

THE LIGHT AND DARK ROMANTIC FEATURES IN IRVING, HAWTHORNE AND POE

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Abstract

This study aims to highlight the characteristics of two of the subgenres of American Romanticism. The dark romanticism has been the most well known one unlike the Light romanticism. It is assumed that a comparative exploration of some works of both genres will help readers of literature to have a clearer overall idea for these two genres of the movement. Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* as being dark romantic works, and Washington Irving's *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of the Sleepy Hollow* as being Light romantic works are chosen to explore the elements of each trend in Romanticism.

Keywords: Light romanticism, dark romanticism, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Washington Irving

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Amerikan Romantik akımının iki alt türünün özelliklerini vurgulamaktır. Karamsar Romantizm (Dark Romanticism), İyimser Romantizm (Light Romanticism) kadar çok iyi bilinmemektedir. Her iki türe ait eserlerin karşılaştırılmasıyla, edebiyat okurlarına, romantik akımın bu alt türleri hakkında daha net bilgi verileceği düşünülmektedir. Karamsar Romantik tür için, Nathaniel Hawthorne'un *Kızıl Damga* (*The Scarlet Letter*) ve Edgar Allan Poe'nun *Usher Evinin Çöküşü* (*The Fall of the House of Usher*) adlı eserleri, İyimser Romantik tür için de Washington Irving'in *Rip Van Winkle* ve *Başsız Süvari* (*The Legend of the Sleepy Hollow*) adlı eserleri, bu türlerin öğelerinin incelenmesi için seçilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İyimser romantizm, karamsar romantizm, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Washington Irving

INTRODUCTION

The Romantic Movement originated in Germany and quickly spread to England, France, and reached America around the year 1820. There are many discussions of the term Romanticism; each of them explains the label to identify the movement including art, literature, music, philosophy, politics and culture in general. Having no simple definition, Romantic Movement, as generally agreed by most scholars, focuses on the individual, the subjective, and the spontaneous (Pennell, 2006, 2). Romantics encouraged contemplation and self-awareness, direct contact with nature, and a focus on and an exploration of inner feelings. Romanticism in America flourished along with the period of national expansion and the discovery of a distinctive American voice and identity. In America, as in Europe this new vision pervaded the art with an important difference: national identity and the surging idealism and passion of Romanticism nurtured the Romantic masterpieces. Kathryn VanSpanckeren* notes that it stressed individualism, affirmed the value of the common person, and looked to the inspired imagination for its aesthetic and ethical values.

Pre-1865 America went under industrial revolution which led to developments in many areas. After the Civil War, the nation entered a period of vast commercial expansion. Factories were built. Cities grew bigger, and fortunes were made. Americans, whether native-born or immigrants, earned more than ever before. They had more opportunities, more freedom. As a result, they felt patriotism, a trust in their country, which made them sure, that the U.S. was the greatest nation on earth. On the other hand, there was dissatisfaction with the problems caused by the industrialization and urbanization, as well. These developments during the Revolution, an artistic, literary and intellectual movement gained strength, which is called Romanticism with subgenres. The subgenres comprise three trends as light and dark romanticism, and the transcendentalism. It is good to remember some of the characteristics of Romanticism for a better understanding the subgenres:

* http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/lit/ch3_p1.htm (logged in 15 December, 2009)

1. Romanticism was a rebellion against the objectivity of rationalism.
2. For Romantics, the feelings, intuitions and emotions were more important than reason and common sense.
3. Romantics did not think of the world as a ticking watch made by God. They stressed the close relationship between man and nature.
4. They emphasized individualism, placing the individual against the group, against authority. They saw the individual at the very center of life and art. They emphasized personal freedom and freedom from formalism, tradition, and conformity.
5. They affirmed the inner life of the self, and wanted each person to be free to develop and express his own inner thoughts.
6. They cherished strong interest in the past, especially the medieval.
7. They were attracted by the wild, the irregular, the indefinite, the remote, the mysterious, and the strange.
8. They were interested in variety. They aspired the sublime and the wonderful, and tried to find the absolute, the ideal by transcending the actual.

