CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	xi
INTRODUCTION: THE LONG VIEW	I
PART I. THE MIDDLE AGES: FROM THE	
EARLIEST TEXTS TO 1470	13
OVERVIEW OF THE PERIOD	15
The Period In Close-UP The saints speak French 31 – Inventing love poetry: the songs of the troubadours 34 – The three matières and the move from history to fiction 41 – Courtliness and the rise of romance 45 – The chansons de geste 48 – Clerks, jongleurs, and townspeople 52 – Prose: history, romance, and the Grail 57 – Treatises, encyclopedias, and compilation in the thirteenth century 62 – The Roman de la rose and the allegorical tradition 65 – From the grand chant courtois to the formes fixes: the French lyric at its height 69 – The dit amoureux: between lyric and history 75 – Writing history 80 – Humanism, didacticism, licence and death 82 – The 'Querelle du Roman de la rose' and 'La belle dame sans mercy' 87 – Theatre in the late Middle Ages 89 – The future of a poet with a past: François Villon 92	31
PART II. THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD: 1470-1789	97
OVERVIEW OF THE PERIOD	99
From Burgundy to the French court: Jean Lemaire de Belges 113 – Rabelais: Pantagruel and Gargantua 116 – Religious controversy and literature: the circle of Marguerite de Navarre 118 – Rabelais's later works 122 – Poetry: (i) from Marot to Labé 123 – Poetry: (ii) the Pléiade 129 – The late sixteenth century: Montaigne's Essais 133 – New directions in the early seventeenth century 138 – Poetry: (iii) Malherbe and his contemporaries 139 – Questions of language and style 141 – Theatre: a retrospect 143 – Theatre: Corneille and his times 145 – Descartes and Pascal: the mid-century turn 148 – Literature and power in the age of Louis XIV 152 – Questions of psychology and ethics 154 – Lucidity and uncertainty 158 – 'Ancients' and 'Moderns' 161 – Outlines of the novel 164 – The end of a reign: literature at the turn of the century 168 – The letter-form:	113

X CONTENTS

INDEX

OVERVIEW OF THE PERIOD

Montesquieu, Voltaire, Graffigny 169 - The philosophes in action: the Encyclopédie 173 - Rousseau: autobiography and fiction 176 -The sentimental and the erotic 180 - Diderot: the philosophe and his double 185 - Crossing the divide 189

193

333

PART III. THE MODERN PERIOD: 1789-2000

OVERVIEW OF THE PERIOD	195
Literature and political action 208 – The Romantic individual 210 – Literature and sexuality 213 – The Napoleonic legend 215 – Romanticism in verse 218 – History and prophecy 221 – Prose fiction prepares for victory 224 – Stendhal and Balzac 226 – A colossus: Victor Hugo 228 – Poetry and society 231 – Writing by women, 1830–1880 237 – Theatre in the nineteenth century 241 – Literature before the law 244 – Flaubert's war on stupidity 245 – Literature and science: the case of 'Naturalism' 247 – Dreyfus and after 250 – Gide and Proust 253 – Literature and war: 1914–18 258 – In Mallarmé's shadow 260 – Dada and surrealism 264 – Prose fiction between the wars 267 – The twentieth century's Voltaire: Jean-Paul Sartre 271 – Literature and war: 1939–45 274 – The fortunes of the modern novel 279 – Writing by women in the twentieth century: a long revolution 285 – Theatre in the twentieth century 292 – Poetry in the later twentieth century 297 – Beyond the Hexagon 301 – Beyond the literary profession 306 – The Revolution remembered 309 – A final note, in which the story does not end 313	208
POSTFACE	315
SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING	317
SOURCES OF QUOTATIONS	325

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Ι.	Courtly authorship. Richard de Fournival, <i>Bestiaire d'amours</i> , Bibliothèque Nationale fr. 15213, fo. 57 (by courtesy of the	
	Bibliothèque Nationale de France)	17
2.	The troubadour Folquet de Marselha in the grip of inspiration at his desk. Pierpont Morgan Library M 819, fo. 63 (by courtesy of the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York)	39
3.	Perceval arrives at the Grail Castle. Chrétien de Troyes, <i>Le Conte del graal</i> , Bibliothèque Nationale fr. 12577, fo. 18° (by courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)	60
4.	The final moments of the lover's 'pilgrimage'. Jean de Meun, <i>Roman de la rose</i> , Biblioteca de la Universidad, Valencia, MS 387 (formerly 1327), fo. 147' (by courtesy of the Biblioteca de la Universidad, Valencia)	60
5.	A lover in the throes of composing a lay. Guillaume de Machaut, Remede de Fortune, Bibliothèque Nationale fr. 1586, fo. 26 (by courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)	74
6.	A love-lorn nobleman and a poet-scribe collaborate to produce a dit amoureux. Guillaume de Machaut, La Fontaine amoureuse, Bibliothèque Nationale fr. 1584, fo. 155° (by courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)	78
7.	François I and his court listening to a humanist (c.1532) (by courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library)	103
8.	The young Louis XIV acting the part of the Sun in the <i>Ballet de la Nuit</i> (1653) (by courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)	153
9.	Louis XIV depicted as Alexander the Great against the backdrop of the scenery for Racine's play <i>Alexandre</i> (1665) (by courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)	153
10.	The highly theatrical decor for the funeral of Henriette d'Angleterre at the royal cathedral of Saint-Denis (by courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)	160
II.	Portrait of Madame de Pompadour by Maurice Quentin de La Tour (1755) (by courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library)	170
2.	An illustration from Marivaux's <i>La Vie de Marianne</i> (by courtesy of the Taylor Institution Library, Oxford)	183
13.	Steam-powered, four-feeder cylinder press, manufactured in Paris by Pierre Alauzet, late 1840s (engraving reproduced, by permission of the publisher, from James Moran's Printing Presses: History and Development from the Fifteenth Century to Modern Times, Faber and Faber, 1973)	197
	,	19/

XII LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

•	(1907–1984) for an encyclopedia article (private collection, by courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library)	204
15.	Liberty Leading the People, by Eugène Delacroix (by courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library)	225
16.	The front page of <i>L'Aurore</i> , 13 January 1898, carrying Émile Zola's celebrated open letter ('J'accuse') to the President of the Republic (by courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library)	251
17.	Delphine Seyrig as Anne-Marie Stretter, with Claude Mann and Didier Flamand, in <i>India Song</i> (1974), directed by Marguerite	

293

14. Jacques Prévert (1900–1977) as drawn by Maurice Henry

Duras (by courtesy of the British Film Institute, London)