzo (History and the Novel)*, and 6. *Scott*

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 395. Translation: the Italian reception of Scott's historical novel and its gothic background is favoured by the proto-romantic climate established in the second half of the eighteenth century, thanks to the work of the translators who had popularised Young, Gray, Hervey, Macpherson, and English sepulchral literature in general.

nel Novecento (Scott in the Twentieth Century). The first section is dedicated to the main influences and sources that inspired the creation of the *Waverley Novels*, giving specific relevance to the work of the Irish writer Maria Edgeworth. It then describes the main characteristics of Scott's production stressing the importance and the role his historical novel played in shaping European literature. The second section analyses the relationship between space and time and Scott's protagonists. These protagonists, when travelling through different regions of Scotland and England, often travel back in time, as did Edward Waverley who travelled through the Highlands and found a still feudal civilisation based on the clan system. In the fourth section, Villari explores the concept of history as crisis: when something is threatened to be lost, it is recovered by Scott's narration. The fifth section is dedicated to the relationship between history and fiction and explores the birth of the historical novel. Finally, the last part traces the reception of Scott in the first half of the twentieth century, especially taking into account the generally bad reviews by Italian critics such as Cecchi, Croce, and Praz. The contribution fits perfectly into the didactic approach, mixing the research for the historical context in which the *Waverley Novels* were born, and the hermeneutical approach aimed to analyse interesting aspects of Scott's works.

Villari's second article 'Spazio nazionale e spazio romanzesco: il caso degli ebrei da *Ivanhoe* a *Daniel Deronda*' looks at one novel in particular, *Ivanhoe*, and investigates the relationship between space and time starting from the role and description of the Jewish people in the novel. This critical piece is particularly relevant since it draws on some new critical approaches in vogue at the end of the twentieth century. It specifically uses cultural studies, with their focus on ethnic minorities, to shed light upon characters of Scott's *Ivanhoe*. The role of the Jewish characters and their relationship with the English nation is a new topic that had never been treated before. It explains how the representation of Jewish characters has changed with the evolution of the English novel. As the first case study, it examines the characters of Rebecca and her father Isaac in Scott's medieval novel *Ivanhoe* (1819). Subsequently, it looks at the character of Fagin in Dickens' novel *Oliver Twist* (1837). After Dickens, the essay analyses the role of the Jew in Anthony Trollope's *The Way We Live Now* (1875). It then looks at the representation of Jews and their role in creating the British nation in Benjamin Disraeli's production. Lastly, it focuses on the new vision and representation of the Jew in George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* (1876).

The aim of this contribution is therefore to analyse the relationship of Jewish characters with the conception and creation of a nation. As Villari states at the beginning of the essay:

Accogliendo al suo interno un popolo percepito come altro per razza e cultura eppure abitante dello stesso territorio, l'immaginario romanzesco trattò lo spazio come metafora (o moderna allegoria) dello spazio nazionale.²⁸⁶

In Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Jews are forced into exile because they have no role and do not participate in the creation of the new world established by the fusion of the Saxons and Normans. In Dickens, Fagin the Jew is totally assimilated into the life of the big city and completely loses his origins and his religion - as the scholar points out when Fagin appears for the first time, he is cooking pork sausages, forbidden to the Jewish people. Trollope's idea and his representation of Jewish characters follow in Dickens's footsteps. The Jewish character Augustus Melmotte is also merged into the cosmopolitan reality. He is, however, an aristocrat who identifies himself more as an English gentleman than as a holder of Jewish culture. In Disraeli's production, on the other hand, the Jews dream of actively participating in creating the idea of the British nation. They want to carve out their place of honor in English culture and society. The above-mentioned perspectives completely changed in the novel *Daniel Deronda* (1876) by George Eliot. Indeed:

[Daniel Deronda] volge le spalle a Gwendolen [and goes] a ricostituire una identità ebraica fuori dall'Inghilterra. George Eliot sottrasse gli ebrei alla loro funzione romanzesca di specchio interno all'identità nazionale inglese.²⁸⁷

To sum up the main points of Villari's essay, it is worth quoting part of her conclusion directly:

Con *Daniel Deronda* si conclude così la parabola ottocentesca dei personaggi ebrei. Sembrava che il romanzo inglese fosse destinato a non conoscerne altri - in partenza - come Rebecca, da quando il composito spazio nazionale scottiano era stato sostituito dallo spazio uniformante della grande città. L'idea stessa di nazione, di cui Scott aveva raccontato la formazione, le necessarie tappe e gli inevitabili costi attraverso la storia delle tre razze in *Ivanhoe*, era apparsa minacciata, nei romanzi di Dickens e di Trollope, dallo spazio uniformante della città dominato da Fagin e dal cosmopolitismo

²⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 98. Translation: Including a people perceived as other by race and culture yet inhabiting the same territory, the fictional imagination treated space as a metaphor - or modern allegory - of national space.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 124. (The words in brackets are mine). Translation: [Daniel Deronda] turns his back on Gwendolen [and goes] to reconstitute a Jewish identity outside England. [Thus] George Eliot removed the Jews from their fictional function of internal mirror to the English national identity.

finanziario di Melmotte. Ma con gli ebrei di George Eliot, che cominciarono a sognare di un'altra nazione, lo spazio del romanzo si riaprì attraverso il loro immaginario di non assimilati.²⁸⁸

Rebecca and her father Isaac go into exile since they, as Villari affirms, cannot participate in creating the English race. This third race, Jewish people, is not calculated in Scott's idea for the constitution of Great Britain, which is instead only the result of the fusion between the Saxons and Normans. This is evidenced in the plot by the choice of making *Ivanhoe* marry Rowena instead of Rebecca. In order to remain faithful to the idea of verisimilitude, Scott makes this decision because he is aware that, in twelfth-century England, it was impossible to think of a union with a Jew. At the same time, as reported by Villari, it is interesting that Rebecca does not identify herself an English citizen and she is aware that a future in that land is not desirable for her:

The people of England are a fierce race, quarrelling ever with their neighbours or among themselves, and ready to plunge the sword into the bowels of each other. Such is no safe abode for the children of my people. [...] Not in a land of war and blood, surrounded by hostile neighbours, and distracted by internal factions, can Israel hope to rest during her wanderings.²⁸⁹

In addition to Scott's desire to remain faithful to twelfth-century England, there is another fundamental reason behind the choice to exile the two Jewish characters. Villari, in fact, argues that the basis of Scott's idea was the conception according to which a nation is created when two or more races merge together. Sometimes, it could happen that one race is canceled within

²⁸⁸ Ibidem. Translation: This is how the nineteenth-century parable of the Jewish characters ends with *Daniel Deronda*. It seemed that the English novel was destined not to know others – from the start – like Rebecca, since Scott's composite national space had been replaced by the uniforming space of the great city. The very idea of nation, whose formation, the necessary stages, and the inevitable costs through the history of the three races in *Ivanhoe* had been told by Scott, had appeared threatened, in the novels of Dickens and Trollope, by the uniforming space of the city dominated by Fagin and Melmotte's financial cosmopolitanism. But with George Eliot's Jews, who began to dream of another nation, the space of the novel reopened through their imaginary of non-assimilated.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 101. quotation taken from Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe* (London: Penguin, 1986), p. 516.

this fusion. Other times an ethnical minority could be excluded by this process through, for example, exile.²⁹⁰

The last article is Chiara Ercolani's 'Da Walter Scott agli studi storici postmoderni. *Waverley*', which appeared in the magazine *Il Lettore di Provincia* in 1998. Interestingly, it links Scott's production to post-modernist literature, suggesting new perspectives to interpret the novel *Waverley* (1814), and provides an analysis according to the canons of Post-modernism. Post-modernist literature flourished in the 1960s in America and was later theorised by scholars such as Linda Hutcheon,²⁹¹ Brian McHale,²⁹² Patricia Waugh,²⁹³ and later by Mark Currie²⁹⁴ – to name but a few. In Italy, one of the most important post-modernist writers was Umberto Eco – as seen in Part one of this dissertation. He inaugurated the post-modernist historical novel with his masterpiece *The Name of the Rose* (1980), merging elements of the nineteenth-century historical novel with post-modernist literary techniques – such as irony, self-reference, subjectivity of history and metatextual devices.

In this article, Ercolani reasons about the definition of historical novel and takes up the thesis already expressed by Villari in 'Narrativa, storia e costume: Walter Scott' (1996), according to which Scott took up 'la formula del *romance* – which in the eighteenth century was associated with the idea of the fantastic and improbable – per sostituirla al *novel*'.²⁹⁵

One of Scott's main innovations was to modify the eighteenth-century concept of 'romance' by making it adhere to the idea of narrating the origin of history. The scholar here quotes part of the *Essay on Romance* written by Scott for the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and published in 1834, where Scott states that 'romance and real history have the same and common origin'²⁹⁶. For Scott, 'romance' was used by primitive peoples to recount history and preserve traditions. They used legends, sagas, and myths to transmit their cultural heritage, knowledge, history, and tradition. These, through combining real events with fantastic elements and mythological characters, 'erano in grado di soddisfare il desiderio e la necessità di verità'.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁰ Cfr. *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

²⁹¹ For example: Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (London-New York: Routledge, 1988) and Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London-New York: Routledge, 1989).

²⁹² Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London-New York: Routledge, 1987).

²⁹³ Patricia Waugh, *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (London-New York: Routledge, 1984).

²⁹⁴ Mark Currie, *Postmodern Narrative Theory* (New York: MacMillan, 1998).

²⁹⁵ Ercolani, p. 61. Translation: the *romance* formula to replace it with that of the *novel*.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 62. Quotation taken from Walter Scott, *Essay on Romance*, in *Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.*, ed. by John Gibson Lockhart, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1834-1836), I, pp. 127-216.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 62. Translation: they were able to satisfy the desire and need for truth.

Scott then took up the same formula to describe a certain period of history by blending and minimising the distance separating real events from fantastic creation. In fact, in Scott's work, 'sia la storia che la finzione contribuiscono alla creazione di una vivida immagine del passato'.²⁹⁸

Ercolani uses this premise on Scott's relationship with 'romance' and 'novel' to introduce the link with post-modernist literature. According to this cultural movement of the second half of the 1900s, historical reality and fiction exhaust their differences, especially in literature. If at the birth of the historical novel the main controversy was around the use and union of history and fiction in literary works - which many critics considered inappropriate – for post-modernists there is no longer any clear distinction between these two worlds, between the real and the fantastic. This is because history is always subjective since it is narrated by someone who filters historical events according to their own experience and ideology. Here Ercolani quotes one of the most authoritative critics of post-modernist literature: Linda Hutcheon. In her pioneering work *The Politics of Postmodernism* (1989), she reports that:

Postmodern fiction shows the impossibility to know the past as an objective entity, because it can't be represented neutrally; on the contrary, it is a subjective representation.²⁹⁹

Hutcheon calls this fusion between historical reality and fiction 'historiographic metafiction':

Historiographic metafiction refutes the natural or common-sense methods of distinguishing between historical fact and fiction. It refuses the view that only history has a truth claim, both by questioning the ground of that claim in historiography and by asserting that both history and fiction are discourses, human constructs, signifying systems and both derive their major claim to truth from that identity.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 63. Translation: both history and fiction contribute to the creation of a vivid image of the past.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 64. Quotation taken from Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism*, p. 57.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p.63. Quotation taken from Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism*, p. 43.

According to this definition, Scott's novels can be seen as precursors of post-modernist literature, since they, as mentioned before, narrow the boundary between history and fiction, starting from the 'romance' formula and arriving at the new sub-genre of historical novel. Ercolani then gives the example of the novel *Waverley* as containing various elements attributable to post-modernism. For example, one of the devices used by Scott to make his narration vivid and plausible is to give voice to the histories of the witnesses, to those who have seen and experienced a certain era:

Essi offrono un racconto e una messa in scena diretta di ciò che è successo. La realtà storica, quindi, narrata attraverso molteplici racconti di testimoni con i loro peculiari e differenti punti di vista.³⁰¹

Thanks to the different points of view, the reader is able to evaluate by himself the events and facts that occurred by listening to various testimonies. As anticipated in the writings of Villari – especially in 'Narrativa, storia e costume: Walter Scott' – readers become autonomous and decide for themselves which side to take.

2.4.3 Translations and Editions

Symptomatic of Scott's recent revival was the publication of *Cavalleria*³⁰² by Enrica Villari in 1991. This was the first Italian translation of Scott's *Essay on Chivalry*, first published in 1818. It was meant to be part of what should have been a more extended project entitled *The Modern Age*, which remained unfinished due to the publisher's untimely death. Reasoning on the project's title one could wonder: why should Walter Scott's *Essay on Chivalry* be included in a series dedicated to the modern age? As it is possible to read in Scott's essay, he believed that at the basis of our modern social behaviours, there were all those rules of good conduct inherited from the age of chivalry: treating women well, respecting others, and being a true gentleman – to quote but a few.

³⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 71-72. Translation: They offer a narrative and direct staging of what happened. Therefore, the historical reality is narrated through multiple stories of witnesses with their peculiar and different points of view.

³⁰² Scott, *Cavalleria*, 1991.

As Villari explains in the introduction to the work, Scott wrote *Essay on Chivalry* even before finishing his first novel *Waverley*. The essay had been commissioned to him by his publisher Archibald Constable who had purchased some rights of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, in 1812. Constable asked Scott to contribute with three entries for the *Encyclopedia*. These entries would be the *Essay on Romance, on Drama, and on Chivalry*, and would be published together in 1824.³⁰³

The essay begins by retracing the beginnings of chivalry at the time of Tacitus' *Germania* (written around 98 AD) and ends with a long discourse about what the modern world has inherited from it. To summarise the content and underline the importance of the 'Essay on Chivalry', it is worth quoting the synopsis of the book - which appears on the back cover of the volume:

Cavalleria ha una duplice importanza: chiarisce il pensiero di Scott sul romanzo storico, sul senso della storia e sul Medioevo, ma è anche un'ampia ricostruzione della decadenza del mondo feudale e aristocratico che si arresta alle soglie della contemporaneità.³⁰⁴

Villari's translation was not particularly successful since no reviews appeared in Italian literary magazines. Furthermore, no other edition of *Cavalleria* has been published, and this is also symptomatic of its limited resonance. Apart from the lack of success, it can be said that the scholar's work constitutes a valid contribution to Scott's Italian scholarship. Indeed, the translation is faithful to Scott's original text, and Villari's introduction illuminates the main points expressed by Scott regarding the relationship between chivalry and modern times.

Regarding the number of Scott's works published in the 1990s, it is possible to count, in the Italian National Library's Catalogue, thirty-two different editions. From 1990 to 1999, *Ivanhoe* appeared twenty-two times, generally in the form of the original novel. The only few exceptions, which are abridgements for children, are, for instance, the editions published by Fabbri and Mursia in 1991 – they will see different re-printings throughout the decade. In addition to *Ivanhoe*, another novel that seemed to have gained a little more popularity in this

³⁰³ Cfr. Ibid., 'Introduction', pp. VII-VIII.

³⁰⁴ Translation: *Cavalleria* has a double importance: it clarifies Scott's thinking on the historical novel, the meaning of history and the Middle Ages, but it is also a broad reconstruction of the decadence of the feudal and aristocratic world, which stop on the threshold of contemporaneity.

period was *Rob Roy*. Indeed, the novel was published three times, also as an illustrated edition for children in 1991, by De Agostini publisher. The interest in *Rob Roy* is probably linked to the dubbing into Italian of the film *Rob Roy* – the original American version appeared in 1991. Another interesting work of Scott's published in these years is *Demoni e streghe (Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft)*. *Demoni e streghe* is the first Italian edition of the study on the supernatural Scott wrote in 1830. This Italian edition was prefaced by Emilio Tadini, an influential scholar who specialises in English literature. It was translated by Annalisa Merlino and published by Donzelli publishing house in Rome. The study is a collection of ten letters on supernatural, folklore, traditions, and constitutes a mixture between a prose work and Gothic fiction. It is not clear why the publisher decided to translate and publish this piece in the 1990s, but it is certain that this edition represents a further enrichment in Scott scholarship and knowledge in Italy. Finally, as we can see from the list below, the short story 'Il racconto dello specchio misterioso' (*My Aunt Margaret's Mirror*) obtained little more success, seeing two editions, in 1991 and 1994. It is another Gothic story published in the collection of *The Keepsake Stories* Scott wrote in 1828. The two works of Scott on the Gothic could be interpreted as a renewed interest in the sub-genre, but to be able to ensure this thesis further research needs to be carried out.

2.5 Walter Scott in the New Millennium

As for Scott's Italian reception in the 1990s, the new critical currents in vogue at the end of the twentieth century and the studies published internationally on Scott have influenced the Italian critical production, which appears rich and varied even in the new millennium. In recent years, hermeneutical, biographical, and psychoanalytic theories were flanked by new critical currents such as Reception, Feminist, Post-colonial, and Cultural Studies. Certainly, these critical approaches have affected Scott's Italian reception, since, in addition to looking at the biography of the author and the study of his texts, they rekindled interest in socio-cultural contexts, and in ethnic, gender, and religious minorities described in Scott's novels.

Cultural Studies were born in Great Britain in the late 1950s thanks to the theories developed by Raymond Williams³⁰⁵ (*Culture and Society*, 1958) and Richard Hoggart³⁰⁶ (*The Uses of Literacy*, 1957). They initially arose as an extension of Marxist criticism and its interest in the evolution of the working class and low culture. Subsequently, this ‘popular’ connotation was lost due to the landing of these theories in the United States, where Cultural Studies began to focus on any kind of minority issues, including gender, race, and even disabilities (Disability Studies).³⁰⁷ In Italy, they became popular starting from the first years of the 2000s thanks to publications such as *Dizionario degli studi culturali*³⁰⁸ (*Cultural Studies Dictionary*), 2004, by Michele Cometa, *Studi Culturali. Temi e prospettive a confronto*³⁰⁹ (*Cultural Studies. A Comparison of Themes and Perspectives*), 2007, by Cristina Demaria and Siri Neergard, and later Luca Salmieri’s *Studi culturali e scienze sociali: fatti, testi e contesti*³¹⁰ (*Cultural Studies and Social Sciences: Facts, Texts and Contexts*), 2017. The main characteristic of Cultural Studies is to mix anthropology, psychoanalysis, and ethnography with the study of literature. Indeed, these studies support the idea that ‘non è più possibile ragionare all’interno di una sola cultura, senza considerare i rapporti con l’esterno e gli apporti delle minoranze interne’.³¹¹ They consider the relationships between authors, their work, and the outside world, focusing on cultural, ethnic, and gender minorities. At the end of the twentieth century, this critical approach became particularly popular, driven by the new phenomena of globalisation and the greater attention paid to Post-colonial studies.

Before looking at the Italian context, it is important to consider the international publications on Scott that influenced his recent Italian reception. These studies offered different contemporary approaches to studying Scott’s *oeuvre*. For example, they looked at his life and works through psychoanalytic, biographical, post-modernist, and new historicist perspectives.

³⁰⁵ Raymond Williams (1921-1988) was a Welsh Socialist writer, academic, and critic. His work deeply influenced the foundation of Cultural Studies. His publications include *Reading and Criticism* (1950), *Culture and Society* (1958), and *Marxism and Literature* (1977).

³⁰⁶ Richard Hoggart (1918-2014), was an English academic. He mostly dedicated his work to the studying of literature and Cultural Studies. His publications include *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working Class Life* (1957), *Contemporary Cultural Studies: An Approach to the Study of Literature and Society* (1969), and *Only Connect: On Culture and Communication* (1972).

³⁰⁷ Cfr. Muzzioli, 2021.

³⁰⁸ Michele Cometa, *Dizionario degli studi culturali*, ed. da Roberta Coglitore e Federica Mazzara (Milano: Booklet, 2004).

³⁰⁹ Cristina Demaria e Siri Neergard, *Studi Culturali. Temi e prospettive a confronto* (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2007).

