

PART IIA – 2024-2025

- Paper B1a** - Intermediate Hebrew
- Paper B1b** - Intermediate New Testament Greek
- Paper B1c** - Intermediate Sanskrit
- Paper B1d** - Intermediate Qur'anic Arabic
- Paper B2** - Israel in Exile: Literature, History and Theology
- Paper B3** – The shaping of Jewish Identity (332 BCE – 70CE)
- Paper B4** – Paul and John: The First Christian Thinkers in Comparative Perspective
- Paper B6** - Christianity in Late Antiquity (to circa 600)
- Paper B7** - Themes in World Christianities: Context, Theology and Power
- Paper B8** - Christ, Salvation, and the Trinity
- Paper B9** - Religious Encounter
- Paper B10** - Philosophy of religion: God, freedom and the soul
- Paper B11** - Ethics and faith
- Paper B12** - Themes in the Anthropology of Islam [FAMES]
- Paper B13** - Theology and Literature
- Paper B14** - Modern Judaism: Thought, Culture, and History
- Paper B15** - Introduction to Islam
- Paper B16** - Life and thought of religious Hinduism and of Buddhism
- Paper B17** - Philosophy: Meaning [Philosophy]

In Part IIA, you take **four of the above papers**.

You also have the option to take, as an additional (fifth) paper, an Elementary Scriptural language from the first year options.

PAPER B1A - INTERMEDIATE HEBREW

Paper Coordinator: Professor Nathan MacDonald

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper is intended for those in their second year of studying Hebrew. The study of the Hebrew texts is designed (apart from their intrinsic interest) to lead students on to a fuller appreciation of the grammar, vocabulary and syntax of prose texts. The lectures will focus mainly on linguistic aspects of the texts, but students are expected to acquire an appreciation of the exegetical and literary aspects of the set passages. An understanding of essential text-critical questions, using *BHS*, will be required. Students will be expected to show knowledge of the basic features of *BHS* and to display an understanding of the grammar and syntax of Hebrew prose.

PAPER B1B - INTERMEDIATE NEW TESTAMENT GREEK

Paper Coordinator: Professor Simon Gathercole

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

The overall objective is for students to develop their Greek language abilities and to acquire exegetical skills and knowledge. The paper will achieve these aims by introducing students to the language, syntax, exegesis and theology of Mark and Galatians on the basis of the Greek text.

PAPER B1C - INTERMEDIATE SANSKRIT

Paper Coordinator: Professor Vincenzo Vergiani

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

Candidates will be required to translate passages from the prescribed texts from Sanskrit into English, to answer questions on their grammar, style, and content, and to translate one unseen passage from Sanskrit to English.

PAPER B1D - INTERMEDIATE QUR'ANIC ARABIC

Paper Coordinator: Mrs Nadira Auty

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper will contain passages for pointing, for translation, and for linguistic and exegetical comment from portions of the Qur'an, Qur'anic commentaries, Hadith and other Islamic literature which the Faculty Board shall from time to time prescribe. The paper will also contain a passage to point and translate from English into Arabic.

PAPER B2 - ISRAEL IN EXILE: LITERATURE, HISTORY AND THEOLOGY

Paper Coordinator: Dr Katharine Dell

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

The exilic age has long been regarded in scholarship as a watershed for the faith of Israel, with important theological understandings formulated in this period. It is also a crucial time in the history of Israel and a time of the collection and writing of formative documents. This course seeks to give a thorough understanding of the literature, history and theology of the period leading up to the Exile, of the Exile itself and of the repercussions that followed it. It involves study of texts from different genres of Old Testament material, including some detailed textual work. It also involves engagement with scholarly methods of analysing literary texts, of evaluating historical claims with the assistance of archaeological finds and

ancient Near Eastern parallels and of seeking an overall sense of the theological developments of the period.

