



LIBRARY NOTES

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3, SEPTEMBER 1996

CONVERSATIONS ON GREAT BOOKS—Series 3

Marcel Proust's *IN SEARCH OF LOST TIME*

John W. Kneller

Now professor emeritus of CUNY's Graduate Center and president emeritus of Brooklyn College, Kneller has had a long and distinguished career as professor of French literature, first at Oberlin College and then at Hunter College and the Graduate Center. He has served as associate editor of *Yale French Studies* and editor-in-chief of *The French Review*. "Conversations" are scheduled at the Library on three consecutive Wednesday evenings at 5:30 P.M., starting October 30. Enrollment is limited. To register, send your check for \$60 to the Library, attention Nancy McCartney.

In our daily lives, Marcel Proust tells us, we need to find a continuity with the past. The past resides within us as impressions that we can resurrect through our faculty of memory. Our memory is often our defense against time. Time changes human beings, as we are all painfully aware, but does not alter the image we may have preserved of them.

The real nature of the world may be out there, but it also resides within us. In the external world, time is linear and chronological; illusion and change govern us. The world within—the world of reminiscence—promises stability, beauty, and peace. *In Search of Lost Time* tells the narrator's "struggle to discern beneath matter, beneath experience, beneath words, something that is different from them." This struggle to find "the true paradises...that we have lost" reverses what we do in our everyday lives, where we look away from ourselves, "where vanity, passion and habit smother our true impressions."

Unlike Balzac's *La Comédie humaine* and Zola's *Les Rougon-Macquart*, *In Search of Lost Time* is a single, long novel in which all the seven parts, or shorter novels, are serially connected. In our "Conversations," we will concentrate on the first novel, *Swann's Way*, and the last, *Time Regained*. These two novels contain most of the major themes of *In Search of Lost Time* and will, I hope, inspire you to read or reread the other five. We will use the three-volume Random/Vintage edition, which, though it bears the old Scott Moncrieff title, *Remembrance of Things Past*, contains essentially the same text as the more recent six-volume Random House/Modern Library edition.



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Art of Biography
Series 1996-97
Tuesday
October 15
6:30 P.M.
Alan Brinkley on
Henry Luce
Temple Israel
112 East 75th

Exhibition
"The City's
Oldest Library"
opens
Thursday
October 24
Second-floor
Gallery
The Library

Conversations
Proust's
*In Search of
Lost Time*
Wednesdays,
5:30 P.M.
October 30
November 6 & 13
with
John W. Kneller

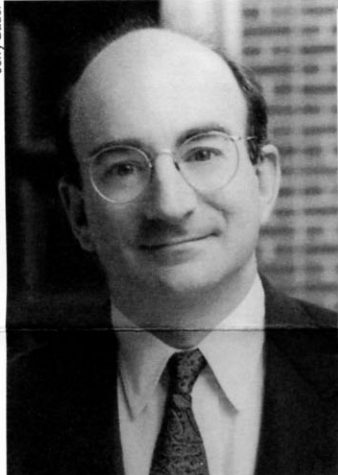
For Children
"Through the Eyes of
a Child: New York
Stories"
ages 4 to 8
Saturdays
10:30 A.M.
November 2, 9, 16
& 23
December 7 & 14

Library Excursion
Thursday
November 21
11:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.
Columbia Rare
Book & Manuscript
Library and
Union Theological
Seminary Burke
Library



The Art of Biography THE MISSIONS OF HENRY R. LUCE

Alan Brinkley



Alan Brinkley

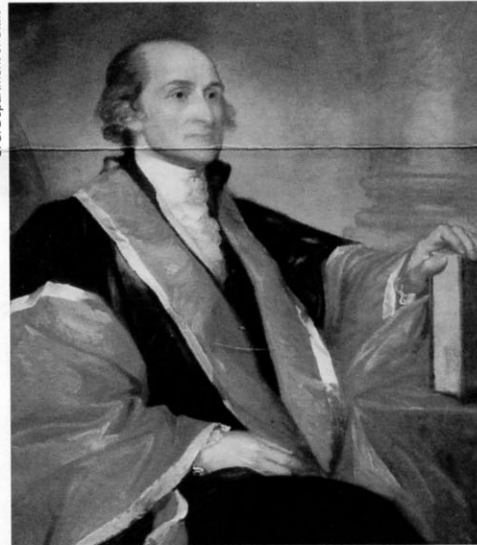
Professor of American history at Columbia University, *Brinkley is author of Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and The Great Depression; The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War; and The Unfinished Nation: a Concise History of the American People.* He is at work on a biography of Henry R. Luce, which will be published by Alfred A. Knopf.

