

Judaism in Marcel Proust: Anti-Semitism, Philo-Semitism, and Judaic Perspectives in Art (Currents in Comparative Romance Languages and Literatures)

Bette H. Lustig

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Through detailed in-depth exegeses of Proust's literary texts (A la Recherche du temps perdu, Jean Santeuil, and Contre Sainte-Beuve), Judaism in Marcel Proust: Anti-Semitism, Philo-Semitism, and Judaic Perspectives in Art explains anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism as present in actual French literary texts. Unlike other studies about Proust and Judaism, the narrative in this book is in English; the focus is on the actual French texts, not on Proust's biography. Primary Judaic sources such as the Hebrew Bible, the Babylonian Talmud, Moses Maimonides' Mishneh Torah, and Rashi's commentaries illuminate Proust's texts and skillfully demonstrate their anti-Semitic and philo-Semitic subtexts.

The principal Proustian themes that are examined in depth include, first of all, the anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism of the characters as informed by Jean-Paul Sartre's Réflexions sur la queston juive; second, Christian interpretations of Judaic biblical references and their anti-Semitic connotations as well as the philo-Semitic references to the Hebrew Bible and to Judaic culture and ritual contained in the Proust texts; third, the importance of references to art in Proust's texts and their Judaic significance.

Written in a lively, clear, and accessible style, Judaism in Marcel Proust engages the reader, both Proustophile and Proust scholar alike. It would be an excellent choice for the reading list of courses on Proust as well as for French history and social psychology courses on anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism relating to the Dreyfus case and the Belle Epoque.



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