

English Literature of the Victorian Age

A Course for 2nd-Year English-Philology Students

ACADEMIC YEAR 2017/2018

Course convenor: Assoc. Prof. Yana Rowland PhD
yanarowland@gmail.com

Syllabus

1. *Victorianism* – preliminary terminological and cultural notes. *Industrialism* and *Utilitarianism*.
2. Early Victorianism – Oracular Prose and the *Condition-of-England* question novel: Carlyle, Disraeli & Mrs Gaskell.
3. The *Realist Novel* – a dialogue with society. Charles Dickens: comedy & melodrama; selfhood & truth. The Victorian *Bildungsroman*.
4. William Makepeace Thackeray: *omniscient narrative* and “*the manager of the performance*”. Irony & self-criticism.
5. The ‘The Brontë Sisters’ Club’. The poetical background. Gothicism and (female) life-writing. The ‘metaphysical’ novel.
6. Charles Darwin & the Mid-Victorian Novel: gradualism, positivism, sensationalism & the crisis of faith. Kingsley, Collins, Bulwer-Lytton, Trollope.
7. ‘*Currents and floods*’: George Eliot and the development of the *psychological novel*. Intrusive narration, introspection & the course of Nature. Character & socio-cultural milieu.
8. Pessimism & fantasy: the Victorian novel under Meredith, Butler, Gissing, Carroll, Lear.
9. Naturalism & Determinism. A Universe of sordid jest: Thomas Hardy: prophecy and alienation.
10. Victorian Poetry:
 - Late Romantics: Tennyson & Browning. Matthew Arnold – sagehood & criticism.
 - E. B. Browning and Christina Rossetti.
 - The Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood (poetry and visual art) and D. G. Rossetti. W. Morris, A. Ch. Swinburne.
11. Theatre & Drama in the Victorian Age.
12. “Closures” and “beginnings”:
 - *Fin de siècle*. Aestheticism and Decadence: theorists & ‘executioners’. Walter Pater. Oscar Wilde. Selfhood as an alternative to normality and regularity.
 - Other spaces, other lores. Transgressing Englishness: Stevenson & Kipling.

NB! Last week of semester – Progress Test (admission to exam) – a general overview of major subjects covered.

ENGLISH LITERATURE OF THE VICTORIAN AGE (1837 – 1901)

READING LIST

Course convener: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yana Rowland

1. Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865): *North and South*;
2. Charles Dickens (1812-1870): *Great Expectations*; and one more novel from the following: *Dombey and Son*, *Oliver Twist*, *Bleak House*, *David Copperfield*;
3. William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863): *Vanity Fair*;
4. Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855): *Jane Eyre*;
5. Emily Brontë (1818-1848): *Wuthering Heights*;
6. Anne Brontë (1820-1849): *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*;
7. George Eliot (1819-1880): *The Mill on the Floss*; *Silas Marner*;
8. Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892): *Mariana*; *The Lady of Shalott*; *The Lotos-Eaters*; *Break, Break, Break*; *Ulysses*; *Crossing the Bar*;
9. Robert Browning (1812-1889): *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*; *My Last Duchess*; *Porphyria's Lover*; *'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came'*; *The Bishop Orders His Tomb at Saint Praxed's Church*;
10. Eminent Victorian Female Poets:
 - Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861): *Sonnets from the Portuguese*
 - Christina Rossetti (1830-1894): *Goblin Market*;
11. Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882): *The Blessed Damozel*;
12. William Morris (1834-1896): *The Defence of Guenevere*;
13. Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909): *The Garden of Proserpine*;
14. Matthew Arnold (1822-1888): *Dover Beach*; *Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse*
15. Thomas Hardy (1840-1928): *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*
16. Oscar Wilde (1854-1900): *The Picture of Dorian Gray*;
17. Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894) – *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

