



Lectureship in French Language

Further Particulars

St. John's College invites applications for a 1.0 FTE Lectureship in French Language. The appointment is available from 1st October 2025.

This is a permanent position without membership to Governing Body; the permanency of the post is subject to evidence of satisfactory teaching, administration and research after the initial period of 2 years.

About the College

Established in 1555 as a constituent college of the University of Oxford, St John's College fosters excellence in education and research. It is one of the largest among Oxford Colleges and nearly every subject studied at the University has its representation. Today, St John's is home to approximately 390 undergraduates, 250 graduate students, 100 fellows and 25 College lecturers. A vibrant international community, it fosters intellectual rigour, creativity, and independence in its students, teachers, and researchers. The College supports a range of research activities including discussions, seminars, workshops, public lectures and visiting scholar schemes, as well as the Research Centre, which particularly emphasizes interdisciplinary approaches. While scholarly publication is naturally at the heart of our research endeavours, the fellowship is also committed to informing policy and public debate, and to teaching that is informed by research findings.

Further information about the College is available at <http://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk>

French Language at St John's

St John's admits around five to seven undergraduates in French each year to read the four-year Modern Languages course, including joint schools involving Classics, Modern History, English, Philosophy and Middle Eastern Languages.

The successful candidate will join a dynamic Modern Languages team in the College including Official Fellows in French (prof. Nikolaj Lübecker) and German (Professor Barry Murnane), a lecturer in Early Modern French Literature, a specialist language teacher in German, as well College Lecturers in French Linguistics, Russian, Spanish, Italian and German. The post offers the opportunity to develop skills in scholarship, teaching and academic administration in a supportive environment.

Main duties and responsibilities

The successful candidate will be required:

- i. to provide up to an average of 12 hours of teaching in French during each week of full term, as directed by the Senior Tutor and Tutor in French. This will include the teaching of all French language papers (oral and written) for the first-year course (papers I and II) and the final honours school (papers I, II, III and oral examination). **(see below Handbooks for details)**
- ii. to share pastoral duties and participate in the organisation of teaching in French in the College as required, contributing to the delivery of the subject and needs of the College as directed by the Senior Tutor and subject tutor(s).
- iii. to set (and mark) start of term collections as required;
- iv. to run or assist in the undergraduate admissions process in College, if required;
- v. to contribute as appropriate to the College's access and outreach initiatives.

Selection criteria

The appointee will be able to demonstrate:

- i. native-level proficiency in French and an ability to provide a high standard of teaching to very able undergraduates;
- ii. the ability to undertake pastoral responsibilities for undergraduate students, and assist as required with the running of the subject in College;
- iii. good communication skills and evidence of the sensitivity required to deal effectively with pastoral duties;
- iv. willingness to take part in Open Days, schools visits and other access and outreach activities.

Preference may be given to candidates with a PhD-degree in Literature or Foreign Language Acquisition. The successful candidate will be given the possibility to engage in scholarship and professional development.

The appointment to the Lectureship will be for two years in the first instance, renewable subject to satisfactory performance of the specific duties.

Remuneration and benefits

The salary will be paid at the equivalent of University grade 6.1 -7.1 currently £34,982 - £38,674 per annum and is dependent on experience and qualifications.

Salaries are paid monthly in arrears and are subject to annual review in line with increases in academic salary scales as agreed by the College's Governing Body. The appointee will automatically be enrolled in the Universities Superannuation Scheme. Further details can be found here - [USS](#).

There is a teaching and scholarship allowance of £1500/year during the period of appointment. There is also an annual entertainment allowance of £358.

The postholder will hold Common Table dining privileges as determined from time to time by the Governing Body as being appropriate for College Lecturers. At present, this means that the postholder will have rights to lunches and dinners without charge during those weeks of the year when the Senior Common Room kitchen is open

A teaching room, which may be shared, may be provided, subject to availability. The College will provide a computer if needed. There is no entitlement to sabbatical leave.

There is no entitlement to sabbatical leave.

Application procedure

There is no application form. Candidates should email a covering letter of no more than two pages and a curriculum vitae with details of qualifications and experience to academic.vacancies@sjc.ox.ac.uk. Applications should be in the form of a single PDF file.

Candidates must also provide the names of two academic referees who should be asked to email their references to the same address.

Both applications and references should reach the College no later than **12pm on 2nd April 2025**. Late applications will not be accepted.

Candidates are encouraged to include a completed equal opportunity monitoring form with their application. Your information will not form part of the selection process and will not be disclosed to the selection panel. Please send this electronically as a separate PDF document to academic.vacancies@sjc.ox.ac.uk.

Right to work in the UK

The appointment will be subject to the provision of proof of the right to work in the UK. The role may meet the requirements to obtain a Skilled Worker visa for new entrants to the UK. This is subject to the eligibility criteria being met for the required visa route. In particular, you must have sufficient English language skills (evidenced by having passed a secure English Language Test at CEFR B1 or above, *or* coming from a majority English-speaking country, *or* having taken a degree taught in English).

Equal Opportunities

St John's College is an Equal Opportunities Employer. Further information can be obtained on the College website at: <https://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk/discover/about-college/legal/college-policies/>

Applications for this post are particularly welcome from candidates who are women, have a disability and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, who are under-represented in academic posts in Oxford.



FACULTY OF
**MEDIEVAL
AND
MODERN
LANGUAGES**

Information for the Preliminary (Prelim) course in

FRENCH

2024/25

This handbook gives subject-specific information for your Prelim course in French. For general information about your studies and the faculty, please consult the Faculty's

[Undergraduate Course Handbook](#)

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SUB-FACULTY TEACHING STAFF

The Sub-Faculty of French is part of the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages. For a complete list of members, please see:

<http://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/people/french>

On that page you can see the list ordered in different ways. The first is by 'post': here you will see whether a member is a 'postholder' in the Sub-Faculty as well as a college tutor, or whether they work only for a specific college or colleges. Most of your lectures will be given by 'postholders'. You can also choose to see the list in alphabetical order by surname, or by the period of teaching and research specialisation. You may have a few tutorials outside your college during your first year. In the second and final year most students taking French will be taught by tutors from more than one college.

THE PRELIM COURSE

The first year of the French course is designed to effect a transition from the kind of work you have done at school to the kind of work you will move on to when you start preparing for the Honour School in your second year. Your language skills will be consolidated and improved, and you will be introduced to some techniques of literary study. The examination is taken at, or just after, the end of Trinity Term and consists of four papers. If you are studying French Sole, the examination is taken at the same time, but you will have three further papers.

Language Teaching

French language teaching is provided mostly by your college, but at some stage in the year the Senior Lecturer in French, Michaël Abecassis, typically organises a series of classes open to students from any college, if they feel that their French grammar needs further attention (see below). Classes in college will give you practice in all aspects of the work on which you will be examined, and will provide you with classes to improve your spoken French. Tutors will offer advice about the use of dictionaries and grammars.

The Senior Lecturer in French organises centralised grammar classes which are open to all students who feel they need extra help on top of their college classes. (Similar additional grammar classes are offered by graduate teaching assistants.) Further classes cover essay writing, and oral/aural skills. The Senior Lecturer in French offers advice throughout the year to newly-appointed lecteurs and lectrices, helps college language tutors to network effectively, organises and conducts intensive language-learning weekends for specialists and non-specialists, and plays an important part in reviewing and developing the syllabus for language teaching.

Language Examinations and Oral Requirement

PAPER I - French Grammar, Translation, and Summary

(3 hour in-person).

1. Grammar Test

10 short sentences to translate into French, testing common, not exceptional, points of French grammar such as those explained in R. Hawkins and R. Towell, *French Grammar and Usage*, 4th edn., 2015.

2. Prose Translation into French.

A passage of 150-200 words of English (post 1950) to be translated into French.

3. Summary

A passage of 500-600 words of French from a work of reflective, analytical or critical writing. To be summarised in French, using 150-180 words and bringing out clearly the writer's argument. Candidates must not simply reproduce the expression of the original passage.

PAPER IIA and IIB - Translation

(1½ each / 3 hours in total, in-person)

IIA Unprepared translation into English (90 minutes)

A passage of about 250 words of French, taken from a post-1900 creative or discursive text testing accuracy in negotiating common grammatical and syntactic structures and some appropriately challenging vocabulary, but also requiring imagination and fluency in English expression.

IIB Prepared translation into English from Prescribed Texts (90 minutes)

A passage of about 300 words from one of the three novels set for Paper IV, i.e., excluding the medieval text.

