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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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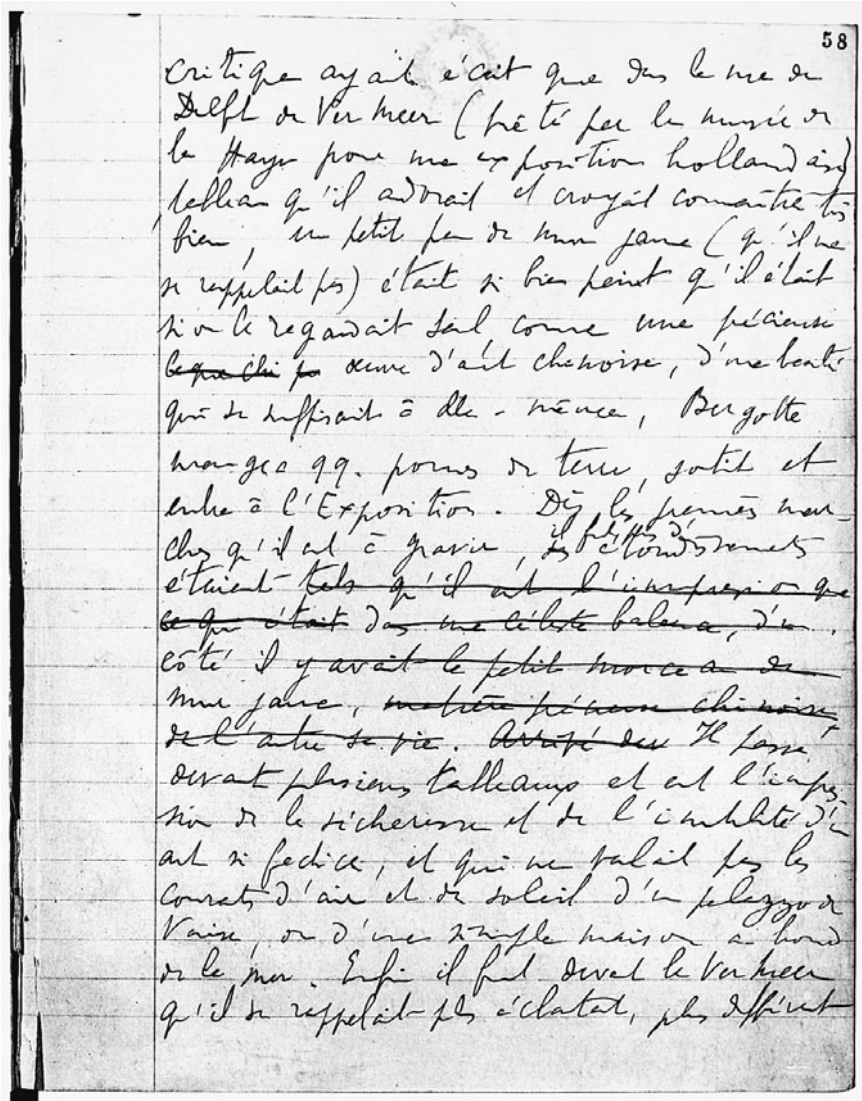
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An extract from the manuscript pages describing the death of the fictional novelist Bergotte, as he contemplates Vermeer's *View of Delft*. (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, NAF 16702, p. 58r; cliché Bibliothèque Nationale de France.)

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PROUST

EDITED BY
RICHARD BALES

Queen's University, Belfast



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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521669610

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First published 2001, 2011

Sixth printing 2010

Second Edition 2012

Reprinted 2013

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-66019-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-66961-0 Paperback

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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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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am exceptionally grateful for the unfailing courtesy and helpfulness of the contributors to this volume. Special thanks are due to Cynthia Gamble and Hollie Harder for going beyond the call of duty, and to Eddie Hughes for his customary wisdom. Vintage books were kind enough to provide copies of the British edition of Proust's novel. Queen's University, Belfast allowed me a semester's study leave, which came at exactly the right moment. Denise McColl expertly deciphered my handwriting and put it on disk. As ever, Tim Unwin has been a great inspiration and help. At Cambridge University Press, Linda Bree and Rachel De Wachter have shown almost heroic patience and faith in the project: my greatest thanks go to them.

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*).

Sodome 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.

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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

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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.

CHRONOLOGY

- 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.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1922 *Sodome et Gomorrhe II* is published. Proust develops bronchitis, then pneumonia, and dies on 18 November. He is buried in Père Lachaise cemetery on 22 November.
- 1923 Publication of *Sodome et Gomorrhe III – La Prisonnière*.
- 1924 Publication of *Albertine disparue*.
- 1927 Publication of *Le Temps retrouvé*.
- 1952 Publication of *Jean Santeuil*.
- 1954 Publication of a version of *Contre Sainte-Beuve*.