

## Development of Literary Forms in Theater and Novel during the Victorian Era

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### ABSTRACT

Appropriate understanding and embracing of the literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain, should be considered so crucial when it comes to writing of novel and the same as to that of theater. Although Radcliff & Mattacks (2009) point out the changes experienced in theatre during the Victorian era, this research further explains the role of human activities in influencing changes in literary forms. There are a number of factors that are seen to be taking place at this particular period, lack of some basic understanding hindered the whole concept of writing. This period was commonly referred as the Victorian era and novel writing were considered to be on the lead when it came to literary genre. Most of the novels at this particular period were published in three volumes, several developments are clearly observed by introduction of other styles such as the satire writing. The women are now given equal opportunities and their work is being acknowledged without any challenges. On the other hand, the 19<sup>th</sup> century makes a great impact on the theatre; this can be illustrated by the number of developments that were involved. This stage was identified as the revolving stage and these changes were observed as from the 1896. This paper presents the major activities that took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain that took place in the writing of the novel, the impact that it had on the novelist and so is that on the theater. This paper goes on to present the kind of society that existed in this era, the cultures and their way of life which includes the division of classes among the people of Britain.

**Key words:** Development, Victorian Era, Novel, Theater, Revolving Stages

### INTRODUCTION

#### Overview

The 19<sup>th</sup> century theatre reveals some number of actions in the theatrical society in Britain. Writing of literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain in the theater can be best illustrated with the growth in the industrial revolution, the revolution and change. New theatre were seen at this era and the people embraced it for better entertainment, there was licensing Act that paved ways for other more theatres to be opened (Asquith, 1974). The theatres were not able to accommodate all the population as the number was growing so rapidly in Britain. Old and unsophisticated theater were the only seen in the previous century, there was no much concentration on the improvement. The license Act did not cater so much on the values of the theater; there were unlicensed premises that existed at this period as there was no law that was enforced (Drucker, 1989). There were emphasizes that were more concentrated when it came to the spoken word and this was among the factors that prompted the raise on the theaters. It is quite clear that some people use the literary forms such as the writing on the theater, which include the drama and music and the novel without enough information as to what exactly happened in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century has been on the headline when it comes to revolution and change, and therefore this research is to provide a clear picture of what truly happened in this period. The main aim of this research is to provide the specific changes that took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the literary form and to put a lot of emphasizes in the innovations at the theater and the writing on the novel. Another objective is to demonstrate the social activities that were there in the society at this period.

- What were the society activities in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Britain?
- What does the 19<sup>th</sup> century impact in the writing for stage in theater and in novel?
- What are the factors that lead to the revolution in this period in Britain?
- How was the reaction of the entertainers when it came to the revolution in the theater in Britain?
- What are the major changes that took place in place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century?

#### Background

One of the common concerns in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was on the literary form; the 18<sup>th</sup> century had formed some form

of literary form such as the poetry, satire and the novels. These forms had no much achievement and that is where the 19<sup>th</sup> century tries to focus on the revolution of these forms. The existence of the Licensing Act of 1737 is demonstrated to be of great importance when it comes to the views of theater as it inhibits the whole process to having only two patents theater (Asquith, 1974).

The 19<sup>th</sup> century has a very positive impact when it comes to the innovations of the literary forms, of which without the literary forms then the whole writing process might be a challenge to each and every individual. Different scholars have been seen on the move at this particular stage in order to ensure that the whole period is functional when it comes to the literary forms such as the novels and writing in the theater.

### Significance of the Study

This research is going to be important to the general people all over the world, as it provides so much information and understanding of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the society. The evaluation of this will also make the reader to be able to value and embrace the need of the women and also the virtue of equal representation in the society.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century is seen to be very important when it comes to the development in various sectors. The first impact is seen on the literature as there were a couple of changes that occurred on the style of writing. The novels were widely elaborated and the language used was brief and thus facilitated the understanding of the readers. The change of Victorian era can also be seen to have an impact on the general perception on the women in the society, as they take part in the writing of the novels. The study also provides the significance of the industrialization which was brought about by the introduction of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the industrialization lead to major changes in the economic society in Britain.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Victorian era can be also be used to refer to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Victorian era had a lot of impact when it came to the economic world in Britain, about from the economic activity there are also the issues such as class divisions, social values and the industrial revolution (O'Brien & Quinault, 1993) The growth of economic and industry was because of the industrial revolution and at some point the introduction of the steam engine. With having all this there was transfer where the people from Britain decided to concentrate on the manufacturing business, initially a large number focused so much on the agriculture. The 19<sup>th</sup> century indeed had a very positive impact, as with all this there was the rise of the middle class which was basically made up of the workers on the industries and those who were literate. There is the issue of division of class from the upper division, middle division and the lower division, all these motivated each other to work hard as the upper class developed fear by the development of the middle class and thus had to work had in order to maintain their class and so did the lower class worked in order to get to the level of the middle class (Justman & Gradstein,

1999). With having this then it will be an inspiration for the society have growth in whichever field as the different class division focused on their development.

