

# Tutorials: Modern languages: French

*THE LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES of Britain's European neighbours are the focus of well established and internationally recognised scholarship in Oxford. Students have the chance to study medieval as well as contemporary forms of each language and early literary forms as well as European cinema. The Language Centre provides resources in various media for independent language study, the Taylorian Institute had rich library resources, and proximity to Europe enables students to travel independently to practice their language skills among native speakers during the mid-term break.*

With the exception of a handful of courses, the descriptions below are copyright University of Oxford and cover tutorial courses offered by the University to matriculated undergraduates. SSO students follow such courses as closely as is practicable, though there may be scope for minor variation to take into account students' previous experience. Students will not necessarily cover all the material cited in the description (especially when they take the course as a secondary tutorial). All tutorials involve in-depth study: where the title might suggest a survey course, the content of the tutorial will involve focused study on part of the syllabus.

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## Early French Texts Prescribed for Study as Examples of Literature

This course consists of the close study of three varied texts which illustrate the incomparable richness and variety of medieval French literature: the *Chanson de Roland*, whose unique text is found in the Bodleian Library, is a heroic tale of military prowess and moral anguish, whose poetry and searching profundity are perennially relevant; Bérout's *Tristan* tells the immortal story of doomed adulterous love in a narrative of bewitching subtlety; Villon's *Testament* and *Poésies Diverses* recreate the complexity of life in

the University and the back streets of Paris in the fifteenth century from the vantage-point of the socially marginal criminal-poet.

Introductory reading: R. Cook, *The Sense of the 'Song of Roland'*, 1987; P. Le Gentil, *François Villon*, 1967; A. Varvaro (trans. J. Barnes), *Bérout's 'Tristan'*, 1972.

## French Literature to 1530

Medieval France is the home of some of the masterpieces of European Literature and the aim of the course is to enable you to study the most

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celebrated examples, ranging from the 'epic biography' of Guillaume d'Orange to the great lyric poets of the fifteenth century, in such a way that they can be properly understood in the context of the types of society which produced them. You will also gain an insight into the precursors of many of the traditional genres and classic texts of French literature. To ensure fair coverage the period is divided into the years preceding the accession of the first Valois king, Philippe VI, in 1328 and those following. The earlier period includes works like the courtly romances of Chrétien de Troyes, the Tristan legend, Saints' Lives, the secular stage, comic narratives, religious drama and Arthurian prose romances. In the second half of the period you will encounter lyric poets like Guillaume de Machaut, Alain Chartier, Charles d'Orléans, along with satires (*Les Quinze Joyes de Mariage*), chronicles (Froissart), allegorical poems, women writers such as Christine de Pizan. A high proportion of the texts studied is available in excellent and inexpensive editions in the series "Lettres Gothiques" (Livre de Poche).

Introductory reading: L.R. Muir, *Literature and Society in Medieval France*, 1985; J.C. Payen, *La Littérature Française 1. Le Moyen Age*, 1984; D. Poirion, *Le Moyen Age II. 1300–1480*, 1971.

### French Literature, 1530–800

The period 1530–1800 sees French culture developing as a dominant force in Europe and in the world. The period embraces major cultural movements (e.g. Renaissance humanism, baroque, classicism, and the Enlightenment), genres such as tragedy, comedy, and the novel, and such major writers as Rabelais and Montaigne from the sixteenth century, Corneille, Pascal, Molière and Racine from the seventeenth, and Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau from the eighteenth. The object in preparing this paper is to study texts not only for their individual merits, but also in relation to each other within the broad framework of the period's cultural developments. You can follow the development of literary genres: drama, poetry or the novel. You can explore thematic similarities between texts, such as the treatment of social class or gender,

attitudes to authority, responses to the natural world, representations of the self. You can also consider texts for their contribution to the history of ideas, such as political and social reform, philosophical trends, religious faith and scepticism. There are no prescribed texts or authors; you are positively encouraged to develop your own interests and to read authors and explore topics of your choice. 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.