Oral

In order to pass the Preliminary Examination in French, candidates must present a certificate of attendance and active participation in oral classes. Candidates must attend and actively participate in no fewer than eight oral classes of at least one hour before the end of the fourth week of the Trinity Term of their first year. The classes will help with proper pronunciation and intonation, and include discussion in French of passages dealing with issues in contemporary French culture. Candidates are required to submit, via the Senior Tutor of their college or society, to the Undergraduate Studies Administrator, Modern Languages, Examinations Office, 41 Wellington Square, a certificate endorsed by the Senior Tutor, and their French tutor (the latter acting on behalf of the sub-faculty of French) stating that they have attended, and participated in, the required number of classes. Candidates who fail to satisfy this requirement for the June examination shall have their mark for the written paper in French language (French Paper I) reduced by ten per cent. Candidates for the September examination in French language who have not previously in that academic year satisfied the attendance requirement will be examined viva voce to demonstrate their competence in spoken French. Certification is required by noon on the Friday of 5th week of Trinity Term.

LITERATURE

Many students begin the course without having had the opportunity to undertake much formal study of French literature. Both literature papers require you to undertake a close reading in the original French of a range of literary texts selected from different periods and different genres so that you will gradually build up your reading speed and learn how to write critical commentaries and essays. This will provide a sure grounding for the literary study you will do from the second year onwards.

PAPER III - Short Texts

(Note that if you are doing French as part of the Joint School of European and Middle Eastern Languages, you do not take this paper)

This paper will introduce you to the techniques of close reading through the study of four short works. You will certainly need to show that you know the texts well by establishing the context of the passages, but the skill is to show that you can comment pertinently and in detail on the words and ideas in front of you. When commenting on texts written in verse, you are required to show an awareness of the author's use of versification.

- (i) Montaigne, 'Des Cannibales' from *Essais*, vol. 1 (recommended edition: *Essais*: 'Des cannibales' et 'Des coches', ed. by Tarpinian, Éditions Ellipses, 1994)
- (ii) Racine, *Phèdre* (recommended edition by Raymond Picard, Gallimard 'Folio', 2015)
- (iii) Verlaine, *Romances sans paroles* (recommended edition by Arnaud Bernadet, GF-Flammarion, 2018 [2012].
- (iv) NDiaye, *Papa doit manger* (recommended edition Éditions de Minuit, 2003)

This course is examined by 3 hour online open-book examination.

PAPER IV - French Narrative Fiction

This paper introduces you to four narrative texts written between the Middle Ages and the twentieth century:

- Anon, *La Chastelaine de Vergy*
- Laclos, *Les Liaisons dangereuses*
- Sand, *Indiana*
- Condé, *Traversée de la mangrove*

This paper will be examined by essay in the form of a 3-hour on-line open book examination. There will be a choice of two essay questions on each text, and you are required to answer three questions, each on a different text. You will need to show that you can construct a clear, relevant, and interestingly written argument, supported at every stage by detailed knowledge of the text. If your argument can be enhanced or sharpened by making comparisons between texts, you are positively encouraged to do so, though you are not penalised for not doing so.

Lectures, first introducing you to the study of literature, and subsequently turning to the four short texts, setting them in context and showing how passages from them might be commented on in detail, are provided in Michaelmas and Hilary Terms. There are also lectures introducing you to techniques of versification. In Hilary and Trinity Terms there are lectures on the longer narrative texts. Throughout the year you will be required to read and write about the prescribed texts for your tutor in college who will discuss your work with you in a series of tutorials or seminars. Lecturers will offer bibliographical advice, as will your tutors.

FRENCH SOLE PRELIM

If you are doing French 'Sole', in addition to the above papers you also take three further papers.

PAPER XI Introduction to French Film Studies

This paper will introduce you to four twentieth- and twenty-first century film directors. In your essay writing you will be able to engage with their ideas and with their particular way of realising them. The prescribed films are:

- Jean-Luc Godard: *Pierrot le fou* (1965)
- Maurice Pialat: *À nos amours* (1983)
- Claire Denis: *Beau travail* (1999)
- Céline Sciamma: *Portrait de la jeune fille en feu* (2019)

Course outline:

This paper aims to equip students with basic skills in film analysis. It is taught in two parts in Michaelmas Term.

The first part is a methodological one, consisting of four lectures devoted to four international films in Weeks 1-4. It presents the basic concepts of film analysis: montage, story, self-reference, and spectatorship. These international films are used simply as illustrations for the lectures and are not treated as set texts for examination purposes. The films are: Sergei Eisenstein: *Potemkin* (1925); Alfred Hitchcock: *39 Steps* (1935); Michaelangelo Antonioni (1967): *Blow-up*; Claire Denis: *Beau Travail* (1999).

The second part is a study of the four prescribed French films above, which illustrate these concepts in the context of French history and society. This part of the course is taught in seminars in Weeks 2, 4, 6, and 8; there are no lectures within the language-specific part of the course. Students are encouraged to develop their skills in scene analysis through seminar discussion. You will be required to submit to your seminar tutor an essay on three of the films, and to do a seminar presentation on the fourth. This course is examined by certification: at the end of term, your tutor will be submitting your last essay (which will either be the essay on Céline Sciamma, or, if you are doing an oral presentation on Sciamma, the essay on Claire Denis) to the examiners.

PAPER XII - Introduction to French Literary Theory

This paper will introduce you to four twentieth-century literary critics. In your essay writing you will be able to engage with their ideas about literature and with their particular way of expressing them. You will be encouraged to apply these ideas to your own reading of texts.

The prescribed texts are:

- **Valéry**, 'Questions de poésie' and 'Poésie et pensée abstraite', in *Théorie poétique et esthétique*, part of *Variété: Œuvres*, vol. I (Gallimard, 'Pléiade') [both essays are available electronically on Canvas]
- **Sartre**, *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?* (Gallimard, 'Folio') [Sections I and II only]
- **Barthes**, *Critique et vérité* (Seuil)
- **Cixous**, 'Le rire de la Méduse' in *Le rire de la Méduse et autres ironies*, ed. by Frédéric Regard (Paris: Galilée, 2010).

The teaching for this paper takes place in Hilary Term weeks 5-8 and Trinity Term weeks 1-4 in a combination of lectures and seminars. You will be required to submit to your seminar tutor an essay on three of the authors, and to do a seminar presentation on the fourth. This course is examined by 3 hour online open-book examination.

Paper XIII - Key Texts in French Thought

This paper will introduce you to four thinkers from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. In both essay and commentary writing you will be able to engage with their ideas and with their particular way of expressing them.

The prescribed texts are:

- **Descartes**, *Discours de la méthode*, edited by Laurence Renault (Garnier-Flammarion)
- **Rousseau**, *Discours sur l'inégalité* (Gallimard, 'Folio')
- **Beauvoir**, *Le Deuxième Sexe* (Gallimard, 'Folio'), I, 'Introduction'; 'Mythes'; II, 'La femme mariée'; 'La mère'.
- **Césaire**, *Discours sur le colonialisme, suivi de Discours sur la Négritude* (Paris: Présence Africaine: 2004).

The teaching for this paper takes place in Michaelmas Term weeks 5-8 and Hilary Term weeks 1-4 in a combination of lectures and seminars. You will be required to submit to your seminar tutor an essay or commentary on three of the authors, and to do a seminar presentation on the fourth. Written work should include at least one essay and at least one commentary. The

three-hour examination in Trinity Term requires you to answer three questions, each on a different text: one will be a commentary, the other two are essays. There will be a choice of one commentary passage from each text and one essay question on each text.

WHEN DRAWING UP THIS HANDBOOK WE HAVE TRIED TO BE AS ACCURATE AND CLEAR AS POSSIBLE.

THE EXAMINING CONVENTIONS – A SEPARATE DOCUMENT – DETAILS THE STRUCTURE OF EACH EXAMINATION PAPER, INCLUDING RUBRICS. SEE THE RELEVANT SECTION OF ‘COURSE INFORMATION’ ON CANVAS:

[Examination conventions: MML UG Information \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

THE REVISED EDITION OF THE UNIVERSITY’S EXAMINATION DECREES AND REGULATIONS LIST THE EXAMINATION PAPERS AND THEIR PERMITTED COMBINATION FOR YOUR DEGREE COURSE. FOR FURTHER DETAILS THEY REFER TO THE HANDBOOK AND THE EXAMINING CONVENTIONS. SEE:

[Exam Regulations - Search \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

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.

Last revised: July 24



FACULTY OF
**MEDIEVAL
AND
MODERN
LANGUAGES**

Information for the Final Honour School (FHS) course in

FRENCH

2024/25

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](#)

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LANGUAGE

Papers I, II & III

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.

The Senior Lecturer in French, Michaël Abecassis, organises centralised grammar classes which are open to all students who feel they need extra help on top of their college classes. (Similar additional grammar classes are offered by graduate teaching assistants.) Further classes cover essay writing, and oral/aural skills. The Senior Lecturer in French offers advice throughout the year to newly-appointed *lecteurs* and *lectrices*, helps college language tutors to network effectively, organises and conducts intensive language-learning weekends for specialists and non-specialists, and plays an important part in reviewing and developing the syllabus for language teaching.

