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.*

- Perspectives on the French Language (IV, V)
- French Morphology and Syntax (IV, V)
- Villon (VI, IX)
- Translating Old French Texts (IX +XII))
- Writing Commentaries on Old French Texts (IX +XII))
- Narrative Voices in Medieval French Texts (VI)
- Key Concepts in Medieval French Literature (VI, IX, XII)
- Early Modern Theatrical Quarrels (VII, VIII, X)
- Montaigne (VII, X)
- Pascal (VII, X)
- Racine (VII, X)
- Eighteenth-century theatre (VII, VIII, X)
- The Novel in the long 18th Century
- Romanticism: Writing and Revolution (VIII, XII)
- Introduction to the Nineteenth Century (VIII, XI)
- Balzac
- Flaubert (VIII, XI)
- Stéphane Mallarmé
- Gide (VIII, XI)
- Sartre (XI, VI, VII, VIII)
- Beckett (XI, VIII)
- Barthes: towards post-structuralism (XI)
- Assia Djebar (XI, VIII)
- Poetry/Poetics/Poethics (VIII & XII (the first two lectures are also relevant to XI))
French Sub-Faculty Lecture List ‘Blurbs’ for MICHAELMAS TERM 2017

- Rupture and Reformulation: Twentieth-Century Experiments in Poetry and Prose (VIII)
- 20th/21st-Century Autobiography (XII, VIII)
- Littérature et arts visuels du premier XXe siècle : d’Apollinaire au surréalisme
- Literature and the Visual Arts in France (XII)
- French Women’s Writing (XII, VIII)
- Colonialism and Postcolonialism in French Literature and Thought (VIII, XII)
- Literary Theory and Critical Thought

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Perspectives on the French Language (IV, V) / Dr Temple
This course is relevant to Papers IV and V. It outlines the development of different perspectives on the French language tracing the tension between French as a heterogeneous or homogeneous object from its origins to the present. We shall examine the external history of French, the various perspectives of descriptive and prescriptive grammarians since the sixteenth century and the contrasting approaches of twentieth- and twenty-first-century linguistics.

French Morphology and Syntax (IV, V) / Dr Wolfe
In this series of lectures, we will explore the grammatical structure of both Standard French and its regional varieties. Topics covered will include gender, number, verb paradigms and word order. Some of the lectures will be supplemented with practical classes on syntactic tree drawing, which will be useful for both those taking French V and IV.

Villon (VI, IX) / Dr Swift
This lecture course, pertinent primarily to Papers VI and IX, will explore the Testament and Poésies diverses of late-medieval French literature’s enigmatic rogue figure, François Villon. His work is difficult to read -- bristling with personality, whilst preventing us from grasping a clear subjectivity; flaunting features of orality and yet grounded in a very self-conscious written artefact; projecting an array of different voices entertaining slippery relationships with the poetic I; and abounding in irony. Villon uses the poetic forms and techniques of high court poetry to lift the lid on the underbelly of urban Parisian life -- a seductive and vicious world of wine, song, sex and violence. We shall explore the structuring narrative principles of the Testament, the treatment of key themes of love and death, and the literary techniques that make his work at once so compelling and so complex.
1. Introduction: how to read Villon?
2. Theatricality of the Testament: Villon’s costume changes
3. Theatricality of the Testament: interacting voices
4. Villon and love: ‘en amours mourut martir’?
5. Villon and death: ‘qui meurt a ses loix de tout dire’
6. Debating authority: written and oral rhetoric
7. Intertextuality and Villon’s contemporary context
8. *Poésies diverses* and conclusions: ‘plus ne t’en dis’

**Translating Old French Texts (IX (+XII)) / Prof. Marnette**
This lecture course is aimed at students taking paper IX and/or some paper XII. We will translate together passages of the texts set for paper IX as well as a few passages of unseen texts. The first two lectures deal with Old French (i.e. *La Chanson de Roland*, Béroul's *Tristran* and others) and the third one with Middle French (i.e. Villon and others). Before attending the lecture course, it is advisable to watch the series of video podcasts by Dr Marnette covering a range of grammatical questions and other issues relating to the study of Old French (available on WebLearn).

