



# **Victorian Transformations: Genre, Nationalism and Desire in Nineteenth-Century Literature (Nineteenth Century)**

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Proposing the concept of transformation as a key to understanding the Victorian period, this collection explores the protean ways in which the nineteenth century conceived of, responded to, and created change. The volume focuses on literature, particularly issues related to genre, nationalism, and desire. For example, the essays suggest that changes in the novel's form correspond with shifting notions of human nature in Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*; technical forms such as the villanelle and chant royal are crucial bridges between Victorian and Modernist poetics; Victorian theater moves from privileging the text to valuing the spectacles that characterized much of Victorian staging; Carlyle's *Past and Present* is a rallying cry for replacing the static and fractured language of the past with a national language deep in shared meaning; Dante Gabriel Rossetti posits unachieved desire as the means of rescuing the subject from the institutional forces that threaten to close down and subsume him; and the return of Adelaide Anne Procter's fallen nun to the convent in "A Legend of Provence" can be read as signaling a more modern definition of gender and sexuality that allows for the possibility of transgressive desire within society. The collection concludes with an essay that shows neo-Victorian authors like John Fowles and A. S. Byatt contending with the Victorian preoccupations with gender and sexuality.

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