

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO



PROUST

Edited by Richard Bales

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RICHARD BALES

Queen's University, Belfast



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The Cambridge Companion to Proust aims to provide a broad account of the major features of Marcel Proust's great work *A la recherche du temps perdu* (1913–27). The specially commissioned essays, by acknowledged experts on Proust, address a wide range of issues relating to his work. Progressing from background and biographical material, the chapters investigate such essential areas as the composition of the novel, its social dimension, the language in which it is couched, its intellectual parameters, its humour, its analytical profundity and its wide appeal and influence. Particular emphasis is placed on illustrating the discussion of issues by frequent recourse to textual quotation (in both French and English) and close analysis. This is the only contributory volume of its kind on Proust currently available. Together with its supportive material, a detailed chronology and bibliography, it will be of interest to scholars and students alike.

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critique avait e'crite que des le me de
 Delft de Vermeer (peint par le musiee de
 la Haye pour une exposition hollandaise)
 tellement q' il adorait et croyait connaître très
 bien, un petit peu de mon genre (q' il ne
 se rappelait pas) e'tait si bien peint q' il e'tait
 si on le regardait seul comme une peinture
 de ma main, d'une belle chose, d'une belle
 qui se suffisait à elle-même, Bergotte
 mangea qq. pommes de terre, sortit et
 alla à l'Exposition. Dès les premières mar-
 ches q' il fut à gauche, les peintures
 e'taient tels q' il fut d'inspiration que
~~ce qui e'tait dans une petite balustrade, d'un~~
~~côté il y avait le petit morceau de~~
~~mon genre, une petite peinture chinoise~~
~~de l'autre se voyait. Arrivé devant la porte~~
 devant plusieurs tableaux et fut l'impression
 de la richesse et de l'habileté d'un
 art si facile, il qui ne valait pas les
 courtes d'air et de soleil d'un paysage de
 Vain, ou d'une simple maison à bord
 de la mer. Enfin il fut devant le Vermeer
 q' il se rappelait plus e'clatant, plus différent

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

RICHARD BALES is Professor of Modern French Literature at Queen's University, Belfast. He is the author of three books and many articles on Proust. His other publications include a book on nineteenth-century authors (*Persuasion in the French Personal Novel*, 1996) and an edition of plays by the Belgian symbolist Georges Rodenbach (1999).

MALCOLM BOWIE is Marshal Foch Professor of French Literature in the University of Oxford, and a Fellow of All Souls College. He is the author of *Henri Michaux: a Study of his Literary Works* (1973), *Mallarmé and the Art of Being Difficult* (1978), *Freud, Proust and Lacan: Theory as Fiction* (1987), *Lacan* (1991), *Psychoanalysis and the Future of Theory* (1993), and *Proust among the Stars* (1998).

WILLIAM C. CARTER, Professor of French at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, is the author of *The Proustian Quest* (1992) and co-producer of the documentary film *Marcel Proust: a Writer's Life* (1993). His *Marcel Proust: a Life* (2000) is the first biography in English to take into account the letters, memoirs and manuscripts available since Painter's biography. He is on the editorial board of the *Bulletin Marcel Proust* and is a permanent correspondent of the *Centre de recherches proustiennes* (Sorbonne nouvelle).

DAVID R. ELLISON is Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of Miami. He is the author of *The Reading of Proust* (1984), *Understanding Albert Camus* (1990), and *Of Words and the World: Referential Anxiety in Contemporary French Fiction* (1993). His current project is a book on the topic *From the Sublime to the Uncanny: Ethics and Aesthetics of European Modernism*.

ALISON FINCH is Professor of French at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of Merton College. She is the author of *Proust's Additions* (1977), *Stendhal: La Chartreuse de Parme* (1984), *Concordance de Stendhal* (1991), *Women's Writing in Nineteenth-Century France* (2000), and a number of essays on post-1800 French literature.

CYNTHIA GAMBLE is Research Fellow, Ruskin Programme, University of Lancaster. She is the author of numerous articles and papers on Proust, with a particular focus on the relationship between Proust and Ruskin. In collaboration with others, she is preparing an edition of *La Bible d'Amiens*, and is co-curating a major exhibition on Proust and Ruskin for the Musée de Picardie, Amiens.

