

**MSt Special Subject**  
**Reality, Representation and Reflexivity in Nineteenth-Century Prose Writing**  
**2020-21 (Hilary)**

Seminars are 1.5 hours each. The reading list indicates a small number of ‘set’ literary texts (marked with a \*), and students are advised to have made a good start on the primary reading before term begins. Each student will give a short presentation (in one session each, to be agreed in advance) and write essays for two other sessions (2500-3000 words each).

Week	Topic	Tutor
0	Planning session	Tim Farrant and Andrew Counter
2	Romantic and Fantastic Prose	Tim Farrant
3	Early Realism	Tim Farrant
4	Late Realism/Naturalism	Andrew Counter
5	Decadent Prose	Andrew Counter
8	Final draft of selected essay/s to be submitted for feedback	

Tim Farrant, Pembroke

Andrew Counter, New College

**Romantic and ‘Fantastic’ Prose**

Chateaubriand, François-René de, ‘René’\*; ‘Atala’ and ‘Du Vague des passions’ in *Le Génie du christianisme* (photocopy to be sent round)

Gautier, Théophile, ‘La Morte amoureuse’\*; ‘Omphale’\*; ‘Arria Marcella’; ‘Pied de momie’ (these tales are sometimes published in a collection of *Contes fantastiques*); Preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin*

Musset, *La Confession d’un enfant du siècle*\*

Nerval, Gérard de, *Les Filles du feu*, particularly ‘Sylvie’\*

**Suggested secondary reading**

Barbérís, Pierre, *Chateaubriand: Une réaction au monde moderne* (Paris: Larousse, 1976)

Béguin, Albert, *Gérard de Nerval* (1986)

Bénichou, Paul, ‘Gérard de Nerval’ in *L’École du désenchantement* (1992)

Blonde, David ‘Le Fantastique comme quête de l’inconnu: Indéterminations narratives dans trois récits de Théophile Gautier’ in *Symposium: A Quarterly Journal in Modern Literatures* 59, no. 1 (2005 Spring), 3-18

Castex, Pierre-Georges, *Le Conte fantastique en France de Nodier à Maupassant* (1951)

- Cummiskey, Gary, *The changing face of horror: a study of the nineteenth-century French fantastic short story* (1992)
- Fairlie, Alison, *An approach to Nerval* (1961)
- Gaillard, Françoise, 'Nerval, ou les contradictions du romantisme', *Romantisme*, 1-2 (1971), 128-38
- Geninasca, Jacques, *Analyse structurale des Chimères de Nerval* (1971)
- Knight, Diana, 'The Readability of René's Secret', *French Studies*, 37: 1 (1983), 35-46
- Kristeva, Julia, ch. 'Nerval, El Desdichado' in *Soleil noir: Dépression et mélancolie* (1987), 152-182
- Née, Patrick, *L'Ailleurs en question* (2009) particularly pp. 43-63
- Porter, Laurence M., 'Consciousness of the Exotic and Exotic Consciousness in Chateaubriand', in *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, (38:3-4), 2010 Spring-Summer, 159-171 (electronic access through SOLO)
- Prendergast, Christopher, *The Order of Mimesis: Balzac, Stendhal, Nerval, Flaubert* (1986), see chapter 'Nerval: the madness of mimesis'.
- Richard, Jean-Pierre, *Poésie et profondeur* (1955), chapter on 'Géographie magique de Nerval'
- Rinsler, Norma, *Gérard de Nerval* (1973)
- Ransom, Amy J, *The feminine as fantastic in the Conte fantastique: visions of the other* (1995)
- Sangsue, Daniel, *Le Récit excentrique: Gautier – de Maistre – Nerval – Nodier* (Paris: José Corti, 1987)
- Smethurst, Colin, *Chateaubriand: Atala and René* (1995)
- Smith, Albert B., *Théophile Gautier and the Fantastic* (1977)
- Todorov, Tzvetan, *Introduction à la littérature fantastique* (1970)
- Vaillant, Alain, ed. *Dictionnaire du romantisme* [particularly the long introductory section on Romanticism]
- Whyte, P. J., *Théophile Gautier: conteur fantastique et merveilleux* (1996)