Henry Luce grew up in two very different worlds--the world of his parents, Presbyterian missionaries in China, which emphasized discipline, restraint, piety, and good works; and the world of Hotchkiss and Yale and Skull and Bones, which valued social distinction and conventional professional success. Luce's lifelong--and never entirely successful--effort to reconcile those two worlds helped determine his career, the powerful magazines he founded and controlled, and to some degree, the new, national, middle-class culture of the mid-twentieth century that his empire did much to shape. In his lecture, Alan Brinkley will examine the rise of Luce from his childhood in China to the early years of the founding of *TIME* and *LIFE* magazines.

THE CITY'S OLDEST LIBRARY: THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY, ITS LIFE AND TIMES

On Thursday, October 24, in the second-floor Gallery, the Library will open its first exhibition in what will be a changing display of the Library's history, drawn from its archives.

The inaugural exhibition will illustrate the history



Chief Justice John Jay, by Gilbert Stuart, 1794

of The New York Society Library from its founding in 1754 to 1937, the year the Library moved to its present location. Highlights of the exhibition will include: the 1713 proposal by the Rev. John Sharpe for the establishment

of a library; the Royal charter granted by King George III in 1772; an entry from the first charging ledger, showing books borrowed by Chief Justice John Jay (he took out 68 titles in one year); and a two-panel timeline showing the city's history, publishing landmarks, and books by member/ authors from Washington Irving to W. H. Auden.

THE ART OF BIOGRAPHY LECTURE SERIES, 1996-1997

October 15, 1996, Alan Brinkley

"The Missions of Henry Luce"

March 4, 1997, Kenneth Silverman

"Houdini Unmasked:

Researching the Life of the World's Handcuff King"

April 1, 1997, Geoffrey C. Ward

"A Disposition To Be Rich:

Writing about the Swindler in the Family"

The lectures will begin at 6:30 P.M. in Temple Israel, 112 East 75th Street.

Tickets are free to Library members and their guests (\$8 for nonmembers). They will be available at the Library's circulation desk or at the door one-half hour before the lecture begins. For more information, call Nancy McCartney at the Library at (212) 717-0357. The biography program, funded by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, was developed by historian, screen writer, and biographer of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Geoffrey C. Ward, and The New York Society Library, in association with the National Humanities Center and Thirteen/WNET.

FOR CHILDREN

SATURDAYS AT THE LIBRARY

THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD:

NEW YORK STORIES

Actress and director Jamie Winnick will read from books such as *The Adventures of Taxi Dog*; *The House on East 88th*; *The Cricket of Times Square*; *Eloise*; *Pet of the Met*; and *Pamela's First Musical*.

The series, entitled "Through the Eyes of a Child: New York Stories," is for children ages 4-8 on six Saturdays: November 2, 9, 16 and 23, and December 7 and 14, at 10:30 A.M. in the Children's Room (3rd Floor). The program is free for members and their friends. Please reserve ahead as space is limited.

LIBRARY EXCURSION

November 21, 1996, 11:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Rare Book & Manuscript Library,
Columbia University

Burke Library, Union Theological Seminary

The Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Columbia University, at 535 West 114th Street, houses 500,000 rare books and 28,000,000 original papers, letters, and documents. Its collections also include maps, paintings, drawings, and mathematical instruments. Among the many strengths of this library are: English and American history and literature; Greek and Latin classical authors; publishing; economics, business, and banking; and New York City politics. We will tour the library and view some of its particular treasures.

The Burke Library of Union Theological Seminary, at 600 West 122nd Street, contains a wide range of materials including papyri of the first century CE, manuscripts from the Middle Ages, early printed books from the Reformation, and slave narratives and hymnals of the African-American community. We will view the library and an exhibition, "Bible of the Reformation/Reformation of the Bible."

This excursion will involve walking approximately six blocks from Columbia to lunch at the rooftop Terrace Restaurant, 400 West 119th Street, and afterwards, walking about five blocks to the Burke Library. The fee, including lunch, will be \$35. Places are limited. Please call Nancy McCartney at (212) 717-0357 for information, reservations, and directions to our meeting place at the Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

WALLET NOTE:

As of August 31, the 1995-1996 Annual Appeal topped \$123,000, 9 percent ahead of last August's total which was a record at that time. The Annual Appeal runs from November to November and supplies roughly one-tenth of the Library's operating budget. The Campaign closed on December 31, 1995, but final pledge payments continue to come in, raising that Campaign nearly to \$700,000.