HOLLIE MARKLAND HARDER is a Lecturer at Brandeis University. She has published articles on Proust and Zola, and is currently writing on the figure of the 'amazone' in Balzac, Sand and Fromentin. She is also working on a book-length study of *A la recherche du temps perdu*, focusing on the role of Françoise in the evolution of the Protagonist's sense of time and art.

EDWARD J. HUGHES is Reader in Modern French Literature at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is the author of *Marcel Proust: a Study in the Quality of Awareness* (1983) and *Albert Camus: La Peste/Le Premier Homme* (1995). He is co-editor (with Peter Dunwoodie) of *Constructing Memories: Camus, Algeria and 'Le Premier Homme'* (1998), and has just completed a book entitled *Writing Cultural Marginality in Modern French Literature: from Loti to Genet* (2001).

JACK JORDAN is Associate Professor of French at Mississippi State University. He is the author of articles on Proust and on Francophone literature of the French Antilles. He has also published a book entitled *Marcel Proust's 'A la recherche du temps perdu': a Search for Certainty* (1993).

JOSHUA LANDY is Assistant Professor of French at Stanford University. He is co-editor (with Claude Bremond and Thomas Pavel) of *Thematics: New Approaches* (1995), and is currently completing a study on images of subjectivity in the first-person novel.

DIANE R. LEONARD is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has written numerous articles on Proust and Ruskin, and is completing a book-length study on Proust's re-inscription of Ruskin's texts in *A la recherche du temps perdu*.

BRIAN ROGERS, a former Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and a member of the Institut des Textes et Manuscrits Modernes, Paris, is the author of *Proust's Narrative Techniques* (1965; revised edition forthcoming), and *Le Dessous des cartes: Proust et Barbey d'Aurevilly* (2000). He is one of the major contributors to the recent Pléiade edition of *A la recherche du temps perdu*, and has also published studies of Barbey d'Aurevilly and Charles Nodier.

MARION SCHMID is Lecturer in French at the University of Edinburgh. She has written widely on textual criticism, with particular reference to Flaubert and Proust. Her publications include *Processes of Literary Creation: Flaubert and Proust* (1998), as well as articles on Proust addressing such topics as his alleged anti-semitism, his representation of the First World War and his reception of Baudelaire. She is currently working on the role of self-censorship in the making of *A la recherche du temps perdu*.

ROGER SHATTUCK has published *The Banquet Years* (1958), *Proust's Binoculars* (1963), *Marcel Proust* (1974), *Forbidden Knowledge: from Prometheus to Pornography* (1996), *Candor and Perversion: Literature, Education, and the Arts* (1999), and *Proust's Way: a Field Guide to 'In Search of Lost Time'* (2000). He recently retired from Boston University and lives in Lincoln, Vermont.

PREFACE

Truly great authors can never have enough books written about them, and no one can now deny that Proust has long since joined that select band. This seemed impossible back in the 1920s when *A la recherche du temps perdu* was being revealed in its entirety: in spite of his winning the *Prix Goncourt* in 1919, Proust's reputation in those years was largely that of a disorganised, if brilliant, amateur. As the years have rolled by, however, his achievement looks ever more masterly, to the extent that a single work of art has come to dominate the entire French literary scene of the twentieth century. And not just the French scene: across the world, Proust's novel is pointed to as representing the *ne plus ultra* of aesthetic profundity, laying forth all manner of analytical, compositional and expressive techniques. Of course, *A la recherche du temps perdu* did not emerge with sudden maturity: on the contrary, years of apprenticeship preceded it, and painstaking effort was put into its elaboration – the famous manuscripts are graphic and eloquent proof of this. If, in our *Companion*, we devote the greater amount of space to the *magnum opus*, this is simply because there is so much to say about it – and even then, we can only hope to scratch the surface of what will always remain, in Walter Benjamin's memorable formulation in *Illuminations*, 'this great special case of literature' in which 'everything transcends the norm'.

