

*The information here is for the **2023-24** academic year. The papers on offer can vary from year to year.*

Part IIB (Third year)

Paper Choices

Candidates for Part IIB must offer:

either (a) four papers chosen from Group C;

or (b) three papers chosen from Group C **and** a dissertation.

Candidates offering four papers may not offer more than two papers examined by an alternative means of assessment (as defined in Regulation 17 for the Tripos).

Candidates who offer a dissertation may not offer more than one paper examined by an alternative means of assessment.

A candidate may choose to offer an additional language paper, subject to the provisions of Regulations 24b or 25b.

Paper C1a - Advanced Hebrew

Paper coordinator: Professor Nathan MacDonald

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper is intended for students ordinarily in their third year of Hebrew, with a focus on linguistic and textual exegesis of prescribed texts in Hebrew. The choice of set texts is designed (apart from their intrinsic interest) to introduce students to the special features of poetic Hebrew (parallelism, grammatical features, imagery) and to nonbiblical sources. Advanced text-critical and lexicographical problems of Hebrew will also be introduced, and students will be expected to comment on the various witnesses (manuscripts and versions) to the texts and the textual evidence for the history of the Hebrew language. Throughout the course lectures and private study are expected to be supplemented by fortnightly supervision practising translation into Hebrew and commenting on Hebrew texts. The lectures will focus mainly on linguistic aspects of the texts, but their theological and literary aspects should also be explored.

Paper C1b - Advanced New Testament Greek

Paper coordinator: Dr Annalisa Phillips Wilson

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

[Content to be confirmed] This paper will allow students to extend their understanding of Hellenistic Greek and also to study in detail particular texts that extend students' familiarity with the New Testament. Students will develop skills in questions of textual criticism, language, historical background, exegesis, and theology, particularly as these are encountered through the exercise of translation. In addition to working with prescribed texts students will also develop skills in translating unseen passages which may be taken from the New Testament, other early Christian literature of similar date, or the Greek Bible.

In addition to the translation classes, four lectures on New Testament Textual Criticism will normally be offered.

The Part IIA set texts paper will normally be a pre-requisite, but students who have taken our Part I Greek paper (or its equivalent) to a high standard will be considered.

Paper C1c - Advanced 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 language, style, and content, and to translate one unseen passage from Sanskrit to English.

Paper C1d - Advanced Qur'anic Arabic

Paper Coordinator: Dr Timothy Winter

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper will contain passages for translation and comment from a number of texts which the Faculty Board shall from time to time prescribe, together with questions on the language and content of those texts.

Paper C2: The Five Scrolls

Paper Co-ordinator: Professor Katharine Dell

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper seeks to explore the five books that make up 'the five scrolls' or 'Megilloth' from within the wider group of the Writings section of the canon. These are Ruth, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations and Esther. This is a Jewish liturgical alignment, which is of interest in itself, but which also provides an opportunity to study five very different books, ranging across different genres and containing differing theological themes.

Paper C3 - New Testament Christology

Paper coordinator: Dr Simon Gathercole

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

The paper will involve detailed investigation of main themes and issues involved in the study of Christology within the New Testament. The main topics that will be dealt with are: Problems and Issues involved in New Testament Christology; Questions concerning Jesus as Prophet, Son of Man, and Messiah; Messianic Hope in relation to Christology; Resurrection and the Beginnings of Christology; The Scope and Significance of Christological Titles; Wisdom, Logos and Pre-existence; Angelology and Angelomorphic Christology; Visionary Traditions and Christology; The Use of Scripture in relation to Christ; The Worship of Christ; Christology and Jewish Monotheism; Christology in John, Hebrews and Revelation; Political Significance of Christology.

Paper C4: Topic in the History of Christianity

Paper Co-ordinator: Professor Richard Rex

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

Topic: 'Faith, Fire, and Fury: The British Reformations and their Discontents'

This paper will explore the nature and history of the religious changes that took place in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It will consider religion as both doctrine and practice, and it will be particularly concerned with the interplay of religion, politics, and culture. It will engage not only with the rich scholarly literature in this field but also with primary sources. The 16 lectures for this paper are delivered under the aegis of the Faculty of History. An additional 4 classes for TRPR students are held in the Faculty of Divinity in the Lent Term

Paper C5 - Topic in Christian Theology (Subject: Charity)

Paper coordinator: Dr Stephen Plant

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper explores the central role of love in the Christian tradition. In particular, love is considered in relation to its practice in response to need and poverty. The paper moves from the historical development of theologies of love (charity) to their contemporary expression in institutional Charities/Faith-Based Non-Governmental Organisations. In the second half of the course a range of issues facing Charities/NGOs are explored. This course may be of particular interest to students considering careers in the Charity sector.