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 takes the following form:

Reading Comprehension and Speaking

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.

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 a course in Linguistics and a Modern Language.

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 essay and commentary writing .
Paper X	Early 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.

Special Subjects - Paper XII

See [Special Subjects on P34](#)

Dissertation - Paper XIV

As one of their papers, according to the schedules of papers set out below, candidates may choose to write a Dissertation not exceeding 8000 words on a subject of their own choice, approved by the Faculty. There is advice on how to decide whether this is the option for you here:

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/20010/pages/examination-conventions>

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, XIV
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

A candidate offering two languages is required to offer, in one language,

- *either* at least one of papers IV, V
- *or* at least one pre-Modern paper

FRENCH SOLE

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

Candidates for French sole must take Papers:

- Paper I
- Paper IIA
- Paper IIB
- Paper III
- One of Papers VI, VII, VIII
- Five of Papers IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV

LINGUISTIC AND LITERATURE PAPERS

Paper IV: Linguistic Studies I - The History of The French Language

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 and interpretation of the evidence, mostly textual, which is available to scholars interested in the history of French, including questions of provenance, authorship and representivity.
- 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.

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.

Examination

In the final examination, your knowledge of the above topics will be assessed on the basis of:

- Text-based questions in Section A (set texts will be published in Michaelmas Term, three academic years before the examination).
- Essay questions in Section B, some of which are related to specific periods in the history of the language.

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:

- Ayres-Bennett, Wendy. 1996. *A History of the French Language through Texts*. London: Routledge.
- Harris, Martin. 1978. *The Evolution of French Syntax: a comparative approach*. London: Longman.
- Lodge, Anthony. 1993. *French: From Dialect to Standard*. London: Routledge.
- Marchello-Nizia, Christiane. 1999. *Le français en diachronie: douze siècles d'évolution*. Paris: Ophrys.
- Picoche, J and Christiane Marchello-Nizia. 1989. *Histoire de la langue française*. Paris: Nathan.
- Posner, Rebecca. 1997. *Linguistic Change in French*. Oxford: OUP.
- Price, Glanville. 1971. *The French Language Past and Present*. London: Grant & Cutler.
- Rickard, Peter. 1989. *A History of the French Language*. London: Routledge.
- Smith, John Charles. 2016. 'French and Northern Gallo-Romance'. In Adam Ledgeway & Martin Maiden (eds.), *The Oxford Guide to the Romance Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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:

- Campbell, Lyle. 1998. *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Crowley, Terry and Claire Bower. 2010. *An Introduction to Historical Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McColl Millar, Robert. 2007. *Trask's Historical Linguistics*. 2nd Edition. Abingdon: Hodder.

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:

- Odden, David. 2013. *Introducing Phonology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lieber, Rochelle. 2009. *Introducing Morphology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Paper V: Linguistic Studies II: Modern French

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 study mainly spoken (as opposed to written) French in terms of its sound system (phonetics and phonology), its word structure (morphology), its sentence structure (syntax) and the way discourse is structured. You will also have the opportunity to learn about the nature and causes of social variation in French-speaking communities, and the consequences of contact between French and other languages in postcolonial settings. You will also have the opportunity to explore how ideologies surrounding the language continue to shape attitudes towards it and towards other languages and dialects in the territories where it is spoken, for example in public debates about spelling conventions, or grammatical details, or the place of 'minority' languages.

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.

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.

Introductory Reading

A good general introduction to this area is:

- Fagyal, Zs, Jenkins, F. & Kibbee, D. (2006). *French: A Linguistic Introduction*. Cambridge: CUP.

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:

- L. Bauer (2007). *The Linguistics Student's Handbook*. Edinburgh.
- V. Fromkin, R. Rodman & N. Hyams (2012) *An Introduction to Language*, 10th edn.

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.

TOPICS IN A PERIOD OF FRENCH LITERATURE

There is no prescribed syllabus for these papers. Examination papers 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

Course Content

Studying literature in the medieval period (1100-1530) involves asking, and finding richly fascinating answers to, fundamental questions: in a pre-print culture involving both oral performance and written transmission through manuscripts, whom do we call 'an author'? Indeed, what constitutes 'a work' or 'a text'? What was the role of literary production in ethical, social, or political terms? From geohistorical and linguistic perspectives, the 'French' identity of literature in this period also needs careful interrogation, given shifting territorial boundaries and dialectal varieties of language. Through your studies, you will encounter works whose assumptions and values (about gender identity or religious opposition, for instance) may feel alien and entirely different from your modern reading experience; we will unpack these perceptions and their contexts, and often uncover unexpected points of connection across time and cultural difference as part of this conversation. Other interesting avenues of enquiry can include the extent to which these earliest texts can be viewed as precursors of later genres and types of text: for instance, can one see the seed of the novel to be sown in the period, and if so, where? Or thinking in terms of literary form, what roles do verse and prose play in relation to genre?

To ensure breadth of coverage, the paper divided into 'earlier' and 'later' sections (around the date of the accession of the first Valois king, Philippe VI, in 1328). The earlier period includes works like the courtly romances of Chrétien de Troyes, the *lais* of Marie de France and others, 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.

Teaching

Normally a variety of topics are explored in eight tutorials, often with a change of tutor according to the topics chosen. A number of lecture courses are offered on topics and texts from the period. There are a range of learning support resources available on Canvas, 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' (Livres de Poche).

Examination

The paper is divided into two in accordance with the division explained above. A total of two essay questions must be answered, one from each section. 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. Most questions are topic-specific, but more general questions also offer candidates the freedom to choose which topics to consider.

Introductory Reading

- [*The Cambridge Companion to Medieval French Literature*](#), ed. Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay (Cambridge: CUP, 2008) (available online in full)
- *Le Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: le moyen âge*, ed. Geneviève Hasenohr and Michel Zink (Paris: Librairie générale française, 1992) (available in the Taylorian for reference, and in several College libraries)
- *Medieval France: An Encyclopedia*, ed. William W. Kibler et al (New York & London: Garland, 1995) (available online from Bodleian workstations and in hard copy in the Taylorian and a few College libraries)

Paper VII: French Literature 1530 To 1800

Course Content

The period 1530-1800 sees French culture developing as a dominant force in Europe and in the world. You may study and interrogate the terms used to describe cultural movements such as Renaissance humanism, baroque, classicism, and the Enlightenment; you may study genres such as tragedy, comedy, and lyric poetry; science fiction, travel writing, and the novel; and you may explore the work of such major writers as Marguerite de Navarre, Rabelais, Labé, Ronsard and Montaigne from the sixteenth century, Corneille, Pascal, Molière, Racine and Madame de Lafayette from the seventeenth, or Françoise de Graffigny, Voltaire, Diderot and

Rousseau from the eighteenth. The object in preparing this paper is to study texts not only for their individual merits and formal qualities, but also in relation to each other within the broad framework of the period's cultural developments. You can explore thematic similarities between texts, such as the treatment of social class, racial or national identities, gender, attitudes to authority, accounts of colonial settlement, responses to the natural world, or representations of the self. The period sees the beginnings of France's first colonial projects and France's codification of the enslavement of Africans; in some quarters it also sees dissident voices which criticize those projects, and you can choose to trace that history via texts of this period. You can also consider texts for their contribution to the history of ideas, via questions of 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.

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.

Examination

Candidates for examination in 2024 onwards must answer two essay questions (those sitting their exams in earlier years should consult the handbook for their year group). 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. No questions are about named authors. Questions ask 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.

Suggested Reading

It can be useful to get to know the period by reading around in the following:

- A New History of French Literature, ed. Denis Hollier, 1989

- A Short History of French Literature, ed. Sarah Kay, Terence Cave, Malcolm Bowie, 2006
- A History of Modern French Literature, ed. Christopher Prendergast, 2017
- The Cambridge Companion to French Literature, ed. John D. Lyons, 2016

In different ways, the following works may help orient you in the period:

- Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance*, 1979
- John O'Brien and Malcolm Quainton, ed. *Distant Voices Still Heard: Contemporary Readings of French Renaissance Literature*, 2000
- Paul Bénichou, *Morales du grand siècle*, 1948
- Joan Dejean, *Tender Geographies: Women and the Origins of the Novel in France*, 1991
- Alain Viala with Kate Tunstall, *Une histoire brève de la littérature française: l'âge classique et les lumières*, 2015
- Jean Starobinski, *L'Invention de la liberté 1700-1789*, 1964
- Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 2019
- Anne C. Vila, ed., *A Cultural History of the Senses in the Age of Enlightenment*, 2014

Paper VIII: French Literature 1715 to the Present

Course Content

Paper VIII encourages you to study a wide range of authors, work and movements from the eighteenth century to the contemporary in the context of dynamic political and social developments which continue to shape France to this day. Within its overarching framework, you could explore the personal achievements of individual writers along with larger political and cultural phenomena such as the Enlightenment, Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, Symbolism, Surrealism, Existentialism, absurdist theatre, the *nouveau roman*, Francophone postcolonial or migrant writing. 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 major political and cultural movements such as feminism, LGBT+ writing, anticolonialism, and anti-racism.