**Writing Commentaries on Old French Texts (IX (+XII)) / Prof. Marnette**
This lecture course is aimed at students taking paper IX and/or papers XII dealing with Medieval French. The lectures outline strategies for writing literary commentaries about medieval French texts and offer specific examples of commentaries based on previous exam questions.

**Narrative Voices in Medieval French Texts (VI) / Prof. Marnette**
This lecture course reflects on the usefulness and the relevance of our modern notions of "author" and "narrator" for the study of medieval texts. For our discussion, we will adopt a stylistic approach of several medieval literary genres (chansons de geste, verse romances, lais, prose romances) and we will envisage questions that are specific to Old French literature such as the problem of textual origin, the evolution from oral performance to literary writing, the classification of literary genres, the position of the narrator, the - often multiple - point(s) of view through which the content of story worlds is filtered, the transposition from verse to prose, etc. This lecture course will be geared towards students taking paper VI (early period: 11th -13th centuries).

**Key Concepts in Medieval French Literature (VI, IX, XII) / Dr Burrows**
Reading Medieval French literature entails dealing with a number of questions not typically encountered in the study of texts from other periods. What is meant by oral composition, oral performance, and aural reception, and how may these concepts affect our appreciation of written texts? Who precisely were clerics, and how can an understanding of their education and culture enhance our understanding of the literature of the period? What is the significance of phenomena such as *mouvance* and *remaniement* in the process of textual transmission? How useful is the idea of genre in the treatment of texts written at this time? This series of lectures will attempt to address these and other key questions that students inevitably face when tackling Medieval French literature.
Early Modern Theatrical Quarrels (VII, VIII, X) / Dr Goodman
Looking In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France, the theatre was far more than a form of entertainment. It was also a place of social, artistic and intellectual encounter, with close links to political power structures. This public space, which brought together different social classes, was the forum in which many of the important debates of the day played out, a tool for beginning or advancing disputes, and the subject of several quarrels in its own right. This lecture series examines some of the most significant theatrical quarrels of the Ancien régime: two lectures consider subjects of dispute across the two centuries, whilst two lectures take a more detailed look at specific quarrels, which are nonetheless symptomatic of wider controversies. These lectures – which will also help you to think more generally about the theme of the quarrel – are particularly suitable for students studying Paper VII, but will also be relevant to students studying eighteenth-century elements of Paper VIII, and Racine, Molière, Diderot and Voltaire for Paper X.

Lecture 1 – Morality, Censorship and the Passions
Lecture 2 – The Querelle du Cid
Lecture 3 – Institutions and Nations
Lecture 4 – Palissot and the Philosophes

Montaigne (VII, X) / Prof. Magnien
These lectures will be held in French.

Pascal (VII, X) / Dr Patterson
Four lectures on Blaise Pascal, exploring principally his Pensées. The lectures are designed to provide foundational intellectual and theological background to studying the Pensées, as well as preliminary considerations of their literary form. Parallels will be drawn with Pascal’s other works (the Lettres provinciales and the Opuscules), and with other period figures such as Montaigne and Descartes.

Racine (VII, X) / Dr Hawcroft
This course of four lectures is aimed at second-years and finalists preparing Racine for Papers VII and/or X. The first two lectures are on poetics and consider the genre of tragedy, plot construction, character, and the use of sources. The second two lectures are on rhetoric and consider the nature of theatrical dialogue, the use of rhetorical figures, verse form, and performance.

Eighteenth-century theatre (VII, VIII, X) / Dr Goodman
This lecture series will cover some of the main authors of eighteenth-century theatre, considering not only their best-known plays, but also their theoretical writings, their lesser-known texts, and their careers within the literary field more broadly. It will be most suitable for students studying Papers VII and VIII, and to students studying Diderot and Voltaire for Paper X.