Paper C6 - Disputed Questions from Medieval and Early Modern Theology

Paper coordinator: Dr Stephen Hampton

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

The paper will examine theological problems arising within 'classical' Christian theology, in the context of the doctrines of God and the Trinity, Christology, soteriology and sanctification, and faith and rationality. In each section of the paper, we will examine primary texts discussing aspects of the doctrines in question, comparing and assessing their various forms, alongside modern critiques of those doctrines.

Paper C8 – The Jewish Tradition and Christianity: From Antiquity to Modernity

Paper coordinator: Dr Daniel Weiss

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper will consider the relationship of the Jewish tradition to Christianity from antiquity to modernity. It is well known that Christianity evolved in intimate discussion with Judaism, yet how far does this apply vice-versa? The paper will consider ways in which the mainstream of the Jewish tradition, from antiquity to the modern period, incorporated and was formed by responses to the theological, social and political challenges generated by interactions with Christianity.

Paper C9 - Islam II

Paper coordinator: Dr Tony Street

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

The course introduces two topics important for the advanced study of Islam. In the first, Islamic philosophy and philosophical theology, we consider notions of canon, authority and unbelief in the Islamic world prior to 1300 with special reference to the intellectual traditions of falsafa and kalām. We then explore disputes about the corpus of works translated from Greek, and whether the methods in these works led to conflict with Islamic texts of authority and their implicit conceptions of God's nature, the created world and the human agent. The second, on aspects of medieval sufism, presents a series of reflections on themes in medieval Sufism, from theories of knowledge, renunciation and metaphysical systems, working especially from the texts of al-Ghazali and Ibn Arabi.

Paper C10 - Hinduism and Buddhism II

Paper coordinator: Dr Ankur Barua

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This course inquires with some detail into specified topics in Hinduism and Buddhism. It is not necessary to have done the Introductory course earlier, but, of course, this would be of help. As religio-cultural traditions of great antiquity and richness (over two and a half millennia in each case) which, on the one hand, have interacted in important ways, but on the other, have developed for most of their history more or less independently of the Abrahamic traditions, Hinduism and Buddhism have a great deal to offer in the exploration of what it is to be human in all the fundamental areas of human living. They have basic religious, philosophical and ethical insights and presuppositions which are not only mutually challenging, but which also interrogate many of the basic presuppositions of the Abrahamic faiths. As such, they are richly rewarding of careful study, especially on such topics as the scope and use of language in constructing and understanding our systems of reality, the nature of human suffering, compassion and fulfilment, and the goal of the ethics of the individual and community.

Paper C11 – Truth, God and Metaphysics

Paper coordinator: Dr Blake Allen

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

This paper is designed to provide third year undergraduates with an in-depth understanding of the contemporary problems of theological metaphysics, especially insofar as they relate to developments within contemporary philosophy and theory; and to enable them to distinguish, and argue rationally and convincingly between alternative positions, whether religious, non- or anti-religious, and to evaluate key sources from different historical periods and philosophico-theological idioms.

Paper C12 - Theology and the Natural Sciences

Paper coordinator: Dr Mari van Emmerik

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper covers a focused range of topics in the overlap of theology and natural sciences, with an emphasis on the nature of creaturely existence. It will consider accounts of 'creaturehood' from the perspectives of the biological sciences and from theological traditions, with attention to areas of agreement and disagreement, and the shape of potential dialogue. The emphasis will be on Christian theology, although consideration will also be given to the debate between theology and natural sciences in other theological traditions.

Paper C13 - Empire, Religion and Identity: Judaism in the Persian Period

Paper coordinator: Professor Nathan MacDonald

Assessment method: Three-hour examination

This paper will be concerned with the literature, history and religious life of Judeans and related communities outside Judah in the Persian period (539–333 BCE). The Faculty Board will prescribe a text for special study

Paper C14 - Christianity, Hellenism, and Empire

Paper coordinator: Professor George van Kooten

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

This paper focuses on the 'manifestation' of early Christianity in the Roman empire. The earliest Christian texts, the so-called 'New Testament' writings, are entirely written in Greek. Indeed, the body of Christian literature surviving from the Roman empire vastly surpasses the size of the classical canon. Yet somehow this body of texts and the culture that generated them is perceived as if belonged to a different world than that was inhabited by their non-Christian contemporaries. This paper examines the place of Christianity in the Graeco-Roman world in all its historical, religious, and philosophical complexities. How did it fit into a Greek world under Rome? How did Christianity relate to the Roman Empire in which it became more and more disseminated, also adopting the use of Latin? What are the historical connections, and which (joint) discourses and narratives did they engage? Was it, did it remain, or did it become, something alien to the classical world? Or was it always an 'integral' part of the Empire? Do we think of the constellation of practices that we call 'Christianity' as something separate from the society in which it originated, or as a Roman religion? In what ways and to what effects did the complex, multifaceted Roman Empire set and determine the context for Christianity?