This paper enables a diversity of approaches, the works covered varying according to choices made in consultation with tutors; it is possible to focus both on individual topics and to complement them with others elsewhere in the period, constructing your own route-map incorporating literary and cultural movements, genres and themes. Topics could include iconic but also more niche stories, poetry, plays and novels, confessional fiction, Romantic or

Symbolist drama, poetry or prose, literature, art and music, gender and writing, literature and commitment, post-modern narrative, representing the city, cultural memory, identity and diversity, Francophone, anticolonial, AIDS and migrant writing, plus other new styles and voices.

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 timescale, and so appreciate change and diversity within the period.

Examination

You must answer two essay questions. The paper includes a wide range of questions of a general nature, relating to genres, themes, and other topics in the writings of the period. No questions are about specific parts of the period, or about named authors (though some questions may come in the form of quotations by 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.

Introductory Reading

As well as reading a selection of key texts as advised by your tutor, you should also acquaint yourself with the historical and cultural context. Useful overviews include:

General:

- Peter France (ed.), *The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French*, 1995;
- Denis Hollier (ed.), *A New History of French Literature*, 1989;
- Sarah Kay, Terence Cave and Malcom Bowie, *A Short History of French Literature*, 2003;
- John D. Lyons (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to French Literature*, 2016.

On the modern period

- Alfred Cobban, *A History of Modern France 1715-1962*, 3 vols, 1963-65;
- John Cruickshank (ed.), *French Literature and its Background*, vols 3,4,5 and 6, 1968-70;
- Jean.-Marie Goulemot, *La Littérature des lumières en toutes lettres*, 1989 ;
- Arlette Michel and others, *Littérature française du XIX^e siècle*, Collection Premier Cycle, 1993 ;
- John Leigh, *The Search for Enlightenment*, 2013;
- Timothy Farrant, *An Introduction to Nineteenth-Century French Literature*, 2007;
- Victoria Best, *An Introduction to Twentieth-Century French Literature*, 2002;
- Martin Evans and Emmanuel Godin, *France 1815-2003: Modern History for Modern Linguists*, 2003;
- Robert Gildea, *Children of the Revolution*, 2008;
- Patrick Boucheron and others, *Histoire mondiale de la France*, 2017;
- Alain Viala with Kate Tunstall, *Une histoire brève de la littérature française: l'âge classique et les lumières*, 2015;
- Jean Starobinski, *L'Invention de la liberté 1700-1789*, 1964;
- Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 2019;
- Anne C. Vila, ed., *A Cultural History of the Senses in the Age of Enlightenment*, 2014.

On specific topics / genres / areas:

- Samuel Petrey, *Realism and Revolution; Balzac, Stendhal, Zola and the Performances of History*, 1988;
- Christopher Prendergast (ed.), *Nineteenth-Century French Poetry: introductions to close reading*, 1990; Lilian Furst (ed.), *Realism*, 1993 ;
- Christopher Robinson, *Scandal in the Ink: Male and Female Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century French Literature*, 1995;
- Eva Martin Sartori and Dorothy Zimmerman (eds.), *French Women Writers*, 1991;
- Mary Lewis Shaw, *The Cambridge Introduction to French Poetry*, 2003;
- Sonya Stephens (ed.), *A History of Women's Writing in France*, 2000;
- Timothy Unwin (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the French Novel: from 1800 to the present*, 1997;
- Paul Hamilton (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of European Romanticism*, 2016;
- Adam Watt (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the Novel in French*, 2021;
- Belinda Jack, *Francophone Literatures: an introductory survey*, 1996;
- Charles Forsdick and David Murphy, *Francophone Postcolonial Studies: A Critical Introduction*, 2003 and *Postcolonial Thought in the French-speaking World*, 2009;

- Jennifer Yee, *The Colonial Comedy: Imperialism in the French Realist Novel*, 2016;
- Christie McDonald and Susan. R. Suleiman, *French Global: A New Approach to Literary History*, 2011.

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

Course Content

This paper consists of the close study of three varied texts which illustrate some of the 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 tale of military conflict, cultural confrontation, and moral anguish, whose poetry and searching profundity are perennially relevant; Bérout's *Tristan* (ed. Philippe Walter, *Lettres gothiques*) 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 mid-fifteenth century from the vantage-point of the socially marginal criminal-poet.

Teaching

Faculty teaching is based on an annual cycle of lectures - six hours on each text, one series in each term. 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 Canvas. Your college will arrange eight hours of tutorials in either your second or final year (or straddling the two years), covering the three texts.

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).

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

Introductory Reading

- Jane Gilbert, 'The *Chanson de Roland*', in [The Cambridge Companion to Medieval French Literature](#), ed. Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), pp. 21-34 (available online).
- Barbara N. Sargent-Baur, 'Accidental Symmetry: The First and Last Episodes of Bérout's *Roman de Tristan*', *Neophilologus* 88.3 (2004), 335-51, available on the relevant section of Canvas.
- Adrian Armstrong, 'The Testament of François Villon', in [The Cambridge Companion to Medieval French Literature](#), pp. 63-76 (available online).

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 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)

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, on the Renaissance and Reformation, and on France in relation to the Mediterranean and the Atlantic world. 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*.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

Recommended introductory studies include:

Bernd Renner (ed), *A Companion to François Rabelais* (2021), John O'Brien (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Rabelais* (2011) and Elizabeth Chesney Zegura (ed), *The Rabelais Encyclopedia* (2004) are useful introductory reference works. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World* (trsl 1968), Michael Screech, *Rabelais* (1979), and Carla Freccero, *Father Figures: Genealogy and Narrative Structures in Rabelais* (1991) provide stimulating contrasts; also very useful are François Rigolot, *Les langages de Rabelais* [2nd ed] (1996), Paul Smith, *Voyage et écriture: Étude sur le 'Quart Livre' de Rabelais* (1987).

There is one international book series dedicated to Rabelais, *Études rabelaisiennes* (published by Droz) as well as one journal, *L'Année rabelaisienne*, and many useful articles online by such critics as Cathleen Bauschatz, Terence Cave, Gérard Defaux, Carla Freccero, Andrea Frisch, Raphaële Garrod, Floyd Gray, Timothy Hampton, Bruce Hayes, Jelle Koopmans, Frank Lestringant, Michel Jeanneret, Margaret Spanos, and others...

2 - Montaigne (1533-92)

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 philosopher 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, the French religious wars, and the destabilisation of knowledge also brought about by early European exploits in (what would come to be known as) the Americas.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

Recommended introductory studies include:

Sarah Bakewell, *How to Live: A Life of Montaigne* (2010); Terence Cave, *How to Read Montaigne* (2007), Carol Clark, *The Web of Metaphor* (1978); Philippe Desan (ed), *The Oxford Handbook to Montaigne*; Zahi Zalloua (ed) *Montaigne after Theory/Theory after Montaigne* (2009)

Two internet sites dedicated to Montaigne are also very useful tools for study of his work: The Montaigne Project, dir Philippe Desan: <http://montaignestudies.uchicago.edu> and MONLOE: *Montaigne à l'oeuvre*, dir Marie-Luce Demonet: <http://montaigne.univ.-tours.fr>

3 - Pascal (1623-1662)

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. Gérard Ferreyrolles et Philippe 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*.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

Recommended introductory studies include:

Richard Parish, "Mais qui parle? Voice and Persona in the 'Pensées'" *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 8 (1986): 23-40; Sara Melzer, *Discourses of the Fall: A study of Pascal's Pensées* (California, 1987); Leszek Kolakowski, *God Owes Us Nothing: A Brief Remark on Pascal's Religion and on the Spirit of Jansenism* (Chicago, 1995); Nicholas Hammond, ed. *Cambridge Companion to Pascal* (Cambridge, 2003); Michael Moriarty, *Early Modern French Thought: The Age of Suspicion* (Oxford, 2003); John D. Lyons, *Before Imagination: Embodied Thought from Montaigne to Rousseau* (Stanford, 2005); Richard Parish, *Catholic Particularity in Seventeenth-Century French Writing: 'Christianity is Strange'* (Oxford, 2011); Alain Cantillon, *Le pari-de-Pascal. Etude littéraire d'une série d'énonciations* (Paris, 2014).

