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# Romanticism Debated

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## Abstract

Arthur Lovejoy, the influential American philosopher, argues that the word Romanticism "offers one of the most complicated, fascinating, and instructive of all problems in semantics." This is because we have many paradoxical varieties and definitions of Romanticism. This paper discusses some key perspectives of Romanticism during the twentieth century, incorporating Arthur Lovejoy, Rene Wellek and Morse Peckham. It calls attention to their critical and conceptual perceptions of Romanticism and holds them as particularly the most important and, perhaps, the most realistic assessments of Romanticism in the history of the literary theory. Through the perceptions of those three scholars, the paper discusses the various and truly paradoxical interpretations of Romanticism and concludes by saying that the difficulties of having a multitude of incongruent assessments of Romanticism explains why we do not have a theory that speaks of a Romanticism with a unified and precise nature and not of a plurality of truly paradoxical romanticisms. Indeed, those paradoxical and many interpretations render the very concept of Romanticism impossible to define up to this day.

**Key words:** Romanticism; Romanticisms; Theory of romanticism; Arthur Lovejoy; Rene Wellek; Morse Peckham

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The issue whether Romanticism has or has not a precise unified nature has been debated passionately and also distinctly throughout the literary history. Despite those many debates, it is still difficult to agree on a definition of Romanticism. In his book of 1992, Watson holds that Romanticism is "not easy" to define "in general terms" (1). From my own perspective, the most notable of such passionate debates are included in three very competitive and well-known essays in the literary history of Romanticism. The first article is that of the American philosopher, Arthur Lovejoy, of 1924, *On the Discrimination of Romanticisms.*[1] The second is that of Rene Wellek: *The Concept of Romanticism in Literary History*,[2] of 1949. Finally, there is Morse Peckham's article of 1952 *Toward a Theory of Romanticism.*[3] These articles are representational and interactive arguments on the definition of Romanticism. In this essay I intend to present the reading, interpretation and understanding of each of these three critics and scholars of Romanticism. I intend to show how the nature of Romanticism has been perceived and debated from those three divergent perspectives throughout the literary history.

Arthur Lovejoy has written one of the most important and, perhaps, most realistic assessments of Romanticism in the history of the literary theory. The famous essay of 1924 *On the Discrimination of Romanticisms* composes an impressive combination of details and research in the various origins and definitions

[1]The article was first published in *PMLA* 29, 1924. It was reprinted in Abrams, 1960: 3-24.
[2]This article was published in Wellek's book of 1963 Concepts of Criticism, 128-198. See also Wellek's article Romanticism Reexamined also printed in Concepts of Criticism 1963: 199-221.
[3]Peckham's essay was first published in PMLA, LXVI, 1952. It was reprinted in 1966 in *British Romantic Poets: Recent Evaluations*, Ed. Kumar. 1-21.

of the sense of Romanticism. In my opinion, Lovejoy refocuses and redefines Romanticism in a completely unexpected way demanding students of Romanticism to rethink its canonical assessments. At the beginning of the essay, Lovejoy talks about how in 1824 a group of respected scholars began an enterprise to discover "what Romanticism is" by "collecting definitions and characterizations" assigned to this term "by eminent authorities." Lovejoy was later invited to speak on this interesting enterprise of these scholars, in other words, he was asked to display "the varieties of the definitions of Romanticism"; to reveal the assortments of what he called this "Centennial Exposition", which, he says, are "the fruits of a hundred years' industry on the part of literary critics and professors of modern literature" (Lovejoy, 1924, p.3). Drawing upon the collected definitions and characterizations of the term Romanticism during the past one hundred and twenty years, Lovejoy strongly maintains that there is an "apparent incongruity of the senses in which the term Romanticism is employed." He, sarcastically, narrates "by means of random samples," as he says, some of "strangely assorted" ancestors or origins of Romanticism according to different critics and scholars:

"From M. Lassere and many others," we learn "that Rousseau was the father of it (Romanticism)."

From "Mr. Russell and Mr. Santayana, that honor of paternity might be plausibly claimed by Immanuel Kant."

"From M. Seilliere that its grandfathers were Fenelon and Madam Guyon."

"From Professor Babbitt that its earliest well-identified forbear was Francis Bacon."

"From Mr. Gosse that it originated in the bosom of the Reverend Joseph Warton"

"From the late Professor Ker that it had its beginnings in the 17th –century or a little earlier in such books as 'the Arcadia or the Grand Cyrus'."