Paper C15 - Contemporary Christian Theology

Paper coordinator: Professor David Fergusson

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

This course enables students to engage in close study of recent work in systematic theology. Covering a broad range of doctrines, it will explore the output of some of the most influential thinkers over the last twenty years. Consideration will be given to different methodologies, perspectives and styles and also to the agenda of problems with which recent theologians have worked. The ecumenical, religious, academic and socio-political contexts that shape recent systematic theologies will be registered, while the usefulness of the discipline for church and society will also be considered.

Paper C16 – The Holy Spirit and The Christian Experience

Paper coordinator: Professor Simeon Zahl

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

This seminar-based paper is concerned with the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It pays particular attention to the relation between the Holy Spirit and the experiences and practices of Christians. Through discussions of classic theological texts from a variety of periods and traditions, the paper will examine a series of major topics in pneumatology, including: the trinitarian identity of the Spirit; the work of the Spirit in relation to baptism, grace, sanctification, and Christian practices; problems of self-deception and authority in discernment of the Spirit; the nature and significance of pentecostal theology; and the role of spirituality and experience in theological method. An important theme of the paper will be the work of the Spirit in relationship to affect, embodiment, and materiality, and students will have freedom to draw on theoretical work from

outside of the discipline of Christian theology in their examinations of these themes, in conversation with classic theological texts.

Paper C17 - Philosophy in the Long Middle Ages

Paper coordinator: Professor John Marenbon

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

This paper is borrowed from the Philosophy Tripos (Part II, Paper 5). Please contact the Faculty of Philosophy for the full paper description and assessment details.

Paper C19 – Self and Salvation in Indian and Western Thought

Paper coordinator: Professor Douglas Hedley

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

The paper involves a “comparative” exercise across Indian and Western worldviews. Students may isolate two themes – one from an Indian context and one from a Western context – and discuss how each of these themes has developed within its distinctive tradition and explore what types of resonances can be discerned across these traditions.

Paper C20 - A Topic in the History of Christianity: Councils in Context

Paper coordinator: Dr Mark Smith

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each.

This paper is concerned with synods and councils in the early church, considering their theological themes and their historical and social contexts. It will focus in particular, but not exclusively, on the oecumenical councils of the fourth and fifth centuries, and the rich documentary evidence for their proceedings.

Paper C22 – Philosophy, Ethics and the Other

Paper coordinator: Dr Daniel Weiss

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each.

This paper will introduce students to perennial questions concerning how one should live; the relationship between affect and religious outlook and truth; the relation of scripture and revelation to philosophy; and the significance of ‘the other’ for understanding one’s own moral and intellectual life. It will address these questions with reference to a range of sources, for example, Maimonides, Spinoza, Mendelssohn, Kant, Cohen, Buber, Weil and Levinas; a philosophical lineage which has been influential on a range of disciplines.

Paper C24 - World Christianities - Decolonising Christendom: The Complex Legacies of Global Christianity

Paper coordinator: Dr Jörg Haustein

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

This paper provides an opportunity to study in depth a set of controversial themes in contemporary World Christianity, all of which centre on how Christians in various parts of the world engage with

the power structures, inequalities and inherited legacies of the post-colonial world. Each theme will be unpacked by connecting historical genealogies with contemporary debates about Christian institutions, practices, and ideas. Lectures will serve to draw out the historical background and main contours of debate for each theme, which will then be studied further in seminar discussions of primary and secondary sources.

Paper C26 - The Play of Imagination

Paper coordinator: Professor Douglas Hedley.

Assessment method: Two essays of 5,000 words each

The aim of this paper is to explore the links between aesthetics, imagination and religion. The term 'play' in English is richly polyvalent: make believe, sport, dalliance, theatre, etc. The concept can be most fertile when considering the phenomenon of religion philosophically. Wittgenstein employs the language of 'games' to explain meaning. Robert Bellah has used 'play' to explain the emergence of religion