³¹⁰ Luca Salmieri, *Studi culturali e scienze sociali: fatti, testi e contesti* (Roma: Carrocci, 2017).

³¹¹ Muzzioli, 2021, p.242. Translation: it is no longer possible to reason within a single culture, without considering the relations with the outside world and the contributions of internal minorities.

The list of most recent and important contributions include: Catherine Jones' *Literary Memory: Scott's Waverley Novels and the Psychology of Narrative*³¹² (2003); Caroline McCracken-Flesher's *Possible Scotland: Walter Scott and the Story of Tomorrow*³¹³ (2005); Julia Meldon D'Arcy's *Subversive Scott: The Waverley Novels and Scottish Nationalism*³¹⁴ (2005); Andrew Lincoln's *Walter Scott and Modernity*³¹⁵ (2007), and the very recent Evan Gottlieb's *Walter Scott and Contemporary Theory*³¹⁶ (2013).

The increased interest in Reception Studies and Comparative Literature deeply influenced the Italian and international production on Scott. Internationally, the manuals by Annika Bautz, *The Reception of Jane Austen and Walter Scott: A Comparative Longitudinal Study*³¹⁷ (2007) and Murray Pittock's *The Reception of Sir Walter Scott in Europe* (2007), represented a landmark in Scott's scholarship, providing a detailed analysis of his English and European reception. On the one hand, the first volume focuses on the reception of Scott's novels in the early nineteenth century in Great Britain, comparing the immediate and enormous success of his works to the initial poor fortunes of Jane Austen's novels. On the other hand, the second volume offers a complete overview of Scott's reception in Europe, highlighting how his historical novel influenced the evolution of all European literature. In Italy, the interest in Scott's reception is visible in recent contributions already quoted in the introduction to this thesis (see 'Introduction').

As said before, Comparative Literature deeply affected the Italian approach to Scott in the new millennium. Even if the study of Scott's work in relation to Italian historical novelists has always been popular, it is possible to see a multiplication of comparative studies published from the year 2000 onwards. It is sufficient to look at some titles to understand the importance of the comparative approach: Enrico Valseriati's 'Al cospetto del diavolo zoppo: Camillo Ugoni, Giuseppe Nicolini e Walter Scott' (*In the Presence of the Lame Devil: Camillo Ugoni, Giuseppe Nicolini, and Walter Scott*), 2011; Matteo Sarni's monograph *Il segno e la cornice. I promessi sposi alla luce dei romanzi di Walter Scott, (The Sign and the Frame. The Betrothed*

³¹² Catherine Jones, *Literary Memory: Scott's Waverley Novels and the Psychology of Narrative* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2003).

³¹³ Caroline McCracken-Flesher, *Possible Scotland: Walter Scott and the Story of Tomorrow* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

³¹⁴ Julia Meldon D'Arcy, *Subversive Scott: The Waverley Novels and Scottish Nationalism* (Reykjavik: University of Iceland Press, 2005).

³¹⁵ Andrew Lincoln, *Walter Scott and Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

³¹⁶ Evan Gottlieb, *Walter Scott and Contemporary Theory* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).

³¹⁷ Annika Bautz, *The Reception of Jane Austen and Walter Scott: A Comparative Longitudinal Study*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2007).

in the Light of Walter Scott's Novels) 2013; again, Matteo Sarni's 'Affinità simboliche fra Manzoni e Scott' (*Symbolic Affinities between Manzoni and Scott*) 2015; Riccardo Campa's 'La figura del badaud nel romanzo storico dell'Ottocento: Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, Alessandro Manzoni' (*The Figure of the Badaud in the Nineteenth-century Historical Novel: Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, Alessandro Manzoni*) 2017, and Simone Signaroli's 'Quando nasce una storia. Omero, Cervantes, Walter Scott' (*When a Story is Born. Homer, Cervantes, Walter Scott*), 2021.

Since Italian critical studies on Scott published in the 2000s are numerous and varied, the aim of this chapter is to consider the ones that differed from previous production the most. For the complete list of Italian critical pieces on Scott, it is possible to look at the timeline at the end of this dissertation. This section will then analyse two monographs: Michela Mancini's *Immaginando Ivanhoe: romanzi illustrati, balli e opere dell'Ottocento italiano* and Matteo Sarni's *Il segno e la cornice. I promessi sposi alla luce dei romanzi di Walter Scott*. It will also look at articles, essays, and book chapters such as Carla Sassi's 'La storia che non c'è: *Redgauntlet* di Sir Walter Scott' (*History that Doesn't Exist: Sir Walter Scott's Redgauntlet*), 2002, Enrica Villari's 'La storia mi salvò la mente dalla completa dissipazione. Scott, Tolstoj, Hardy e la terapia della storia' (*History Saved my Mind from Complete Dissipation. Scott, Tolstoy, Hardy, and the Therapy of History*), 2008, Erminia Irace and Gabriele Pedullà's 'Walter Scott in Italia e il romanzo storico' (*Walter Scott in Italy and the Historical Novel*), 2012, and Riccardo Campa's 'La figura del badaud nel romanzo storico dell'Ottocento: Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, Alessandro Manzoni', 2017. Even if it is not discussed in this section, the article 'Sir Walter Scott and the Caribbean: Unravelling the Silences'³¹⁸ (2017), by Carla Sassi, represents the only recent Italian example of Post-colonial studies applied to the analysis of Scott's work.

2.5.1 Monographs

The first monograph on Scott published in the 2000s is Michela Mancini's *Immaginando Ivanhoe: romanzi illustrati, balli e opere dell'Ottocento italiano*³¹⁹ (2007). This study fits

³¹⁸ Carla Sassi, 'Sir Walter Scott and the Caribbean: Unravelling the Silences', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 47 (2017), 224-40-

³¹⁹ Michela Mancini, *Immaginando Ivanhoe: romanzi illustrati, balli e opere dell'Ottocento italiano* (Milano: Mondadori, 2007).

perfectly into the context of Reception Studies as it traces the Italian reception of *Ivanhoe* in the nineteenth century. The study highlights how Romantic ideals, linked to the formation of national identities, spread through Scott's historical medieval novel and its transposition into other media.³²⁰

In the first pages, Mancini briefly reports the history of the reception of *Ivanhoe* in Italy. The novel was first translated into Italian by Gaetano Barbieri in 1822 and, from this moment onwards, it enjoyed immediate success. The praise it obtained was so great that it is still considered the first bestseller in Italy. Mancini then identifies some of the elements that contributed to its fortunes. Firstly, the novel followed the medieval revival in vogue during the nineteenth century both in Europe and in Italy. This revival, promoted especially by new Gothic architecture and fiction, soon affected every field of the arts, including the historical novel. Through the depiction of the past, and specifically through the history of the Saxons and Normans, Scott was able to address important topics related to the formation of national identities. Indeed, dear to the public was not only the fascination for the medieval world, but also the whole series of nationalistic values connected to the formation of the English people:

Dalle prime pagine del romanzo era manifesta l'indignazione per l'oppressione, la tirannia e le vessazioni dei nobili francesi nei confronti dei Sassoni. L'esaltazione dell'indipendenza e il tema di una lingua straniera imposta erano elementi dal forte impatto emotivo e consentivano varie forme di partecipazione per i lettori.³²¹

Secondly, the stories of the disinherited knight who returns from the Crusades and fights for the oppressed, and of the virtuous but unfortunate Jewess Rebecca, fascinated a great number of readers. On the one hand, Wilfred of Ivanhoe perfectly embodies the chivalric ideals of being on the side of the oppressed crushed by the invasion and settlement of the Normans. On the other hand, the beautiful Jewess Rebecca, gifted with every virtue but unlucky in love, represents the tragic-romantic love story. Although she loves Ivanhoe, the young woman is left alone and forced into exile in Spain with her father. Ivanhoe in fact marries Rowena, a choice repeatedly claimed by Scott as more likely according to the mentality of the time.

³²⁰ In particular, illustrations, historical paintings, melodramas, and ballets.

³²¹ Mancini, p. 9. Translation: From the first pages of the novel, the indignation at the oppression, tyranny and harassment of the French nobles against the Saxons was evident. The exaltation of independence and the theme of an imposed foreign language were elements with a strong emotional impact and allowed various forms of participation for readers.

Contrary to the main story of *Ivanhoe* who returns from the Crusades and fights in favour of Richard the Lionheart, Rebecca's fate always changes according to the media through which it is narrated. As Mancini posits:

Nel romanzo Rebecca resta sola, in un'opera burlesca sposa Ivanhoe, nel balletto tragico-romantico muore di crepacuore. Le illustrazioni la ritraggono mentre tenta di gettarsi nel vuoto, i quadri della pittura storica rappresentano il suo rapimento e il processo in cui viene condannata al rogo.³²²

Rebecca thus becomes an iconic character and her story almost ends up moving away from the novel itself to become a separate narrative. *Ivanhoe*'s heroine was so popular that she appeared as the favourite subject of portraits and ballets.

After describing the reception of the novel *Ivanhoe* and highlighting the elements responsible for its fame, Mancini enters the heart of her research by discussing other artistic media that have contributed to *Ivanhoe*'s diffusion in Italy. *Ivanhoe*'s popularity was not due only to the novel, since the story also circulated through other artistic channels such as theater – melodramas, operas, ballets, and music – painting, and illustrations.

As Mancini reports, one of the most important vehicles through which *Ivanhoe* reached popularity in Europe and Italy was opera. In 1826 *Ivanhoe* was performed at the Odéon-Théâtre de l' Europe in Paris, with the music composed by Gioachino Rossini and the libretto written by Émile Deschamps and Gabriel-Gustave. The opera presented significant changes compared to the novel. Among these were the reductions in the number of characters – Rowena was excluded – and some name changes – Rebecca became Léila and her father Isaac, Ismaél. The opera consisted of three acts and twenty-five scenes. It opened with the return of Ivanhoe to Cedric's castle and ended with an outdoor scene with a burning castle in the background. After the performance in Paris, *Ivanhoe* arrived in Italian theaters, obtaining immediate praise. In 1832 it was performed at the Teatro della Fenice in Venice and later in 1834 at the Teatro alla Scala of Milan. The music for these performances was composed by Giovanni Pacini, while the libretto was written by Gaetano Rossi. In addition to theatrical performances, *Ivanhoe*

³²² Mancini, p. 3. Translation: In the novel Rebecca is left alone, in a burlesque opera she marries Ivanhoe, in the tragic-romantic ballet she dies of a broken heart. Several illustrations depict her as she attempts to throw herself into the void, historical paintings depict her kidnapping and the process in which she is sentenced to be burned at the stake.

circulated in Italy in the form of booklets published by specialised publishing houses such as Ricordi di Milano.³²³

Another artistic channel through which *Ivanhoe* circulated in Italy was illustrations. The most famous ones were Hayez's, published between 1828-1831 under the name *Soggetti tratti dall'Ivanhoe, romanzo storico di Walter Scott composti e disegnati da Hayez* (*Subjects Taken from Ivanhoe, Walter Scott's Historical Novel, Composed and Drawn by Hayez*). Francesco Hayez (1791-1882) was a famous Italian painter who produced several lithographs based on Scott's novels. As Mancini reports:

Le vicende di *Ivanhoe*, pubblicato nel 1822 dall'editore Vincenzo Ferrario, sarebbero state conosciute anche attraverso le tavole del pittore Francesco Hayez, pubblicate dall'editore milanese Vassalli. La strategia editoriale del romanzo era parallela alla diffusione della pittura storica di cui uno dei rappresentanti era Hayez. A questa come al romanzo, si affidava il compito della fondazione del carattere popolare-nazionale del nascente stato italiano.³²⁴

Hayez's *Soggetti tratti dall'Ivanhoe* represented a break with the Neoclassical tradition, in vogue until the mid-nineteenth century. Hayez was indeed one of the most important interpreters of romantic-historical painting, which conveyed the romantic ideals already expressed in literature. Unlike Scott's novel, Hayez's lithographs emphasised Rebecca's unfortunate and unrequited love for Ivanhoe and her persecution by the Templar. The heroine was often represented in action scenes to emphasise her strong and virtuous character. After Hayez's *Soggetti*, several illustrated editions appeared in Italy. Among these illustrated versions, Mancini quotes the editions published by Simonetti Brothers in 1869, in the series of the *Biblioteca romantica illustrata* (*Illustrated Romantic Library*); the edition of Borroni and Scotti sold at the Milanese Reina bookshop in 1840, and the edition with one hundred and fifty-two drawings by Frédéric Théodore Lix, Adrien Marie, Edoard Riou published by Treves in 1890.³²⁵

Rebecca was also the favourite subject of ballets. For example, in October 1842, the ballet *Rebecca. Ballo eroico tragico* (*Rebecca. A Tragic-Eroic Ballet*) was performed at the

³²³ Cfr. Ibid., pp. 23-28.

³²⁴ Ibid., p. 38.

³²⁵ Cfr. Ibidem.

theatre in Modena. Subsequently, in 1845, the ballet *Rebecca ballo romantico in sei parti. Tratto dal romanzo l'Ivanhoe di Walter Scott ed espressamente composto dal coreografo signore Emanuele Viotti (Rebecca, Romantic Ballet in Six Parts. Based on Walter Scott's Novel Ivanhoe and Explicitly Composed by the Choreographer Emanuele Viotti)* was performed at La Fenice Theatre in Venice. In the same year, the same ballet was performed in Bologna, and again in 1865, at La Scala in Milan. As Mancini affirms:

Rebecca, personaggio attivo nel romanzo e agente dell'azione, si prestava bene a diventare la protagonista di un balletto con i suoi balzi verso le finestre, le sue fughe dal Templare e i suoi inseguimenti alla ricerca di Ivanhoe.³²⁶

In my opinion, Mancini's study is particularly fascinating since it is the first Italian contribution that deals with the reception of one of Scott's novels in particular. Indeed, since its first appearance in Italy, *Ivanhoe* established itself as a true bestseller and contributed to spreading romantic and nationalistic ideals in Italy and the rest of Europe. The study provides a precise analysis of the genres and channels that contributed to increasing its enormous success. In addition, *Ivanhoe* still remains Scott's most representative and well-known work in Italy. Although *Waverley* (1814) is the first modern historical novel, the contemporary Italian reader recognises Scott's name when associated with the medieval novel of *Ivanhoe*. It is sufficient to look at the number of *Ivanhoe*'s editions and translations that appeared from 1945 to the present day: there are one hundred and forty-four editions of *Ivanhoe* out of two hundred sixty-eight of Scott's works published in Italy. Quantitatively, *Ivanhoe* far surpasses Scott's other novels – some of which were no longer even translated into Italian. To conclude, I believe that Mancini's study constitutes an interesting starting point for the study of *Ivanhoe*'s reception in the new millenium. I will discuss the modern history of *Ivanhoe* in Italy in the case study of this thesis *The Never-Ending Popularity of Ivanhoe in Italy*.

The second monograph dedicated to Scott and published in the 2000s is Matteo Sarni's *Il segno e la cornice: I promessi sposi alla luce dei romanzi di Walter Scott*. Although Manzoni's and Scott's relationship was treated on several occasions over the years,³²⁷ this

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 68.

³²⁷ For example, critics such as A. Borgognoni, F. D' Ovidio, and G. Fenaroli. Their writings about Scott and Manzoni are mentioned in the section dedicated to Scott's reception in the 1970s when analysing Punzo's study.

contribution demonstrates that the comparative study of the two authors is still of interest in the academic world. Unlike previous studies, which aimed to identify Scott's direct influences on Manzoni's *I promessi sposi*, Sarni's research investigates the common origins behind Scott's and Manzoni's historical novels. He builds a comprehensive discourse on the driving forces that allowed the creation of Scott's and Manzoni's masterpieces. Subsequently, he analyses their stylistic, thematic, and narrative similarities in great detail.

In the introduction, Sarni points out that the two novelists adhered to the renewal of the human sciences typical of early Romanticism. For example, the new vision of history, or New Historiography, which saw human beings as actively involved in historical development, pushes the two authors to describe past events from the point of view of those who lived them. This concept of history experienced by the masses, was explored in detail by György Lukács in *The Historical Novel*. Sarni thus takes up the foundations of the modern historical novel theorised by Lukács, adding, however, some new relevant criticisms. For instance, he believes that Lukács 'misunderstood' the essence of Romanticism, seeing it only as a reactionary movement, and therefore a rupture, against the Enlightenment, and, at the same time, the result of great European revolutions. On the contrary, Scott and Manzoni, who were great interpreters of Romanticism, also brought with them the lessons left by the Enlightenment.³²⁸ In this regard Sarni reports two quotations, respectively by A. Fleishman and S.B. Chandler: 'Scott is a special kind of Romantic, in whom elements of Neoclassicism and the Enlightenment are equally strong'; 'The experience of the rationalism of the Enlightenment divides Manzoni from such a reading of history'.³²⁹

The monograph is then divided into four parts that discuss the common elements between the two authors. The first section analyses the concept of *imagination* expressed by Coleridge in *Biographia Literaria*,³³⁰ highlighting that both Scott and Manzoni took up this concept to create their novels. Sarni hypothesises that both writers have read this founding manifesto of English Romanticism, drawing inspiration from it.³³¹ Indeed, both writers believed that to penetrate the 'metaphysical truth' they must use imagination:

³²⁸ See also MacQueen, 1989.

³²⁹ Sarni specifies that this 'reading of history' means the providential vision of history.

³³⁰ *Biographia Literaria* is a critical autobiography written by S. T. Coleridge and published in 1817. It was a very influential work that inspired many Romantic writers. Together with *Preface to the Lyrical Ballads* - written by W. Wordsworth and published in 1801 - it was considered a Romantic manifesto.

³³¹ Scott was acquainted with Coleridge and therefore it is likely that he came into possession of *Biographia Literaria*. Manzoni, on the other hand, may have come into contact with the writing thanks to the mediation of his Anglist friend Ermes Visconti. Cfr. pp. 34-37.

Ricorrendo all'*immaginazione*, uno scrittore può penetrare la scorza fenomenica e assaporare una porzione del vero, a patto - però - di non abbandonarsi a fumisterie astratte e di tenere sempre presente la concretezza della realtà mondana.³³²

In this sense, imagination aims to comprehend the historical context of Scott's and Manzoni's stories. It is the vehicle through which it is possible to describe historical events from the point of view of their protagonists. At the same time, the two authors were aware that it was necessary to calibrate real facts and fiction in order not to stray too far from the idea of verisimilitude. For example, they use the manuscript found as the liable source of their stories, using it as a historical authority of the events they are narrating. Sarni had already dedicated an article on the concept of imagination for Coleridge, Scott, and Manzoni. The article published the year before this monograph is in fact titled 'L'immaginazione e il romanzo storico: Coleridge, Scott e Manzoni' (*Imagination and the Historical Novel: Coleridge, Scott, and Manzoni*).³³³

The second section discusses the roles of the fictitious characters who are also the narrator-spectators of the events narrated. Sarni points out that some characters become narrative voices in the story, albeit remaining an integral part of the action. In this sense, the distance between spectator and spectacle, between observer and observed, is thinned or canceled. An example is a scene in *Ivanhoe* in which Rebecca describes the battle between the Saxons and Normans she is observing through a loophole in the castle of Front-de-Boeuf. Her purpose is to report the events to Ivanhoe, who is bedridden due to a wound. She is looking at the battle from a distant point of view. However, she still risks being wounded by an arrow. Another example, taken from the *Promessi sposi*, is the scene in the first chapter in which Don Abbondio sees the appearance of the two betrothed, Renzo e Lucia, and is shocked by this vision. Sarni states that:

Don Abbondio assiste come a teatro allo spettacolo dell'improvvisa comparsa dei promessi sposi. La platea in cui si trova il curato, però, fa anche parte del

³³² Matteo Sarni, *Il segno e la cornice: I promessi sposi alla luce dei romanzi di Walter Scott* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2013), p. 33. Translation: Through the imagination, a writer can penetrate the phenomenal rind and savor a portion of the truth, provided – however – that he does not indulge in abstract fumes and always keeps in mind the concreteness of worldly reality.

