



Spring 2021  
Mon / Wed. 10:00-11:50 am

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## FRENCH 392

# LA BELLE ÉPOQUE: FRANCE AT THE TURN OF THE XX<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY (1880-1914)

La Belle Époque is a key moment in French history. Politically it's the settling of the Third Republic, whose foundations will be challenged by the Dreyfus Affair and colonial crises that comes with the expansion of the French Empire. Innovation and progress find their symbol in the construction of the Eiffel Tower, an architectural success as well as the most spectacular calling card for the industrial power of the country. Artistically, Paris is the center of a changing world, painted by the Impressionists, chronicled by Emile Zola, Guy de Maupassant, filmed by the Frères Lumières, and put to music by Camille Saint-Saëns: a unique intellectual and artistic effervescence that draw the foundation of today's France.

We will read novels by Emile Zola, Maurice Leblanc and Victor Segalen, tales and stories by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam and Maupassant, political texts, such as Zola's "J'accuse", essays by Claude Monet, Odilon Redon, Saint-Saëns, explore the beginning of cinema, with archives footing of the first experiments by the Frères Lumières, movies by Alice Guy and Georges Méliès, and virtually visit some of the largest repository of the era's art, such as the Musée d'Orsay.

### *Readings:*

Émile Zola : *Au Bonheur des Dames*

Maurice Leblanc : *L'Aiguille creuse*

Victor Segalen : *René Leys*

**co-requisite: French 330.**