Francis E. Skipp (1992, 23) draws five principal Romantic themes in American literature:

1. intuition (“the truth of the heart”) is more trustworthy than reason;
2. to express deeply felt experience is more valuable than to elaborate universal principles;
3. the individual is at the center of life and God is at the center of the individual;
4. nature is an array of physical symbols from which knowledge of the supernatural can be intuited; and
5. we should aspire to the Ideal, to changing what is to what ought to be.

In addition to Skipp’s list, some elements of Romantic subject matter were put forth by Paul P. Rueben¹. According to his list, we see escapism-from American problems, nature as source for the knowledge of the primitive, nature as revelation of God to the individual, interest in the past and finally characterization and mood as grotesque, gothicism, sense of terror, fear, use of the odd and queer. Rueben also noted Romantic attitudes as stress on emotion rather than reason, appeals to imagination and subjectivity in both form and meaning.

This study does not cover the transcendentalism but focuses on comparing the Light and dark romanticism. It has been noted that there are not many studies having intense debate on the Light romanticism. It is assumed that this study will offer a re-description and a different view on the subgenres of the Romanticism. There are some critics coining new terms for the movement like Morse Peckham. In his article “Toward the Theory of Romanticism”, he defines his term ‘negative romanticism’ as “the expression of the attitudes, feelings, and ideas of a man who has left static mechanism but has not yet arrived at a reintegration of his thought and art in terms of dynamic organicism”(1951, 15). Experiencing “a period of doubt, of despair, of religious and social isolation, of the separation of reason and the creative power, the negative romantic is able to see ‘neither beauty nor goodness in the universe, nor any significance, nor any rationality, nor indeed any order at all, not even evil order” (ibid., 20). These negative feelings are reflected in the characters created in the authors’ works. As Peckham states:

The typical symbols of negative romanticism are individuals who are filled with guilt, despair, and cosmic and social alienation. They are often presented, for instance, as having committed some horrible and unmentionable crime in the past. They are outcasts from men and from God; they are almost always wanderers on the face of the earth.

The other term used to define the opposite of the negative romanticism is the Positive Romanticism, as Eberhard Alsen puts forth. He puts the definition as “the ideological core of Positive Romanticism is a worldview that is grounded in philosophical idealism” (2000, 3). Alsen explains the positive romanticism shortly as “the imagination that reveals to the positive Romantics the spiritual world of essences beyond the physical world of appearances” (2000, 4).

The subgenres are explained by the critics as well seen in the above mentioned descriptions, but one cannot see the term ‘light’ used in defining the movement. Therefore, it is assumed that this paper is

¹ Reuben, Paul P. "Chapter 3: Early Nineteenth Century and Romanticism - A Brief Introduction " PAL: Perspectives in American Literature- A Research and Reference Guide. <http://www.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/chap3/3intro.html>

an attempt to offer a contribution to the field. The Light Romantics present individuals as good without evil whereas dark Romantics reflect them as inclined to sin and self-destruction. For the dark Romantics, individuals fail attempting to make changes for the better in their lives, while the Light ones believe the opposite. They emphasize that people cannot stop the changes but they should not forget the past. The dark Romantics stress what is wrong with humanity, the negative components of human life, not the positives unlike the Light Romantics. Their stories contain dark, creepy, gloomy and dreary tones mostly with unhappy ending. They deal with the personal weaknesses in one's character which is eventually led to tragedy. They focus on analyzing human life and psychology.

Garry Richard Thompson sums up the characteristics of the subgenre, writing:

Fallen man's inability fully to comprehend haunting reminders of another, supernatural realm that yet seemed not to exist, the constant perplexity of inexplicable and vastly metaphysical phenomena, a propensity for seemingly perverse or evil moral choices that had no firm or fixed measure or rule, and a sense of nameless guilt combined with a suspicion the external world was a delusive projection of the mind--these were major elements in the vision of man the Dark Romantics opposed to the mainstream of Romantic thought. (1974: 5)

Light Romantics are optimist because they had their solutions by turning to the past. To them in the past everything was nice, good. On the other hand, dark Romantics like Hawthorne and Poe, are realistic but not totally pessimistic. Light Romantics look for the past. They turn to the past to see the mistakes they have done. The dark Romantics see both good and bad things in the past and the future. Puritan heritage is some of the writers' main focus to criticize the past as in "the Scarlet Letter". They look ahead but distrust changes brought by the future. The Light Romantics solve the problems by searching for the past and the values in the past. Idealism in the Light Romantics cannot be seen in the dark ones. They do not search for utopias but they rely on a struggle for utopia.

