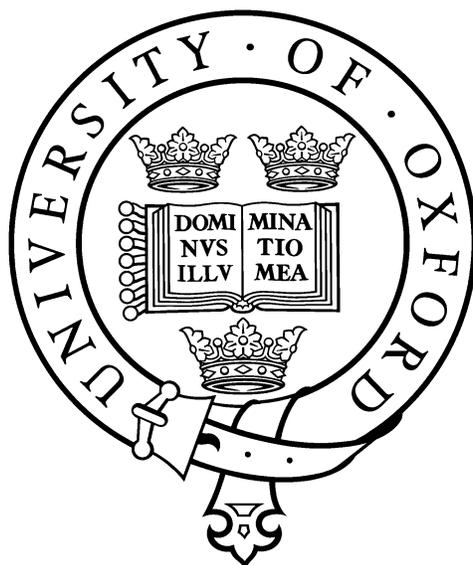


UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

FACULTY OF MEDIEVAL AND MODERN LANGUAGES



Information for the Final Honour School in

## **FRENCH**

Information for students who start their FHS course in October 2015  
and expect to be taking the

**FHS examination in Trinity Term 2018**

Handbook for the Final Honour Course in  
**FRENCH**

Trinity Term 2015

*This handbook is for those students who start their FHS course in October 2015 and therefore will normally be examined in June 2018.*

## FINAL HONOUR SCHOOL IN FRENCH

### Language

After the Preliminary Examination a variety of approaches are used in the language teaching offered to you. Language classes will usually be arranged by your college and there will be opportunities for improving the whole range of skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Developing your skills in translation will also encourage you to write accurately and acquire a feel for style and register, and there will be opportunities to develop oral and aural skills with native speakers. Communicative skills will be developed in preparation for the Essay paper and the Oral examination. Classes using authentic material (videos, newspapers and magazine articles) frequently provide a basis both for language exercises and for information on current affairs, politics and other aspects of modern society. Such classes prove especially useful for students who know little about the country and who need guidance for making the most of their year abroad; they also keep Final Year students up to date. Formal classes apart, undergraduates are urged to make use of the well-resourced Language Centre with abundant video and printed material and facilities for computer-assisted learning and self-taught courses.

**Paper I** An essay of between 1000 and 1500 words to be written in French from a range of questions on literary, linguistic and general cultural topics, and on topics prescribed for the FHS oral examination in French.

**Paper II A** Translation from modern French

**Paper II B** Translation into modern French

The passage for translation *from* French is taken from a post-1800 text, the one for translation *into* French from a post-1900 text. Passages will be in contrasting styles or registers (e.g. narrative, descriptive, analytical, reflective or journalistic).

Candidates reading sole French also take:

**Paper III** Translation from pre-modern French

Six passages will be set, of which candidates are required to translate any two into English; all passages will be between 300-320 words in length.

1. a twelfth- or thirteenth-century verse passage
2. a fourteenth- or fifteenth-century prose passage
3. a sixteenth-century verse or prose passage
4. a seventeenth-century verse or prose passage
5. an eighteenth-century prose passage
6. an eighteenth-century verse passage

### Oral Examination

All students reading French take a compulsory oral examination. This is divided into two parts:

### **Listening Comprehension (33%)**

Candidates will listen to a passage in French lasting about 5 minutes. After listening to it once, they may look at the questions on it, which will be in English, and they will have 5 minutes to make notes. Candidates will then hear the passage for a second time, after which they will have 25 minutes to write their answers to the questions. Answers must be written in English.

### **Reading Comprehension and Speaking (66%)**

Candidates have 30 minutes to read and prepare a passage of journalistic French of between 470 and 520 words in length, on a subject related to one of the four topics prescribed for the Oral Examination (as advertised on [WebLearn](#)). Candidates may make notes on one side of A5 paper, but no more.

After the preparation time candidates will have a 15-minute examination with an examiner and a native speaker. External examiners, monitoring peripatetically, may sit in on some examinations. Candidates must, in about 5 minutes, summarise (in their own words) and comment on the passage. This will be followed by a discussion with the examiners of up to 10 minutes, which may focus on the passage or range more widely.

## **Literature**

### **Periods of Literature (Topics in a Period of Literature)**

- Paper VI** Medieval Literature (to 1530)
- Paper VII** Early Modern Literature (1530-1800)
- Paper VIII** Modern Literature (1715 to the present)

Each paper required the candidate to study a selection of topics or writers that fall within the defined period of literature.

### **Prescribed Authors/Texts**

- Paper IX** This paper requires a close study of medieval texts and includes both essays and commentary writing (including translation).
- Paper X** Modern Prescribed Authors I.
- Paper XI** Modern Prescribed Authors II.

Each of Papers X and XI requires a detailed study of the prescribed texts of two authors, but you will be expected to have read widely within their works. In the examination it may not be reasonable or desirable for an essay to discuss all of the prescribed texts in detail, but candidates should leave the examiners in no doubt that it was, precisely, their good knowledge of all of the prescribed texts that led them to decide not to offer a detailed discussion of one or more of them.

## **Linguistics**

- Paper IV** This paper involves the study of the language from a historical perspective and allows candidates to specialise in a particular period of its history.
- Paper V** In this paper candidates study the modern (and for some languages, early) state of the

language.

**Paper XIII** General Linguistics. This is not specific to any language. It is especially designed for, and available only to, students offering a sole language in the Main School of Modern Languages, who have a strong interest in the theoretical underpinnings of linguistic analysis.

The above papers may also be taken as part of the linguistics component of a course in Linguistics and a Modern Language.

### **Special Subjects - Paper XII**

See below.

### **Extended Essay - Paper XIV**

In addition to their other papers, some candidates choose to write an essay of up to 6000-8000 words on a subject of their own choice, approved by the Faculty. For students reading the Modern Languages School this is an optional additional paper, possibly written during the year abroad and submitted shortly after the end of the second term of your final year. In some joint schools the Extended Essay can be chosen in lieu of one of the other examination papers.

Each of papers IV to XIII is described later on in this handbook. You should discuss them with your tutors when making your choices.

The tuition for papers IV to XIII is most often a combination of tutorials and lectures, and possibly seminars. The core of the teaching will be a series of tutorials, typically eight per paper. Lectures on most of the papers are given throughout the year; so, through lectures, you would usually be able to develop an interest in a subject before your course of tutorials starts and pursue your interest after the tutorials have finished.

### **A CANDIDATE WHO OFFERS TWO LANGUAGES MUST TAKE THE WRITTEN PAPERS LISTED BELOW, AND ORAL EXAMINATIONS IN BOTH LANGUAGES:**

1. **Five** papers in language A
  1. *Two* language papers I, II(A+B)
  2. *One* of VI, VII, VIII
  3. *Two* of IV, V, IX, X, XI, XII
2. **Four** papers in language B
  1. *Two* language papers I, II(A+B)
  2. *One* of VI, VII, VIII
  3. *One* of IV, V, IX, X, XI, XII
3. **Optionally** XIV Extended Essay

### **COMBINATIONS OF PAPERS FOR THOSE OFFERING FRENCH SOLE IN THE HONOUR SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES**

Candidates for French sole **must** take Papers:

I

IIA

IIB

III

**One** of VI, VII, VIII

**Five** of IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII

**Optionally** XIV Extended Essay

## DESCRIPTION OF LINGUISTIC AND LITERATURE PAPERS

### PAPER IV: LINGUISTIC STUDIES I: THE HISTORY OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE UP TO THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY

#### 1. Course Content

This paper offers you the opportunity to study the development of the French language from Vulgar Latin to Modern French.

#### 2. Teaching

Given the scope of the paper, coverage cannot be achieved in the eight tutorials normally allotted to its preparation. Regular attendance at lectures from the introductory course onwards is, therefore, strongly advised.

#### 3. Examination

The paper is divided into two sections to enable you to combine study in breadth with the more detailed exploration of a particular period or periods.

Section A includes a range of questions on the history of the language from earliest times to the present day, or relating to historical linguistics as applied to French. Questions may cover phonological, orthographical, morphological, syntactic, lexical, semantic, stylistic and sociolinguistic topics, as well as ideas about the French language in an historical perspective.

Section B is divided into a number of parts starting with the transition from Latin to French and the early history of the language and moving on to periods which correspond, roughly speaking, to the literary periods offered in Paper VI (1100-1530), VII (1530-1715), VIII (1715-1940). This makes it possible for you, if you so choose, to make fruitful links between your study of language and literature.

#### 4. Introductory Reading

You will find it useful to have read at least one of the following introductory works before beginning the course:

M.S.R. Cohen, *Histoire d'une langue: le français*, 1967.

A. Ewert, *The French Language*, 1966.

G. Price, *The French Language: present and past*, 1971.

P. Rickard, *A History of the French Language*, 1989.

H. Walter, *Le français dans tous les sens*, 1989.

## **PAPER V: LINGUISTIC STUDIES II: MODERN FRENCH**

### 1. Course Content

You will study the structure and varieties of the modern French language, and learn to exploit and assess the usefulness of traditional and modern methods of linguistic analysis for this purpose. You will also become familiar with some of the most important developments in the history of French, when these illuminate modern usage.

Except for the introductory reading (see below), there are no set texts, although for various topics there are a number of important studies about which tutors will advise you. You will learn how to analyse spoken and written French in terms of its sound system (phonetics and phonology), its spelling, its word structure (morphology), and its syntax. You will also have the opportunity to consider the nature and causes of social variation in French speaking communities, the way discourse is structured in French, the effect on French of other languages, and the relationship between linguistic analysis and literary studies.

### 2. Teaching

For linguistic topics, as for literature, you can expect to have a mix of lectures and (usually eight) tutorials. The lectures are vital in this area, as the basic knowledge to be absorbed is much more easily acquired from lecturers than from books. For all the tutorials you will have to produce written work, as for literary topics. This may sometimes involve practical analysis as well as essays. If you choose to go into phonetics in depth, you will also normally be offered additional classes in phonetic transcription.

### 3. Examination

The examination consists of one paper, in which you have to answer three questions. The majority of these involve writing an essay. However, there are normally also questions demanding more practical skills including phonetic transcription and stylistic analysis.

### 4. Introductory Reading

A good general introduction to this area is:

A. Battye and M.-A. Hintze, *The French Language Today*, 1992.

If you, like most people doing this paper, have not done the prelim in linguistics you should also look at a very readable introduction to general linguistics:

V. Fromkin and R. Rodman, *An Introduction to Language*, 5th edition, 1993.

In addition, there is normally an introductory lecture course on French linguistic studies. If you are at all thinking of doing this option (and even if you are not) you should attend this course.

## **PAPERS VI, VII, VIII: TOPICS IN A PERIOD OF FRENCH LITERATURE**

There is no prescribed syllabus for these papers. Examination papers (in which you have to write three essays in three hours) are set with a sufficiently wide range of questions to allow students who have read widely under the guidance of tutors and lecturers to answer on almost any aspect of their

chosen period which has interested them. You will prepare for the paper by following a series of tutorials on topics which your tutor will advise you to pursue and by attending, at all stages of your course, a large number of lectures that deal with different writers and issues relevant to the period. Tutors and lecturers will give detailed bibliographical guidance. The descriptions offered here are meant to help you make up your mind as to which paper to choose and to suggest some reading which will let you find your bearings in the period.