"From J.E.G. de Montmorency that it was born in the eleventh century and sprang from that sense of aspiration which runs through the Anglo-Norman Renaissance"

From Professor Grieson that St. Paul's irruption into Greek religious thought and Greek prose was an essential example of a romantic movement, though the first great Romantic was Plato."

"From Mr. Charles Whibley that the Odyssey is romantic in its texture and essence, but that with its revival, Romanticism was born in the Garden of Eden and that the Serpent was the first romantic" (ibid).

What is worse according to Lovejoy is his point that "many of these originators of Romanticism," work also "on other lists as initiators or representatives of precisely the contrary sort" (ibid: 4).

Lovejoy then speaks of some of the strangely-assorted attributes and senses assigned to Romanticism over the years. He ironically states that Romanticism "offers one of the most complicated, fascinating, and instructive of all problems in semantics" (ibid: 8).

For Professor Ker, "Romanticism was 'the fairy way of writing […] the romantic implies reminiscence: the romantic schools have always depended more or less on the past." "But Prof. Schelling tells us that the classic temper studies the past, the romantic temper neglects it; … it leads forward and creates new precedents."

"For Mr. Gosse, it is inconsistent with keeping to the facts."

For Mr. Eccles the romantic system of ideas is the direct source of the realistic error, of the tendency to conceive of psychology as the dry notation of purely physiological phenomena and consequently to reduce the novel and the drama to the description of the automaton-like gestures of la bete humaine."

"Mr. Geoffrey Scott finds its most typical form to be the cult of the extinct."

"While for some of the French Romantic critics of the 1820s and 1830s, the slogan of the movement was *il faut etre de son temps*."

"Mr. Paul Elmer More defines Romanticism as the illusion of beholding the infinite within the stream of nature itself, instead of apart from that stream- in short, as an apotheosis of the cosmic flux."

German Romanticism is embodied in the "typical Romantic utterances" of Friedrich Schlegel ' alles Sichtbare hat nur die Wahrheit einer Allegorie,' and those of Goethe ' alles Vengängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis'"

"For a recent German author, the deepest thing in Romanticism is 'eine Religion die dieses Leben hasst… Romantik will die gerade Verbindung des Menchlichen mit dem Uberirdischen.'"

"From M. Seilliere's most celebrated work it appears that the Romantic mind tends to be affected with an inferiority complex […] from other passages of the same writer we learn that Romanticism is the imperialistic mood, whether in individual or in nations – a too confident assertion of the will-to-power, arising from the mystic feeling that one's activities have the advantages of a celestial alliance."

"The function of the human mind which is to be regarded as peculiarly romantic is for some the heart as opposed to the head."

"For others, the imagination, as contrasted with Reason and the Sense of Fact," which Lovejoy thinks are only "ways of expressing a by no means synonymous pair of psychological antithesis."

Notable representative expressions of "the spiritual essence of Romanticism" exhibit "a passion for moonlight, for red waistcoats, for Gothic churches, for futurist paintings; for talking exclusively about oneself, for hero-worship, for losing oneself in an ecstatic contemplation of nature" (ibid: 4-5).

In addition to the incongruity of the origins of Romanticism and the attributes assigned to it by eminent scholars, Lovejoy also composes another "strangely-assorted" list of "(an) extraordinary number and still more

extraordinary diversity of the descendents," (ibid: 6) or products of Romanticism over the years:

> It is by different historians –sometimes by the same historians- supposed to have begotten the French Revolution and the Oxford Movement, the Return to Rome and the Return to the State of Nature, the philosophy of Hegel, the philosophy of Schopenhauer, and the philosophy of Nietzsche- than which few other philosophies more nearly exhaust the rich possibilities of philosophic disagreement, the revival of neo-platonic mysticism in a Coleridge or an Alcott, The Emersonian transcendentalism, the scientific materialism; Wordsworth and Wilde; Newman and Huxley; the Waverley novels in the *Comdie Humaine* and *Les Rougon-Maccquart* (ibid: 5-6).

According to Lovejoy, the consequence of the incongruent and, on the whole, the contrasting collections is "a confusion of terms, and of ideas." Lovejoy adds that "the word 'Romantic' has come to mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing. It has ceased to perform the function of a verbal sign" (ibid: 6).

Lovejoy names this chaos of terminology and of thought which Romanticism; or rather the "undiscriminating" views of scholars of Romanticism cause an "aesthetic" malady, "dangerously" misdiagnosed. To him, this confusion of thought is even "the scandal of literary history and criticism," "copiously productive of historical errors."