Suggested reading: J. Cruickshank [ed.], *French Literature and its Background*, vols 1–3, 1968–69 [these three volumes contain introductory chapters on major writers and topics in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries respectively]. The following works are, in different ways, landmarks in criticism: P. Bénichou, *Morales du grand siècle*, 1948; T. Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance*, 1979; P. Hazard, *La Crise de la conscience européenne*, 1935; J. Starobinski, *L'Invention de la liberté 1700–1789*, 1964. Two very different, but both helpful and stimulating, reference guides to authors and topics in this and other periods of French literature are: *A New History of French Literature*, ed. D. Hollier, 1989; *The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French*, ed. P. France, 1995.

### French Literature from 1715 to the Present

This course provides an opportunity to study a wide range of literary and cultural developments set against the background of the complex political and social developments which have formed modern France. The paper is not, however, seen as primarily historical in content or approach. It is possible to look at literary and intellectual developments in terms of the personal achievement of individual writers, as well as exploring larger movements and 'schools' of writing such as the Enlightenment, Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, Symbolism,

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Surrealism, Existentialism, Theatre of the Absurd, or the *nouveau roman*. It is also possible to trace developments within individual genres (including less familiar genres from the *récit* to autobiography) and to consider the impact of non-mainstream groups, such as women, gay, and Francophone writers. The structure of the paper encourages the application of a range of theoretical approaches. Because of the sheer bulk and variety of the material which the paper potentially covers, the works studied will vary according to choices made in consultation with tutors. It is quite normal to limit coverage to a number of complementary topics in one or more parts of the period.

Authors commonly covered include: i) for the eighteenth century: Marivaux, Prévost, Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, Beaumarchais, Sade, and Chénier; ii) for the nineteenth century: Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, Sand, Zola, Maupassant, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé; iii) for the twentieth century: Apollinaire, Valéry, Gide, Proust, Colette, Cocteau, Malraux, Camus, Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Mauriac, Genet, Ionesco, Beckett, Robbe-Grillet, Butor, Sarraute, Duras, Tournier. It is also possible to study a range of topics, that include these and other authors. In addition to approaches based on literary movements, possible topics include *drame bourgeois*, the epistolary novel, first-person fiction, Romantic drama, literature and the visual arts, literature and music, gender and writing, literary commitment, post-modern narrative, the representation of the city, the literary reflection of national identity, cultural marginalisation, and AIDS writing.

As well as reading a selection of basic texts, as advised by your tutor, you should also acquaint yourself with the historical and cultural background. Appropriate introductory works include: P. France (ed), *The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French*, 1995; D. Hollier (ed), *A New History of French Literature*, 1989; Sarah Kay, Terence Cave and Malcolm Bowie, *A Short History of French Literature*, 2003; Mary Lewis Shaw, *The Cambridge Introduction to French Poetry*, 2003; M.-C. Bancquart and P.

Cahné, *Littérature française du XXe siècle*, 1992; Victoria Best, *An Introduction to Twentieth-Century French Literature*, 2002; D.G. Charlton (ed.), *The French Romantics*, 2 vols, 1984; A. Cobban, *A History of Modern France 1715–1962*, 3 vols, 1963–65; J. Cruickshank (ed.), *French Literature and its Background*, vols 3,4,5 and 6, 1968–70; L. Furst (ed.), *Realism*, 1993; J.-M. Goulemot, *La Littérature des lumières en toutes lettres*, 1989; Belinda Jack, *Francophone Literatures: an introductory survey*, 1996; A. Michel and others, *Littérature française du XIXe siècle*, Collection Premier Cycle, 1993; Christopher Prendergast (ed), *Nineteenth-Century French Poetry: introductions to close reading*, 1990; C. Robinson, *Scandal in the Ink: Male and Female Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century French Literature*, 1995; E.M. Sartori and D.W. Zimmerman (eds.), *French Women Writers*, 1991; 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. 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.

### French Narrative Fiction

This paper introduces you to four narrative texts written between the Middle Ages and the mid-twentieth century: *La Chastelaine de Vergy*; Laclos, *Les Liaisons dangereuses*; Balzac, *La Peau de chagrin*; Proust, *Combray*. 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.

