The Eastern Tale in the English Novel

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This study focuses on one of the enormous developments of the eighteenth-century English novel: the Eastern tale.

In the late eighteenth century the stream of the novel broadened enormously. The developments that occurred in the novel were too diverse to be easily defined or described. Amid these later eighteenth –century developments, one was notable for attracting a large reading public: that was the Eastern tale

The Eastern tale (also called Oriental novel) is a class of story exotically set in the Middle or Far East, and varying greatly in tone and mood. The choice of an Oriental setting was a means of distancing and of arousing interest at the same time. In the second half of the eighteenth century and early part of the nineteenth centuries, there was a vogue for things Oriental. This interest in the East sprang for disillusionment with the increase in commercialism and rationalism at the time.