

8-8-2011

The Development of the Rebellion Novel Genre in Nineteenth Century British Literature

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REBELLION NOVEL GENRE
IN NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITISH LITERATURE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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August 2011

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This dissertation is an argument for the existence of a previously unidentified rebellion novel genre. A close study of dozens of rebellion novels proved this to be true. The findings are a significant step in genre studies and in the general understanding of British novels with political purposes. This dissertation primarily focuses on the rebellion novels by Sir Walter Scott (*Waverley*, *Rob Roy*, *Black Dwarf*, *Tale of Old Mortality*, and *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*), Charles Dickens (*Barnaby Rudge: A Tale of the Riots of Eighty*, and *The Tale of Two Cities*), and Robert Louis Stevenson (*Kidnapped*, *David Balfour*, *Dynamiter*, *The Young Chevalier* and *Pentland Rising*), brushing over the rebellion novels of several other major nineteenth century authors. The category of rebellion novels is defined according to both linguistic (sentence and word structure, use of regional and class dialects and use of foreign languages) and structural (purpose, characters, setting, plot and generic) criteria. Genre is commonly studied either with structuralism or with linguistics, but it is illogical to separate linguistics from structure in a discussion of a literary category. In order to create a unified, single argument, I am focusing on the radical purpose rebellion novelists had in mind when they wrote rebellion novels, and I am extending the discussion of purpose into the linguistic and structural sections for each author, to explain subversive and radical politics at work even in the structural and linguistic elements of these works. Scott, Dickens and Stevenson used the tools of political literary propaganda to assist the poor, disenfranchised and periphery people that they identified with and hoped to see free from oppression and poverty.