



Lecteur et lecture dans *La Recherche de l'Absolu* de Balzac : Lire le texte à sa juste valeur

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Abstract: Balzac's style has been said to be dreadful, his work muddled and difficult to read. From the time of publication of his first works up until today, Balzac has been looked upon with suspicion by critics. In 1834, his ambitious novel *La Recherche de l'Absolu* was received rather unfavourably: the writer was accused not only of writing badly but also of having chosen a theme, science, which was insuitable for a novel. In 1846, in an attempt to defend his novel and to underscore its scientific reach, Balzac chose to put it no longer in *Études de mœurs* (Studies of Manners) but in *Études philosophiques* (Philosophical Studies). With *La Recherche de l'Absolu*, it is a new novelistic vision that Balzac tries to impose. Consequently, a new reading is required to fully understand the value of the text.

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