

ANDRÉ MAUROIS (1885–1967)

JEANNE FUCHS

ANDRÉ MAUROIS, THE PEN NAME OF Emile Salomon Wilhelm Herzog, was a prolific French biographer, novelist, historian, and essayist. Born into a wealthy Jewish family of textile manufacturers, he was conflicted from a young age about following the family path into business or pursuing an artistic and intellectual route. He recounts this struggle in his novel *Bernard Quesnay* (1928). Maurois served France in both World War I and World War II. His first literary success came with *Les silences du colonel Bramble* (1918), translated into English as *The Silence of Colonel Bramble*, a humorous treatment of his experiences as interpreter and liaison officer with the British army in World War I. In World War II, he served in both the French army and with the Free French Forces. His many biographies have been singled out by critics for the author's clear and graceful prose, his penetrating analysis of each subject, and his ability to sustain a novelistic narrative in this genre. Among these works are *Ariel* (1923), the life of Shelley, *Byron* (1930), *Olympio* (1954), the life of Victor Hugo, *Lélia* (1952), the life of George Sand, *Prométhée* (1965), the life of Balzac, and *A la recherche de Marcel Proust* (1949). Maurois was elected to the Académie Française in 1938. He married a Polish-Russian aristocrat, Jeanne-Marie Wanda de Szymkiewicz, who had attended Oxford University, and they had two sons and a daughter. After her death in 1924, he married Simone de Caillavet. In 1947, he changed his name legally to his pen name.