Another feature of Dark Romanticism is its relation to Gothic fiction, which shares many conventions found in Dark Romantic works. It has common elements of darkness and the supernatural characters with sheer terror. Gothic's themes of dark mystery and skepticism regarding man can be found in Dark Romanticism, as well. These features cannot be observed in Light Romanticism.

THE WORKS INTERPRETED

This paper attempts to explore the characteristics of Light and dark romanticism in three American Romantic works. Washington Irving's "Rip Van Winkle" and "the Legend of Sleepy Hallow", Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter", and Edgar Allan Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" are chosen for this purpose. It is generally observed that Romantic heroes in these writings tend to be archetypal rather than well-rounded, realistic characters, and often meant to embody ideas rather than represent humanity. Their heavy involvement with nature helps identify them as Romantic heroes. They also reflect a relation to the past. The setting in all of them tends to be a blend of imagination and realism.

Washington Irving influenced the early stages of Romanticism in America through his descriptions of Nature's beauty, his utilization of gothic imagery, and his belief that man was inherently good. With all these traits, his works became a representative of Light Romanticism as a whole. His well known short story "Rip Van Winkle" is a classic American Romantic tale. The hero, Rip Van Winkle, illustrates several characteristics important to the ideal romantic hero. Both its setting and themes of the supernatural and fantasy, and nature are rampant in Romantic literature. The setting in Rip Van Winkle is marked by light romantic details such as vivid description of the mountain. "The mountains are clothed in blue and purple" (Irwing, 1993, 2). They are thick, exotic and seem unreal and imaginative. Rip does not like farm not because he is against it but he is lazy to work in the farm. Indeed he is in touch with nature. He very often goes into the forest. Rip is escaping from the materialism by climbing the mountains. His wife, Dame, forces him to work at home. She reminds him his responsibilities of home and children. The town was the oldest village survived. Rip represents the solution for the dissatisfaction of materialism by going to nature. The name of tradition, The Van Winkles, shows the fact of Light Romantics because the Light Romantics give importance to the past which is perfect. It is a sign of perfect past. Also Rip is very

good natured man. He helps others instead of doing house chores, and he is loved by children of the village.

One day he goes up to the mountain with his dog for hunting in the woods. At the top, he meets several Dutch gnomes dressed in old-fashioned Dutch. Later they invite him to go to a hollow in which a company of odd-looking personages play at ninepins. Rip drinks their magic liquor and falls asleep for twenty years. He awakens not realizing the length of his sleeping, and returns to his village. The village has changed greatly. When Rip left his home for climbing, his home was still a part of an English colony; now the country is an independent republic. People have been discussing about politics in this new republic, so it confuses Rip. Moreover, he cannot find his old friends, his neighbors, and even his home. All houses were different now. So he goes to identity crisis. Time is election, the portrait is different and the governor now is George Washington. Shortly, this story is about America that undergoes some dramatic changes. America's identity has changed. But there are several hints that nothing essential has changed as Dekker states. He states that the funniest one is that the rubicund countenance on the inn sign, formerly identified as that of George the Third, is the same except that it is now surrounded with suitably republican appurtenances and labeled "GENERAL WASHINGTON" (1990, 115-116).

Beneath the comic appearance of this story, signs of decay, sterility and impotence indicate that it deals with the loss or surrender of manhood. While Rip drinks too much and "falls into a deep sleep" which lasted 20 years, he exchanges the best years of his life for a peaceful old age. Meanwhile his friends (compatriots) fight a war, and establish a new nation. This supernatural element depicted in the story is a light romantic approach. This motif in "Rip Van Winkle" is a physical impossibility also observed in Irving's other story "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."