Lecture 1 – Marivaux
Lecture 2 – Voltaire
Lecture 3 – Diderot
Lecture 4 – Beaumarchais

The Novel in the long 18th Century / Prof. Seth
The course on the novel in the long 18th-century will deal with many aspects of the genre, from formal questions to ideas of verisimilitude, the relationship to history etc. These lectures will be given in French.

Romanticism: Writing and Revolution (VIII, XII) / Dr Warman & others
This course will provide valuable background for students of paper VIII and will be essential for anyone taking the paper XII on Romanticism. Each lecture will introduce a key theme and set the literary debates of the period in their wider context. Authors covered will include, amongst others, Chateaubriand, Staël, Hugo, Lamartine, Nodier, Gautier, Sand.
1. Origins, Conceptions, and Definitions (Dr Warman)
2. History and Politics (Dr Counter)
3. 'Idéologie' and Thought (Dr Warman)
4. Drama (Dr Nye)
5. Poetry and Nature (Dr Lunn-Rockliffe)
6. Romantic Sexualities (Dr Counter)
7. Romantic Geographies (Dr Yee)
8. Gothic and Dreams (Prof. Seth)

Introduction to the Nineteenth Century (VIII, XI) / Dr Lunn-Rockliffe
This course will explore the changing conceptions of the writer in nineteenth-century France. It will chart the key political and cultural changes of the period and situate key authors in relation to this wider context, considering in particular the tensions between those who argued that art had a social purpose and those who celebrated the artist as a disinterested craftsman. Beginning with the aftermath of the Revolution and writings by Chateaubriand and Staël, it will conclude with Decadence and the fin-de-siècle. Topics covered will include the confessional novel, sentimental fiction, fantastic stories, Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, and Symbolism. While these terms were often at the heart of aesthetic debates, which will themselves be examined, the aim throughout will be to think critically about labels, genres, movements and the canon itself.

Balzac / Dr Counter
The nineteenth century, as we know it, is largely the invention of Balzac,’ wrote Oscar Wilde. And sure enough, few writers have influenced not just the literature of their age, but future generations’ understanding of that age, as much as Honoré de Balzac, whose sprawling universe of interconnected fictions, La Comédie humaine, has often been viewed as a near-exhaustive encyclopaedia of nineteenth-century France’s manners, obsessions, neuroses, and fantasies—not to mention its material culture and economic workings. Hailed by later nineteenth-century novelists as the man who gave this upstart genre its literary dignity, rejected just as eagerly by virtually every modernist and postmodernist writer as emblematic of complacent bourgeois literary values, Balzac is essential to any understanding of European literary history in general, and of the novel in particular. This short course of four lectures, aimed at those preparing Paper VIII as much
as at those contemplating the Balzac Paper XII, introduces students to Balzac’s unique aesthetic vision and key thematic preoccupations, and outlines the dominant positions within criticism.

**Flaubert (VIII, XI) / Dr Yee**
These lectures aim to help students approach Flaubert’s most well-known texts in the context of his work more generally, concentrating on *Madame Bovary, L’Éducation sentimentale* of 1869, and the *Trois contes*. There will also be some discussion of Flaubert’s style which will be of use for close reading or commentary work as well as essays.

**Stéphane Mallarmé / Prof. Lübecker**
These four lectures will take us through key texts in Stéphane Mallarmé’s work, place this work in its historical and intellectual context, consider why Mallarmé became one the most influential French authors in the 20\(^{th}\) century, and reflect on how Mallarmé’s writings speak to the contemporary situation. The lectures begin in week 2 and focus on the following topics: Week 2: The Crisis (Ontology); Week 3: The Marvellous Crisis (Poetics); Week 4: Mallarmé as a Cultural Historian; Week 5: Mallarmé in the 20\(^{th}\) and 21\(^{st}\) century. (Please consult WebLearn for more detailed information about the lectures).

