Ferdinand de Saussure is widely considered to be the founder of both modern linguistics and structuralism. The first to establish the structural study of language, he identified the difference between the system of language (\textit{langue}) and the speech of individuals (\textit{parole}), and was first to distinguish between the ‘synchronic’ study of language (language at a given time), and the ‘diachronic’ (language as it changes through time). This companion brings together a team of leading scholars to offer a fresh new account of Saussure’s work. As well as looking at his pioneering and renowned \textit{Course in General Linguistics} of 1916, they consider his lesser-known early work, his more recently discovered manuscripts, and his influence on a range of other disciplines, such as cultural studies, philosophy, literature and semiotics. With contributions by leading specialists in each field, this comprehensive and accessible guide creates a unique picture of the lasting importance of Saussure’s thought.

\textsc{Carol Sanders} is Professor of French at the University of Surrey, and has taught at universities across Australia, France, Italy, the West Indies and Britain. She has published many articles, books and translations in the fields of French language, linguistics and culture, including a monograph on Saussure (1979), and \textit{French Today: Language in its Social Context} (Cambridge University Press, 1993).
The Cambridge Companion to Saussure

Edited by
Carol Sanders
Contents

Notes on contributors vii
Acknowledgements xi
List of abbreviations xii

Introduction: Saussure today 1
CAROL SANDERS

Part I Out of the nineteenth century

1 Saussure and Indo-European linguistics 9
ANNA MORPURGO DAVIES

2 The Paris years 30
CAROL SANDERS

Part II The ‘Course in General Linguistics’

3 The making of the Cours de linguistique générale 47
RUDOLF ENGLER

4 The linguistic sign 59
JOHN E. JOSEPH

5 Langue and parole 76
W. TERRENCE GORDON

6 System, arbitrariness, value 88
CLAUDINE NORMAND

Part III After the Cours

7 Saussure and American linguistics 107
JULIA S. FALK

© in this web service Cambridge University Press
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Saussure and structuralist linguistics in Europe</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian Puech</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Russian critique of Saussure</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stephen C. Hutchings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Saussure, Barthes and structuralism</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steven Unger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Saussure’s anagrams</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Wunderli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Saussure and Derrida</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geoffrey Bennington</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Part IV New debates and directions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Saussure’s unfinished semantics</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simon Bouquet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Saussure, linguistic theory and philosophy of science</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christopher Norris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Saussure’s legacy in semiotics</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paul Bouissac</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Notes** 261

**Works by Saussure and further reading** 267

**Matthew Pires and Carol Sanders** 273

**References** 273

**Index** 298
Notes on contributors

Geoffrey Bennington is Asa G. Candler Professor of Modern French Thought at Emory University. His most recent books are *Frontières kantiennes* (Paris: Gallilée, 2000) and *Interrupting Derrida* (London: Routledge, 2000).

Paul Bouissac is Professor Emeritus at the University of Toronto (Department of French Studies). He is the author of *La mesure des gestes: prolégomènes à la sémiotique gestuelle* (1973), and *Circus and Culture* (1976), and the editor of the Oxford University Press *Encyclopedia of Semiotics* (1998). His published articles bear upon issues in the epistemology and history of semiotics, the cultural anthropology of circus performances, the semiotic analysis of gestures and prehistoric rock art.

Simon Bouquet’s interests are in linguistics and philosophy. He is a researcher at the University of Berne and lectures at the University of Paris 10 – Nanterre. He has devoted himself to making the manuscript texts of Saussure better known through critical editions (S. Bouquet and R. Engler’s edition of the *Ecrits de linguistique générale* is frequently referred to in this volume). He is currently working on the consequences of Wittgenstein’s thought for semantics. He is president of the Institut F. de Saussure in Switzerland.

Rudolf Engler (1930–2003) taught for many years at the University of Berne. He wrote prolifically on Saussure, making frequent contributions to the *Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure*, including bibliographical lists up to the 1980s. He is known in particular for his monumental comparative critical edition of the student notes for Saussure’s lectures on general linguistics, for his chapter on ‘European structuralism: Saussure’ in *Current Trends in Linguistics* vol. XIII (ed. Sebeok, 1975), and for co-editing with Simon Bouquet the *Ecrits de linguistique générale*.

Julia S. Falk is Professor Emeritus, Linguistics, Michigan State University, and a resident of La Jolla, California, where a courtesy appointment as visiting scholar, Linguistics, University of California, San Diego, facilitates
viii Notes on contributors

her continuing research and writing on the history of linguistics in the United States. A member of NAAHoLS (North American Association for the History of the Language Sciences), she served as president in the year 2000.

W. TERRENCE GORDON’S works in the field of twentieth-century intellectual history include a critically acclaimed biography of Marshall McLuhan and Saussure for Beginners, which has been translated into Spanish and Japanese. Gordon recently relinquished the Alexander McLeod Chair in Modern Languages at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada, to assume the fulltime general editorship of an international publishing programme for issuing new editions of Marshall McLuhan’s writings.

STEPHEN HUTCHINGS is Reader in Russian Studies at the University of Surrey. He is the author of A Semiotic Analysis of the Short Stories of Leonid Andreev (London: MHRA, 1990) and Russian Modernism: the Transfiguration of the Everyday (Cambridge University Press, 1997). He is currently completing two books for Routledge on the relationship between Russian literature and the camera media. Stephen’s research interests include nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russian literature and culture, post-Soviet television culture, and Russian critical and cultural theory.

