REASON VS. TRUTH: HOW THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND ROMANTICISM EFFECTED THE VICTORIAN OCCULT

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Abstract
"Reason vs. Truth: How the Enlightenment and Romanticism Effected the Victorian Occult."

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Abstract:
This research project is a historical analysis of occult secret societies and organizations during and soon after the reign of Queen Victoria. In particular, this research focuses on the impact of Romanticism and the Enlightenment on the Victorian occult. By examining the founding myths, practices, and core beliefs of these organizations this study found that Enlightenment, Romanticist, and Neoclassical ideas all played a part in the adoption of foreign ideas into these societies. The Freemasons, for instance, were very much influenced by Enlightenment ideas. Similarly, Theosophy included both ideas from Romanticism and Neoclassicism.

This research was conducted using secondary sources about the occult, the Enlightenment, and Romanticism, but also closely studied primary documents like books and articles written by the members of these secret societies. The works of Alex Owen and Edward Said served as inspirations for this research project and provided a basis of historiological understanding. Alex Owen provided pioneering understanding of Enlightenment ideas in the occult in her book The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern published in 2004. In his book Orientalism, Said argued for a created myth of the "mystical east" which informed the author's interpretation of Theosophy. While both historians provided important understanding for this project, this author provides a new argument towards the impact of Romanticism and Neoclassicism on the Victorian occult. This research project also explores how these ideas have larger implications on both European and Eastern societies by studying the effect of Colonialism in these societies.

Keywords:
emotional restraint adopted by Victorian writers. These changes were in part due to the realization of "realism" in the Victorian era versus the "idealism" of the romantic era.

The following are examples of how Romantics and Victorians differed in their own perceptions of Cited: John Keats "Ode to a Nightingale" The Norton Anthology of English Literature (Ninth Edition) Ed. Stephen Greenblatt.  

William Blake vs. Enlightenment n Mock on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau; Mock on, mock on; 'tis all in vain! You throw the sand against the wind. And the wind blows it back again. n And every sand becomes a gem Reflected in the beams divine, Blown back they blind the mocking eye, But still in Israel's paths they shine. The Atoms of Democritus And Newton's Particles of Light Are sands upon the Red Sea shore, Where Israel's tents do shine so bright. THE SHELLEYS  

The Romantics' Power Couple Percy Bysshe Shelley Mary Shelley. A Binary at the turn of the 19th C. n Enlightenment n Romanticism Anti-Science n n n Knowledge Reason Technology Machinery Power Control Man n n n Feeling + Experience Imagination Art: lit. + paintings Nature Love Harmony God. The Literature of Romanticism versus the Victorian Essays. - In the Victorian era poets are inspired to debate among each other in the heat of enlightenment. - To understand how Romanticism changed the way society thought, you must first understand the meanings and reason behind the movement. The Romantic Movement in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was described as a movement in the history of culture, an aesthetic style, and an attitude of mind. - Romanticism It was a reaction against the Enlightenment and yet akin in that they both assumed life was designed for human happiness. However the Enlightenment placed reason at the center of human achievement.