4 - Molière (1622-73)

Course Content

Molière has enduring appeal on many fronts: for producers and theatre-goers as well as for students and critics. He not only wrote plays but also produced them and starred in them, creating in the process his own individual brand of comedy; in studying him, you will get to know a textual tradition, but you are also encouraged to think about performance history and more recent adaptations. His output was varied, changing to suit the different needs of the audiences at court and in the public theatre in Paris, and it is notable for its sometimes scandalous engagement with issues ranging from the authority of the church to the education of women. His work is formally as well as politically innovative: 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'École des femmes*, *Le Tartuffe*, *Dom Juan*, *Le Misanthrope*, *Les Fourberies de Scapin* and *Le Malade Imaginaire*. Students are also encouraged to read beyond these plays.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

The following works open up some lines of interpretation:

- William D. Howarth, *Molière: A Playwright and his Audience*, 1982.
- Gérard Defaux, *Molière ou les métamorphoses du comique*, 1980.
- Michael Hawcroft, *Molière: Reasoning with Fools*, 2007.
- Noel Peacock, *Molière sous les feux de la rampe*, 2012.
- Larry Norman, *The public mirror: Molière and the social commerce of depiction*, 1999.
- Pierre Force, *Molière, ou, Le prix des choses*, 1994.

You can also get to know Molière via articles that draw attention to his work in the context of seventeenth-century approaches to the court (e.g. Ellen Welch, 'Going behind the Scenes with *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*: Staging Critical Spectatorship at Louis XIV's Court', *The French Review* 85: 5 [2012], 848-8600; to sexuality (Joan DeJean, 'The Work of Forgetting: Commerce, Sexuality, Censorship, and Molière's *Le Festin De Pierre*', *Critical Inquiry*, 29:1 [2002], 53-80), or to women's education (Barbara Johnson, 'Teaching Ignorance', *Yale French Studies* 63 [1982], 165-182). Your tutor will guide your exploration of the wide range of critical approaches to Molière's varied works.

5 - Lafayette (1634-1693)

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 the nature and purpose of fiction and the relation of literature to historical event, and her writing of romance provides a particular prism for thinking through early modern reflections on race. 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 we both learn about court life and engage critically with what it means to be a woman writing in, and about, intimacy, political life, and public space.

The texts prescribed for special study are *La princesse de Montpensier*; *Zaïde*; *La princesse de Clèves*. You should also read *La comtesse de Tende* and *Histoire de madame Henriette d'Angleterre*.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

Recommended critical studies include:

Books: Faith Beasley, *Revising Memory* (1990); Joan DeJean, *Tender Geographies: Women and the Origins of the Novel* (1991); Patrick Henry, *An Inimitable Example: The Case for the Princesse de Clèves* (1992); Anne Green, *Privileged Anonymity: The Writings of Madame de Lafayette* (1996); Nathalie Grande, *Stratégies de romancières de Clélie à La Princesse de Clèves (1654-1678)* (1999); John D. Lyons, *Before Imagination: Embodied Thought from Montaigne to Rousseau* (2005); Anne-Lise François, *Open Secrets: The Literature of Uncounted Experience* (2008); *Going Public: Women and Publishing in Early Modern France* eds. Elizabeth Goldsmith and Dena Goodman (Cornell, 1995); Erica Harth, *Ideology and Culture in Seventeenth-Century France* (Cornell, 1983); Juliette Cherbuliez, *The Place of Exile: Leisure Literature and the Limits of Absolutism* (Bucknell, 2005)

Selected articles: Gérard Genette, 'Vraisemblance et motivation', *Figures II* (1969); Nancy Miller, 'Emphasis Added: Plots and Plausibilities in Women's Fiction', *PMLA* 96:1 (1981): 36-48; Michael Moriarty, 'Discourse and the body in *La Princesse de Clèves*', *Paragraph* 10 (1987): 64-86; Ellen McClure, 'Cartesian Modernity and the Princesse de Clèves', *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 29 (2007): 73-80; Harriet Stone, 'Reading the Orient: Lafayette's *Zaïde*', *Romanic Review* 81: 2 (1990): 145-60; Peggy Kamuf, 'The gift of clothes: Of Mme de Lafayette and the origin of novels', *Novel* 17: 3 (1984): 233-45; Ellen Welch, 'Strangers among us: Aliens and Alienations in Lafayette's *Zaïde*', *Dalhousie French Studies* (2011): 3-14.

6 - Racine (1639-99)

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. They explore high issues of state ranging from the transmission of power to the governance of empires. But they are also 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.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

- The following very different approaches to Racine can be recommended as starting points for serious critical reading:
- Sylvaine Guyot, *Racine et le corps tragique*, 2014.
- Mitchell Greenberg, *Racine: From Ancient Myth to Tragic Modernity*, 2010
- Richard Parish, *Racine: The Limits of Tragedy*, 1993.
- David Maskell, *Racine: A Theatrical Reading*, 1991.
- Peter France, *Racine's Rhetoric*, 1965.
- Roland Barthes, *Sur Racine*, 1963.

But you should also get to know some of the lively accounts of Racine in journal articles or developed in books addressing broad cultural questions of the period; your tutor will be able to direct you in this. One of the pleasures of getting to know this corpus is getting to know the varied ways of reading it.

7 - Voltaire (1694-1778)

Course Content

Dramatist, satirist, historian, *philosophe*, polemicist, poet, Voltaire is (with Diderot and Rousseau) one of the three major writers of the French Enlightenment. His writing exposes the systemic abuse of power and punctures the self-serving narratives of governments, religions, and global trade. The texts prescribed for special study are his *Lettres philosophiques* (1734), one of his earliest and most trenchant satires, and some of his *contes* in prose and verse written in mid- and late career (*Zadig*, *Paméla* (pp.138-96), *Candide*, *Contes*

de Guillaume Vadé (pp.339-453), *La Princesse de Babylone*, *Les Lettres d'Amabed*, *Le Taureau blanc*). In addition to these texts, you will study a selection of his other writings, chosen from among his histories (e.g. *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*), tragedies (e.g. *Zaïre*, *Mahomet*, *Mérope*) philosophical and polemical works (e.g. *Dictionnaire philosophique*, *Traité sur la tolérance*).

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

It is important that you read the *Lettres philosophiques* (ed. F. Deloffre, Folio) and the selection of contes specified above (*Romans et contes*, ed., E. Guitton, Pochothèque, Livre de Poche, 1994). You will also find Haydn Mason, *Voltaire, a Biography*, 1981, and his *Voltaire*, 1975, helpful introductions to the author, his work and his background, as well as Nicholas Cronk's *The Cambridge Companion to Voltaire* (2009). A more advanced study of the contes is Roger Pearson, *The Fables of Reason: A Study of Voltaire's 'contes philosophiques'*, 1993. For a concise introduction to the Eighteenth Century and its polemics, see Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 4th ed (2019).

8 - Diderot (1713-84)

Course Content

Probably the most varied and original of the Enlightenment writers, Diderot is a particularly stimulating author. Every area he engages with, from gender and sexuality, race and otherness, mind and body, hierarchy and class, authenticity and artifice, to nature and ethics, ends up profoundly re-thought. 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. Bukdahl 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).

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

A convenient short introduction to Diderot's life and work is Peter France, *Diderot*, 1983, and an annotated selection of his writings can be found in the very useful *Diderot: Textes et débats*, edited by Jean-Claude Bonnet, Livre de poche, 1984. Wilda Anderson's *Diderot's Dream* (1990) is particularly helpful on the connections in his work between science and philosophy, while James Fowler's edited collection, *New Essays on Diderot* (Cambridge CUP, 2011), offers informed surveys of the different topics and genres his writing covers.

Paper XI: Modern Prescribed Authors II

You choose any two of:

1 - Stendhal (1783-1842)

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, his 'chronicles' of French and Italian society in the first decades of the nineteenth century (incl. *Chroniques italiennes*); his autobiography (*Vie de Henry Brulard*); and his writings on art and literature (*Histoire de la peinture en Italie, Racine et Shakespeare*). His fiction is particularly striking, in the context of nineteenth-century literature, for the centrality and agency of his female characters (in the two prescribed texts as well as his unfinished novel *Lamiel*, and some of his short fiction).

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

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

2 - Baudelaire (1821-67)

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. He responds both in his theoretical writings and in his poetry to the experience of modern urban life, including its most socially marginalized figures. Many of his most beautiful and disturbing poems are inspired by his long-standing, often fraught relationship with a black woman called Jeanne Duval; others are partially inspired by a brief early voyage to Mauritius and Reunion. 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 novella *La Fanfarlo* and his diary-form notes (*Fusées* and *Mon cœur mis à nu*).

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

A useful general introduction to Baudelaire's poetry is F.W. Leakey, *Les Fleurs du Mal*, Landmarks in World Literature (1992) or Rosemary Lloyd, *Charles Baudelaire* (2008). In addition, undergraduates may find the following works helpful: Lloyd James Austin, *L'Univers poétique de Baudelaire* (1956); Léo Bersani, *Baudelaire and Freud* (1977); Roberto Calasso, *La Folie Baudelaire* (2013); James Andrew Hiddleston, *Baudelaire and 'Le Spleen de Paris'* (1987);

Rosemary Lloyd, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Baudelaire* (2005); Maria Scott, *Baudelaire's Le Spleen de Paris: Shifting Perspectives* (2005).

