



## Marcel Proust: A Life

*Jean-Yves Tadié*

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## **Marcel Proust: A Life** Jean-Yves Tadie

Marcel Proust was arguably the greatest writer of the 20th century. This biography by the acknowledged world authority on Proust redefines the way we look at both the artist and the man. Jean-Yves Tadie has restricted himself to the biographical and historical record: he has avoided speculation, and has drawn a scrupulous line between the life and the work. Previous biographers have conflated the man with the masterpiece, and called upon the "narrator" of the novel to fill the lacunae in the life of his creator. Tadie has brought Proust alive by releasing him from his creation. In many respects the figure who moves through the pages of this new life is unfamiliar: Proust the classicist and admirer of Racine, the anti-decadent, the moralist. Above all, Proust the creator of the autonomous universe of "A la recherche" is revealed as a figure minutely affected by his upbringing and environment, a man in time rather than a solipsist in a cork-lined room. The author's approach is multi-faceted, and his narrative is a sequence of short essays and sections, each complete in itself. So that although this biography is nearly 1,000 pages long, its synoptic penetration, formal elegance and wit make it an exemplar of that essential Proustian resource: brevity.

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