



## Changing France

Literature and Material Culture in the Second Empire

Anne Green

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### Description

**A fresh insight into the rich possibilities of expression opened up to French Second Empire writers through apparently trivial aspects of modern material life.**

'This lively, lucid, and meticulously researched book will be a rich resource for those wishing to know more of the burgeoning material culture of Second Empire France. It breaks new ground both in its exploration of how that culture, even at its most apparently trivial, reflected larger social and political anxieties; and in its compelling account of how the literature of the period responded to and engaged with it.' —*Professor Heather Glen, University of Cambridge*

The French Second Empire (1852-70) was a time of exceptionally rapid social, industrial and technological change. Guidebooks and manuals were produced in large numbers to help readers negotiate new cultural phenomena, and their concerns – including image-making, diet, stress, lack of time, and the frustrations of public transport – betray contemporary political tensions and social anxieties alongside the practical advice offered. French literature also underwent fundamental changes during this period, as writers such as Baudelaire, Flaubert, Gautier, Hugo and Zola embraced 'modernity' and incorporated new technologies, fashions and inventions into their work. Focusing on cultural areas such as exhibitions, transport, food, dress and photography, *Changing France* shows how apparently trivial aspects of modern life provided Second Empire writers with a versatile means of thinking about deeper issues. This volume brings literature and material culture together to reveal how writing itself changed as writers recognised the extraordinarily rich possibilities of expression opened up to them by the changing material world.

**Readership:** A key title for students and scholars of nineteenth-century French literature, cultural historians and nineteenth-century specialists.

### Contents

Acknowledgements; 1. Introduction; 2. Exhibitions; 3. Transport; 4. Food; 5. Photography; 6. Costume; 7. Ruins; 8. Conclusion; Bibliography; Index

### About the Author

Anne Green is Professor of French at King's College London, UK, and a graduate of the universities of Aberdeen and Cambridge. She is the author of two books on French historical fiction: *Flaubert and the Historical Novel. 'Salammbô' reassessed* (CUP, 1982 and 2010) and *Privileged Anonymity. The Writings of Madame de Lafayette* (Legenda, 1996), and the co-editor of *Flaubert: Shifting Perspectives* (Dix-Neuf, 2011). She has published numerous articles on Second Empire writers, particularly Flaubert, and is currently working on a study of Flaubert's 'Sous Napoleon III'.

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