### Introduction to French Film Studies

This course will introduce you to four twentieth-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 Vigo, *L'Atalante*; Jacques Becker, *Casque d'or*; Jean-Luc Godard, *A bout de souffle*; Bertrand Blier, *Les Valseuses*

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### Introduction to French Literary Theory

This course 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 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); Sartre, *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?* (Folio) [Sections I and II only]; Barthes, *Critique et vérité* (Seuil); Todorov, 'La notion de littérature', 'L'origine des genres', 'Les deux principes du récit', 'Introduction au vraisemblable' in *La Notion de littérature et autres essais* (recommended edition : Seuil)

### Key Texts in French Thought

This course 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* (Garnier-Flammarion); Rousseau, *Discours sur l'inégalité* (Folio) ; Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (PUF) [Chapters I and II only].; Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe* (Folio), I, 'Introduction'; 'Mythes'; II, 'La femme mariée'; 'La mère'.

### Late-Medieval Responses to *Le Roman de la rose*

*Le Roman de la rose* established itself as a medieval mastertext from the appearance of its continuation by Jean de Meun in the late

thirteenth century. This course aims to answer the question: 'what happened next?', tracing the shifting and intersecting reputations of the text and its two authors, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as the poem rapidly acquired controversy. Responses to the *Rose* retrospectively define it as an intellectual auctoritas, a misogynistic tirade, a travesty of allegorical writing, an interpretative minefield; Jean is lauded or lambasted, whilst Guillaume is usually forgotten. Texts for consideration take diverse forms and cover a range of genres (from prose epistle to dramatic monologue) and tones (from

moralizing treatise to comic anecdote). It will be possible to consider the target, form, and literary context of a range of responses, including works by Guillaume de Machaut, Guillaume de Deguileville, Jean Le Fèvre, Christine de Pizan, Martin Le Franc, and Pierre Michault, and to explore the complex intertextual negotiations through which such writers acknowledge their indebtedness

to, as well as their departure from, the *Rose*.

Introductory reading: P.-Y. Badel, *Le Roman de la rose au quatorzième siècle: étude de la réception de l'oeuvre*, Geneva, 1980; E. Hicks (ed.), *Le Débat sur 'le Roman de la rose'*, Paris, 1977; S. Huot, *The 'Romance of the Rose' and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission*, Cambridge, 1993; Jean-Claude Mühlethaler, *Poétiques du quinzième siècle*, Paris 1983; R. B. Palmer (ed.), *Chaucer's French Contemporaries: The Poetry/Poetics of Self and Tradition*, New York, 1999



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### Linguistic Studies I: The History of the French Language up to the Mid-Twentieth Century

This course offers you the opportunity to study the development of the French language from Vulgar Latin to Modern French. The course is divided into two sections to enable you to combine study in breadth with the more detailed exploration of a particular period or periods. Section A includes the history of the language from earliest times to the present day, or and historical linguistics as applied to French. Questions may cover phonological, orthographical, morphological, syntactic, lexical, semantic, stylistic and sociolinguistic topics, as well as ideas about the French language in an historical perspective. Section B is divided into a number of parts starting with the transition from Latin to French and the early history of the language and moving on to periods which correspond, roughly speaking, to the literary periods covered in other papers (1100–1530, 1530–1715, and 1715–1940. This makes it possible for you, if you so choose, to make fruitful links between your study of language and literature.

### Linguistic Studies II: Modern French

You will study the structure and varieties of the modern French language, and learn to exploit and assess the usefulness of traditional and modern methods of linguistic analysis for this purpose. You will also become familiar with some of the most important developments in the history of French, when these illuminate modern usage. Except for the introductory reading (see below), there are no set texts, although for various topics there are a number of important studies about which tutors will advise you. You will learn how to analyse spoken and written French in terms of its sound system (phonetics and phonology), its spelling, its word structure (morphology), and its syntax. You will also have the opportunity to consider the nature and causes of social variation in French speaking communities, the way discourse is structured in French, the effect on French of other languages, and the relationship between linguistic analysis and literary studies. 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.

