

ST CATHERINE'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

HONOUR SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES (FRENCH) & JOINT SCHOOLS WITH MODERN LANGUAGES (FRENCH)

Congratulations again on your offer at St Catherine's! We very much look forward to you joining us in October.

Below you will find an outline French reading list, so that you can begin your preparation for the first year's work.

First year examinations (Prelims) take place at the end of the third (Trinity) Term. Lectures will take place on all prescribed texts during the first (Michaelmas) and second (Hilary) Terms. In College you will be taught for the literature papers in seminars (for the whole group) and tutorials (in smaller groups).

After some introductory sessions, we will concentrate first on the short texts, then on the four novels, with two meetings devoted to each text (the order will follow that on the reading list). We will expect work for each session to be prepared in advance, sometimes written out, and sometimes in note form.

We ask, therefore, that you read all the texts to be studied in a term at least once before the beginning of that term, **in the original French**. This is absolutely vital, since we work hard during the short Oxford terms, and you will not have time to do a lot of primary reading once we begin. **A secure knowledge of the primary texts is by far the most important aim at this stage.**

The texts to be studied in the first term are marked on the reading list with **. Please do your best to acquire the recommended editions, which should be available online: you might try independent book shops like mollat.com and librairie-compagnie.fr as well as the usual big name bookstores. Secondary reading lists will be provided in the Autumn.

Written language work (grammar, translation) will take place in two or three weekly classes, spread over all three terms, and complemented by oral classes with a native speaker. Please undertake a thorough revision of French grammar in advance of October. The most widely recommended grammars are Byrne and Churchill, *A Comprehensive French Grammar*, or Hawkins and Towell, *French Grammar and Usage*.

Sole French students will be taught the additional three papers (XI, XII, and XIII) in centralized University classes.

We will be in touch shortly before the beginning of term, with some more detailed information about work to prepare for your arrival. Meanwhile, look after yourselves, and we look forward to meeting you again in October.

Jessica Goodman
August 2023

SUB-FACULTY OF FRENCH

Paper III: Short Texts

****MONTAIGNE, 'Des Cannibales' (Essais, I, 31)**

Recommended edition:

Des Cannibales & Des Coches, ed. by Michel Tarpinian (Éditions Ellipses, 1994)

****RACINE, *Phèdre***

Recommended edition:

Phèdre, ed. Picard (Paris: Gallimard, Folio, 2015)

****VERLAINE, *Romances sans paroles***

Recommended edition:

Romances sans paroles, ed. Arnaud Bernadet (GF-Flammarion, 2018)

NDIAYE, *Papa doit manger*

Recommended edition:

Papa doit manger (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 2003)

Paper IV: French Narrative Fiction

La Chastelaine de Vergy

Recommended editions:

La Chastelaine de Vergy, ed. Jean Dufournet and Liliane Dulac (Paris: Folio-classique, 1994)

La Chastelaine de Vergy, in *Nouvelles courtoises*, ed. Suzanne Méjean-Thiolier and Marie-Françoise Notz-Grob (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1997)

LACLOS, *Les Liaisons dangereuses*

Recommended edition:

Les Liaisons dangereuses, ed. R. Pomeau (Paris, Flammarion, 1996)

GEORGE SAND, *Indiana*

Recommended edition:

Indiana, ed. Béatrice Didier (Paris: Folio Gallimard, 1984)

MARYSE CONDE, *Traversée de la mangrove*

Recommended edition:

Traversée de la mangrove (Paris: Gallimard, Folio, 1992)

For French sole students only:

In addition to French papers I-IV, you take the following papers, which are taught centrally. In the case of each paper, your lecturers/seminar tutor will provide you with topic-specific reading lists and essay titles.

Paper XI Introduction to French Film Studies

Introductory reading:

- Michael Temple and Michael Witt (eds), *The French Cinema Book* (British Film Institute, 2004). A detailed introduction to French cinema as an industry.
- David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art, An Introduction* (McGraw Hill, various editions). A very useful introduction explaining all the technical terms that are used to analyse a film.

This paper will introduce you to four twentieth- and twenty-first century French film directors. We discuss the concepts of realism, documentary and avant-garde cinema and introduce the basic tools of film analysis.

In your essay writing you will be able to engage with the directors' ideas and with their particular way of realising them. The films under discussion involve a wide range of themes such as love, power, gender relations and autobiography. Each director has a different style of filmmaking. The focus of the course is the question of how the film medium represents contemporary reality. We will look at the way each of these directors uses devices of storytelling to present a particular point of view upon the world we live in. You will be encouraged to watch more films by each of these directors.

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)

The teaching for this paper takes place in Michaelmas Term, with seminars on the prescribed films in weeks 2, 4, 6 and 8. 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. [Normally the three-hour examination in Trinity Term requires you to answer three questions, each on a different film. There will be a choice of two questions on each film.] **In 2023-24 this paper will not be formally examined, but certified on the basis of the submission of one of the essays written as part of the course.**

In addition to the seminars you must follow the modern languages lecture-series entitled Introduction to Film Studies in weeks 1, 3, 5 and 7 in Michaelmas Term. These lectures present basic concepts of film analysis – montage, story, self-reference, and spectatorship – in four lectures devoted to four international films. These 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); Michelangelo Antonioni (1967): *Blow-up*; Claire Denis: *Beau Travail* (1999).

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 authors (note the recommended editions) are:

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

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. [Normally the three-hour examination in Trinity Term requires you to answer three questions, each on a different author. There will be a choice of two essay questions on each author.] **In 2023-24 this paper will not be formally examined, but certified on the basis of the submission of one of the essays written as part of the course.**

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 (note the recommended editions) are:

**Descartes, *Discours de la méthode*, edited by Laurence Renault (Garnier-Flammarion)

**Rousseau, *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité* (Folio)

Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe* (Folio), I, 'Introduction'; 'Mythes'; II, 'La femme mariée'; 'La mère'. (NB Both the French 'Idées' collection and the English translation have sections missing and cannot be relied upon)

Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme, suivi de Discours sur la Négritude* (Présence Africaine).

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 a commentary, the other two essays. There will be a choice of one commentary passage from each text and one essay question on each text.**