**Gide (VIII, XI) / Dr Ferguson**
These lectures are primarily addressed to those studying André Gide as a special author for Paper XI, and those preparing for the modern period paper (Paper VIII). The lectures provide an overview of Gide’s work, following its development in roughly chronological order. Commentary passages will also be discussed, and it would be useful if students could read the passages for lectures 2 to 4 (on the handouts provided in lecture 1).

**Sartre (XI, VI, VII, VIII) / Dr Kemp**
These lectures are designed to be useful to those studying Sartre as a prescribed author for Paper XI, as well as those exploring his work for other courses. The four lectures will focus in turn on *Les Mouches, Les Séquestrés d’Altona, La Nausée* and *Les Mots*.

**Beckett (XI, VIII) / Prof. Maclachlan**
These lectures are designed for those taking Beckett as a ‘prescribed author’ for Paper XI (an option only available to current 2\(^{nd}\) Years), and for those studying his work in the context of Paper VIII:
Week 5: *Je ne peux pas continuer. Je vais continuer*. Narration in the Trilogy (*Molloy, Malone meurt, L’Innommable*)
Week 6: Habitable Spaces: Theatrical experiment from *Fin de partie* to *La dernière bande*
Week 7: Lessness: Minimalist aesthetics from *Têtes-mortes* to *Mal vu mal dit*
Week 8: *Comment dire?* Language, voice and style (including guidance on commentaries)

**Barthes: towards post-structuralism (XI) / Dr Bourne-Taylor**
1. *L’Empire des signes*
2. *Le Plaisir du texte*
3. *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes*
4. *La chambre claire*

**Assia Djebar (XI, VIII) / Prof. Morisi & Prof. Hiddleston**
These lectures work through the four set texts that are Djebar’s key works to offer both a broad sense of her historical significance and a detailed understanding of her aesthetics. The first two lectures on the collection of short stories *Femmes d’Alger dans leur appartement* and the essay *Le Blanc de l’Algérie* examine the intersections of poetics and politics. Lecture One sheds light on Djebar’s representation of, and finding a language for, Algerian women as subjects or actors of Orientalism, colonialism, the War of Independence, and Muslim patriarchy, while Lecture Two turns to her reflection on and performative support for the formation and appropriation of memory and national identity through the deaths of numerous Algerian intellectuals during—and before—the so-called *décennie noire* of the 1990s. The last two lectures examine Djebar’s two ‘autobiographical’ works, *L’Amour, la fantasia* and *Nulle part dans la maison de mon père*, and reflect both on the challenges of autobiographical writing for Djebar and on the broader relationships between the personal, the political, and the historical in her work. Although none of the lectures are devoted exclusively to commentary writing, they will all combine thematic analysis with close textual reading, and will usually include discussion of a particular passage during the last part of the lecture.

**Poetry/Poetics/Poethics (VIII & XII (the first two lectures are also relevant to XI)) / Dr Bourne-Taylor**
A panorama of modern & contemporary poetry/poetics from Baudelaire to Michel Deguy. The first two lectures are fairly general, harking back to Baudelaire, Rimbaud and Mallarmé, and covering the 20thC; the third one is devoted to Bonnefoy, the fourth one to Deguy. Also useful for the MSt The Power of Literature (Modern & Post-Modern Poetry).

**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.

**20th/21st-Century Autobiography (XII, VIII) / Prof. Killeen, Prof. Maclachlan, and Dr Ferguson**
These lectures, intended for those studying the Paper XII on Autobiography or autobiographical writing in the context of Paper VIII, or graduates taking the MSt special
subject on Life Writing, will attempt to broach general issues in the theory and practice of autobiography by means of a series of individual case studies:

Week 1: The limits of a life – Leiris, *L’Age d’homme* [IM]
Week 2: The puzzle of identity – Perec, *W ou le souvenir d’enfance* [MCK]
Week 3: On fiction, imposture and ventriloquism – Gary/Ajar, *Pseudo* [MCK]
Week 4: Autobiography encounters the *Nouveau roman* – Sarraute, *Enfance* [MCK]
Week 5: *Autofiction or roman faux* – Guibert, *A l’ami qui ne m’a pas sauvé la vie* [SF]

**Littérature et arts visuels du premier XXe siècle : d’Apollinaire au surréalisme** (VIII, XII – Visual Arts) / Prof. Campa

These lectures will be held in French.

