

Transformation of Landscape in the U.S Post-War Historical Novel.

Landscape has always been an important element of the American literature. It plays quite a particular role in historical fiction. In this kind of literature we distinguish two types of landscape: the first which we have called "historical" and which presents the exact description of the topography of the place, its streets and buildings, and the second one, called by us "fictitious", whose task is to convey the heroes' mood and state of mind.

The "historical" landscape is an integral part of the historical novel during the whole XX th century. Gettysburg of the Civil War from "Jim Mundy" by R. Fowler is easily recognized by the reader due to its detailed description in "Long Remember" by M. Kantor and "Köller-Angels" by M. Sharra. J. Boyd in his "Marching On" is historically true in the exact description of Wilmington, W. Edmonds is topographically correct in his restoration of the settlements of the Mohawk Valley. Vidal resurrects the streets of Washington and New York of the previous century in "Lincoln" and "1876", Auchincloss does the same to New York in his "Watchfires", and is true to the historical data.

In the U.S. historical novels of the 20-30-es both the types of landscape balance each other; but the post-war historical novel gives undeniable preference to the "historical" landscape. The "fictitious" landscape shows a marked tendency towards brevity, documentary exactness in which the author's invention is minimum. This transformation of the "fictitious" landscape testifies to the main tendency marking the development of the American post-war historical novel, the tendency towards the deceptive prevalence of fact over fiction, towards fiction being disguised as facts, as will be shown in the report.