

## ABSTRACT

This thesis is an attempt to view the literature by Negroes in America from a literary point of view. Literary, because, although many articles and a few longer studies have been done on the "Negro Novel" in the United States, they have, for the most part, approached the literature from a sociological point of view and have tended to assess it as mere documentary on the Negro situation.

This dissertation, on the other hand, takes the view that all the literature - in this case predominantly the novels - by Negroes in America, should be judged artistically.

The study starts with the very first recorded novel by a Negro in the States and proceeds through the varying decades up to James Baldwin. It attempts to show the very marked development in technique and themes which has naturally resulted from the changing status and resulting confidence of the Negro himself. Consequently, the socio-economic background of the Negro as a minority group has not been entirely ignored. It has, however, been included only when it can further explain the literature as art.

James Baldwin is the culminating point of the study as, for this writer, Negro literature after Baldwin has begun to be re-shaped and re-assessed and a new trend is just beginning, which cannot fairly be analysed at present.