

Abstract:

A Return to Classicism? Proust's Thinking about Love

A sceptical approach to love has always been represented in French literature, especially during the Classicism era. This work is an in-depth analysis of Charles Swann and his romantic relationship with Odette – as it is depicted in the first part of Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*. This paper attempts to verify if Proust, a 20th century author, remains anchored in the moral literary tradition and to what extent. The work examines Proust's understanding of love and compares it with the ideas of Classicism, which the author often references. The work also delineates how this pessimistic approach to love was further developed in French literature and philosophy. To what extent can, for example, Jean-Paul Sartre or Maurice Merleau-Ponty be considered as Proust's disciples?