### **Early Realism**

- Stendhal, *Le Rouge et le Noir*\*; *Lucien Leuwen* (Garnier-Flammarion edition); *La Chartreuse de Parme*
- Balzac, *Le Père Goriot*\*; *Illusions perdues*; article on *La Chartreuse de Parme*, 1840 (discussed by Lukacs in the work cited)

### **Suggested secondary reading**

- Auerbach, tr. W. Trask, *Mimesis* (Princeton: 1953 and reprints), ch. 18, 'In the Hôtel de la Mole', p. 454-492.

Brombert, Victor, *The Hidden Reader* (Cambridge, Mass., & London: Harvard UP, 1988)

Brooks, Peter, *Realist Vision* (Yale: YUP, 2005)

Chateaubriand, François-René de, 'Du Vague des passions' in *Le Génie du christianisme*

Cohen, Margaret, *The Sentimental Education of the Novel* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999), 'Introduction: Reconstructing the Literary Field', pp. 3-25

Lukács, G., *Balzac et le réalisme français / Studies in European Realism* (Fr. tr. P. Laveau, Paris: F. Maspero, 1969; Eng. tr. E. Bone, London: The Merlin Press, 1978), preface.

Petrey, Sandy, *Realism and Revolution* (Cornell UP, Ithaca and London, 1988) – chapters on *Le Rouge et le noir* and *Le Père Goriot*.

Prendergast, Christopher, *The Order of Mimesis* (Cambridge, 1986)

### **Late Realism/Naturalism**

Flaubert, Gustave, *Madame Bovary*\*, 'Un cœur simple'\*, *L'Éducation sentimentale* (of 1869)

Maupassant, Guy de, 'Le Roman', preface to *Pierre et Jean*

Zola, Émile, *La Bête humaine*\* ; *Thérèse Raquin* (and Zola's preface to the second edition of the novel) ; *L'Assommoir* ; *Le Roman expérimental*

### **Suggested secondary reading**

Baguley, David, *Naturalist Fiction: The Entropic Vision* (1990)

Barthes, Roland, 'L'Effet de réel' (1968), reprinted in Roland Barthes et al., *Littérature et réalité* (1982), pp. 81-90

Brombert, Victor, *The Novels of Flaubert: A Study of Themes and Techniques* (1966)

Brooks, Peter, *Reading for the Plot* (1984), ch. 7 on Flaubert

Culler, Jonathan, *Flaubert: The Uses of Uncertainty* (1974)

Deleuze, Gilles, 'Zola et la fêlure', in *Logique du sens* but preprinted as the preface to the Gallimard edition of *LBH*

Genette, Gérard, 'Silences de Flaubert', in *Figures I*, Paris: Seuil, 1966, pp. 223-43

Maupassant, 'Le Roman', Préface à *Pierre et Jean*, 1887

Nelson, Brian ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Emile Zola* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2007)

Parkhurst-Ferguson, Priscilla, 'Mobilité et modernité: le Paris de *La Curée*', *Les Cahiers naturalistes* 67 (1993), 73-81

Prendergast, Christopher, *The Order of Mimesis* (1986), ch.6 on Flaubert

Reid, James H., *Narration and description in the French realist novel. The temporality of lying and forgetting*, CUP 1993

Unwin, Timothy, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Flaubert* (2004)

## **Decadent Prose**

Huysmans, *A rebours\**, *Là-bas*

Rachilde, *La Marquise de Sade\**, *La Jongleuse*, *Monsieur Vénus* [Novels by Rachilde can be quite hard to get hold of; check Blackwells' holdings, or amazon.fr or chapitre.com; otherwise you can consult them on Gallica]

