

Aula 10

THE VICTORIAN LITERATURE

META

Apresentar, de forma panorâmica, as principais obras e autores do período vitoriano.

OBJETIVOS

Ao final desta aula, o aluno deverá:
Compreender o modo como as condições de produção, circulação e recepção do período vitoriano afetaram a sua produção cultural e literária.
Familiarizar o aluno com a leitura de fragmentos da poesia de Kipling.

PRÉ-REQUISITOS

Noções históricas do período vitoriano.

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INTRODUÇÃO

Nessa aula, conheceremos os autores e obras canônicos do período vitoriano, depois de termos estudado as condições sócio-históricas do período. Assim, conheceremos os principais gêneros literários e seus representantes, buscando sempre relacionar sua obra os processos de produção, circulação e recepção de bens culturais naquele momento. Em seguida, na conclusão do texto, nos concentraremos na vida e obra de Kipling, talvez o mais paradigmático escritor do período, para podermos ler e analisar um de seus mais famosos poemas, “The White Man’s Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands” (1899).

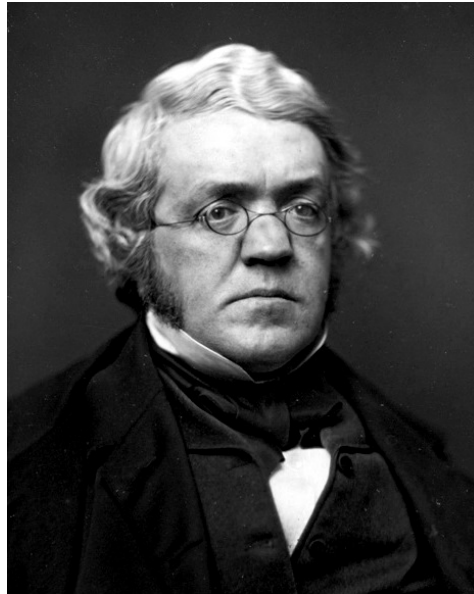
THE NOVEL

Charles Dickens was the most famous Victorian novelist. Extraordinarily popular in his day, he is still one of the most popular and read authors of that time period. His first novel, *The Pickwick Papers* (1836), was written when he was twenty-five and was a great success, as well as all his subsequent Works, which always sold very well. Dickens was a writer who worked diligently to produce the entertaining writing that the public wanted, but also gave them commentaries and reflections on social problems, especially those involving the poor and oppressed. His most famous works include *Oliver Twist* (1837-1838), *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *Dombey and Son* (1846-1848), *David Copperfield* (1848-1850), *Great Expectations* (1860-1861), among others.



Charles John Huffam Dickens (1812-1870) was an English writer and social critic. He created some of the world’s best-known fictional characters and is regarded as the greatest novelist of the Victorian era. His works enjoyed unprecedented popularity during his lifetime, and by the twentieth century critics and scholars had recognised him as a literary genius. His novels and short stories enjoy lasting popularity. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Dickens

His great rival was William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863). With a similar style but a slightly more acerbic satirical view of his characters, he also tended to depict a more middle class society than Dickens did. He is best known for his novel *Vanity Fair* (1848), subtitled *A Novel without a Hero*, which is an example of a form popular in Victorian literature: a historical novel in which recent history is depicted.



William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863) was an English novelist of the 19th century. He is famous for his satirical works, particularly *Vanity Fair*, a panoramic portrait of English society of the period. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Makepeace_Thackeray

The three Brontë sisters, Charlotte (1816-1855), Emily (1818-1848) and Anne (1820-1849), produced notable works, although they were not immediately appreciated by Victorian critics. *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Emily's only work, is an example of Gothic Romanticism from a woman's point of view which examines class, myth, and gender. *Jane Eyre* (1847), by her sister Charlotte, is another canonic nineteenth century novel with gothic themes. Anne's second novel *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848), written in a realistic style, is considered to be the first sustained feminist novel.