To sort out or to remove this malady of confusion, Lovejoy suggests two possible remedies, "which if carried out more thoroughly and more carefully […] would promote a clearer understanding" of what Romanticism actually is (ibid: 7). First, to show "how such manifold and discrepant phenomena have all come to receive one name" the student of Romanticism must "trace the associative processes through which the word 'romantic' has attained its present amazing diversity, and consequent uncertainty, of connotation and denotation." The other solution according to Lovejoy, consists of two steps, the "first step on the second mode of treatment of the disorder is that we should learn to use the word 'Romanticism' in the plural." In other words, since "the Romanticism of one country may have little in common with that of another," Lovejoy calls for dividing or discriminating Romanticisms, but not as he says upon lines of nationality or language. The student of Romanticism must recognize a diversity or "plurality of Romanticisms, of possibly quite distinct thought-complexes—a number of which may appear in one country based upon various historic episodes or movements." Lovejoy strongly opposes studies, which assume that Romanticism is the "designation of some single real entity" (ibid: 8), for, to him, there are several various things named Romanticism by various scholars and that the same name has been assigned to all of these various and sometimes contrasting movements is no strong support that these movements share the same essence or that they are "identical in essentials" (ibid: 9).

The essential step of the second remedy that Lovejoy proposes to encounter the confusion that surrounds Romanticism, which he described in impressive details, is that after discriminating various Romanticisms, not as he says, on the basis of their nationality or language, but in consideration of "their representatives or their dates." Once this becomes established, then each episode or movement must be analyzed into its components—"into several ideas." Lovejoy asserts that this shall enable the student of Romanticism to assess the affinity or resemblance of each episode of the various Romanticisms to one another. In other words, this will grant the student of Romanticisms to see and evaluate what is "common to any two or more of them, and wherein they manifested distinct and divergent tendencies" (ibid: 10). According to Lovejoy, after this and only this, one can speak of a clearly defined Romanticism.

As a clear case in the point of confusion in the thinking on Romanticism, Lovejoy cites the conception of "romantische Poesie" (romantic poetry, my translation) of Friedrich Schlegel and his German fellow romanticists against Joseph Warton's poem *"The Enthusiast: The Lover of Nature."* Lovejoy states that Warton's Poem of 1740 "*The Enthusiast,"* which according to Edmund Gosse is the first clear manifestation of the great Romantic movement" seems, at first, to have "plainly common elements" with Schlegel's notion of the "romantische Poesie." In other words, to Lovejoy, both appear as "forms of revolt against the neo-classical aesthetics; both are partly inspired by an ardent admiration for Shakespeare; both proclaim the creative artist's independence of rules" (ibid). Lovejoy holds that "these two Romanticisms" appear identical in essence only for an instant. For "a closer analysis and a more vigilant "scrutiny" of the two Romanticisms reveals with no doubt, a disparity or sharp "contrast" between the two (ibid).

Lovejoy states "naturalism and Gothicism became allied in the 18th century" (ibid: 14). Warton's *The Enthusiast* "boldly applied the doctrine of the superiority of nature over conscious art to the theory of poetry" (ibid: 11). It is a classic example of "the so-called Romanticism before the 1790s—a Romanticism […] based on naturalism […] and associated with primitivism" (ibid; 14). According to Lovejoy, the Romanticism in Warton's poem differs essentially form that of the German theories of "romantische Poesie" in that "the latter Romanticism is in the very essence a denial of the older naturalistic presuppositions, which Warton's poem has manifested" (ibid). German Romantic theories are essentially based upon "Schiller's essay "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry" which holds that "harmony with nature, in any sense which implied an opposition to culture, to art, to reflection and self-conscious effort, was neither possible nor desirable for the modern man or the modern artist" Schiller criticized "those poets whom it is customary to represent as carefree nurslings of nature, without art

and without schooling." Lovejoy, holds that to Schlegel, for instance, Shakespeare is 'wie der Mittlepunkt der romantischen Kunst" (the central point of the romantic art. My translation) He "was no gifted child of nature addicted to 'warblings wild" "The greatness of Shakespeare in the eyes of German Romantics like Schlegel and Schiller "lay in his Universalität (universality), his sophisticated insight into the human nature and the many-sidedness of his portrayal of character" (ibid: 15).