A good general introduction to this area is: A. Battye and M.-A. Hintze, *The French Language Today*, 1992. A very readable introduction to general linguistics: V. Fromkin and R. Rodman, *An Introduction to Language*, 5th edition, 1993.

### Modern Prescribed French Authors I

This paper provides the opportunity to concentrate on and study in detail the work of two 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. The descriptions below are designed to help you choose your authors. The suggested reading is intended simply to start you off. Tutors will provide more detailed guidance once you have made your choice.

You choose any two of:

- 1) Rabelais (c. 1494–c. 1553): The five books of Rabelais's chronicles of Gargantua and Pantagruel (1532–64) present the author's enormous range of intellectual interests within a framework of coarse humour and wild fantasy. Reading Rabelais is challenging, fascinating and rewarding. He opens perspectives on his own times, the Renaissance and Reformation. He creates thought-provoking comedy out of topics as diverse as learning and ignorance, war and peace, marriage and cuckoldry, as well as medical, legal and theological issues. His whole work raises questions about language and literature, meaning and interpretation, laughter and seriousness. The books prescribed for special study are *Gargantua and the Quart Livre*. Introductory reading: Daniel Ménager, *Rabelais en toutes lettres*, 1989 and Carol Clark, *The Vulgar Rabelais*, 1985 are succinct and useful. The two longer and more challenging works by Mikhail Bakhtin,

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Rabelais and his World, 1968, on popular culture and carnival spirit, and Michael Screech, Rabelais, 1979, on the religious and intellectual background, provide a stimulating contrast.

- 2) Montaigne (1533–92): The three books of 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 and the French religious wars. Introductory reading: John Holyoake, *Montaigne*, 1983 (*Critical Guides to French Literature*) deals with the topics in the *Essais*, whilst Peter Burke, *Montaigne*, 1981 (*Past Masters*) covers the broader intellectual background. R.A. Sayce, *The Essays of Montaigne*, 1973, gives the best overall view of the *Essais*.
- 3) Pascal (1623–62): If in the course of his short life, Pascal was primarily known as a mathematician and scientist, his most enduring literary contributions lie in the wittily polemical *Lettres provinciales*, a virulent attack on the Society of Jesus, and in the fragmentary apology for the Christian religion, left unfinished at his death, but universally known as the *Pensées*, whose pessimistic imagery, rhetorical control and

dogmatic conviction have left few readers indifferent. The *Pensées* constitute the major text for study, although certain of the *Opuscules* (*De l'esprit géométrique et de l'art de persuader*, *Entretien avec Monsieur de Saci*, *Ecrits sur la grâce*, and the preface to the *Traité sur le vide*) all throw important light on the central project. Parallels may then be drawn with the *Lettres provinciales*, notably in terms of the persuasive strategies deployed. Introductory reading: It is particularly important to read the *Pensées* in the prescribed edition (ed. G. Ferreyrolles et P. Sellier, in *La Pochothèque [Livre de Poche/Classiques Garnier]*), which also contains the *Opuscules* and *Lettres provinciales*. A convenient brief introduction to Pascal is provided by A.J. Krailsheimer in the 'Past Masters' series (1980). A fuller survey is afforded by J. Mesnard, *Les 'Pensées' de Pascal*, 1976, and a more radical reading offered by Sara Melzer, *Discourses of the Fall*, 1986.

- 4) Molière (1622–73): Molière remains one of the most popular French writers, popular among producers and theatre-goers as well as among students and critics. He not only wrote plays, he also produced them and starred in them, creating in the process his own individual brand of comedy. His output is very varied, changing to suit the different needs of the audiences at court and in the public theatre in Paris. He is noted for introducing issues of burning topical importance into stock plots played out by stock character types, and he thereby transforms the tradition out of which his comedy grows. Molière can be credited with the invention of the *comédie-ballet*, a highly successful combination of comedy, dance, and music. All these aspects of his work can be seen in the plays prescribed for special study: *L'Ecole des femmes*, *Le Tartuffe*, *Dom Juan*, *Le Misanthrope*, *Les Fourberies de Scapin* and *Le Malade Imaginaire*. Introductory reading: The following two general works are good at setting Molière in an historical context

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and at opening up some lines of interpretation: J. Grimm, *Molière en son temps*, 1993. W.D. Howarth, *Molière: A Playwright and his Audience*, 1982. A more adventurous critical study embracing all Molière's output, and including some stimulating and provocative readings of some of the plays prescribed for special study is: G. Defaux, *Molière ou les métamorphoses du comique*, 1980/1992.

