New member of staff in French

Dr Sotirios Paraschas brings new research and teaching specialisms to French Studies.

Welcome to Dr Sotirios Paraschas, who joined the Department as Lecturer in September, after studying and working at the Universities of Thessaloniki (Greece) and Oxford and, most recently, Warwick, where he held a three-year Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship.

Dr Paraschas is an expert in Comparative and French literature and has recently published a monograph on The Realist Author and Sympathetic Imagination (Legenda, 2013). Primarily interested in nineteenth-century fiction, he researches the history and theory of the novel. His current book project entitled ‘Reappearing Characters: Originality and Property in Ideas in Nineteenth-Century France’ touches upon the very relevant issues of authorship, plagiarism and intellectual property which provoked great public debate with legal changes post-Revolution. Balzac, for example, had to devise legal and literary strategies to protect his immensely popular characters, plots and ideas from unauthorized appropriation and commercial exploitation.

- Dr Paraschas will be teaching and on the module on ‘Contemporary France’ (FR103) and various aspects of French language

He will also be teaching a new modulette on the Enlightenment (FR21E). This introduces into the Reading programme the free-thinking society of eighteenth-century France – a period of intellectual revolt and fierce public debate, which paved the way for the Revolution. The module will look at the great French writers and philosophes, Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau. These intellectuals are strikingly “modern” in terms of their creative interplay between ideas and fiction, and in their rejection of authority and institutions.

Next year we can look forward to teaching that draws on Dr Paraschas’s research into fictional characters of nineteenth century novels, such as Dumas’s Three Musketeers, which have fascinated authors and artists and been resurrected in sequels, stage, film and TV adaptations.


I’m not a racist, but…’: Italian linguistics research in the news

Dr Federico Faloppa (Lecturer in Italian linguistics) has made the news in Italy recently with his wide-ranging research into how language in politics and the media is connected with verbal aggression, intrinsic forms of racism, as well as relevant questions of political correctness and multicultural education.

Interest in this subject has been sparked particularly by Federico Faloppa’s book Razzisti a parole (per tacer dei fatti) [Racist language (not to mention racist actions)] (2011).

- You can hear one of his interviews on Italian public radio (Rai 3) on: http://www.radio3.rai.it/dl/radio3/programenti/puntata/ContentItem- b13f1395-6acd-4d8b-a1bf-8a09341fe883.html

Meet our new Head of Department

Dr Julia Waters (French Studies) took up the post of Head of DMLES in October when she returned from a year’s research leave, funded by an AHRC Research Fellowship.

During her leave, she completed the manuscript of a monograph on The Contemporary Mauritian Novel: Fictions of Belonging, which she hopes will be published by the end of 2015.

Dr Waters, who joined the University of Reading in 2006, is looking forward to steering the department through the many challenges ahead. Her priorities, and those of MLES, will be to increase student recruitment, to enhance the student experience, and to continue to develop stimulating, research-led teaching.

Farewell to:

Prof. Christopher Duggan and Prof. Joel Felix who moved to the History Department in the summer.

Prof. Mary Bryden who took early retirement but remains in the department as Emeritus Professor.

Dr Sara Poole who also retired from the department and is employing her talents in local voluntary groups.
Italian Studies student wins full scholarship for summer language school study in Italy

Nicola d’Alessandro (Italian Studies, Part 2) won an all-expenses scholarship to study for four weeks in August at the Scuola Dante Alighieri in the medieval city of Camerino in the Marche region. She hopes other students will be stimulated by her experience to benefit from the scheme.

www.scuoladantealighieri.org or contact Enza Siciliano Verruccio

Forthcoming Student Society Events

German Society:
- Kaffee and Kuchen evening, Thursday 21 November, 7-10pm
- Visit to Christmas Market, Saturday 7 December
- For further details contact Sarah: sarah.tompkins@student.reading.ac.uk

French Society:
- Baguette Bingo – rolls full of fun
- Film night with French snacks
- The language boat party
- Trip to Paris in February
- For further details contact Tanya: t.b.harris-brown@student.reading.ac.uk

Italian Society:
- Joint Tandem night with Erasmus Society - date tbc
- Meal at Italian restaurant in town centre – date tbc
- Last week of term – a Christmas dinner with members.
- For further details contact Gabriela Zoldova: rq022331@reading.ac.uk

World War 1 Centenary Event
On 3 December 2013, there will be a special European Studies event to mark the centenary, in 2014, of the outbreak of World War I. The speakers are Professor William Philpott, and Professor Jack E. Spence, OBE, both from King’s College, London. All staff and students. welcome. For information, contact Dr Athena Leoussi a.s.leoussi@reading.ac.uk

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Student news

Congratulations to Gabrielle Linnett and Sarah Mills (German Studies, year 2) for winning places to study at the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) summer school over the summer, which are allocated on a competitive basis. There is a strong tradition of Reading students being selected for this excellent scheme. For more details see http://www.lse.ac.uk/language/Home.aspx or contact Stefanie Ochel s.coehel@reading.ac.uk

Where are our 2013 graduates now?

Many of our students who graduated in June have already embarked on fascinating careers in the UK and abroad – language skills clearly open many doors in the global job market.

Gurpreet Deol, European Technical Sales Manager for eXception PCB Solutions.

As a French Studies graduate, I will be using my French language, looking at a lead generation of new clients in France as well as helping to manage existing accounts. PCB stands for Printed Circuit Boards - and I'll mainly be selling in France. Some of our clients include McLaren, Renault Lotus, Intel.

Alice Hero (Italian Studies and Politics) began in September a 6-month internship at the European Union Office in Malta.

Sandy Yu (IMBA with Italian) has been accepted for an MA degree in Fashion in Milan.

Please send news items for the next issue by 31 January 2014 to Dr Lisa Sampson L.m.sampson@reading.ac.uk or Stephanie Brunger s.a.brunner@reading.ac.uk.