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).

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


Kristeva, Julia, ch. ‘Nerval, El Desdichado’ in *Soleil noir: Dépression et mélancolie* (1987), 152-182


Rinsler, Norma, *Gérard de Nerval* (1973)

Ransom, Amy J, *The feminine as fantastic in the Conte fantastique: visions of the other* (1995)


Vailiant, Alain, ed. *Dictionnaire du romantisme* [particularly the long introductory section on Romanticism]


**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**

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

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


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**


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


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


Maupassant, ‘Le Roman’, Préface à *Pierre et Jean*, 1887


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


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
Carter, A.E. *The Idea of Decadence in French Literature* (1830-1900)
Dijkstra, B., *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-siècle Culture* (OUP, 1986)
Holmes, Diana, *Rachilde: Decadence, Gender and the Woman Writer* (Berg, 2001)
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…]
Lloyd, C., J.-K. Huysmans and the Fin-de-siècle novel (1990)
McGuinness, Patrick, ed. *Symbolism, Decadence and the Fin de siècle* (University of Exeter Press, 2000) [Introduction; ch.9 on the unconscious]
Rossbach, 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
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 raconteurs du passé; les romanciers des raconteurs 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.