## **PAPER VI: FRENCH LITERATURE TO 1530**

### 1. Course Content

Medieval France is the home of some of the masterpieces of European Literature, and the aim of the course is to enable you to study the most celebrated examples, ranging from the 'epic biography' of Guillaume d'Orange to the great lyric poets of the fifteenth century, in such a way that they can be properly understood in the context of the types of society which produced them. You will also gain an insight into the precursors of many of the traditional genres and classic texts of French literature. To ensure fair coverage the period is divided into the years preceding the accession of the first Valois king, Philippe VI, in 1328, and those following. The earlier period includes works like the courtly romances of Chrétien de Troyes, the *lais* of Marie de France and others, the Tristan legend, saints' lives, the secular stage, comic narratives, Arthurian prose romances, and the *Roman de la rose*. In the second half of the period you may encounter lyric and narrative poets like Guillaume de Machaut, Alain Chartier, Charles d'Orléans, and François Villon, along with prose narratives, chronicles, farces, and the first professional woman writer Christine de Pizan.

### 2. Teaching

Normally a variety of topics are explored in eight tutorials, often with a change of tutor. Each year a number of lecture courses are offered on topics and texts from the period. There are a range of learning support resources available on Weblearn, including podcasts of lectures on reading Old French, digitised primary and secondary sources, past lecture slides, and bibliographies for all topics. There are no compulsory language or commentary exercises. A high proportion of the texts studied are available in excellent and inexpensive editions in the series 'Lettres Gothiques' (Livre de Poche).

### 3. Examination

The paper is divided into two in accordance with the division explained above. A total of three essay questions must be answered, to include questions from both sections. Questions typically invite candidates to respond with reference to one or more appropriate texts/authors, but the general rubric of the paper requires candidates, in at least one of their answers, to refer to two or more texts/authors.

### 4. Introductory Reading

*Le Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: le moyen âge*, ed. G. Hasenohr and M. Zink (Paris: Librairie générale française, 1992) (available in the Taylorian for reference, and in several College libraries)

*Medieval France: An Encyclopedia*, ed. W. W. Kibler et al (New York & London: Garland, 1995) (available in Taylor Teaching Collection and partially online via Google Books)

*The Cambridge Companion to Medieval French Literature*, ed. S. Gaunt and S. Kay (Cambridge: CUP, 2008) (available online:

<http://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/companions/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9781139001809>

)

## PAPER VII: FRENCH LITERATURE 1530 TO 1800

### 1. Course Content

The period 1530-1800 sees French culture developing as a dominant force in Europe and in the world. The period embraces major cultural movements (e.g. Renaissance humanism, baroque, classicism, and the Enlightenment), genres such as tragedy, comedy, and the novel, and such major writers as Rabelais and Montaigne from the sixteenth century, Corneille, Pascal, Molière and Racine from the seventeenth, and Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau from the eighteenth. The object in preparing this paper is to study texts not only for their individual merits, but also in relation to each other within the broad framework of the period's cultural developments. You can follow the development of literary genres: drama, poetry or the novel. You can explore thematic similarities between texts, such as the treatment of social class or gender, attitudes to authority, responses to the natural world, representations of the self. You can also consider texts for their contribution to the history of ideas, such as political and social reform, philosophical trends, religious faith and scepticism. There are no prescribed texts or authors; you are positively encouraged to develop your own interests and to read authors and explore topics of your choice.

### 2. Teaching

Each year there are courses of lectures on authors, genres or cultural movements within the period. You should attend lectures on this paper in both your second and your final years. In addition, tutors in colleges normally give 8 tutorials, which encourage you to build up a breadth of reading to write from different critical points of view. You can come to a relatively full understanding of one part of the period by concentrating on texts that fall within closely circumscribed chronological limits; alternatively, you may study texts across a broad time-scale, and so appreciate change and diversity within the period.

### 3. Examination

You must answer three essay questions in three hours. The paper includes a wide range of questions. Most are of a general nature, relating to genres, themes, and other topics in the writings of the period. Some relate to specific parts of the period, but no questions are about named authors. Questions typically invite candidates to respond with reference to one or more appropriate authors; but the general rubric of the paper requires candidates, in at least one of their answers, to refer to two or more authors. A satisfactory minimum range of reference within one answer might be two longer texts (e.g. two substantial novels) or four shorter texts (e.g. four plays). Examiners welcome a wider range of reference, but look primarily for evidence of first-hand knowledge of the texts. Candidates offering both Paper VII and Paper VIII in French may only draw on material from the period 1715-1800 in answering questions in *either* Paper VII *or* Paper VIII.

### 4. Suggested Reading

J. Cruickshank [ed.], *French Literature and its Background*, vols 1-3, 1968-69 [these three volumes contain introductory chapters on major writers and topics in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries respectively]

The following works are, in different ways, landmarks in criticism:

P. Bénichou, *Morales du grand siècle*, 1948

T. Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance*, 1979

P. Hazard, *La Crise de la conscience européenne*, 1935

J. Starobinski, *L'Invention de la liberté 1700-1789*, 1964

Two very different, but both helpful and stimulating, reference guides to authors and topics in this and other periods of French literature are:

*A New History of French Literature*, ed. D. Hollier, 1989

*The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French*, ed. P. France, 1995

## **PAPER VIII: FRENCH LITERATURE 1715 TO THE PRESENT**

### 1. Course Content

This paper provides an opportunity to study a wide range of literary and cultural developments set against the background of the complex political and social developments which have formed modern France. The paper is not, however, seen as primarily historical in content or approach. It is possible to look at literary and intellectual developments in terms of the personal achievement of individual writers, as well as exploring larger movements and schools of writing such as the Enlightenment, Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, Symbolism, Surrealism, Existentialism, Theatre of the Absurd or the *nouveau roman*. It is also possible to trace developments within individual genres (including less familiar genres from the  *récit*  to autobiography) and to consider the impact of non-mainstream groups, such as women, gay, and Francophone writers. The structure of the paper encourages the application of a range of theoretical approaches.

Because of the sheer bulk and variety of the material which the paper potentially covers, the works studied will vary according to choices made in consultation with tutors. It is quite normal to limit coverage to a number of complementary topics in one or more parts of the period. Authors commonly covered include: i) for the 18th century: Marivaux, Prévost, Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, Beaumarchais, Sade and Chénier; ii) for the 19th century: Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, Sand, Zola, Maupassant, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé; iii) for the 20th century: Apollinaire, Valéry, Gide, Proust, Colette, Cocteau, Malraux, Camus, Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Mauriac, Genet, Ionesco, Beckett, Robbe-Grillet, Butor, Sarraute, Duras, Tournier. It is also possible to study a range of topics that include these and other authors. In addition to approaches based on literary movements, possible topics include *drame bourgeois*, the epistolary novel, first-person fiction, Romantic drama, literature and the visual arts, literature and music, gender and writing, literary commitment, post-modern narrative, the representation of the city, the literary reflection of national identity, cultural marginalization, and AIDS writing.

### 2. Teaching

Several lecture courses each year cover authors and topics in this period, and all the lecture courses on authors prescribed under Paper XI (Modern Prescribed Authors ii) will also be relevant to this paper. Core teaching for this paper is arranged by colleges and consists typically of eight tutorials or a mixture of tutorials and seminars.

### 3. Examination

Candidates answer three essay questions in three hours. The paper includes a wide range of questions which raise general issues but may be answered with respect to one or more authors. The paper begins with questions that raise broad issues with theoretical implications; the remaining questions are in roughly chronological sequence, although some will allow you to make cross-century comparisons. While there is no requirement to discuss more than one author for each essay, the paper is intended to encourage students to show their insight into issues relevant to the period, rather than as a series of narrowly focused studies. The breadth of knowledge and range of reference displayed

across the three different essays will be taken into account.

#### 4. Introductory Reading

As well as reading a selection of basic texts, as advised by your tutor, you should also acquaint yourself with the historical and cultural background. Appropriate introductory works include:

- P. France (ed.), *The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French*, 1995.  
D. Hollier (ed.), *A New History of French Literature*, 1989.  
Sarah Kay, Terence Cave and Malcolm Bowie, *A Short History of French Literature*, 2003.  
Mary Lewis Shaw, *The Cambridge Introduction to French Poetry*, 2003.  
M.-C. Bancquart and P. Cahné, *Littérature française du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 1992.  
Victoria Best, *An Introduction to Twentieth-Century French Literature*, 2002.  
D.G. Charlton (ed.), *The French Romantics*, 2 vols, 1984.  
A. Cobban, *A History of Modern France 1715-1962*, 3 vols, 1963-65.  
J. Cruickshank (ed.), *French Literature and its Background*, vols 3,4,5 and 6, 1968-70.  
L. Furst (ed.), *Realism*, 1993.  
J.-M. Goulemot, *La Littérature des lumières en toutes lettres*, 1989.  
Belinda Jack, *Francophone Literatures: an introductory survey*, 1996.  
A. Michel and others, *Littérature française du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Collection Premier Cycle, 1993.  
Christopher Prendergast (ed.), *Nineteenth-Century French Poetry: introductions to close reading*, 1990.  
C. Robinson, *Scandal in the Ink: Male and Female Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century French Literature*, 1995.  
E.M. Sartori and D.W. Zimmerman (eds.), *French Women Writers*, 1991.  
Sonya Stephens (ed.), *A History of Women's Writing in France*, 2000.  
Timothy Unwin (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the French Novel: from 1800 to the present*, 1997.

The seven volumes of the Cambridge History of Modern France, covering 1815-1958, are useful for more detailed study of individual periods such as the Restoration or the inter-war years.

### **PAPER IX: EARLY TEXTS (MEDIEVAL PRESCRIBED TEXTS)**

#### 1. Course Content

This paper consists of the close study of three varied texts which illustrate the incomparable richness and variety of medieval French literature: the *Chanson de Roland*, whose unique text is found in the Bodleian Library, is a heroic tale of military prowess and moral anguish, whose poetry and searching profundity are perennially relevant; Bérout's *Tristan* tells the immortal story of doomed adulterous love in a narrative of bewitching subtlety; Villon's *Testament* and *Poésies Diverses* recreate the complexity of life in the University and the back streets of Paris in the fifteenth century from the vantage-point of the socially marginal criminal-poet.

#### 2. Teaching

Faculty teaching is based on an annual cycle of lectures - eight hours on each text, one series in each of the three University terms. In addition, lectures (including podcasts) are offered on reading and translating Old French and on commentary writing. Students may also join in final-year medieval translation classes. A range of additional electronic resources are available on Weblearn. Your

college will also arrange eight hours of tutorials in either your second or final year, covering the three texts.

### 3. Examination

In the three-hour examination paper, you will be asked to answer THREE questions, AT LEAST ONE of which must be taken from each section. All three set texts must be covered in these answers:

Section A: One passage for commentary from each of the set texts, each passage including a number of lines to be translated into English

Section B: Two essay questions on each of the set texts dealing with more general topics arising from your reading.

### 4. Introductory Reading

J. Gilbert, 'The *Chanson de Roland*', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval French Literature*, ed. S. Gaunt and S. Kay (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), pp. 21-34, available online:

<http://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/companions/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9781139001809>

B. N. Sargent-Baur, 'Accidental Symmetry: The First and Last Episodes of Bérout's *Roman de Tristan*', *Neophilologus* 88.3 (2004), 335-51, available on Weblearn:

[https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/modlang/french/fhs/medieval\\_fre/page/online\\_reading](https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/modlang/french/fhs/medieval_fre/page/online_reading) (> Paper IX > Beroul, Tristan)

A. Armstrong, 'The Testament of François Villon', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval French Literature*, pp. 63-76, available online:

<http://universitypublishingonline.org/cambridge/companions/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9781139001809>

## **PAPERS X AND XI:            PRESCRIBED AUTHORS**

These papers complement the broader sweep of the period papers by providing the opportunity to concentrate on and study in detail the work of TWO (for each paper) of a number of the most important French writers since the Renaissance. You will read widely within the work of your two authors, set them in their intellectual and historical contexts and study in detail a small number of central works with a view to close textual analysis. You may, but need not, choose Prescribed Authors from the period you have studied for Paper VII or VIII.