3 - Flaubert (1821-80)

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 include his novel *Salammbô* (set in ancient North Africa), *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.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

You should read the texts prescribed for special study, and as many of Flaubert's other works as you can. Amongst the many useful critical guides are Anthony Thorlby, *Gustave Flaubert and the Art of Realism*, 1957, and Victor Brombert, *The Novels of Flaubert*, 1966, Stephen Heath, *Madame Bovary*, 1992, Alan Raitt, *The Originality of 'Madame Bovary'*, 2002, and his *Flaubert, 'Trois contes'*, 1991; Gisèle Séginger, *Dictionnaire Flaubert*, 2017. A central work is Jonathan Culler's *Flaubert: The Uses of Uncertainty*, 1974, which searchingly questions the conclusions of earlier studies.

4 - Mallarmé (1842-98)

Course Content

Stéphane Mallarmé was the most influential living poet in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, revered by the younger generation of poets who called themselves Symbolists (from 1886 onwards). He pursued his calling as a poet by abandoning all effusive or ironic expression of a lyrical self 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, revealing many of the 'mysterious relationships' which Mallarmé found 'preexisting' in language itself. The prescribed texts are *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). Further reading will provide the opportunity to explore his fascination with dance, and fashion, including in essays he wrote for his fashion magazine *La Dernière Mode*.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

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

5 - Beckett (1906-89)

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*.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

Some recommended critical studies include: two very helpful essay collections, offering useful starting-points, *The Cambridge Companion to Beckett* (1994), ed. John Pilling, and *The New Cambridge Companion to Samuel Beckett* (2015), ed. Dirk Van Hulle; Michael Sheringham, *Beckett: 'Molloy'* (1985) provides an excellent introduction to that novel; other helpful, general studies include Steven Connor, *Samuel Beckett: Repetition, Theory, and Text* (1988), Bruno Clément, *L'Œuvre sans qualités: rhétorique de Samuel Beckett* (1989), Leslie Hill, *Beckett's Fiction: In Different Words* (1990), Alain Badiou, *Beckett: l'incroyable désir* (1995), and Shane Weller, *A Taste for the Negative: Beckett and Nihilism* (2005).

6 - Duras (1924-1996)

Course Content

Despite critics' repeated attempts to 'contain' Marguerite Duras's oeuvre by affixing labels such as *nouveau roman* or *écriture féminine* to it, her work has continued to defy simple categorisation and explanation. Although her bold experiments with image and voice have earned her a place in the vanguard of French cinema, Duras is known first and foremost as a writer whose highly distinctive voice gives cohesion to an eclectic and wide-ranging oeuvre, consisting of novels, short stories, plays, newspaper articles, essays and even film scripts. Spanning the post-war era from 1943 until her death in 1996, Duras's writing offers a rich and compelling introduction to contemporary French literature, thought and culture, as it engages with some of the most important questions of our time: gender and sexuality; politics and France's colonial past; the limits of language and representation; identity and autobiography; memory and trauma; as well as the power of affect and repetition.

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.

For *Hiroshima mon amour*, students should read a version of the screenplay that includes Duras's stage directions. We recommend the Folio edition, or the Quarto edition of her collected *Romans, cinéma, théâtre* (both published by Gallimard).

Teaching

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

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: Leslie Hill, *Marguerite Duras: Apocalyptic desires*, Routledge (1993); Laure Adler, *Marguerite Duras* (1998); C. Hofman, *Forgetting and Marguerite Duras* (1991); Julia Kristeva, 'La Maladie de la douleur: Duras', in *Soleil Noir. Dépression et Mélancolie* (1987); Jane Bradley Winston, *Postcolonial Duras: Cultural Memory in Post-War France* (2001).

7 - Barthes (1915-80)

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*.

Teaching

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

Introductory Reading

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

Helpful introductory studies include: Jonathan Culler, *Barthes: A Very Short Introduction* (2002) and Graham Allen, *Roland Barthes* (2003). More detailed studies include: Annette Lavers, *Roland Barthes: Structuralism and After* (1982); Louis-Jean Calvet, *Roland Barthes* (1990); Michael Moriarty, *Roland Barthes* (1991); Bernard Comment, *Roland Barthes, vers le neutre* (1991); and Diana Knight, *Barthes and Utopia: Space, Travel, Writing* (1997).

8 - Djebbar (1936-2015)

Course Content

Assia Djebbar 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, Djébar'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*.

Teaching

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

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:

Wolfgang Asholt, Mireille Calle-Gruber et Dominique Combe (eds). *Assia Djébar: littérature et transmission* (2010); Mireille Calle-Gruber, *Assia Djébar, ou la résistance de l'écriture* (2001);

Esprit Créateur, Special Issue, *L'Amour, la fantasia, avant et après*. 41.1 (2008); Nicholas Harrison, *Postcolonial Criticism: History, Theory, and the Work of Fiction* (2003); Jane Hiddleston, *Assia Djébar: Out of Algeria* (2006); Debra Kelly, *Autobiography and Independence: Selfhood and Creativity in North African Postcolonial Writing in French* (2005).

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 XIs 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 XIs in other languages, or in Linguistics, may not be assessed by submitted work.

Although most topics are available in most years, 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. In particular, many topics operate caps for minimum numbers (below which the option will not run for that year) and for maximum numbers (if these are exceeded, some students will need to take a different option). For that reason, when choosing a French Paper XI, students will be asked also to identify a 2nd and 3rd choice. The list of topics, from which students make their choices, will be circulated on the Friday of week 5 of the Trinity Term of the preceding academic year (i.e. in TT2022 for finalists in 2022-23, and so on).

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.

Paper XII - (i) French Subjects

1 - Medieval Intersectional Identities

Course content

The course gives students the opportunity, as a contrasting complement to the other FHS Medieval French papers, to privilege a concept-led approach to literature of the Francophone Middle Ages, centring the rich and important critical question of intersectional identities in order to pave the way for methodological reflection: how does medieval literature articulate challenges to empowerment and agency? How do texts' genres (e.g. *chanson de geste*, *fabliau*) define or become defined by their representation of authority in relation to gender, ethnicity, or social class? In what ways have traditions and movements in scholarship on medieval Francophone literature shaped or transformed understanding of identity politics? What kinds of dialogue are most fruitful to pursue between medieval texts and modern theoretical approaches (e.g. queer theory, postcolonialism)? Through guided case studies drawn from texts which may include, for example, Anglo-Norman saints' lives, continental French romances, or Old Occitan lyric, you will develop a nuanced appreciation of the literary representation of medieval concepts of human identity and will then select your own case studies for exploration in your portfolio. In the modern day, when a distorted representation of 'the Middle Ages' is sometimes adopted by extremist groups to promote the oppression and maltreatment of minoritised groups, it is all the more vital to study the medieval materials in order to challenge narratives of power.

Teaching

The course is taught in a series of six meetings in Hilary Term of the student's final year, normally four seminars and two tutorials. You do not need already to have taken another FHS medieval paper (VI or IX) in French. We encourage students to engage as much as possible with the texts in their original language (and always if choosing to write a commentary), and have provided resources on Canvas for you to use to prepare, following the recorded lectures on Reading Medieval French and on Medieval French commentary writing. However, all seminar texts will be available with modern French or English translation, to ensure that the course is as widely accessible as possible. Lectures in Michaelmas Term set up a general framework for the Paper ('Medieval Identities', 2 lectures) and offer important contextual knowledge ('Key Concepts in Medieval French Literature', 8 lectures).

Examination

Method of Assessment B (2). The portfolio may consist of essays, commentaries, or a combination of both. The subjects for essays / commentaries will be chosen in consultation with tutors, allowing for considerable freedom in the material studied and approaches adopted.

Introductory Reading

- Andrew Albin, Mary C. Erler, Thomas O'Donnell, Nicholas L. Paul, Nina Rowe, editors, *Whose Middle Ages? Teachable Moments for an Ill-Used Past* (Fordham University Press, 2019)
- Glen Burger and Steven F. Kruger (eds), *Queering the Middle Ages* (University of Minnesota Press, 2001)
- Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Post-Modern* (Duke University Press, 1999)
- Simon Gaunt, 'French Literature Abroad: Towards an Alternative History of French Literature', *Interfaces* 1 (2015): 25-61
- Simon Gaunt, *Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 1995)
- Jane Gilbert, Simon Gaunt and William Burgwinkle, *Medieval French Literary Culture Abroad* (Oxford University Press, 2020)
- Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press, 2018)
- Nicola Morato and Dirk Schoenaers (eds.), *Medieval Francophone Literary Culture outside France : Studies in the Moving Word* (Brepols, 2019)
- Tory Vandeventer Pearman, *Women and Disability in Medieval Literature* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)
- Cord J. Whitaker, *Black Metaphors: How Modern Racism Emerged from Medieval Race-Thinking* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019)

2 - French Poetry of the Mid-Sixteenth Century

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.