Emily Jane Brontë (1818-1848) was an English novelist and poet who is best known for her only novel, *Wuthering Heights*, now considered a classic of English literature. Emily was the third eldest of the four surviving Brontë siblings, between the youngest Anne and her brother Branwell. She wrote under the pen name Ellis Bell. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emily_Bront%C3%AB

Later in this period, George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans) (1819-1880) published *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) and in 1872 her most famous work, *Middlemarch*. Like the Brontës, she published under a masculine pseudonym. In the later decades of the Victorian era, Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) was the most important novelist. His works include *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895). Other significant novelists were Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865), Anthony Trollope (1815-1882), George Meredith (1828-1909) and George Gissing (1857-1903). Most of the novels published in this period were adapted the cinema in the twentieth century.

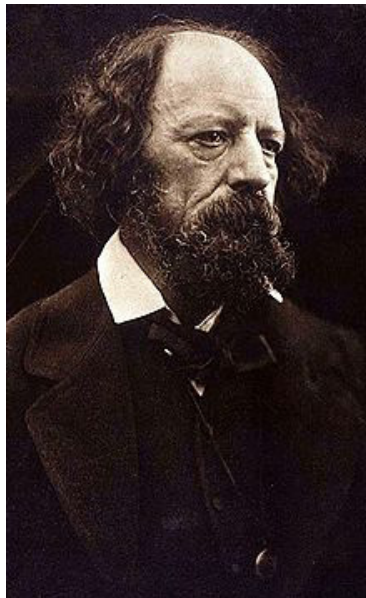


Mary Ann Evans (1819-1880) – alternatively “Mary Anne” or “Marian”), known by her pen name George Eliot, was an English novelist, poet, journalist, translator and one of the leading writers of the Victorian era. She is the author of seven novels, including *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861), *Felix Holt, the Radical* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1871-72) and *Daniel Deronda* (1876), most of them set in provincial England and known for their realism and psychological insight. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Eliot

Poetry

The husband and wife team of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) and Robert Browning (1812-1889) conducted their love affair through verse and produced many tender and passionate poems. Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) and Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), in turn, wrote poems which, although presented romantic aspects, as the exultation of nature, are held as precursors of modern poetry. However, Hopkins's poetry was not published until 1918.

The reclaiming of the past was a major part of Victorian literature, with an interest in both classical literature but also the medieval literature of England. From this perspective, the Victorian poetry is a continuation of the Romantic movement. The Victorians loved the heroic, chivalrous stories of knights of old and they hoped to regain some of that noble, courtly behaviour and impress it upon the people, at home and abroad. These characteristics can be exemplified by the poetry of Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892), whose *Idylls of the King* blends the stories of King Arthur with his contemporary concerns and ideas. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a group of English painters, poets, and critics founded in 1848, also drew on myth and folklore. Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) is regarded as the chief poet amongst them.



Alfred Tennyson, 1st Baron Tennyson (1809-1892) was Poet Laureate of Great Britain and Ireland during much of Queen Victoria's reign and remains one of the most popular British poets. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred,_Lord_Tennyson

Drama

In drama, farces, musical burlesques, extravaganzas and comic operas competed with Shakespeare productions and serious drama produced by authors like James Planché (1796-1880) and Thomas William Robertson (1829-1871). By the middle of the nineteenth century, musical theatre became a fashion in Britain, culminating in the famous series of comic operas by W. S. Gilbert (1836-1911) and the composer Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900). They were followed by the first Edwardian musical comedies in the 1890s.

The first play to achieve 500 consecutive performances was the London comedy *Our Boys*, by H. J. Byron (1835-1884), opening in 1875. After W. S. Gilbert, Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) became the leading poet and dramatist of the late Victorian period. His plays stand apart from the many plays which were produced during the Victorian period and have a close relationship to those of the Edwardian dramatists, such as George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), whose career began in the 1890s. Wilde's 1895 comic masterpiece, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, was the greatest of the plays, according to the critics.



Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde (1854-1900) was an Irish playwright, novelist, essayist, and poet. After writing in different forms throughout the 1880s, he became one of London's most popular playwrights in the early 1890s. He is remembered for his epigrams, his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, his plays, as well as the circumstances of his imprisonment and early death. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar_Wilde