- 5) Racine (1639–99) Racine is the author of eleven tragedies and one comedy. His tragedies are often seen as the high point of French tragic drama and are still highly successful on stage. They explore the frequently fatal and always disorderly consequences of human passion in a most elegant and stylized form. The main characters are kings, queens and emperors; they are deployed in historical or mythological settings; for the most part, they use elevated vocabulary and speak in alexandrines. But they are susceptible to moments of aching sexual desire, excruciating jealousy, uncontrolled anger, and painful hopelessness that make them like all other human beings. You will have the opportunity to explore the sense of the tragic in his work and to sample the diverse critical readings to which his plays have given rise (among them, rhetorical, theatrical, structuralist, psychoanalytical, Marxist). You will be expected to acquire detailed knowledge of the six prescribed tragedies: *Andromaque*, *Britannicus*, *Bérénice*, *Bajazet*, *Iphigénie*, and *Athalie*, but also to read his other plays. Introductory reading: P. Yarrow's *Racine*, 1978, is a clear and informative introduction, which also sets Racine in the context of the seventeenth-century theatre. A short introduction to the varied critical approaches to Racine is J. Rohou's *Jean Racine, Bilan critique*, 1994. Two different approaches to Racine can be recommended as starting points for serious critical reading: D. Maskell, *Racine: A Theatrical Reading*, 1991. R. Parish, *Racine:*

*The Limits of Tragedy*, 1993; An influential critical work for some years has been R. Barthes, *Sur Racine* 1963

- 6) Voltaire (1694–1778): Dramatist, satirist, historian, philosopher, polemicist, poet, Voltaire is (with Diderot and Rousseau) one of the three major writers of the French Enlightenment. The texts prescribed for special study are his *Lettres philosophiques* (1734), one of his earliest and most trenchant satires, and some of his contes in prose and verse written in mid- and late career (*Zadig*, *Paméla* (pp.138–96), *Candide*, *Contes de Guillaume Vadé* (pp.339–453), *La Princesse de Babylone*, *Les Lettres d'Amabed*, *Le Taureau blanc*). In addition to these texts, you will study a selection of his other writings, chosen from among his histories (e.g. *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*), tragedies (e.g. *Zaïre*, *Mahomet*, *Mérope*) philosophical and polemical works (e.g. *Dictionnaire philosophique*, *Traité sur la tolérance*). 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. Guillon, *Pochothèque*, *Livre de Poche*, 1994). You will also find H. Mason, *Voltaire, a Biography*, 1981, and his *Voltaire*, 1975, helpful introductions to the author, his work and his background. A more advanced study of the contes is R. Pearson, *The Fables of Reason: A Study of Voltaire's 'contes philosophiques'*, 1993.
- 7) Diderot (1713–84): Probably the most varied and original of the Enlightenment writers, Diderot is a particularly stimulating author. The prescribed texts give some idea of the wide range of his intellectual activity: novels (*Jacques le Fataliste*), satire (*Le Neveu de Rameau*), philosophical dialogue (*Le Rêve de d'Alembert*), art criticism (*Le Salon de 1765*). 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

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theory (*Le Fils naturel*, *Le Père de famille* and the associated theoretical writings), or his short stories. Introductory reading: a convenient short introduction to Diderot's life and work is P. France, *Diderot*, 1983, and an annotated selection of his writings can be found in the very useful *Diderot: Textes et débats*, edited by J.-C. Bonnet, *Livre de poche*, 1984.

