

## Modern Poetry I: Symbolism to Imagism

ENGL 331 / Fall 2003

T-Th 9:35-10:50 / King 327

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Hours: T-Th 4:30-

5:30, W 2:00-4:00

### Description

This course is designed to help students develop a rich and complicated sense of the poets and poetic approaches that helped constitute what we now call modern poetry. Taking symbolism and imagism as two predominant (stylistic and historical) points of reference, we'll survey French, British, Irish, and American poetry between roughly 1880 and 1920, pushing ourselves to describe poems and poets in relation to one another and to consider their relationships to wider cultural and artistic shifts. Certainly we'll find elements of symbolism in poems by imagists, imagist techniques in poems by symbolists, and poets who don't seem to fit into either category. You'll be encouraged--both in class and in written assignments--to read against the narrative suggested by the course schedule and to seek out and argue for those poets and modes of poetic description that speak to you most insistently. I hope we can consider all such complications and welcome additions while still working together to imagine a literary history in which a poetry of formal versification and symbolic resonance gives way to a poetry of free verse and "direct treatment of the thing."

### Requirements

Written work for this course consists of two 4-page essays, a longer final essay (10-12 pages), and three 1-page responses, all of which will be carefully explained as due dates approach. The rest of your work will consist of completing reading assignments and participating intelligently in class discussion. I cannot overemphasize how highly I value the time and effort it takes to play an active role in class discussions.

### Required Texts

\* Bob Blaisdell, *Imagist Poetry: An Anthology*

\* Angel Flores, *Anchor Book of French Poetry*

\* Jahan Ramazani et al, *Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry, Vol. 1*

### Course Policies

You're permitted two absences. If you miss more than two classes, your grade may suffer. Written work is due in class on the date indicated on the course schedule. You may turn in one late paper of any kind, which can be late by one class period, but I may penalize a second lateness, or any lateness of more than one class period.

### Honor Code

Students are responsible for following the guidelines set out by the Oberlin College Honor Code ([http://www.oberlin.edu/~stlife/Honor\\_Code/Honor\\_Code.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/~stlife/Honor_Code/Honor_Code.html)). Please come speak with me during the semester if you have any questions about citing or acknowledging outside sources. You should append the signed honor pledge to all written work for this course. The pledge should read as follows: "I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment."

## Grading

4-page Essays: 40%      Final Essay: 40%      Participation: 10%      1-page Responses: 10%

## **Schedule**

### Introductions and Initial Definitions

T 9/2                      Introductions  
Th 9/4                      M.H. Abrams, "Imagism" and "Symbolist Movement" (photocopy)  
BAUDELAIRE, "Correspondences" (F 21, 297); H.D., "Oread" (R 395);  
POUND, "In a Station of the Metro" (R 351)

### Flowers of Evil

T 9/9                      CHARLES BAUDELAIRE (1821-1867)  
"To the Reader," "Benediction," "The Albatross," "Correspondences,"  
"The Enemy," "The Former Life" (F 17-23, 294-299)  
Th 9/11                      "Beauty," "Posthumous Remorse," "I offer you this verse," "The Vial,"  
"Invitation to the Voyage," "Music," "The Cracked Bell" (F 24-29, 299-  
303)  
T 9/16                      "Spleen," "Heautontimoroumenos," "Landscape," "The Swan," "The  
Seven Old Men," "The Seven Old Women," "The Love of Deceit," "I  
have not forgotten," "Morning Twilight," "Beatrice," "A Voyage to  
Cythera," "The Voyage" (F 29-50, 303-319)  
Th 9/18                      "Lesbos," "Lethe," "Epigraph for a Condemned Book,"  
"The Gulf" (F 51-56, 320-323)  
**\*1<sup>st</sup> Response Due**

### French Symbolism after Baudelaire

T 9/23                      STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ (1842-1898)  
"Apparition," "Windows" (F 141-43, 364-66), "Sea Breeze" (F 147-48,  
369), "Another Fan" (F 158-59, 375-76), "Salute" (F 165, 378-79), "A  
Throw of the Dice Never Will Abolish Chance" (F 171-193)  
Th 9/25                      ARTHUR RIMBAUD (1854-1891)  
"My Bohemia" (F 106, 350-51), "The Drunken Boat," "Vowels" (F 109-  
113, 353-56), "Departure" (F 133), "Cities" (F 134-35), "Dawn" (F 136)

