

**Seton Hall University**  
**Department of Modern Languages**  
**FREN 4318 – Twentieth Century French Literature I:**  
**The Narrative Self**

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Fall 2005

Tuesday / Thursday 1 p.m. -2:15 p.m.  
Room: AS 101

**Course focus:**

The early twentieth century saw a rapid succession of several artistic movements each *avant-garde* appearing as a response to (usually a rejection of) the established artistic movements of an earlier generation. Both the product of and the symbiotic stimulus for a given set of historical ideas, these movements and the larger literary production which may or may not fully correspond with them, offer insights into how societal attitudes have evolved. The theme of identity has been prominent in narrative genres since Antiquity, and the early Twentieth Century is no exception. What changed was the way this theme was treated. Exploring three key narrative works and several poetic works (as well as film and paintings) from the first thirty years or so of the twentieth century, this course focuses on the ways in which Modernist and Surrealist literature conceived of the self.

We will discuss ways in which the interest in the subconscious – and the inner, ‘authentic’ self – affected views of identity and the writing of narrative works of the time. We will also take a look at the evolution of French literature from Realism (Balzac’s project to describe the society of his time), Naturalism (Zola’s highly researched, gritty social narratives), Romanticism (Chateaubriand’s nostalgia for an earlier era) and Symbolism (such as Mallarmé’s exploration of language without a writing subject) gave way to Modernism – a move which can be traced to the 1850’s but which found an articulate voice in Baudelaire – and later Surrealism (whose leader André Breton was to publish an aggressive “manifesto”). Technological changes which affected everyday life such as the invention of the telephone, the cinema, the airplane and the automobile all had a direct role to play in the evolution of the rapport between literature and life. These changes are apparent especially in the poetry we will study.

Questions of the relationship between writer and text, reader and text and reader and writer will be explored as we look at the usage of the first person singular in two novels by Marcel Proust, André Gide and André Breton.

Specifically as regards identity we will look at the way that each writer conceives of the role of memory, the possibility to control the self, what the role of the mind (and analysis in general) is in the construction of the self, the treatment of the body – both the literal bodies of the characters and the metaphorical space of the text and its relationship to identity as well as properly historical concerns (such as World War I or the *affaire Dreyfus*).

Basic course objectives:

In this course you will learn

1. to recognize what characterizes the evolution from Realism to Modernism
2. to identify the major themes of each work studied
3. to identify and analyze the narrative techniques used in early 20<sup>th</sup> Century French literature

**Papers:**

Of the two substantial papers which are required, one must be comparative (for the comparative paper only one work needs to be a novel in this course). If you have studied or are studying another national literature of the early twentieth century I encourage you to compare (for the longer paper of 6-8 pages) one *novel* from this course with another which you have already studied (such comparisons do however need to be approved, so come see me or email me with your ideas ahead of time). The second work to be compared *may be* one of the poems we will be studying.

All readings marked with an arrow (⇒) must be prepared before the class date next to which they appear on this syllabus. Readings marked with three asterisks (\*\*\*) are *suggested*, though they will be read and presented by at least one student.

All written work is to be emailed to my SHU email account in the following file name format:

**YourLastName\_Title.doc** (ex: “Escobar\_Proust.doc”)

I will make suggestions for improvements and indicate which grammatical corrections need to be made to the first draft, then you will be required to send a FULLY CORRECTED final draft with the following file name format:

**YourLastName\_Title\_FINAL.doc** (ex: “Escobar\_Proust\_FINAL.doc”)

*If you have fully corrected the first draft, your grade for that paper will be raised by a half grade.*

For the final paper (6-8 pages) send me an email in advance with a couple paragraphs telling me what you plan to work on. There will be **no first draft for the final paper** though we can and will discuss your approach to it and you are encouraged to bounce your ideas off me as early as possible.

**Note:**

This course will be conducted entirely in French and all written work must be written in French without the use of computerized translation.

**Required Work:**

**1 oral presentation** (1 page of notes to be emailed several days before presentation)

The presentation topic may be taken either from an optional reading, a passage of the primary text being read, or any of the required critical texts. Presentations should reflect a thoughtful engagement with the material and must include questions for the class that can stimulate discussion at the end.

**1 paper** - 3-4 pages

**3 travaux courts (short papers)** - 1 page each

**1 final paper** - 6-8 pages

**1 examen final** – this will be an essay test including questions on each work studied

You are encouraged to make use of the **Academic Resource Center** for tutoring in written and spoken French.