### Modern Prescribed French Authors II

This course provides the opportunity to concentrate on and study in detail the work of two 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. The descriptions below are designed to help you choose your authors. The suggested reading is

intended simply to start you off. Tutors will provide more detailed guidance once you have made your choice. You choose any two of:

- 1) Stendhal (1783–1842): 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 prescribed texts, *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1830) and *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839) are considered to be the most important. He also wrote in a wide variety of other genres (short fiction, the diary, memoirs, biography, art history, travel writing, literary journalism), and there will be opportunities to explore, amongst others: Stendhal's 'chronicles' of French and Italian society in the first decades of the nineteenth century (incl. *Chroniques italiennes*); the status of women in his works





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(with particular reference to the eponymous heroine of his unfinished novel, *Lamiel*); his autobiography (*Vie de Henry Brulard*); the writings on art and literature (*Histoire de la peinture en Italie, Racine et Shakespeare*).  
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): 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. You will study *Les Fleurs du Mal* and *Le Spleen de Paris* in detail, and will need to have an understanding of the principal features of his art and literary criticism. In addition, you will be expected to have read his short story *Le Fanfarlo* and his *Journaux intimes*. Introductory reading: A useful general introduction would be M.A. Ruff, *Baudelaire*, 1966, or F.W. Leakey, *Les Fleurs du Mal, Landmarks in World Literature*, 1992. In addition, undergraduates will find the following works helpful: L.J. Austin, *L'Univers poétique de Baudelaire*, 1956; L. Bersani,

*Baudelaire and Freud*, 1977; J.A. Hiddleston, *Baudelaire and 'Le Spleen de Paris'*, 1987.

- 3) Flaubert (1821–80): Flaubert's work explores the conditions of modernity — irony, 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*, and other texts you should read of his remaining work are his exotic novel *Salammbô*, *Bouvard et Pécuchet* and *La Tentation de Saint Antoine*. His correspondence (*Bibliothèque de la Pléiade*) is as revealing as his fiction is restrained. Introductory reading: you should read *Madame Bovary* and as many of Flaubert's other works as you can. Amongst the many useful critical guides are A. Thorlby, *Gustave Flaubert and the Art of Realism*, 1957, and V. Brombert, *The Novels of Flaubert*, 1966, S. Heath, *Madame Bovary*, 1992, Alan Raitt, *The Originality of 'Madame Bovary'*, 2002, and his *Flaubert, 'Trois contes'*, 1991. A central work is J. Culler's *Flaubert: The Uses of Uncertainty*, 1974, which searchingly questions the conclusions of earlier studies.
- 4) Mallarmé (1842–98): Coming after Hugo and Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé dominates the history of French poetry in the last three decades of the nineteenth century. A contemporary of Verlaine and Rimbaud, he was revered by the younger generation of poets who called themselves Symbolists (from 1886 onwards). By the mid 1860s Mallarmé had already become conscious of the radical way in which he would pursue his calling as a poet: that is, by abandoning all effusive or ironic expression of a lyrical self (characteristic, respectively, of the Romantics and of Baudelaire) and by 'ceding the initiative to words'. He soon developed a reputation for 'difficulty', which has persisted to this day; but his poems (in prose as well as verse) become readily accessible when approached as verbal

