Name:

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Culture and Idea History - Enlightenment, Romance, Realism Epoch

**Question 1**  
**A. Describe characteristic features of the following epochs 1. Enlightenment 2. Romance 3. Realism**

The Enlightenment period is also commonly known as the age of reason. The period was typified by endorsement of reason, as the means of authoritative system of aesthetics, morality, authority and religion. This period occurred in Europe in the period between 1620 and 1781. Knowledge was greatly dispersed through the numerous literary work and Scientifics discoveries that characterized this period. The enlightenment period significantly influenced the American and the French revolutions (New World Encyclopedia).

The New World Encyclopedia states that enlightenment gave way to romanticism in the late 19th century, up to the mid 18th century. Romanticism emphasized on imagination, spontaneity, and passion, as opposed to the inflexibility in enlightenment. It was characterized by the expression of strong emotions, and individualization. It emphasized intuition as opposed to reason. Realism was an artistic movement which took place beginning in the 18th century to the early 19th century. It was mainly characterized by the close observation and realistic representation of the outward appearances.

**B. Within the Enlightenment, Romance and Realism, there were many distinguished artists, writers and other people who worked in the cultural. B. Explain and discuss what differences and similarities exist between these epochs. Make a comparative analysis.**

The three periods differed in their foundations. For instance, rationality was foundation of the Enlightenment movement. On the contrary in Romanticism diverted from the rigid reasoning of enlightenment and emphasized an individualism characterized by imagination and expression of strong emotions. In the same way, realism rejected Romanticism and adapted an unadorned expression of nature and life. Secondly, enlightenment yielded scientific discovery, laws, wars and revolutions, literary work while Romanticism was an artistic and intellectual movement. on the contrary, while realism mostly influenced art. The major similarity in the three epochs is that they significantly influenced the economic, political, religious, and social frameworks of the contemporary society.

**C. Choose a person from the respective period, discuss and analyze how the ideas of the period are visualized in their respective work. Emphasize their cultural work and not so much on their childhood, upbringing etc.**

Isaac Newton was among the enlightenment thinkers whose work has significantly shaped modern science. According to the New World Encyclopedia, Newton integrated mathematics of self-evident proof with the mechanics of physical observation to develop a logical system of provable predictions. This system was based on reason; which was the basic foundation of the enlightenment movement. Henry Fuseli is among the renowned Romanticism artists. His work, *The Nightmare* was a unique piece which marked the transition from Enlightenment to Romanticism. This work depicts idealization of the woman character. The exploration of human psychology, as opposed to science is evident from the mood portrayed in the work. Also, the work is neither drawn from history or the bible, nor does it hold any moralistic element. It is a clear portrayal of imagination, and the liberty derived from individualism and imagination.Théodore Rousseau was among the romanticism artists who settled in a French village for art. His aim was to devotedly replicate the landscape. Like the other artists of this period, Rousseau emphasized on simple and ordinary works derived from a close observation of nature, as opposed to the exaggerations depicted in the Romanticism period.   
**Question 2**  
**A. A new culture-supporting group, young people, emerged after 1945. Tell us about this youth's culture.**

The youth culture emerged following the World War II in the period between 1945 and 1965. The youths started identifying themselves with various music genres including the rock ‘n’ roll, and pop music. A homogeneous style, language and attitude developed amongst this age group (Milestone 1).  
**B. Explain and discuss how young people came to have and still have a great significance for culture today.**

The youth culture was a social category defined by youths, and attributed to changing social constructs including raised standards of living, consumer culture, increased leisure time, as well as the intensive scientific research focused on the psychology of adolescents (Milestone 1). The youths started challenging the conventional ways of doing things, and shaped their own lifestyle and identity. Even today, elements such as the consumer culture, social venues, lifestyle, and music are ways in which the youths identify themselves today, thus shaping the contemporary culture in a significant way.  
**C. Choose one of the following epochs or periods, Enlightenment, Romance, Realism, period 1900-1945 or the time after 1945. Explore one of the art forms (sculpture, painting, photography, film, literature, music, dance) design and development for the period. Compare and analyze for any similarities and differences with the other epochs.**

*La Grande Odalisque* (1814) is among Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres’s paintings done during the Romanticism period. The painting depicts a reclining nude woman, turning her head over her shoulder to gaze at the viewer. Exaggeration is evident from the unproportionally smaller head. Her arms also appear to be of different lengths. The work depicts the romanticisms’ inclination on portraying the subject in regard to the idealized elements of beauty. The work is comparable to the works of the Picasso and Matisse; who are the 20th century artists who employed classical ideals in the depiction of their subjects. The exaggerations and idealizations are opposed to the realism paintings, where the subjects are represented as they appear naturally (theartstory.org).

Works Cited

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