PAPER B3 – THE SHAPING OF JEWISH IDENTITY (332 BCE – 70CE)

Paper Coordinator: Dr Arjen Bakker

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

The paper will examine **how Jewish ideas and literature developed** in the context of the political and social changes of the period, extending the history of Israel from the end of the narrative of the Hebrew Bible, as well as informing on the Jewish context in which the New Testament arose. It was a time when the authoritative books of the bible were read and reinterpreted by individuals such as the scribe Ben Sira and the community attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls. New literature arose such as the Jewish novella, as seen in the tale of seduction and decapitation in the Book of Judith. And the historian Josephus wrote in Greek fashion of the life of Herod, leaving a memorial of him that is far from flattering. Against the background of the political upheavals under Alexander the Great and his successors, followed by Jewish independence under the Hasmoneans, and finally intervention under the Herodians and Romans, we see developments in Jewish practices such as the synagogue, prayer life, the role of the temple (and competing temples), reading of the scriptures, and concepts of time and temporality. How Jews shaped their identity in a turbulent period of history is viewed in a multi-faceted way through literature, historical writings, theology, archaeology, and manuscripts.

PAPER B4 – PAUL AND JOHN: THE FIRST CHRISTIAN THINKERS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Paper Coordinator: Dr James Carleton Paget

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper introduces the thoughts of Paul and John and brings them in discussion, first with one another and subsequently also with their contexts—Jewish, Hellenistic, and Roman. As there are no separate set text classes for this paper, the lectures will make full use of the available hours and use a form that is suitable for, and supports the comparison between Paul and John: all lectures consist of double hours that follow the following pattern—twice forty minutes with usually the first part on Paul and the second part on John, followed by twenty minutes of explicit comparison and discussion.

PAPER B6 - CHRISTIANITY IN LATE ANTIQUITY (TO CIRCA 600)

Paper Coordinators: Professor Thomas Graumann

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

Many important features of Christianity emerged and developed in the late antique period. The paper examines the development of Christian churches and groups, their organisation, institutions, identities and ways of life in the context of the political, social and cultural life of the Roman Empire. It studies main strands of Christian theological reflection and discussion in the period with a focus on the Trinitarian and Christological controversies, and introduces exemplary texts from what is often called the “Golden Age” of patristic literature.

PAPER B7 - THEMES IN WORLD CHRISTIANITIES: CONTEXT, THEOLOGY AND POWER

Paper Coordinator: Dr James Gardom.

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

Over the last hundred years Christianity has become overwhelmingly a non-Western religion. The discipline of World Christianity has emerged to understand the extraordinary diversity of beliefs and practices which unite and divide the 31+% of the world's population who identify as Christian. Students gain an overview of the field, and are given an opportunity to study particular phenomena, from an anthropological, historical, or theological perspective, in some depth. There is also an opportunity to study some of the migrant Christian groups in the West, and in Cambridge.

PAPER B8 - CHRIST, SALVATION, AND THE TRINITY

Paper Coordinator: Professor Simeon Zahl

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper contains questions on Christian doctrines concerning Jesus Christ, salvation, and the Trinity. The paper is designed to provide an overview of three of the most central topics in Christian doctrine, by way of engagement with key thinkers from the patristic period to the present day. It aims to give students a strong foundation in traditional language and concepts associated with the person and work of Christ, the nature of God, and Christian salvation, while also exploring how these topics are being discussed by theologians today.

PAPER B9 - RELIGIOUS ENCOUNTER

Paper Coordinator: Professor Esra Özyürek

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

Different religious communities commonly co-exist. However, the ways in which they do so varies tremendously. Their interactions are conditioned by many factors, like tradition, politics, landscape, economy, and even calendars, ghosts or dreams. This paper turns to encounter as a productive site to think about the ways in which individuals and communities experience, negotiate and manage religious difference in specific contexts. It raises questions about the challenges to plurality and interfaith relations, about the production of religious borders, the convergence and synthesis of religious ideas and practices, the protection of shared sacred heritage, as well as about conflict, violence and the politics of religious difference. We consider the impacts of colonialism, nationalism and xenophobia on religious plurality, but also the surprising modes of resistance through alliances and exchanges across boundaries. Based on anthropological accounts of actual lives from around the world, the paper suggests that religious co-existence and encounters are the norm, not an exception. By familiarising students with the many ways humans live with difference, the paper builds skills to bring together real-life examples and theoretical models, as well as to critically engage with historical and contemporary scholarship of religion.

