

Paris and the Nineteenth Century (Writing the City)

By Christopher Prendergast

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Paris has long been the archetypal literary city. This identification reached its peak in the nineteenth century when Paris could reasonably fulfill Walter Benjamin's claimn for it: that it was the 'capital of the nineteenth century'. In this expansive and entertaining book Christopher Prendergast explores the way writers and others have identified with Paris and been identified with it. He moves between social and cultural history, literature, painting and photography and presents an exemplary series of readings (of Balzac, Hugo, Baudelaire, Michelet, Flaubert, Zola, Valles, Laforgue). Throughout Paris is both the city represented and the very problem of representation.

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Editorial Review

Review
"Prendergast offers a fascinating view of the changing structures and sensibilities of 19th-century Paris." *Times Higher Education Supplement*

"Tanner's book, and Christopher Prendergast's on nineteenth-century Paris, are the first volumes in what promises to be an outstanding series on 'Writing the City'. Throughout, Prendergast writes brilliantly." *Times Literary Supplement*

"*Paris and the Nineteenth Century* is an intricate and challenging book, with much to say not only about Paris but about other cities, and about the business of thinking about cities. It is a dense and rich work, it thinks hard and it makes you think." *London Review of Books*

"Readers looking for both plaisir du texte and rigorous scholarship could not expect a more original and powerful voice than Prendergast's, as this prominent critic leads us on a series of sensuous strolls and connected mappings through the pictorial, historical, and literary spaces of the pre-modern capital, and soon-to-be modern metropolis." *Substance*

From the Back Cover
Paris and the Nineteenth Century moves between social and cultural history, literature, painting and photography. At its heart lies a series of readings of major nineteenth century texts - by Balzac, Hugo, Baudelaire, Michelet, Flaubert, Zola, Valles, Laforgue and others. In each of these texts the city becomes a matter for and problem of representation. Prendergast concludes by sketching some perspectives which join the pre-modern Paris of the nineteenth century to the postmodern city of the late twentieth century.

About the Author
Christopher Prendergast is currently Distinguished Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the Graduate School, City University of New York, and Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. He is the author of *Balzac: Fiction and Melodrama* and *Paris Spectacle* and editor of *Nineteenth Century French Poetry.*

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