³³³ Matteo Sarni, 'L'immaginazione e il romanzo storico: Coleridge, Scott e Manzoni', *Intersezioni*, 3 (2012), 387-404.

palcoscenico su cui si muovono Renzo e Lucia, tant'è vero lo spettatore interviene a modificare il copione della scena.³³⁴

These characters, who become narrating voices in the novel and, therefore, the 'double' of the authors, have the purpose of signaling:

Che la realtà narrata nel romanzo (e la realtà effettuale) non può essere contemplata da una sola specula superiore – che consenta di penetrarla interamente – neppure dall'autore di quello stesso romanzo, giacchè lo ricomprende inevitabilmente dalla propria cornice.³³⁵

The inclusion of several points of view and different narrating voices is functional to the more intimate narration of the story. It gives the impression of revisiting again some historical moments through the eyes of their protagonists and, at the same time, it provides various interpretations for the understanding of the story narrated.

The third section focuses on the use of language in both the *Waverley Novels* and *I promessi sposi*. Sarni points out that both authors believed that language is sometimes unable to express the totality about the surrounding reality. He includes some extracts from Scott's and Manzoni's texts to testify to this belief. Both authors express in different dialogues the impossibility of the characters to describe in words what they hear, see, and experience. The idea that reality itself is not completely accessible to man is linked to the role of language. For instance, in the novel *Waverley* Scott writes 'the following verses convey but little idea of the feelings with which, so sung and accompanied, they were heard by Waverley',³³⁶ in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, he also writes 'Non m'arrestero a descrivere, perchè superi ad ogni descrizione, i sentimenti di sdegno e di cordoglio che si straziavano a vicenda il cuore del sere

³³⁴ Sarni, p. 65. Translation: Don Abbondio observes as if in a theater the spectacle of the sudden appearance of the betrothed. The audience in which the curate is situated, however, is also part of the stage on which Renzo and Lucia move, so much so the spectator intervenes to modify the script of the scene.

³³⁵ Ibid., p. 66. Translation: That the reality narrated in the novel - and the actual reality - cannot be contemplated by an only superior *specula* - which allows it to be fully penetrated - not even by the author of that same novel, since it inevitably includes it from his own frame.

³³⁶ Sarni, p. 101. Quotation taken from Walter Scott, *Waverley*, ed. by Andrew Hook (London: Penguin Books, 1985), p. 171.

di Ravenswood nell'allontanarsi dal castello de' suoi antenati'.³³⁷ Manzoni in *I promessi sposi* writes 'mentre s'avviavano con quella commozione che non trova parole';³³⁸ he also writes 'il terrore di Gertrude, al rumore dei passi di lui non si può descrivere'.³³⁹ Language is the mirror of reality but at the same time it is not able to unlock all its meanings.

Since language is the mirror of reality, it can also be functional towards adding realism to the characters in the stories. For example, both Scott and Manzoni change the language register according to the characters who are speaking. On the one hand, in *I promessi sposi* the strong and audacious personality of fra' Cristoforo is evidenced by the language he uses, which is also impetuous and passionate³⁴⁰. On the other hand, in a scene from *Peveril of the Peak* (1822), Scott compares the wigs used by three notables and the three degrees of the adjective. Metatextual recourses and reasoning about language are thus akin to both writers.

The last section is dedicated to the theme of compassion present in the works of the two authors. Sarni sets the example of *Ivanhoe* who is a *Bildungsroman* characterised by the feeling of compassion. Indeed, Wilfred of Ivanhoe, the protagonist of the novel, is the only one among the characters who feels mercy towards the Jewish people. As the scholar points out, initially this mercy is not driven by pity and desire for equal sharing. Rather, it takes on a connotation of contempt. For example, Ivanhoe considers Rebecca an inferior being, unable to understand the chivalric values to which he has devoted his life.³⁴¹ Blinded by fame, he recognises no greater values than those of fighting for chivalric ideals. In the latter part of the novel, however, Ivanhoe appears more reflective. The events in the story he experienced, such as Rebecca's kidnapping, changed him profoundly, modifying his worldview:

Alla compassione sprezzante di un tempo si è sostituita l'autentica condivisione delle sofferenze altrui, all'orgoglio superomistico del guerriero la consapevolezza dell'uguaglianza universale.³⁴²

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 101. Quotation taken from Walter Scott, *The Bride of Lammermoor*. Translation: I will not stop describing, for it surpasses all description, the feelings of indignation and condolence which tore one another in the heart of Ravenswood evening as he left the castle of his ancestors.

³³⁸ Ibid., p. 102. Quotation taken from Alessandro Manzoni, *I promessi sposi*. Translation: while they set off with that emotion that finds no words.

³³⁹ Ibidem. Quotation taken from Alessandro Manzoni, *I promessi sposi*. Translation: Gertrude's terror at the sound of his footsteps cannot be described.

³⁴⁰ Fra' Cristoforo is one of the main characters of *I promessi sposi*.

³⁴¹ Sarni, pp. 119-122.

³⁴² Ibid., p. 124. Translation: The contemptuous compassion of the past has been replaced by the authentic sharing of the sufferings of others, the super-homistic pride of the warrior by the awareness of universal equality.

Rebecca's personality is also characterised by compassion. In fact, she decides to rescue Ivanhoe, injured during the Ashby tournament, and take care of him during their imprisonment in the castle of Front-de-Boeuf. As Sarni says, her mercy towards Ivanhoe recalls the Christian parable of the Good Samaritan. Compassionate characters are opposed by those who are without moral scruples. Here, Sarni quotes and describes the personalities of the Grand Master of the Knights-Templars Lucas Beaumanoir and of Reginald Front-de-Boeuf,³⁴³ who are the merciless characters of the novel.

There are also compassionate characters in *The Bride of Lammermoor*. An example is Lucy Ashton who, as Sarni recalls, remains excluded from the parental circle due to her compassionate temperament. As the scholar points out, through Lucy Ashton's compassion it is possible to understand that:

La vera *mercy* non può mai essere scompagnata dall'autentica spinta conoscitiva verso l'altro (e viceversa): se si compatisce una persona senza sforzarsi di comprenderla, la *pietas* risulta fasulla e infruttuosa, destando l'impressione che non si voglia alleviare la sofferenza altrui, ma solo tacitare ipocritamente la propria coscienza³⁴⁴.

Lucia's *pietas* contrasts with the fake *pietas* of her father, Lord Ashton, who feels a contemptuous compassion for his neighbors whom he considers inferior and more miserable than himself.³⁴⁵

Even in *I promessi sposi*, there are examples of compassionate characters. First, Sarni reports the dialogue between the *Innominato* and the *Nibbio*,³⁴⁶ who debate the meaning of compassion:

‘Voglio dire che tutto quel tempo, tutto quel tempo... M’ha fatto troppa compassione.’

³⁴³ Ibid., p. 126.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 131. Translation: true mercy can never be disjointed by the authentic will to know the others, and vice versa: if you pity a person without trying to understand them, the *pietas* turns out to be fake and fruitless, giving the impression that you do not want to alleviate the suffering of others, but only hypocritically silence your own conscience.

³⁴⁵ Ibidem.

³⁴⁶ L'Innominato (*the Unnamed*) is an outlaw nobleman indebted with Don Rodrigo. He kidnapped Lucia but, in the end, he is moved by her innocence and decides to protect her from Don Rodrigo. Nibbio is the Innominato's right-hand man. He is also chief of the Innominato's criminal gang called 'i bravi'.

‘Compassione! Che sai tu di compassione? Cos’è la compassione?’
 ‘Non l’ho mai capito così bene come questa volta: è una storia la compassione un poco come la paura: se uno la lascia prender possesso non è più uomo.’
 ‘Sentiamo un poco come ha fatto costei per muoverti a compassione.’
 ‘O signore illustrissimo! Tanto tempo...! piangere, pregare, e far cert’occhi, e diventar bianca bianca come morta, e poi singhiozzare, e pregare di nuovo, e certe parole...’³⁴⁷

Subsequently, Sarni lists a series of characters who are guided by disinterested and authentic compassion, including: the family of the tailor who welcomes Lucia in his home, the heroism of the Capuchin friars who tend to the sick in the hospital, the boatman who ferries the betrothed on the run, and finally the virtuous and compassionate Cardinal Federico Borromeo, who dedicated his life to helping the ones who suffer.

As can be seen from the summary and critical reading of this monograph, Sarni’s contribution represents an innovation in comparative studies on Scott and Manzoni. In addition to demonstrating, as mentioned above, the still lively interest in the study of two authors in comparison, the investigation conducted by Sarni does not aim at decreeing Manzoni’s dependence on Scott or even subordinating the work of one of the two writers. There are no evaluative judgments of Scott’s and Manzoni’s works, but the scholar’s great enthusiasm for both authors shines through. The research highlights the great narrative qualities of both Scott and Manzoni and emphasises the depth and complexity of both their works. The only discordant note in the volume is the redundancy of footnotes which, even if they highlight the great erudition of Sarni, risk breaking the harmonic rhythm while reading the text. Some are undoubtedly essential to explaining quotations and concepts. Others, perhaps, could have been reduced. The footnotes, indeed, occupy more than half of each page. As Federica Alziati posits in her review on Sarni’s monograph, which appeared in 2014 in the scientific journal *Testo*³⁴⁸,

³⁴⁷ Sarni, p. 136. Quotation taken from *I promessi sposi*. Translation: ‘I mean that all that time, all that time ... He made me feel compassion for them.’

‘Compassion! What do you know of compassion? What is compassion?’

‘I have never understood it, until this time: compassion is a story a little like fear: if one lets it take possession, he is no longer a man.’

‘Let’s hear a little how she did this to move you to compassion.’

‘O most illustrious sir! A long time...! weeping, praying, and making certain eyes, and turning white as dead, and then weep, and pray again, and certain words...’

³⁴⁸ Federica Alziati, ‘Matteo Sarni *Il segno e la cornice*’, recensione *Il segno e la cornice*, di Matteo Sarni, *Testo*, 35.67 (2014), 165-66.

it would have been more helpful to consider these notes as an apparatus on its own and use it to clarify some unclear concepts.

2.5.2 Articles, Essays, and Book Chapters

The first essay is Carla Sassi's 'La storia che non c'è: *Redgauntlet* di Sir Walter Scott'³⁴⁹ (2002). This contribution is an interesting piece in the history of Scott's Italian reception. It shows how new critical approaches, including Post-colonial, Neo-historical, and Post-modernist Studies, can be applied to the study of his works. In particular, the scholar highlights that at the basis of *Redgauntlet* lies the idea of 'relativisation of history',³⁵⁰ a Post-modernist concept that highlights the non-uniqueness of the interpretation of history.³⁵¹

The scholar begins her essay by acknowledging one of the fundamental characteristics of Scott's novels, the description of a significant historical moment in which a conflict is resolved, leading to a new phase of peace and change. For instance, we could consider *Ivanhoe*, in which the struggle between the Saxons and Normans leads to the birth of the English people, and *Waverley*, in which the 1745 Jacobite rebellion is quelled and a new era of modernity begins for both Scotland and England. However, the scholar suggests that in several of Scott's novels, as in *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*, there is always something that remains unsolved, latent, and ambiguous. In this respect, the most fascinating example is *Redgauntlet*, published in 1824. Together with *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*, this novel is part of the Scottish trilogy that tells of the Jacobite uprisings of 1715, 1745, and a hypothetical rising in 1765 – hypothetical because this Jacobite rebellion never really happened.

Redgauntlet concludes with a feeling of incomplete satisfaction in the mind of the reader as the events that occur do not reflect the expectations created throughout the story. From the beginning to the end of the novel, the reader is prepared to witness the final rebellion which, however, will never take place. Sassi analyses the elements that contribute to creating this sense of the unfinished and unsolved. She emphasises the idea that reality can be relative according

³⁴⁹ Carla Sassi, 'La storia che non c'è: *Redgauntlet* di Sir Walter Scott', in *Imagined Scotlands. Saggi sulla letteratura scozzese*, ed. da Carla Sassi e altri (Trieste: Parnaso, 2002), pp. 45-68.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 77.

³⁵¹ According to Post-modernism, history can never be told or reported - by historians or novelists - in an objective way because it is always filtered by the conscience, prejudice, and experience of the writer.

to one's interpretation. Furthermore, the story is narrated through several points of view, which also prove to be also unreliable:

Anche la lettura di questo romanzo è un'esperienza inquietante, dato che ci ritroviamo a cercare di comporre faticosamente un complesso puzzle, tentando di sdipanare il filo delle diverse voci narranti, tutte egualmente parziali, tutte inaffidabili e talora in aperta contraddizione l'una con l'altra.³⁵²

In fact, in *Redgauntlet*, history is not described as the natural and predictable succession of events or as a resolution of conflicts. It takes on, instead, a highly ambiguous and unpredictable connotation. Therefore, different voices narrate the story, and when the third-person narrator enters the story, he adds even more uncertainty to the plot. Because of this multitude of narrations, the expectations that the readers create are promptly denied. Sassi underlines Scott's non-casual choice of playing with reality and fiction by choosing an imaginary historical moment, a 'privileged space'³⁵³ in which Scotland at the end of the 1700s merges with the author's imagination. The scholar also outlines that because of these characteristics, many critics have defined *Redgauntlet* as a neo-historical novel.³⁵⁴

In *Redgauntlet*, the characters are linked to the relativisation of history. Unlike the protagonists of *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*, Edward Waverley and Frank Obaldistone, the main character of *Redgauntlet*, Darsie Latimer, does not have a clear idea of his identity and origin. The young Darsie is an orphan and does not remember anything of his father or his past. Raised by a tutor in Edinburgh, he discovers his true identity only after travelling on a long pilgrimage in the Solway region, which, as Sassi identifies, is located in an ambiguous area, difficult to define due to the constant changing of the tides and borders between Scotland and England.³⁵⁵ In the end, Darsie will understand that he is a pure Scotsman and that he is descended from the ancient lineage of the Redgauntlets. Sassi combines the analysis of the character of Darsie with that of the rational and objective Allan Fairford, who is a young lawyer from an upper middle-

³⁵² Ibid., p. 70. Translation: Even reading this novel is a disturbing experience, given that we find ourselves trying to painstakingly compose a complex puzzle, trying to unravel the thread of the different narrative voices, all equally partial, all unreliable and sometimes in open contradiction to each other.

³⁵³ Ibid., p. 84.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 84. Sassi quotes Rohan Maitzen, 'By No Means an Improbable Fiction: *Redgauntlet*'s Novel Historicism', *Studies in the Novel*, 25.2 (1993), 170-83 (p. 121).

³⁵⁵ Cfr. Ibid., p. 74.

class family, perfectly aware of his role and his identity. He follows an opposite path from that of Darsie. He departs to search for his missing friend, but the more he moves away from Edinburgh and enters into wild Scotland, the more he loses his certainties, his objectivity and his points of reference.³⁵⁶ Sassi identifies how ‘i viaggi-regressione’ (*regression journeys*) are common in Scott’s work. The protagonists, in fact, moving between various regions often travel back in time. For example, Edward Waverley, moving towards the North, finds himself in less modern Scotland. Even on a metaphorical level, Allan Fairford regresses by making the journey into wild Scotland, questioning what until then had been the certainties of his life.³⁵⁷

Other elements that create ambiguity in the story are the structure and the development of the plot. In *Redgauntlet*, the faithful narration of history is not that important as it describes a fictional moment. What is most important is the metanarrative discourse. As the scholar points out:

Di *Redgauntlet* è stato detto che è il romanzo scottiano dove la riflessione metanarrativa prevale di gran lunga sulla preoccupazione di rappresentare realisticamente la storia; l’elisione del referente storico sposta interamente l’attenzione sui metodi e dilemmi del romanziere.³⁵⁸

Sassi concludes her essay by stating that Scott anticipates the ideas expressed by Hayden White in the twentieth century (*Metahistory*,³⁵⁹ 1973). Scott believes that historical truth is always underlying in a text and therefore subject to its own limits and mechanisms. The reader who reads history in a text is led to believe it as truthful. In fact, the appeal of the historical novel, White suggests, lies precisely in the ability to create the illusion of a truthful and objective history.³⁶⁰

To sum up, Sassi’s essay proposes a modern analysis of Scott’s works and it gives new post-modernist and neo-historical interpretations. The paper is particularly fascinating as it

³⁵⁶ Cfr. Ibid., p. 76.

³⁵⁷ Cfr. Ibid., p. 75.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 77. Translation: It has been said of *Redgauntlet* that it is Scott’s novel where the metanarrative reflection far prevails over the concern to represent history realistically; the elision of the historical referent shifts the attention entirely to the novelist’s methods and dilemmas.

³⁵⁹ Hayden White, *Metahistory; The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

³⁶⁰ Cfr. Ibid., p. 78.

embraces several new critical currents of the 2000s and applies their approaches to the studying of one of Scott's novels.

The second contribution is Enrica Villari's 'La storia mi salvò la mente dalla completa dissipazione: Scott, Tolstoj, Hardy e la terapia della storia'³⁶¹ (2008). This article is fascinating as it overturns the concept expressed by Lukács, according to which the inclusion of history in the novel has facilitated the understanding of the surrounding world. By analysing the role of history and its relationship with Scott's, Tolstoy's and Hardy's protagonists, the scholar wants to discredit the idea that mixing history and real facts contributes to a better comprehension of the surrounding reality. To support this idea, she takes as an example three novels belonging to three crucial moments in the history of historical fiction. The first one is *Waverley* (1814) by Scott, the first modern historical novel. The second one is *War and Peace* (1863-69) by Tolstoy, the most famous historical novel of the nineteenth century. The third one is *The Trumpet-Major* by Thomas Hardy (1880), published at the end of the nineteenth century, when the crisis of the novel began.

Before exposing her argument, the scholar acknowledges Lukács' merit in having identified the continuity between Scott's historical novel and the great nineteenth-century realist novel. Indeed, the representation of history, the origins of which can already be found in the eighteenth century,³⁶² has led to even greater attention to the historical awareness of the complexity of the social universe. However, from Lukács' diagnosis, it arose the idea that:

Il romanzo ottocentesco trasse, come la storia, la sua energia narrativa dalla fiducia nella intelligibilità del mondo, e che la crisi del romanzo – iniziata con la fine del secolo decimonono - fosse corsa parallela alla crisi della fiducia ottocentesca in quella intelligibilità, e di conseguenza nella possibilità stessa di una grande narrazione come organica e logica concatenazione di molti fatti, circostanze ed eventi³⁶³.

³⁶¹ Enrica Villari, 'La storia mi salvò la mente dalla completa dissipazione. Scott, Tolstoj, Hardy e la terapia della storia', in *La storia del romanzo (1800-2000)*, ed. da M. Colummi Camerino (Roma: Bulzoni, 2008), pp. 39-54.

³⁶² As in the realist French and English novels or in gothic fiction. See Part I of this dissertation, chapter 1.1. 'The Historical Novel'.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 41. Translation: Like history, the nineteenth-century novel drew its narrative energy from the faith in the intelligibility of the world, and that the crisis of the novel - which began at the end of the nineteenth century – ran parallel to the crisis of nineteenth-century confidence in that intelligibility, and consequently in the very possibility of a great narrative as an organic and logical concatenation of many facts, circumstances and events.

On the contrary, Villari suggests that in the works of Scott, Tolstoy, and Hardy the characters do not understand nor control the forces that determine the chain of events. For example, Edward Waverley finds himself naively and unwittingly involved in the preparations for the Jacobite insurrection of 1745, believing it to be a hunting trip. The same ‘epistemologically weak position’³⁶⁴ of man in the face of history becomes a recurring motif throughout the novel *War and Peace*. In fact, Tolstoy writes in the novel about Napoleon’s invasion of Russia:

Gli storici, con ingenua sicurezza, dicono che le cause di questo fatto furono l’offesa recata al Duca di Oldenburgo, l’inosservanza del blocco continentale, l’ambizione di Napoleone, la fermezza di Alessandro, gli errori dei diplomati, ecc. ecc. [...] Tutto accadde per caso.³⁶⁵

Also, in Thomas Hardy’s *The Trumpet-Major*, what happens to the unfortunate protagonist is governed by chance and events he does not understand.

