

EDI Audit Report for the Sub-Faculty of Portuguese (2023–25)

As part of the Sub-Faculty of Portuguese's commitment to ensuring a diverse and representative curriculum that reflects the richness and complexity of the Portuguese-speaking world and its multiple traditions, we agreed to undertake an annual audit of our teaching to assess the extent to which we introduce students to a broad range of voices and avoid replicating the unconscious biases of a white, heteronormative, male-dominated canon. Where traditionally canonical authors are studied, we aim to contextualise them through the lenses of feminism, postcolonial theory, and critical race theory. In language papers, source material chosen to support our students' language-learning skills is carefully selected to draw on the work of people of all genders and a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Translation and prose passages are chosen with this in mind too. Likewise, passages used in our admissions interviews include texts by a broad spectrum of poets beyond white canonical males. Linguistics papers include studies of Creoles, as well as an awareness of the multiple varieties of Portuguese spoken beyond Europe, namely in South America, Africa, and Asia.

THE PRELIM COURSE

Our Prelims Paper III currently includes work by a Brazilian woman who migrated from Ukraine and was of Jewish heritage (Clarice Lispector), an Angolan woman (Alda Lara), and a Portuguese woman who lived in Mozambique during the war for independence and whose work challenges hegemonic masculinity and the residues of Portugal's imperial fantasies (Lídia Jorge). This makes Paper III, for the first time, a paper that includes only women writers from diverse backgrounds.

Prelims Paper IV includes ground-breaking work by one of Portugal's leading experts in Queer Studies, Ana Luísa Amaral. Her play *Próspero Morreu* tackles issues of race and non-binary genders. Students also study work by two twentieth-century white male playwrights from north-eastern Brazil (João Cabral de Melo Neto and Ariano Suassuna), who sought to highlight class inequalities and retell Indigenous folk stories. The other two texts taught on this paper are by Gil Vicente, who wrote plays at the turn of the sixteenth century that can be read as critiques of the effects of empire on the moral character of the Portuguese nation.

THE FHS COURSE

Papers VI and IX (medieval period) include the study of:

1. Zurara's *Chronicle of Guinea*, which describes the first time Portuguese explorers took Africans as slaves as part of their maritime expansion and thus provides an opportunity to critique a key and shameful moment in world history;
2. *Cantigas de escárnio e mal-dizer*, poems that explore diverse sexualities, genders, and religious and ethnic identities;
3. *Cantigas de amigo*, poems written by men, which represent one of the most significant corpora of poetry voiced by women in medieval Europe and were often performed by women in the period. Teaching explores the gendered tensions in this textual and performance tradition.

Papers VII, X and XII (early modern period) cover the entirety of the Portuguese empire, from Brazil to Africa and from India to Japan. Texts written by Portuguese authors are placed in dialogue with texts, images, and material culture produced by those the Portuguese encountered, to show that this was not a one-sided process in which Europeans had all the agency. Fierce critiques of empire from Camões' *Os Lusíadas*, Sá de Miranda's poetry, the shipwreck stories of the *História Trágico-Marítima*, and Mendes Pinto's *Peregrinação* all form part of the course. Reading lists of secondary criticism include a mixture of voices from BME critics and a range of genders wherever possible, and draw on modern theories where this helps to add diversity to teaching on more canonical male authors (e.g. queer theory, critical race theory, feminist theory). Teaching for these papers also includes:

1. Joana da Gama, the first woman to have a single-authored work printed in Portugal (in the 1550s). She established a 'secular convent' in Évora, defying some of the male-dominated structures of the Church;
2. Sāga-Zä-'Ab, an Ethiopian ambassador to Portugal in the sixteenth century who has a treatise on the religious customs of the Ethiopians included in Damião de Góis's *Fides religio moresque Aethiopum*;
3. Lectures on Petrarchism and the construction of whiteness, where poems such as Camões' *Aquela cativa*, which was written in Goa, provide an opportunity to explore how the European lyric tradition has fetishised whiteness;
4. Queer approaches to early modern lyric;
5. Violante do Céu, a seventeenth-century nun whose work reveals how women negotiated traditionally male genres and used poetry to network and build their own reputation as writers;
6. Gregório de Matos, a poet from Brazil whose work satirises the colonial elite in Brazil and reveals the social, racial, and linguistic diversity of Brazilian society.