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lacework in which no personal experience is narrated but rather the separate threads of meaning attaching to individual words are woven into new, quasi-musical patterns of significance. Patience and a large dictionary soon reveal many of the 'mysterious relationships' which Mallarmé found 'pre-existing' in language itself. In your reading you will be concentrating on the *Poésies*, published posthumously, which brings together (as he had intended) the majority of his poems in verse. You will also need to study 'Un coup de Dés' (1897), a boldly experimental poem which appears to dispense with the rules of versification, and his *Divagations* (1897), a collection of prose poems and revised newspaper and review articles (on music, religion, and the theatre, and on the nature of poetry and the role of the poet in society). As well as trying to arrive at coherent readings of his individual texts, you will become involved in discussion of Mallarmé's aesthetic of poetry, its radical consequences and the central place which this aesthetic has come to occupy in the debate about the nature and meaning of Postmodernism. 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) Gide (1869–1951): The work of André Gide is central to the phase of literary experimentation that followed Naturalism and Symbolism. The texts prescribed for special study are: *L'Immoraliste*, *La Porte étroite*, *Si le grain ne meurt* and *Les Faux-Monnayeurs*. You will be expected therefore to have a broad knowledge of Gide's writing in several genres (short prose fiction, novel, and autobiography) and an understanding of the issues raised by these, including ethical concerns relating to the individual in society, the question of homosexuality, the problems of self-conscious writing, and the relationship between fiction and reality, writing and life. In practice, you will read widely from Gide's oeuvre and acquire a grasp of its literary and intellectual context. Introductory reading: alongside the four prescribed texts, you should read: G. Brée, *André Gide: l'Insaissable Protée*, 1970; A. Goulet, *André Gide, écrire pour vivre*, 2002; M. Tilby, *Gide: 'Les Faux-Monnayeurs'*, 1981; C. Tolton, *Gide and the Art of Autobiography*, 1975; D. Walker, *André Gide*, 1990; The following website is also of interest: <http://www.gidiana.net>.
- 6) Sartre (1905–80): There are four texts prescribed for special study: *La Nausée*, *Les*

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Mouches, Les Séquestrés d'Altona and Les Mots are the texts from which commentaries will be set, but you will be expected to read a selection of Sartre's other plays and novels, and perhaps to dip into his philosophical, critical or political writings, according to what most appeals to you. Sartre is an exciting choice of author, for his existentialism will take you into areas outside the narrowly literary, and broaden your horizons in many different and unexpected ways. Introductory reading: you should read the prescribed texts, of course, and also, if you have time, plays such as Huis clos, Les Mains sales, and Kean. You might also like to try some of Les Chemins de la liberté, perhaps L'Age de raison, the first volume. Many good critical works are available, including: Benedict O'Donohoe, Sartre's Theatre: Acts for Life, 2005; M. Contat (ed), Comment et pourquoi Sartre a écrit "Les Mots", 1997; R. Goldthorpe, Sartre: Literature and Theory, 1984; C. Howells, Sartre: The Necessity of Freedom, 1988; C. Howells, Sartre, Modern Literatures in Perspective, 1995; Other excellent critics include: R. Aronson, Jean-Paul Sartre: Philosophy in the World, 1980; H. Barnes, Sartre, 1974; F. Jeanson, Sartre [Ecrivains de toujours]; D. LaCapra, A Preface to Sartre, 1978.

- 7) Marguerite Duras (1924–1996): 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). You will also be expected to read a selection of Duras's other works, such as to enable you to study Duras's 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. 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: L. Hill, Marguerite Duras: Apocalyptic desires, Routledge 1993. L. Adler, Marguerite Duras, Gallimard 1998. C. Hofman, Forgetting and Marguerite Duras, (Up of Colorado, 1991). J. Kristeva, 'La Maladie de la douleur: Duras', in Soleil Noir. Dépression et Mélancolie, (Gallimard, 1987). J. Bradley Winston, Postcolonial Duras: Cultural Memory in Post-War France, (Palgrave, 2001).

### Short Texts in French

This course will introduce you to the techniques of close reading through the study of six short works arranged in three complementary pairs: (i) Montaigne, 'Des Coches' from Essais III Mme de Graffigny, Lettres d'une Péruvienne (ii) Baudelaire, a selection of poems from the section 'Spleen et Idéal' of Les Fleurs du Mal Aimé Césaire, Cahier d'un retour au pays natal (iii) Racine, Phèdre Beckett, En attendant Godot

### Translation from Modern French and Translation into Modern French: Advanced Level

This course develops the skills needed to translate both into and from modern French. Passages for translation from French will be taken from post-1800 texts, and those for translation into French from post-1900 texts. A range of styles and registers will be covered, e.g. narrative, descriptive, analytical, reflective, and journalistic.

### Translation from pre-modern French: Advanced Level

This course develops the skills needed to translate into English passages written in pre-modern French. The material covered will include prose and verse ranging from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries.

### Written French: Advanced Level

This course develops the skills needed to write essays in French on a range of literary, linguistic, and general cultural topics.