### Texts Prescribed for Special Study

The *Examination Decrees* set out in detail which parts of an author's work are set for special study: passages for commentary are chosen only from these specified works. Essays, however, give you the opportunity to show your knowledge of the authors beyond these works.

### Form of Examination

In the examination you will have three hours to answer three questions. You must write an essay on each of your two authors and a commentary on one or other.

### Preparation

The descriptions below are designed to help you choose your authors. The suggested reading is intended simply to start you off. For background reading, see the works mentioned in the entries for the relevant paper of Topics in a Period of Literature (Paper VII or Paper VIII). Tutors and lecturers

will provide more detailed guidance once you have made your choice.

## **PAPER X: MODERN PRESCRIBED AUTHORS I**

You choose any two of:

### **1. Rabelais (c. 1494-c. 1553)**

#### 1. Course Content

The five books of Rabelais's chronicles of Gargantua and Pantagruel (1532-64) present the author's enormous range of intellectual interests within a framework of coarse humour and wild fantasy. Reading Rabelais is challenging, fascinating and rewarding. He opens perspectives on his own times, the Renaissance and Reformation. He creates thought-provoking comedy out of topics as diverse as learning and ignorance, war and peace, marriage and cuckoldry, as well as medical, legal and theological issues. His whole work raises questions about language and literature, meaning and interpretation, laughter and seriousness. The books prescribed for special study are *Gargantua* and the *Quart Livre*.

#### 2. Teaching

Each year two lecture courses are usually given. One, a general introduction to Rabelais; the other, guidance on writing commentaries. You will also normally have four tutorials, combining essay and commentary practice.

#### 3. Introductory Reading

Daniel Ménager, *Rabelais en toutes lettres*, 1989 and Carol Clark, *The Vulgar Rabelais*, 1985 are succinct and useful introductions. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 1968, on popular culture and carnival spirit, and Michael Screech, *Rabelais*, 1979, on the religious and intellectual background, provide a stimulating contrast.

### **2. Montaigne (1533-92)**

#### 1. Course Content

The three books of Montaigne's *Essais* (1580-1595) are a unique literary representation of a journey of self-exploration. Montaigne's self-portrait reveals his life, his appearance, his likes and dislikes, but above all the workings of his mind as he experiments with different topics. The titles of the chapters prescribed for special study give an idea of these topics: *Que philosophe c'est apprendre à mourir* (I 20), *De la Coutume* (I 23), *De l'Institution des enfants* (I 26), *De l'Exercitation* (II 6), *De la praesumption* (II 17), *Du Repentir* (III 2), *Sur des Vers de Virgile* (III 5) and *De l'Experience* (III 13). The chapter-titles often playfully conceal the subject matter: *Sur des Vers de Virgile* is about men, women, sex and marriage; *Des Coches* is about Spanish colonialism. You will be able to study the diversity of topics in the *Essais*, Montaigne's individual manner of writing and his work in relation to its intellectual and cultural background: Renaissance, Reformation and the French religious wars.

#### 2. Teaching

Each year two lecture courses are usually given. One, a general introduction to Montaigne; the other, guidance on writing commentaries. You will also normally have four tutorials, mostly essays but also commentary practice.

### 3. Introductory Reading

John Holyoake, *Montaigne*, 1983 (Critical Guides to French Literature) deals with the topics in the *Essais*, whilst Peter Burke, *Montaigne*, 1981 (Past Masters) covers the broader intellectual background. R.A. Sayce, *The Essays of Montaigne*, 1973, gives the best overall view of the *Essais*.

## **3. Pascal (1623-62)**

### 1. Course Content

If in the course of his short life, Pascal was primarily known as a mathematician and scientist, his most enduring literary contributions lie in the wittily polemical *Lettres provinciales*, a virulent attack on the Society of Jesus, and in the fragmentary apology for the Christian religion, left unfinished at his death, but universally known as the *Pensées*, whose pessimistic imagery, rhetorical control and dogmatic conviction have left few readers indifferent.

The *Pensées* constitute the major text for study, although certain of the *Opuscules* (*De l'esprit géométrique et de l'art de persuader*, *Entretien avec Monsieur de Saci*, *Ecrits sur la grâce*, and the preface to the *Traité sur le vide*) all throw important light on the central project. Parallels may then be drawn with the *Lettres provinciales*, notably in terms of the persuasive strategies deployed.

### 2. Teaching

Characteristically Pascal is the subject of 4 lectures and 4 commentary classes in each academic year.

If you choose to study him as a prescribed author, there will be 4 tutorials. The lectures typically deal with: i) problems of the text and of fragmentation; ii) the philosophical issues; iii) the theological issues; iv) rhetorical and stylistic matters. This background is then borne in mind in the more detailed analyses of specific passages.

### 3. Introductory Reading

It is particularly important to read the *Pensées* in the prescribed edition (ed. G. Ferreyrolles et P. Sellier, in *La Pochothèque* [Livre de Poche/Classiques Garnier]), which also contains the *Opuscules* and *Lettres provinciales*. A convenient brief introduction to Pascal is provided by A.J. Krailsheimer in the 'Past Masters' series (1980). A fuller survey is afforded by J. Mesnard, *Les 'Pensées' de Pascal*, 1976, and a more radical reading offered by Sara Melzer, *Discourses of the Fall*, 1986.

## **4. Molière (1622-73)**

### 1. Course Content

Molière remains one of the most popular French writers, popular among producers and theatre-goers as well as among students and critics. He not only wrote plays, he also produced them and starred in them, creating in the process his own individual brand of comedy. His output is very varied, changing to suit the different needs of the audiences at court and in the public theatre in Paris. He is noted for introducing issues of burning topical importance into stock plots played out by stock character types, and he thereby transforms the tradition out of which his comedy grows. Molière can be credited with the invention of the comédie-ballet, a highly successful combination of comedy, dance, and music. All these aspects of his work can be seen in the plays prescribed for special study: *L'Ecole des femmes*, *Le Tartuffe*, *Dom Juan*, *Le Misanthrope*, *Les Fourberies de Scapin* and *Le Malade Imaginaire*.

## 2. Teaching

Typically two lecture courses are given each year. One is a general introduction to Molière; the other guidance on writing commentaries. Other lecture courses may discuss issues closely related to the study of Molière. You will also normally have four tutorials, for which you will write essays and commentaries approaching Molière from a number of angles.

## 3. Introductory Reading

The following two general works are good at setting Molière in an historical context and at opening up some lines of interpretation:

J. Grimm, *Molière en son temps*, 1993.

W.D. Howarth, *Molière: A Playwright and his Audience*, 1982.

A more adventurous critical study embracing all Molière's output, and including some stimulating and provocative readings of some of the plays prescribed for special study is:

G. Defaux, *Molière ou les métamorphoses du comique*, 1980/1992.

# **5. Racine (1639-99)**

## 1. Course Content

Racine is the author of eleven tragedies and one comedy. His tragedies are often seen as the high point of French tragic drama and are still highly successful on stage. They explore the frequently fatal and always disorderly consequences of human passion in a most elegant and stylized form. The main characters are kings, queens and emperors; they are deployed in historical or mythological settings; for the most part, they use elevated vocabulary and speak in alexandrines. But they are susceptible to moments of aching sexual desire, excruciating jealousy, uncontrolled anger, and painful hopelessness that make them like all other human beings. You will have the opportunity to explore the sense of the tragic in his work and to sample the diverse critical readings to which his plays have given rise (among them, rhetorical, theatrical, structuralist, psychoanalytical, Marxist). You will be expected to acquire detailed knowledge of the six prescribed tragedies: *Andromaque*, *Britannicus*, *Bérénice*, *Bajazet*, *Iphigénie*, and *Athalie*, but also to read his other plays.

## 2. Teaching

Typically two lecture courses are given in each year. One is a general introduction to Racine; the other guidance on writing commentaries. Other lecture courses discuss issues closely related to the study of Racine. You will also normally have four tutorials, for which you will write essays and commentaries approaching Racine from a number of angles.

## 3. Introductory Reading

P. Yarrow's *Racine*, 1978, is a clear and informative introduction, which also sets Racine in the context of the seventeenth-century theatre. A short introduction to the varied critical approaches to Racine is J. Rohou's *Jean Racine, Bilan critique*, 1994. Two different approaches to Racine can be recommended as starting points for serious critical reading:

D. Maskell, *Racine: A Theatrical Reading*, 1991.

R. Parish, *Racine: The Limits of Tragedy*, 1993.

An influential critical work for some years has been R. Barthes, *Sur Racine*, 1963.

## **6. Voltaire (1694-1778)**

### **1. Course Content**

Dramatist, satirist, historian, *philosophe*, polemicist, poet, Voltaire is (with Diderot and Rousseau) one of the three major writers of the French Enlightenment. The texts prescribed for special study are his *Lettres philosophiques* (1734), one of his earliest and most trenchant satires, and some of his *contes* in prose and verse written in mid- and late career (*Zadig*, *Paméla* (pp.138-96), *Candide*, *Contes de Guillaume Vadé* (pp.339-453), *La Princesse de Babylone*, *Les Lettres d'Amabed*, *Le Taureau blanc*). In addition to these texts, you will study a selection of his other writings, chosen from among his histories (e.g. *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*), tragedies (e.g. *Zaïre*, *Mahomet*, *Mérope*) philosophical and polemical works (e.g. *Dictionnaire philosophique*, *Traité sur la tolérance*).

### **2. Teaching**

You might expect to have 4 tutorials on this topic, of which 2-3 might be devoted to the texts prescribed for special study, and 1-2 to other works. Typically 3 essays will be written, and one commentary. Lecture courses on both familiar and less familiar works are normally available each year, as well as commentary classes on these texts. References to other texts will be found regularly in courses of lectures on more general Enlightenment topics (e.g. 18th-Century Literature and travel, 18th-Century theatre).

### **3. Introductory Reading**

It is important that you read the *Lettres philosophiques* (ed. F. Deloffre, Folio) and the selection of *contes* specified above (*Romans et contes*, ed., E. Guillon, Pochothèque, Livre de Poche, 1994). You will also find H. Mason, *Voltaire, a Biography*, 1981, and his *Voltaire*, 1975, helpful introductions to the author, his work and his background, as well as N. Cronk's *The Cambridge Companion to Voltaire* (2009). A more advanced study of the *contes* is R. Pearson, *The Fables of Reason: A Study of Voltaire's 'contes philosophiques'*, 1993.

## **7. Diderot (1713-84)**

### **1. Course Content**

Probably the most varied and original of the Enlightenment writers, Diderot is a particularly stimulating author. The prescribed texts give some idea of the wide range of his intellectual activity: novels (*Jacques le Fataliste*), satire (*Le Neveu de Rameau*), philosophical dialogue (*Le Rêve de d'Alembert*), art criticism (*Le Salon de 1765*). In addition to these texts, you might expect to read other works in these same genres, or to explore other areas, e.g. his contributions to the *Encyclopédie*, his theatre and dramatic theory (*Le Fils naturel*, *Le Père de famille* and the associated theoretical writings), or his short stories. Owing to the complex publishing history of *Le Neveu de Rameau*, we recommend students to use one of the following editions: ed. Marian Hobson (Droz, 2013); ed. Michel Delon (Folio [édition dérivée de la Bibliothèque de la Pléiade], 2006).