PAPER B10 - PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION: GOD, FREEDOM AND THE SOUL

Paper Coordinator: Professor Douglas Hedley

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper is conceived as an introduction to Philosophical Theology in the narrow sense, i.e. theories about the nature of God, the cosmos and the soul. Is God one or many, personal

and impersonal, transcendent or immanent, timeless or everlasting? How is creation of the cosmos to be thought of? Is the Soul the form of the body or a separate entity? Is God best perceived in nature or in the soul? Is freedom a coherent notion? Can we know God? How does God act? These very general and abstract questions have puzzled philosophers and theologians since Plato. The approaches to these topics tend to be either historical or very abstract. The idea of this paper is to combine the concern with the topics as real issues of contemporary interest with an awareness of how for example Plotinus or Spinoza, Kant or Hegel thought about these problems. The second section will enable candidates to answer at least one question of a more abstract nature. It is felt that candidates for this paper will have acquired a greater degree of philosophical confidence and a broader acquaintance with the philosophical canon to enable them to attempt essays of a more general or abstract philosophical nature.

PAPER B11 - ETHICS AND FAITH

Paper Coordinator: Dr James Orr

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

Paper B11 builds on the foundational questions concerning the nature of goodness and moral obligation that arose in relation to the canon of philosophers and theologians explored in Paper A9. It offers students a comprehensive engagement with eight central topics that lie at the intersection of religious belief and practice, moral theology, and moral philosophy. The eight topics span historical and contemporary metaethical theories; four of the most common varieties of normative approaches adopted in religious ethics; the philosophical and theological dimensions of human personhood, dignity, and rights; and historical and contemporary understandings of the connections between theologically invested metaphysical frameworks and the right ordering of society towards the common good.

PAPER B12 - THEMES IN THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ISLAM

This paper is borrowed from the **Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (MES20)**. Please contact the Faculty of AMES for the full paper description and assessment details.

PAPER B13 - THEOLOGY AND LITERATURE

Paper Coordinator: Dr Giles Waller

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

This paper seeks to examine key theological and ethical issues in novels from the literary traditions of Europe and America shaped by Judaism and Christianity. A variety of theological and ethical topics will be explored, including suffering, agency and responsibility, the place of the human animal in its natural and political environments, providence, Christology, messianism, hope and despair.

PAPER B14 - MODERN JUDAISM: THOUGHT, CULTURE, AND HISTORY

Paper Coordinator: Dr Daniel Weiss

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper introduces students to Jewish culture and thought, approaching contemporary issues along with the historical developments that shaped them. Topics will include central Jewish ideas such as Messianism and Zionism, the distinct and variegated character of the Jewish communities in Britain, the State of Israel and abroad, as well as aspects of religious

observance such as Shabbat and Prayer. It explores how Judaism relates to surrounding cultures and especially how it has responded to the challenges of modernity, and it approaches Judaism in the methodological context of the study of 'religion' and 'culture' by inviting students to consider whether the term 'religion' makes sense at all when applied to Judaism. By the study of primary texts, it aims to acquaint students with the self-understandings of Judaism at critical periods of its development. Although history will be provided to give the necessary background, the focus throughout will be on contemporary communities.

PAPER B15 - INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM

Paper Coordinator: Professor Claire Gallien

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper will cover the origins, development and contemporary situation of the theology, law and mysticism of Islam. It will deal with literary-critical and interpretative problems relating to the founding documents of the religion, and with contemporary methodologies in philosophy of religion, gender studies, and comparative jurisprudence as applied to Islam. References to Christianity may be included. The Board may from time to time prescribe texts for special study.

PAPER B16 - LIFE AND THOUGHT OF RELIGIOUS HINDUISM AND OF BUDDHISM

Paper Coordinator: Dr Ankur Barua

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

The principal aim of the study of these Indic traditions is to form a sensitive understanding, in terms of social context and historical perspective, of their main beliefs and practices. The approach is thematic and phenomenological, and when occasion demands, anthropological, sociological and political comments will also be made. It is important to show not only what Hinduism and Buddhism mean in the lives of their adherents, but also that as religious traditions they cannot be understood in a sociohistorical vacuum.

PAPER B17 - PHILOSOPHY: MEANING

This paper is borrowed from the **Philosophy Tripos (Part IA, Paper 3)**. Please contact the Faculty of Philosophy for the full paper description and assessment details.