Villari also points out that Scott’s historical novels are based on an anti-heroic conception. In fact, although historical characters who really existed are included, the real protagonists of the novels are the so-called ‘average heroes’,³⁶⁶ who are also fictional characters. According to what the scholar states, this choice was to emphasise the belief that great historical events were not the product of the actions of individual men but rather were the result of a concatenation of events which could be lived mostly passively. Regarding this last statement, the scholar adds that even if the protagonists, average heroes, cannot interfere in the natural development of history, they want to take advantage and obtain glory and distinction by taking an active part in the most significant events - for example, battles, revolutions, and insurrections.³⁶⁷ As she outlines, this hope of becoming the architects of history is in reality only an ‘illusion of freedom and grandeur’.³⁶⁸ Lost illusions and unfulfilled hopes are the themes that also characterise the nineteenth-century realist novel. In this sense, the scholar

³⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 42.

³⁶⁵ Ibidem. Quotation taken from Leo Tolstoy, *Guerra e pace* (Torino: Einaudi, 1990), p. 707. Translation: Historians, with naive certainty, say that the causes of this fact were the offense against the Duke of Oldenburg, the non-observance of the continental blockade, the ambition of Napoleon, the steadfastness of Alexander, the errors of the diplomats, etc. etc. [...] It all happened by chance.

³⁶⁶ Cfr. Lukács, 1981.

³⁶⁷ Villari, p. 43.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 44.

identifies another relationship of continuity between the historical novel and the nineteenth-century realist novel.

After outlining some common and discordant traits between historical fiction and the nineteenth-century realist novel, Villari analyses the theme of war. The latter is present in historical novels as an experience that deeply changes the life and destiny of the protagonists. War is indeed the turning point in the growth of Edward Waverley, Nikoláj Rostòv, and Pier Bezuchov. Because of what they see and live in the battles - horrors, death, and desolation – they are transformed from heroes who think - and who live on illusions of grandeur – to heroes who feel.³⁶⁹

Villari concludes her article by stating that what the historical novel bequeathed to the nineteenth-century realist novel is not a better understanding of the world. It is, instead, the mechanism to explain large historical events from the points of view of minor characters, emphasising that behind the great events that marked the evolution of man there are all those common people who have experienced firsthand the creation of history. The scholar calls this ‘the fictional celebration of the great that is in the small’, or ‘the dislocation of the great into the small’:

Questa dislocazione del grande nel piccolo, che è la cifra segreta del movimento del romanzo storico, è anche l'unica grandezza, l'unica etica possibile nel mondo moderno. È questo il contributo del romanzo storico alla cultura del romanzo in generale.³⁷⁰

The third article to be included in the analysis of Scott's reception in the 2000s is Erminia Irace and Gabriele Pedullà's ‘Walter Scott in Italia e il romanzo storico’.³⁷¹ The article appeared in *Atlante della letteratura italiana (Atlas of Italian Literature)*, volume three, dedicated to Romanticism and published in 2012. This contribution fits perfectly into the context of Reception Studies as it deals with Scott's fortunes and misfortunes in Italy from the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, with a brief comment on more recent years. It is a short article that gives a general idea of Scott's Italian reception without going too deeply into it. Indeed, it

³⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 47.

³⁷⁰ Ibidem. Translation: This dislocation of the great into the small, which is the secret code of the historical novel, it is also the only greatness, the only ethics possible in the modern world. This is the contribution of the historical novel to the culture of the novel in general.

³⁷¹ Irace and Pedullà, pp. 47-50.

does not provide a complete framework for analysing Scott's critical reception, nor does it offer a quantitative analysis of Scott's translations. What is still quite compelling is that the article demonstrates the great interest in Reception Studies that arose in Italy in recent years and the will to reconstruct Scott's fortunes in Italy.

The article begins by tracing Scott's early reception from the first Italian translation of his novel *Kenilworth* (1821) to the mid-nineteenth century, when Scott began to lose his appeal among the public. It discusses the elements of his novels that first engendered public praise and contributed to making him one of the most famous writers of those years. The article also recognises the importance of Italian opera in spreading his works and prompting his fame in the nineteenth century. Then, it is stated that Scott's works suffered a period of little consideration and fame after their initial success. This decline in interest occurred in conjunction with the birth and development of the autochthonous Italian historical novels and, above all, after the great success achieved by Manzoni. The more the Italian historical sub-genre is established, the more Scott loses his charm among the readers.

To illustrate the progress of the fame of Scott's works, Irace and Pedullà provide an explanatory graph that illustrates the number of Scott's Italian translations from 1821 to 1920. The graph is divided into decades and clearly shows the waves of Scott's fortunes. Indeed, the number of his works decreases after the 1840s and then almost disappears in the early 1900s. Fascinating is also the second picture that illustrates the places of publication of Scott's works in Italy. The greatest number of Scott's works was published in northern Italy, especially in Milan, Turin, Parma, and Padua, a trend that will be confirmed also in the second half of the twentieth century.³⁷² Another important center for Scott's publications was Naples, where many pirated editions appeared as well. The period taken into consideration for this graph is also from 1821 to 1920.

The article closes with a concise analysis of Scott's reception in the second half of the twentieth century, demonstrating how his great influence almost disappeared in later years. The two scholars also cite Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* (1980), arguing that 'Neppure il successo internazionale di un narratore profondamente scottiano quale Umberto Eco ha risollevato le sorti italiane di Scott'.³⁷³ Indeed, they affirm that contemporary Italian historical narrators such as Vincenzo Consolo, Sebastiano Vassalli, Luigi Malerba, and Antonio Tabucchi

³⁷² To see this phenomenon, suffice is to look at the timeline of the editions of Scott's works at the end of this dissertation.

³⁷³ Ibid., p. 50. Translation: not even the international success of a profoundly Scottian narrator like Umberto Eco has really raised Scott's Italian fortunes.

are not affected by the influence of the Scottish author in the writing of their novels. This latter claim, however, is not entirely true. The aforementioned narrators do not refer directly to Scott nor mention his works, but in any case, being great names in the historical genre in Italy, they are transversely affected by the legacy left by Manzoni - and therefore by Scott. They also claimed that Umberto Eco was a 'real Scottian narrator' suggesting that he owed much to Scott and his works. Furthermore, while it is true that Scott's fortune declined in the second half of the 1900s in the academic field, the studies on the Scottish author multiplied especially after the publication of *The Leopard* (1958) and *The Name of the Rose* (1980). In addition, in recent years the editions of Scott have returned to being in vogue, especially from the big publishing houses such as Garzanti, Mondadori, and Newton Compton.

The last article is the very recent Riccardo Campa's 'La figura del *badaud* nel romanzo storico dell' Ottocento: Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, Alessandro Manzoni'³⁷⁴ (2017). The article is another example of a comparative study that puts in relation two or more authors, searching for a specific theme or element they have in common. In this case, what interests Campa is the figure of the *badaud* in the works of three representatives of English, French, and Italian literature. The *badaud* is a French term that describes a wandering citizen typical of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Parisian society. He is a curious spectator who runs to watch the riots in the city.

Campa recognises the strong political connotation of the *badaud*, as it is the product of a period of great historical and social changes. To link the importance of this figure to the historical novel sub-genre, Campa introduces the theoretical background into which his research is inserted. He quotes Lukács and reports the idea that the historical novel is profoundly political. Indeed, he supports the same idea that the historical novel is the product of the revolutions that deeply marked Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this period, the masses began to participate firsthand in the battles and revolutions, with increasing the awareness that people were an active part in making history, and the historical novel began as the vehicle through which new nationalistic, romantic, and enlightening ideas were spread.³⁷⁵ Campa affirms that the historical novel 'riconosce la funzione politica del popolo, della folla, della massa, alla quale cerca di dare un'identità'.³⁷⁶ Furthermore, most of the public could read

³⁷⁴ Riccardo Campa, 'La figura del *badaud* nel romanzo storico dell'Ottocento: Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, Alessandro Manzoni', in *Le badaud et le regardeur*, ed. by Jakub Kornhauser and Iwona Piechnik (Kraków: Biblioteka Jagiellońska, 2017).

³⁷⁵ Cfr. Lukács, 1981.

³⁷⁶ Campa. p. 29. Translation: recognises the political function of the people, of the crowd, of the mass, to which he tries to give an identity.

a historical novel, from the upper to the lower classes, since it was a simple form of narrative that did not demand too much education. From this premise, the author posits the question of his research. He wants to investigate the role of the *badaud* in the historical novel, the ‘passive’, curious, and wandering spectator who witnesses historical events and sometimes even takes part in them.³⁷⁷ Campa compares the political characterisation of the figure of the *badaud* in three different contexts and sees how Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, and Alessandro Manzoni used this figure in their historical novels.

After explaining the meaning of *badaud*, defined in the French dictionary as ‘tramps’ or ‘idlers’, or ‘slackers’, Campa gives a possible translation of the word into Italian and English. The scholar then begins his research by looking at two works of Scott, *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe*. In the two novels the figure of the *badaud* never appears. Instead, there are passive spectators whose fate is linked to the unfolding of events. In *Waverley*, for example, English sailors and Scottish peasants watch the battle between English troops and the Highlanders. They are not real ‘idlers’. They are everyday people who inhabit the north of Scotland and are involved in the Jacobite rebellions, albeit marginally. Even in *Ivanhoe* there are no *badauds* but still there are passive spectators. These are spotted, for example, during the Ashby tournament. These people are both members of the aristocracy and lower classes. Campa, therefore, concludes that in Scott’s two most famous novels there is no equivalent of the ‘Parisian vagabond’ defined as *badaud*. This result, however, is used by the scholar as a term of comparison for analysing the second author in question, Victor Hugo. If it is true that Scott influenced the European and especially French historical novel, Campa explains that it will be interesting to look for this figure in the works of one of the most famous of Scott’s heirs.³⁷⁸

Campa points out that in the work of Victor Hugo, *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831), it was easier to identify the word *badaud*, since it is a French word. In fact, the word appears four times, pronounced twice by the narrator and twice by one of the protagonists, Pierre Gringoire. However, the scholar identifies two different ways of addressing the *badauds* in the novel. On the one hand, the narrator speaks of them in fairly neutral terms, on the other Pierre Gringoire – thought of as Victor Hugo’s alter ego - shows contempt for this category.³⁷⁹

Unlike the works of Scott, in Alessandro Manzoni’s *I promessi sposi* the figure of the *badaud* appears several times. That is because the great part of the plot is set in the city of Milan and the term *badaud* specifically refers to a citizen wandering through the streets of the city -

³⁷⁷ Cfr. Ibidem.

³⁷⁸ Cfr. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

³⁷⁹ Cfr. Ibid., p.37.

in the French dictionary it is defined as a typical figure of a Parisian citizen of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who strolls in the streets.³⁸⁰ However, it is not translated from French as ‘vagabond’ or ‘idle onlooker’, so it assumes different meanings according to the situations. It is sometimes described with the adjective ‘idle’ or with the noun ‘rascals’ or it simply refers to the curious people who come to attend a particular scene - as the one when some countrymen of Lucia flock to the house of Lucia and Agnese, when the Griso and the *bravi* try in vain to kidnap them.

To conclude, Campa outlines the role of the *badaud*, and its correspondents, in the historical novel. The *badaud* ‘diventa metafora del popolo nella sua fase di immaturità, ovvero nel momento in cui non ha ancora una coscienza nazionale, o una coscienza di classe’.³⁸¹

2.5.3 Translations and Editions

The highest number of Italian editions of Scott’s works is recorded in the new millennium. Once again, *Ivanhoe* is the most published novel in the 2000s. In fact, out of seventy-two publications, there are forty-six editions of *Ivanhoe*. Scott’s second most published work in recent years is *La sposa di Lammermoor*, which appeared with two different titles. The copies of *La sposa di Lammermoor* are six out of seventy-two of Scott’s editions. In 2000, 2004, 2009, and 2012, the novel was published under the name *La sposa di Lammermoor*, while in 2016 and 2020, it appeared under the name of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, recalling the name of the opera’s librettos.

Ivanhoe appeared in the original text format as well abridged versions and adaptations for children and young adults. Some examples are the 2006 edition of Dami publishing house, the 2013 edition of Edibimbi, and the 2016 edition of Crescere publishing house. There are also versions of *Ivanhoe* in comics, such as the 2018 edition of Mondadori Comics.

Rob Roy also appeared in different versions. An example of this is the young children’s 2007 edition of Tagete.

Waverley was published again in the 2000s after almost fifty years. The last edition of *Waverley* was in fact that of the Casini publisher in 1972. The new edition of *Waverley* was

³⁸⁰ See the definition of *badaud* in French Dictionary. Online version:

<<https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/badaud/7415>> [accessed November 2022].

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45. Translation: [the *badaud*] becomes a metaphor for the people in their phase of immaturity, or in the moment in which they do not yet have a national consciousness, nor a class consciousness.

published in two volumes - part I and part II- in 2018, by a small publishing house in Verona, Gondolin. The same publishing house had previously published *Rob Roy* in 2015.

In 2020, one of Scott's short stories, which have always been appreciated by the Italian public - especially *Riccardo Cuor di Leone*, which is part of Scott's *The Talisman* but was published on its own until 1980s circa³⁸² – *Lo specchio della zia Margaret*, was also published by Elliot, another small publishing house in Rome.

Apart from small exceptions of little publishing companies that have been interested in Scott's work from the beginning of 2000s to present days, it is for the most part the large publishing houses that proposed his novels, especially in economic and paperback versions. This follows the trend that began in the 1980s according to which publishing houses started to save their resources – such as paper – and produced less books. At the same time, they try to ensure as many publications as possible to keep up with the rapid changes in the publishing world and to earn more and more profits.³⁸³

In addition to the large publishing houses, Italian newspapers also offer some works by Scott among their inserts. An example of this is the release of *Ivanhoe* for *La Repubblica* in 2004, *Il Giornale* in 2009 and *L'Espresso*, in 2013.

To conclude this introduction to Scott's editions and translations in the 2000s, it is important to underline that the introductions to Scott's new Italian editions – Garzanti, Newton Compton, BUR, Rizzoli, and Mondadori – offer fascinating critical apparatuses as they introduce the author's work and provide a detailed interpretation of it. These apparatuses largely follow the introductory notes of the Edinburgh Editions of the *Waverley Novels*, confirming once again the enormous impact that this publishing project had all over the world, including Italy. There are no new translations of Scott's works in the 2000s. However, one of Scott's essays appeared, entitled *Del soprannaturale nel romanzo fantastico (On the Supernatural in Fictitious Composition, 1827)* in 2004, thanks to L. Pellegrini publishing house of Cosenza.

³⁸² See the introduction to this research.

³⁸³ Cfr. Ferretti, 2004.

Case Study

The Never-Ending Popularity of *Ivanhoe* in Italy: An Overview of Its Italian Reception from 1945 to 2020.

In Italian culture, it is common to associate the name Walter Scott with only a few of his novels. Although the author wrote nearly fifty texts, including books, poems, and short stories, some works have attracted the attention of critics and readers more than others. The difference in their reception is due to several factors: for example, the structure and plots of these works, their main themes, the context in which they appeared, and the role that opera, cinema, and television played in spreading their popularity. Among Scott's most-appreciated and most-read novels in Italy, it is possible to list: *Rob Roy*, 1817, *La sposa di Lammermoor* (*The Bride of Lammermoor*) 1819, *Ivanhoe*, 1819, and *Riccardo Cuor di Leone*³⁸⁴ (*Richard the Lionheart*), 1825. In particular, *Ivanhoe* constitutes a real publishing case as it is Scott's most-translated and published novel in Italy and worldwide. As Ann Rigney highlights in *The Afterlives of Walter Scott*³⁸⁵ (2012):

Ivanhoe is the only name from the entire Scott repertoire that is still recognizable from many people nowadays. This novel of medieval England is arguably the best known, most widely disseminated, most internationally successful, and most enduring of all Scott's works, several of which were record-breaking best-sellers.³⁸⁶

From the year of its first Italian translation, 1822,³⁸⁷ up to the present day, Scott's medieval story has fascinated numerous generations of readers. Thanks to the medieval iconography and setting, a strong mythic sense has developed around the book: the myth of the disinherited knight who returns from the Crusades to fight on the side of the legitimate Saxon king. To highlight the impact that Scott's novel had on Italian culture in the early 1800s, it is worth quoting Francesco Pezzi, an Italian journalist, who in 1823 wrote:

³⁸⁴ *Richard the Lionheart* is the story Richard I of England, contained in the Scott's novel *The Talisman* (1825). In Italy, this story was published on its own for nearly two centuries before losing its popularity in the 1980s.

³⁸⁵ Ann Rigney, *The Afterlives of Walter Scott* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

³⁸⁷ Gaetano Barbieri translated *Ivanhoe* into Italian in 1822. See Anna Benedetti, *Le traduzioni italiane da Walter Scott e i loro anglicismi* (Firenze: Olschki, 1974).

Ormai non si legge che [...] l'*Ivanhoe*, il *Kenilworth*, [...] le belle non vestono che i colori di *Ivanhoe* e *Kenilworth*; si può credere che d'or innanzi non si parlerà, non si penserà, non si mangerà, non si dormirà che alla [...] *Ivanhoe*, alla *Kenilworth*.³⁸⁸

Ivanhoe experienced continuous success and is still considered today as Scott's most iconic and successful novel. Its never-ending fame is testified by the number of editions published from 1822 onwards, by its presence in contemporary English and Italian literature manuals used in schools and universities, by recent criticism posted on the novel, and by the fact that new television and cinema versions based on the book were produced in the twentieth century.

The present case study aims to give an overview of *Ivanhoe*'s Italian reception during the last seventy-five years. This contribution does not presume to describe *Ivanhoe*'s fortunes in detail but only that of its general discursive presence in Italy. The present author is conscious that the issues introduced in the paper are worth investigating in depth in subsequent research - in particular when mentioning abridged versions for children, adaptations for television and cinema, and Scott's presence in Italian literature manuals. Given these parameters, a specification must also be made regarding the chosen time-span: my focus on the years that range from 1945 to 2020 was dictated by the context in which this paper appears, that is, my research on Scott's Italian critical reception from 1945 to 2020. Furthermore, there is a monograph, recently published, that gives a comprehensive view of the early reception and fortunes of *Ivanhoe* in nineteenth-century Italy: Michela Mancini's *Immaginando Ivanhoe: romanzi illustrati, balli e opere dell'Ottocento italiano*³⁸⁹ (*Imagining Ivanhoe: Illustrated Novels, Ballets, and Opera of the Italian Nineteenth Century*), published in 2007.

To trace the fortunes of *Ivanhoe* in Italy from 1945 to 2020, three different types of research have been carried out: firstly, it was essential to look at the Italian National Library's Catalogue and build a timeline of the editions of Walter Scott's novels, published from 1945 onwards. Secondly, it was necessary to consider the recent criticism published in Italy on *Ivanhoe*, especially some introductions to new editions, and lastly, it was revealing to look at other media, such as cinema and television, and see the impact they had on *Ivanhoe*'s popularity.

³⁸⁸ Francesco Pezzi, *Lo Spettatore Lombardo*, 6.2 (1823) p. 77. Translation: you can find books of *Kenilworth* and *Ivanhoe* everywhere. All the ladies dress like Walter Scott's characters. His popularity is immense. Everyone started to imitate the manners of *Kenilworth* or *Ivanhoe*.

³⁸⁹ Michela Mancini, *Immaginando Ivanhoe: romanzi illustrati, balli e opere dell'Ottocento italiano* (Milano: Mondadori, 2007).

