

The Victorian Era - A Period of Great Literary Expression

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Annotation: The Victorian period of literature roughly coincides with the years that Victoria ruled Great Britain and its Empire (1837-1901). From a predominantly rural to an urban agricultural society which was an industrial one was the transformation that happened to Britain during this period.

New technologies like railroads and therefore the steam press united Britons both physically and intellectually. The Victorians at that time perceived their world as rapidly changing. Evangelical and even atheist beliefs got splintered on the religious faiths.

The labor, women, and other people's agitation to vote and rule themselves, reformer's fight for safe workplaces, sanitary reforms, and universal education were reflected in Victorian literature with values, debates, and cultural concerns.

Keywords: Victorian, era, expression, literary, period, Britain, debates, culture, faiths, education.

Introduction

Poetry was one of the foremost popular genres of the Victorian period. The Romantic poets, particularly Wordsworth (who lived through the start of the amount, dying in 1850) were revered and widely quoted. [1,2]

The Victorians experimented with narrative poetry, which tells a story to its audience, including Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1856), a whole novel written in verse. The poem tells the story of Aurora Leigh, a lady who seeks a career as a poet after rejecting an inheritance and a male suitor, then tells, in part, the story of Barrett Browning's own struggles to form her poetic way within the world.

Like Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" (1862), narrative poetry could even be much shorter, which recounts how a woman is seduced into eating beautiful fruit sold by goblins and therefore the way her sister saves her after she is sick.

Victorian poets also developed a replacement form called the dramatic monologue, during which a speaker recites the substance of the poem to an audience within the poem itself.

Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess" (1842), during which the Duke of Ferrara describes how he (probably) killed his last wife to the person who is arranging his next marriage, is one among the foremost famous examples of a dramatic monologue.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson also used the shape in "Ulysses" (1842), during which Ulysses recounts his reasons for beginning on a final voyage to the lads with whom he will sail. Tennyson also wrote lyric or non-narrative poetry, including what's perhaps the foremost famous poem of the Victorian era, *In Memoriam A. H. H.* (1849).

The poem contains a number of the foremost famous lines in literature, including " 'Tis better to possess loved and lost than never to possess loved in the least," and was widely quoted in the Victorian period.[3,4]

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Poets like Tennyson, the Brownings, and Rossetti frequently wrote poetry to make a strong emotional effect on the reader, but some Victorian poets also wrote simply to entertain.

Although different sorts of realism (see below) dominated the novel within the Victorian period, the eighteenth-century tradition of the Gothic lived on, particularly in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847).

Jane Eyre uses many Gothic conventions: a young, pure female heroine; a sinister house crammed with mysteries; and a handsome, brooding older man – but within a Victorian frame. *Jane Eyre* uses some Gothic tropes, but sensation fiction more fully embraced the surprise and horror typical of the Gothic.

Discussion

Sensation fiction typically centers on deception and bigamy, during which men or women are lured into fake marriages – and worse. Wilkie Collins' *The Lady in White* (1859), which tells the story of two women who look strangely alike and are substituted for each other at various points, is probably the most famous example.

Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862), during which a supposedly deranged woman tries to kill her husband after he realizes that she has married another man, also shocked Victorian readers.

To surprise and trouble readers by challenging social conventions was one of the aims of sensation fiction, but another Victorian genre named melodrama achieved popularity by upholding popular values. [5,6]

Melodramas divide characters starkly into those that are vicious and virtuous people. They evoke emotion in readers and viewers by making virtuous characters the topic of vicious plots which were some of the most popular theatrical productions of the period.

Although poetry and plays were important in Victorian cultural life, the amount is understood because of the great age of the novel. The serial sort of publishing, during which installments of a completely unique genre were released at regular intervals, encouraged engaged audiences. Victorian books are also famously long.

In part, this was because improvements in papermaking and printing technology made printing books less expensive. The rise of lending libraries, which might individually lend out volumes of a book (a book like *Jane Eyre* was a "triple-decker," or had three volumes) also contributed to the great length of Victorian novels.

A three-volume book might be read by three readers at an equivalent time, while a one-volume book could only be read by one. Lending libraries made extra money on triple-deckers, and their encouragement helped that form become dominant within the Victorian marketplace.

Results

Realism, which aims to portray realistic events realistically happening to real people, was the dominant narrative mode of the Victorian novel – but it had many variants, that are:

1. Satirical Realism

William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847-48) best exemplifies satirical realism, a mode that emphasizes the worst qualities of every character and suggests that the planet, or "Vanity Fair," is a dark and unfair place.

The novel follows the adventures of Becky Sharpe, a scheming and amoral heroine who manipulates all those around her (and does alright for herself), in contrast to Amelia Sedley, a trusting and virtuous girl who struggles to seek out happiness.[7,8]

2. Psychological Realism

Psychological realism emphasizes portraying the rich inner life of characters – their thoughts, feelings, motivations, anxieties, etc. In George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871-72) as an example, she portrays the progress of several marriages during a small provincial town.

3. Social Realism

Social realism focuses on the foibles, eccentricities, and memorable characteristics of individuals, who are frequently caricatured. The works by Dickens like *Oliver Twist* (1837-39) that criticize the social system by creating a vibrant world of memorable characters best exemplify social realism.

As Dickens and Gaskell focused on important domestic issues, other writers turned their attention to Britain's rapidly expanding empire, which they took as a topic for novels and poetry. Rudyard Kipling celebrated British rule out India together with his novel *Kim* (1901), during which the young Kim becomes a British spy in India.

Joseph Conrad took a more skeptical stance toward imperialism in *Heart of Darkness* (1899), in which the sailor Marlow journeys through the Belgian Congo. Although ostensibly about the Belgian instead of the British Empire, Marlow informs his fellow sailors that his tale applies to Britain also.

With the cheaper price of printing, British journalism and periodical writing flourished and formed a big part of Victorian literary production. Essayists like Ruskin, Carlyle, Thomas Babington Macaulay, John Stuart Mill, and Arnold all wrote famous works of nonfiction prose that analyzed British history and critiqued current trends in British society.

Professional female journalists like Harriet Martineau and prominent reformers like Nightingale also used the periodical press to boost awareness about important issues in British society.

Conclusions

The nineteenth century is frequently seen as the golden age of children's literature. Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking Glass* (1871) narrate the story of Alice, who finds herself in a place called "Wonderland" populated by grinning cats, mad hatters, and an evil queen. Victorian literature differs from that of the eighteenth century and Romantic period most importantly because it had been not aimed toward a specialist or elite audience; rather, because the steam printing press made the assembly of texts less expensive and since railroads could distribute texts quickly and simply, the Victorian period, therefore, was a time when new genres appealed to new mass audiences.[9,10]

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