The Cambridge History of the Novel in French

This History is the first in a century to trace the development and impact of the novel in French from its beginnings to the present. Leading specialists explore how novelists writing in French have responded to the diverse personal, economic, socio-political, cultural-artistic and environmental factors that shaped their worlds. From the novel’s medieval precursors to the impact of the Internet, the History provides fresh accounts of canonical and lesser-known authors, offering a global perspective beyond the national borders of ‘the Hexagon’ to explore France’s colonial past and its legacies. Accessible chapters range widely, including the French novel in Sub-Saharan Africa, data analysis of the novel system in the seventeenth century, social critique in women’s writing, Sade’s banned works and more. Highlighting continuities and divergence between and within different periods, this lively volume offers routes through a diverse literary landscape while encouraging comparison and connection-making between writers, works and historical periods.

Adam Watt is Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of Exeter. Born in Edinburgh, he studied at the University of Oxford, where his doctoral research was supervised by the late Malcolm Bowie. His publications include Reading in Proust’s À la recherche: ‘le délire de la lecture’ (2009), The Cambridge Introduction to Marcel Proust (2011) and, as editor, Marcel Proust in Context (2013).
THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF THE NOVEL IN FRENCH

Edited by
ADAM WATT
University of Exeter
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AW, Exeter October 2020
Note on Conventions

Translations from French are provided throughout the volume except where the sense is straightforwardly evident from the context. Unless otherwise noted, translations are provided by the author(s) of the chapter in question. Upon first mention, where necessary, titles of novels are also translated, though subsequent references are usually to the French original. Where a novel has been published in English translation, this translated title is given in italics after the original, thus: Marguerite Duras, *Le ravissement de Lol V. Stein* (*The Ravishing of Lol Stein*, 1964). For works that have not been translated, an English rendering is provided between single inverted commas. In selected chapters, and in the chronology, where a great deal of material is surveyed, titles have not been translated for reasons of space. In all cases, unless otherwise specified, the date given after the translated title is the date of original publication in French. A list of selected ‘further reading’ is provided at the end of each chapter.
Chronology

Selected key publications are listed below; selected historical events are included in bold.

c.1150 'Romans d’antiquité' – Roman de Thèbes, Roman d’Enéas, Roman de Troie (translated from Latin)
c.1237–77 Le Roman de la rose
1337–1453 Hundred Years’ War
1346 French defeat at Battle of Crécy
1353 Guillaume de Machaut, Le Livre dou voir dit
1353 Boccaccio, Decameron
1362–5 Battle of Agincourt
1362 Jeanne d’Arc burnt to death in Reims
1362–5 Guillaume de Machaut, Le Livre dou voir dit
1415 Cent Nouvelles nouvelles
1415 Rabelais, Pantagruel; Gargantua
1434 Establishment of ‘New France’ colony in Canada
1457 Amyot’s translation of Heliodorus, Aethiopica
1499 Du Bellay, La Défense et illustration de la langue française
1559 Marguerite de Navarre, Heptaméron
1562–98 Wars of Religion
1572 St Bartholomew’s Day Massacre
1607 Honoré d’Urfé, L’Astrée
1635 Foundation of the Académie française
1643–1715 Reign of Louis XIV, ‘the Sun King’
1648–53 Fronde civil wars
1651–7 Scarron, Le Roman comique
1654 Madeleine de Scudéry, Clélie
1664 Sorel, Bibliothèque française
1665 Furetière, Le Roman bourgeois
Chronology