## **Suggested secondary reading**

Beizer, Janet, *Ventriloquized Bodies : Narratives of Hysteria in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cornell, 1993), pp. 227-60

Birkett, Jennifer, *The Sins of the Fathers : Decadence in France 1870-1914* (Quartet, 1986), pp. 159-89

Carter, A.E. *The Idea of Decadence in French Literature (1830-1900)*

Dauphiné, C., *Rachilde* (Mercure de France, 1991)

Dijkstra, B., *Idols of Perversity : Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-siècle Culture* (OUP, 1986)

Garelick, R.K., *Rising Star : Dandyism, Gender, and Performance in the Fin de Siècle* (1998)

Gill, Miranda, 'The Myth of the Female Dandy', *French Studies* 61: 2 (2007), pp. 167-81

Holmes, Diana, *Rachilde: Decadence, Gender and the Woman Writer* (Berg, 2001)

Holmes, Diana, 'Monstrous Women: Rachilde's Erotic Fiction', in A. Hughes and K. Ince, *French Erotic Fiction: Women's Desiring Writing, 1880-1990* (Berg, 1996)

Huret, Jules, *Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire*, ed. Daniel Grojnowski, Paris: José Corti, 1999 [an innovative series of interviews with contemporary French writers, published in 1891, which enquires about the 'death' of naturalism and what the immediate literary future will be; includes interviews with Huysmans, Zola...]

Livi, François, *J.-K. Huysmans: 'A Rebours' et l'esprit decadent* (1976)

Lloyd, C., *J.-K. Huysmans and the Fin-de-siècle novel* (1990)

Lukacher, M., *Maternal Fictions* (Duke U.P., 1994), pp. 109-60

McGuinness, Patrick, ed. *Symbolism, Decadence and the Fin de siècle* (University of Exeter Press, 2000) [Introduction ; ch.9 on the unconscious]

Palacio, Jean de, *La Décadence: le mot et la chose* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2011)

Rosbach, S., '(Un)Veiling the Self and the Story: Dandyism, Desire, and Narrative Duplicity in Barbey d'Aurevilly's *Les Diaboliques*,' *NCFS* 37: 3-4 (2009), pp. 276-290

Swart, K.W., *The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France* (1964)

## **Questions from which to choose for your essays and presentation:**

### Romantic and Fantastic Prose:

‘Pour que la synthèse romantique entre la réalité et l’idéal s’accomplisse [...] il faut une sorte d’explosion temporaire qui suspende miraculeusement l’enchaînement normal des causes et des effets.’ Discuss in relation to Romantic and Fantastic literature.

OR

‘Seen through a Romantic lens, travel across geographical space resembles travel across the borderline between sleep and waking.’ Discuss in relation to Romantic and Fantastic literature.

### Early Realism:

‘Early realism, like all literature, creates what it describes. Its primary innovation is its repudiation of that creative role.’ Discuss.

OR

‘Les historiens sont des conteurs du passé; les romanciers des conteurs du présent’ (E. & J. de Goncourt). How paradoxical is this remark, and how usefully may it be applied to the work of early French realist writers?

OR

‘The central tension of realism falls between subjectivity and objectivity’. Discuss.

### Late Realism/Naturalism:

‘Naturalist literature calls upon the strategies of realism to represent a process of levelling or dissolution, through which meaning collapses into indeterminacy.’ To what extent is this quotation (adapted from David Baguley) useful in reading the texts studied?

OR

To what extent do the texts studied suggest a failure of the notion of individual human agency?

OR

‘Nineteenth-century French literature of the second half of the century exposes the precarity of gender identity but at the same time the determining nature of gender roles.’ Discuss.

### Decadent writing:

To what extent is irony essential to understanding fin-de-siècle ‘decadent’ writing?

OR

‘Decadent explorations of “gender trouble” do not reflect burgeoning feminism but rather a profound disquiet concerning the role of Nature itself.’ Discuss with reference to the texts studied.