English Literature of the Victorian Age – Semestral seminar weekly planning

ENGLISH PHILOLOGY

1. The condition-of-England novel: Elizabeth Gaskell – *North and South* (1855).
2. **Charles Dickens**. *Great Expectations* (1861). Humour and Melodrama. Character formation – dialogue and 1st-person narrative. Portrayal & symbolism. *Bildungsroman*. Orphanhood and authorship.
3. **William Makepeace Thackeray** – *Vanity Fair. A Novel without a Hero* (1848). The *omniscient narrator*. Documenting history & subverting morality. Heroes and heroic worship. Time and Space – epic or drawing-room? History and individual fate. Close reading of select excerpts.
4. **Charlotte Brontë** – *Jane Eyre* (1847). Autobiography and gender issues (the *governess* as a social category). Education and individuation. Biological deprivation and social privation. Evangelicalism: damnation and pardon.
5. **Emily Brontë** – *Wuthering Heights* (1847). Gothicism, pantheism, subjective idealism. Structural peculiarities: narrators, credibility, the progress of Time. Remembrance, spiritual fulfilment and carnal presence. Personal freedom and social norm. Mysticism, stoicism, the motif of revenge.
6. **George Eliot** – *The Mill on the Floss* (1860). The microscopic eye. Conscience and Consciousness. Fraternal fidelity & ideological bondage. Self-realisation & social duty. Theology & Teleology.
7. **Thomas Hardy** – *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891). Personal ethics & doctrinaire mentality. *Outcast* and *outlaw*. The motif of *forgiveness*. Regionalism, landscape painting and elegiac nuances.
8. **Alfred Tennyson**. Alienation, medievalism and the remedial capacity of art. Discussion of select poetic works.
9. **Robert Browning**. *Male artist & objectified female individual* in cultural history. Discussion of select poetic works.
10. **Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Christina Rossetti**. *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850) & *Goblin Market* (1862). – lecture.
11. **Oscar Wilde** – *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891). Aestheticism, decadence and the issue of conscience. Artistic liberty and aesthetic responsibility. *The Preface* to the novel.

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Instructions & Requirements

Regarding the Completion of the Course and the Examination Format

For the purposes of a successful completion of this course all students are required to:

- Be present at, and take part in, all discussions during seminars
- **Bring their own texts for each seminar, having actually read those texts!**
- **Cover the whole of the reading list for the final exam**
- **Contributively study valuable relevant criticism**
- **Master the set of critical terms and philosophical concepts applicable hereby**
- **Resist BY ALL MEANS (!!!) any temptations/urge to cheat: i.e. to copy during a test, or to plagiarise from available critical sources, or from one another!**
- **Come for each respective class on time!**
- **Facilitate an atmosphere of civilized discussion!**

It would indeed be common courtesy of a student to inform the course convenor of an inability to attend (a) seminar(s) in advance: that would guarantee better synchronization with the pace of work – planned and actual.

SURGERY HOURS – Autumn Semester
(BY APPOINTMENT BY EMAIL IN ADVANCE ONLY!!!):
Rectorate, Office 240; Time – to be specified in due time

NB! EXAMINATION FORMAT:

Your final mark comprises the following elements:

- Participation in discussions during seminars
- written exam (theory & actual analysis of a specific literary excerpt)
- tests (mid-term and final eliminatory)
- any other tasks, compulsory for the whole course of students
- individual assignments (optional)

English Literature of the Victorian Age

A Historical Outline

1837 – 1901: Reign of Queen Victoria

- ~ **1740–1850** → – **The Industrial Revolution** – a term first used by the English economic historian Arnold Toynbee (1882) and descriptive of the period of change from domestic production to production in factories under capitalist control; the introduction of water and steam power to drive machines; a surge of innovation transforming several major industries; the economic stability after the Glorious Revolution (1688-89), the encouragement of individualism, the development of a strong banking and credit system, inventiveness and enterprise – those were profitable signs of non-conformity; the abundance of materials (coal, iron, wool) and the availability of the expanding international (markedly colonial) market of Britain – those were all pre-requisites for The Industrial Revolution to occur; major changes occurred in the textile, iron and steel industries, in mechanical engineering and pottery; the textile industry took the lead from the 1740s onward and raw material proved its quality of power source so that the new industrial regions (sources of raw material) became the North and the West (Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Sheffield); the steam engine was perfected by James Watt in 1769 and the train system grew rapidly and eventually became dominant in transportation in the 19th century; the industrial working class was created;
- 1824 – death of Lord Gordon, George Byron (poet & playwright)
- 1825 – The Law Society established
- 1828 – University College London founded
- **1828 – The Repeal of the Test Act** – non-communicants of the established church allowed to sit in parliament and to obtain university degrees
- **1829-1830 – Achievement of free civil and political rights for Roman Catholics**; abolishment of the Penal Code of year 1571 (designed to suppress the practice of Roman Catholicism through division of land inherited, penalties for refusing to attend the Church of England ranging to the point of disqualification from office etc.); previously the Toleration Act of 1689 had allowed English non-conformists their own place of worship, teachers and preachers and in Scotland Presbyterianism was finally established in 1690.
- **26th June 1830 – King George IV died (reigned 1820-1830)**
- **1830 – 1837 – Reign of king William IV**
- 1830 – 1880 – a period of British Self-Confidence and Semi-Isolationism in terms of direct/voluntary involvement with European affairs
- 1831 – Cholera Epidemic bursts out
- **Reform Acts** (through Reform Bills throughout the 19th century: in **1832, 1867 and 1884**). Measures of **electoral reform**: disenfranchisement of rotten (decayed) boroughs and redistribution of representation in Parliament (extension of franchise to freeholders, copyholders, short-leaseholders and tenants, householders of certain property and worth of value) – increase of the electorate (inc. Ireland and Scotland) with the purpose of achieving exact correspondence between population and representation (inc. previously non-represented districts). The Reform Acts **MUST NOT** be confused with the term **Reformation**, which would in general context be understood as **PROTESTANIZATION** of Britain (through the Acts of Uniformity and of Supremacy passed by the English Church during the reign of queen Elizabeth I, 1558-1603, whereby the English Monarch became Head of Church) and through the universal introduction of the Book of Common Prayer (1559).
- 1832 – death of Sir Walter Scott (novelist & poet)
- **1833** – establishment of the Oxford Movement (Roman Catholic in essence)