I. An Introduction to *Ivanhoe*: Plot and Main Themes

Before looking at the OPAC Catalogue, recent criticism and new editions, it is worth contextualising the novel in the socio-political situation of nineteenth-century England when it first appeared (1819). It is also necessary to briefly chronicle the plot of *Ivanhoe* in order to understand what might have been the characteristics that most fascinated the European and Italian public.

As outlined in Carol Hedges' article 'The Peterloo Massacre and Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819)', 2016, when Scott wrote the novel, England was 'a divided society [...] The end of the Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815) has brought economic depression, unemployment, and clamours for political reform'³⁹⁰. One of the bloodiest episodes of this period was the Peterloo Massacre, which occurred on August 16th, 1819, in Manchester at Saint Peter's Field – a few months after the publication of *Ivanhoe*. During an initially peaceful demonstration, some veterans of the battle of Waterloo and some participants were wounded and killed. The crowd was there to express their discontent with some recently introduced reforms, such as the Corn Laws, which determined the dramatic increase in the price of flour and bread. In addition to this episode, the novel appeared right before the start of the 1820s revolutions that involved every part of Europe. Indeed, after the fall of Napoleon in 1815, a new political and social order was being established. However, driven by discontent, some liberal-nationalist secret societies began to be born across the continent. These companies aimed at upsetting the conservatism that still reigned in Europe. The Carbonari motions in Italy were one of the most representative examples of these turmoils. The Carbonari's chief aim was to defeat tyranny and establish constitutional governments. Even Lord Byron took part in the Carbonari revolts in Italy by fighting in Emilia Romagna - an east region of Italy.

Ivanhoe was thus published in a climate of tension and change. Its depiction of the struggles between the Saxons and Normans represented the right topic at the right moment. Through the narration of the conflict of these two races, during the twelfth century, Scott wanted to discuss the socio-political situation of his own time. As Hedges states:

³⁹⁰ See Carol Hedges, 'The Peterloo Massacre and Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819)' <<https://reynolds-news.com/2016/11/02/the-peterloo-massacre-walter-scotts-ivanhoe-1819/>> [accessed November 2022].

Scott's novel was a plea for national unity: he turned to the medieval period in order to find a harmonious ordering of society. In Scott's vision, the feudal system in the Middle Ages was a model that could be adapted to solve social and political divisions in nineteenth-century Britain.³⁹¹

For the first time in history the Middle Ages was looked at as a period of order and unity rather than the dark ages believed until then. The article 'European Romantic Perception of the Middle Ages'³⁹² by Núria Perpinyà also expresses the general perception that Romantics shared of the Middle Ages: 'romantic medievalism was not based on eroticism, nor on scholasticism, but rather on chivalry, politics, religion, mystery and populism'.³⁹³ Given these details it is not surprising that Scott's novel gained immediate success.

Ivanhoe is Scott's tenth novel and is also the first one to be set in England. Unlike the first nine novels, which tell of historical periods quite close to the author's time, *Ivanhoe* describes a more distant past. The setting is twelfth-century England, marked by the struggles between the Saxons and Normans. This long projection backward in time represents an absolute novelty in Scott's *oeuvre* until then. He narrates the genesis of the birth of the English people, who in many ways are the product of this clash and result in being neither Saxons nor Normans.³⁹⁴

The book is centered on the story of Wilfred of Ivanhoe returning from the Crusades to help claim the throne of Richard the Lionheart (Richard I). Richard is kept prisoner in Austria, and during his absence, his throne is usurped by his brother Prince John Lackland. Ivanhoe is a knight who has been disinherited by his father Cedric for following a Norman King in the Crusades and falling in love with his beautiful Saxon ward Rowena. Indeed, Cedric is a Saxon nobleman who intends to marry Rowena to Athelstane, a descendent of a long-dead Saxon king. With this marriage, Cedric hopes to restore the Saxon dynasty.

Ivanhoe returns from the Crusades disguised as a religious pilgrim. Soon after, he takes the name of Disinherited Knight and participates in the Ashby tournament. He chooses to hide his identity in order not to be recognised by either his father or the reigning John Lackland. In the tournament, he proves his excellent combat skills and defeats the terrible Templar Brian de

³⁹¹ See Ibidem.

³⁹² Núria Perpinyà, 'European Romantic Perception of the Middle Ages: Nationalism and the Picturesque', *Imago Temporis. Medium Aevum*, 6 (2012), 23-47.

³⁹³ Ibid., p. 26.

³⁹⁴ See Scott's preface to *Ivanhoe* (1830 edition). Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, trad. da Marco Papi e Clara Ghibellini intr. di Francesco Marroni (Milano: Oscar Mondadori, 2008), pp. 543-53.

Bois-Guilbert. After his victory, Ivanhoe reveals his true identity. Despite defeating the Templar, with the help of the Black Knight, Ivanhoe is seriously injured in the fight and subsequently brought to Front-de-Boeuf's castle as a prisoner. His father, Cedric, is also kidnapped by Maurice de Brac, one of John Lackland's advisors. Meanwhile, Prince John is planning to marry Rowena to Maurice de Brac. At this point, Ivanhoe, Cedric, Rowena, Athelstane, Rebecca the Jewess, and her father, Isaac, are kept prisoners in Front-de-Boeuf's castle. Concurrently, John discovers that Richard I is free again and plans to stop him from returning to England. The castle is then attacked by the Black Knight and the legendary outlaws of the forest: Robin Hood and his merry men. They manage to defeat the villains and free Ivanhoe and his party. However, the terrible de Bois-Guilbert kidnaps Rebecca because he has fallen in love with her. For this reason, Rebecca is accused of having 'enchanted' Bois-Guilbert and she is put on trial.

Rebecca follows the advice of de Bois-Guilbert and asks for a trial-by-combat. Immediately the Templars call de Bois to fight for their part, causing great despair in his heart, split as he is between duty and love for Rebecca. Ivanhoe arrives to defend Rebecca. Although at the beginning of the duel, Ivanhoe falls from his horse and seems almost defeated, in the end he wins the fight because the conflicting feelings and desperation of de Bois cause the death of the Templar. At the end of the story, the Black Knight and his party prevent the ambush of John Lackland. The Black Knight reveals his true identity: he is King Richard and takes back his throne. Ivanhoe marries Rowena, while Rebecca and Isaac sail to Granada in exile.

The popularity and appreciation of *Ivanhoe* is connected to several factors. The elements that most fascinated the public include: the medieval setting; the adventurous plot and chivalric elements; the narration of the unfortunate fate of the Jewish Rebecca and her father Isaac, and the love story between Ivanhoe and Rowena. These issues permitted the perusal of *Ivanhoe* through different perspectives and ideologies, adapting to the evolving interests of the public the critical trends of each era. For example, the racial and feminist issues represented by Rebecca, Isaac, and Rowena were well-received by recent Cultural Studies. These studies read literature by focusing on the history of ethnic, religious, and gender minorities. An example of gender and ethnic studies applied to *Ivanhoe* is the article 'The Distinction of the Beautiful Jewess: Rebecca of *Ivanhoe* and Walter Scott's Marking of the Jewish Woman'.³⁹⁵ In this paper

³⁹⁵ Judith Lewin, 'Legends of Rebecca: *Ivanhoe*, Dynamic Identification, and the Portraits of Rebecca Gratz', *Nashim, Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues*, 5766.10 (2005), 178-212.

the scholar discusses the role of Rebecca and underlines the devices used by Scott to make the nature of this character less subversive.

To understand how much *Ivanhoe* - and other works by Scott - can be studied through new critical approaches, it is useful to mention the volume by Andrew Lincoln titled *Walter Scott and Modernity*³⁹⁶ (2007). The study takes up some of the fundamental themes of Scott's novels and discusses them through new theoretical approaches. Particularly interesting for this case study is the third chapter of the volume titled 'The Condition of England: *Ivanhoe* and *Kenilworth*', which explains how Scott, through the expedient of the English Middle Ages and Renaissance, told of the political and social situation of England of the nineteenth century. As Lincoln outlines in the abstract of this volume 'Scott uses the past as a means of exploring key problems in the modern world'.³⁹⁷

Now it is possible to look at the main motifs of the novel.

- The medieval setting: twelfth-century England described in the novel is a period of great crisis and change. Two different kings clash to obtain the throne. The Saxon subjects of Prince John suffer from oppression and the abuse of power by the ruling Normans. This critical situation enrages the population, including Saxon noblemen, such as *Ivanhoe*'s father. From this conflict and its subsequent resolution derives the birth of the modern English people, who are the result of the merger between the Saxons and Normans. In the first chapter of the novel, Scott describes the historical context in which the ruling Normans and Saxons were living together in a climate of great tension. He also explains that contemporary English derives from the merging of the French dialect and Anglo-Saxon language:

The necessary intercourse between the lords of the soil, and those oppressed inferior beings by whom that soil was cultivated, occasioned the gradual formation of a dialect, compounded betwixt the French and the Anglo-Saxon, in which they could render themselves mutually intelligible to each other.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ Andrew Lincoln, *Walter Scott and Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

³⁹⁷ See online version:

<https://academic.oup.com/edinburgh-scholarship-online/book/16666?login=true> [accessed December 2022].

³⁹⁸ Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe* (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2008), p. 27.

From these details, it is possible to speculate that the narration of Medieval England, populated by knights, ladies and men of court, and characterised by duels, battles, and tournaments, was particularly appreciated by Scott's audience. Setting his story in the Middle Ages, Scott was catering for and encouraging Medievalism in contemporary literature and at the same time through this ground he was worrying about contemporary politics and culture. The Italian and European public has always been fascinated by the Middle Ages and its iconography. For example, during the eighteenth century, the Gothic revival³⁹⁹ was spreading all over Europe. This revival took up the characteristic elements of the Middle Ages and repurposed them in architecture and literature. Gothic literature was born from this newfound interest in the Middle Ages with its settings and archetypal characters - the villain, the owner of the castle, the pursuer in contrast to the persecuted heroine, the hero who saves her, the faithful servants. Many late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century authors rode the waves of this newfound taste for the Gothic, setting their works in the Middle Ages. In doing so, they contributed in boosting Medievalism throughout Europe. As the *Encyclopedia Britannica* states:

By setting their stories in medieval times, authors such as Walpole and especially Sir Walter Scott helped to create a sense of nostalgia and a taste for that period.⁴⁰⁰

The nostalgia mentioned here refers to that sentiment towards the Middle Ages typical of most people who lived between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As mentioned before, for the first time in history, the Middle Ages was perceived as a fascinating period of unity rather than a dark historical phase.

When writing *Ivanhoe*, Scott was aware of the tastes of his contemporaries. Indeed, his decision to set some of his works⁴⁰¹ in this distant historical period is not surprising. He also knew that after writing nine novels set in Scotland and dealing with the Scottish past, he needed to change the setting to excite the public's attention. He believed that the

³⁹⁹ The Gothic revival was an artistic style or movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries inspired by and imitative of the Gothic style especially in architecture and literature.

⁴⁰⁰ See <<https://www.britannica.com/art/Gothic-Revival>> [accessed November 2022].

⁴⁰¹ Scott's novels set in the Middle Ages include: *Quentin Durward* (1823), *The Talisman* (1825), *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828), *Anne of Geierstein* (1829), *Count Robert of Paris* (1831), and *Castle Dangerous* (1831).

Middle Ages could be a fascinating background and allow him to discuss fundamental issues of the times he was living in. To highlight Scott's reason for choosing England and the Middle Ages it is worth reporting some excerpts taken from the *Introduction* to the novel:

Nothing can be more dangerous for the fame of a professor of the fine arts than permit (if he can possibly prevent it) the character of a mannerist to be attached to him, or that he should be supposed capable of success only in a particular and limited style.⁴⁰²

[...]

It was his purpose, at the same time, to have rendered the experiment as complete as possible, by bringing the intended work before the public as the effort of a new candidate for their favour.⁴⁰³

In addition to the fascination for the Medieval era, the narration of the origins of a nation was a topic able to describe several realities in Europe. As well known, the birth of European nations mainly occurred following crucial political changes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁴⁰⁴ As evidenced by Chris Worth in '*Ivanhoe* and the Making of Britain'⁴⁰⁵ the novel:

[...] contributed to the making and circulation of the analogous idea of a *British* nation during the imperial era. Highly popular in Europe, it provided a paradigm for imagining a synthetic nation bringing apparently opposed interests together.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰² Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 3.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁰⁴ For example, the defeat of Napoleon and the birth of the French Republic. In Italy the Republic will be established in 1860.

⁴⁰⁵ Chris Worth, '*Ivanhoe* and the Making of Britain', *Links and Letters*, 2 (1995), 63-76.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 63.

The making of a nation is another fundamental theme that determined the immediate success of *Ivanhoe* among Scott's contemporaries and permitted its never-ceasing perusal over two centuries. *Ivanhoe* is a universal story.

- The adventurous plot and chivalric elements: *Ivanhoe* is a historical-adventurous story. Unlike Scott's other historical novels, *Ivanhoe* was conceived as a romance⁴⁰⁷, more concerned with the amusement of the public rather than its education. As Enrica Villari posits in her essay *Ivanhoe-Scott*⁴⁰⁸ (2014):

Quella sorta di passaggio delle consegne tra epica e romanzo su cui hanno tanto insistito gli studiosi di romanzo è infatti in *Ivanhoe* particolarmente evidente perché Scott lo concepì come forma intermedia tra i due generi. Cosicché, pur inserendolo nel ciclo romanzesco dei *Waverley Novels*, lo sottotitolò *A Romance*, ovvero ne dichiarò l'appartenenza anche a quel genere moderno imparentato all'epica antica il cui soggetto era appunto, come scrisse nel saggio omonimo del 1824 sottolineandone la profonda affinità con la narrazione storica, «la storia mitologica e favolosa di tutte le origini nazionali» (*An Essay on Romance*).⁴⁰⁹

The plot is dynamic and full of action: think, for example, of the fights between knights or the numerous scenes of captures of the main characters. Also, the uncertain fate of the protagonists creates empathy with the readers. Its main character, Wilfred of Ivanhoe, is a hero who returns from the Crusades to fight on the side of the righteous, of the legitimate king. His father disinherited him for following a Norman king in battle and falling in love

⁴⁰⁷ See, for example, the title of the novel: *Ivanhoe, a romance*. See also the *Dedicatory Epistle* Scott wrote under the pseudonym of Laurence Templeton. In the Epistle Scott/Templeton excuses himself with the public for not being too detailed about historical references. He affirms that he was more concentrated on entertaining the readers while describing the manners and costumes of the Medieval era. He also outlines that our ancestors were not much different from us in their way of thinking and feeling.

⁴⁰⁸ Enrica Villari, '*Ivanhoe – Scott*', in *Letteratura Europea*, ed. da P. Boitani e M. Fusillo, 5 vols (Torino: UTET, 2014), IV, pp. 255-260.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p.256. Translation: That sort of handover between epic and novel on which scholars have insisted so much is in fact particularly evident in *Ivanhoe* because Scott conceived it as an intermediate form between the two genres. So that, while including it in the novel cycle of the *Waverley Novels*, he subtitled it *A Romance*, i.e. He also declared its belonging to that modern genre related to the ancient epic whose subject was underlining its profound affinity with the historical narrative, 'the mythological and fabulous history of all national origins' - as he wrote in the homonymous essay of 1824 *An Essay on Romance*.

with his ward Rowena. His character is constantly in danger. Firstly, Ivanhoe is wounded by the Templar in the Ashby Tournament. Secondly, he is kept prisoner in Front-de-Boeuf's castle. Thirdly, his courage and battle skills determine Rebecca's absolution. It is evident that Ivanhoe's adventures make the audience hold their breath. The stories of the other characters, such as those that include Rebecca, are also full of pathos. The young Jewish girl is, in fact, imprisoned and captured by the Templars. In the last phase of the novel, her life depends on a trial-by-combat.

Some of the chivalric elements are thus visible in the personalities of the main characters: Wilfred of Ivanhoe perfectly embodies the ideals of medieval chivalry, including loyalty, prowess, purity of soul, and combat skills. In the *Essay of Chivalry* (1818), Scott wrote:

The love of freedom - both his own and others - generosity, gallantry, loyalty, and an unblemished reputation were also essential principles to the knight'.⁴¹⁰

On the other hand, Rowena embodies the ideal of femininity and grace typical of the Middle Ages. To better understand the inclusion of chivalric elements - apart from the historical context in which the novel is set - it is worth keeping in mind that Scott himself was working on the *Essay on Chivalry* before publishing *Ivanhoe* in 1819. The *Essay on Chivalry* is one of the three entrees for which Scott's publisher commissioned him for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Therefore, Scott knew well the subject he was dealing with, as he knew well the differences between a novel and a romance.

- The unfortunate fate of the Jewish Rebecca and her father Isaac: despite being two essential characters in the story – for example, they help Ivanhoe recover after the Ashby tournament – they are forced to go into exile in Spain since they ‘have no place’ in England.⁴¹¹ The racial question also involves the relationship between Ivanhoe and Rebecca. In fact,

⁴¹⁰ Walter Scott, ‘Essay on Chivalry’, Online version:

https://books.google.it/books?id=cUqnwEACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=it&source=gb_s_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false [accessed November 2022].

⁴¹¹ See Enrica Villari, ‘Spazio nazionale e spazio romanzesco: il caso degli ebrei da *Ivanhoe* a *Daniel Deronda*’, in *Raccontare e descrivere: Lo spazio nel romanzo dell'Ottocento*, ed. da F. Fiorentino (Roma: Bulzoni, 1997), pp. 95-125.

Rebecca falls in love with Ivanhoe and the latter, in part, reciprocates her affection. But as Scott himself says in the *Introduction to Ivanhoe*,⁴¹² the marriage between an English nobleman and a Jewess was impossible in twelfth-century England. This issue, in particular, is very contemporary, and in fact, it was studied in detail by several scholars in recent years.⁴¹³ Unlike Rowena – a character who will be mentioned in the next point – the reader is able to better empathise with this Jewish heroine. First of all, her role is more active in Scott's novel, as from the beginning she is essential for the redemption of Ivanhoe. She is then subject to various traumatic events such as her capture and being put on trial.

- The love story between Ivanhoe and Rowena: Lady Rowena is Cedric's ward. The love story between her and Ivanhoe is impeded by Cedric, who wants Rowena to marry Athelstane in order to restore the Saxon dynasty. In addition, Prince John Lackland plans the marriage between Rowena and his advisor Maurice de Bracy. Rowena represents the ideals of the feminine beauty and courtly love in old and medieval England: she is fair, loyal and virtuous, and, at the same time, she demonstrates great strength in refusing to marry Athelstane. The two are able to marry only in the end of the book when King Richard regains his throne and Ivanhoe is rewarded with glory. Only at this point does Cedric permit Ivanhoe to marry her. This love story has intrigued the readers throughout two centuries because it is an example of a tormented love story.

