Information for the Final Honour School in

FRENCH

Information for students who start their FHS course in

October 2019
Handbook for the Final Honour Course in FRENCH

This handbook is for those students who start their FHS course in October 2019 and therefore normally expect to be examined in June 2022.

This handbook gives subject-specific information for your FHS course in French. For general information about your studies and the faculty, please consult the Faculty’s Undergraduate Course Handbook:
(https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/:humdiv:modlang)
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, including the topic 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

Four passages will be set, of which candidates are required to translate any two into English; all passages will be between 250-320 words in length.
1. a twelfth-, thirteenth-, fourteenth or fifteenth-century verse or prose passage
2. a sixteenth-century verse or prose passage
3. a seventeenth-century verse or prose passage
4. an eighteenth-century verse or prose 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 the subject of ‘L’actualité française et francophone’ (matters of contemporary political, social, cultural, and ethical interest).

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 requires 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. In the main school of Modern Languages it is available only to students offering a sole language 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 the degree course in Modern Languages and Linguistics.

**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 XII is described later on in this handbook. You should discuss them with your tutors when making your choices. For Paper XIII, see the Linguistics website.

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, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII*, XIII
**Optionally** XIV Extended Essay

* Candidates can normally offer only one Paper XII. See the Examination Regulations for full information.

DESCRIPTION OF LINGUISTIC AND LITERATURE PAPERS

PAPER IV: **LINGUISTIC STUDIES I: THE HISTORY OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE**

1. **Course Content**
The aim of this paper is to present an advanced introduction to the history of French, both through the close analysis of texts from the earliest (late Latin) era to the twentieth century. During lectures, tutorials and seminars, you can expect to learn about:
   • Major changes affecting the sound system, grammar and lexicon of French throughout its history, starting from Latin and continuing through to the present day.
• The importance of sociohistorical factors in driving linguistic change, for example, dialect contact, standardisation, societal change and contact with other languages.
• Issues with the quality of the evidence, mostly textual, which is available to scholars interested in the history of French.
• The strengths and weaknesses of competing theories which have been proposed to account for some of the major changes taking place throughout the history of the language.

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. You are also advised to attend lectures relating to Paper V.

3. Examination
In the final examination, your knowledge of the above topics will be assessed on the basis of:
• Text-based questions in Section A, for which the set texts are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Century</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strasbourg Oaths</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>BFM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chanson de Roland, 9-12</td>
<td>c.1100</td>
<td>BFM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lapidaire en prose, XI-XVI</td>
<td>c.1150</td>
<td>BFM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queste del saint Graal, §172-175</td>
<td>1225-1230</td>
<td>BFM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vie de sainte Geneviève version IV</td>
<td>1475</td>
<td>BFM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippe de Comynes, Mémoires, Livre VI, p1-4</td>
<td>c.1500</td>
<td>BFM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
commencement as far as ignominie'.

Jean Héroard, Record of the Dauphin’s Speech. 5.8-9.8

Early 1600s


Port-Royal Grammar, Part II, Ch. 2 ‘Des noms, & premierement des substantives’

1660

Gallica

Voltaire, Candide, Ch.XVII

1759

Gallica

Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary III, Ch1, First 6 paragraphs

1856

Gallica

- Essay questions in Section B, some of which are related to specific periods in the history of the language.

4. Introductory Reading

You are strongly advised to take advantage of the lectures relating to this paper, both the specific History of French lectures, and other lectures on French linguistics. Reading widely, both on French linguistics specifically and on general linguistics, is essential to preparing this paper. The following are general works on the history of French which can provide a basic foundation of knowledge:


Historical linguistic theory is an essential and engaging part of studying French historical linguistics. Many of the textbooks in this area are written in a clear, accessible style. These include:


Tutors will also be able to offer advice on general introductory linguistics textbooks for those new to the field. There are a huge number available. The Cambridge Introductions to Language and Linguistics series published by Cambridge University Press are very clear introductions to specific sub-fields of linguistics, such as:

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:

If you, like many people doing this paper, have not done Prelims in linguistics you should also look at a readable introduction to general linguistics, for example:

There is normally at least one lecture course on French linguistic studies in Michaelmas Term. If you think you might do this option (even if you are not yet sure), 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
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, you will normally have 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
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:
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, Sarraste, 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, non-metropolitan Francophone writing, 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
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: 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* (ed. Ian Short, *Lettres gothiques*), 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; Béroul’s *Tristan* (ed. Alfred Ewert) tells the immortal story of doomed adulterous love in a narrative of bewitching subtlety; Villon’s *Testament* and *Poésies diverses* (ed. Claude Thiry, *Lettres gothiques*) 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 - six 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 (in the case of Villon, the section of his work for special study is *Le Testament*, lines 1-909 and 1660-end), 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*
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 separate entries below 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**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**

### 2. Montaigne (1533-92)

1. **Course Content**
The three books of Michel Eyquem de 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**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**

### 3. Pascal (1623-1662)

1. **Course Content**
During his lifetime Blaise Pascal published ferocious political and religious polemic as well as scientific and philosophical treatises; he also invented the first calculator. After his death, his family gathered together the bundles of notes, mini-treatises, and snippets of dialogue he had written dealing principally with the relation between God and humankind, which have become known as the *Pensées*. We'll approach Pascal’s work by taking on questions about editorial transmission, textual instability, and the significance of imaginative inquiry for exploring what it means to be human in an infinite universe. Studying Pascal means exploring fundamental questions about the relation between texts and their histories, and about the public and private dimensions of authorship. It also means thinking through the boundaries between disciplines – philosophy, literature, theology, psychology, geometry, grammar, rhetoric, informatics – as well as the histories of those disciplines themselves.

The texts for special study are, *Les Provinciales, Pensées et opuscules divers*, éd. G. Ferreyrolles et P. Sellier, in *La Pochothèque* (Livres de poche/Classiques Garnier), with a special study of *Pensées*, 1-414; 419-671; 680-690; 694-695; 697-717; 742-769 and *De l'esprit géométrique et de l'art de persuader*. You will also be able to draw relevant parallels with other *Opuscules*.
2. Teaching
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. Introductory Reading
Recommended introductory studies include:

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
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

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:
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:

5. Lafayette (Mme de) (1634-1693)

1. Course Content
Marie-Madeleine Pioche de la Vergne, comtesse de Lafayette, is not only a canonical author, the greatest novelist of her period, but also a writer whose works open up critical perspectives on the canon and on authorship itself. Lafayette’s historical fiction was central to seventeenth-century debates about vraisemblance, the nature and purpose of fiction, and the relation of literature to historical events. She has been hailed as the inventor of at least two genres, the nouvelle historique and the psychological novel; she was an important figure at court, and the way in which she ensured the wider circulation and publication of her work reveals much about gender and public life in this
period; film adaptations of her work also have much to tell us about our understanding of the past. In reading Lafayette’s fiction alongside her Histoire(s), we both learn about court life and engage critically with what it means to be a woman writing in, and about, intimacy, politics, and public space.

The texts prescribed for special study are La Princesse de Clèves; La Princesse de Montpensier; Histoire de madame Henriette d’Angleterre. You should also read Zaïde, La Comtesse de Tende.

2. **Teaching**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**
Recommended critical studies include:


6. **Racine (1639-99)**

1. **Course Content**
Jean 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* in *Théâtre complet*, ed. J. Rohou (Pochothèque, Livre de Poche, 1998), but also to read his other plays.

2. **Teaching**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

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

**7. 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*), tragédies (e.g. *Zaïre, Mahomet, Mérope*) philosophical and polemical works (e.g. *Dictionnaire philosophique, Traité sur la tolérance*).

2. **Teaching**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**

**8. Diderot (1713-84)**

1. **Course Content**
Probably the most varied and original of the Enlightenment writers, Diderot is a particularly stimulating author. The texts prescribed for special study give some idea of the wide range of his intellectual activity: novels (*Jacques le Fataliste*, ed. Belaval, Folio), satire (*Le Neveu de Rameau*, ed. Varloot, Folio), philosophical dialogue (*Le Rêve de d'Alembert*, ed. Chouillet, Livre de Poche), art criticism (*Le Salon de 1765*, ed. Bokdahl and Lorenceau, Hermann). 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**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

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
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 texts prescribed for special study, *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**
   Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**

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

   1. **Course Content**
   Charles 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. There are two texts prescribed for special study: *Les Fleurs du Mal* and *Le Spleen de Paris* (*Petits Poèmes en prose*). You will also explore the principal features of Baudelaire’s art and literary criticism, including ‘Le Peintre de la vie moderne’. In addition, you should also read his short story *Le Fanfarlo* and his *Journaux intimes*.