Richard Bales

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Belfast

PRELIMINARY NOTES

Titles

A la recherche du temps perdu is now translated as *In Search of Lost Time*, a close rendition. It formerly appeared as *Remembrance of Things Past*, a quotation from Shakespeare's *Sonnet* 30. The novel consists of seven separately named parts, as follows:

Du côté de chez Swann (*Swann's Way*). Subdivided into:

‘Combray’

‘Un amour de Swann’ (‘Swann in Love’)

‘Noms de pays: le nom’ (‘Place-names: the Name’).

A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs (*Within a Budding Grove*). Subdivided into:

‘Autour de Mme Swann’ (‘Madame Swann at Home’)

‘Noms de pays: le pays’ (‘Place-names: the Place’).

Le Côté de Guermantes (*The Guermantes Way*).

Sodomie et Gomorrhe (*Sodom and Gomorrah*).

La Prisonnière (*The Captive*).

Albertine disparue or *La Fugitive** (*The Fugitive*).

Le Temps retrouvé (*Time Regained*).

In the running text, the novel is designated in different ways: some writers prefer the full French title, others an abbreviated one, still others an English version such as *The Search*. Everyone has his or her favourite.

Editions

Marcel Proust, *A la recherche du temps perdu*. 4 vols. Paris: Gallimard (Pléiade), 1987–9.

*See Chapter 3 for an explanation regarding these alternative titles.

In Search of Lost Time. 6 vols. London: Vintage, 1992 [1996].

In Search of Lost Time. 6 vols. New York: The Modern Library, 1993 [1999].

The Pléiade edition has been chosen because it is broadly recognised as the most scholarly and authoritative, and has established itself as the benchmark text. The English translation (originally by C.K. Scott-Moncrieff, updated by Terence Kilmartin, then by D.J. Enright) takes account of the corrections incorporated into the 1987–9 Pléiade edition. The American and British editions, though in the same number of volumes, take different pagination, but the text remains identical. In most cases, quotation from the original text is immediately followed by the English translation; the exception is a few cases of brief quotation where the meaning of the French or English alone is self-evident.

References

Providing page references to Proust's novel is, inescapably, a complicated and cumbersome affair, exacerbated where, as here, the pagination is different in the two English-language editions. Typically, text in French is followed by a reference, the roman numeral referring to the volume, and the arabic to the page number, as: II, 397. Text in English is followed by volume number in roman, followed by TWO page numbers in arabic, first that of the British edition, then that of the American edition (the latter practically always takes a higher number), as: III, 690/818. References which are allusions where there is no quoted text are in the order French – British – American, as: IV, 615; VI, 438/516. (Note that with this system there is no need for title abbreviations.)

Other frequently mentioned works by Proust, with their abbreviations, are as follows:

Contre Sainte-Beuve (*Against Sainte-Beuve*) (CSB).

Correspondance (*Correspondence*) (Corr.).

Jean Santeuil (JS).

Les Plaisirs et les jours (*Pleasures and Days*) (PJ).

(For the editions see the Select Bibliography.)

References to other works are given in full in endnotes to chapters and in the Select Bibliography.

'The Narrator' or 'Marcel'?

It was for long common practice to designate the main character of *A la recherche du temps perdu* 'Marcel'. The justification was the following