1670  Madame de Lafayette, Zaïde with preface by Pierre-Daniel Huet, Lettre-Traité de l’origine des romans
1678  Madame de Lafayette, La Princesse de Clèves
1683  Anon., Vénus dans le cloître
1699  Fénelon, Télémaque
1704–17 Galland, trans., Les Mille et une nuits
1721  Montesquieu, Lettres persanes
1731  Prévost, Manon Lescaut
1747  Graffigny’s Lettres d’une Péruvienne
1748  Diderot, Les Bijoux indiscrets
1756–63 Seven Years’ War
1759  Voltaire, Candide
1761  Rousseau, Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse
1778–80 Diderot, Jacques le fataliste
1782  LaClos, Les Liaisons dangereuses
1785  Sade, Les 120 Journées de Sodome (in manuscript; published 1904)
1788  Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Paul et Virginie
1789–99 French Revolution
1791  Olympe de Gouges Déclaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne
1791–1804 Haitian Revolution
1792  Claris de Florian, Gonzalve de Cordoue
1795  Madame de Genlis, Les Chevaliers du cygne
1800  Madame de Staël, De la littérature considérée dans ses rapports avec les institutions sociales
1801  Chateaubriand, Atala, ou Les amours de deux sauvages dans le désert
1802  Madame de Staël, Delphine
1803–15 Napoleonic Wars
1804  Napoleonic Code, ‘code civil’ established
1807  Madame de Staël, Corinne ou l’Italie
1815  Napoleon defeated at Waterloo
1816  Constant, Adolphe
1823  Madame de Duras, Ourika
1830  July Revolution
1830  Stendhal, Le Rouge et le Noir
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<th>Event</th>
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<td>Hugo, <em>Notre-Dame de Paris:</em> 1482</td>
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<td>1832</td>
<td>Sand, <em>Indiana</em></td>
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<td>1835</td>
<td>Balzac, <em>Le Père Goriot</em></td>
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<td>1837–43</td>
<td>Balzac, <em>Illusions perdues</em> (3 vols.)</td>
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<td>1839</td>
<td>Durham Report on the Affairs of British North America Stendhal, <em>La Chartreuse de Parme</em></td>
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<td>1842</td>
<td>Balzac, ‘Avant-propos’ to the <em>Comédie humaine</em></td>
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<td>1842–5</td>
<td>Sue, <em>Les Mystères de Paris</em></td>
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<td>1844</td>
<td>Dumas père, <em>Le Comte de Monte-Cristo; Les Trois Mousquetaires</em></td>
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<td>1846</td>
<td>Lacombe, <em>La Terre paternelle</em> (serial; book publication 1871)</td>
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<td>1848</td>
<td>February Revolution; end of the July Monarchy and creation of the Second Republic</td>
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<td>1856</td>
<td>Flaubert, <em>Madame Bovary</em></td>
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<td>1862</td>
<td>Hugo, <em>Les Misérables</em></td>
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<td>1865</td>
<td>Frères Goncourt, <em>Géraldie Lacerteux</em></td>
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<td>1868</td>
<td>Zola, <em>Thérèse Raquin</em></td>
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<td>1869</td>
<td>Flaubert, <em>L’Éducation sentimentale</em></td>
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<td>1870–1</td>
<td>Franco-Prussian War</td>
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<td>1870–1940</td>
<td>Third Republic</td>
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<td>1871</td>
<td>Zola, <em>Les Rougon-Macquart</em> (suppressed May)</td>
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<td>1873</td>
<td>Verne, <em>Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours</em></td>
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<td>1881–2</td>
<td>Conan, <em>Angéline de Monthrun</em> (serial; book publication 1884)</td>
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<td>1884</td>
<td>Rachilde, <em>Monsieur Vénus</em></td>
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<td>1885</td>
<td>Maupassant, <em>Bel-ami</em></td>
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<td>1887</td>
<td>Foundation of the Eiffel Tower</td>
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<td>1892</td>
<td>Rodenbach, <em>Bruges-la-morte</em></td>
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<td>1894–9</td>
<td>Dreyfus Affair</td>
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<td>1900</td>
<td>Colette, <em>Caudine à l’école</em></td>
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<td>1904–12</td>
<td>Rolland, <em>Jean-Christophe</em></td>
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<td>1905</td>
<td>Separation of Church and State</td>
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<td>1907</td>
<td>Segalen, <em>Les Immémoriaux</em></td>
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<td>1913–27</td>
<td>Proust, <em>À la recherche du temps perdu</em></td>
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<td>1913</td>
<td>Alain-Fournier, <em>Le Grand Meaulnes</em></td>
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<td>1914–18</td>
<td><strong>First World War</strong></td>
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<td>1916</td>
<td>Barbusse, <em>Le Feu</em></td>
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<td>1919</td>
<td>Dorgelès, <em>Les Croix de bois</em></td>
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<td>1921</td>
<td>Maran, <em>Batouala</em></td>
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<td>1922–40</td>
<td>Martin du Gard, <em>Les Thibault</em></td>
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<td>1925</td>
<td>Gide, <em>Les Faux-Monnayeurs</em></td>
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<td>1927</td>
<td>Mauriac, <em>Thérèse Desqueyroux</em></td>
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<td>1928</td>
<td>Breton, <em>Nadja</em></td>
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<td>1932</td>
