Part I Paper 4: Literature 1830-Present
Dr. Anna Vaninskaya

Oxford University Press and Penguin editions are authoritative and easy to get, but Broadview Press editions and Norton Critical editions contain a wealth of supplementary contextual information and should be used where possible.

Past Exam Papers and Examiners' Reports
http://www.english.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/local/part1/index.htm

Week 1: Faith and Doubt

Primary


See also

Gerard Manley Hopkins, “Selected Letters” and “Journal”

Matthew Arnold, “Empedocles on Etna,” “Dover Beach,” Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse,” “The Church of Brou”

Algernon Charles Swinburne, “Laus Veneris,” “Dolores,” “Hymn to Proserpine,” “The Last Oracle”

Thomas Hardy, “Channel Firing,” “The Subalterns,” “God-forgotten,” “God’s Funeral,” “The Darkling Thrush,” “Hap”


Secondary

Questions

1) “I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of our Lord by it….” (G. M. Hopkins Journal entry of May 18, 1870)
What is the relationship between religion and nature in Victorian poetry? Religion and science?

2) Discuss the varieties of Victorian poetic religious experience. Catholic/pagan/agnostic, historical/contemporary, political/personal/philosophical, ironic/devotional, etc.

3) What do formal/metrical/stylistic/generic choices contribute to the poetry of faith and doubt?
Week 2: Realism and Gender

Primary

*George Eliot, *Adam Bede*

*Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*

*G. B. Shaw, *Mrs Warren’s Profession* (and Preface)

See Also

George Eliot, “Silly Novels by Lady Novelists” in Rosemary Ashton, ed. *Selected Critical Writings*

Thomas Hardy, “Candour in English Fiction” in Harold Orel, ed. *Thomas Hardy’s Personal Writings*

Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*

Elizabeth Gaskell, *Cousin Phillis*

D. G. Rossetti, “Jenny” (http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/3-1848.raw.html)


Secondary


Elaine Showalter, *A Literature of their Own: British Women Novelists from Bronte to Lessing* (1977)

---, *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (1992)


Martha Vicinus, ed., *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age* (1972)

---, *A Widening Sphere: Changing Roles of Victorian Women* (1977)


Regina Barreca, ed. *Sex and Death in Victorian Literature* (1990)

Sally Ledger, *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle* (1997)

Questions

1) “It is always ... the poor girl what gets the blame.”

2) What is realism?

3) How does the New Woman differ from the old?
Week 3: Division of Self and Society

Primary

* Thomas Hood, “The Song of the Shirt”


* Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*

* R. L. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

* Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

See Also

Benjamin Disraeli, *Sybil*

Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South* and *Mary Barton*

Charlotte Bronte, *Shirley*

Charles Kingsley, *Alton Locke*

John Ruskin, *Unto This Last* in Clive Wilmer, ed. *Unto This Last and Other Writings* (Penguin)


Secondary

Kathleen Tillotson, *Novels of the Eighteen Forties* (1954)


---. *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence* (1970)


H. Gustav Klaus, ed. *The Literature of Labour: Two Hundred Years of Working-Class Writing* (1985)


Sally Ledger and Scott McCracken, eds., *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siecle* (1995)


G. K. Chesterton, *Charles Dickens* (1906)


F. R. Leavis and Q. D. Leavis, *Dickens, The Novelist* (1973)


Andrew Sanders, *Dickens and the Spirit of the Age* (1999)


Sally Ledger, *Dickens and the Popular Radical Imagination* (2007)


Questions

1) “Passive suffering is not a theme for poetry.”
   
   W. B. Yeats, Introduction to The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892-1935
   
   Discuss (no need to limit yourself to poetry).

2) How does the novel work as a medium of social criticism?