### **2. Teaching**

You might expect to have 4 tutorials on this topic, of which 2-3 might be devoted to the texts prescribed for special study, and 1-2 to other works. Typically 3 essays might be written and one commentary. Lecture courses are regularly given on different aspects of Diderot's writings, e.g. his art criticism, novels and philosophical dialogues, as well as commentary classes on the prescribed texts. His work also features regularly in other courses on Enlightenment writing or intellectual

background (e.g. Literature and moral instruction in the 18th Century, 18th-Century Literature and travel).

### 3. Introductory Reading

A convenient short introduction to Diderot's life and work is P. France, *Diderot*, 1983, and an annotated selection of his writings can be found in the very useful *Diderot: Textes et débats*, edited by J.-C. Bonnet, Livre de poche, 1984.

## **PAPER XI: MODERN PRESCRIBED AUTHORS II**

You choose any two of:

### **1. Stendhal (1783-1842)**

#### 1. Course Content

Stendhal is widely regarded as one of the founders of nineteenth-century French realism, but he may just as fruitfully be read as a major figure in the European tradition of self-conscious fiction. He is best known for his five novels of which the prescribed texts, *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1830) and *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839) are considered to be the most important. He also wrote in a wide variety of other genres (short fiction, the diary, memoirs, biography, art history, travel writing, literary journalism), and there will be opportunities to explore, amongst others: Stendhal's 'chronicles' of French and Italian society in the first decades of the nineteenth century (incl. *Chroniques italiennes*); the status of women in his works (with particular reference to the eponymous heroine of his unfinished novel, *Lamiel*); his autobiography (*Vie de Henry Brulard*); the writings on art and literature (*Histoire de la peinture en Italie, Racine et Shakespeare*).

#### 2. Teaching

You would typically have 4 tutorials which would usually involve a mixture of essay and commentary work. There are lectures on Stendhal each year.

#### 3. Introductory Reading

The texts mentioned above are available in modern French editions (Folio, Garnier-Flammarion) but is advisable also to consult the critical material supplied in the Classiques Garnier or the Pléiade editions of the two novels prescribed for special study. Roger Pearson (ed.), *Stendhal: 'The Red and the Black' and 'The Charterhouse of Parma'*, Modern Literatures in Perspective, 1994, provides an introduction to the secondary literature. Broader discussions of Stendhal as a novelist include Ann Jefferson, *Reading Realism in Stendhal*, 1988, and Roger Pearson, *Stendhal's Violin: A Novelist and his Reader*, 1988. Stimulating essays on each of the prescribed novels may be found in René Girard, *Deceit, Desire and the Novel* (1966) for *Le Rouge*, and Leo Bersani, 'Stendhalian Prisons and Salons', *Balzac to Beckett* (1970) for *La Chartreuse*.

### **2. Baudelaire (1821-67)**

#### 1. Course Content

Baudelaire is now widely considered to be the greatest and the most influential of nineteenth-century French poets. He is not just a great poet in verse, but was also a pioneering figure in prose poetry, and an influential critic of the visual arts and of contemporary literature. You will study *Les Fleurs*

*du Mal* and *Le Spleen de Paris* in detail, and will need to have an understanding of the principal features of his art and literary criticism. In addition, you will be expected to have read his short story *Le Fanfarlo* and his *Journaux intimes*.

## 2. Teaching

The course is covered in 4 tutorial hours. A typical format would be 2 hours on the verse poetry, one on the prose poems, and a final hour on some aspect of his criticism and his aesthetic ideas in their relationship to his poetry.

## 3. Introductory Reading

Undergraduates will already have studied some of his poetry in their first year, but a useful general introduction would be M.A. Ruff, *Baudelaire*, 1966, or F.W. Leakey, *Les Fleurs du Mal*, Landmarks in World Literature, 1992. In addition, undergraduates will find the following works helpful:

L.J. Austin, *L'Univers poétique de Baudelaire*, 1956.

L. Bersani, *Baudelaire and Freud*, 1977.

J.A. Hiddleston, *Baudelaire and 'Le Spleen de Paris'*, 1987.

## **3. Flaubert (1821-80)**

### 1. Course Content

Flaubert's work explores the conditions of modernity - irony, the inadequacy and the creative power of language - in the context of the social and historical changes and pressures of the nineteenth century in France. The texts prescribed for special study are *Madame Bovary*, *L'Éducation sentimentale* and *Trois contes*, and other texts you should read of his remaining work are his exotic novel *Salammbô*, *Bouvard et Pécuchet* and *La Tentation de Saint Antoine*. His correspondence (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade) is as revealing as his fiction is restrained.

### 2. Teaching

You will usually have 4 tutorials dealing with the texts prescribed for special study and giving you the chance to do a commentary or study one of Flaubert's other works. At least one lecture course is provided on Flaubert each year, concentrating either on specific texts or on the whole of his fictional output, and there are usually commentary classes in addition.

### 3. Introductory Reading

You should read *Madame Bovary* and as many of Flaubert's other works as you can. Amongst the many useful critical guides are A. Thorlby, *Gustave Flaubert and the Art of Realism*, 1957, and V. Brombert, *The Novels of Flaubert*, 1966, S. Heath, *Madame Bovary*, 1992, Alan Raitt, *The Originality of 'Madame Bovary'*, 2002, and his *Flaubert, 'Trois contes'*, 1991. A central work is J. Culler's *Flaubert: The Uses of Uncertainty*, 1974, which searchingly questions the conclusions of earlier studies.

## **4. Mallarmé (1842-98)**

### 1. Course Content

Coming after Hugo and Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé dominates the history of French poetry in the last three decades of the nineteenth century. A contemporary of Verlaine and Rimbaud, he was revered by the younger generation of poets who called themselves Symbolists (from 1886 onwards).

By the mid 1860s Mallarmé had already become conscious of the radical way in which he would pursue his calling as a poet: that is, by abandoning all effusive or ironic expression of a lyrical self (characteristic, respectively, of the Romantics and of Baudelaire) and by 'ceding the initiative to words'. He soon developed a reputation for 'difficulty', which has persisted to this day; but his poems (in prose as well as verse) become readily accessible when approached as verbal lacework in which no personal experience is narrated but rather the separate threads of meaning attaching to individual words are woven into new, quasi-musical patterns of significance. Patience and a large dictionary soon reveal many of the 'mysterious relationships' which Mallarmé found 'preexisting' in language itself.

In your reading you will be concentrating on the *Poésies*, published posthumously, which brings together (as he had intended) the majority of his poems in verse. You will also need to study 'Un coup de Dés' (1897), a boldly experimental poem which appears to dispense with the rules of versification, and his *Divagations* (1897), a collection of prose poems and revised newspaper and review articles (on music, religion, and the theatre, and on the nature of poetry and the role of the poet in society). As well as trying to arrive at coherent readings of his individual texts, you will become involved in discussion of Mallarmé's aesthetic of poetry, its radical consequences and the central place which this aesthetic has come to occupy in the debate about the nature and meaning of Postmodernism.

## 2. Teaching

You would typically have 4 tutorials involving both commentary and essay work. There are lectures on Mallarmé each year.

## 3. Introductory Reading

The standard edition of Mallarmé's work is his *Oeuvres complètes*, edited by Bertrand Marchal, 2 vols (Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1998-2003). Most of this edition, including the helpful 'Notices', is available in three inexpensive paperback volumes (also published by Gallimard): *Poésies* (1992), *Igitur, Divagations, Un coup de dés* (2003), and *Vers de circonstance* (1996). It is best to begin with 'early Mallarmé', the more accessible poems written before 1866. They you might proceed by focusing on 'Hérodiade. Scène', 'L'Après-midi d'un faune', 'Prose (pour des Esseintes)' and the major sonnets (particularly those grouped as 'Plusieurs sonnets' in *Poésies*. Brief and informative introductions to *Poésies* are provided by Rosemary Lloyd in the Grant & Cutler Critical Guides series (1984) and Pascal Durand in Gallimard's Foliothèque series (1996). The best short introduction to Mallarmé's aesthetic remains Claude Abastado, *Expérience et théorie de la création poétique chez Mallarmé* (Minard, 1970). Malcolm Bowie's *Mallarmé and the Art of Being Difficult* (Cambridge, 1978) provides excellent accounts of 'Prose (pour des Esseintes)' and 'Un coup de dés'. More recent studies include Graham Robb, *Unlocking Mallarmé* (Yale, 1996), Roger Pearson, *Unfolding Mallarmé: The Development of a Poetic Art* (Oxford, 1996) and *Mallarmé and Circumstance: The Translation of Silence* (Oxford, 2004), and Michel Murat, *Le 'Coup de dés' de Mallarmé: un recommencement de la poésie* (Belin, 2005).

## 5. Gide (1869-1951)

### 1. Course Content

The work of André Gide is central to the phase of literary experimentation that followed Naturalism and Symbolism. The texts prescribed for special study are: *L'Immoraliste*, *La Porte étroite*, *Si le*

*grain ne meurt* and *Les Faux-Monnayeurs*. You will be expected therefore to have a broad knowledge of Gide's writing in several genres (short prose fiction, novel, and autobiography) and an understanding of the issues raised by these, including ethical concerns relating to the individual in society, the question of homosexuality, the problems of self-conscious writing, and the relationship between fiction and reality, writing and life. In practice, you will read widely from Gide's *œuvre* and acquire a grasp of its literary and intellectual context.

## 2. Teaching

Teaching is offered in the form of lectures (at least one series a year, usually with a separate series of commentary classes as well) and tutorials, the latter in colleges. It is normal to have 4 tutorials on a Prescribed Author, either singly or in a pair, and to write at least three essays and one commentary for them.

## 3. Introductory Reading

Alongside the four prescribed texts, you should read:

G. Brée, *André Gide: l'Insaisissable Protée*, 1970.

A. Goulet, *André Gide, écrire pour vivre*, 2002.

M. Tilby, *Gide: 'Les Faux-Monnayeurs'*, 1981.

C. Tolton, *Gide and the Art of Autobiography*, 1975.

D. Walker, *André Gide*, 1990.

The following website is also of interest: <http://www.gidiana.net>

## **6. Sartre (1905-80)**

### 1. Course Content

There are 4 texts prescribed for special study: *La Nausée*, *Les Mouches*, *Les Séquestrés d'Altona* and *Les Mots* are the texts from which commentaries will be set, but you will be expected to read a selection of Sartre's other plays and novels, and perhaps to dip into his philosophical, critical or political writings, according to what most appeals to you. Sartre is an exciting choice of author, for his existentialism will take you into areas outside the narrowly literary, and broaden your horizons in many different and unexpected ways.

### 2. Teaching

There are usually 4 tutorials for each prescribed author, probably 3 essays and one commentary. Lectures on Sartre are available every year.

### 3. Introductory Reading

You should read the prescribed texts, of course, and also, if you have time, plays such as *Huis clos*, *Les Mains sales*, and *Kean*. You might also like to try some of *Les Chemins de la liberté*, perhaps *L'Age de raison*, the first volume. Many good critical works are available, including some by your tutors:

Benedict O'Donohoe, *Sartre's Theatre: Acts for Life*, 2005.

