

ABSTRACT

In this study, an examination of some of the historical novels of the Spanish Caribbean is undertaken with a view to determining some of the major preoccupations and techniques used in the historical novel in this particular zone. While a special area of the novel within this geographical limitation has been selected for close examination, it is recognized that the historical novel of Spanish Caribbean literature shares some features with that of Spanish America as well it reflects the development of the Spanish Caribbean novel in general.

Accordingly, a review of the historical novel in Spanish American literature is considered equally necessary as the study of critical thinking with respect to the historical novel, which is attempted with the intention of establishing a theoretical framework for analysis of the individual novels. The option in favour of a broad and general definition is the result of our review of the widely divergent views of eminent thinkers. It is also the result of our concern to avoid formal definitions which carry inherent aesthetic criteria and premises prejudicial to our eventual conclusions. The dearth of firm critical opinion on this topic seems to be a strong argument in favour of adopting a flexible approach both in the choice of texts and in the methods of analysis.

This study is limited to an examination of some historical novels dealing with three easily identifiable periods of Caribbean history - the conquest, the colonial period, and the independence period. The body of this study is devoted to the close examination of individual texts, which are arranged according to the period depicted in an attempt to order novels of varying approaches and themes in a manner which seeks to highlight the literary response to particular stages of Caribbean history.

In conclusion, certain general comments on the nature and characteristics of the historical novel in Spanish Caribbean literature are postulated on the basis of the examination of the selected texts.