Paper VIII includes the construction of national identity at the end of the nineteenth century through the novels of Eça de Queirós and Machado de Assis. Modernism is approached from a female perspective, through the works of Patrícia Galvão and Florbela Espanca, as well as the poetry of either Fernando Pessoa's heteronyms or mixed-race Mozambican Noémia de Sousa. On a more contemporary note, transnational identities are studied through the novels of Luiz Ruffato (whose writing deals with class and racial inequalities), Adriana Lisboa, and Isabela Figueiredo (whose work critiques Portuguese colonialism).

Paper XI may include the study of the following:

1. From Portuguese-speaking Africa, Mozambican author Mia Couto critiques the European outlook of United Nations and aid-agency workers in Africa. Djina uses a transnational gaze to make sense of an Angolan immigrant experience of contemporary England. The Angolan writer Pepetela seeks to give voice and agency to those who were enslaved, questioning the imperial biases of history as a discipline. From Guinea-Bissau, Odete Semedo's bilingual Creole-Portuguese

poetry engages with the experience of living between cultures, continents, and languages in a postcolonial world.

2. From Brazil, at the end of the nineteenth century, naturalist writer Adolfo Caminha approaches controversial subjects (for his time), such as homosexuality and interracial relationships. Mário de Andrade, a mestiço, draws on the folklore and culture of Indigenous groups in Brazil, as well as being a driving force behind Brazilian modernism. Conceição Evaristo's work reflects her experience as an Afro-Brazilian woman born in a favela on the outskirts of Belo Horizonte. The work of Clarice Lispector, who was born in Ukraine to a Jewish family, raises existential questions through a stream-of-consciousness narrative that interrogates female abjection.
3. Writing from Portugal, the Afropean Djaimilia Pereira de Almeida engages with transcontinental colonial legacies and the challenges of disability. Lídia Jorge bears witness to systemic violence and the experiences of Portuguese women during the colonial wars. Fernando Pessoa channels and interrogates the enduring myths of Portuguese exceptionalism through the lens of Modernism. At the end of the nineteenth century, Eça de Queirós exposes the tensions and inconsistencies of Portuguese high society during the age of empire.

Paper XII includes Brazilian cinema and Latin American cinema, which consider representations of race, class, and gender in a selection of films. The main syllabus change in 2023-24 was the successful overhaul of the Women Writers Paper XII to become *Art, Literature and Gender in the Lusophone World Since 1950*, an interdisciplinary paper. The syllabus includes the Portuguese-born Paula Rego and Maria Velho da Costa, Mozambicans Bertina Lopes and Paulina Chiziane, and Afropeans Mónica de Miranda and Djaimilia Pereira de Almeida.

SUB-FACULTY ACTIVITIES: Research Seminars and Conferences

In 2023-24, it welcomed the following to present at Research Seminars:

Mark Sabine (Nottingham), on Mario Cesariny (see below).

Angolan writer Djina and journalist Lara Pawson (invited by Phillip Rothwell and part of the British Academy Remarginalised Voices Project).

The largest event held by the Sub-Faculty was the **two-day conference 25 April 1974: Unfinished Revolutions in Portuguese Literary and Visual Culture** (organised by Cláudia Pazos Alonso and Luísa Coelho, with Hilary Owen), which included two film premieres in the presence of film directors Raquel Freire and Luisa Sequeira. It took an intersectional approach to race and gender inequalities to explore how these continue to play out to the present day. Raquel Freire's work speaks directly to EDI issues.

Cláudia Pazos Alonso and Luísa Coelho also organised a conference on the pioneering Portuguese poet, politician and public intellectual Natalia Correia.

Luísa Coelho organised an exhibition to celebrate the centenary of the birth of surrealist (and openly gay) poet Mario Cesariny.

In 2024-25, the Sub-Faculty welcomed the following to present at **Research Seminars**:

Researchers into African culture (and former DPhil students) Alex Reza (Bristol), Tom Stennett (Exeter).

Emeritus Professor Tom Earle.

Brazilian scholars Marcelo Lachat (UNIFESP) and Sheila Hue (UERJ).

Inês Castro e Silva (Birmingham)

Pulitzer-Prize-winning author Jhumpa Lahiri in conversation with Luís Amorim de Sousa about the Mozambican-Portuguese poet, Alberto de Lacerda.

The theme of **Brazil Week 2025** was Eco-Brazil. The week of events included talks by Indigenous author Trudruá Dorrico and Black British-Brazilian actor Alfie Enoch, plus a screening of the Brazilian film *Cowrã, A Flor do Buriti* [The Buriti Flower], as part of the LMH Foreign Film Club Environmental and Ecocritical Cinema series.

The Taylor Lecture featured Afro-Brazilian philosopher Djamila Ribeiro.