M. Contat (ed), *Comment et pourquoi Sartre a écrit "Les Mots"*, 1997.

R. Goldthorpe, *Sartre: Literature and Theory*, 1984.

C. Howells, *Sartre: The Necessity of Freedom*, 1988.

C. Howells, *Sartre*, *Modern Literatures in Perspective*, 1995.

Other excellent critics include:

R. Aronson, *Jean-Paul Sartre: Philosophy in the World*, 1980.

H. Barnes, *Sartre*, 1974.

F. Jeanson, *Sartre* [Ecrivains de toujours].

D. LaCapra, *A Preface to Sartre*, 1978.

## **7. Marguerite Duras (1924-1996)**

### 1. Course Content

There are four texts prescribed for special study: *Un Barrage contre le Pacifique*, *Le Ravissement de Lol V. Stein*, *L'Amant* and *Hiroshima, mon amour* (film script). These are the texts from which commentaries will be set, but you will be expected to have read a selection of Duras's other works, such as to enable you to study Duras's contribution to the novel, autobiography/auto-fiction and film as genres. Film will be looked at in its literary aspect, which raises issues of 'filmic technique' in the other writings.

### 2. Teaching

There are usually four tutorials for each prescribed author, probably three essays and one commentary. Lectures on Duras are available each year.

### 3. Introductory Reading

You should read the set texts, but you should also read a selection of further works, e.g. *Moderato cantabile*, *Le Square*, *Le Vice-consul* and *L'Amant de la Chine du nord*. Useful critical approaches will be found in the following works:

L. Hill, *Marguerite Duras: Apocalyptic desires*, Routledge 1993.

L. Adler, *Marguerite Duras*, Gallimard 1998.

C. Hofman, *Forgetting and Marguerite Duras*, (Up of Colorado, 1991).

J. Kristeva, 'La Maladie de la douleur: Duras', in *Soleil Noir. Dépression et Mélancolie*, (Gallimard, 1987).

J. Bradley Winston, *Postcolonial Duras: Cultural Memory in Post-War France*, (Palgrave, 2001).

## **8. Roland Barthes (1915-80)**

### 1. Course Content

The extraordinary range of Barthes's writings is suggested by some of the chapter titles of one introductory guide: literary historian, critic, polemicist, semiologist, hedonist, writer, man of letters. His work stands at the crossroads of several key aspects of the cultural and intellectual life of France in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In his analyses not just of literature but also of aspects of popular culture and everyday life, he draws on Marxism, anthropology, psychoanalysis and structuralism, ultimately becoming one of the pioneers of so-called 'post-structuralism'. He is also a remarkable autobiographer and essayist, exploring the self, love, photography, music, the theatre, travel, everyday 'mythologies', and so on.

There are four texts prescribed for special study: *L'Empire des signes* (1970), *Le Plaisir du texte* (1973), *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes* (1975), and *La Chambre claire* (1980). You will also be expected to read widely in his other writings, such as *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture*, *Mythologies*, *Critique et vérité*, *S/Z*, and *Fragments d'un discours amoureux*.

## 2. Teaching

You would usually have four tutorials on Barthes, typically comprising three essays and a commentary. Lectures on Barthes are available each year.

## 3. Introductory Reading

A useful anthology in the Points: Essais 'Bibliothèque' series offers a sample of the diversity of Barthes's work: *Barthes* (2010), edited by Claude Coste.

Helpful introductory studies include: Jonathan Culler, *Barthes: A Very Short Introduction* (2002), Graham Allen, *Roland Barthes* (2003).

More detailed studies include: Annette Lavers, *Roland Barthes: Structuralism and After* (1982), Louis-Jean Calvet, *Roland Barthes* (1990), Michael Moriarty, *Roland Barthes* (1991), Bernard Comment, *Roland Barthes, vers le neutre* (1991), Diana Knight, *Barthes and Utopia: Space, Travel, Writing* (1997).

## **PAPER XII: SPECIAL SUBJECTS**

The Special Subjects, of which there is a wide range, vary enormously in nature. They allow you to follow up in detail some aspect of one of your other papers that has particularly interested you. Those who have enjoyed the nineteenth-century novel whilst preparing Paper VIII (Topics in the Period of Literature 1730 to the present) might choose to offer the Special Subject on Balzac, for instance. Alternatively, they allow you to branch out and do something quite different from your work on other papers. Someone whose other papers have all been in modern literature and linguistics might choose, for instance, the Special Subject on Mid-Sixteenth-Century Poetry. In short, they may complement, or contrast with, the work you have done elsewhere in your course.

The two lists below give (i) those Subjects that are specifically the responsibility of the French Sub-Faculty and (ii) those general subjects that are not specifically French, but that are often taken by students reading French. Most are examined by a submitted portfolio of essays; some in three-hour written papers (see below for details).

*You should note that not all the subjects are available every year: consult the list published on WebLearn at <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/access/content/group/modlang/general/exams/index.html> as well as your tutor before deciding which paper you might offer.*

### **Examination and Methods of Assessment:**

- A Three-hour unseen written paper.
- B An essay or portfolio of essays (the number in parentheses shows the number of essays required), aggregating to about 6,000 words and not exceeding 8,000 words, to be delivered by noon on the Friday of the ninth week of Hilary Term next before the examination.
- C An essay or portfolio of essays aggregating to about 6,000 words and not exceeding 8,000 words, on a title or titles from a list circulated by the examiners on the Friday of the fifth week of Hilary Term next before the examination, to be delivered by noon on the Friday of the ninth week of Hilary Term next before the examination. The number in parentheses shows the number of essays required, and indicates whether a commentary is optional/compulsory.

## (i) FRENCH SUBJECTS

### Late-Medieval Responses to the *Roman de la rose*

#### 1. Course Content

*Le Roman de la rose* established itself as a medieval mastertext from the appearance of its continuation by Jean de Meun in the late thirteenth century. This course aims to answer the question: ‘what happened next?’, tracing the shifting and intersecting reputations of the text and its two authors, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as the poem rapidly acquired controversy. Responses to the *Rose* retrospectively define it as an intellectual *auctoritas*, a misogynistic tirade, a travesty of allegorical writing, an interpretative minefield; Jean is lauded or lambasted, whilst Guillaume is usually forgotten. Texts for consideration take diverse forms and cover a range of genres (from prose epistle to dramatic monologue) and tones (from moralizing treatise to comic anecdote). It will be possible to consider the target, form, and literary context of a range of responses, including works by Guillaume de Machaut, Christine de Pizan, and Jacques Milet, and to explore the complex intertextual negotiations through which such writers acknowledge their indebtedness to, as well as their departure from, the *Rose*.

#### 2. Teaching

The course is taught through a series of five tutorials/seminars, preceded by an introductory seminar, in Hilary Term of the student’s final year; each year there are lectures on topics in late medieval literature. Students wishing to take this course will be expected to have prepared by following the recorded lecture courses on Reading Old French

([https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/modlang/french/fhs/medieval\\_fre](https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/modlang/french/fhs/medieval_fre))

and on Old French Commentary

(<https://oxforduniversity.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Sessions/List.aspx?embedded=1#folderID=%22604edb74-62c9-4e2f-bf8c-3c2ad6b2cd9c%22>).

You will normally also have taken one of the other medieval French FHS Papers (VI or IX).

#### 3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (3; including a compulsory commentary).

#### 4. Introductory Reading

A. Armstrong & S. Kay, *Knowing Poetry: Verse in Medieval France from the ‘Rose’ to the Rhétoriciens*, Ithaca, 2011.

P.-Y. Badel, *Le Roman de la rose au quatorzième siècle: étude de la réception de l’oeuvre*, Geneva, 1980.

E. Hicks (ed.), *Le Débat sur ‘le Roman de la rose’*, Paris, 1977.

S. Huot, *The ‘Romance of the Rose’ and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission*, Cambridge, 1993.

C. McWebb (ed.), *Debating the ‘Roman de la rose’: A Critical Anthology*, New York, 2008.

J.-C. Mühlethaler, *Poétiques du quinzième siècle*, Paris, 1983.

### Old Occitan

#### 1. Course Content

This paper provides a fascinating insight into the language and literature of the troubadours and trobairitz from the earliest extant lyrics of Guilhem de Peitieu (Guillaume de Poitiers) down to the time of the Albigensian Crusade. A selection of texts from *Introduction à l’étude de l’ancien*

*provençal*, ed. F.R. Hamlin, P.T. Ricketts, J. Hathaway, 1985 (pdf available on weblearn), is prescribed for mandatory translation and literary commentary in the examination paper. Additional texts will be read to prepare for the other essay questions, including *tensos* (dialogues between poets and/or male or female characters); romances such as *Flamenca*; or epics such as *Girart de Rousillon*, etc. It will also be possible to discuss the evolution of Old Occitan as a vernacular oral language and a literary *scripta*. The paper makes an ideal choice, if you are studying Paper VI in a Romance language.

## 2. Teaching

The course is taught in a series of eight tutorials/seminars in Michaelmas Term of the final year. Students wishing to take this course will be expected to have prepared in advance by using W. D. Paden's *An Introduction to Old Occitan* since the texts will be read and analysed in the original language.

## 3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (3; including a compulsory commentary).

## 4. Introductory Reading

*Introduction to Occitan Language and Literature:*

F.R.P. Akehurst, & J. M. Davis (eds.), *Handbook of the Troubadours*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

S. Gaunt & S. Kay (eds.), *The Troubadours: An Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

W. D. Paden, *An Introduction to Old Occitan*, New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1998 [read first part].

*Texts in bilingual editions:*

M. T. Bruckner, L. Shepard & S. White (eds.), *Songs of the women troubadours*, New York – London: Garland, 2000.

Robert Kehew (ed.), *Lark in the Morning: The Verses of the Troubadours*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

## **The Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Grail Romances**

## 1. Course Content

Stories of the Grail represent a fascinating confluence of Christian and pagan themes whose imaginative force is still apparent in modern culture. The examination texts which normally figure in the paper are as follows: Chrétien de Troyes, *Conte del Graal*, his final and profoundest work in which Christian and pagan ideas converge in an imaging of the unconscious life of the individual; Robert de Boron's *Roman de l'Estoire dou Graal*, which makes a systematic attempt to subordinate non-Christian themes to Christian scriptural ones; the anonymous *Queste dou Saint Graal*, a section of the vast cyclical story of *Lancelot dou Lac* in which the theme of the Grail is interwoven with those of chivalric and monastic ideals; the anonymous *Perlesvaus*, which presents intriguing problems concerning the relationship between Christian and other traditions. The verse continuations of Chrétien's *Conte du Graal* will also be discussed.

## 2. Teaching

The course is taught in a series of five tutorials/seminars, preceded by an introductory seminar, in

Hilary Term of the student's final year. Students wishing to take this course will be expected to have prepared by following the recorded lecture courses on Reading Old French

([https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/modlang/french/fhs/medieval\\_fre](https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/modlang/french/fhs/medieval_fre))

and on Old French Commentary

(<https://oxforduniversity.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Sessions/List.aspx?embedded=1#folderID=%22604edb74-62c9-4e2f-bf8c-3c2ad6b2cd9c%22>).

You will normally also have taken one of the other medieval French FHS Papers (VI or IX).

3. Examination: *Method of Assessment C* (3; including a compulsory commentary).

4. Introductory Reading

A. Combes and A. Bertin, *Écritures du Graal (XIIe-XIIIe siècles)*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2001.