Teaching

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

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

Introductory Reading

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

3 - Early Modern French Satire

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.

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.

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

Introductory Reading

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

4 - Jean-Jacques Rousseau

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*.

Teaching

The course is taught in a series of five seminars in Hilary Term of the student's final year; there are regular lecture courses dealing with aspects of the topic.

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

Introductory Reading

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

Robert Wokler, *Rousseau*, 1995.

5 - French Romanticism: Writing and Revolution

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.

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.

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

Introductory Reading

A complete bibliography will be circulated to students taking this special subject. Recommended introductory reading includes:

- D.G. Charlton (ed.) *The French Romantics*, 2 vols (1984)
- 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)

6 - Honoré de Balzac

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.

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.

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

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.

7 - French Poetry 1870 to 1918

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: after a string of political revolutions earlier in the nineteenth century, this period saw great experimentation with poetic forms, looking beyond rules that had held sway for centuries. 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, as French poetry was increasingly influenced by voices and perspectives from across Europe and beyond.

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, Krysinska, Valéry and Apollinaire. You may also study individual groups of poets as representatives of particular trends or topics, e.g. wartime poetry, gender and voice, or religion.

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.

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

Introductory Reading

If you are unfamiliar with the poetry of the period, you will find a good representative selection in *Anthologie de la poésie française du XIX^e siècle, t. 2: de Baudelaire à Saint-Pol-Roux*, ed. Michel Decaudin, 1992. See also:

- J-N Illouz, *Le Symbolisme*, 2014.
- B. Marchal, *Lire le symbolisme*, 1993.
- P. McGuinness (ed.), *Anthologie de la poésie symboliste et décadente*, 2001.
- C. Prendergast (ed.), *Nineteenth-Century French Poetry: Introductions to Close Reading* (1990; note the volume's invaluable Appendix by Clive Scott)
- M. Shaw (ed.), *The Cambridge Introduction to French Poetry* (2003)

8 - Marcel Proust

Course Content

Proust's 3000-page *À 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 profoundly influenced the development of twentieth-century literature both inside and outside France. Proust's major work explores themes as diverse as memory, time and the nature of human perception; the complexities of love; homosexuality; shifting class identity; and the politics of group and individual identities in the context of antisemitism and the Dreyfus affair. You will be expected to have read *À la recherche du temps perdu*, some of Proust's other works, and some works of criticism.

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.

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

Primary Reading

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 *À la recherche du temps perdu* (the best paperback edition is Folio); make sure your edition includes the 'long' version of *Albertine disparue* (i.e. about 280 pp.).

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

Selected Secondary Reading:

- Bales, Richard, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Proust*, 2001
- Barthes, Roland, 'Proust et les noms' in *Nouveaux essais critiques*, 1967

- Beckett, Samuel, Proust, 1931
- Bersani, Leo, Marcel Proust: The Fictions of Life and of Art, 1965
- Bowie, Malcolm, Proust Among the Stars, 1998
- Brée, Germaine, The World of Marcel Proust, 1967
- Ellison, Richard, A Reader's Guide to Proust's 'In Search of Lost Time', 2010 [an introductory guide]
- Freed-Thall, Hannah, 'Aesthetic disorientation in Proust', in Spoiled Distinctions, 2015
- Genette, Gérard, 'Métonymie chez Proust', Figures III, 1972.
- Gray, Margaret E., Postmodern Proust, 1992, particularly ch. 'Postmodern selfhood and the "Monsieur qui dit je"'
- Hughes, Edward J., Proust, Class, and Nation, 2011
- Ladenson, Elisabeth, Proust's Lesbianism, 1999.
- Landy, Joshua, Philosophy as Fiction: Self, Deception, and Knowledge in Proust, 2004
- Richard, Jean-Pierre, Proust et le monde sensible, 1974
- Schmid, Marion, 'Marcel Proust 1871-1922: A Modernist Novel of Time' in The Cambridge Companion to European Novelists, ed. Michael Bell, 2012, pp. 327-42
- Tadié, Jean-Yves, Proust et le roman 1971
Wassenaar, Ingrid, Proust for beginners, 2001
- Watt, Adam, Marcel Proust, 2013 [a short, accessible biographical study]
- Wilson, Emma, 'Reading Albertine's Sexuality', in Sexuality and the Reading Encounter, 1996

9 - French Poetry from Surrealism to the Present

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, Michel Deguy, Yves Bonnefoy, Philippe Jaccottet, Marie-Claire Bancquart, Jacqueline Risset, and Andrée Chéhid.

This course explores how poets use experimental forms of writing to develop innovative models for understanding our relationships to ourselves, other people, and the physical world. Students will have the opportunity to study lots of different kinds of texts, from erotic to elegiac poetry, from an urban poetics of everyday life to nature writing. You will tackle a diverse range of themes – love, sex, death, the body, illness, ecology – and be introduced to a diverse range of theoretical approaches, including feminist theory, thing theory, and ecopoetics.

Teaching

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

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

Introductory Reading

- Décaudin, Michel and Jean-Baptists Para (eds), *Anthologie de la poésie française du XXème siècle*, Poésie / Gallimard, 2 vols, 2002
- Richard, Jean-Pierre, *Onze Etudes sur la poésie moderne*, 1964
- Cardinal, Roger (ed.) *Sensibility and Creation: Studies in Twentieth-century French poetry*, 1977
- Greene, Robert, *Six French Poets of Our Time*, 1979
- Stamleman, Richard, *Lost Beyond Telling: Representations of Death and Absence in Modern French Poetry*, 1990

10 - Literature and the Visual Arts in France

Course Content

The paper offers students the opportunity to explore some of the different relations between literature and the visual arts from medieval times to the present. Students will be free to draw on a wide range of writers, artists and movements. Among the topics explored are the relationships between visual and literary notions of styles and forms, the ways language conveys images, and images tell stories; forms that mix the visual and the verbal; the links between word, picture and 'message'. These include book illustration and calligraphic practices in manuscripts (for example those of Christine de Pizan) and printed editions of poetry, novels and plays; visual art-forms functioning narratively (such as medieval stained

glass or tapestries); literary responses to the visual arts in theoretical writings and Salon commentaries (by writers such as Diderot, Baudelaire and Barthes); ekphrasis and description (by many authors, including Duras and Djébar); fictional portrayals of artists (for example by Balzac and Zola); artists' books and photographic essays (for example by Gauguin and Ernaux). Lists of suggested primary and secondary reading, as well as suggested artists or images to discuss, will be made available to students, but there is considerable scope for students to choose their own corpus.

Teaching

8 lectures in Michaelmas Term; 4 seminars in Hilary Term.

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.

Suggested General Reading

- Benjamin, Walter, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' [1936] several editions, for example in Walter Benjamin, *One-Way Street and Other Writings* (London: Penguin, 2009).
- Heffernan, James A. W., 'Ekphrasis and Representation', *New Literary History* 22:2 (1991), 297-316 [gives a modern definition of ekphrasis as 'the verbal representation of graphic representation' (p. 299)]
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim, *Laocoon or On the Limits of Painting and Poetry* [1766], in Nisbet, H.B. ed. *German Aesthetic Literary Criticism: Winckelmann, Lessing, Hamann, Herder, Schiller, Goethe* (Cambridge University Press, 1985)
- Mitchell, W.J.T., *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994)
- Wettlaufer, Alexandra K., *In the Mind's Eye: the Visual Impulse in Diderot, Baudelaire and Ruskin* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003)

On the difference between symbol, index and icon, mainly based on the theories of C.S. Pierce, you can find a short overview by Drew Huening: 'Symbol, index, icon', The University of Chicago Theories of Media, Keywords Glossary

<https://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/symbolindexicon.htm> [consulted 06.5.23].

There is also a longer and more in-depth account of 'Pierce's Theory of Signs', of which the lectures will refer only to the very short section '3.2 Objects', at:

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/peirce-semiotics/#Objec> [consulted 06.5.23]

11 - Women's Writing In French

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 canonical and lesser-known writers, and range across literary genres from poetry to novels, memoirs and essays.

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.

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

Introductory Reading

You will have the opportunity to explore widely over writers from different genres, periods and backgrounds. Some suggestions for introductory secondary reading: Diana Holmes, *French Women's Writing, 1848-1994*, Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (1985, 2002); Susan Sellers, *Language and Sexual Difference: Feminist Writing in France* (1991).

12 - Twentieth- and Twenty-first-century Autobiography

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, Djébar).

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.

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.

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

Introductory Critical Reading

- Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte autobiographique* (1975) and *L'autobiographie en France* (1998)
- Michael Sheringham, *French Autobiography. Devices and Desires* (1993)
- Philippe Gasparini, *Est-il je? Roman autobiographique et autofiction* (2004)

13 - Race and Representation

Course Content

This paper will explore the 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 eighteenth-century naturalist Buffon to modern novelist Patrick Chamoiseau.