Thanks to all who, now and in the past, have supported the Library's regular operations through the Annual Appeal and helped assure its future through the Capital Campaign. Each contributor will be listed in the Annual Report.

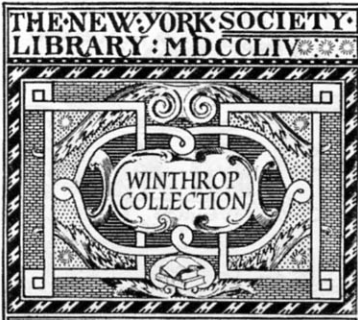
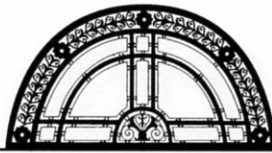


Tower of Learning from Gregor Reisch's Margarita Philosophica (Freiburg, Germany, Johann Schott, 1503). This woodcut shows a young scholar being shown into the Tower of Learning. The hornbook in his guide's hand is the first tool of education. Then he goes through the door of Grammar, and up the stairs through the various types of study, culminating in theology, at the top of the tower, personified by Peter Lombard.

BOOKS ON WHEELS:

As a convenience to members, the Library is considering a book delivery and pickup service by bicycle messenger in parts of Manhattan. This messenger service would be available two or more days each week at a modest fee--probably no more than \$1.50 for each trip. There would be a limit on the number of volumes that could be picked up or delivered at one time. If you feel you might like this option, please call Nancy McCartney at (212) 717-0357.





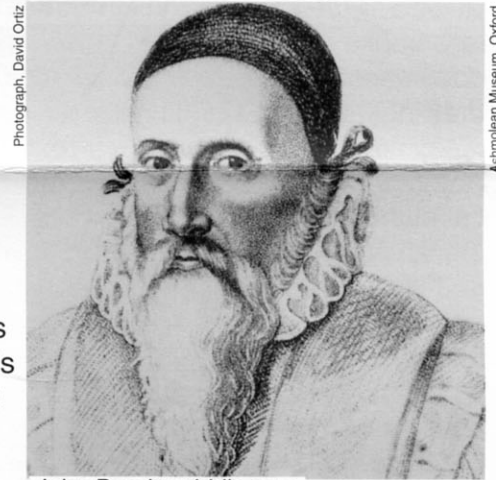
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I found Margaret Byard's article in the last issue of *Library Notes* extremely interesting but would like to add some additional material on John Dee (1527-1608), several of whose books are to be found in the Winthrop Collection. Dee is a significant figure in the English Renaissance and is gradually being given proper recognition for his important library at Mortlake, just north of London. Three books have recently been published on his life and library, and a large conference on his career was held at the University of London in May, 1995.

As mentioned in Dr. Byard's article, Dee's library numbered well over 3000 books and was frequently consulted by navigators, explorers, cartographers, and students in many fields. Queen Elizabeth herself found him extremely helpful. He is said to have urged her to form a British Empire. He was also a strong advocate of much-needed calendar reform, which eventually brought about the more accurate Gregorian Calendar, and was intensely interested in the work of Paracelsus, who was a proponent of chemical treatment of disease, a helpful improvement on Galen's theory of the four humors.

However, in Dee's perpetual search for answers to some of the world's as yet insoluble problems, he sometimes sought answers in esoteric fields and tried with his skryer, or "crystal gazer," Edward Kelly, to make contact with angels. Dee eventually seems to have realized that he was being duped and the two men parted company, but Dee's reputation had suffered in the process. His neighbors, becoming suspicious that Dee was practicing witchcraft, set fire to his library at Mortlake and destroyed a huge part of it. It is only in recent years that Dee's proper status has been restored. Historian Frances Yates said of his great book collection, "The whole Renaissance is in this library." In Dee's persistent search for some of the earth's answers, perhaps he should be considered an early precursor of the scientific revolution.

—Dr. Virginia F. Stern, Library member



John Dee in middle age

Recommended books:

Nicholas H. Clulee: *John Dee's Natural Philosophy*, London & New York, Routledge, 1988.
 Peter J. French: *John Dee: The World of an Elizabethan Magus*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972.
 Roberts & Watson: *John Dee's Library Catalogue*, London: Bibliographical Society, 1990.
 William H. Sherman: *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995.

FOR INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS for events, please call Nancy McCartney, the Library's Events Coordinator, (212) 717-0357. Comments and letters to Jenny Lawrence, editor of *Library Notes*, at the Library. Note: The Library will close Thurs., Oct 3, and Tues. Oct. 15 for staff training in automated circulation.

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY
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