

French Sub-Faculty Lecture List 'Blurbs' for HILARY TERM 2018

Please click the titles below for a brief description of the content of each of these lectures.

For lecture times please check the main online lecture list at:

<https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/access/content/group/modlang/general/lectures/index.html>

Always ensure to check the latest online lecture list on WebLearn for any changes to lectures during term time. Changes are shown in red.

- ❖ **History of French (IV, V)**
- ❖ **Language Variation & Change – Topics in French (V (IV, XII))**
- ❖ **Bérroul, *Le Roman de Tristan* (Paper IX (VI))**
- ❖ **Writing History in the Middle Ages (Paper VI)**
- ❖ **Medieval French Translation Classes (III, VI, IX, XII)**
- ❖ **Key Contexts for Reading Medieval French Literature (VI)**
- ❖ **Gender and Early Modern Writing**
- ❖ **Renaissance French Poetry (VII, XII)**
- ❖ **Racine Commentaries (X, VII)**
- ❖ **Molière (X, VII)**
- ❖ **Molière Commentaries**
- ❖ **Crises in Lyric and Form in Nineteenth-Century Poetry**
- ❖ **Rimbaud**
- ❖ **Stendhal (VIII, XI)**
- ❖ **Camus (VIII, XII Francophone Lit)**
- ❖ **Writing Killing (VIII, XII Francophone Lit., and XII French Poetry from Surrealism to the Present)**
- ❖ **Rupture and Reformulation: Twentieth-Century Experiments in Poetry and Prose (VIII)**

History of French (IV, V) / Dr Wolfe

In this course of lectures, we'll consider a number of major topics within the history of French, spanning phonology, morphology and syntax. These lectures provide essential preparation for those taking FHS Paper IV as well as additional material for those taking V.

Language Variation & Change – Topics in French (V (IV, XII)) / Dr Temple

These lectures provide a broad view of Language Variation in French as applied to French. After examining some general principles and constructs of LVC, we'll explore studies of variation at different levels of the language and how they can inform not only our understanding of the sociolinguistic situation of Modern French but also provide insights into linguistic structure. Mainly relevant to Paper V, but also tangentially to Paper IV (and to Paper XII Sociolinguistics, since we'll be covering some general sociolinguistic theory).

Bérroul, *Le Roman de Tristan* (Paper IX (VI)) / Prof. Marnette

Bérroul's *Tristan* tells the immortal story of doomed adulterous love in a narrative of bewitching subtlety. In this eight-lecture course, we will explore various themes at work in this legendary medieval poem, such as courtly love, feudalism, Christian ethic and the meaning of sin. A close textual analysis will enable us to explore the different ways in which the narrator is presented, to evaluate his relationship with the author, and to identify the - often multiple - point(s) of view through which the content of story world is filtered : those of the narrator, characters, or even at times the implied listeners/readers. We will also discuss the issue of genre classification.

Writing History in the Middle Ages (Paper VI) / Prof. Marnette

This lecture course will study several literary genres that purported to be "historical" (i.e. chansons de geste, prose romances, prose chronicles) and will analyze their differences, both in form and content. The course will also focus on specific medieval historians such as Clari, Villehardouin, Joinville, Froissart and Commynes. This lecture course is geared towards students taking paper VI (both Old French and Middle French periods) and is of interest for students taking paper XII (French Historical Writing to 1515).

Medieval French Translation Classes (III, VI, IX, XII) / Dr Burrows

These classes are primarily intended for French Sole students preparing the pre-modern translation paper (Paper III), but any students taking other medieval French papers are most welcome to attend. The main focus will be on improving comprehension and accuracy through practical engagement with the difficulties (primarily grammatical and orthographical) that the texts raise, thus complementing Dr Marnette's podcasts on Reading Old French (available on WebLearn). The passages on which we shall be working, as well as various supporting materials, will be available via the Medieval French WebLearn site.

