



## The Genre of Dark Romanticism

Ritu Rathee, 1014A, Sector-1, Rohtak

**Abstract :** This study is an attempt to highlight the salient features of dark romanticism, also highlighting its most eminent writers and bringing about a contrast in their writing methodology and viewpoints, with respect to other writers.

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Dark romanticism is a literary sub genre of romanticism, reflecting popular fascination with irrational, the demonic and grotesque. Often confused with Gothicism, it had shadows romantic movement felt its 18th century beginning. Edgar Allan Poe is the supreme exponent of this tradition. Romanticism valued emotions, beliefs as more important facts or logic and individuality comes first worshipping nature where is dark romanticism was different from them emphasising on human fallibility.

**Keywords:** Sub genre, Irrational, Demonic, Grotesque, Gothicism, and Exponent.

### Introduction

During 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, national literature of various Western countries went through an evolution of different movements. The Dark Romanticism which was the literary sub genre of Romanticism exploded into the existence during these movements. Dark Romanticism was such a perennial possibility within the broader movement in both literature and art. Like romanticism, Dark Romanticism began in Germany with an intense fascination with melancholia, insanity, crime and shady atmosphere. It involved ghosts and ghouls, the grotesque and irrational. “Dark romanticism emphasised on emotions and individualism, as well as glorification of all the past and nature, referring to medieval rather than the classical. Dark romanticism was given such a form grotesque”, by literary theorist Mario Praz in his lengthy study of the genre published in 1930, 'The romantic age'. (1)

According to the critic G R Thomson, “Romantics adopted the images of anthropomorphised Evil in the form of Saturn devil, ghosts, Werewolves, vampires and Ghosts as emblematic of human nature”. (2)

He sums up the characteristics of the sub genre, writing:

“Fallen man's inability fully to comprehend Haunting reminders of another Supernatural real and that yet seems not to exist, the constant perplexity of inexplicable and vastly metaphysical phenomena, a propensity for seemingly purpose or Evil moral... A sense of nameless guilt combined with suspicion on the external world was delusive projection of the mind these were the major elements and the vision of man the dark romantics opposed to the mainstream of romantic thought.” (3)

According to the dark romantics even good men and women drift towards sin and self destruction and there can be unintended consequences that arise from well intended social reforms.

### Dark Romanticism and Transcendentalism

Dark romanticism also emerged from Transcendentalist movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century America, who felt perfection and their own divinity as innate qualities of mankind and dark romantics believed that humans gravitate to evil and self the general. The genre dealt with realism on fallibility of sin, psychological effects of guilt and sin. The ever Dark Side of the romantics is the inclusion of Gothic literature that involves sheer terror, personal torment, graphic morbidity and the supernatural.

The Transcendental philosophical movement was protest against the general state culture and Society at the time. They believed in the intellectualism at Howard and the doctrines of Unitarian church. The belief, that an ideal, spiritual state 'transcends' the physical and empirical forms only through individual initiation and not by religious norms.