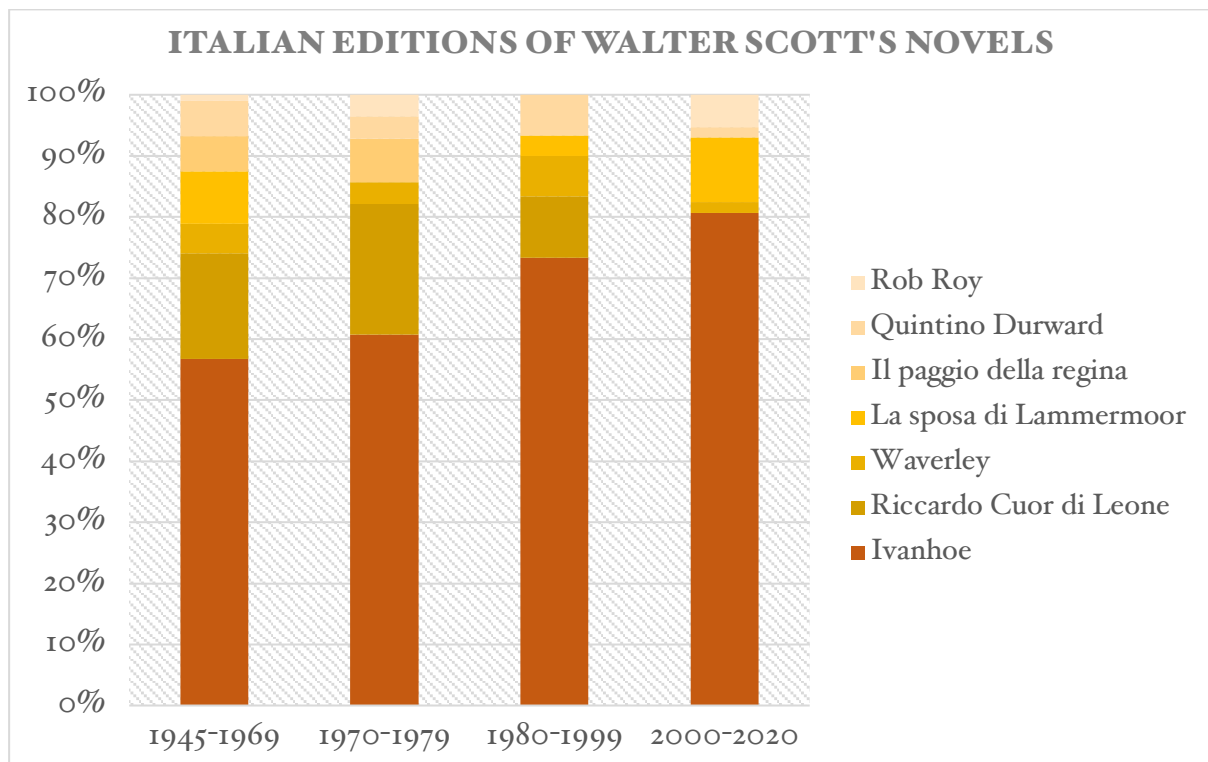
II. The National Library's Catalogue (OPAC)

After reporting the summary of *Ivanhoe*'s plot and outlining some elements linked to its popularity, it is possible to look at the National Library's Catalogue (OPAC). The search in the Catalogue is fascinating as it allows: to have an overview of the success of *Ivanhoe* compared to Scott's other novels; to identify the periods of greatest popularity of the work; to show the locales – northern, central or southern Italy – where more copies have been published and by

⁴¹² In *Ivanhoe*'s preface Scott wrote 'the prejudices of the age rendered such a union almost impossible'. See Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 12.

⁴¹³ To quote just a few critical studies on Rebecca's character, apart from the already mentioned Judith Lewin, 'Legends of Rebecca: *Ivanhoe*, Dynamic Identification, and the Portraits of Rebecca Gratz': Judith Lewin, 'The Distinction of the Beautiful Jewess: Rebecca of *Ivanhoe* and Walter Scott's Marking of the Jewish Woman', *Jewish Culture and History*, 8.1 (2006), 29-48, and Milton Kerker, 'Isaac and Rebecca in Scott's *Ivanhoe*', *Midstream*, 53.5 (2007), 28-32.

which publishing houses, and to differentiate the types of resources, finding both Italian versions of the original novel as well as abridged editions for children or comic books. By researching the Catalogue, results show that out of two hundred and sixty-eight of Scott's works published between 1945 and 2020, one hundred sixty-five are editions of *Ivanhoe*. The criteria applied to this research were to select the author's name, decide the period of interest, set the format – printed text – select the Italian language and, if necessary, eliminate any double copies or ones with unspecified data from the results obtained. From the final list, it is possible to extrapolate a graph that summarises the trends of the publication of Scott's works from the post-war years to the 2000s:



As shown in the graph, the editions of *Ivanhoe* are far more numerous than Scott's other novels.⁴¹⁴ It is also evident that the fortunes of *Ivanhoe* remained almost unchanged over the course of seventy-five years, experiencing, instead, a new peak starting from the 1980s. What is also fascinating is that the highest number of *Ivanhoe* editions is recorded in the 2000s.

⁴¹⁴ Due to the space requirement, not all of Scott's poetic and prosaic works have been transcribed in the graph, but only the most popular.

Indeed, in the last twenty years, the biggest Italian publishing houses such as Garzanti, Mondadori, Rizzoli, and Newton Compton produced several editions of the novel, including new formats such as paperbacks and newspaper inserts.

Looking at the National Catalogue list⁴¹⁵ in chronological order, it is possible to note that during the period from the late 1940s through the 1960s, the novel *Ivanhoe* accounts for fifty-nine instances out of a total of one hundred and ten of Scott's works published in Italy. The years of the post-war period experienced a boom in book production resulting in a high number of publications, including autochthonous and foreign authors. This phenomenon is interesting since it explains, partly, the high number of copies of *Ivanhoe* that appeared in this period. In general, the editions of *Ivanhoe* were not new Italian translations of the book, but were instead reprints of previous Italian versions produced in the first half of the twentieth century. Indeed, to meet the demands of a thriving book market and the high demand from readers, Italian publishing houses tended to pick up old translations and repurpose them several times. For example, the publishing house UTET used Nicoletta Neri's 1934 translation for its editions of *Ivanhoe*. This translation was then published several other times between 1945 and 1969. The same happened with Principato publishing house that used a single translation and repurposed it four times during the same period. The two exceptions in this period were the new translations by Agostino Severino (1952) and Corrado Alvaro (1956). The latter is one of the most-used translations of *Ivanhoe* in Italy.

Alongside the complete novels of *Ivanhoe*, it is possible to find abridged versions for children and young adults. In this respect, it must be said that identifying the adaptations for children from the list of the National Catalogue is not an easy task. If the type of resource is specified in the title, it is easier to understand that the work belongs to children's literature. Otherwise, it is necessary to pay attention to the name of the publishing house and understand if it is – or was – specialised in this type of literature. In the case of Edibimbi (where *bimbi* means *children*) and the La Scuola (*scuola* is the Italian word for *school*) publishing house, it is simple as the names are evocative themselves. Apart from this consideration, the most famous abridgements of this period belong to the SAS publishing house which published *Ivanhoe* for children three times, in 1952, 1954, and 1955. In addition to the high number of *Ivanhoe*'s printed copies, it is also necessary to highlight the role of cinema and television in boosting the novel's popularity, especially in the 1950s. These new media were, in fact, affirming themselves

⁴¹⁵ The complete list of the National Library's Catalogue can be found in the section *Timeline* of this Ph.D. dissertation.

as alternative channels for connecting and spreading knowledge. The two most famous screen versions of *Ivanhoe* produced in the 1950s and those dubbed into Italian were: the American film *Ivanhoe* (1952), directed by Richard Thorpe – with Robert Taylor, Elizabeth Taylor and Joan Fontaine – and the television series *Ivanhoe*, starring Roger Moore, in 1958.

In the 1970s the Italian editions of *Ivanhoe* number seventeen out of twenty-nine publications of Scott's works. Again, complete versions of the novel as well as abridgments for children were produced. Specifically, several versions for primary and middle school students appeared. For example, La Scuola publishing house repurposed an edition of *Ivanhoe* for children in 1975. Also, Dami publishing house produced an illustrated version of the novel for young adults in 1979. In the same year Edibimbi published a volume containing three adventurous stories for children titled *Lance e spade: I tre moschettieri, Robin Hood, Ivanhoe* (*Lances and Swords: The Three Musketeers, Robin Hood, and Ivanhoe*).

Starting from the 1980s, *Ivanhoe* began to experience a period of even greater popularity. Indeed, during the 1980s and 1990s, twenty-two editions of *Ivanhoe* appeared out of a total of fifty-seven Italian versions of Scott's works. One determining factor for this increase was the publication of Umberto Eco's *Il nome della rosa* (*The Name of the Rose*) in 1980. Eco's novel gained great appreciation both in Italy and the rest of the world. Furthermore, as evidenced in this thesis, it was able to rekindle interest in the historical novel sub-genre, including nineteenth-century masterpieces such as those of Manzoni and Scott.

Despite what people think about Scott's popularity in recent years, *Ivanhoe* saw the highest number of publications in the new millennium. Indeed, it may commonly be thought that Scott in this period was irrelevant and unread, but, in fact, his presence can be found. The data in the OPAC Catalogue testify to a contrary phenomenon: in the last twenty years, forty-six editions of *Ivanhoe* out of a total of seventy-two of Scott's works were published in Italy. The peak of *Ivanhoe*'s popularity in Italy - in the time-span we are considering in this case study – is perhaps linked to the publication of the Edinburgh Editions of the *Waverley Novels*, a project started in the 1990s and recently completed. Indeed, this project re-ignited international interest in Scott and his works, and also affected Scott's Italian reception. One exciting result that emerges from the Catalogue is that in 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2014, the only novel of Scott's published in Italy was *Ivanhoe*. Another fascinating feature related to *Ivanhoe*'s popularity is that three important Italian newspapers repurposed *Ivanhoe* in a paperback format during these years. Indeed, in 2004 the novel appeared as an insert for *La Repubblica*, published for the series *I grandi romanzi dell'800* (*The Great Novels of the Nineteenth Century*). In 2009 one issue of *Il Giornale* came out with a copy of *Ivanhoe*, while

in 2013 *L'Espresso* repurposed *Ivanhoe* for the series *La biblioteca dell'Espresso: i grandi romanzi* (*The Library of Espresso: The Great Novels*).

III. Criticism on *Ivanhoe*: Introductions to New Italian Editions (1945-2020)

From its first appearance in the United Kingdom in 1819, *Ivanhoe* has been able to excite the interest of the public and critics. In the last seventy-five years, several scholars devoted their studies to the analysis of *Ivanhoe*, highlighting its most fascinating features. In Italy critical studies dedicated to *Ivanhoe* and published from 1945 to 2020 include: Paolo Amalfitano's 'L'esperienza di un sapere. La descrizione dell'esordio di *Ivanhoe*'⁴¹⁶ (*The Experience of Knowledge. The Description of Ivanhoe's Debut*), 1985; Enrica Villari's 'Narrativa, storia e costume: Walter Scott'⁴¹⁷ (*Fiction, History and Costume: Walter Scott*) 1996; Enrica Villari's 'Spazio nazionale e spazio romanzesco: il caso degli ebrei da *Ivanhoe* a *Daniel Deronda*'⁴¹⁸ (*National Space and Fictional Space: the Case of the Jews from Ivanhoe to Daniel Deronda*) 1997; Michela Mancini's *Immaginando Ivanhoe: romanzi illustrati, balli e opere dell'Ottocento italiano*⁴¹⁹ (*Imagining Ivanhoe: Illustrated novels, Ballets, and Opera of the Italian Nineteenth Century*), 2007; Michela Mancini's 'Rebecca: l'eroina del romanzo *Ivanhoe* tra scrittura e illustrazioni'⁴²⁰ (*Rebecca: the Heroine of the Novel Ivanhoe between Writing and Illustrations*) 2008; Enrica Villari's '*Ivanhoe*, la cavalleria e il fanatismo nel disegno dei *Waverley Novels*'⁴²¹ (*Ivanhoe, Chivalry, and Fanaticism in the Design of the Waverley Novels*) 2013, and Enrica Villari's '*Ivanhoe-Scott*'⁴²² 2014. In addition to the articles and the

⁴¹⁶ Paolo Amalfitano, 'L'esperienza di un sapere. La descrizione dell'esordio di *Ivanhoe*', in *Storie su storie*, ed. da Enrica Villari e altri (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1985).

⁴¹⁷ Enrica Villari, 'Narrativa, storia e costume: Walter Scott' in *Storia della civiltà letteraria inglese*, ed. da Franco Marengo, 4 vols (Torino: UTET, 1996), II, pp. 477-496.

⁴¹⁸ Enrica Villari, 'Spazio nazionale e spazio romanzesco: il caso degli ebrei da *Ivanhoe* a *Daniel Deronda*', in *Raccontare e descrivere: Lo spazio nel romanzo dell'Ottocento*, ed. da F. Fiorentino (Roma: Bulzoni, 1997), pp. 95-125.

⁴¹⁹ Michela Mancini, *Immaginando Ivanhoe: romanzi illustrati, balli e opere dell'Ottocento italiano* (Milano: Mondadori, 2007).

⁴²⁰ Michela Mancini, 'Rebecca: l'eroina del romanzo *Ivanhoe* tra scrittura e illustrazioni', in *Il personaggio: figure della dissolvenza e della permanenza: in memoria di Pino Fasano*, ed. da Chiara Lombardi (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2008).

⁴²¹ Enrica Villari, '*Ivanhoe*, la cavalleria e il fanatismo nel disegno dei *Waverley Novels*', in *Saggi di teoria e storiografia letteraria*, ed. da E. Svegno (Venezia: Libreria editrice Ca' Foscari, 2013), pp. 169-178.

⁴²² Enrica Villari, '*Ivanhoe - Scott*', in *Letteratura Europea*, ed. da P. Boitani and M. Fusillo, 5 vols (Torino: UTET, 2014), IV, pp. 255-260.

monograph just mentioned, the University of Pisa held a conference titled *Due secoli con Ivanhoe* (*Two Centuries with Ivanhoe*) in 2018. The papers presented during the conference were collected and published in a volume in 2019.⁴²³

To understand *Ivanhoe*'s critical reception, it is essential to look at the studies just mentioned. However, since these pieces show only a part of the novel's reception linked mainly to the academic field, it seemed more interesting, in this case study, to conduct another type of research. Furthermore, the critical studies dedicated to *Ivanhoe* have been analysed earlier in this thesis. To have another perspective of *Ivanhoe*'s Italian success it is worth looking at its mainstream reception, which includes the analysis of new editions and its presence in cinema and television. In this section, the focus will be to look at some of the introductions to the latest editions of the *Ivanhoe* published from 1945 to 2020. These prefaces do not explain the general taste of a decade. However, they certainly outline the aspects of the novel that most impressed different generations. In addition, the critics in charge of writing these contributions provide interesting keys to interpret the book, proposing themselves as guides for the readers. Finally, the tone in which the critics wrote these introductions explains their general consideration of Scott's work.

The prefaces analysed in this section are: Enrico Groppali's introduction to *Ivanhoe*, which appeared for the first time in the 1979 edition of Garzanti; Francesco Marroni's introduction to *Ivanhoe*, 1994 edition of Oscar Mondadori, and Mario Moretti's introduction to *Ivanhoe*, 1995 edition of Newton Compton. The choice to consider these contributions is dictated by the fact that they are the most frequently included introductions in recent Italian versions of the work. In fact, from the 1950s to the present day, the prefaces of these three Anglicist critics have been repurposed by the major Italian publishing houses. It is sufficient to go to any library or enter any bookstore to easily find these pieces. Indeed, the editions that I have used as references for these introductions are those of Oscar Mondadori (*Ivanhoe*, 2008), Garzanti (*Ivanhoe*, 2014), and Newton Compton (*Ivanhoe*, 2017).

The first introduction is the one by Enrico Groppali. Groppali is an Italian critic, translator, and author of important theatrical projects. His preface to *Ivanhoe* appeared for the first time in 1979 in the edition of Garzanti publishing house and introduced the new Italian version of the novel made by Laura Ferruta. Groppali divides his preface into two main parts: the first one dedicated to Scott's biography and the second one devoted to the analysis of the

⁴²³ *Due secoli con Ivanhoe: atti della giornata di studio, Pisa 18 ottobre 2018*, ed. da Domitilla Campanile (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2019).

novel. In the first part, called ‘Biografia’ (*Biography*), Groppali contextualises the era in which Scott lived and wrote. He outlines that Scott lived during the same period as the first generation of Romantic poets. Also, Scott was contemporary to some of the most famous exponents of Gothic literature, such as Ann Radcliffe. Groppali underlines that the influence of Gothic literature is visible in the historical settings Scott chose for some of his novels:

Curiosamente proprio la collocazione cronologica di Scott nella storia letteraria si presenta come una chiave di volta significativa che rende ragione all’opera dell’autore: se in lui si cercherebbe invano lo slancio romantico di Wordsworth [...] è innegabile un’innata propensione a trasformare il paesaggio naturale in lussureggiante fondale animato da un’eccezionale maestria compositiva.⁴²⁴

Groppali’s contribution begins with a very positive statement regarding Scott’s work. Indeed, from the first pages, the critic acknowledges many of Scott’s qualities as a novelist. For example, he praises Scott’s use of historical settings. He highlights that Scott described past eras in great details. He adds that Scott did not use historical settings only as a mere frame for his stories. On the contrary, Scott depicted historical periods with ‘freddezza algebrica’,⁴²⁵ with reason and attention to details.

The generally positive considerations on Scott’s work are followed by the section dedicated to his life. Groppali reports the most significant events that impacted upon Scott’s life and work: his childhood spent in the Scottish Borders with its folklore, his illness, his education at the Edinburgh University, the early stages of his career, and his last years spent again in the Borders. The critic captures the duality of Scott’s personality and production: the coexistence of the fantastic – fueled by his experience in the Borders and his erudition – and the formal, rigid, and rational universe of his legal training and career. Groppali suggests that Scott was, at the same time, a son of Romanticism and the Scottish Enlightenment. Concerning this last statement, it can be highlighted how Groppali has perfectly grasped the dual essence of Scott’s person and work. Scott is an author of transition who lived between two centuries

⁴²⁴ Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, trad. di Laura Ferruta, intr. di Enrico Groppali (Milano: Garzanti, 1994). Translation: It is curious that Scott’s chronological position in literary history presents itself as a significant keystone that justifies the author’s work: if in him one would seek in vain Wordsworth’s romantic impulse [...] an innate propensity to transform the natural landscape in a luxuriant backdrop animated by an exceptional compositional mastery.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. VII. Translation: algebraic coldness.

marked by two main currents: the Enlightenment and Romanticism. Scott, as we know, was born and raised between Edinburgh and the Scottish Borders. His education and career as a lawyer blended perfectly with his background forged in the folkloric areas of Kelso, Melrose, Selkirk, and Abbotsford. Everything about his person and his writings lets perceive this duality. His historical novel is the perfect synthesis of these two worlds that converge, the fantastic one – of his childhood and his erudition – and the realist one of the Enlightenment Edinburgh and his career in law. Groppali, although writing for the average Italian reader, captures and describes some fundamental aspects of the author. Indeed, he adds: ‘non poteva fare uso dell’immaginario se non dopo averlo sottoposto al filtro implacabile della ragione’.⁴²⁶ The critic concludes Scott’s biography affirming that, although Scott lived at the same time as the greatest exponents of English Romanticism, he is to be considered a writer of transition. Scott absorbed and neutralised the contrasting currents of the era in which he lived.

The part dedicated to the analysis of *Ivanhoe* is also divided into ten parts. Groppali discusses, respectively, the structure, characters, settings, and fortunes of *Ivanhoe* in Europe and Italy. The critic touches on various themes in this paper. First of all, he compares *Ivanhoe* to *La sposa di Lammermoor (The Bride of Lammermoor)*, suggesting that since the two novels were written in the same year,⁴²⁷ they have several traits in common, especially what he calls ‘la spasmodica sorveglianza nei confronti dei piani narrativi’.⁴²⁸ He adds that the description of the psyche of the characters, the appearance of supernatural elements, and the comedy interspersed with scenes of greater emotional pathos can be found in both works. This is the first time that *Ivanhoe* is compared to *The Bride of Lammermoor* in the history of Italian criticism on Scott.

Although the two works have some elements in common, it is a bit risky to assume that they are very similar. Surely the two stories are connected to the Gothic imagery much appreciated by Scott, who inserts elements of the supernatural in both plots: the appearance of the presumed dead Athelstane in *Ivanhoe*, and the prophecies and legends that revolve around the house of Ravenshood. Despite the somewhat forced comparison between the two works, it is interesting to see that Groppali read these two novels with passion and interest, so that he wanted to give his own original interpretation.

⁴²⁶ Ibid., p.VIII. Translation: he could not make use of the imagination until after having subjected it to the relentless filter of reason.