After this impressive and perhaps convincing argument, Lovejoy maintains that the distinction or difference between these two Romanticisms "is more significant, more pregnant" than their "likeness." It is plausibly a big difference

> between the assertion of the superiority of ' nature' over 'art' and that of the superiority of conscious art over mere 'nature'; between a way of thinking of which primitivism is of the essence and one of which idea of perpetual self-transcendence is of the essence; between a fundamental preference for simplicity […] and a fundamental preference for diversity and complexity […] between the Romanticism which is but a special and belated manifestation of the naturalism that had flourished since the Renaissance[…] and the Romanticism which began at the end of 18th century in German. (Ibid: 16)

From this comparison, it becomes clear that the problem of Romanticism according to Lovejoy is that the canonical assumptions of giving both the "naturalistic and the anti-naturalistic," the same name of Romanticism has caused an "unconscious falsification of the history of ideas" clearly because "the elements of one Romanticism tend to be read into the other; the nature and profundity of their oppositions" are more often than not, disregarded; "and the relative importance of the different changes of preconceptions in modern thought, and of susceptibilities in modern taste, tends to be wrongly estimated" (Ibid) To sum up, what is called Romanticism to Lovejoy, is in fact a diversity of complexes composed of exceedingly conflicting ideas and themes yet are listed under the same and one designation, that of Romanticism. These conflicting ideas become clear only by means of a more careful analysis of the episodes of Romanticism. To solve this dilemma is "the task of the historian of ideas in literature" who before applying any designation must "become acquainted" with such components (ibid: 23).

From Lovejoy's article it seems that Romanticism is a notoriously and extremely difficult phenomenon to define. However, Watson maintains that although "Lovejoy's essay had a considerable influence it did not stop people from talking about Romanticism" (Watson, 1992, p.4).

Twenty-five years after the publication of Lovejoy's *On The Discriminations of Romanticisms* in 1924, Rene Wellek, who may be called the advocate of a unified European Romantic movement, took up the challenge to encounter Lovejoy's emphasis on the diversity, or rather, incongruity of the senses of Romanticism. In his essay, Wellek clearly states that his major intention is to challenge Lovejoy's thesis. He proposed "to show that the major romantic movements form a unity of theories, philosophies and style and these in turn, form a coherent group of ideas each of which implicates the other" (Wellek 1960, p.129).

Although he cites many examples from the early literary history on when and by whom the term romantic was used, Wellek agrees with Lovejoy that the origins of Romanticism are not exactly identified, since he admits that it is "difficult to ascertain when, for the first time, a work of literature and which works were designated as "romantic" (ibid: 130). However, Wellek seems certain that the term "romantic poetry" was used in different parts of Europe at various times yet it always referred to the same entity.

> The term "romantic poetry" was used first of Ariosto and Tasso and the medieval romances from which their themes and "machinery" their derived. It occurs in this (same) sense in France in 1669, in England in 1674, and certainly Warton understood it to mean this when he wrote his introductory dissertation to his *History of English Poetry* (1774), "The Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe. (ibid)

Wellek holds that Warton's concept of Romanticism involves a contrast with the ancient, and with the "artificial and popular poetry" (ibid: 132). He asserts that the Romanticism of Warton, which Lovejoy displayed in *The Enthusiastic* as mere naturalism associated with primitivism, is different from what Lovejoy thought. Wellek believes it is true that Warton admired Shakespeare. He admired him essentially because the "natural poetry of Shakespeare" is "unconfined by rules", for instance of the "French Classical tragedy" (Ibid). In other words, Warton and the naturalists admired Shakespeare but not because he was a "child of nature addicted to 'warblings wild'" (Lovejoy, 1924, p.15). In Wellek's point of view, Warton's Romanticism does not mean mere primitivism and naturalism as Lovejoy suggested, it is in the first place, a clear stand against the classical antiquity in literature and art.

Wellek traces the term "romantic" and its derivatives in the literary history across Europe. He maintains, "the terms "romantic" and "romanticism," though late by the dates of their introduction, were everywhere understood in approximately the same sense and are still useful as terms for the kind of literature produced after neoclassicism" (ibid: 160). In Germany, Wellek believes, that the term "romantic" appeared as early as 1766 to refer to the same English sense of "romantic." "The learning, information, and terminology of Warton and his English contemporaries" were used in Germany, for instance by "Herder" (ibid: 132) Wellek argues that the usage of the term "romantisch" in Germany is "substantially identical with Warton's except that its realm has been expanded […] (to refer to) all poetry written in a tradition differing from that descended from classical antiquity" (ibid: 133).

