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Jean-Jacques Nattiez  
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## Proust as Musician

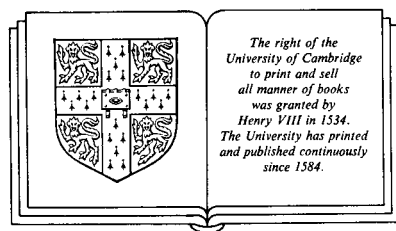
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# Proust as Musician

BY  
JEAN-JACQUES NATTIEZ

TRANSLATED BY  
DERRICK PUFFETT



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*le parfum persistant des fleurs du passé*  
And to Christie and David, in friendship

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A book could be written on the significance of music in the work of Proust, in particular of the music of Vinteuil: the Sonata and the Septuor. The influence of Schopenhauer on this aspect of the Proustian demonstration is unquestionable . . . Music is the catalytic element in the work of Proust.

Samuel Beckett, *Proust* (1931)

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## Preface to the English edition

The decision to publish an English translation of my book *Proust musicien* (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 1984) was taken at a time when the work of Proust had just fallen into the public domain. In 1987 the famous Pléiade collection began to bring out a new edition of *A la recherche du temps perdu*, a critical edition this time and in four volumes instead of three. With only three exceptions, notably the passage on the Vinteuil Septet, which will appear in the new edition of *La Prisonnière* (*The Captive*) after the present book has been published, all the passages I have analysed are included in the new volume I, which contains *Du côté de chez Swann* (*Swann's Way*) and Part I of *A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs* (*Within a Budding Grove*), along with 900 pages of rough drafts, variants and critical notes. I have taken the opportunity provided by this English edition to update my text, in particular modifying my account of the genesis of *A la recherche* and adding information that has recently become available.

The original book was the result of a seminar on the relationship between the arts held at the University of Quebec at Montreal in 1976–7 and an interdisciplinary seminar presented jointly by the Department of French Studies and the Faculty of Music of the University of Montreal in 1981 and 1983. Warmest thanks are due to the students and to my colleagues Christie McDonald and David Mendelson for their perceptive criticisms at that time.

There are moments in the life of a musicologist or a critic that reward him for having spent long hours on dreary tasks. The moment, for example, when Derrick Puffett, the remarkable translator of this little book, telephoned its author to tell him that, having found in it the

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## PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

answers to certain questions he had asked himself in the past about Proust's relationship to music, he had decided to translate it, without even being assured of a publisher. Derrick will doubtless reproach me for making public what is, after all, the result of private enthusiasm, but it is the only way I know to let my readers understand why I cannot find adequate words to express my gratitude.

Jean-Jacques Nattiez  
Montreal, April 1988



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## Translator's note

The object of this translation is to make the book available to the widest possible readership. All quotations are therefore given in English. The many extracts from *A la recherche du temps perdu* appear in the standard revised translation by C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin (*Remembrance of Things Past*, 3 vols., Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), based on the Pléiade edition of 1954 (the new edition has not of course been translated); the corresponding passages from the 1954 text are reproduced in an Appendix. For consistency, titles of individual books of *A la recherche* are given in their conventional English form (*Swann's Way*, etc.). However, it seemed better to say *A la recherche du temps perdu* than *Remembrance of Things Past*. The following abbreviations have been used:

- C     *The Captive (La Prisonnière)*  
 CP    *Cities of the Plain (Sodome et Gomorrhe)*  
 F     *The Fugitive (La Fugitive)*  
 G     *The Guermantes Way (Le Côté de Guermantes)*  
 S     *Swann's Way (Du côté de chez Swann)*  
 TR    *Time Regained (Le Temps retrouvé)*  
 WBG  *Within a Budding Grove (A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs)*

Four further abbreviations require explanation:

- CSB   The Pléiade volume containing *Contre Sainte-Beuve* and *Pastiches et mélanges*, ed. Pierre Clarac (Paris: Gallimard, 1971)  
 JS    The Pléiade volume containing *Jean Santeuil* and *Les Plaisirs et les jours*, ed. Pierre Clarac in collaboration with Yves Sandré (Paris: Gallimard, 1971)

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## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

- MPG* *Matinée chez la Princesse de Guermantes* (the rough drafts for *Time Regained*), ed. Henri Bonnet (Paris: Gallimard, 1982)  
*NE* The new Pléiade edition of *A la recherche du temps perdu*, ed. Jean-Yves Tadié (Paris: Gallimard, 1987–)

In these cases I have made my own translations.

For quotations from other sources, 'received' translations have been used wherever possible and the bibliographical references revised accordingly. All other translations are mine, as is all material in square brackets.

Thanks are due to Esther Cavett-Dunsby, Alfred Clayton and Hugo Tucker for reading and commenting on the translation, and to Monica Buckland and Jackie Scully for typing it.