After the growth of the society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the literature is also to have a lot of innovation this can be seen in the theater as the number of the population is seen to be on the rise. Many actors are seen to come up and so are the techniques on the acting. The first drama in Britain was referred as the melodrama and it was greatly influenced by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is standardization in the design of the theater in this era. The impact on the novel can also be seen on the various things such as there was the introduction of the fiction in the novels at this particular era. The women also become successful when it came to writing of the novel as there was no discrimination any more, they were given the equal opportunity with the men.

### METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, we try to explain how the whole study will be fulfilled. This research is made up of the qualitative data which has been produced from the books and internet sources and they are based as the secondary data. The method is considered to be the best suited for this research as the books written are by the well established researchers and the internet sources are credible.

### RESEARCH FINDING

#### Activities Impacting Literature in the Victorian Era

The Victorian era is significant because of the many developments in different literary forms such as theatre and novel writing. The period led to the development in writing and acting culture through use of technology. With emergence of new writing technology, there was increase in authors. Understanding the society of the Victorian era has been provided for the different researchers who have made this possible. There are dynamic changes that have taken place from the 18<sup>th</sup> century; this can be seen by the rise of the social classes, the growth of economy and the innovations on the literary form. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the society was purely agriculture, as there was no much when it comes to industrialization due to lack of industry and this can be seen to be different in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a large number shifted from agriculture to industrialization (O'Brien & Quinault, 1993).

The 18<sup>th</sup> century was made of only two divisions, which are the upper class and the lower class while this is seen not to be the case as there is rise of middle class. The middle class came about as a result of growth of industrialization; many people were able to get basic education in order to increase their ability to deal with the industries. The issue of slavery is seen to be abolished when there was the Victorian era; the people are given equal opportunity as there is no oppression of the poor since every individual is seen to be beneficial in the society. There is massive urbanization at this time. These factors can be seen to have facilitated the whole process of revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### Effects of Victorian Era on Literary Forms

There was a significant shift in literature during the Victorian era as people developed new ways of life in different aspect of life including education, economic and political activities. This urbanization made the innovation of literature to be so easy, there are different developments in the writing styles, and there is introduction of visual arts which were used in the theaters. The society is seen to embrace the whole concept theater and this can be evidenced by the increase of number in the theaters (Diehl, 1997). Three stages are seen at this era when it comes to the writing movement, there are the romantic period, the American renaissance and the realist movement. The novels were written in the real life situation that happens every day, there were novels that were written about nature compared to other past century, where there was restriction on what to write about. The theaters at this era are seen to have elevated stages that were good for the entertainers as they were able to observe all the scenes that were taking place without straining. The theatrical culture is occupied with dramas such as the melodrama and the romanticism, melodrama was characterized with the advancement of the technology which has a positive impact on the arts of the theater (Radcliffe & Mattacks, 2009), at this stage there is the shifting of analogue to digital. Another change that was experienced was the replacing of the candle lights with the electric lights.

The Victorian era was is seen to be of great significance as there is also connection of network through the novel, as earlier stated novel is crucial in literature and therefore with all the interconnection there was efficiency in the literature and thus in the production (Radcliffe & Mattacks, 2009). The novels started having the aspect of fiction, which was widely accepted by the society.

### DISCUSSION

A lot of arguments have come up which focus to explain the society of Victorian era. Some arguments present the challenges that were faced by the society in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the way there was discrimination and other characteristics that prompted the formation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Just like any other thing in life there has to be some factors that might lead to performance of an activity. In illustration to show this can be on the case when someone wants to set up a large business in the society, he or she has to start up with something that is at an average and if the business is able to establish a profit then there will be consideration of a bigger business. There are issues such as availability of customers that are seen to be among the factors that lead to the expansion of the business. And this can be seen to be the case on this scenario of the revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is also the argument of the developments in the 19<sup>th</sup> century which was

experienced in France, where the theaters are seen to have developed and the people had concentration on the neoclassical drama (Silverman & Weber, 1978). Neoclassical drama is the introduction of the visual arts and decoration on the theater and music.

Writing for the stage in the society is seen to have also impacted the feminism theory, as the women are allowed to participate in the writing of the novels (Larsen & Winn, 1994). The women's liberation movement advocated for the women writers and provided a lot of support to the women who decided to venture in these professions.

### CONCLUSION

After having all the statements and proves from the above paragraphs, we can clearly establish that the 19<sup>th</sup> century was so significant in the society in Britain. Although Britain has been our main focus, we can also conclude by saying that many other continents benefited on the 19<sup>th</sup> century revolution as other continents were able to be involved in the industrialization. A number of styles that was used in literature in the Victorian era are seen to be on the poems, this is by the type of poems that try to explain the reality of life and the rhyming of words as a style in poetry. Fiction in the dramas have been evolved since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and thanks to all this era, as it paved way for all this other developments, which came later on.

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