⁴²⁷ It is interesting to note that Groppali wrote the wrong date of publication of *Ivanhoe*. He wrote that the novel was published in 1823 rather than 1819. However, the comparison makes sense since both novels were published in 1819.

⁴²⁸ Ibid., p. XV. Translation: a particular attention to the narrative.

In conclusion, it is possible to affirm that Groppali's introduction is detailed and expressed a favourable judgment on Scott. It is important to bear in mind that this introduction was written in the 1970s, when the critical interest in Scott awakens and produces, perhaps for the first time, contributions of great critical depth.

The second introduction analysed here is Francesco Marroni's preface to *Ivanhoe*, which appeared in 1994 for Oscar Mondadori. This edition is also a new translation of the novel made by Marco Papi and Clara Ghibellini. This contribution is a long summary of the main themes involved in the novel. It also discusses *Ivanhoe*'s fortunes in Italy and in Europe.

As Enrico Groppali did some years before, Marroni recognises the influence of Gothic literature on Scott's production. He adds that *Ivanhoe*'s setting is connected to the newfound taste for Gothic, since Scott abandoned Scottish settings for:

Addentrarsi nei territori variegati dell'universo feudale. In parte dietro la suggestione di una moda culturale avviata dal *Castle of Otranto* di Horace Walpole, in parte mosso dall'ambizioso programma di offrire al lettore la rappresentazione di un'epoca che, pur piena di conflitti e problemi, sembrava configurare una sorta di positiva sintesi della storia del Regno Unito, con *Ivanhoe* Scott scrive una di quelle opere destinate a incidere profondamente sui gusti e sull'immaginario di un'intera epoca.⁴²⁹

Marroni suggests that *Ivanhoe* is one of the liveliest and most inspiring representations of the Middle Ages. He praises Scott for his remarkable ability to describe an era, being faithful to its costumes and manners. He then affirms that, despite some anachronism and historical inaccuracies, this *medieval romance* can be understood as a colorful pageant, a fascinating theatrical representation of the medieval world. A reflection on Medievalism in Europe follows these introductory words. Marroni affirms that *Ivanhoe* appeared at a time of significant changes in Europe and that it was able to feed the readers' need to recover some of the founding values of our civilisation found in the feudal era:

⁴²⁹ Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, intr. di Francesco Marroni, trad. di Marco Papi e Chiara Ghibellini (Milano: Oscar Mondadori, 2008), p.V. Translation: Entering the multiple territories of the feudal world. In part behind the suggestion of a cultural fashion initiated by Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, in part moved by the ambitious program of offering the reader the representation of an era which, although full of conflicts and problems, seemed to configure a sort of positive synthesis of the history of the United Kingdom, with *Ivanhoe* Scott wrote one of those works destined to profoundly affect the tastes and imagination of an entire era.

Dopo Scott, con maggiore convinzione di prima, la cultura europea tornava al feudalesimo per scoprire valori che, per molti versi, risultavano alternativi a una mentalità sempre più condizionata dall'industria e dal commercio.⁴³⁰

[...]

Ivanhoe, sin dalla sua prima apparizione riuscisse a imporre una nuova parola romanzesca e insieme una nuova visione della realtà a un pubblico che, mai come allora, era parso così assetato di opere narrative che, pur alimentando la fantasia, dessero l'illusione dei grandi movimenti della storia.⁴³¹

The critic goes on with stating that from the moment of its publication, and throughout the nineteenth century, *Ivanhoe* established itself as the most popular and imitated of Scott's novels. Subsequently, he reflects on the main features that most fascinated the readers of *Ivanhoe*. First of all, Scott's ability to mix fantasy with real life, to merge together the *romance* and the *novel*:

Scott adotta gli stilemi 'eccessivi' del genere gotico proprio per conferire autorità e credibilità ai suoi romanzi storici. La Storia in sé non è narrativamente credibile, ma acquista spessore di verità non appena essa si sovrappone e confonde con la realtà quotidiana, che appare tanto più convincente e coinvolgente in quanto rappresentata nelle forme estreme ereditate nella tradizione fantastica.⁴³²

Marroni suggests that Scott's Enlightenment education is visible in the choice of mixing reason and fantasy: fiction and history. The critic claims that Scott 'osserva il passato avendo una concezione del mondo ancora fortemente improntata al pensiero illuminista'.⁴³³ This point takes up the one expressed by Groppali in the previously analysed preface. From this, it can be seen that the impact of the Scottish Enlightenment on Scott is finally acknowledged. Indeed, only a few Italian contributions had examined Scott's work keeping in mind his training and education during the Enlightenment. On the contrary, international authors have dealt with these

⁴³⁰ Ibid., p. V-VI.

⁴³¹ Ibidem.

⁴³² Ibid., p. IX.

⁴³³ Ibid., p. X. Translation: (Scott) looks at the past with an enlightened conception of the world.

influences in some foundational critical studies – e.g., John MacQueen’s *The Rise of the Historical Novel* (1989). As in the case of Groppali, it is valuable and exciting to see that these prefaces give innovative interpretative keys to Scott’s work. They are not mere introductory apparatuses that merely provide some trite information about the author. They are innovative and comprehensive critical contributions.

The third and last preface is Mario Moretti’s introduction to *Ivanhoe*, published in 1995 for Newton Compton. Unlike Groppali or Marroni’s contributions, this introduction does not begin by praising Scott. Moretti seems more interested in gossiping about Scott’s *persona* rather than considering him a good writer. He outlines that Scott has been the first ‘professional’ novelist capable of enriching himself thanks to his writing career.⁴³⁴ Moretti quotes Benedetto Croce, one of the most influential critics of the early twentieth century, who in his long essay *Poesia e non Poesia (Poetry and Non-Poetry)*, 1914, expressed severe judgments on Scott’s work.⁴³⁵ Moretti’s choice to quote Croce is emblematic and anticipates the tone of the whole contribution. Indeed, he begins by saying: the reason for the great fortunes of Scott’s historical novel seems to lie more in its defects than in its merits.⁴³⁶ He then mentions Mario Praz – another influent critic of the first half of the twentieth century – who, generally, shared the same judgment towards Scott’s work.

Moretti believes that one of Scott’s greatest flaws – considered as a merit by the reading public – was his erudition. Initially, in 1800, Scott was compared to Shakespeare for the genius of his writings, full of dramatic scenes and memorable characters. On the contrary, Moretti argues that there is very little original in Scott’s work and that he copied from several authors including Shakespeare himself. He states that Scott borrowed many of Shakespeare’s expressions and incidents, and included them in his novels. He goes on saying that Scott took most of his material from old tales and ballads. He presents the example of *Ivanhoe*, whose main character is taken from an old nursery rhyme – as Scott admits in the *Introduction* to *Ivanhoe*.⁴³⁷ The character of Robin Hood was also taken from popular ballads. The tone that Moretti uses for writing his preface is therefore that of a critic who, while acknowledging the great success of Scott, un.masks his merits. He defines him, between the lines, as a ‘copycat’,

⁴³⁴ See, Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe* (Roma: Newton Compton, 2017), p.8.

⁴³⁵ In *Poesia e non poesia*, Croce believed Scott a businessman rather than a creative genius. As seen in the criticism dedicated to Scott in the post-war years (Ph.D. dissertation), the judgments of Benedetto Croce, Mario Praz, and Emilio Cecchi always tended to be sceptical and belittling towards Scott.

⁴³⁶ Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 7.

⁴³⁷ In the 1830 edition of *Ivanhoe*, Scott’s writes: ‘the name of *Ivanhoe* was suggested by an old rhyme’. See Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 11.

who has been credited to have invented the historical novel, but who ultimately does not possess artistic qualities.

Also, with regard to the structure of the novel and its characters Moretti provides heavy criticism. After stating that everything revolves around the concept of duality - there are pairs of contrasting characters and pairs of contrasting places - he states that Scott's characters are fixed, that is, that they remain immobile throughout the story. They do not have a psychological evolution but only follow the course of events remaining in the places that the author has assigned them. Moretti says:

Insomma, la psicologia dei personaggi non è il forte di Scott. il suo non è un romanzo introspettivo, è un romanzo d'azione, un'azione che ruota intorno a personaggi che sembrano presi dal Museo delle Cere.⁴³⁸

This statement seems a bit too stern and also discriminatory against the average reader of Scott's work. In fact, *Ivanhoe* is a work of great structural and ideological complexity and is also rich in fascinating themes.

From reading these introductions it emerges that Scott was generally believed as one of the most influential authors of European literature. His role as the 'inventor' of the modern historical novel is underlined by all three Italian critics. Scott's initial enormous success, and specifically the great praise for his most prolific work, *Ivanhoe*, is also highlighted by the three Anglicists. Furthermore, the critics emphasise the main qualities of Scott's writing and above all express the same positive judgments regarding the work *Ivanhoe*. The only introduction, which in tone differs from the others is that of Mario Moretti who tends to take a sceptical position towards Scott's work. As previously mentioned, it is emblematic that Moretti mentions first Croce and then Praz. These two Italian critics had marked the general thinking about Scott from the beginning of the twentieth century, belittling and criticising his work. It is curious to see that this type of criticism can still be found in the second half of the 1900s and in most recent editions of Scott's works.

⁴³⁸ Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe* (Roma: Newton Compton, 2017), p. 13. Translation: In short, the psychology of the characters is not Scott's forte. This is not an introspective novel. It is a novel of action, where the revolves around characters who seem taken from the Wax Museum.

IV. *Ivanhoe* in Italian Cinema and Television

From the beginning of the twentieth century, several transpositions for cinema and television have been made based on Scott's novels. The reason why Scott's stories were fruitful material from which directors and screenwriters could draw inspiration lies in the structures and themes of these novels. Many of Scott's books share some characteristics that made them perfect for the transposition to the small and big screen. Among these elements, it is possible to mention: Scott's ability to 'show' through lively descriptions the era in which the story is set - including the narration of settings, costumes and the surrounding landscape; the captivating plots full of action and populated by characters from all strata of society - who render the novels a colorful tale of the past, and the narration of crucial historical events marked by contrasts and which involve a final resolution.

In this case study, aimed at providing an overview of *Ivanhoe*'s Italian reception from 1945 to 2020, it seemed useful to mention the presence of the novel in Italian cinema and television. In fact, to trace the mainstream reception of Scott's medieval novel, it is fascinating to look at different artistic channels that have contributed to boosting the success of this work. Indeed, *Ivanhoe*'s fortunes were perpetrated thanks to some important cinematographic and television adaptations that appeared from the beginning of the twentieth century until about twenty years ago. There are several reasons behind *Ivanhoe*'s ability to adapt perfectly to the audiovisual world. To sum up the elements that made *Ivanhoe* perfect for several adaptations it is possible to quote Ann Rigney, who, in her pivotal study *The Afterlives of Walter Scott*⁴³⁹ (2012), affirms:

It is above all its employment of history, however, and not just its vivid descriptions, that ensured *Ivanhoe*'s long-term impact. The action-packed plot depicts the emergence of a modern nation from the conflict between two ethnic groups, one the conqueror of the other, and it was this underlying design that ensured its long-term resonance.⁴⁴⁰

In this section dedicated to *Ivanhoe* in Italian cinema and television, the main focus will be that of quoting the adaptations dubbed into Italian and broadcast between 1945 and 2020. The

⁴³⁹ Ann Rigney, *The Afterlives of Walter Scott* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

critical studies dedicated to the presence of Scott and his work in cinema will not be analysed. In fact, to discuss in detail the adaptations of Scott's novels for cinema and television, it would be necessary to undertake another doctoral thesis. For an in-depth analysis of Scott's history in cinema, please refer to important contributions such as: Jeffrey Richards' *Films and British National Identity: From Dickens to Dad's Army*⁴⁴¹, 1997; James Chandler's 'The Historical Novel Goes to Hollywood: Scott, Griffith, and Film Epic Today' (1990);⁴⁴² Ann Rigney *The Afterlives of Walter Scott* – quoted above; Domitilla Campanile's '*Ivanhoe* al cinema e in televisione' (*Ivanhoe in cinema and television*), 2019, and Giuseppe Pucci's '*Ivanhoe* reloaded', 2019.⁴⁴³

In Italy, between the years 1945 and 2020 appeared two film adaptations for television, a mini-series, one animated film, and one cartoon, all based on *Ivanhoe*.

The first film based on the novel and made since 1945 is the Hollywood version of *Ivanhoe* directed by Richard Thorpe – with Robert Taylor, Elizabeth Taylor, and Joan Fontaine – released in American cinemas in 1952. It is a remake of two films of 1913, respectively, the one produced in Great Britain directed by Herbert Brenon, and the one released in America directed by Leedham Bantock. However, it seems the Hollywood version of the 1952 has never been dubbed into Italian and consequently did not reach Italian cinemas. Instead, the first film inspired by the story of *Ivanhoe* and broadcast by Italian TV was *La spada normanna* (*The Norman Sword*) directed by Roberto Mauri. This transposition was an exclusive Italian production and was broadcast by the Rai 1 channel in 1971. Although the main character is the knight Ivanhoe, who returns from the Crusades, the historical period and the plot are slightly different from those of the novel. The story is set just after the reign of Henry I (1066-1135). After his death, Stefano Cunningham finds the Norman sword and reclaims the throne. However, the sword is a fake one. Ivanhoe is a knight returning from the Crusade who retrieves the original sword with the help of a group of outlaws and travelling actors. With the Norman sword, Ivanhoe can defeat the usurper. Despite the differences from the original novel, there is no doubt that this free version for TV fascinated the Italian public of the 1970s and helped to perpetuate the success of Scott's work.

⁴⁴¹ Jeffrey Richards, *Films and British National Identity: From Dickens to Dad's Army* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).

⁴⁴² James Chandler, 'The Historical Novel Goes to Hollywood: Scott, Griffith, and Film Epic Today' in *The Romantics and Us: Essays on Literature and Culture*, ed. by Gene W. Ruoff (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990).

⁴⁴³ These last two contributions are found in the collection of papers *Due secoli con Ivanhoe: atti della giornata di studio*, ed. da Domitilla Campanile (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2019).

Another free version of *Ivanhoe* is the mini-series of the same name made in 1958 in Great Britain but broadcast in Italy in the 1960s. This was a children's adaptation and sanctioned the story of the knight Ivanhoe in the hearts of many young Italians. The splendid performance of Roger Moore has in fact contributed to spreading the fame of the famous character of Scott and therefore also of the novel. However, the characters are the only ones who have remained faithful to the original story since the plot is again different from that of the novel. Contemporary critics believed that 'as an adaptation of sorts, *Ivanhoe* was disappointing in its shortcomings; as a swashbuckler series it was bold, striking and distinctly enjoyable'.⁴⁴⁴

Another television film - this time faithful to Scott's novel – is *Ivanhoe* released in 1982. It was dubbed in Italian and broadcast for the Rai 1 channel in 1984. The film was directed by Douglas Camfield and did not receive favourable reviews. Generally, this transposition was criticized for being an ordinary show with actors lacking in charisma.

Subsequently, an animated film and a cartoon based on *Ivanhoe* and dubbed in Italian were broadcast: in 1986 the animated film *Ivanhoe* produced by Australian Burbank Films, and in 1998 the animated series produced by Cinar and France Animation.

To conclude this section dedicated to *Ivanhoe*'s presence in cinema and TV, it can be said that in Italy television – more than cinema – played a fundamental role in perpetrating the mainstream success of Scott's masterpiece. Although *Ivanhoe* never made it to the Italian big screen, the various adaptations and works loosely based on the novel produced for TV demonstrate the great attention of the television market to this novel by Scott. Furthermore, the abridged versions for children and teenagers highlight the great transversality and adaptability of this iconic novel.

V. Conclusion

In this case study, I wanted to give an overview of the fortunes and long-lasting presence of *Ivanhoe* in Italy, from 1945 to 2020, by paying attention to different artistic channels. The research in the National Catalogue, the introductions to some recent editions, and the transmission of films and TV series show that the fascination aroused by Scott's medieval work never ceased to exist in Italy. From its first appearance in 1822 to the present day, *Ivanhoe* has been Scott's most appreciated novel in Italy and elsewhere. From the foregoing treatment we

⁴⁴⁴ See <<http://www.screenonline.org.uk/tv/id/1137405/index.html>> [accessed November 2022].

can see that Scott's *Ivanhoe* continues down to very recent times to be a significant cultural phenomenon.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this doctoral thesis reiterates the data reported in the introduction. Contrary to what one might have hypothesised about Scott's fate in Italy – given the general lack of interest in reading the author anymore and the scarce presence of his novels in Italian bookshops – he is still a presence in the country. Scott's model of writing historical novels certainly inspired the authors of the Italian *Risorgimento* but also laid the foundations for the development of the sub-genre in more recent times. It was noticed that, following the rehabilitation and new interpretation of Scott's works – especially starting from the 1990s, and mostly in the English-speaking world – some of the elements of his novels can be studied through Post-modernist perspectives and can be found in the works of some Italian authors of the late twentieth century. In particular, Umberto Eco with his novel *The Name of the Rose* (1980) witnesses the permanence of some characteristics of Scott's mode of writing in the recent production of Italian historical fiction. Not only Eco but also authors such as Vincenzo Consolo or Sebastiano Vassalli drew on Scott's and Manzoni's models for the drafting of their most famous works. The use of the rediscovered manuscript as a historical source on which to base the story is one of the devices that return more constantly in the novels of the second half of the Italian twentieth century – even if the reliability of this source is often questioned by the authors themselves.

Although the number of editions of Scott's works fluctuated in frequency during the twentieth century, it was highlighted that even today the major Italian publishing houses continue to publish some of his most iconic works: *Ivanhoe*, *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *The Antiquary* hold the primacy among Scott's most published novels in the last seventy-five years. It was also noted that some small publishing houses have contributed to the permanence and rehabilitation in Italy of some of Scott's masterpieces such as *Waverley* and *Rob Roy* in recent years – for example, Gondolin publishing house in Verona.

After building the timeline of Scott's editions, re-editions, and translations, one might have also asked why, if the most representative work of Scott's historical novel is *Waverley*, the novel wasn't published more often in recent decades? In my opinion, *Waverley* is Scott's richest and most iconic novel, which most represents the main characteristics of Scott's repertoire. I would argue that if *Waverley* had been more easily available – perhaps in new translations and new editions following the Edinburgh Edition's version – it could have been used more in the study of the authors in high schools and universities. In this thesis, I did not carry out any research focused on high schools and university *syllabi* to understand how much,

and to what extent, Scott is still studied in Italian schools. My supposition regarding his scarce consideration is based on my experience as former high school student, bachelor and master English literature student, and current English teacher. What I can say, in fact, according to what I lived first-hand is that the author is just briefly mentioned when introducing Alessandro Manzoni and *I promessi sposi* in Italian literature. Usually, excerpts from *Ivanhoe* are commented on to introduce the topic of ‘the historical novel’ and little more is added on the author’s life and *oeuvre*. Italian professors and literature manuals usually limit themselves to delineate the common characteristics and differences between *Ivanhoe* and *I promessi sposi*. This is certainly due to the fact that in Italy, as seen by the criticism dedicated to Scott during two centuries, the author takes second place to the work of Manzoni, which is still considered by many to be aesthetically and conceptually superior to the *Waverley Novels*. Surely, in future research, it will be my concern to research Scott’s presence in the most used manuals of Italian and English literature in Italian schools in order to have a more complete picture of Scott’s existence in Italian institutions.

