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During the 18th into the 19th century many things began to transition in society. The norms, morals, and the beliefs, were changing drastically. This was a major shock for the people. With these societal changes, people began seeing a transition in literature. It didn't only affect what the writers were expressing in their work, but how they were expressing it in their work. During the two centuries of literary work, writers thoroughly expressed the elements of drama, poetry, fictions, and many other types of literature.

During this age of Enlightenment, there were many different philosophers that shaped the 18th centuries literary works. The Enlightenment was known as a time period in which people believed that facts and logics gave them more knowledge than the beliefs of others or their religion. Jessie Szalay explains in the article What Was the Enlightenment, "Characteristics of the Enlightenment include the rise of concepts such as reason, liberty and the scientific method. Enlightenment philosophy was skeptical of religion — especially the powerful Catholic Church — monarchies and hereditary aristocracy." Many well-known philosophers, Voltaire, Locke, and Swift, played a major role in evolving literature during this century. A good example is Voltaire's drama, "Tartuffe" was an ideal example of literary work during the 18th century. "Tartuffe" was written with intentions of criticizing the church. This play presents the elements of drama very thoroughly. Molière clearly presented that Tartuffe was the antagonist. Tartuffe was a hypocritical, Christian who fooled Orgon into thinking he was a wonderful man. Remaining in disguise, Orgon welcomed Tartuffe into his home, and remained gullible to all of his sneaky actions. Even Tartuffe know he has Orgon when he states:

Tartuffe.

What does it matter if he comes or goes?

The secret is, I lead him by the nose,

He's urged me to spend all my time with you.

So let him see- he won't believe it's true. (Molière 4.5 140-144)

Orgon's family was well aware of Tartuffe's inappropriate actions, but they couldn't convince Orgon he was a bad person. Throughout the entire play, Tartuffe remained a static character even though he was unmasked. Elmire, Orgon's wife, the protagonist repeatedly tried telling Orgon what kind of person Tartuffe truly was:

Elmire:

And now, I wonder have you lost your mind?

Your love for this man has made you blind.

Can you stand there and say you don't believe

A word we've said? That we're here to deceive (Molière 4.3 41-45).

This is one of many examples in which Elmire and the daughters tried revealing Tartuffe's true colors. It wasn't until Elmire was able to plot against him. She seduced Tartuffe while Orgon was hiding in the room watching. It wasn't until Tartuffe was going to commit adultery with his wife, when he seen Tartuffe's true colors. Molière's work was banned because many people were offended by his insinuation of the Catholic church. Although it was very offensive, it was a reflection of the people in the church. This is a good example of what literary work was centered around during the 18th century.

As writers and philosophers transitioned out of the 18th century into the 19th century people seen a sudden change throughout literature. In fact, many people were reluctant to this change. This became known as the period of Romanticism. This period consisted of well-known poets that are still prominent in today's society. Poets such as Walt Whitman, Edgar Allen Poe, and William Blake were evolving as the 19th century began. The Romanticism was a period that expressed emotion and feeling of the writer. It was sometimes referred to as a rebellion in comparison to the 18th century's belief. A poet who shows a transition of centuries within his work is Walt Whitman, who lived through the early 1800s century to the late 1800s. In his poem, When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer he begins his poem as if he was sitting in a lecture in which he is referring to the period of the Enlightenment. Whitman explains that he is sitting in a lecture being showed graphs and statistics on Astronomy. He explains how uninterested he is in the statistic and graphs during his astronomy lecture.

When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,

When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,

How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick, (Whitman 3-5)

These three lines express how the Enlightenment era seemed to be, especially for people who were apart of the 19th century. He explains how knowledge was being shown, but he was uninterested, therefore he wasn't learning. He is short, bold, and repetitive in these lines which better expresses his boredom to the readers. He then transitions into the 19th century when he explains he is able to go experience what the professor was saying for himself.

Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,

In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,

Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars. (Whitman 6-8)

In these last lines he explains how he was able to wander off and go outside and see the diagrams of the stars and experience them in nature. This transition is very easily depicted in this poem not just by what it says, but by the word choice Whitman uses when he begins talking about the 19th century. Although Whitman never states this half of the poem is about the 18th century and the other half is about the 19th century, it is easily analyzed the difference in the tone, words, and experience presented in this poem. Whitman even uses personification in the

last lines to express the impractical or unrealistic viewpoint in which a 19th century poet would have. A biography of Whitman describes him as, “A humanist, he was a part of the transition between transcendentalism and realism, incorporating both views in his works.” For many people in the 19th century felt like they had a better understanding of things, because they were able to experience them through nature and fictional viewpoints. Whereas in 18th century it was based on facts and logics.

Romanticism was also a time period in which nature was celebrated, feelings and emotions were vividly clear, and being unrealistic was more accepted than ever. The article What Was Life Like During the Romantic Period states, “The Romantic movement placed high importance on imagination, in contrast to the earlier era, which championed reason. Paying attention to emotions became more important under Romanticism.” Edgar Allen Poe was famous for all his literary work during this time. He had a very weird approach to the Romanticism style. Although he still expressed his emotion within his work, it was always very dark, morbid, and strange. The article Edgar Allen Poe: Biography, Works states, “Through his works, like 'The Raven' and 'The Tell-Tale Heart,' Poe reflected the characteristics of Dark Romanticism by creating horrific storylines and characters while exploring the dark, irrational depths of the human mind.” In Edgar Allen Poe’s story “The Tell-Tale Heart” he uses the elements of fiction to bring emphasis to the tone of the story. He emphasizes on the mood, which makes the reader uncomfortable while reading this story. Poe makes his audience very nervous by using this element in his work, but it also leaves the reader wondering what will happen and making the reader eager to flip the page to know what happens next. In the story, Poe explains his desire to murder the old man for no valid reason. Throughout the story he thoroughly explains throughout the story as he has watched the man night by night planning to murder him. He states, “And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously --oh, so cautiously --cautiously (for the hinges creaked) --I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights --every night just at midnight --but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye” (Poe). He goes on to explain how the man had done nothing wrong, and he explains this by pouring his emotions and urge to kill him into the story. He goes on to explain, “Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! Yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture” (Poe). When Poe successfully murders the old man, the calmness of the narrator made the reader feel more nervous and uncomfortable than before. When the police show up, Poe is doing a very good job at maintaining his composure, despite the fact he had disposed of the body shortly before they arrived. He welcomes them in, and he lies to them about where the old man is. As they continue to talk about the “noise” that was reported, the narrator’s conscious begins working making the narrator very uncomfortable in the situation. As he begins to worry about the murder of the old man, he begins hearing a sound that mimics a heartbeat. As the noise continues, he begins to get antsy and paranoid that the cops are onto him. Poe writes, “I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men -- but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed --I raved --I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased (Poe). Poe vividly describes as he is beginning to feel more anxious, the noise grows louder. In this story, the heartbeat is Poe’s nervousness of the crime that he had committed. As the noise wouldn’t dissipate, he could no longer stand the feeling, so he confessed himself and revealed the corpse to police officers. Ultimately Poe wrote this story during the Romanticism because is it filled with emotions, but they are much different emotions than they typical Romanticist writer.

All of Poe’s literature had a likeminded approach that was very dark and different from many writers during this time period.

In conclusion, the 18th century and the 19th century were polar opposites. Taking in consideration the beliefs, morals, and religion all varied drastically between the two centuries. The writers during this time expressed things differently and used the elements of literary work to express the points differently. Not only had literature took a drastic turn after the 18th century, everything and everyone in society had a different outlook on the way of life. Some people had a hard time transitioning to the ways of the 19th century, and some never transitioned. Regardless of the change that was made between the centuries, all of the writers during these eras still have a significant influence on literary work today.