According to Wellek, the terms "classical and romantic" refer to the "naïve" and "sentimental,"

which were invented by Schiller. He maintains that "the Schlegels merely named these terms "classical and romantic" (ibid: 133). Although the term romantic which "spread from Germany in all directions" expanded more and more, it always echoed Schlegel in the sense that it preserved one essence that of the appeal for the modern against the classical.

In France, Wellek holds that "Dante and Shakespeare are spoken of as "sustaining la Romantique" and the new spiritual sect in Germany is praised because it favors "La Romantique" (ibid: 138).

In Italy, "Tasso is one of the poets called "romantic," and the famous contrast between classical poetry and romantic poetry as that between the poetry of the dead and the living is suggested" (ibid: 142).

In Spain, the terms "classical" and "romantic" occurred in newspapers as early as 1881, once with as specific reference to Schlegel"(ibid: 144).

In Russia, Pushkin, described his poem "Prisoner form the Caucasus as a "romantic" in 1821 and in the following year, Vyazemsky, reviewed this poem to "discuss the contrast between the new romantic poetry and the poetry still adhering to the rules 47" (ibid: 145).

In England, Wellek maintains, "an extensive study of medieval romances and romantic fiction" started after Warton. Wellek also acknowledges the role of Madame de Stael in popularizing the distinction "romantic" and "classical" as derived from Schlegel. "But none of the English poets […] recognized himself as a romanticist (ibid: 147). "There is no consciousness in Byron," for instance, "that he belongs to the romantics (ibid: 148), although he is referred to in Thomas Shaw's Outlines of English Literature (1849) as the "the greatest of romanticists" (ibid: 150).

Wellek also talks about the decisive role or influence, which Rousseau and Hugo had on the romantic writers in the whole Europe. "Rousseau, of course, has made the wellspring of all Romanticism" (ibid: 169). "Victor Hugo later in his life, became the most ambitious mythologist, symbolist, prophet of the new religion, of all the romantics" (ibid: 173).

Contrary to what Lovejoy believes, Wellek holds that all these facts "point out to the fact that the history of the term (romantic) cannot regulate the usage of the modern historian." Wellek strongly refutes Lovejoy's conclusion that the examination of the history of the words, that they are used in contradictory terms" calling it implausible and "greatly exaggerated" and emphasizing the point that there is, in fact, something as the unified European Romanticism:

> One must grant that many German aestheticians juggle the terms in extravagant and personal ways, nor can one deny that the emphasis on different aspects of their meaning shifts from writer to writer and sometimes from nation to nation, but on the whole there was really no misunderstanding about the meaning of Romanticism as a new designation for poetry, opposed to the poetry of the neoclassicism […] the term is understood in this sense all over Europe. (Ibid: 151-2)

With special emphasis more than any other European literature, Wellek explained the unified nature of English Romanticism, "that it formed a unity and had its parallels on the continent," and that "there was a movement which rejected the critical concepts and poetic practice of the eighteenth century" that this is "a new age dominated by Wordsworth […] with its sources in the French Revolution, in German literature," the original of the Lake School of poetry (ibid: 152-3). In this regard, Wellek then turns to talk about the unity of romantic themes and ideas that spread across England amongst the major English Romantic poets. The power of creative imagination, the conception of nature, use of symbolisms and mythology are among the themes, ideas and techniques that spread in a unified fashion in the Romantic English poetry. To Shelly, poetry is "the expression of the imagination," therefore "imagination is creative" (ibid: 181). To Keats, "the power of creative imagination," is a "seeing, reconciling, combining force that seizes the old, penetrates beneath its surface, disengages the truth slumbering there, and, building afresh, bodies forth anew a reconstructed universe in fair forms of artistic power and beauty" (ibid: 181-2).

In regard to nature, Wellek holds that there are "individual differences" amongst English romantic poets, but on the whole, all of them "conceived of nature as an organic whole […]—a nature that is not divorced from aesthetic values" (ibid: 182). In Shelley's poetry, there is the concept of "the vitality of nature, its continuity with man, its emblematic language" (ibid: 186). In Byron, nature is especially present in "the third canto of Childe Harold:

> I live not in myself but I become
> Portion of that around me; and to me
> High mountains are a feeling (ibid: 187).