3) Do fictions of a divided self reflect a divided society?
High and Low

Primary

*Oscar Wilde, “The Decay of Lying” in Richard Ellmann, ed. The Artist as Critic: The Critical Writings of Oscar Wilde

*Walter Pater, Preface and Conclusion to The Renaissance

*J. M. Whistler, “Ten O’Clock Lecture” (http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/html/Tenocloc.htm)

*John Davidson, “Thirty Bob a Week” in Francis O’Gorman, ed. Victorian Poetry: An Annotated Anthology

*H. G. Wells, The History of Mr. Polly

*E. M. Forster, Howard’s End

See Also

Oscar Wilde, “The Critic as Artist,” “Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young,” “Impression du Matin,” “Impressions,” “In the Gold Room,” “The Harlot’s House,” “Symphony in Yellow,” Poems in Prose

Arthur Symons, The Symbolist Movement in Literature and poetry including “At the Cavour,” “At Dieppe,” “Paris,” “The Barrel-Organ”

Ernest Dowson, “Cynarae,” “Spleen”


Jerome K. Jerome, Three Men in a Boat

George Orwell, Coming Up for Air

Secondary


Ian Small, Conditions for Criticism: Authority, Knowledge and Literature in the late Nineteenth Century (1991)

Raymond Williams, Culture and Society Part II: Interregnum (1958)

---, The Country and the City (1973)


Linda Dowling, Language and Decadence in the Victorian Fin de Siècle (1986)

William Greenslade, Degeneration, Culture and the Novel, 1880-1940 (1994)


Joseph Bristow, ed. The Fin-de-Siècle Poem: English Literary Culture and the 1890s (2005)


John Stokes, In the Nineties (1989)

Holbrook Jackson, The Eighteen Nineties (1913)


Samuel Hynes, The Edwardian Turn of Mind (1968)

John Carey, The Intellectuals and the Masses (1992)


[Fin de Siècle books from the previous reading list]


Carolyn Williams, Transfigured World: Walter Pater’s Aesthetic Historicism (1989)

Questions

1) “Then in 1900 everybody got down off his stilts; henceforth nobody drank absinthe with his black coffee; nobody went mad; nobody committed suicide; nobody joined the Catholic church; or if they did I have forgotten.”
   W. B. Yeats, Introduction to The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892-1935

Was Yeats right? Does it make sense to portray the Fin de Siècle and the Edwardian era as two different periods? What was their relationship to Victorianism? (to Modernism?)

2) High vs. low art; aesthetes vs. clerks; intellectuals vs. masses. Discuss with regard to any (or all) of the readings.

3) What is the place of humour in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century literature?
Modernism

Primary

*James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

*Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway

“Modern Fiction” and “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown” in Andrew McNeillie, ed. *Essays of Virginia Woolf*


“Tradition and the Individual Talent,” “Marie Lloyd,” “Ulysses, Order, and Myth” in *Modernism: An Anthology*

See Also

*Modernism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey (Blackwell), especially Ezra Pound's and W. B. Yeats’s poetry, Pound’s and Wyndham Lewis's Manifestos, and short stories by Ford Madox Ford, Dorothy Richardson, Mary Butts, Jean Rhys, and Elizabeth Bowen

Virginia Woolf, *Flush: A Biography* and *Freshwater: A Comedy*

D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*

Secondary

[There is a wealth of criticism on the individual works, take a look at the bibliographies in your editions as a first port of call]


---, *Modernism and the Fate of Individuality: Character and Form in the Modern English Novel* (1991)


Peter Faulkner, *Modernism* (1977)


---, *Modernity and Metropolis* (2002)


Richard Ellmann, James Joyce (1983)
---, ed. The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce (1990)
Patrick Parrinder, James Joyce (1984)
Steven Connor, James Joyce (1996)
Hugh Kenner, Joyce’s Voices (1987)
Dominic Manganiello, James Joyce’s Politics (1980)
Emer Nolan, James Joyce and Nationalism (1995)
Jean-Michel Rabate, James Joyce and the Politics of Egoism (2001)
R. B. Kershner, Joyce, Bakhtin and Popular Literature (1989)
Mark Wollaeger, James Joyce’s A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man: A Casebook (2003)
William Schutte, ed. Twentieth-Century Interpretations of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1968)

---, Novels of Virginia Woolf (1977)
Sue Roe and Susan Sellers, eds. The Cambridge Companion to Virginia Woolf (2000)
John Mepham, Criticism in Focus: Virginia Woolf (1992)
Leila Brosnan, Reading Virginia Woolf’s Essays and Journalism (1997)
Perry Meisel, Absent Father: Virginia Woolf and Walter Pater (1980)
Christine Froula, Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde: War, Civilization, Modernity (2005)
Melba Cuddy-Keane, Virginia Woolf, the Intellectual, and the Public Sphere (2003)
Jeremy Hawthorn, Virginia Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway: A Study in Alienation (1975)

Anne Fernihough, ed. The Cambridge Companion to D. H. Lawrence (2001)
Tony Pinkney, D. H. Lawrence and Modernism (1990)

Questions

1) What is Modernism?