JOHN E. JOSEPH is Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh, having previously held chairs at the University of Hong Kong and the University of Maryland at College Park. His books relating to the history of linguistics include Limiting the Arbitrary: Linguistic Naturalism and its Opposites in Plato’s Cratylus and Modern Theories of Language (2000), Landmarks in Linguistic Thought 2: The Western Tradition in the Twentieth Century (with N. Love and T. J. Taylor, 2001) and From Whitney to Chomsky: Essays in the History of American Linguistics (2002).

ANNA MORPURGO DAVIES is Diebold Professor of Comparative Philology at Oxford University. She completed her doctorate for the University of Rome, but has spent most of her working life in Oxford with frequent periods in the United States. She has worked and published extensively on Indo-European (especially ancient Greek and the ancient Anatolian languages) and on the history of nineteenth-century linguistics. She is the author of Nineteenth Century Linguistics (London: Longman, 1998). Professor Morpurgo Davies is a Fellow of the British Academy and an Honorary Member of the Linguistic Society of America.

CLAUDINE NORMAND is Emeritus Professor at the University of Paris at Nanterre, where she taught for thirty years. Her research interests are in the history and epistemology of linguistics and semiotics, especially of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Her main publications include a monograph
Notes on contributors ix


CHRISTOPHER NORRIS is Distinguished Research Professor in Philosophy at the University of Cardiff, Wales. He has published more than twenty books to date on various aspects of philosophy, the history of ideas and critical theory. At present he is writing mainly about issues in philosophical semantics and philosophy of science, with particular reference to areas of shared concern between the so-called ‘analytic’ and ‘continental’ lines of descent. Among his most recent books are Deconstruction and the Unfinished Project of Modernity (2000), Truth Matters: Realism, Anti-Realism and Response-Dependence (2002) and Philosophy of Language and the Challenge to Scientific Realism.

MATTHEW PIRES lectures at the British Institute in Paris. His interests include syntax, stylistics and the discourse of popular culture. He is a co-translator, with Carol Sanders, of the Écrits de linguistique générale.

CHRISTIAN PUECH lectures at the Centre de Linguistique Française at the Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris III). He is a member of the CNRS research group for the History of Linguistic Theories, and since 1978 he has been publishing on the history of linguistic ideas in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His most recent publications include Fondations de la linguistique: études d’histoire et d’œpistémologie (Louvain: Duculot, 1997), (with J. L. Chiss); Le langage et ses disciplines: XIX°–XX° siècles (Louvain: Duculot, 1999) (with J. L. Chiss); he is the editor of Linguistique et partages disciplinaires à la fin du XIX° siècle début du XX° siècle: Victor Henry (1850–1907), Coll. Bibliothèque de l’Information Grammaticale 55 (Louvain and Paris: Peeters, 2003).

CAROL SANDERS is Professor of French at the University of Surrey. She has research interests in the history of linguistics, French linguistics, applications of linguistics and French-speaking culture. She is the author of, among other things, a commentary on the Cours de linguistique de Ferdinand de Saussure (Hachette, 1979), and French Today: Language in its Social Context (Cambridge University Press, 1993). She is the co-translator of Saussure’s Écrits de linguistique générale (published in French by Gallimard in 2003).

STEVEN UNGAR is Professor of French and Chair of the Department of Cinema and Comparative Literature at the University of Iowa, where he teaches on twentieth-century French fiction, poetry, film and critical thought. His book-length publications include Roland Barthes: the Professor of Desire

**Peter Wunderli** is Emeritus Professor of Romance Philology at the Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf. His research interests are in the history of linguistics, syntax and morphosyntax, semantics, intonation and medieval philology. He is the author of numerous books and articles, among which are: *Ferdinand de Saussure und die Anagramme* (Tübingen, 1972); *Valéry saussurien* (Frankfurt am Main, 1977); *Saussure-Studien* (Tübingen, 1981); *L’intonation des séquences extraposées en français* (Tübingen, 1987); *Französische Lexikologie* (Tübingen, 1989); *Principes de diachronie* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990); *Studi esegetici su Ferdinand de Saussure* (Rome, 1993).
Acknowledgements

The initial preparation for this volume was done while I had the privilege of holding a Leverhulme Research Fellowship, and a subsequent small grant from the British Academy also facilitated the work. Matthew Pires, Peter Figueroa and I have translated, or where necessary edited, the chapters that were written in a language other than English. The first draft of the bibliography was very ably drawn up by Matthew Pires. In particular, I am very grateful for the important editorial assistance generously given by Peter Figueroa.
Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in the text to refer to works by Saussure; further information about the various editions of the *Cours de linguistique générale*, and also about translation and terminology, is given in the introduction, pp. 3–4.

*CGL*-B *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. W. Baskin (Saussure, 1959, 1974)

*CGL*-H *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. R. Harris (Saussure, 1983)

*CLG* *Cours de linguistique générale* (Saussure, 1916)

*CLG*/D *Cours de linguistique générale*, ed. T. de Mauro (Saussure, 1972)


*ELG* *Ecrits de linguistique générale*, ed. S. Bouquet and R. Engler (Saussure, 2002)