2. **Teaching**
   Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**
   Undergraduates will already have studied some of his poetry in their first year, but a useful general

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

1. **Course Content**
Gustave Flaubert’s writings explore the conditions of modernity – irony, disenchantment, the disempowerment of the individual, 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*. Other texts you should read of his remaining work are his exotic novel *Salammbô, Bouvard et Pécuchet*, the *Dictionnaire des idées reçues*, and *La Tentation de Saint Antoine*. His correspondence (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade) is as revealing as his fiction is restrained.

2. **Teaching**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**

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.

You should concentrate 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 discuss Mallarmé’s poetic
aesthetics, its radical consequences and the central place it has come to occupy in the debate about the nature and meaning of Postmodernism. Passages for commentary will be set from these editions: Poésies (édition Deman), ed. Bertrand Marchal (Gallimard Poésie, 1992, pp. 1-74) and Igitur, Divagations, Un coup de dés, ed. Bertrand Marchal (Gallimard Poésie, 2003), but not from Igitur, Quelques médailleons et portraits en pied and Pages diverses in the latter volume.

2. **Teaching**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**

5. **Beckett (1906-89)**

1. **Course Content**
Samuel Beckett’s work represented a sustained process of experimentation with the fundamental resources of narrative fiction and of the theatre, the radical and influential nature of his contribution being marked by the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1969. His narratives and plays ask searching questions about our common humanity, in relation to language, consciousness, the body and mortality, as well as at an ethical and political level. His work may also invite investigation in relation to literary modernism, artistic abstraction and minimalism, and questions of cultural value. Beckett wrote versions of almost all his mature works in both French and English; the prescribed texts were mostly written in French in the first instance, but comparison with the English versions in order to consider issues of translingual authorship is another possible area for study.

There are six texts prescribed for special study: Molloy (1951), Fin de partie (1957), La dernière bande (1959), Oh les beaux jours (1963), Têtes-mortes (2nd edn, 1972; the prescribed texts are: ‘Assez’, ‘Imagination morte imaginez’, ‘Bing’, and ‘Sans’), and Mal vu mal dit (1981). You will also be expected to read widely in his other writings, particularly Malone meurt and L’Innommable (completing, with Molloy, the so-called trilogy of novels), as well as further examples of narrative prose, such as Comment c’est and Compagnie, and other plays such as Comédie, Pas moi, Pas, and Catastrophe.

2. **Teaching**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.
3. **Introductory Reading**


6. **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 Marguerite Duras’s other works, such as to enable you to study her 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**

Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

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:


7. **Barthes (1915-80)**

1. **Course Content**

The extraordinary range of Roland 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 20th 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**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**

### 8. Djebbar (1936-2015)

1. **Course Content**
Assia Djebar is one of the most important Francophone writers, and was the first Algerian woman to be made a member of the Académie française in 2005. Despite the acclaim she has received in Europe and the US, however, her work offers a challenging critique of French colonialism and its aftermath, and contains a profound reflection on the ways in which literature is able to probe and question existing versions of colonial history. At the same time, moreover, Djebar’s relationship with Algeria remains complex, as she goes on to depict the ravages of the ‘civil war’ of the 1990s in her later work, at the same time as she explores her simultaneous commitment to and alienation from her native land. In this course, you will study four of her most important and sophisticated works, which include recollections of the colonial invasion of Algeria, of the War of Independence, and of the violence of the 1990s, in particular from the point of view of the women caught up in it.

The texts prescribed for special study are *Femmes d’Alger dans leur appartement; L’Amour, la fantasia; Le Blanc de l’Algérie* and *Nulle part dans la maison de mon père*.

2. **Teaching**
Students typically have four tutorials on this author, producing written work for each, and lectures are offered annually.

3. **Introductory Reading**
You should read the prescribed texts, and also, if you have time, a selection of other works (such as *Vaste est la prison, Oran langue morte, Ces Voix qui m’assiègent.*)

Some recommended critical studies include:
Calle-Gruber, Mireille, *Assia Djebar, ou la résistance de l’écriture*. Maisonneuve et Larose, 2001
*Esprit Créateur*, Special Issue, L’Amour, la fantasia, avant et après. 41.1 (2008)

### 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. All French paper Xllls are now examined by a submitted portfolio, but there are variations in the nature and number of pieces of work required (see below for details). Please be aware that paper Xllls in other languages, or in Linguistics, may not be assessed by submitted work.