passage in *La Prisonnière*: 'Elle [Albertine] retrouvait la parole, elle disait: "Mon" ou "Mon chéri", suivis l'un ou l'autre de mon nom de baptême, ce qui, en donnant au narrateur le même prénom qu'à l'auteur de ce livre, eût fait: "Mon Marcel", "Mon chéri Marcel"' (III, 583) ['Then she would find her tongue and say: "My - " or "My darling - " followed by my Christian name, which, if we give the narrator the same name as the author of this book, would be "My Marcel," or "My darling Marcel"' (v, 77/91)]. Although the nomenclature is repeated on III, 663; v, 172/203, nowhere else in the novel does this happen, anonymity being the general rule. (Besides, these passages occur in a section of the novel that Proust left unrevised at his death.) Early commentators doubtless felt that the Narrator 'needed' a name, especially in his role as developing human being. This function can, however, readily be covered by the term 'the Protagonist', when a clear distinction has to be established between the younger and the older Narrator. Most frequently, though, the umbrella-term 'the Narrator' suffices, and indeed reinforces the continuity between all stages of his development.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1871 10 July: birth, at Auteuil in the Paris suburbs, of Marcel Valentin Louis Eugène Georges Proust, son of Adrien Proust, a distinguished professor of medicine, and Jeanne-Clémence Weil. The father is Catholic, the mother Jewish.
- 1872 The Proust family takes up residence in the fashionable boulevard Malesherbes (Paris 8^e). Proust will always live in this area, except at the end of his life.
- 1878–86 Family holidays at Illiers (now Illiers-Combray) in the *département* of Eure-et-Loir.
- 1882–89 Attends the Lycée Fontanes (renamed Lycée Condorcet in 1883); poor health often keeps him absent.
- 1888 Proust is strongly influenced by his philosophy teacher, Alphonse Darlu.
- 1889–90 Proust performs his military service at Orléans, a feat of which he is exceptionally proud.
- 1890–95 Student years (law and political science). Licence en droit (1893); licence ès lettres (1895).
- 1891 Co-founds a short-lived journal, *Le Banquet*. Is an active contributor to this and other journals.
- 1894 Beginning of the Dreyfus affair.
- 1895 Begins a novel, *Jean Santeuil* (unfinished).
- 1896 Publication of *Les Plaisirs et les jours*, a collection of stories, essays and miscellaneous pieces.
- 1897 Proust becomes increasingly enthusiastic about the work of the English writer Ruskin.
- 1898 Publication of Zola's 'J'accuse'. Proust rallies to the Dreyfus cause.
- 1900 Death of Ruskin. Proust devotes the next few years to translating (with the help mainly of his mother) and annotating selected works of his. Two trips to Venice. The family moves to the rue de Courcelles.

- 1902 Artistic trips to Belgium and Holland; sees Vermeer's *View of Delft*.
- 1903 Death of Proust's father.
- 1904 *La Bible d'Amiens*, translation of Ruskin.
- 1905 Death of Proust's mother. He is inconsolable.
- 1906 Proust moves to 102, boulevard Haussmann. *Sésame et les lys*, translation of Ruskin.
- 1907-14 Summer holidays at Cabourg, on the Normandy coast.
- 1908 Writes *Pastiches* of other authors, based on an amusing extortion racket. Begins what is now known as *Contre Sainte-Beuve*, an essay.
- 1909 The essay transforms itself into a novel: it will eventually become *A la recherche du temps perdu*.
- 1910 Goes to see the *Ballets russes*. Has his bedroom lined with cork, because of building work in an adjoining apartment.
- 1911 The novel's title at this time is *Les Intermittences du cœur*. Proust employs a secretary to type up his work, more than 700 pages to date.
- 1912 Proust seeks a publisher, in vain.
- 1913 *Du côté de chez Swann* is published by Grasset, at Proust's own expense. The general title of the novel is changed to *A la recherche du temps perdu*.
- 1914 The second volume of the novel as it then existed is being set up in proof when the outbreak of war stops the printing presses.
- 1914-18 During the war, with no possibility of publication, Proust vastly expands his novel, notably in respect of the character Albertine.
- 1915 Publication rights are transferred from Grasset to Gallimard.
- 1918 Publication of *A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*.
- 1919 Proust is forced to move from 102, boulevard Haussmann, firstly to the rue Laurent-Pichat, then to what will turn out to be his final residence, 44, rue Hamelin. He is controversially awarded the *Prix Goncourt*, France's premier literary prize.
- 1920 Proust is named Chevalier de la légion d'honneur. Publication of *Le Côté de Guermantes I*.
- 1921 Extracts from the novel are regularly published in journals, mainly *La Nouvelle Revue française*, continuing into 1922. Proust visits an exhibition of Dutch paintings at the Orangerie in May: he sees the *View of Delft* again. *Le Côté de Guermantes II – Sodome et Gomorrhe I* is published.