

L/Hum 152b
Modern French Literature in Translation

Spring 2017

Instructor: Trevor Merrill
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Class meetings: TBD

Course Description: This course presents three masterpieces of French literature by Stendhal (*The Red and the Black*), Flaubert (*Sentimental Education*), and Proust (*In Search of Lost Time, vol III. The Guermantes Way*). France in the 19th century was an incredible laboratory of political and social transformation, and these novelists showed how systems of government—from Napoleon’s Empire to constitutional monarchy to the emerging Republic—intertwined with the personal ambitions, love affairs, and social rivalries of French men and women. By giving a holistic view of what it was like to be alive at specific historical moments, connecting the schemes of powerful nobles with the destinies of provincial upstarts, Stendhal, Flaubert, and Proust shed light on the mechanisms of both love and history. It will be the goal of this course to understand what our three novelists were trying to say, and how, by perfecting the techniques of literary realism, they turned their art into a source of existential wisdom whose lessons remain valid in our era of “negative partisanship,” college admissions mania, and dating apps. All readings are in English but students may read the texts in French if they wish.

Texts:

Stendhal; *The Red and the Black*, trans. Roger Gard, Penguin Classics, 2002. ISBN: 978-0140447644

Flaubert, Gustave; *Sentimental Education*, ed. Patrick Coleman, trans. Helen Constantine, Oxford World’s Classics, 2016. ISBN: 978-0199686636

Proust, Marcel; *In Search of Lost Time, vol. III, The Guermantes Way (Modern Library edition)*, Modern Library, 1998. ISBN: 978-0375752339

Assignments and Grading:

Weekly writing assignments in response to the readings, a mid-term exam (take-home), and a final paper of 10 pages.

Attendance is a basic course requirement.

Attendance/participation/reading responses: 40 %

Mid-term exam: 20%

Final paper: 40%