2) Were Joyce, Woolf, and Eliot highbrows? In what relation did they stand to popular/mass culture?

3) How does the Modernist novel/short story/essay/poem/manifesto (pick one) differ from its Victorian/Edwardian predecessor? How is it the same? Is this self-conscious? Is it oedipal?
War

Primary

*The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry* ed. Jon Silkin (esp. Thomas, Blunden, Sassoon, Owen)

*Robert Graves, Goodbye to All That*

*George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia*

See Also

H. G. Wells, *Mr. Britling Sees It Through*

Edmund Blunden, *Undertones of War*

Sigfried Sassoon, *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*

Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth*

W. H. Auden, “Spain 1937,” “September 1, 1939”

*The Oxford Book of War Poetry*, ed. Jon Stallworthy


*The Penguin Book of Spanish Civil War Verse*, ed. Valentine Cunningham

*Poetry of the Second World War: An International Anthology*, ed. Desmond Graham

Pat Barker, *Regeneration*

Sebastian Faulks, *Birdsong*

Secondary


Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975)


Mildred Davidson, *The Poetry Is in the Pity* (1972)


Suzanne Raitt and Trudi Tate, eds. *Women's Fiction and the Great War* (1997)


Questions

1) “…the intensity of the poetry is something quite different from whatever intensity in the supposed experience it may give the impression of.”
   “It is not in his personal emotions, the emotions provoked by particular events in his life, that the poet is in any way remarkable or interesting. Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion…”
   T. S. Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent”

Do you agree or disagree? Discuss in relation to First World War poetry.

2) “I made several attempts during these years to rid myself of the poison of war memories by finishing my novel, but had to abandon it – ashamed at having distorted my material with a plot, and yet not sure enough of myself to turn it back into undisguised history, as here.”
What are the consequences of adopting the autobiographical mode (combatant memoirs) to write about war experiences (as opposed to frontline journalism, historical novels, patriotic propaganda, etc.)? Is the war memoir a fictional genre? Discuss in relation to Graves or Orwell or both.

3) The Great War “is too cut off from the rest of my experience and often seems to have happened to someone else. It is even in a way unimportant. One imaginative moment seems now to matter more than the realities that followed. It was the first bullet I heard – so far from me that it ‘whined’ like a journalist's or a peacetime poet's bullet. At that moment there was something not exactly like fear, much less like indifference: a little quavering signal that said, ‘This is War. This is what Homer wrote about.’”

C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*

What is the relationship between imagination and reality, ideals and disillusionment in war writing?
Empire

Primary


*Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

*Graham Greene, *The Heart of the Matter*

See Also

Colonial

H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon’s Mines* and *She*
Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*
Lynton Strachey, “The End of General Gordon” from *Eminent Victorians*
E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India*
George Orwell, *Burmese Days*

Post-Colonial

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*
J. M. Coetzee, *Dusklands*
V. S. Naipaul, *A Bend in the River*
Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things*
Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*
Monica Ali, *Brick Lane*

Historical Fiction

Philip Hensher, *The Mulberry Empire*
Matthew Kneale, *English Passengers*

Secondary

***, *Empire, the National, and the Postcolonial, 1890-1920: Resistance in Interaction* (2002)
Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992)
Anindyo Roy, *Civility and Empire: Literature and Culture in British India, 1822-1922* (2005)
Martin Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (1980)
***, *Imperialism and Music: Britain, 1876-1953* (2001)
Laura Chrisman, *Rereading the Imperial Romance* (2000)
---, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993)
Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (1995)
Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire and Locations of Identity* (1999)
Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (1994)

Peter Keating, *Kipling the Poet* (1994)


Andrea White, *Joseph Conrad and the Adventure Tradition: Constructing and Deconstructing the Imperial Subject* (1993)
Ian Watt, *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century* (1979)
Questions

1) What does Greene do with Conrad?

2) What role do violence and death play in the literature of empire?

