7 - THE VICTORIAN PERIOD
Queen Victoria's reign (1837 -1901)

- Domestic policy: period of Peace at home
- British Empire colonial conflicts Crimean War Anglo-Zanzibar War and the Boer War
- Industrial improvements at home,
- Reform Act 1832.
- House of Commons: two parties: Whigs and Tories
- the Whigs → Liberals and the Tories→. Conservatives
- Irish Home Rule

Gin Lane
(1750), engraving by William Hogarth

Gustave Doré:
Over London by Rail (1872)
They lived in Yorkshire (Brontë Country)
They wrote from their early childhood (first book published in 1846 at their own expenses, under pseudonyms).

- **Charlotte** (1816-1855): *Jane Eyre*, a woman who builds her life

- **Emily** (1818-1848): *Wuthering Heights*, contrasting passions and feelings in a gothic atmosphere.

- **Anne** (1820-1849): *Agnes Grey*, her experiences as a governess.
Emily Jane Brontë
(1818 –1848)
second eldest of the three surviving Brontë sisters, between Charlotte and Anne.
→ pen name: Ellis Bell.

*Wuthering Heights* (1947)
Passions
Double: love and hatred (revenge); childhood and social life; life and death; instinct and rationality
- Circular structures /repetition of names)
- Flashback
- More than one narrator (different truths)
Charlotte Brontë
(1816 –1855)

Novelist and poet, the eldest of the three Brontë sisters

Jane Eyre (pen name Currer Bell): story of an orphan girl who gets a job as a teacher and finds love

gothic, mystery
psychological introspection, education
New role of woman (independence)
CHARLES DICKENS
(1812-1870)

Popular in English literature's for his most characters.
His novels appeared in magazines in serialized form, he often created the episodes as they were being serialized.

- Social novel
- Sense of humour
- Episodes (pathos)
- World seen though children’s eyes
- Education
- Caricatures/figures
- Painter of English life
- Denounce of social evils
- Criticism to utilitarianism
- Fluent style and use of symbolism
- Powerful imagines (metaphors)
- Exploitation of children
  → End: re-establishment of social order
WORKS
The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club (1835)
The Adventures of Oliver Twist (1839)
The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby (1839)
The Old Curiosity Shop (1841)
A Christmas Carol (1843)

David Copperfield (1850)
Bleak House (1853)
Hard Times: For These Times (1854)
Little Dorrit (1857)
A Tale of Two Cities (1859)
Great Expectations (1861)
The Great Exhibition: 1851
Mid Victorian Period
revival of Romanticism
sense of uneasiness
Return to nature

Charles Robert Darwin
(1809 –1882), naturalist
Sell species of life have
descended from common ancestors
evolution results from
natural selection.

John Ruskin (1919-1901)
Gothic architecture →
against utilitarianism
social structure
Moral qualities
Beauty of hand made products
against machines
The Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849)
The Stones of Venice (1853)
1848 *Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*:
New taste for Beauty in a world dominated by materialism and compromise
Return to simplicity and spirituality
Paintings before Raphael

**Poetry:**
*Themes*: religion, middle ages, nature, details;
idealization of beauty, against machines that kill creativity; art as a message
*Use of symbols*
*Sources*: Dante, Shakespeare, the Bible
End of the Century

Dissatisfaction and rebellion
Anti Victorian reaction due to new scientific and philosophical theories
Realism:
Clash between man and environment
Illusion and reality (E. Zola); naturalism (Darwin)
Man no longer responsible for his action that are determined by forces beyond his control
Writer’s task → to record events, impersonal like a scientist, without comments
Thomas Hardy
(1840-1928)

British writer and poet.
Main themes: contrast between the ideal life and the real life and the relationship between man and Nature.

📖 Works:
Far From The Madding Crowd
Tess Of The D'Urbevilles
Jude The Obscure.
• **Aestheticism** → European movement
• Theophile Gautier - 1835
• Frustration and uncertainty
• Break of conventions
• Free imagination
• France → Decadentism
• 1890 Baudelaire
• Symbolism
• Escape not in nature but in the self

• **Art** → Impressionism

The Liberty style → goods produced by the London store Liberty & Co. (founder: AL Liberty)
Oscar Wilde

Cult of art and beauty

Different from Huysmann and D’Annunzio → he did not
isolate himself, but was successful and popular

Different from French poets: morality, lack of realism

Influenced by W. Pater

📖 Novel: *Picture of Dorian Gray* → Double
Still Victorian → moralism, integrity and coherence

📖 Comedies: *The Importance of being Earnest*
(Puns, country/town; double)

*An Ideal Husband* (hypocrisy)
Rudyard Kipling
(1865 –1936)

- R. Kipling Was born in India and considered the prophet of British imperialism (G. Orwell).
- Nobel Prize in Literature (1907),
- first English language writer

- short stories, (The Man who wanted to be King)
- poems (If, The White Man’s Burden)
- The Jungle Book (1894, a collection of stories)
- Kim (1901)
Robert Louis Stevenson
(1818-1887)

- Double personality of man
- Inspired by Darwin
- Duplicity of soul and society
- Primitive nature
- Escape to further lands

Scottish novelist, poet, essayist and travel writer.

- *Treasure Island*
- *Kidnapped*
- *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.*
**DRAMA**

Features
- Absurd situations
- Characters vividly sketched
- Witty language
- No judgment but satire to literature and society

Rebirth:
- France (Scribe)
- Denmark (Ibsen) → social problems;
- Sweeden (Strindberg) → women psychol
- Russia (Chekhov) → psychology,
- Social criticism and retrospective method
- New influences
- Women independence
- Naturalism and realism

- Amusement
- Star system
- Show business
- Great expensive three dimensional sceneries
- Distorted spirit of classics
Ideas taken from economists and philosophers
with the spirit of comedy
- Conflict between thoughts and ideas
- Debate and dialogues
- Paradoxes and nonsense
- Various viewpoints
- Dramatic force of characters

- *Pygmalion*
- *Major Barbara*
- *Mrs Warren’s Profession*
Abraham “Bram” Stoker (1847 –1912)

- Irish novelist and short story writer,
- personal assistant of actor Henry Irving and business manager of Irving’s Lyceum Theatre in London

Works

- *Dracula*, Gothic novel (1897).
- *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903), the rebirth of a mummy
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
(1859 – 1930)

- Scottish physician, ship's doctor and writer,
- creator of the detective Sherlock Holmes and of Professor Challenger.
- Christian spiritualist

Main works:
- *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), first of Sherlock Holmes stories
- *The Lost World* (1912), protagonist Professor Challenger in a primitive world
- *The Green Flag and Other Stories of War and Sport* (1900), about pirates.
A brilliant consulting detective", famous for his astute logical reasoning, his ability to take almost any disguise, and his forensic science skills.

He appears in 56 short stories.

The first, *A Study in Scarlet*, was published in 1887.

All but four stories are narrated by Holmes's friend and biographer, *Dr. John H. Watson*. 
Lewis Carroll
(Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, 1832 –1898)

- writer, mathematician, logician, Anglican deacon and photographer.
- noted for his facility at word play, logic, and fantasy (nonsense)

Works

📖 Novels: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass,
📖 Poems: The Hunting of the Snark; Jabberwocky

Movies:
W. Disney’s Alice in Wonderland (animated film, 1951), T. Buton’s Alice in Wonderland (2210)