J. Frappier, *Autour du Graal*, Genève: Droz, 1977.

N. J. Lacy (ed.), *The Grail, the Quest and the World of Arthur*, Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2008.

C. Méla, *La Reine et le Graal: la conjointure dans les romans du Graal de Chrétien de Troyes au Livre de Lancelot*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1984.

D. B. Mahoney (ed.), *The Grail: A Casebook*, New York – London: Garland, 2000.

## **Anglo-Norman Language and Literature**

1. Course Content

'Anglo-Norman' is the term conventionally used to describe the form of French which was used in Britain subsequent to the Norman Conquest, which became increasingly distinct from Continental French dialects in terms of its phonology, morphology, lexis, and syntax. For four centuries, Anglo-Norman was used as a language of law, record, and administration which has left an indelible mark on the English which is spoken today, and its contribution to the history of French literature is inestimable, with two-thirds of the surviving twelfth-century manuscripts of French texts having been written in Britain. This course offers an introduction to Anglo-Norman language and literature via a small selection of significant works from a range of genres which illustrate some of the fascinating and distinctive characteristics of Insular French.

2. Teaching

The course is taught in a series of 5 tutorials/seminars, preceded by an introductory seminar, in Hilary Term of the student's final year; each year there are lectures on various germane aspects of medieval literature. Students wishing to take this course will be expected to have prepared by following the recorded lecture courses on Reading Old French

([https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/modlang/french/fhs/medieval\\_fre](https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/modlang/french/fhs/medieval_fre))

and on Old French Commentary

(<https://oxforduniversity.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Sessions/List.aspx?embedded=1#folderID=%22604edb74-62c9-4e2f-bf8c-3c2ad6b2cd9c%22>).

You will normally also have taken one of the other medieval French FHS Papers (VI or IX).

3. Examination: *Method of Assessment C* (2; including a compulsory commentary).

4. Introductory reading

R.J. Dean and M.B.M. Boulton, *Anglo-Norman Literature: a Guide to Texts and Manuscripts*, London, 1999

M.D. Legge, *Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background*, Oxford, 1963  
S. Lusignan, *La Langue des rois au Moyen Age: le français en France et en Angleterre*, Paris, 2004  
I. Short, 'Patrons and polyglots: French literature in 12th-century England', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 14 (1992), 229-49  
I. Short, *Manual of Anglo-Norman*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Oxford, 2013  
J. Wogan-Browne (ed.), *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain: the French of England c.1100-c.1500*, Woodbridge, 2009  
*The Anglo-Norman Online Hub*: <http://www.anglo-norman.net/> (excellent linked articles and introductory material to the online Anglo-Norman Dictionary).

## **French Poetry of the Mid-Sixteenth Century**

### 1. Course Content

The course ranges from the writings of Maurice Scève in the late 1540s through the Lyonnais school and the beginnings of the Pléiade up to 1570. You will read poets like Scève, Louise Labé, Du Bellay, Ronsard, Baïf, Belleau and Pontus de Tyard. Attention will be given to Renaissance poetic theory as well as practice, and you will be taught close reading of poetic texts so as to appreciate stylistic features. Other areas will include use of models, mythology and genre, as well as the treatment of major themes, including political, scientific, moral, satirical and amatory verse, or links between poetry and music.

### 2. Teaching

The course is normally taught in a series of tutorials, and may be supplemented by lectures.

### 3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (2; compulsory commentary).

### 4. Introductory Reading

You might look at G. Castor, *Pléiade Poetics*, 1964, for an introduction to poetic theories; T.C. Cave's collection of essays, *Ronsard the Poet*, 1973, is still the best introduction to this author; for Du Bellay you should try V.-L. Saulnier, *Du Bellay, l'homme et l'œuvre*, 1951, and complement it with G. Gadoffre, *Du Bellay et le sacré*, 1978. A wide-ranging examination of this subject is available in H. Weber, *La Création poétique au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle en France*, 1955.

## **Dramatic Theory and Practice in France from 1605 to 1660**

### 1. Course Content

1605-60 is the time when the public theatre first started to develop in France as a prominent social institution patronised by royalty, the aristocracy, and the bourgeoisie. You will be able to see the evolution of different genres, as dramatists responded to changing theatrical conditions and hotly debated theories about how drama should be written and what its aims should be. You will have the chance to study some of Alexandre Hardy's plays from the beginning of the century which curiously mix erudition, excitement and crudity, a range of Corneille's plays (his comedies as well as his serious drama), and some plays by his contemporaries like Mairet, Rotrou, Du Ryer, La Calprenède and Scarron. You will be expected to come to terms with the theoretical issues arising out of the *querelle du Cid* and the writings of Corneille and the Abbé d'Aubignac.

## 2. Teaching

Typically you would cover some of the dramatic theory and a variety of the dramatic practices of the period in a series of tutorials. There may, in addition, be lectures on Corneille, and in some years there are lectures that look at Corneille's contemporaries and the critical debates amidst which they wrote.

3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (2; compulsory commentary).

## 4. Introductory Reading

There is a good map of the territory in W.G. Moore, *The Classical Drama of France*, 1971. For an introduction to the conditions of theatrical performance in the period, see J. Lough, *Seventeenth-Century French Drama: The Background*, 1979, or C.J. Gossip, *An Introduction to French Classical Tragedy*, 1981.

## **French Satire from Rabelais to Beaumarchais**

### 1. Course Content

The term satire covers a wide range of writing from the scornful condemnation of social abuse to a more detached, ironic reflection on human folly, from the analysis of timeless vices to more personalised and topical attacks. The period 1500-1800 is particularly fertile in this domain, and writers as diverse as Rabelais, du Bellay, Molière, La Bruyère, Voltaire and Diderot experiment with different literary forms - novel, fable, dialogue, verse, portrait - as they seek to communicate, sharpen, or disguise their critical response to the society they live in. You will be able to concentrate on the different styles and concerns of writers during a particular century, or to explore the diversity of satire over a longer period, tracing the development of a theme or form. Work will involve both the close reading of individual texts, and consideration of more theoretical questions relating to the writing (and definition) of satire.

### 2. Teaching

You would typically be taught in a series of tutorials. There may also be lectures on individual writers of satire in the period, or on recurrent themes, forms and theories.

3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (2; compulsory commentary).

### 4. Introductory Reading

General introductions to satire might include: Matthew Hodgart, *Satire* (1969), or Gilbert Highet, *The Anatomy of Satire* (1962).

## **Jean-Jacques Rousseau**

### 1. Course Content

One of the pivotal figures of the Enlightenment, Rousseau is important as a novelist -- *Julie* was the best-selling novel of eighteenth-century France --, as an autobiographer, and as a political thinker. He is the most poetic of prose writers and he defended the importance of feeling in an age when unbounded belief in reason was the norm. 'Rousseauism' and the cult of *sensibilité* were a major influence on the evolution of European Romanticism. His major works include: *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse*, *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de*

*l'inégalité, Du Contrat social, Emile, Les Confessions, and Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire.*

2. Teaching

The paper is usually taught in a series of tutorials; there are regular lecture courses dealing with aspects of the topic.

3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (2; optional commentary).

4. Introductory Reading

Jean Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: La Transparence et l'obstacle*, 1971.

Robert Wokler, *Rousseau*, 1995.

### **Honoré de Balzac**

1. Course Content

Whilst we might be tempted to regard the individual as the fundamental social unit, Balzac sees 'la Famille et non l'Individu comme le véritable élément social'. His prescient accounts of emergent modern capitalism, of the power of money, and of the primacy of desire in determining destiny have never been more relevant. This paper allows you to explore in depth a wide range of Balzac's work, including his great novels *Illusions perdues* and *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes*, as well as a variety of lesser-known but equally fascinating texts.

2. Teaching

The course is usually taught in a series of tutorials, divided between central issues in Balzac's work and topics which you wish to explore in greater detail. In most years there will be a lecture course on Balzac, providing either an overview and/or an examination of selected texts in greater detail.

3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (3; optional commentary).

4. Introductory Reading

Balzac's work is only properly appreciable *en masse*. You should read as many as possible of the following texts: *La Peau de chagrin*, *Eugénie Grandet*, *Le Père Goriot*, *César Birotteau*, *Illusions perdues*, *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes*, *La Rabouilleuse*, *La Cousine Bette*, and *Le Cousin Pons*. G. Robb's *Balzac*, 1994, is an entertaining biographical introduction. H.J. Hunt's *Balzac's Comédie humaine*, 1964, and M. Bardèche's *Balzac*, 1980, provide readable overviews of his work, whilst C. Prendergast's *Balzac: Fiction and Melodrama*, 1978, makes a stimulating study of one of its central issues.

### **French Poetry 1870 to 1918**

1. Course Content

The period covered by this paper is one of the most exciting, as far as poetry is concerned, in the whole of French literature. You will have an opportunity to look at the successive emergence of Decadence, Symbolism and Modernism, alongside a number of smaller movements. You will also study the relationship between poetic theory and practice in the period, particularly the development of *vers libre* and the cult of the prose poem, and will learn about the developing relationship between poetry, music and painting. The focus of your reading will nonetheless be the poetry of individual

writers.

The main authors studied will be selected from a list which includes Rimbaud, Verlaine, Laforgue, Mallarmé, Lautréamont, Valéry and Apollinaire. You may also study individual groups of poets as representatives of particular literary trends, e.g. Blaise Cendrars and Max Jacob as Modernists, Claudel and Péguy as religious poets, Anna de Noailles and Renée Vivien as women poets.

## 2. Teaching

You would normally have a series of tutorials for which you would write essays or commentaries, developing your practical critical skills by analysing typical poems of the period. Each year there are lectures covering certain aspects of the topic.

## 3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (3; compulsory commentary).

## 4. Introductory Reading

If you are unfamiliar with the poetry of the period, you will find a good representative selection (French text with English prose paraphrase) in *French Poetry 1820-1950* ed. William Rees, Penguin Classics, 1990, pp. 190-599. See also:

P. Martino, *Parnasse et Symbolisme*, 1947.

G. Michaud, *Message poétique du symbolisme*, 1947.

H. Peyre, *Qu'est-ce que le symbolisme?*, 1974.

A.M. Schmidt, *La Littérature symboliste*, 1942.

## **French Literature and Modern War**

### 1. Course Content

The First World War was a traumatic experience for the supposedly civilized society of Western Europe. In this course you will study the literary context of the war, looking at attitudes to Germany and to militarism before 1914, the experience of war itself, and later attempts to interpret it. You will consider issues such as the following: propaganda and dissent; the concept of heroism; documentary, *témoignage* and fiction; intellectual analyses of war; reinterpreting war in imaginative literature. The experience of later wars (e.g. the Second World War, the Algerian conflict) may also be studied.

### 2. Teaching

Teaching is normally by tutorials or seminars rather than by lectures. A seminar group of three or four students might meet for four two-hour sessions, or there might be single tutorials. There are no set texts: you will write essays based on about a dozen texts (including at least two of the main novels of combat), chosen from a list of over thirty.

### 3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (3; optional commentary).

### 4. Introductory Reading

You should start by reading two war-novels (e.g. Barbusse, *Le Feu*; Dorgelès, *Les Croix de bois*).

The following studies will give you a good idea of the literature:

J. Cruickshank, *Variations on Catastrophe*, 1982.

F. Field, *British and French Writers of the First World War*, 1991.

H. Klein, (ed.), *The First World War in Fiction*, 1978.

## Marcel Proust

### 1. Course Content

Proust's 3000-page *A la recherche du temps perdu* is the greatest twentieth-century French novel and one of the most important works of Western European literature. It encompasses and goes beyond the main trends of nineteenth-century French literature, and has profoundly influenced the development of twentieth-century literature both inside and outside France. There are no set texts for this paper, but you will be expected to have read *A la recherche du temps perdu*, some of Proust's other works, and some works of criticism.