Key Contexts for Reading Medieval French Literature (VI) / Ms Cooper

This mini-series is designed as a follow on from Dr Burrows' series, 'Key Concepts in Medieval French Literature'. Designed with Paper VI in mind, it will also be of interest to those taking (or thinking of taking) Paper IX. Over the course of four lectures, we will explore together some of the key contexts that shaped medieval French literature. These concern both the context within which the works were produced (including the impact of scholastic or of secular environments), and will introduce key medieval reading practices such as exegesis. Students will gain an understanding of the broad historical settings, such as the key political and historical events that were taking place, and of how they

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shaped contemporary literature. Together, we will think about who would have read the texts you will be studying, and *how* that reading would have taken place. A key feature of the lecture series will be to consider how our experience of reading modern printed editions differs from that of contemporary readers; it will give students the basic tools needed to understand the cultural and manuscript context of the works they choose to study.

Gender and Early Modern Writing / Prof. Ibbett

Four This set of lectures addresses the category of gender as it was explored in writing from 1550-1700, mostly but not exclusively by women, across genres (poetry, fiction, philosophy, travel writing). How did writers draw on literary genres to think about gender, and how did discussions of gender inflect and redraft early modern philosophical discussions? How did intellectual women make their voices heard in the marketplace, and what new sorts of genres and networks did their work bring about? How does paying attention to gender open up other topics across the period?

1. Introduction/Defending Women 2. Lyric voice and readership – Labé, Aubespine, the des Roches 3. Working writers –Marie de Gournay 4. Marriage – Montpensier 5. Uses of fiction – Scudéry 6. Philosophical exchange – Scudéry 7. Politics of freedom - Suchon, 8. Masculinities

Renaissance French Poetry (VII, XII) / Prof. Worth

Four lectures examining some of the range of poetry written in Renaissance France (from Clément Marot to Agrippa D'Aubigné). The course is relevant for Paper VII and Paper XII. The lectures will not assume prior knowledge of any particular poet; they will range across court and popular poetry, and short and longer forms (sonnet to epic). The themes treated will include: the interplay between poetic theories and practice; imitation, inspiration and poetic identity; gender; poetry as a vehicle for political and religious polemic.

Racine Commentaries (X, VII) / Dr Goodman

Each lecture will address one feature you might consider in a textual commentary (with examples from a variety of texts), before giving more a sustained example of a commentary on a longer passage.

Week 5: Versification / Bajazet extract

Week 6: Rhetorical structures / Iphigénie extract

Week 7: Rhetorical tropes / Bérénice extract

Week 8: Aural and visual effects / Athalie extract

The lectures are particularly suitable for students studying Racine as a special author for Paper X, but will also be useful for those studying seventeenth-century tragedy for Paper VII.

Molière (X, VII) / Dr Goodman

These lectures are particularly suitable for students studying Molière as a special author for Paper X, but they will also be useful for those studying seventeenth-century theatrical topics for Paper VII. The sessions will cover:

1. Background and context
2. Correction and Controversy
3. Laughter and Performance
4. Truth and Pleasure

Molière Commentaries / Prof. Ibbett

These sessions will be run seminar-style. 1. *École des Femmes* 2. *Tartuffe*. 3. *Dom Juan*
4. *Le Misanthrope*

Crises in Lyric and Form in Nineteenth-Century Poetry / Prof. Whidden

These lectures offer a glimpse into different aspects of the crisis of the lyric subject in French poetry of the long nineteenth century. Under pressures of accelerated industrialisation and booming readership, questions about poetry – what it was supposed to do, to whom it was addressed, and who had a right to speak – were no longer answered so easily. Fallen dominant presences gave way to vacuums that gave access to a number of new voices and new forms. The first will trace the advent of romanticism and transition to Parnassian poetry (Lamartine, Desbordes-Valmore, Gautier, Banville, Leconte de Lisle). The next two will focus more on formal elements of versification: the breakdown of French verse and the advent of prose poetry and free verse (Bertrand, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Verlaine). The final one will consider poetic experimentation in form and voice that paved the way for the new century (Krysinska, Laforgue, Kahn, Mallarmé).