Rip sees his idle son and speaks to his daughter, and an old woman identifies Rip. At the end he becomes a village celebrity and is ready to tell his strange story to anyone who will listen. In other words, Rip survives by talking about his past: "If we want to live in a modern society, we must carry values in the past to the present." At this point, the main theme arises in the story: Irving says that we cannot stop changes but we should never forget our past. Radical changes are necessary to move the country for better but old ways and traditions should not be entirely abolished. Societies are better to survive with an amalgam of the old and the new values. This theme is depicted in the moment when Rip sees his son, Rip II, now a grown man, who looks just like him, and her daughter who is holding the baby—Rip III. Cummings interprets the moment as: "thus, though the change has come to the village, their remains link with the past; there is continuity. New generations come along that bring change, but old values and traditions—as well as family lines—remain alive and thriving. And, every now and then, thunder rumbles in the Catskills when Hudson and his crew play ninepins" (2000).

The story begins with a detailed romantic description of the Catskill (or Kaatskill in Dutch language) Mountains through "magical hues and shapes" (Irving, 1993, 2). Other light romantic elements in the story are emphasized: love of land, nature, people, and good relations with them. These are the values of the past which are not seen in the new system anymore. This is an indirect way to criticize the new developments of the industrial revolution. Rip is completely opposite of the ideal believed in working hard and saving money. Industrial economy and capitalist system emerged individualism in a competitive society where people are forced to have primary purpose in their lives to earn more and to spend more. Thus, Rip is described as the opposite of this new system; he is lazy according to the criteria of the new society but, on the other hand, he is loved by children in the village. He also helps his neighbors.

Based on a German folktale and set in the Dutch culture of Pre-Revolutionary War in New York State, "The Legend of the Sleepy Hollow" is a light romantic story as "Rip Van Winkle". In "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," there is a strong supernatural theme throughout, which is also supported with some details in the setting. The Headless Horseman, for instance, was a physically impossible creature. It seems a spectral hallucination. The setting supports the elements of Romanticism: nature is vividly and magically described. Magical colors are used: "purple and blue". Magical words are used to describe nature: "a drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land..." (Irving, 2003, 2).

Another Light Romantic characteristic that manifested itself in Irving's Sleepy Hollow is that all human beings are supposed to be inherently good. In "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," Irving describes

Brom Bones as a "burly, roaring, roystering blade" (1995, 19). Brom does not earn his living through a proper occupation or work; therefore one can expect him to make his living by thuggery or robbery. However, Brom is portrayed as a harmless prankster like Rip Van Winkle, who does not work but spends all his time having fun with the kids in the town. Yet, the striking humane point in Rip is that he "would never refuse to assist a neighbor in the roughest toil" (ibid., 53).

Sleepy Hollow is a small town in the East in which everything remained same although there are many changes in other parts of country. In the town, customs, manners, ways of living, population did not change. Ichobad is silly-looking, funny, a wise man (teacher), pleasant character, loved by everybody. He was grown up in Connecticut. He is Easterner, so he is a city person, representing city life and higher education. Now, he is blending into the country life. He brings them education, and we see at that time the changes of 19th. c. He brings these changes to the Sleepy Hollow. Town people accept him only as a country man not a city man. Although he is a country man, he tries to adopt the town life. He helps them, and he enjoys listening to the local tales and he strictly believes in them. He is under the influence of the tales. One of the reasons of his helping them that the country is not interested in the education, so he tries to be accepted as useful and agreeable. He moves from the East to Sleepy Hollow. So here arise two questions: can he survive in the country and can modern man be improved by traditional society? Also Ichobad and Brom represent a struggle between modern and traditional life. Ichobad, as being a new man, city man, brings materialistic changes to the town, whereas Brom, as being country, rustic, old man, represents the traditions. They both love Katrina, but Ichobad always visits her house. He loves her for her money. Brom does love her indeed and he will keep her in Sleepy Hollow but Ichobad won't. He wants to go the West with her when she marries Kathrina. It will be good that they will go to the West blending a new and an old tradition if married, but Ichobad has negative values due to the moral corruption caused by the machine age in the late 19th century. It is his mistake loving her for money. His love is materialistic based. He represents all these city elements that are spoiled. Is Ichobad advocating that all go to the past? Here the solution is presented for the conflicts of the society but Sleepy Hollow is not a Utopia. The solution is to blend country life with city life. However Ichobad has many values. Irving shows us a solution which is in the merge. Wit failed because he made many mistakes. He wanted to use her for his own purposes.