From my own perspective, there is plenty of research and literature which depicts and interprets the works of many individual writers as romantic,[4] yet there seems to be, perhaps, some sort of reticence—perhaps because the debates has not settled this question surrounding the issue of the specific nature or essence of Romanticism as a unity. In other words, although poets like Byron and Keats, for instance, are widely recognized as the major Romantics of the English poetry, generally speaking, Romanticism as a clearly defined area of a specific nature is still beyond reach. In perhaps one of the most comprehensive studies of the English Romantic poetry: English *Poetry of the Romantic Period: 1789-1830*, J.R. Watson, maps or outlines the landscape of Romanticism in English poetry from Blake, to Keats. From my point of view, Watson's book is a rich source of information

[1]There are much more books devoted to the study of Romantic English poets as individuals than to the study of English Romanticism as a unity, see for instance Hearn 1970, Gingerich, 1924, Kumar, 1966.

on the romantic tendencies, attitudes, and beliefs, which as Wellek says, characterized the late eighteenth century English poetry. "The Romantic poets […] have always been celebrated for their love of nature (Watson, 1992, p.50). "The Romantic poets were fascinated by dreams" (ibid: 64) they perceived "much in common between the dream world and the world of imagination" (ibid: 65). Shelley, for instance, used the images of dreams "symbolically" to pursue "Platonic speculations about life as a resemblance of reality rather than reality itself" (ibid: 74). Amongst the many preoccupations shared by the English Romantic poets, Watson mentions their "strong interest in the social and political state of the world around them" (ibid: 76).[5]

Morse Peckham in another distinguished essay, of 1951 *Toward a Theory of Romanticism,* hopes "for a theory of the historical Romanticism of ideas and art" (Peckham: 1951, p.2), which could encompass both Lovejoy and Wellek's ideas and overcome the famous clash between their theories on Romanticism. Peckham believes both Lovejoy and Wellek's ideas are viable and plausible when talking about such a theory of Romanticism. "What I wish to do in the rest of this paper is to […] reconcile Wellek and Lovejoy" (Ibid: 6).

Romanticism, to Peckham has "two primary referents: 1) general and permanent characteristic of mind, art, and personality, found in all periods and in all cultures." (From my own perspective, this is similar to what Wellek proposed in his articles on Romanticism.) 2) and a specific historical movement in art and ideas which occurred in Europe and America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centrist," which I think, Lovejoy hoped could be extracted from all the incongruent varieties of Romanticism (Ibid: 1).

The theory Peckham proposes sees Romanticism as an "organic dynamism,"

> What then is Romanticism? Whether philosophic, theologic, or aesthetic, it is the revolution in the European mind against thinking in terms of static mechanism and the redirection of the mind to thinking in terms of dynamic organism. Its values are change, imperfection, growth, diversity, the creative imagination, the unconscious. (Ibid: 11)

The theory Peckham hoped for is one that "shows the relevance of one work of art to another" and therefore encompasses all kinds of romantics (ibid: 19). In this respect, Peckham suggests the concept of "Negative Romanticism." "The typical symbols of negative Romanticism are individuals who are filled with guilt, despair, and cosmic and social alienation […] they are often outcasts from men and God, and they are almost always wanderers over the face of the earth" (ibid: 18). In the theory Peckham's proposes, he wishes to include "the excellence of Lovejoy's three principles of Romanticism or organism, dynamism and diversitarianism to get us inside various works of romantic art and to show us the relationships that tie them together into a single literary movement" (ibid). And also to include Wellek's three criteria- organism, imagination, and symbolism- all three are derivable from the basic metaphor or concept of dynamic organism" (ibid: 10).

## FINAL THOUGHT

Reading Arthur Lovejoy's *On the Discrimination of Romanticisms* and Rene Wellek's *The Concept of Romanticism in Literary History,* I have become very aware of only one thing that is, how impossible it seems to take sides in the controversy, which goes on in these two articles over the nature and character of Romanticism. The two articles are indeed a thesis and antithesis, both packed with rich historical facts and therefore both are well defended and well asserted. I believe the controversy will go on because of the equal power of both perspectives in these two articles. In my opinion, Peckham's attempt to reconcile the two is also an acknowledgement of the equal merits of both perspectives. Reading Lovejoy and Wellek's paradoxical interpretations of Romanticism, one can only say that Romanticism remains impossible to define. Romanticism itself does and cannot fully and everlastingly control its interpretation. Derrida says, "It is the ear of the other that signs" (McDonald 1985, p.ix).

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[6] See Watson 1992 Ch. 3 "Preoccupations and Ways of Reading them" 1992, 50-96