Although most topics are available in most years, the topics listed are those which will be available for the next examination year only (in this case, 2019-2020); in some years some topics may not be offered for staffing or other reasons, so first or second-year students considering a given topic must not assume that it will certainly be available in their final year. The definitive list of topics which will be available in a given year is published on the Friday of week 5 of the Trinity Term of the preceding academic year (i.e. in TT2021 for finalists in 2021-22, and so on) on WebLearn at https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/access/content/group/modlang/general/exams/index.html.

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 Monday of the tenth 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 Monday of the tenth 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

Medieval Subjectivities: The Lyric / Across Boundaries

1. Course Content
Subjectivity in medieval lyric verse is a much-debated entity, from structuralist approaches to the ‘je grammatical’ to psychoanalytic readings of personal psychologies. Its study has been importantly inflected by key movements in literary criticism, such as the so-called ‘material turn’, which brought to the fore the study of texts in their manuscript context. This Paper will give you the opportunity to study first-person expression across the medieval francophone period, in areas including Old Occitan and Anglo-Norman verse (e.g. troubadours/trobaritz, crusade songs), trouvère poetry, lyric insertions in later-medieval French dits, or the so-called grands rhétoriqueurs. Important figures in the development of – and experimentation with – lyric voice will be examined, such as Rutebeuf and Guillaume de Machaut. The Paper will specifically encourage asking questions across different boundaries: those of gender (e.g. the trobairitz alongside troubadours), genre (interrogating the parameters of ‘lyric’ as a formal category), language (e.g. debate poetry in oïl and oc, or Charles d’Orléans’s experimentation with English poetry, and space (e.g. touching on the varied compilation and presentation of lyrics across different chansonniers).
2. **Teaching**
The course is taught in a series of five seminars in Hilary Term of the student’s final year. Students are advised to indicate their interest by the start of Michaelmas Term, so they can be directed to relevant lectures to support their preparation for the course content. Students wishing to take this Paper will also be expected to have worked on medieval French language by following the recorded lectures on Reading Medieval French (https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/humdiv.modlang.french.fhs.medieval_fre) and on Medieval French commentary (https://ox.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Sessions/List.aspx?embedded=1#folderID=%225bed5d0-2495-4dd7-910f-bbe105b63dfb%22&folderSets=3). You will normally also have taken an FHS medieval paper (VI or IX) in French or another romance language.

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

4. **Introductory Reading**

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**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**

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**Early Modern Satire in French**

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

**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

**French Romanticism: Writing and Revolution**

1. Course Content
Romanticism was an important turning point in French cultural history, an extension of Enlightenment preoccupations as well as the origin of modernity. French Romanticism was strongly influenced by the Europe-wide movement but was also shaped by the specific historical, political, and intellectual situation in France, where writers were still responding to the fallout of the Revolution, seeking to create new kinds of art which would be appropriate to the era of change and to find a language which would reflect new conceptions of subjectivity. This tension between political engagement and
introspection will be a focal concern. We will begin by problematizing the term ‘Romanticism’ and explore its various manifestations in the period 1789-1869. You will encounter the diverse range of experiments with form and genre in poetry, theatre, and prose (the latter including memoirs, le roman personnel, le journal intime, and short stories). Areas to be studied include politics, history and the Revolution, spiritualism and religion, identity and subjectivity, sexuality, exoticism, nature, vitalism, the gothic and the fantastic, mal du siècle, and social commitment.

2. **Teaching**
There will be a series of eight lectures in Michaelmas, looking at Romanticism through broad themes, followed by five seminars in Hilary that will take a more text-based approach.

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

4. **Introductory Reading**
A complete bibliography will be circulated later. Recommended introductory reading includes:
- Hugo, *Préface de Cromwell*, (1827), *Hernani* (1830), *Les Contemplations* (1856) [selected poems]
- Chateaubriand, *René* (1802)
- Constant, *Adolphe* (1816)
- Nodier, *Trilby* (1822)
- Duras, *Ourika* (1823)
- Gautier, ‘La Morte amoureuse’ (1839)

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

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.).

On Proust: Introductory:
S. Beckett, Proust, 1931.
R. Hayman, Proust [biography], 1990.
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:
M. Bowie, Proust Among the Stars, 1998
L. Spitzer on Proust's style in Études 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
Greene, Robert, *Six French Poets of Our Time*, 1979

**Literature and the Visual Arts in France**

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)**
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*
French Women’s Writing

1. Course Content
This paper offers the opportunity to examine work by a wide range of women writers from the medieval period to the present day including both French and other Francophone writers. It will include consideration of canonical and lesser-known writers, and range across literary genres from poetry to novels, memoirs and essays.

