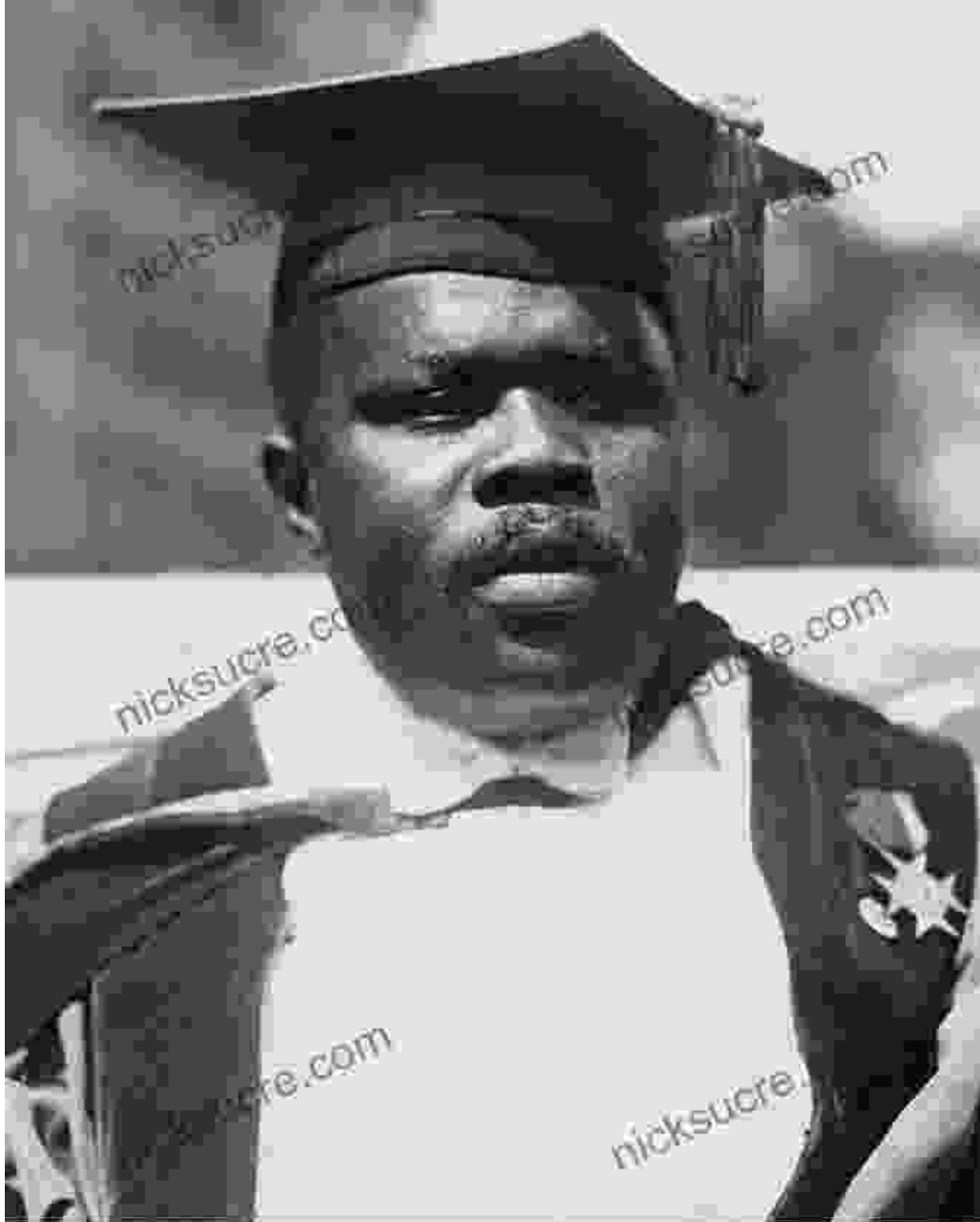


Garvey and Garveyism in Washington Irving's "Legend of Sleepy Hollow"



Washington Irving's "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" is a beloved American folktale that has been passed down through generations. However, beyond its surface level of whimsical storytelling, the tale holds a deeper

significance that reflects the social and racial tensions of its time. This article will explore the presence of Marcus Garvey and Garveyism in Irving's work, examining how the author's subtle references to these historical figures and movements add layers of complexity to the story.



Garvey and Garveyism by Washington Irving

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2077 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 340 pages



Historical Context

Marcus Garvey was a Jamaican-born activist who emerged as a prominent leader of the Pan-African movement in the early 20th century. His ideology, known as Garveyism, advocated for the self-determination and empowerment of the African Diaspora. Garvey's teachings resonated with many African Americans who were facing racial discrimination and oppression in the United States.

Garveyism in "Legend of Sleepy Hollow"

While not explicitly mentioned by name, Garvey and Garveyism appear in "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" through various subtle allusions and imagery. For instance, the character of Brom Bones, the antagonist of the story, is described as having a "vaguely African" appearance, with "thick lips, flat

nose, and rolling eyes." This description echoes the racial stereotypes prevalent during Irving's time, but it also suggests a connection to the African Diaspora.

Moreover, the story's setting in Sleepy Hollow evokes the historical context of slavery and the lingering racial tensions in post-colonial America. Irving portrays the village as a place where racial prejudices and superstitions persist, creating an atmosphere of unease and fear.

The Headless Horseman as Symbol

The central figure of the Headless Horseman has been interpreted by some scholars as an allegory for the fears and prejudices surrounding the African American presence in white society. The headless nature of the Horseman represents the dehumanization and anonymity with which African Americans were often treated.

In one pivotal scene, the Horseman chases Ichabod Crane, the protagonist of the story, into a ravine known as the "Devil's Swamp." This setting, with its eerie and ominous atmosphere, symbolizes the racialized underworld that lurked beneath the surface of American society.

By incorporating elements of Garveyism and the historical experiences of the African Diaspora, Washington Irving's "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" transcends its surface level of folklore. The story becomes a reflection of the complex racial dynamics of its time, offering a subtle commentary on the fears and prejudices that plagued American society.

Through its allusions to Garveyism and its exploration of racial stereotypes, the tale invites readers to question the nature of identity, belonging, and the

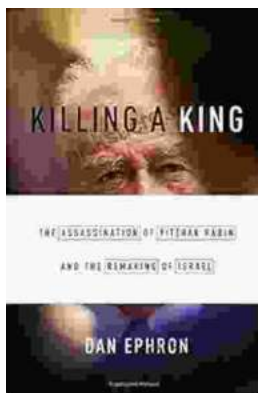
ongoing struggles for equality and social justice.



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