Unlike Light Romantics, the Dark Romantic authors are defined by a pessimistic view of the natural world as a place that is dark, decaying, and mysterious. When it reveals truth to man, its revelation is evil and hellish. They describe dark fantasy worlds and have cynical characters. The darker side of human psychology is explored. They examine the psychological effects of guilt and sin, the conflict between good and evil, and people plagued with madness. They are also known as realistic, which means they are both pessimistic and optimistic. They do not believe in Utopia but a struggle for it. They look ahead but at the same time distrust changes brought by the future. They distaste the past unlike the light Romantics. Strong use of images and symbols is the most striking element in their works.

Following the above mentioned characteristics of the Dark romanticism, we can see dark features in "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "The Scarlet Letter." "The Fall of the House of Usher" represents Dark Romanticism. It has the strong symbolic representation of nature both in the description of the house and the surrounding with the storm. Poe uses the setting to establish a gloomy mood and to foreshadow dark future events. He also uses symbols to help understand the theme. For instance, Poe describes the setting in the house as "I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity- an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn- a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible and leaden-hued" (Poe, 1986, 92). In fact, the first effect the narrator brings to the story is very good example for Romanticism when he describes how the weather was the day he arrived at the house of Usher. He says "During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens..." He uses "dark, dull and soundless day" in autumn that might stand for death coming. The house is, on the other, described with some Gothic elements as "dark with bleak walls, vacant eye-like windows, a few trunks of decayed trees" (ibid., 90). At the very beginning readers can feel the pessimistic and dark mood as the narrator feels. He says that "a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit" (ibid., 90). The effects of the house make his imagination start to see things as if they were really there. Here, it can be asserted that Poe creates the perfect line between imagination and reality, which is one of the characteristics of the romanticism.

In addition to the line between imagination and reality, Poe includes elements of the supernatural, too. Madeline goes into a coma-like state and is buried alive. The narrator visits her where she is locked in a casket. This is highly unbelievable but it helps Poe's story as being a Dark Romantic. Another example of the Romantic feature of supernatural elements is the destruction of the house. It is collapsed in the storm at the same time that Roderick dies. The Usher bloodline is destroyed for ever with the destruction of the house. The coincidence seems unbelievable for a realistic story.

"The Fall of the House" features Poe's interest in exploring the psychology of humanbeing, and the self-destructive and persevere nature of the conscious and subconscious mind. Dark Romantic authors like Poe believed that man was born basically evil, and that humans must struggle their whole lives to keep their evil nature from overtaking them. In this story, Roderick is in a battle against the powers of evil (psychological issues and his sister who is not in control of herself).

On the other hand, the dark emotional tone, feelings of doom, fear and guilt pervade throughout the story especially on Roderick Usher, who suffers from a mental illness. It eventually leads him to bury his sister alive. For him his sister Madeline is a symbol of his fear of death, and also her name stands for madness. Another dark symbol used in the story is the painting. He paints a tunnel that stands again for death. Lastly, the narrator mentions a "fissure", which literally means a crack or a fracture, in the foundation of the Usher house. It is symbolic of the "cracks" in the Usher family. The last Ushers, Roderick and Madeline, are flawed just like the house, and therefore neither can survive.

In "The Scarlet Letter", Nathaniel Hawthorne, as being a dark romantic, seems to criticize the past, which is marked with Puritanism. Skipp (1992, 32) asserts that Hawthorne finds his materials in the New England Puritan past.² The Scarlet Letter is about the puritan punishment of sexual sin, and it is a treatment of the destroying effects of sin on the human spirit. He takes particular interest in human psychology and the nature of evil like his contemporaries Melville and Poe. Evil is coincided with Puritanism. He depicts the themes of guilt and sin that are qualities inherent in man. Chillingworth, Dimmesdale and Hester Prynne are the characters of these themes in the novel. Chillingworth tries to understand the nature of sin in human while Dimmesdale endures the feeling of the guilt, which Chillingworth sneakily gives efforts to explore in a Puritan environment. Hawthorne himself has mistrust feelings about his ancestors of Puritan heritage.³ In his autobiographical sketch, Hawthorne described his ancestors as "dim and dusky," "grave, bearded, sable-cloaked, and steel crowned," "bitter persecutors" whose "better deeds" would be diminished by their bad ones. There can be little doubt of Hawthorne's disdain for the stern morality and rigidity of the Puritans, and he imagined his predecessors' disdainful view of him: unsuccessful in their eyes, worthless and disgraceful. Their intolerance and lack of humanity becomes the subject of his novel.