### Late Victorian, Early Modern

T 9/30                      THOMAS HARDY (1840-1928)  
"Hap," "Neutral Tones," "I Look into My Glass" (R 44-45), "The  
Darkling Thrush," "A Broken Appointment," "The Self-Unseeing,"  
"Bereft" (R 48-50), "New Year's Eve," "Channel Firing" (R 51-52)  
Th 10/2                      GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS (1844-1889)  
"God's Grandeur," "[As Kingfishers Fire, Dragonflies Draw Flame],"  
"Spring," "The Windhover," "Pied Beauty" (R 76-78)

### Yeats, Symbolism, Modernism

T 10/7                      W.B. YEATS (1865-1939)  
"To the Rose Upon the Rood of Time," "The Lake Isle of Innisfree,"  
"The Sorrow of Love," "When You Are Old," "[Who Goes with  
Fergus?]," "To Ireland in the Coming Times" (R 94-97)

Th 10/9	“The Song of Wandering Aengus” (R 98), “Adam’s Curse,” “No Second Troy,” “The Fascination of What’s Difficult,” “A Coat,” “September 1913,” “The Magi” (R 100-03) <b>*4-page Essay Due</b>
T 10/14	“Easter, 1916,” “The Wild Swans at Coole” (R 105-07), “The Second Coming” (R 111)
Th 10/16	Midterm Discussions
T 10/21	FALL BREAK
Th 10/23	FALL BREAK

Imagism and the Poetic Image

T 10/28	H.D. (1886-1961) “Oread,” “The Pool,” “Sea Rose,” “Mid-Day,” “Garden,” “Sea Violet,” “Helen” (R 395-398) Hugh Kenner, “Imagism” (photocopy)
Th 10/30	AMY LOWELL (1874-1925) “In a Garden,” “Venus Transiens,” “The Travelling Bear,” “Solitaire,” “Sunshine,” “A Year Passes,” “To a Husband,” “The Emperor’s Garden,” “A Decade” (B 93-96) <b>*2<sup>nd</sup> Response Due</b>
T 11/4	WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS (1883-1963) “The Young Housewife,” “Tract,” “Dans Russe,” “Sympathetic Portrait of a Child,” “Portrait of a Lady,” “Queen-Anne’s-Lace,” “The Widow’s Lament in Springtime” (R 286-291)
Th 11/6	“The Great Figure,” “Spring and All” (R 291-92), “The Red Wheelbarrow” (R 294-95)
T 11/11	EZRA POUND (1885-1972) “Portrait d’une Femme,” “The Return,” “A Pact,” “The Rest,” “In a Station of the Metro,” “The River-Merchant’s Wife: A Letter,” “Lament of the Frontier Guard” (R 349-53) Timothy Materer, excerpt from “Make It Sell! Ezra Pound Advertises Modernism” (photocopy)
Th 11/13	“After Ch’u Yuan,” “Liu Ch’e,” “Fan-Piece for Her Imperial Lord,” “Couplet,” “The Garret” (B 99-100), “Ts’ai Chi’h,” “Alba,” “Image from d’Orleans,” “Epitaphs,” “The Jewel Stairs’ Grievance” (B 103-05) <b>*2<sup>nd</sup> 4-page Essay Due</b>

Imagism and Vernacular Modernism

T 11/18	CARL SANDBURG (1878-1967) “Chicago,” “The Harbor,” “Subway,” “Cool Tombs,” “Grass,” “Gargoyle” (R 227-29)
Th 11/20	LANGSTON HUGHES (1902-1967) “The Negro Speaks of Rivers,” “When Sue Wears Red,” “The Weary Blues,” “Suicide’s Note,” “Cross,” “Lament over Love,” “Po’ Boy Blues,” “Song for a Dark Girl” (R 687-691)

Departures

T 11/25	GERTRUDE STEIN (1874-1946) From <i>Tender Buttons</i> , “Susie Asado” (R 180-185) MINA LOY (1882-1966) From <i>Songs to Joannes</i> (R 269-272), “Gertrude Stein” (R 281) <b>*3<sup>rd</sup> Response Due</b>
Th 11/27	THANKSGIVING
T 12/2	POUND Cantos I & II (R 368-374)
Th 12/4	T.S. ELIOT (1888-1965) “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (R 463-466)
T 12/9	Final Discussions
Th 12/11	Final Discussions
M 12/15	<b>*Final Essay Due (10-12 pages)</b>