<td>Céline, <em>Voyage au bout de la nuit</em></td>
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<td>1933</td>
<td>Malraux, <em>La Condition humaine</em></td>
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<td>1936–8</td>
<td><strong>Popular Front, left-wing government</strong></td>
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<td>1938</td>
<td>Sartre, <em>La Nausée</em></td>
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<td>1939–45</td>
<td><strong>Second World War</strong></td>
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<td>1940–5</td>
<td>German Occupation of France; Vichy government</td>
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<td>1942</td>
<td>Camus, <em>L’Étranger</em></td>
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<td>1943</td>
<td>Genet, <em>Notre-Dame-des-Fleurs</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Women in France gain right to vote</td>
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<td>1945</td>
<td>Beauvoir, <em>Le Sang des autres</em></td>
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<td>1945–9</td>
<td>Roy, <em>Bonheur d’occasion</em></td>
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<td>1945–9</td>
<td>Sartre, <em>Les Chemins de la liberté</em></td>
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<td>1946–58</td>
<td><strong>Fourth Republic</strong></td>
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<td>1946–52</td>
<td><strong>Indochina War</strong></td>
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<td>1947</td>
<td>Camus, <em>La Peste</em></td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>Duras, <em>Un barrage contre le Pacifique</em></td>
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<td>1951–3</td>
<td>Beckett’s trilogy, <em>Molloy – Malone meurt – L’Innommable</em></td>
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<td>1954–62</td>
<td><strong>Algerian Revolution/War of Independence</strong></td>
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<td>1954</td>
<td>Sagan, <em>Bonjour Tristesse</em></td>
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<td>1956</td>
<td>Colonial rule ends in Morocco and Tunisia</td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td><strong>Treaty of Rome: France joins the new European Economic Community</strong></td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Oyono, <em>Une vie de boy</em></td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Sarraute, <em>L’Ère du soupçon</em></td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Yacine, <em>Nedjma</em></td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Butor, <em>La Modification</em></td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Robbe-Grillet, <em>La Jalousie</em></td>
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<th>Year</th>
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| 1958– | **Fifth Republic** | Wiesel, *La Nuit*  
Glissant, *La Lézarde* |
| 1958–60 | **Independence of French West African colonies** | Queneau, *Zazie dans le Métro*  
Sarraute, *Le Planétarium*  
Schwarz-Bart, *Le Dernier des justes* |
| 1959 | **First French nuclear weapons test** | Le Clézio, *Le Procès-verbal* |
| 1960 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Ouologuem, *Le Devoir de violence* |
| 1969 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Pèrec, *La Disparition* |
| 1970 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Tournier, *Le Roi des aulnes* |
| 1971 | | Doubrovsky, *Fils* |
| 1977 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Pèrec, *La Vie mode d’emploi* |
| 1978 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Ba, *Une si longue lettre* |
| 1979 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Tansi, *La Vie et demie* |
| 1980 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Le Clézio, *Désert* |
| 1981 | **François Mitterand elected President; end of capital punishment** | Boubi, *Chamoiseau, Éloge de la créolité*  
Maïmouna, *Les Particules élémentaires*  
Mabanckou, *Bleu-blanc-rouge* |
| 1984 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Duras, *L’Amant* |
| 1985 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Ernaux, *La Place* |
| 1985 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Djebar, *L’Amour, la fantasía*  
Laferrière, *Comment faire l’amour avec un nègre sans se fatiguer*  
Toussaint, *La Salle de bain* |
| 1989 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Bernabé, *Chamoiseau, Confiant, Éloge de la créolité*  
Condé, *Traversée de la mangrove* |
| 1992 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Alexakis, *Avant*  
Chamoiseau, *Texaco* |
| 1994 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Alexakis, *Avant*  
Chamoiseau, *Texaco* |
| 1995 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Alexakis, *Avant*  
Chamoiseau, *Texaco* |
| 1996 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Alexakis, *Avant*  
Chamoiseau, *Texaco* |
| 1997 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Alexakis, *Avant*  
Chamoiseau, *Texaco* |
| 1998 | **1968 student revolts and national strike** | Alexakis, *Avant*  
Chamoiseau, *Texaco* |

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1999  Nothomb,  *Stupeur et tremblements*
2000  Dai Sijie,  *Balzac et la petite tailleuse chinoise*
2002  Chevillard,  *Du hérisson*
2003  Beyala,  *Femme nue, femme noire*
2004  Némirovsky,  *Suite française*
2006  Littell,  *Les Bienveillantes*
2007  **Nicolas Sarkozy elected President**
       *Pour une littérature-monde en français*
2008  Ernaux,  *Les Années*
2009  Ndiaye,  *Trois femmes puissantes*
2011  Darrieussecq,  *Clèves*
2012  **François Hollande elected President**
       *Fournel, La Liseuse*
2015  **Terror attacks on Charlie Hebdo and Bataclan, Paris**
       Binet,  *La Septième fonction du langage*
       de Vigan,  *D’après une histoire vraie*
       Houellebecq,  *Soumission*
2016  Faye,  *Petit pays*
       Slimani,  *Chanson douce*
2017  **Emmanuel Macron elected President**
2019  Houellebecq,  *Sérotonine*