### 2. Teaching

There is normally a course of lectures on Proust every year. In addition, you will have a series of tutorials. There are also occasional postgraduate seminars on Proust which you might find it interesting to attend.

### 3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (3; compulsory commentary).

### 4. Introductory Reading

By Proust: If you are trying to decide whether to do this paper, look at the first 200 pages or so of *Du Côté de chez Swann* (up to 'Un Amour de Swann'). If you do the paper, you should read all of *A la recherche du temps perdu* (the best paperback edition is Folio); make sure your edition includes the 'long' version of *Albertine disparue* (i.e. about 280 pp.).

Also: *Les Plaisirs et les jours*. Jean Santeuil. *Essais et articles*. *Contre Sainte-Beuve*. *Pastiches*, in *Pastiches et Mélanges* (especially those of Balzac and Flaubert).

On Proust: Introductory :

S. Beckett, *Proust*, 1931.

G. Brée, *The World of Marcel Proust*, 1967.

R. Hayman, *Proust* [biography], 1990.

G. Picon, *Lecture de Proust*, 1963.

E.J.Hughes, *Marcel Proust* 1983

J.-Y. Tadié, *Proust et le roman* 1971

I. Wassenaar, *Proust for beginners*, 2001

*The Cambridge Companion to Proust*, 2000

Also:

R. Barthes, 'Proust et les noms' in *Nouveaux essais critiques*, 1967.

L. Bersani, *Marcel Proust: The Fictions of Life and of Art*, 1965.

M. Bowie, *Proust Among the Stars*, 1998

G. Genette, 'Métonymie chez Proust', *Figures III*, 1972.

R. Girard, *Mensonge romantique, vérité romanesque*, 1961.

G. Poulet, essay on Proust in *Etudes sur le temps humain*, 1949; *L'Espace proustien*, 1963.

J.-P. Richard, *Proust et le monde sensible*, 1974.

R. Shattuck, *Proust*, 1974.

L. Spitzer on Proust's style in *Etudes de Style*, 1970.

## **French Poetry from Surrealism to the Present**

### 1. Course Content

Closely linked to the evolution of thought and visual culture, French poetry in the twentieth century has been immensely rich and varied. Surrealism (inaugurated by André Breton's *Manifeste du surréalisme* in 1924) placed poetry at the heart of literary, philosophical and revolutionary movement that sought to transform human existence. Informed by 'Automatic writing', a technique aimed at liberating the unconscious via the free play of language, the poetry of the surrealists (including André Breton, Paul Eluard and Robert Desnos) abounded in flamboyant images and strange associations, which also found expression in painting, sculpture and cinema.

The relationship between self, word and world remains a central preoccupation in many later poets including Francis Ponge, René Char, Saint-John Perse, Jules Supervielle, Henri Michaux, Aimé Césaire, André Frénaud, Yves Bonnefoy, Jacques Dupin, Philippe Jaccottet, Gaston Miron, Michel Deguy, Andrée Chedid, Jacques Réda, Jacques Roubaud, Pierre Alferi, Anne Portugal. Students will have the opportunity to study a range of poets and to pursue such topics as: Surrealism and its legacy; the relationship between poetry and the visual arts; poetry and politics; French Poetry and the Second World War; poetry and narrative; poetry and phenomenology; poetry and subjectivity; the evolution of poetic forms; poetry and gender; language and desire; poetry as meditation; poetry and landscape; poetry and the city; poetry and the everyday.

### 2. Teaching

The course will be taught in a series of small classes. Each year there are lectures on aspects of twentieth-century French poetry.

### 3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (2).

### 4. Introductory Reading

Décaudin, Michel and Jean-Baptists Para (eds), *Anthologie de la poésie française du XXème siècle*, Poésie / Gallimard, 2 vols, 2002

Richard, Jean-Pierre, *Onze Etudes sur la poésie moderne*, 1964

Cardinal, Roger (ed.) *Sensibility and Creation : Studies in Twentieth-century French poetry*, 1977

Greene, Robert, *Six French Poets of Our Time*, 1979

Stamleman, Richard, *Lost Beyond Telling: Representations of Death and Absence in Modern French Poetry*, 1990

## **Literature and the Visual Arts in France (Suspended for 2015-16)**

### 1. Course Content

The paper offers students the opportunity to explore the different relations between literature and the visual arts from medieval times to the 19th century, focusing on a wide range of writers, artists and movements. Among the topics explored will be the way(s) language conveys images, and images tell stories; the uses of realism and fantasy in literature and art; and the links between word, picture and 'message' (including book illustration in manuscripts and early printed editions of poetry, novels and plays). Writers and artists examined include Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, Guillaume de Machaut, the Limbourg brothers, Scève, Corneille, Racine, Chauveau, Poussin, Lebrun, Watteau,

Marivaux, Diderot, Greuze, David, Baudelaire, Manet, Courbet, Zola, Huysmans, and Mallarmé.

2. Teaching

8 lectures in Michaelmas Term; 5 seminars in Hilary Term.

3. Examination: Method of assessment C (2).

Candidates are encouraged to adopt a broad chronological approach, either between their two topics or within at least one of them.

4. Suggested Reading (preliminary)

J.J.G. Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators and their Methods of Work* (1992)

Andrew Taylor, 'Authors, scribes, patrons, books', in *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory, 1280-1520*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Nicholas Watson, Ruth Evans, and Andrew Taylor (Philadelphia: Penn State University Press, 1999), pp. 353-65

Benoît Bolduc, *Andromède au rocher: fortune théâtrale d'une image en France et en Italie, 1587-1712*, vol. 12 of *Teatro. Studi e testi* (2002)

Michael Hawcroft, 'Racine and Chauveau: a poetics of illustration', *French Studies*, 61 (3) (2007), 280-297

Alain Mérot (ed), *Les Conférences de l'Académie Royale de peinture et de sculpture* (2003)

Jacqueline Lichtenstein, *La couleur éloquente* (1989); *La tache aveugle: essai sur les relations de la peinture et de la sculpture à l'âge moderne* (2003)

René Démoris (ed.), *La peinture en procès: l'invention de la critique d'art au siècle des Lumières* (2001)

Denis Diderot, *Salons, Essais sur la peinture; Pensées détachées sur la peinture*

Philip Conisbee, *Painting in Eighteenth-Century France* (1981)

Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (1981)

Thomas Crow, *Painters and Public Life in 18thc Paris* (1987)

## **French Women's Writing**

1. Course Content

This paper offers the opportunity to examine work by a wide range of women writers of the modern period, from France and the francophone world. It will include consideration of little-known writers who have been excluded from the literary canon, as well as of more canonical names, including George Sand, Simone de Beauvoir and Nathalie Sarraute. It will also (from 2006) allow you to study the work of French women film-directors, such as Agnès Varda and Claire Denis. In the lectures and seminars, we will address issues such as the relationship between gender and genre, the theorization of an 'écriture féminine', the gendering of the reader, and the treatment of themes such as mothers and daughters, or the status of women in European and North African society.

2. Teaching

A series of 8 lectures will be given in the second half of Michaelmas Term and the first half of Hilary. There will be a weekly seminar throughout Hilary Term at which students will give presentations.

3. Examination: Method of Assessment B (3).

#### 4. Introductory Reading

Among other writers, the course will focus on George Sand, Rachilde, Simone de Beauvoir, Marie Cardinal, Hélène Cixous, Annie Leclerc, Annie Ernaux, Nathalie Sarraute, Marie Darrieussecq and Assia Djebar. Contact the course organizer (currently Dr Kathryn Rees at The Queen's College, kathryn.rees@queens.ox.ac.uk) for a full list of the core texts. Some suggestions for introductory secondary reading: Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (1985, 2002); Susan Sellers, *Language and Sexual Difference: Feminist Writing in France* (1991) and *The Hélène Cixous Reader* (1994); Kelly Oliver (ed), *French Feminism Reader* (2000); Elizabeth Fallaize, *French Women's Writing: Recent Fiction* (1993).

### **Twentieth-century French Autobiographical Writing**

#### 1. Course Content

This paper will allow students to explore a major tradition in twentieth-century French literature in greater depth and variety than is possible on the modern period paper (Paper VIII), or in the autobiographical texts prescribed for the study of twentieth-century authors in Paper XI (Gide, Sartre, Duras).

Students will be encouraged to acquire an understanding of the core features of what has come to be recognised as a major literary genre of the twentieth century, and offered the opportunity to explore the ways in which its assumptions have been developed and challenged by some of the most innovative writers in the period. Some of the issues raised by autobiographical writing in the period include questions of identity; memory; the limits of self-knowledge; the place of language; psychoanalysis; gender; the relations between biographical and autobiographical writing; the use of photography.

#### 2. Teaching

In most years there will be a course of lectures in Michaelmas Term providing an introduction into some of the key ideas and texts (which will also be of interest to students taking Papers VIII and XI). The Paper is taught in a seminar in Hilary Term which develops both the issues and the repertoire of texts.

#### 3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (2).

#### 4. Introductory Reading

André Gide, *Si le grain ne meurt*

Michel Leiris, *L'Âge d'homme*

“ , *La Règle du jeu*

Jean-Paul Sartre, *Les Mots*

Romain Gary (Emile Ajar), *Pseudo*

Roland Barthes, *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes*

Nathalie Sarraute, *Enfance*

Marguerite Duras, *L'Amant*

Georges Perec, *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*

Assia Djebar, *L'Amour la fantasia*

Jacques Roubaud, *Le grand incendie de Londres*

Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte autobiographique* (1975)

Michael Sheringham, *French Autobiography* (1993)

## **Francophone Literatures (2015-16)**

### 1. Course Content

For this paper you will study literary texts that reflect France's long and enduring relationship with its ex-colonies. You will study writers from a range of France's ex-colonies and overseas territories, as well as some works by immigrant writers living in the métropole.

### 2. Examination

*Method of Assessment C (2)*

### 3. Teaching

In Michaelmas term there will normally be lecture courses on related issues. In Hilary weeks 1-5 there will be a series of five Francophone seminars, as outlined below. You must read the works marked with a \*, and you are encouraged to read further 'primary' reading as listed for each week. You will write three tutorial essays in all, choosing from the topics for weeks 2-5; you will give a short presentation on the fourth area (you need to choose which topics you wish to answer on by the session in week 1).