We will examine accounts of racial difference or sameness in Buffon and Montesquieu, and the way in which these "Enlightenment" theorisations were unable to avoid touching on questions of enslavement; we will look at a short text dramatising aspects of the Haitian slave revolt under Toussaint Louverture, and at polemical tracts by Henri Grégoire. These issues are refracted in literary narratives by writers Isabelle de Charrière and Claire de Duras. In the nineteenth century Duras's focus on the psychological impact of racialisation gives way to ideas of race as defining identity in a more biological sense, most notoriously in the hands of Arthur de Gobineau, though this is complicated by his tragic sense of inevitable decline. In his writings and in other writers such as Maupassant and Pierre Loti, exoticist attraction and racist objectification work together, sometimes uneasily. The next 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. We will then compare concepts of 'Antillanité' and 'Créolité' and discuss their efficacy in driving a more egalitarian and open-ended conception of ethnicity and

cultural difference. In the final session, we will explore how contemporary 'Afropean' writers are currently elaborating new, fluid and ironic representations of black identities that simultaneously challenge racial essentialism and French universalism.

Teaching

In Michaelmas term there will be a lecture courses on related issues. In Hilary weeks 1-5 there will be a series of five seminars.

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

Introductory Reading

A full reading list will be circulated before the start of the course

14 - New Ecologies: Plants, Stones, Robots.

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.

Teaching

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

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

Introductory Reading

A full reading list will be circulated before the start of the course but some useful introductory texts are:

- Laurent Alexandre & Jean-Michel Besnier (2016): Les Robots font-ils l'amour? Le transhumanisme en 12 questions.
- 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')
- Haraway, Donna (2003): The Companion Species Manifesto.
- Richard Grusin (ed.) (2015): The Nonhuman Turn (read 'introduction')
- Bruno Latour (1997, nouv. éd): Nous n'avons jamais été modernes (read: '5: Redistribution')
- Gilbert Simondon (1965): Sur la technique (read: 'Culture et technique')

15 - Histories of Violence (1789–today)

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.

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?

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

Introductory Reading

- Ahimana, Emmanuel. *Les violences extrêmes dans le roman négro-africain francophone*. Éditions universitaires européennes, 2015.
- Arasse, Daniel. *La Guillotine et l'imaginaire de la Terreur*. Paris: Champs Flammarion, 1987.
- Bayard, Pierre. *Écrire l'extrême : la littérature et l'art face aux crimes de masse*. *Revue Europe*, n° 926-7 (juin-juillet 2006).
- Burton, Richard D. E. *Blood in the City: Violence and Revelation in Paris, 1789-1945*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001.
- Chevalier, Louis. *Classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses à Paris pendant la première moitié du XIXe siècle*. Paris: Plon, 1958.
- Crépon, Marc. *Le Consentement meurtrier*. Paris: Le Cerf, 2012.
- Davis, Colin. *Ethical Issues in Twentieth-Century French Fiction: Killing the Other*. Houndmills: Macmillan Press; New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
- ---. *Traces of War: Interpreting Ethics and Trauma in Twentieth-Century French Writing*. Liverpool : Liverpool University Press, 2018.
- Dufief, Pierre-Jean et al. *Violence politique et littérature au XIXe siècle*. Paris: Le Manuscrit, 2012.
- Fanon, Frantz. *Les Damnés de la terre*. Paris: Éditions Maspero, 1961.
- Foucault, Michel. *Surveiller et punir: naissance de la prison*. Paris: Gallimard, 1975.
- Girard, René. *La Violence et le sacré*. Paris: Hachette Littératures, 2006 (1972).
- Harendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Co, 1951.
- Héritier, Françoise. *De la violence I and II*. Paris: Odile Jacob, 1996, 1999.
- Marcandier-Colard, Christine. *Crimes de sang et scènes capitales: essai sur l'esthétique romantique de la violence*. Paris: PUF, 1998.
- Mbembe, Achille. 'Necropolitics' in *Public Culture* 15.1 (2003): 11-40.
- ---. *Politiques de l'inimitié*. Paris: La Découverte: 2016.
- Sanyal, Debarati. *The Violence of Modernity*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.
- Sapiro, Gisèle. *La Guerre des écrivains*. Paris: Fayard, 1999.
- Savey-Casard, Paul. *Le Crime et la peine dans l'oeuvre de Victor Hugo*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956.

16 - French Theatre: Between Page and Stage

Course Content

This paper will allow students to take a broad approach to French theatre from the early modern to the contemporary. Though text will still be at the heart of our discussions and the work produced, the approach will be a contextual one, with the course focusing on the practical elements that make theatre such a unique object of study. These will include: the theatre itself (troupes, spaces, forms of performance, and economic considerations), the actor (theories relating to the craft and status of the actor across time), the audience (the relationship between audiences, critics and theatrical production at specific moments, from early modern quarrels to modern spaces of criticism) and the performance (the chance to undertake close analysis of a live or filmed performance of a relevant text). As well as theatrical texts themselves, the texts to be studied could include historical documentation relating to the institutionalisation of theatre in the early modern period, eighteenth-century manuals on acting, and dossiers of reviews on innovative modern productions, such as those by the Théâtre du Soleil.

Teaching

The course is typically taught in a lecture series in Michaelmas Term (which students must attend), followed by a series of five seminars in Hilary Term of the student's final year. These seminars will be based around case studies drawn from across the period of study.

Examination: *Method of Assessment C* (2, with compulsory performance question)

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

Introductory Reading

You will have the opportunity to explore writers from different genres, periods and backgrounds. A full reading list will be circulated before the start of the course, but some suggestions for introductory secondary reading are:

- Christian Biet & Christophe Triau, *Qu'est-ce que le théâtre?* (Paris: Gallimard, 2006)
- Marvin Carlson, *Theories of the Theatre: A Historical and Critical Survey, from the Greeks to the Present* (Cornell University Press, 1993)
- Patrick Pavis, *Dictionnaire du théâtre*, 3rd edn (Paris: Armand Colin, 1996); *L'analyse des spectacle*, 2nd edn (Paris: Armand Colin, 2012)
- Anne Ubersfeld, *Lire le théâtre*, revised edition, 3 vols (Paris: Belin, 1996-1999)
- Alain Viala, ed., *Le Théâtre en France, des origines à nos jours* (Paris: PUF, 2009)

17 - Advanced French Translation: Theory and Practice

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.

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.

Examination: *Method of Assessment C (2; two translations with commentary OR one translation with commentary and one essay on translation theory).*

Introductory Reading

For a lively introduction to the subject, read David Bellos's *Is That a Fish in Your Ear?* (Penguin, 2011), which gives you the history of translation studies and its major current debates in entertaining style. The course itself used Jeremy Munday's *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* (Routledge, 2012) as a guide to the theory, and Ian Higgins and Sandor Hervey's, *Thinking French Translation* (Routledge, 2002) for stylistics and more practical considerations. Lawrence Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader* (Routledge, 1999) is a good starting point for more detailed exploration.

Paper XII - (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 will be able to borrow the film in question and watch it on your own.)

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.

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. You may 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 of 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.

Select Bibliography

- Jacques Aumont et al.: *Aesthetics of film*, Austin, 1992
- André Bazin: *What is cinema*, Berkeley 1967-1971
- Tim Bergfelder; Erica Carter; Deniz Göktürk: *The German cinema book*, London, 2002
- Peter E Bondanella: *A history of Italian cinema*, New York, 2009

- David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson: *Film Art an Introduction*, Boston, 2004
 - C. G. Crisp: *The classic French cinema, 1930-1960*, Bloomington, 1993
 - Sergei Eisenstein, ed. Richard Taylor: *The Eisenstein reader*, London, 1998
 - Peter William Evans: *Spanish cinema: the auteurist tradition*, Oxford, 1999
 - Noël Burch, *Theory of film practice*, London, 1973
 - Siegfried Kracauer: *Theory of film: the redemption of physical reality, 1889-1966*, New York, 1960
 - Philip Rosen: *Narrative, apparatus, ideology: a film theory reader*, New York, 1986
 - Michael Temple: *The French cinema book*, London, 2004
 - Nicolas Tredell: *Cinemas of the mind: a critical history of film theory*, Cambridge, 2002
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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:

[Examination conventions: MML UG Information \(ox.ac.uk\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/mml-ug-information)

THE REVISED EDITION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S EXAMINATION DECREES AND REGULATIONS LISTS THE EXAMINATION PAPERS AND THEIR PERMITTED COMBINATION FOR YOUR DEGREE COURSE. (FOR FURTHER DETAILS, REFER TO THE HANDBOOK AND THE EXAMINING CONVENTIONS.) SEE:

[Exam Regulations - Search \(ox.ac.uk\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/exam-regulations-search)

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.

Last revised June 24