Children's Literature

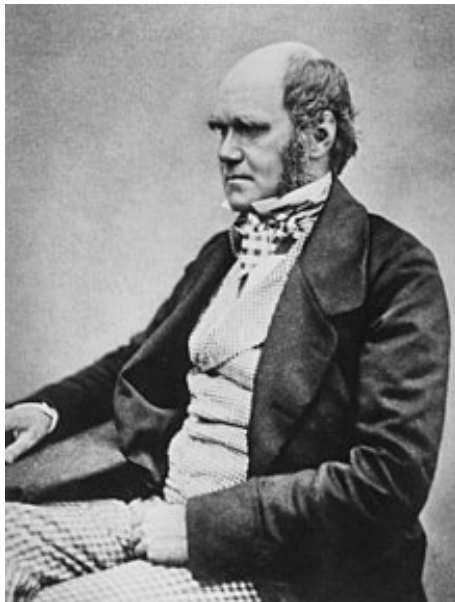
The Victorians are credited with “inventing childhood”, partly because of their efforts to stop child labour and the introduction of compulsory education. As children were now able to read, literature for young people became a powerful industry. Not only established writers produced works for children, like Dickens himself, who wrote *A Child's History of England* (1851-1853), but also a new group of authors, like the most famous of them, Lewis Carroll (1832-1898), R. M. Ballantyne (1825-1894) and Anna Sewell (1820-1878). Other authors, such as Anthony Hope (1863-1933) and Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) wrote mainly for adults, but their adventure novels are classified as for children. Other genres include nonsense verse and school stories.



Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (1832-1898), better known by his pen name Lewis Carroll, was an English writer, mathematician, logician, Anglican deacon, and photographer. His most famous writings are *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, its sequel *Through the Looking-Glass*, which includes the poem “Jabberwocky”, and the poem *The Hunting of the Snark*, all examples of the genre of literary nonsense. He is noted for his facility at word play, logic, and fantasy. There are societies in many parts of the world dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of his works and the investigation of his life. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis_Carroll

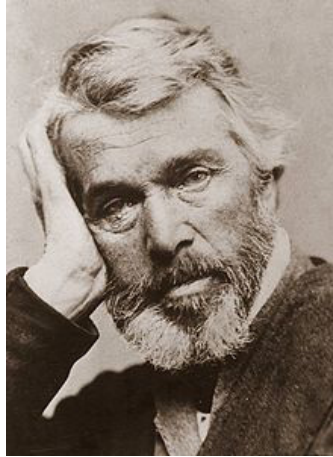
Science and Philosophy

The Victorian era was an important time for the development of science and the Victorians had a mission to describe and classify the entire natural world. Much of this writing is not considered literature, but one book in particular, *On the Origin of Species* (1859), by Charles Darwin (1809-1882), affected society and thought in the Victoria era, and still does today. His theory of evolution shook many of the ideas the Victorians had about themselves and their place in the world. Much of the work of popularizing Darwin's theories was done by his younger contemporary Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), who wrote widely on the subject.



Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882) was an English naturalist and geologist, best known for his contributions to the science of evolution. He established that all species of life have descended over time from common ancestors, and in a joint publication with Alfred Russel Wallace introduced his scientific theory that this branching pattern of evolution resulted from a process that he called natural selection, in which the struggle for existence has a similar effect to the artificial selection involved in selective breeding. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Darwin

Philosophical, literary and historical essays were also largely produced during this period. The philosophical writings of John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), for example, covered logic, economics, liberty and utilitarianism. A historical book like *The French Revolution* (1837), by Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), is another example. The same occurs with the writings of Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859) on English history. John Ruskin (1819-1900) wrote many influential works on art and the history of art. Other monumental reference works were published in this period, like the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which became the most important historical dictionary of the English language. Also published during the later Victorian era.



Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) was a Scottish philosopher, satirical writer, essayist, historian and teacher. Considered one of the most important social commentators of his time, he presented many lectures during his lifetime with certain acclaim in the Victorian era. One of those conferences resulted in his famous work *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and The Heroic in History* (1841), where he explains that the key role in history lies in the actions of the “Great Man”, claiming that “History is nothing but the biography of the Great Man”. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Carlyle

CONCLUSÃO

Writers from the United States and the British colonies of Australia, New Zealand and Canada were influenced by the literature of Britain and are often classed as a part of Victorian literature, although they were gradually developing their own distinctive voices. The problem with the classification of “Victorian literature” is the great difference between the early works of the period and the later works which had more in common with the writers of the Edwardian period and many writers support this divide. Writers like Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, H. G. Wells, Bram Stoker, H. Rider Haggard, Jerome K. Jerome and Joseph Conrad all wrote some of their important works during Victoria’s reign but the sensibility of their writing is frequently regarded as Edwardian.