Seminar 1, Hilary week 1: Postcolonialism and Francophonie (photocopies of selected theoretical material to be distributed in advance)

Jane Hiddleston, Exeter College

Primary reading:

Edward Said, 'Introduction', *Orientalism* (1978)

Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel, Sandrine Lemaire, *La Fracture coloniale*, Introduction and Chapter One (2005)

Robert Young, 'Postcolonial Remains', *New Literary History* 43 (2012): 19-42

Seminar 2: North African Writing

Jane Hiddleston, Exeter College

Primary reading:

Djébar, Assia, *L'Amour, la fantasia*\*

---- *Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement*

Boualem Sansal, *Rue Darwin*\*

---- *Le Village de l'Allemand*

Selected critical reading:

Calle-Gruber, Mireille, *Assia Djébar, ou la résistance de l'écriture* (2001)

Calle-Gruber, Mireille, Wolfgang Asholt, Dominique Combe (eds.), *Assia Djébar: Littérature et transmission* (2010)

Djébar, Assia, *Ces Voix qui m'assiègent* (1999)

Harrison, Nicholas, *Postcolonial Criticism: History, Theory, and the Work of Fiction* (2003)

Hiddleston, Jane, *Assia Djébar: Out of Algeria* (Liverpool, 2006)

Kelly, Debra, *Autobiography and Independence: Selfhood and Creativity in North African Postcolonial Writing in French* (2005)

Dinah Assouline Stillman, 'A Rustle in History: Conversations with Boualem Sansal', *World Literature Today* (September 2012)

Lucy Brisley, 'Melancholia and Victimhood in Boualem Sansal's *Le Village de l'Allemand: Ou Le journal des frères Schiller*', *Research in African Literatures* 44.1 (2013)

### Seminar 3: Caribbean Writing

Jane Hiddleston, Exeter College

Recommended primary reading:

Chamoiseau, Patrick, *Texaco*\*

Condé, Maryse, *Desirada*\*

--- *Traversée de la mangrove*

Glissant, Edouard, *Le Discours Antillais* (especially 'La dépossession', 'Le Même et le Divers', 'Langue, multilinguisme' and 'Histoire, littérature')

Selected critical reading:

Britton, Celia, *The Sense of Community in French Caribbean Fiction* (2008)

Patrick Chamoiseau, Jean Bernabé and Raphaël Confiant, *Eloge de la créolité*. Paris: Gallimard, 1993.

Condé, Maryse, 'O Brave New World', *Research in African Literatures*, 29 (Autumn 1998) 1-7

Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs*. Paris: Seuil, 1965.

Charles Forsdick and David Murphy (eds). *Francophone Postcolonial Studies: A Critical Introduction*. London: Arnold, 2003

Sam Haigh, *An Introduction to Caribbean Francophone Writing*. Oxford: Berg, 1999.

McCusker, Maeve, "'This Creole culture, miraculously forged": the contradictions of créolité', in *Francophone Postcolonial Studies: A Critical Introduction* ed. by Charles Forsdick and David Murphy (2003), 112-21

Maeve McCusker, *Patrick Chamoiseau: Recovering Memory*. Liverpool, 2007

Pfaff, Françoise, *Entretiens avec Maryse Condé* (1993)

### Seminar 4: Sub-Saharan African writing and Negritude

Toby Garfitt, Magdalen College

Primary reading:

Ba, Mariama, *Une si longue lettre*\*

Diop, Birago, *Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba*

Kourouma, Ahmadou, *Les Soleils des Indépendances*\*

Oyono, Ferdinand, *Le Vieux Nègre et la médaille*

Sembène, Ousmane (or Ousmane, Sembène), *Les Bouts de bois de Dieu*

Senghor, Léopold Sédar, *Poèmes* (Seuil: Points)

Selected critical reading:

Blair, Dorothy, *African Literature in French* (1976)

Hitchcott, Nikki, *Women Writers in Francophone Africa* (2000)

Irele, F. Abiola, *The African Imagination* (2001)

Jack, Belinda, *Negritude and Literary Criticism* (1996)

Murphy, David, *Sembene: Imagining Alternatives in Film and Fiction* (2000)

Obioma Nnaemeka, 'Urban Spaces, Women's Places: Polygamy as Sign in Mariama Bâ's Novels', chap. 10 in her book *The Politics of M(O)thering: Womanhood, Identity and Resistance in African Literature* (1996)

E. Bekers, 'The Critical Powers of Salimata's Disenchantment: A Gendered Rereading of Ahmadou Kourouma's *Les Soleils des Indépendances*', *Research in African Literatures* 44.2 (2013)

### Seminar 5: Migrant Writing

Jane Hiddleston, Exeter College

Primary reading:

Nina Bouaroui, *Garçon manqué\** (2000)

Alain Mabanckou, *Black Bazar* (2009)

Gisèle Pineau, *L'Exil selon Julia\** (2000)

Selected Critical Reading:

Hafid Gafaïti (et al), *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World* (2009)

Alec Hargreaves, *Immigration, Race and Ethnicity in France* (1995)

Susan Ireland and Patrice J. Proulx, *Immigrant Narratives in Contemporary France* (2001)

Marina Van Zuylen, 'Maghreb and Melancholy: A Reading of Nina Bouraoui', *Research in African Literatures* 34.3 (2003)

Sam Haigh, 'Migration and melancholia: From Kristeva's 'depression nationale' to Pineau's 'maladie de l'exil'', *French Studies*, 60.2 (2006)

Pascale de Souza, 'Trickster Strategies in Alain Mabanckou's *Black Bazar*', *Research in African Literatures* 42.1 (2011)

### Advanced French translation

#### 1. Course Content

This paper is an excellent opportunity to take your translation skills beyond the level you have been working at on the French course so far, to explore translation in unfamiliar contexts, from cinema subtitling to *bande dessinée*, and to reflect on an activity which is not only a transposition of a text between two languages, but also a transfer of meaning between two cultures.

#### 2. Teaching

The course is taught in four seminars in Hilary Term of your final year. You will be expected to produce essays on translation theory, original translations, and commentaries on the strategies involved in your own and others' translations.

3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (3; two translations with commentary, one essay on translations theory).

#### 4. Introductory Reading

For a lively introduction to the subject, read David Bellos's *Is That a Fish in Your Ear?* (Penguin, 2011), which gives you the history of translation studies and its major current debates in entertaining style. The course itself used Jeremy Munday's *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and*

*Applications* (Routledge, 2012) as a guide to the theory, and Ian Higgins and Sandor Hervey's, *Thinking French Translation* (Routledge, 2002) for stylistics and more practical considerations. Lawrence Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader* (Routledge, 1999) is a good starting point for more detailed exploration.

## **(ii) GENERAL SUBJECTS**

### **Literary Theory**

#### 1. Course Content

What is literature? What is an author? What is reading, and where does meaning come from? This paper examines how literary theorists have answered these questions over the past century. The paper also allows you to concentrate on two further topics. You might focus on specific questions or themes (e.g. What is performativity?; Theoretical Readings of Poe's 'Purloined Letter'), on particular theorists (e.g. Roland Barthes) or on critical approaches, such as Psychoanalysis, Structuralism and Narratology, Feminism and Gender Studies, Marxism and History, Deconstruction, Post-Colonial Studies.

#### 3. Teaching

You would typically be taught in a series of 5 tutorials in Hilary term. The M.St. course also runs a series of sixteen introductory lectures to various aspects of modern literary theory throughout Michaelmas and Hilary terms.

#### 3. Examination: Method of assessment C (1).

#### 4. Introductory Reading

Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 1997)

David Lodge (ed.), *Modern Criticism and Theory. A Reader*, 2nd ed. (Longman, 2000)

Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: an introduction* (Blackwells).

### **European Cinema**

This paper gives you the opportunity to study major directors and periods of European cinema. The course introduces the basic concepts of film form and presents each film within its historical context.

Please note that it is only possible to take this paper in the final year. The course runs over two terms, Michaelmas and Hilary. ALL LECTURES AND SEMINARS ARE COMPULSORY. (You are also encouraged to attend the screenings since it is better to watch films on a big screen, but if there is a clash between screening times and other lectures you still have the possibility of borrowing the film in question and watching it on their own.)

#### 1. Course Content and Teaching

The format of the course is as follows. In Michaelmas there are 8 lectures and 8 screenings. In Hilary there are 5 lectures and screenings accompanied by seminars. For the seminars the group will be divided into two and each student is obliged to give a presentation on one of the films that are screened that term. Normally the students give these presentations in pairs. In Michaelmas term, the course outlines some of the main currents in European film history from 1920 to the 1970s presenting

the main concepts of film form and introducing each of the chosen films in its historical context. The focus of the lectures and seminars in Hilary term is European cinema from the 1970s until now, often covering countries not discussed in the first term. Students are welcome to write on directors and topics that lie outside of the languages they study. The course is taught by a group of lecturers. Normally each of the seminars in Hilary term is chaired by one person.

## 2. Exam Essay

Friday of week 5 in Hilary term, a list of exam questions are made public at the Examination Schools. You have four weeks to write a 6000-8000 word essay on one of the questions. The questions are broad and can be answered with reference to a number of different directors, periods and national cinemas. The questions correspond to the theoretical and historical topics that have been covered in the lectures. It is allowed to compare films from different countries and periods. It is allowed to write about films from language areas other than the ones you study. You can quote in the main European languages but it is helpful to translate quotes from Russian. You can also quote dialogue from subtitles since you are not required to know the original language of the film in order to write on it. A minimum of 'technical' vocabulary, describing different kinds of shot for instance, is helpful, but the exam is not a test in how many technical words you know. If in doubt you can be guided by the requirements of your argument. You can write about rare or very recent films but should then compare them to films that are more closely related to the topics covered in the course. The films screened are merely examples of periods and types of filmmaking and there are few restrictions on which films you may choose to write about, except that all the films should be European, which in this particular context means continental Europe including Russia.

## 3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (1).

## 4. Select Bibliography

Jacques Aumont et al.: *Aesthetics of film*, Austin, 1992

André Bazin: *What is cinema*, Berkeley 1967-1971

Tim Bergfelder; Erica Carter; Deniz Göktürk: *The German cinema book*, London, 2002

Peter E Bondanella: *A history of Italian cinema*, New York, 2009

David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson: *Film Art an Introduction*, Boston, 2004

C. G. Crisp: *The classic French cinema, 1930-1960*, Bloomington, 1993

Sergei Eisenstein, ed. Richard Taylor: *The Eisenstein reader*, London, 1998

Peter William Evans: *Spanish cinema: the auteurist tradition*, Oxford, 1999

Noël Burch, *Theory of film practice*, London, 1973

Siegfried Kracauer: *Theory of film: the redemption of physical reality, 1889-1966*, New York, 1960

Philip Rosen: *Narrative, apparatus, ideology: a film theory reader*, New York, 1986

Michael Temple: *The French cinema book*, London, 2004

Nicolas Tredell: *Cinemas of the mind: a critical history of film theory*, Cambridge, 2002

**WHEN DRAWING UP THIS HANDBOOK WE HAVE TRIED TO BE AS ACCURATE AND CLEAR AS POSSIBLE, BUT REMEMBER THAT IT IS ONLY AN INFORMAL GUIDE. THE REVISED EDITION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S *EXAMINATION DECREES AND REGULATIONS* WILL BE THE OFFICIAL AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE OF INFORMATION AND YOU SHOULD CHECK ALL DETAILS IN YOUR COPY OF THAT PUBLICATION. COURSES AND REGULATIONS ARE CONSTANTLY UNDER REVIEW, SO ALWAYS CHECK ALSO WITH YOUR COLLEGE TUTOR TO CONFIRM WHAT IS WRITTEN HERE. IN ADDITION, DO NOT HESITATE TO ASK FOR CLARIFICATION ABOUT THE COURSE FROM ANY MEMBER OF THE SUB-FACULTY WHO IS LECTURING TO YOU OR TUTORING YOU; WE WILL ALWAYS DO OUR BEST TO HELP.**

The University has three offices, the two Proctors and the Assessor, held by members of the colleges in rotation for one year at a time, who have a University-wide role of ombudsman. The Proctors have particular responsibility for University student discipline and formal complaints, while the Assessor is concerned with student welfare and support. You should refer to the *Proctors' and Assessor's Memorandum*, available from the University Offices or your college, for information about such matters (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam/>).

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