FR 546: Discourses on Decadence, 1870-1914

3 Credits

This interdisciplinary seminar examines notions of decadence in the visual arts and other fields elaborated primarily in French and Francophone contexts between 1880 and 1914. We will alternate an in-depth reading of Joris-Karl Huysmans' classic text of Decadence, A Rebours (1884), with close study of the visual arts, music, scientific discourse, and historical and philosophical texts in order to identify what were considered by contemporaries the major sources of decadence during that era: among others, ‘new women’, Jews and other social and ‘racial’ inferiors, democratization, urbanization, and the triumph of scientific and rationalistic thought. We will also examine presumed symptoms of decadence: neurasthenia, declining birth rates, perceived social ‘pathologies’ such as prostitution, crime, and drugs; homosexuality, androgyny, and other supposed sexual ‘perversions’; and psychological conditions such as hysteria. Finally, we will examine what contemporaries considered antidotes to decadence: visits to spas, the cult of heroes, sports, a return to faith. We will analyze how artists and authors of the period among others, Aubrey Beardsley, Félicien Rops, Edvard Munch, Fernand Knopff, Jean Lorrain, Oscar Wilde, and others’ valorized the notion of decadence, celebrating it and making it the touchstone of a key esthetic of the late-nineteenth century, overlapping and echoing other trends and esthetics, such as Symbolism, Art nouveau, the Pre-Raphaelites, Japonism, the Arts and Crafts Movement, Jugendstil, Estheticism, Dandyism, and Snobbism.

FR 589: Technology in Foreign Language Education: An Overview

3 Credits

Approaches to the uses and research applications of multimedia and other educational technologies applied to the teaching of foreign languages. (also crosslisted with SPAN 589)

Cross-listed with: APLNG 589, CMLIT 589, GER 589, SPAN 589