Le cours se compose en diptyque. La première séance proposera un panorama général des liens qu'entretiennent les écrivains et les artistes, la littérature et les arts visuels, dans la période concernée. Il s'intéressera à l'esthétique des avant-gardes, aux collaborations interartistiques, ainsi qu'aux questions génériques et sémiologiques (livres illustrées, œuvres hybrides, dessins d'écrivains, textes d'artistes, critique d'art, etc.)
La seconde séance étudiera le thème chez deux auteurs : Guillaume Apollinaire et André Breton, à travers leurs œuvres poétiques, critiques et plastiques.

**Literature and the Visual Arts in France (XII) / Prof. Williams & Others**

Week 1 Introduction (Dr Swift)
Week 2. Medieval (Dr Swift)
Week 3. Renaissance (Prof. Williams)
Week 4. Classicism and Baroque (Prof. Williams)
Week 5. The Salon (Prof. Seth)
Week 6. Romanticism and Baudelaire (Dr Lunn-Rockliffe)
Week 7. From Realism to Symbolism (Dr Yee)
Week 8. Novels with Artist as Hero (Ms Skokowski)

**French Women’s Writing (XII, VIII) / Dr Kemp & others**

A series of eight lectures on French women’s writing from the medieval period to the present day, for those taking or considering the Paper XII Special Subject in French Women’s Writing, and those studying women’s writing for a period paper or elsewhere on the course.

1. Marie-Chantal Killeen: ‘A Short Introduction to Feminist Criticism’
2. Catriona Seth: ‘Je lis la Princesse de Clèves’
4. Chimène Bateman: Gender Trouble: Women Writers and Performative Language (Christine de Pizan, Marguerite de Navarre)
5. Caroline Warman: Women’s Writing in the 18th and 19th Centuries: historical and cultural context
6. Catriona Seth: Women and Revolution
7. Seth Whidden: French Women’s Poetry in the Nineteenth Century
8. Simon Kemp: Autobiography and Contemporary French Women’s Writing

Colonialism and Postcolonialism in French Literature and Thought (VIII, XII) / Prof. Hiddleston & Ms Reza
These lectures explore five key figures in twentieth-century literature and thought, who reflected in challenging ways of France’s relationship with its colonies: Camus, Sartre, Fanon, Césaire and Sembène. The series starts with Camus, famous for his association with ‘existentialism’, but who lived in Algeria and wrote at length about the troubled period during which Algeria sought independence from France. Sartre too wrote in bold and moving ways about the difficulties of this period, though his stance was far more militant than that of Camus. The last three lectures cover major anticolonial thinkers, including the Martinican psychiatrist Frantz Fanon, who wrote a devastating critique of the violence of colonial and racist thinking. We will also be discussing Césaire’s complex political and cultural thinking beyond the Cahier d’un retour au pays natal, as well as the Senegalese writer and film director Ousmane Sembène, who also combined his literary and cultural activity with astute and challenging political critique. The course as a whole tackles one of the most difficult and troubling moments in French twentieth-century history, one that divided intellectuals and whose legacy still haunts the Republic and its ongoing cultural and political tensions today.
1. Camus
2. Sartre
3. Fanon
4. Cesaire
5. Sembene

Literary Theory and Critical Thought / Profs. Maclachlan, Hiddleston, Swift, Killeen and Lübecker
Week 1+2: Texts (Prof. Maclachlan)
Week 3+4: Identities (Dr Swift)
Week 5: Feminist Matters (Prof. Killeen)
Week 6+7: The Nonhuman Turn (Prof. Lubecker)
Week 8: Worlds (Prof. Hiddleston)