Hawthorne, like Poe, makes extensive use of symbols and sometimes uses metaphors of everyday objects seen in moonlight to give a sense of romanticism. In The Custom-House section of the book, he describes the room with the moonlight falling down onto the carpet. The moonlight filtered through the window constitutes a combination of reality and imagination, which leads us to the core of the romanticism. The description of the meteor and the red letter A seen in the sky also work to help the Romantic aspect if they are real or unreal. Like the other Dark Romantics, Hawthorne, too, uses the supernatural and the mysterious. His symbols, like the scarlet letter A, the scaffold, the comet, Hester's house, the forest, the rosebush in the front gate of the prison, which is believed that Anne Hutchinson stepped on and it was grown, and Pearl, are the hints of the supernatural, the unreal or the uncommon. These symbols are also Hawthorne's concern, as a dark romantic, of the human conflict between heart and head, soul and intellect, human nature and Puritanism, and the past and the present. He writes that an unpardonable sin is "a want of love and reverence for the Human Soul; in consequence of which, the

² In relation to this statement, Skipp explains themes in Hawthorne's works as:

- The past, therefore, is a force living in the present.
- As we could expect from the deep Puritan concern with moral conduct, Hawthorne's work shows sin and its attendant guilt to be an inextricable part of life, and all men and women to share an inclination toward evil.
- If we yield to this inclination and conceal the deed, our secret guilt can destroy us. Our deed confessed and expiated, we can grow in virtue and find redemption.
- The unpardonable sin is the invasion of the sanctity of another person's soul, through that invasion to bend the person to our will.

³ ("http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Scarlet_Letter")

investigator pried into its dark depths, not with a hope or purpose of making it better, but from a cold philosophical curiosity,--content that it should be wicked in whatever kind or degree, and only desiring to study it out. Would not this, in other words, be the separation of the intellect from the heart" (Bell, 1962, 176).

His use of allusions to the Black Man and the descriptions of Mistress Hibbins as a witch are good examples, too. Mistress Hibbins invites Hester to "dance with the dark man" in the forest. The forest is revealed as somewhat witchlike place, which is another romantic nature symbol. However, the forest is a place safe for Hester where she lives her womanhood freely without the oppression of Puritan rules which disregard the human nature.

CONCLUSION

The late eighteenth century makes America economically wealthier. However, the rising materialism causes disillusionment. The materialistic values and inequities of American society emerge the dissatisfaction, and American Romanticism gains strength. The changes caused by the industrial revolution pushed the writers in their inner being and then they used symbols and imagination to express their feelings. They escaped from the cities to nature. The literary and philosophical theory sees the individual at the center of life, and thus, it places the individual at the center of art. It also sees in nature a reflection of Truth that is God. Romanticism seeks to find the actual reality through intuition. There are two subgenres of the movement, which are the light and the dark romanticism. The light romanticism is not an often used term to describe authors like Washington Irving, whereas the dark romanticism is more used term especially for those like Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville. These subgenres share similar characteristics but there are striking differences. The light Romantics are optimist because they have their solutions unlike the dark Romantics. They are both pessimist and optimist, thus, they are somehow realistic Romantics. The other difference is that for the Light Romantics, past is perfect as well seen in Irving's stories, whereas like Hawthorne, the dark Romantics are not happy with their past. One can observe love and hate via the past in their works, for instance the dissatisfaction with the Puritan heritage in *The Scarlet Letter*. Therefore, a sweeping idealism cannot be seen in them as in the Light Romantics' works. The Light Romantics solve the problems of the society by searching the past. A comparative exploration of the stories in this study indicates these features. Ultimately, the works discussed in this paper have come to be viewed as emblematic of dark and light subgenres of the Romantic era.

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