2. Teaching
A series of eight lectures will be given in Michaelmas Term. There will be a weekly seminar through the first half of Hilary Term based on presentations and discussion.

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

4. Introductory Reading

Twentieth- and Twenty-first-century Autobiography

1. Course Content
This paper will allow students to explore a major tradition in twentieth- and twenty-first-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 (Duras, Barthes, Djebar).

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; narrative voice; the limits of self-knowledge; the place of language; psychoanalysis; class, race, gender and sexuality; migration and exile; the relations between biographical and autobiographical writing; the role of History; 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 Critical Reading
Philippe Lejeune, Le Pacte autobiographique (1975) and L’autobiographie en France (1998)
Discourses of Race

1. Course Content
This paper will explore the long history of conceptions of ‘race’ and ethnicity in France and the Francophone world. Although a highly problematic concept, ‘race’ has nevertheless been a focus of preoccupation in French culture and thought since the sixteenth century, and continues to provoke fierce antagonism and debate in the present day. In this paper we will undertake a critical analysis of discourses of race and ethnicity as they have developed, for example, from François Rabelais to Patrick Chamoiseau.

2. 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 seminars. The first two sessions will sample the varied early modern meanings and uses of race emerging from medico-legal categories and the anthropologies of travel narratives: these meanings testify to the early modern concern with redefining human nature. We will focus first on the medical and natural-historical tradition and its most conspicuous instances in Rabelais, before envisaging it through the prism of the travel narrative, from André Thevet’s Les Singularités de la France Antarctique (1557), which informs Montaigne's reflection on human nature in the Essais, to François Bernier’s Les Voyages de François Bernier (1672) in Moghul India: a free thinker and a materialist, Bernier is also the first to write in French a geographical theory of human races. We will then shift our attention to the nineteenth century, examining literary responses to race as part of conflicted social identity in writers such as Claire de Duras and Guy de Maupassant, as well as the impact of scientific racialism on literary culture, looking at extracts from Gobineau’s Essai sur l’inégalité des races humaines alongside Pierre Loti. The final two sessions will focus on the twentieth century and on the emergence of a virulent critique of colonial racial theory. The first of these sessions will explore Frantz Fanon’s complex response to the ‘negritude’ movement in Peau noire, masques blancs alongside the negritude poetry of Léopold Sédar Senghor and Aimé Césaire. In the final session we will compare concepts of ‘Antillanité’ and ‘Créolité’ and discuss their efficacy in driving a more egalitarian and open-ended conception of ethnicity and cultural difference.

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

4. Introductory Reading

Travel, Exile, Migration

1. Course Content
This paper will explore histories of travel, exile, and migration to and from France, and around the world, from the seventeenth century to the present. From early colonial enterprises to the migration movements of the twenty-first century, French culture has encountered and been permeated by other cultures through experiences of travel to and from the metropole. In the light of these sometimes violent encounters and movements, the paper will examine works that raise questions about sovereignty and national frontiers, about cultural identity and exchange, and about the politics as well as the poetics of migration.

2. **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 seminars. In exploring the early modern Americas, for example, we will consider how encounters with indigenous people shaped European conceptions of racial difference, and how disputes over American territories sustained and reshaped the European debates about sovereignty that would come to underwrite later colonial projects. In Europe itself, we will also explore the border-crossing literature produced by Protestant refugees of the late seventeenth century, alongside texts which describe the proper comportment of the refugee: what did it mean to be a ‘good immigrant’ in the seventeenth century? Moving on to the nineteenth century, we will see how travel writing was shaped by the drive towards expansion and the heyday of the modern French colonial period, but also how writers critique the genre itself. Two sessions on twentieth and twenty-first century material will then explore the impact of postcolonialism and globalisation on more recent conceptions of migration and border-crossing. We will analyse texts reflecting on travel to and from the Caribbean to think through the complex intertwining of the search for rootedness with the embrace of a diasporic consciousness. Finally, we will read a set of texts focusing specifically on travel between France and the Maghreb in the twenty-first century and on the uneasy transition zone of the Mediterranean.

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

4. **Introductory Reading**
   Since this paper covers a range of historical ground, indications given here are only preliminary, and your seminar leaders will give more detailed instructions once you’ve signed up.