3) Does it make sense to speak of ‘imperialist’ and ‘anti-imperialist’ writers?
The Political Play

Primary

*David Hare Trilogy: Racing Demon, Murmuring Judges, The Absence of War

*Tom Stoppard Trilogy: The Coast of Utopia (Voyage, Shipwreck, Salvage)

See Also

Tom Stoppard, Travesties, Professional Foul, and Rock ‘n’ Roll

David Hare, Pravda: A Fleet Street Comedy (with Howard Breton), and The Permanent Way

Secondary

Christopher Innes, Modern British Drama: The Twentieth Century (2002)
---, New British Political Dramatists (1984)

Reviews of The Coast of Utopia: http://www.complete-review.com/reviews/stoppt/coastofu.htm

Katherine E. Kelly, ed. The Cambridge Companion to Tom Stoppard (2001), especially ch. 8, “Tom Stoppard and Politics”

Ira Nadel, Double Act: A Life of Tom Stoppard (2002)

John Fleming, Stoppard’s Theatre: Finding Order Amid Chaos (2001)

Paul Delaney, ed. Stoppard in Conversation (1994)

Neil Sammells, Tom Stoppard: The Artist as Critic (1988)

Tom Stoppard, “I’m Writing Three Plays Called Bakunin, Belinsky and Herzen . . . I Think” and “The Presiding Spirit of Isaiah Berlin: From a Conversation with Tom Stoppard,” Lincoln Center Theater Review 43 (Fall 2006), http://www.lctreview.org/


Richard Boon, ed. The Cambridge Companion to David Hare (2008), especially ch. 4 “Hare’s Trilogy at the National”

---, About Hare: The Playwright and the Work (2003)

Finlay Donesky, David Hare: Moral and Historical Perspectives (1996)

Judy Lee Oliva, David Hare: Theatricalizing Politics (1990)

Carol Homden, The Plays of David Hare (1995)

Hersh Zeifman, ed. David Hare: A Casebook (1994)

Scott Fraser, A Politic Theatre: The Drama of David Hare (1996)


David Hare, Obedience, Struggle and Revolt: Lectures on Theatre (2005)

---, Writing Left-Handed (1991)

---, Asking Around: Background to the David Hare Trilogy, ed. Lyn Haill (1993)

Questions

1) What makes a ‘play of ideas’ successful? Does this depend on how much weight is given to the personal vs. the political?

2) Compare Stoppard’s use of historical reconstruction and Hare’s critique of contemporary institutions. What purposes do these two approaches serve? Are the aims similar? Which works better?

3) What is the relationship between text and performance (length, format, scenery, staging, etc.)?
Class 1: The Function of Art


*Henry James, "The Art of Fiction" (1884) in *The Art of Criticism: Henry James on the Theory and the Practice of Fiction*, eds. William Veder and Susan M. Griffin (Chicago) or in any Leon Edel edition

See also


Matthew Arnold, "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1864)

George MacDonald, "The Fantastic Imagination" (1893) and "The Imagination: Its Functions and Its Culture" (1867) in *A Dish of Orts* (http://www.online-literature.com/george-macdonald/dish-of-orts/)

Class 2: The East End

*Rudyard Kipling, “The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot” in *Many Inventions* (1893)


See also

G. B. Shaw, *Widowers' Houses* (1892) and *Major Barbara* (1907)

Documentary selections from Peter Keating, ed. *Into Unknown England* (1976)


Class 3: The Battle of the Brows

*J. B. Priestley, "High, Low, Broad" (1926) in *Open House: A Book of Essays* (1927)

*Aldous Huxley, "Foreheads Villainous Low" in *Music at Night and Other Essays* (1931)

*Desmond MacCarthy, "Highbrows" (1931) in *Experience* (1935)

*Virginia Woolf, "Middlebrow" in *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays* (1942)

*C. S. Lewis, "High and Low Brows" in *Rehabilitations and Other Essays* (1939)

See also

Leonard Woolf, *Hunting the High Brow* (1927)

Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" (1939) in *Art and Culture: Critical Essays*

Q. D. Leavis, *Fiction and the Reading Public* (1932)


See also

J. B. Priestley, *Time and the Conways* (1937)

Harold Pinter, *Betrayal* (1978)

Martin Amis, *Time’s Arrow* (1991)