Joseph Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), for example, was an English journalist, short-story writer, poet, and novelist. His works of fiction include *The Jungle Book* (1894), *Kim* (1901), and many short stories, including the famous “The Man Who Would Be King” (1888). His poems include “Mandalay” (1890), “Gunga Din” (1890), “The Gods of the Copybook Headings” (1919), “The White Man’s Burden” (1899) and “If” (1910). He is regarded as a major innovator in the art of the short story. His children’s books are classics of children’s literature.

Kipling was one of the most popular writers in the United Kingdom, in both prose and verse, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In 1907, at the age of 42, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, making him the first English-language writer to receive the prize, and its youngest recipient to date. He was also sounded out for the British Poet Laureateship and on several occasions for

a knighthood, both of which he declined. Kipling's subsequent reputation has changed according to the political and social climate of the age and the resulting contrasting views about him continued for much of the 20th century. George Orwell (1903-1950), for example, called him a "prophet of British imperialism".



Joseph Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) was an English journalist, short-story writer, poet, and novelist. Fonte: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudyard_Kipling



RESUMO

While in the preceding Romantic period poetry had been the dominant genre, it was the novel that was most important in the Victorian period. Charles Dickens (1812-1870) dominated the first part of Victoria's reign: his first novel, *Pickwick Papers*, was published in 1836, and his last, *Our Mutual Friend*, between 1864 and 1865. William Thackeray (1811-1863), in turn, is most famous for *Vanity Fair*, published in 1848. The three Brontë sisters, Charlotte (1816-1855), Emily (1818-1848) and Anne (1820-1849), also published significant works in the 1840s. A major later novel was George Eliot's (1819-1880) *Middlemarch* (1872), while the major novelist of the later part of Queen Victoria's reign was Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), whose first novel, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, appeared in 1872 and his last, *Jude the Obscure*, in 1895.

Robert Browning (1812-1889) and Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) were the most important Victorian poets, though more recent criticism has tended to prefer the poetry of Thomas Hardy, who did not publish a collection until 1898, as well as Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), whose poetry was published posthumously in 1918. Both of them are considered, nowadays, modern poets. Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909) is also considered an important literary figure of the period, especially because of his poems and essays. W. B. Yeats (1865-1939) was also published during Victoria's reign.

With regard to the theatre, it was not until the last decades of the nineteenth century that any significant works were produced. This began with W. S. Gilbert (1836-1911) and the composer Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900), both of whom produced comic operas, and then was continued with George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) in the 1890s and Oscar Wilde's (1854-1900), who produced *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 1895.



Leia cuidadosamente o poema abaixo e em seguida responda à pergunta que lhe será feita.

The White Man's Burden: The United States and The Philippine Islands (1899)

Take up the White Man's burden, Send forth the best ye breed
Go bind your sons to exile, to serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness, On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples, Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's burden, In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple, An hundred times made plain
To seek another's profit, And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden, The savage wars of peace—
Fill full the mouth of Famine And bid the sickness cease;
And when your goal is nearest The end for others sought,
Watch sloth and heathen Folly Bring all your hopes to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden, No tawdry rule of kings,
But toil of serf and sweeper, The tale of common things.
The ports ye shall not enter, The roads ye shall not tread,
Go make them with your living, And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better, The hate of those ye guard—
The cry of hosts ye humour (Ah, slowly!) toward the light:—
“Why brought he us from bondage, Our loved Egyptian night?”

Take up the White Man's burden, Ye dare not stoop to less—
Nor call too loud on Freedom To cloak your weariness;
By all ye cry or whisper, By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples Shall weigh your gods and you.

Take up the White Man's burden, Have done with childish days—
The lightly proffered laurel, The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood, through all the thankless years
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom, The judgment of your peers!

* Identifique e comente os elementos do poema que indicam a filiação do autor ao projeto imperialista do governo vitoriano. Se possível, procure relacionar a temática adotada pelo poeta com a estrutura do poema.

A intenção desta atividade é fazer com que o aluno se familiarize com a dicção poética de Kipling, mas também sobretudo para fazê-lo refletir acerca do imperialismo britânico promovido pelo governo vitoriano.

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