As regards the criticism on Scott, the thesis highlighted that this scholarship mainly followed the several critical currents that characterised Italy in the last seventy-five years. The critical studies dedicated to Scott also underwent the great influence of international criticism dedicated to the Scottish author especially starting from the 1970s – especially with Reception studies – and later in the 1990s – through Post-modernist perspectives. Following the European and Global critical influxes, Italian authors began to align their works on Scott with modern criticism by producing a series of contributions that re-evaluate the author’s work through Post-modernist, Deconstructionist, Cultural, and Hermeneutical approaches. They, therefore, began to place their writings in a context more in line with the international situation which, as we have seen, is experiencing a period of ferment as regards Scott studies. Specifically, in the last thirty years, it was possible to note a considerable increase in Italian critical studies dedicated to Scott, these having as their topic the analysis of the author’s novels through innovative approaches such as Feminist studies, Reception studies, and Cultural studies. Little has been found in Italy concerning Post-colonial studies applied to the analysis of Scott’s works. The only contribution that recently appeared is Carla Sassi’s ‘Sir Walter Scott and the Caribbean: Unravelling the Silences’, published in 2017 in *The Yearbook of English Studies*, issue 40. Also, Scott’s poetry hasn’t been revaluated in Italy yet. That is contrary to what English-speaking world is experiencing in recent years especially thanks, to the Edinburgh Editions of Scott’s poetic works.

To conclude, I would like to add that the purpose of this thesis was to trace the reception of Scott in Italy and complete the discourse started by Franca Ruggieri Punzo and Murray Pittock but, at the same time, I wanted to re-habilitate the presence of Scott in the study of English literature in Italy – emphasising the complexity of his works and his great influence on the Italian historical novel. Specifically, it is important to me to highlight the opportunity to re-evaluate Scott in a more modern, interesting, and multifaceted context, for example, through Post-modernist approaches, Cultural studies, Feminist studies, and Post-colonial studies, which are already flourishing globally. This is to align Scott's Italian scholarship with the international criticism that has been buzzing in recent years regarding the study of the author. Above all, I would like to encourage students and teachers to reconsider Scott's importance and propose him again, and more thoroughly, in school programs so as not to consider the author as a mere obvious and ghostly presence hovering over Italian literary culture.

Timeline of the Reception of Walter Scott in Italy from 1945 to 2020

1 Translations, Editions, and Re-editions

1945

Ivanhoe

Edited by Cesare Giardini

Illustrated by Nino Pagot

Publisher: UTET, Turin

Waverley

Translated by Corrado Alvaro

Publisher: Mondadori, Milan

1947

Ivanhoe

Edited and translated by Nicoletta Neri

Publisher: UTET, Turin

1949

Allan Cameron; Il soldato di ventura

Illustrated by Nello Pasquali

Publisher: Chiantore, Turin

Ivanhoe: romanzo storico

Edited by Simonetta Palazzi

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Edited by Cesare Giardini

Illustrated by Gustavino

Publisher: UTET, Turin

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Publisher: Chiantore, Turin

1950

I misteri del castello

Illustrated by Carlo Nicco

Publisher: Chiantore, Turin

1951

Ivanhoe

Translated by Lina Ottino Foglino

Publisher: Cavallotti, Milan

Il paggio della Regina

Translated by Ada Salvatore

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Quintino Durward l'arciere del re

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi

Illustrated by Giannina Lavarello

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

La sposa di Lammermoor

Publisher: Rizzoli, Milan

Tartan contro Abiti Rossi

Illustrated by Carla Ruffinelli

Publisher: Chiantore, Turin

1952

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Rizzoli, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: SAS, Turin

Ivanhoe

Edited by Simonetta Palazzi

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

1953

Ivanhoe

Edited by Nicoletta Neri

Publisher: Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, Turin

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Torretta

Publisher: Antonio Vallardi editore, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher : La Sorgente, Milan 250

Ivanhoe

Translated and adapted by Lina Ottino Foglino

Publisher: Cavallotti, Milan

Ivanhoe o il ritorno del crociato

Translated by Gino Valori

Publisher: Sonzogno, Milan

Peveril del Picco

Publisher: Paoline, Vicenza

Riccardo cuor di leone

Translated and reduced by Mario Giussani

Publisher: SAS, Turin

Roberto conte di Parigi

Publisher: Paoline, Vicenza

1954

Ivanhoe

Publisher: La Sorgente, Milan

Ivanhoe

Illustrated by Enrico Bagnoli

Publisher: Carroccio, Bologna

Ivanhoe

Translated and reduced by Agostino Severino

Publisher: SAS, Turin

Lucia di Lammermoor

Publisher: Paoline, Vicenza

Il paggio della regina

Translated by Ada Salvatore

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

1955

Ivanhoe

Translated and reduced by Agostino Severino

Publisher: SAS, Turin

Quintino Durward

Publisher: La Sorgente, Milan

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Edited by Cesare Giardini

Illustrated by Gustavino

Publisher: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, Turin

1956

Waverley e Ivanhoe

Publisher: G. Casini, Roma

Riccardo cuor di Leone

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi.

Illustrated by Domenico Natoli

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Lucia di Lammermoor

Publisher: Paoline, Vicenza

Ivanhoe

Publisher: La Sorgente, Milan

Riccardo cuor di leone

Translated and reduced by Mario Giussani

Publisher: SAS, Turin

Rob Roy

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi
Illustrated by Courboin and Toussaint
Publisher: Ptincipato, Milan-Messina

Ivanhoe

Translated by Renata Peccariè
Illustrated by Maraja
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

La sposa di Lammermoor

Translated by Bice Onofri
Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

1957**Lucia di Lammermoor**

Publisher: Paoline, Vicenza

1958**Ivanhoe**

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi
Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Ivanhoe

Translated and reduced by Agostino Severino
Publisher: S.A.I.E. Turin

Riccardo cuor di Leone

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi
Illustrated by Domenico Natoli
Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Lucia di Lammermoor

Publisher: Paoline, Vicenza

1960**Riccardo Cuor di leone: romanzo per ragazzi**

Publisher: Boschi, Milan

Lucia di Lammermoor / Walter Scott

Publisher: Paoline, Vicenza

Ivanhoe

Publisher: SEI, Turin

Ivanhoe

Edited by Cesare Giardini
Illustrated by Giuseppe Riccobaldi
Publisher: UTET, Turin

Riccardo Cuor di leone

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi
Illustrated by Domenico Natoli

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Edited by Cesare Giardini

Illustrated by Gustavino

Publisher: Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, Turin

1961

Ivanhoe

Cover by I. Gongalov

Translated and adapted by Lina Ottino Foglini

Illustrated by B. Bodini

Publisher: AMZ, Milan

Il nano nero

Translated by Augusto Pardini

Publisher: Sonzogno, Milan

Ivanhoe o il ritorno del crociato

Translated by Gino Valori

Publisher: Sonzogno, Milan

Quintino Durward l'arciere del re

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi

Illustrated by Giannina Lavarello

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Ivanhoe

Publisher: La Scuola, Brescia

L'Antiquario

Translated by Fernando Ferrara

Preface by Giorgio Manganelli

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated Simonetta Palazzi

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Boschi, Milan

Riccardo cuor di Leone: romanzo per ragazzi

Publisher: Boschi, Milan

1963

Riccardo cuor di leone: romanzo per ragazzi

Publisher: Boschi, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: AMZ, Milan

Il paggio fedele della Regina

Illustrated by Adri
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

1964

Ivanhoe

Illustrated by Santin
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Waverly e Ivanhoe

Publisher: Casini, Rome- Florence

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Bietti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Edited by Nicoletta Neri
Publisher: UTET, Turin

Lucia di Lammermoor

Publisher: Paoline, Vicenza

Ivanhoe

Edited by Alessandra Bellezza Migliarini
Illustrated by Zucca
Publisher: Boschi, Milan

Ivanhoe

Edited by G. Tarlini
Publisher: Sansoni, Florence

Quintino Durward: l'arciere del re

Translation by Simonetta Palazzi
Illustrated by Giannina Lavarello
Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Riccardo Cuor Di Leone

Illustrated by Diego and Dale
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Paoline, Rome

1965

Ivanhoe

Translated and adapted for middle school by Giuseppe Sforza
Publisher: Trevisini, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi
Introduction and explanatory notes by Enrico Oddone
Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Quintino Durward

Cover by I. Gongalov

Translated and adapted by Stefania Gerili

Illustrated by R. Molino

Publisher: AMZ, Milan

Quintino Durward

Cover by B. Bodini

Illustrated by R. Molino

Publisher: AMZ, Milan

Ivanhoe

Cover by C. A. Michelini

Illustrated by B. Bodini

Publisher: BRI, Milan

Il paggio della regina

Translated by Ada Salvatore

Publisher: Principato, Milan-Messina

Il paggio di Maria Stuarda

Translated and reduced by Vittoria Comucci

Illustrated by Diego

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Riccardo cuor di leone

Translated by Elena Micheli

Illustrated by Diego

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe: romanzo per ragazzi

Edited by A.B. Migliarini

Illustrated by Zucca

Publisher: Boschi, Milan

Riccardo cuor di leone: romanzo per ragazzi

Edited by A. B. Migliarini

Publisher: Boschi, Milan

1966**Ivanhoe**

Translated by Dora Pirajno

Publisher: S.E.I., Turin

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Paoline, Roma

Ivanhoe

Translated by Maria Stella Ferrari

Publisher: Sansoni, Firenze

Ivanhoe

Publisher: La Scuola, Brescia

Ivanhoe: romanzo per ragazzi

Publisher: Boschi, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi

Publisher: G. Principato, Milan-Messina

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Mondadori, Milan

1967

Riccardo Cuor di leone

Illustrated by Diego

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe: Romanzo per ragazzi

Edited by A. B. Migliarini

Illustrated by Zucca

Publisher: Boschi

Ivanhoe

Publisher: BRI, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: La Sorgente, Milan

Lucia di Lammermoor

Publisher: Paoline, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: S.A.I.E., Turin

1968

Ivanhoe

Edited by Sergio Rinaldi

Publisher: La Scuola, Brescia

Ivanhoe

Reducted and with introducyion by T. Sardelli

Publisher: IREOS, Rome

I cospiratori di Woodstock

Publisher: Paoline, Rome

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Adapted by Domenico Natali

Illustrated and cover by I. Gongalov

Publisher: AMZ, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Paoline, Rome

1969

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Principato Milan-Messina

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Paoline, Rome

Il paggio di Maria Stuarda

Illustrated by Diego

Translated and reduced by Vittoria Comucci

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Waverley

Translated by Corrado Alvaro

Publisher: Mondadori, Milan

Ivanhoe

Edited Vanna Bosia

Translated by Agostino Severino

Illustrated by Carlo Nicco

Publisher: S.A.I.E., Turin

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Translated by Elena Micheli

Illustrated by Diego

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: AMZ, Milan

Waverley: un racconto dei tempi passati

Publisher: Paoline, Rome

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Società Editrice Internazionale, Turin

1970

Ivanhoe

Translated by Giorgio Spina

Publisher: Istituto editoriale italiano

1971

Ivanhoe

Publisher: B.R.I.

1972

Riccardo Cuor di leone

Publisher: B.R.I.

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Translated by Agostino Severini

Adapted by Domenico Natali

Ivanhoe

Translated by Agostini Severini
Edited by Vanna Bosia
Publisher: S.A.I.E.

L'Arciere del re

Publisher: La Sorgente

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Illustrated by Diego
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Waverley/Ivanhoe

Publisher: Casini

1973**Ivanhoe**

Translated by Gaia
Publisher: Malipiero

Il nano nero

Translated by Augusto Pardini
Publisher: Club degli Editori

Quintino Durward: l'arciere scozzese

Translated by Simonetta Palazzi
Illustrated by Giannina Lavarello
Publisher: Principato

Ivanhoe

Cover by I. Gongalov
Illustrated by B. Bodini
Publisher: AMZ, Milan

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Illustrated by Diego
Adapted by Elena Michelini
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Paoline

Il paggio fedele della regina

Illustrated by Adri
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Illustrated by Ico
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

1974**Rob Roy**

Translated by Rossi Sergio and Baldi Giovanni

Publisher: Bietti

1975

Il paggio di Maria Stuarda

Translated by Vittoria Comucci

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore

Publisher: Einaudi, Turin

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Illustrated by Diego

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: La Scuola

1976

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Ed. Forni

Ivanhoe

Translated by Renata Peccariè

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

1979

Ivanhoe

Translated by Giorgio Spina with introduction by Enrico Groppali

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translator: Laura Ferruta

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Illustrated by Cosimo Musio

Publisher: Dami

Lance e spade: I tre moschettieri; Robin Hood; Ivanhoe

Publisher: Edibimbi

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Illustrated by Diego

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Paoline

1980

Ivanhoe

Translated by Bruno Oddera

Publisher: Emme, Milan

1982

Lo specchio di zia Margherita: fantasie scozzesi

Edited by Attilio Brilli

Publisher: Serra and Riva editori, Milan

I misteri del castello

Edited by Carmen d'Eletto e Lucrezia Tese

Publisher: Loescher, Turin:

Ivanhoe

Translated by Vincenzo Brinzi

Illustrated by Carlo Alberto Michelini

Publisher: Mursia, Milan

La sposa di Lammermoor

Translated by Bice Onofri

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with Introduction by Mario Praz

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

1983

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Illustrated by Diego

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated and adapted by Sandy

Illustrated by Serenella Del Vita

Publisher: Malipiero, Bologna

Il Talismano: Riccardo in Palestina

Illustrated by Carlo Alberto Michelini

Publisher: Mursia, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz

With the engravings of Hayez

Preface to the text: Attilio Brilli

Publisher: Biblioteca universale Rizzoli, Milan

Ivanhoe

Illustrated by Carlo Jacono

Publisher: Accademia, Milan

I misteri del castello

Edited by Carmen d'Eletto e Lucrezia Tese

With didactic consultancy of Maria Corda Costa

Publisher: Loescher, Turin

Ivanhoe

Illustrated by Santin

Publisher: Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri, Milan

1984**Ivanhoe**

Translated by Agostino Severini

Publisher: ed. Paoline

1985**Il racconto dello specchio misterioso**

Translated by Daniela Ruotolo

Publisher: Theoria

Riccardo Cuor di Leone

Translated by Benvenuto Guido, Pierdonati Sandro, and Corda Costa Maria

Publisher: Loescher, Turin

1986**Allan Cameron**

Edited by Carmen D'Eletto and Lucrezia Tesé

Publisher: Loescher, Turin

Ivanhoe

Translated by Giardini C.

Publisher: UTET, Turin

Ivanhoe

Edited by Mino Milani

With the didactic consultancy of Donatella Carnevali

Publisher: Mursia, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: A. Peruzzo, Sesto San Giovanni

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Riccardo cuor di leone

Illustrations: Diego

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

1987**Ivanhoe**

Translated by Maria Stella Ferrari

Publisher: Mondadori

1988**Waverley/Ivanhoe**

Translated by Corrado Alvaro and Maria Stella Ferrari

Publisher: Melita

Also contains a translation of: Ivanhoe

1989

Ivanhoe

Translated by Giovanni L.
Publisher: ed. Paoline

1990

Rob Roy

Edited by Lucilla Ghelli
Publisher: De Agostini, Novara

1991

Cavalleria

Translated by: Erica Villari
Publisher: Bollati Boringhieri

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz
With the engravings of Hayez
Publisher: Rizzoli, Milan

Rob Roy

Edited by Lucilla Ghelli
Publisher: De Agostini, Novara

Ivanhoe

Illustrated by Aldo Ripamonti
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Edited by Mino Milani
Publisher: Mursia

I grandi racconti d'avventura tutti illustrati a colori da Rob Roy

Publisher: De Agostini, Novara

Ivanhoe

Edited by Luca Orsenigo
Publisher: Società editrice internazionale, Turin

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali
Publisher: Garzanti

Il racconto dello specchio misterioso

Edited by Daniela Ruotolo
Publisher: Theoria, Naples

1994

Il racconto dello specchio misterioso

Translated by Ruotolo Daniela
Publisher: L'Unità, Rome

Demoni e streghe

Translated by Annalisa Merlino with introduction by Emilio Tadini
Edited by Maria Pia Donat
Publisher: Donzelli, Rome

Ivanhoe

Translated by Marco Papi e Clara Ghibellini
Publisher: Oscar Mondadori

Ivanhoe

Illustrated by Carlo Alberto Micheli
Publisher: Mursia, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali
Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz
With the engraving by Hayez
Preface: Attilio Brilli
Publisher: Rizzoli, Milan

Ivanhoe

Edited by Edgardo Pansoni
Publisher: Ghisetti and Corvi, Milan

1995**Ivanhoe**

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Moretti
Publisher: Biblioteca Economica Newton

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Marco Papi and Clara Ghibellini with introduction by Francesco Marroni
With an essay by Mario Praz
Publisher: Oscar Mondadorio

Ivanhoe

Publisher: A. Peruzzo, sesto San Giovanni

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali
Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

La sposa di Lammermoor

Translated by Bice Onofri with introduction by Enrico Groppali
Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

1996

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz

With engravings by Hayez

Preface by Attilio Brilli

Publisher: Rizzoli, Milan

1997

I misteri del castello

Publisher: Biblioteca italiana per i ciechi, Monza

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Euroclub, Trezzano sul Naviglio

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz

With engravings by Hayez

Preface by Attilio Brilli

Publisher: Rizzoli, Milan

1998

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Reducted by Dan Uldihea

Publisher: Taurus, Turin

1999

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz

With engravings by Hayez

Preface by Attilio Brilli

Publisher: BUR, Milan

Old mortality: i puritani di Scozia

Edited by Rossella Camerlingo

Publisher: Keltia, Aosta

2000

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz

With engravings by Hayez

Preface by Attilio Brilli

Publisher: Rizzoli, Milan

Quentin Durward, l'arciere del re

Edited by Paola Calgaro

Publisher: Principato, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

La sposa di Lammermoor

Translated by Bice Onofri with introduction by Enrico Groppali

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Adapted by Mino Milani

Didactic apparatus by Donatella Carnevali

Publisher: Mursia, Milan

2001

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz

With engravings by Hayez

Preface by Attilio Brilli

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Petrini, Turin

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

2002

Kenilworth

With introduction by Giuseppe Bernardi

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz

With engravings by Hayez

Preface by Attilio Brilli

Publisher: Rizzoli, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Adapted by Mino Milani

Didactic apparatus by Donatella Carnevali

Publisher: Mursia, Milan

2003

Ivanhoe

With an essay by Antonio Faeti

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali
Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

2004**Rob Roy**

Edited by Patrizia Juvarra
Publisher: Principato, Milan

L'Antiquario

Translated by Fernando Ferrara with introduction by Enrico Groppali
With an essay by Giorgio Manganelli
Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Pugno with introduction by Carlo Pagetti
Publisher: La Repubblica, Rome

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz
With the engraving of Hayez
Publisher: BUR, Milan

La sposa di Lammermoor

Translated by Bice Onofri with introduction by Enrico Groppali
Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Marco Papi and Clara Ghibellini with introduction by Francesco Marroni
With an essay by Mario Praz
Publisher: Mondadori, Milan

Del soprannaturale nel romanzo fantastico

Edited by Carlo Bordini
Preface by Romolo Runcini
Publisher: L. Pellegrini, Cosenza

I due mandriani

Edited by Valentina Poggi
Preface by Remo Ceserani
Appendix: Comparatico by Luigi Capuana and Cavalleria rusticana by Giovanni Verga
Publisher: Sellerie, Palermo

2005**Ivanhoe**

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali
Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario
Preface by Attilio Brilli
Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

2006

Ivanhoe

Illustrated by Cosimo Musio

Adapted by M. Danesi

Publisher: Dami, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore

With an essay by Antonio Faeti

Publisher: Fabbri, Milan

2007

Ivanhoe

Translated by Ugo Dettore with introduction by Mario Praz

Publisher: BUR, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Laura Ferruta with introduction by Enrico Groppali

Publisher: Garzanti, Milan

Ivanhoe

Translated by Marco Papi and Clara Ghibellini with introduction by Francesco Marroni

With an essay by Mario Praz

Publisher: Oscar Mondadori, Milan

Rob Roy

Adapted by Michele Lombardi

Didactic apparatus by Maria Patrizia Gaddi

Publisher: Tagete, Viterbo

2008

Ivanhoe

Publisher: Mursia, Milan

Ivanhoe

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