- **1833 – Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Empire** (1787- the Abolitionist Society formed under Wilberforce and Clarkson; 1807 – slave trade abolished; 1823 – the Anti-Slavery society formed)
- **1833 – The Factory Act passed** – children under 9 to be excluded from factories, those aged 9-13 got a 48-hour working time
- **1834 – The Poor Law Amendment Act** – regulation of pauperism through boards of guardians (elected by ratepayers) whereby outdoor relief ceased and paupers were forced into **workhouses** with particularly and deliberately harsh conditions of living.
- 16th October 1834 – The Palace of Westminster on fire.
- 1834-1837 – construction of the Houses of Parliament in the Gothic Style of architecture
- 1837 – Opening of the British Museum
- **1837 – The People’s Charter issued. 1838-1848 – Chartism:** a movement for political reform. The 1838 charter (drawn by William Lovett) demanded: annual parliaments, universal male suffrage, equal electoral districts, end to property qualification for MPs, voting by ballot, payment of MPs. The underlying ideology was forged by working-class resentment against economic distress, the poor law, and the failed attempt to develop trade unionism. The Chartist Petitions (1839, 1842, and 1848) were all rejected by parliament.
- 1837 – abolition of the pillory
- 1838 – *Holiday House* (by Catherine Sinclair) is published – the first Victorian book especially aimed at children and dealing with mischief and domestic revelry
- 1839-1842, 1878, 1880 – The Afghan Wars – wars aimed at liberating Afghanistan from British rule
- 1843 – The Ethnological Society founded
- 1844, 1848 – limiting the number of working hours for women and children (The factory Acts)
- **1845 – Blighted potato crop in Ireland: 1847-1851 period of ‘the Irish famine’** – starvation and death large numbers of Irish people (**around 1 million**); the government was both unable and unwilling to provide adequate relief; a further million Irish people emigrated, mainly to the USA;
- **1846 – The Repeal of the Corn Laws** – the gradual process of the abolition of the bar on the importation of grain from abroad; eventually the duty on importing foreign grain became only nominal;
- 1846 – The ‘pupil-teacher’ education system inaugurated by Sir James Kay Shuttleworth – students aged 13-18 would study & teach other students by means of which they would gain practice and qualify as professional teachers
- **1847 – The Town Improvement Clauses Act** – aimed at improving the outlook, stability and hygiene of British cities, mainly in the systems of paving, draining and lighting
- **1848 – Revolutions in Europe (France, Germany, Italy, Austria)**
- **1848-1849 – Cholera Epidemic**
- 1849 – Annexation of the Punjab province (India)
- 1850 – Roman Catholic Hierarchy restored in England by Pope Pius IX
- 1851 – The Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace (London) – demonstration of a variety of technical wonders (representing the industry of all nations)
- 1851 – gold reserves discovered at Ballarat (Australia): a period of large-scale emigration
- 1854 – New-Zealand granted self-government
- **1854-1856 – The Crimean War** (Russia v/s France, Britain and Turkey) – resulted in a high number of victims, disease and deprivation
- 1857 – The Matrimonial Causes Act – an obligation for a divorced husband to provide maintenance for his former wife
- **1857-1858 – The Indian Mutiny** – a rebellion against British rule, originating in the Bengal army of the East India Company (a British economic trade formation) and supported by some civilians. In essence – demonstration of rejection of the process of westernisation of the sub-continent (preceded, peculiarly, by the resistance to the introduction of the new Enfield paper

cartridge). In 1858 the India Act ended the havoc (which had previously been savagely extinguished): East India Company's territories and forces were transferred to the Crown.