Below are the hours and location of the center (for French):

Wednesday 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. Thursday 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. & 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

LOCATION: Arts and Sciences 238

Here is their web site: <http://artsci.shu.edu/arc/tutoring/>

**Disability Services Statement**

Students at Seton Hall University who have a physical, medical, learning or psychiatric disability, either temporary or permanent, may be eligible for reasonable accommodations at the University as per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In order to receive such accommodations, students must identify themselves at the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS), provide appropriate documentation and collaborate with the development of an accommodation plan. The DSS phone number is 973-313-6003. For further information, please go to our website at <http://studentaffairs.shu.edu/health/DisabilitySupportServices.html>

**Marcel Proust *Du côté de chez Swann* [Combray] (1913)**

[1] Thursday, September 8 – Introduction au cours:  
Mallarmé « Sonnet en yx » / « Ses purs ongles »  
Apollinaire: « La colombe poignardée »  
Rozé « L'explication de textes »  
Début de *Combray*

[2] Tuesday, September 13 – ⇒ *Du côté de chez Swann* [Combray] pp.95-120  
⇒ Histoire littéraire du XX (20 pp.)  
\*\*\*Baudelaire « Peintre de la vie moderne »

[3] Thursday, September 15 – ⇒ *Du côté de chez Swann* [Combray] pp.121-146  
⇒ Rebérioux « L'affaire Dreyfus » (39 pp.)  
\*\*\*Nicholls « Ironies of the Modern »  
(*Modernisms*) (pp.5-23)

**⇒DRAFT**

**Travail court 1 (1 page)**

[4] Tuesday, September 20 – ⇒*Du côté de chez Swann* [Combray] pp.147-172  
⇒Tableaux : Braque, Picasso  
\*\*\*Genette « La question de l'écriture » (6 pp.)

[5] Thursday, September 22 – ⇒*Du côté de chez Swann* [Combray] pp.173-198  
⇒Poulet « La dialectique de l'être » (11 pp.)

**⇒CORRECTED VERSION**

**Travail court 1 (1 page)**

[6] Tuesday, September 27 – ⇒*Du côté de chez Swann* [Combray] pp.199-224  
\*\*\*Rousset « Notes sur la structure de *A la recherche du temps perdu* » (18 pp.)

[7] Thursday, September 29 – ⇒*Du côté de chez Swann* [Combray] pp.225-250

**⇒DRAFT Paper due (3-4 pages)**

[8] Tuesday, October 4 – ⇒*Du côté de chez Swann* [Combray] pp.251-276  
⇒Rabaté « Un genre en crise » (5 pp.)  
\*\*\*Bersani « Les déguisements du moi » (22 pp.)

[9] Thursday, October 6 – ⇒*Du côté de chez Swann* [Combray] pp.277-302  
⇒Girard « La grâce romanesque » (6 pp.)  
\*\*\*Genette « Métonymie chez Proust » (pp.41-63)

**⇒CORRECTED Final draft due (3-4 pages)**

**André Gide *Les faux-monnayeurs* (1925)**

[10] Tuesday, October 11 – ⇒*Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.13-38  
⇒Rabaté « Sur Gide et d'autres » (11 pp.)

[11] Thursday, October 13 – ⇒*Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.39-64  
⇒Correspondance Gide-Valéry  
⇒Valéry « Narcisse parle »

[12] Tuesday, October 18 – ⇒*Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.65-90  
⇒Sartre « Gide vivant » (4 pp.)

**⇒DRAFT - Travail court 2 due (1 page)**

- [13] Thursday, October 20 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.91-116
- [14] Tuesday, October 25 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.117-142  
 ⇒ Blanchot « Gide et la littérature d'expérience » (10 pp.)  
 ⇒ **CORRECTED - Travail court 2 due (1 page)**
- [15] Thursday, October 27 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.143-168
- [16] Tuesday, November 1 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.169-194
- [17] Thursday, November 3 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.195-220  
 \*\*\*Goulet « Lire les *Faux-monnayeurs* » (23pp.)
- [18] Tuesday, November 8 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.221-246  
 ⇒ Martin « Authority, Paternity and Currency in Gide's *Faux-monnayeurs* » (8 pp.)
- [19] Thursday, November 10 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.247-272
- [20] Tuesday, November 15 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.273-300  
 ⇒ **DRAFT - Travail court 3 due (1 page)**
- [21] Thursday, November 17 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.301-326
- [22] Tuesday, November 22 – ⇒ *Les faux-monnayeurs* pp.327-378  
 ⇒ **CORRECTED - Travail court 3 due (1 page)**
- November 24-26 – THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASSES**

### **André Breton. *Nadja* (1928)**

- [23] Tuesday, November 29 – ⇒ *Nadja* pp.11-49  
 ⇒ Dossier de *Nadja* pp.175-184  
 Photos : Man Ray « Noire et Blanche »  
 ⇒ Court métrage: Buñuel et Dali « Un chien andalou »
- [24] Thursday, December 1 – ⇒ *Nadja* pp.49-89  
 ⇒ Rebérioux « Les avant gardes esthétiques »

(pp.182-186)

⇒Lire les pages sur « Le manifeste surréaliste » et  
« Nadja » dans « Breton\_ADPF\_Surréalisme.rtf »

[25] Tuesday, December 6 –

⇒*Nadja* pp.89-134

⇒Court métrage: Cocteau « Le sang d'un poète »

\*\*\*Nicholls « Other Spaces : French Cubism »  
(pp.112-124)

[26] Thursday, December 8 –

⇒*Nadja* pp.134-161

⇒**Final paper due**

[27] Tuesday, December 13 –

**EXAMEN FINAL**