

Nineteenth-Century French Studies

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Proust, Marcel. *Swann's Way. Marcel Proust: A Norton Critical Edition*. Ed. Susanna Lee. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014. Pp. 608. ISBN: 978-0-393-91916-5

Dwight Page, Bryan College

Susanna Lee's 2014 edition of Marcel Proust's *Swann's Way* constitutes a landmark in Proustian studies. First, this is a unique centenary edition: *Swann's Way* was originally published in 1913. Second, this particular edition has been specially designed with the professor, the student, and classroom discussion in mind. Accordingly, it contains the following useful pedagogical elements: the 1922 translation by Proust's first English translator, C. K. Scott Moncrieff, which was chosen because it echoes so well the lyrical cadences of the original; a section called "Contexts," which provides the original reader reports of the manuscript and reviews of the book; a section of critical essays; a chronology of Proust's life; a chronology of French literature from 1870 until 1929; and an excellent bibliography which will be most valuable to students as they prepare research papers. The entire work is written in English. It is thus an ideal critical source for students with no knowledge of French.

Swann's Way is the first of the seven volumes of Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*, which comprises some three thousand pages of narrative. Its title refers to the path that the narrator and his family would follow during childhood excursions in the environs of Combray, a fictionalized version of Proust's actual hometown of Illiers. *Swann's Way* is remarkable for its sensitive exploration of love, for its remarkable style, for its study of Third Republic society (1871-1940), and for its consideration of the French arts during this era: music, painting, theater, and literature. These elements are woven into a rich and complex literary tapestry representing the spectrum of fin-de-siècle French life.

Lee's editorial introduction outlines the fundamental ideas and themes contained within *Swann's Way*. However, her primary goal is to introduce the reader to an incomparable reading experience. She points out that "while this work is indubitably great in the sense of eminence and magnitude, it also earns that title in its fusion of warmth and intellect, heart and mind, introspection and panorama" (vii). Lee also clarifies the fact that, while the reading public today is now accustomed to the system of narrative introspection that Proust inaugurated, at the time of its publication in 1913 *Swann's Way* was met with confusion and derision: it was rejected by several publishing houses before finally being accepted by Grasset. She emphasizes that Proust's "langorous and meticulous verbosity" is the antithesis of "modern hastiness and reductivity." Indeed, while Flaubert desperately sought polished brevity and the precision of "le mot juste," Proust, with equal determination, sought through his complex sentence structures to present the infinite kaleidoscope of life which he deemed to be the essence of reality. In order to accomplish this literary miracle, Proust explored the linguistic and semantic resources of the French language with more zeal and perspicacity than any other writer in history.

In addition, Lee deplors the fact that, owing to its semantic complexity, Proust's writing is often associated with scholarly inaccessibility. She stresses that such an association is erroneous and misleading. While Proust's sentences are indeed complicated and serpentine, his writing is neither unapproachable nor precious. Like the linguistically brilliant works of Charles Dickens, Proust's semantic counterpart in English, *À la recherche du temps perdu* resonates not as an untouchable relic, but as an act of superb communication, utilizing all the nuances of the French language as an act of friendship with the reader. "It is a triumph not just of genius but of common humanity [. . .]" (xvii).

In conclusion, Susanna Lee's edition of *Swann's Way* will stimulate excellent student discussion. It is ideal for the promotion of a vibrant and engaging intellectual ambiance in the classroom. It is a most effective and valuable tool for the instruction and discussion of this famed Proustian novel. A distinguished contribution to Proustian studies, Lee's centenary critical edition of *Swann's Way* deserves an honored place on the shelves of all professors contemplating the teaching of a course on the French novel.