Rimbaud / Prof. Whidden

By the age of twenty-one, Arthur Rimbaud had already written some of the most enduring poems in French, including the first two poems in free verse. During the course of his explosive itinerary, he dismantled verse poetry piece-by-piece, undermining rhyme and metre; picked up where Baudelaire's synaesthesia had left off and pushed the senses to their limits; and tore apart lyric voice and perspective. By retracing this remarkable journey, these lectures will retrace the history of poetic voice and form during the second half of the nineteenth century and consider questions fundamental to the nature of poetry.

Lectures:

1. Early verse (1869-70)
2. The *Lettres du voyant* and poetry of 1871
3. Verse-things fall apart: *Derniers vers*
4. *Une saison en enfer*
5. *Illuminations* and after

Stendhal (VIII, XI) / Dr Lunn-Rockliffe

These lectures offer a survey of the main issues in Stendhal's works, including history, Realism, and the importance of the self-conscious narrator. Particular emphasis will be given to the key novels *Le Rouge et Le Noir* and *La Chartreuse de Parme*, but these will be situated in relation to Stendhal's other writings.

Camus (VIII, XII Francophone Lit) / Prof. Morisi

One of the major writers and thinkers of the 20th century, Albert Camus was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1957 in recognition of "his important literary production, which with clear-sighted earnestness illuminates the problems of the human conscience in our times." This lecture series sets out to consider his oeuvre as a whole without reducing it to the best-seller *L'Étranger* or to erroneous assumptions such as his classification as an existentialist. His relationship to the history and politics of his time, his conception of art, as well as the various genres and poetics he embraced will be examined through some of his early writings, plays, journalism, short stories, and novels.

This sequence will be of use to the preparation of Paper VIII and Paper XII (Francophone Literature). Two additional lectures will complement it in Trinity Term.

1. Life, Works, Art: l'écrivain *embarqué*
2. Love of Life and the Absurd: Early Works
(*L'Envers et l'endroit*, *L'Étranger*, *Noces*)
3. Stories of Revolt
(*La Peste* and/or *L'État de siège*)
4. Always Algeria
("Misère de la Kabylie," "L'Hôte" in *L'Exil et le royaume*)

Writing Killing (VIII, XII Francophone Lit., and XII French Poetry from Surrealism to the Present) / Prof. Morisi

Be it in the form of crimes of passion, a legal State practice, war, or clandestine political violence, killing pervades French and Francophone modern and contemporary history. Qualitatively and quantitatively, it can be said to reach new, and sinister, heights, from the long nineteenth century up to today. Accordingly, murder in its various guises haunts the French and Francophone imaginary. From the iconic guillotine of the French Revolution, to the mass graves of the two World Wars and the particular case of the French Collaboration, the massacres of the wars of decolonization, to contemporary terrorisms, this sequence of lectures will consider how major writers have represented and reflected on taking life away, at both the individual and the collective levels. How do their works conceive killing – as a crime, a punishment, a transgression, a system, a science, an art, an abstraction? What tools and forms do they use to evoke it? For what reasons do their writings engage with the murderous realities – or fictions - of their times? With what limits is their art confronted in portraying killing? The lectures will focus on capital punishment, Resistance during WWII, and Revolutionary and Islamist terrorisms. Authors will include some - or all, time permitting - of the following: Hugo, Zola, WWII poets (Desnos, Char, Aragon, Éluard), Malraux, Camus, Sansal, Daoud.

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These lectures will be of use to the preparation of Paper VIII, Paper XII (Francophone Literature) and Paper XII (French Poetry from Surrealism to the Present).

Rupture and Reformulation: Twentieth-Century Experiments in Poetry and Prose (VIII) / Dr McLaughlin

This lecture series examines a series of formally innovative twentieth-century writing techniques that challenge existing conceptions of subjective, social, and worldly experience. The lectures examine texts in poetry and prose by Apollinaire, Breton, Ponge, Jaccottet, Bancquart, and Bonnefoy. Each lecture is focused on a key twentieth-century movement: Modernism, Surrealism, Existentialism/Materialism, the everyday, women's writing, and ecocriticism. This is a useful survey course for any student who is studying twentieth-century topics for Paper VIII or more specialist papers.