Lecture 22

Questions and Topics for discussion

1. When Albertine plays the pianola for Marcel, who are the two real composers whose names are given?

2. What are the names of the novels by Thomas Hardy that Proust uses to illustrate his thesis about “key phrases” that one finds in the works of a writer?

3. When Albertine was in Auteuil, how did she manage for Marcel to receive her postcards from Balbec?

4. What title does Françoise use for Albertine when she speaks of her sarcastically?

5. At what two times in the course of French history was the king’s silver melted down?

6. As Marcel watches Albertine playing the pianola, he compares the heart-shaped loop of her hair to a portrait of whom by what painter?

7. Can you think of some passages that would serve as examples of what we might call the Proust side of Mme de Sévigné?

8. What famous French eighteenth century writer (famous for just one work) does Proust name to make the distinction between a person’s (the author’s) character and the moral content of his work? What is the title of this novel and what is its genre? It is perhaps the most famous novel written in this genre.

9. In a rare occurrence, Proust gives the month and day of the crucial revelation that Albertine made about her relationship with Mlle Vinteuil and her friend in Sodom and Gomorrah. What is the date?

10. What are the names of the two Elstir paintings that Marcel wants to go and see in the Palais du Luxembourg? What in the subject matter of the paintings makes him reluctant to view them with Albertine?