**Sample of primary reading**

**Secondary reading**
Plants, Stones, Robots: Rethinking the Natural

1. Course Content
We live in a moment when traditional understandings of human life have been thrown into crisis by technological development and ecological change at a massive scale. In recent years, a remarkably fertile body of literary and theoretical work has emerged that questions what it means to be human today and how technology has changed our relation to the natural world. Writers, critics, and philosophers are challenging anthropocentric stances and decentring the human perspective in favour of non-human perspectives, be they vegetable, animal, bacterial, cybernetic, or geophysical. Though critical debates on these topics have flourished recently, art, literature, and culture have been thinking the limits of the human for centuries. This paper will consider, on the one hand, some of these recent theoretical frameworks and, on the other, some ways in which, over the centuries, literature and visual culture have been experimenting with the relations between humans, nature, and technology. Some things you might expect to encounter in studying this paper: lovesick plants, dead animals, talking stones, political cyborgs.

2. Teaching
The course will be taught as a series of five seminars in Hilary Term of the student's final year.

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

4. Introductory Reading
A full reading list will be circulated before the start of the course but some useful introductory texts are:
Jean-Christophe Bailly (2013): Le parti pris des animaux.
Jane Bennett, Vibrant Matter: A political ecology of things (2009)
Timothy Clark (2015): Ecocriticism on the Edge (read: ‘Scale Framing’)
Gilbert Simondon (1965): Sur la technique (read: ‘Culture et technique’)

Histories of Violence (1789–today)

1. Course Content
‘Histories of Violence’ sets out to examine the representations of a crucial and many-sided reality in France and the Francophone world throughout the modern and contemporary periods: violence both from above and from below, in its historical, political, and socio-economic guises. From the French Revolution to the recent terrorist attacks in France and Francophone territories, literary and critical works have both informed and been informed by violence, be it State sponsored, clandestine, individual, or collective.

2. 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 seminars. Our seminars will focus on a selection of key moments and topics that help reflect on this reciprocal relationship and that have shaped a capacious imaginary. By focusing on a limited number of major literary works belonging to various genres, sometimes in relation to visual art and film, we will investigate some of the following questions: to what extent can some writers be considered to have contributed to the French Revolution and its reception? How have fiction and non-fiction portrayed the socio-economic and legal realities of crime and punishment
in a French nineteenth century known for its so-called “classes laborieuses, classes dangereuses”? What stories of the revolutions of 1830, 1848, and the Commune have been proposed by contemporaneous and ulterior narrative, poetic and dramatic works? Through what forms have metropolitan writers ‘orientalized’ the French colonies and their inhabitants, and how has Francophone literature countered or re-appropriated their perspectives and aesthetics? In what ways has literary writing played a role in the First and/or Second World Wars as a tool of propaganda, Résistance, or commemoration? Which critical thinkers and narratives have actively contributed to the wars of decolonization and their memory, and how? In the period of the ‘extrême contemporain’, how have writers engaged with ‘new’ (or new-looking) forms of violence, such as social déclassement—resulting from the joblessness and poverty due to deindustrialization and deregulated capitalism—as well as forced migration, the sex industry, or contemporary terrorisms?

3. Examination: Method of Assessment C (2, with one compulsory commentary question)

4. Introductory Reading

Advanced French Translation: Theory and Practice

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**
(ii) GENERAL SUBJECT

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. **Examination: Method of Assessment C (1).**
On Friday of week 5 in Hilary term, a list of exam questions are made public. 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. **Select Bibliography**
André Bazin: *What is cinema*, Berkeley 1967-1971
Peter E Bondanella: *A history of Italian cinema*, New York, 2009
David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson: *Film Art an Introduction*, Boston, 2004

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WHEN DRAWING UP THIS HANDBOOK WE HAVE TRIED TO BE AS ACCURATE AND CLEAR AS POSSIBLE. THE TEXTS PRESCRIBED FOR STUDY FOR INDIVIDUAL PAPERS ARE NOW LISTED IN THIS HANDBOOK.

THE EXAMINATION CONVENTIONS – A SEPARATE DOCUMENT – DETAIL THE STRUCTURE OF EACH EXAMINATION PAPER, INCLUDING RUBRICS. SEE: https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/humdiv.modlang:french:fhs


COURSES AND REGULATIONS ARE CONSTANTLY UNDER REVIEW, SO ALWAYS CHECK ALSO WITH YOUR COLLEGE TUTOR TO CONFIRM WHAT IS WRITTEN HERE AND IN THE EXAMINATION CONVENTIONS.

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.

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