- 1858 – The Medical Registration Act passed – abolition of regional licensing and instalment of the hospital as the seat of medical instruction
- **1859 – publication of Charles Darwin's monumental work *The Origin Of Species***
- **1860s-1870s – gradual conquest of Africa**
- **1864, 1866, 1869 – Contagious Diseases Acts passed** – inspection and hospitalisation of prostitutes who would threaten to spread venereal diseases amongst men
- 1865 – Uprising in Jamaica (600 Black Jamaicans killed)
- 1867 – formation of the North of England Council for promoting the Higher Education of Women
- **1868 – abolition of Public Execution**
- **1869 – Girton College (Cambridge) founded – the first female-only college**
- 1869 – establishment of the Metaphysical Society (ceased in 1879)
- **1870 – The Forster Education Act passed – Universal Elementary Education (5 to 12 years of age) introduced in England, Scotland and Wales; the first state school system in Britain**
- 1870 – a peak of birth-rate in Britain
- 1870, 1882 – The Married Women's Property Acts – gradual granting of the right to women to own property before, during and after marriage
- 1871 – Disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland (under the act passed in 1869) and in Wales in 1920 (under legislation in 1914 & 1919). The disestablishment meant in effect a termination of formal links between church and state.
- 1871 – Newnham College Founded – a female-only college
- **1871 – All degrees and offices officially available to Non-Anglicans**
- 1871 – the Royal Anthropological Society founded
- 1871 – Trade Unions were legalized
- 1871 – the Paris Commune
- 1873-1874, 1879 – Wars against the Ashantis & Zulus in Africa
- 1874–1850 – Benjamin Disraeli prime-ministry – a period of Toryism, conservatism, improvement of hygiene and trade industry, as well as territorial expansion
- 1875 – establishment of the Friendly Societies Act – aimed at providing charitable gifts for people 50 years old and over
- **1876 – Queen Victoria becomes empress of India**
- **13th November 1877 – Bloody Sunday – police breaks up a radical socialist meeting in Trafalgar Square**
- **1880, 1899-1902 – Conflicts with the Boers in South Africa (The Boer Wars)**
- 1880 – George Eliot dies
- 1881 – A revised version of the Bible issued (linguistically closer to the original) – New Testament; 1885 – Old Testament part revised
- 1883 – National Union of Teachers formed
- 1882-1884 – The Egyptian Campaigns – Egypt gained independence only in 1926
- 1884 – The Society for Authors founded
- 1884 – The Berlin Conference – division of Africa among the European Powers
- **1886 – The Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts of 1860s**
- 1883 – The Bar Council established – official representative organ of barristers
- 1894 – The Society of Women Journalists is founded
- 1896 – The Publishers' Association if formed
- 1897 – Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee
- 1898 – The Old Age Pensions Committee names the age 65 as the official retirement age for men
- 1898 – The Criminal Evidence Act is passed – a criminal accused would be given the right to testify on oath at his/her own trial
- **1902 – secondary education becomes compulsory in Britain**
- 1908 – opening of the Victoria and Albert museum

Faculty of philology institute of english studies. <http://www.anglistyka.uni.lodz.pl/>. Practical Grammar 1. T. B1 year 1/ winter. 2 English 30. Student is expected to have achieved level C1 (or higher) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Completion of Practical Grammar 2 or equivalent is recommended. 2nd year/winter semester. 2 English 30 Conditionals-typology and variations. WISH-clauses, subjunctives and "unreal" past. English 30 The course develops knowledge and awareness of the complexity of cultural discourses in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The classes aim to enhance students' interest in British culture, music, architecture, painting, etc. current affairs and history. Victorian course designed for students. UNIT I: Background to Victorianism (8 Hours) History of the age The characteristics of the period Introduction to Victorian Literature Contradictions in the period Texts: G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936) The Victorian Age in Literature [Essay] Will Durant (1885-1981) Comte and Darwin (The Story of Philosophy) [Essay] Robert Browning (1812-89) Lines from Pippa Passes [Drama] Gerald Manley Hopkins (1844-89) Thou. Every Day in the Year: A Poetical Epitome of the Worlds History. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1902. 16. Stedman, Edmund Clarence, ed.