

Part II, Paper 11

Textual criticism

CO-ORDINATOR: DR ROSALIND LOVE

This course offers an introduction to the processes by which extant sources written in the languages studied elsewhere in the Tripos have been transmitted, and to the scholarly methods which are used to convert these sources into readable form. It aims to provide some familiarity with the evolution of textual criticism as a scholarly tool, as well as enabling the student to analyse and interpret the critical apparatus of an edition effectively, and furnishing some of the skills necessary for the preparation of such an edition. The University teaching for the paper consists of thirty-two contact hours. Of these, the first eight lectures (Michaelmas term) are devoted to the general principles and history of textual criticism. Topics covered include technical terminology, the development and practical application of the variety of strategies which have been applied to the editing of texts, followed by individual sessions offering an introduction to the textual criticism of Insular Latin, Old English, Old Norse, Medieval Welsh and Medieval Irish (the range of these individual sessions will be tailored to the particular interests of the students taking this course in a given year). In addition to these, there are a further eight lectures providing an introduction to Anglo-Saxon diplomatic (the study of charters).

In the Lent term there will be eight weekly lectures on the problems and principles of stemmatic method. These will be complemented by eight hour-long classes which will focus on a practical approach to the edition of texts in the languages in which the students have some expertise (Medieval Latin, Old English, Old Norse, Medieval Welsh or Medieval Irish). In preparation for these classes students will be required to work on practical exercises in textual criticism, and the skills thus acquired will be assessed in the compulsory element of the examination, in which the candidate is asked to determine the relationship of textual witnesses for a given text from a sample text and critical apparatus (of which one will be set for each of the languages studied in a given year). It is not envisaged that students will have college supervisions in addition to the university teaching; they will, however, in addition to the exercises in Lent term, be expected to read widely in the scholarly literature cited in the bibliographies accompanying the lectures.