

## Syllabus

**Belle Époque France, FREN S367, HUMS S211, LITR S240**

June 7-July 10, 2021

R. Howard Bloch

This course aims to acquaint the student with many of the significant literary, visual, and musical works along with artistic and social movements of Belle Époque France: that is, symbolist poetry, naturalism and realism, end-of-the-century decadence, feminine literature, primitivism, and the idealist novel; Impressionism and Post-Impressionism in painting and sculpture, Fauvism, Cubism and Dadaism, Art Nouveau in architecture, advertising, and interior design; Dadaism and Primitivism in Music; Third Republic social movements and politics, including religion and anti-clericalism, the condition of workers and women, the Dreyfus Affair, the coming of the Great War; everyday and family life, music and concert halls, cafés, restaurants, and theatres, masculine and feminine dress, department stores, the Universal Expositions of 1889 and 1900, means of communication and transportation, home comforts, scientific discovery and technological innovation.

Please Note: You should do the reading for each week before our Tuesday meetings, when worksheets are due. Historical, art historical, social, political, musical topics will be treated via lecture and question format.

\*Indicates reading available on the Canvas server under Files.

### **Week I**

- **Reading:**

Emile Zola, *Ladies Paradise*; \*Guy de Maupassant, "The Necklace," "The Umbrella," "A Day in the Country."

Tuesday, June 8, **Introduction.** Discussion of Émile Zola, literary realism and naturalism, growth of the department store, advertising.

Thursday, June 10, Worksheet #1 due via Canvas at beginning of class. Continuation of discussion of Zola and of de Maupassant's short stories. Impressionism in painting: Manet, Monet, Degas, Renoir, Pissaro.

## Week II

- **Reading:**

Marcel Proust, *Swann in Love*, second volume of *Swann's Way*, which is the first part of *In Search of Lost Time*.

Tuesday, June 15, Worksheet #2 due via Canvas before class.  
Discussion of *Swann in Love*, the Dreyfus Affair.

Thursday, June 17, The decorative arts, Art Nouveau, poster art, architecture of the Belle-Époque, the sculpture of Auguste Rodin.

## Week III

- **Reading:**

Colette, *The Vagabond*; Georges Feydeau, "Cat among the Pigeons."

Tuesday, June 22, Worksheet #3 due via Canvas before class. Colette and the question of women in France 1870-1914, music halls and cafés. Erik Satie and musical Dadaism, the invention of cinema.

Thursday, June 24, Georges Feydeau and boulevard theatres, vaudeville, and bedroom farces. Post-Impressionism in painting: Cézanne, Matisse.

## Week IV

- **Reading:**

André Gide, *Lafcadio's Adventures*; \*Jules Barbey d'Aurevilly, "A Woman's Revenge"; Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Against Nature*.

Tuesday, June 29, Worksheet #4 due via Canvas before class.  
Discussion of André Gide, Nietzsche in France, Dadaism and Cubism in the visual arts: Duchamp, Picasso, Bracque.

Thursday, June 21, Discussion of Huysmans and Barbey d'Aurevilly, Fin-de-Siècle decadence.

**N.B.** Proposals for final papers are due at the end of Week IV, at which time we will conduct one-on-one Zoom conferences to hone your topics and prepare the terrain for you to succeed in your final paper.

## Week V

- **Reading:**

Henri Alain-Fournier, *The Lost Estate (Big Meaulnes)*, \*Guillaume Apollinaire, "Zone"; \*Stéphane Mallarmé, "A Throw of the Dice Never Will Abolish Chance"

Tuesday, July 6, Worksheet #5 due via Canvas before class. Discussion of Alain-Fournier, Fauvism in painting: Matisse, Derain, Roualt.

Thursday, July 8, Discussion of modernism in poetry (Mallarmé and Apollinaire), Primitivism in music, Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring."

### **Conclusion**

Saturday, July 10, Paper due electronically, 5:00 p.m. EDT via Canvas.

### **Format:**

Class will consist of mini-lectures by the instructor, discussion, and virtual museum tours.

### **Requirements:**

- Class participation (20%).
- Weekly worksheets based on the reading, due before class (30%).
- One-on-one paper consult to develop paper topic (end of fourth week) (10%).
- Final paper (10-12 pages) (40%).

### **Reading List:**

The reading list below is divided between works available on Canvas, indicated by \* , and those to purchase. When purchasing, please try to obtain the edition below so that we can easily and quickly be on the same page.

Canvas:

- \*Guillaume Apollinaire, "Zone"
- \*Jules Barbey d'Aurevilly, "A Woman's Revenge"
- \*Georges Feydeau, "Cat among the Pigeons"
- \*Stéphane Mallarmé, "A Throw of the Dice Never Will Abolish Chance"
- \*Guy de Maupassant, "The Necklace," "The Umbrella," "A Day in the Country"

To Purchase, but also on Canvas:

- Henri Alain-Fournier, *The Lost Estate*, tr. Robin Buss, Penguin Classics, 2007.
- Colette, *The Vagabond*, tr. Stanley Applebaum, Dover Publications, 2010.
- André Gide, *Lafcadio's Adventures*, tr. Dorothy Bussy, Vintage International, 2003.
- Marcel Proust, *Swann in Love*, tr. C. K. Scott Moncrieff, Modern Library, New York, 2003.
- Emile Zola, *Ladies Paradise*, tr. Brian Nelson, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press, 2008.

**Statement on Academic Conduct:**

"You must document all of your source material. If you take any text from somebody else, you must make it clear the text is being quoted and where the text comes from. You must also cite any sources from which you obtain numbers, ideas, or other material. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, ask! Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. Fortunately, it is also easy to avoid and if you are the least bit careful about giving credit where credit is due you should not run into any problems."

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