



The Structure of the Autobiographical Narrative in the Work of Simone de Beauvoir: *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter**

Malihe ZIAEE**/Reza ZATALYAN***/Mahboobeh FAHIMKALAM****

ONE of the twentieth century writers, Simone de Beauvoir, finds a deep salutation to reading and writing in her Mandarin novel is Goncourt Award. However, she abandoned this literary genre, and, instead, featured biographies as a literary genre and did five autobiographical works. Self-portrait biography is a type which, at least, is characterized by the identity of the author, the narrator and the main character. In 1958, she wrote *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* before *Old Age* and *Force of Circumstance*, a biography that depicts a form of female emancipation. The biography convention has first been introduced in order to understand how the author writes his biography. How the author writes his autobiography? The aim of the article is to show how Simone de Beauvoir, based on the Philippe Lejeune's theories, addresses the reader's questions about biography, and studies the style that Simon adopts for her ideas and thoughts while the reader is surrounded with the memories and images of her life and the world she lives in.

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**Ph.D. student, Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch, Iran, E-mail: baharzmn@gmail.com

***Assistant professor, Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch, Iran, (corresponding author), E-mail: rezazatalyan1932@gmail.com

****Associate professor, Islamic Azad University, Arak Branch, Iran, E-mail: mahramin2004@yahoo.com

In the preparation of this article, so as not to lose ourselves in ramblings, we chose to rely on a reliable foundation. Philippe Lejeune, literature theorist and specialist in autobiography, has served us as a guide to this labyrinthine path to distinguish at first glance a truly autobiographical work and then to enter the inextricable maze of its narrative structure.

Philippe Lejeune defines autobiography in his *Autobiography Pact* as a "retrospective narrative in prose that a real person makes of his own existence, when he focuses on his individual life, especially on the history of his personality".

While taking into account this definition, I will try to present a summary of the specific characters of the autobiography genre which have been explained at length by Philippe Lejeune, this well-known specialist in literary circles. Autobiography is a particular narrative mode. The "I" dominates in a story as the first person. But here, the one who signs the book (the author), the one who tells the story (the narrator) and the one whose life is told (the character) are one and the same. As a result, we will be particularly interested in the relationship that the author establishes with himself through writing. How does he designate himself? How far is he from himself? What is the part of the story, the analysis and the judgment on himself?

What is very important in the study of an autobiographical work is the question of time: it is necessary to distinguish the time of the facts (the period which is being spoken about, the childhood for example) and the time of the writing (the period during which the author writes); most often, many years separate them. The memory, the mechanisms of memory is frequent themes of autobiography. Sometimes, the past and the present are compared or the times are mingled. The writer then takes advantage of this superposition to access his own truth by the decomposition of his successive "me". What are the goals of autobiography? This is the question that often arises when one approaches the poetic study and the analytic interpretation of autobiography as a phenomenon of language.

If the author has the ambition to retrace the historical events in which he has been involved, the autobiography becomes "Mémoires" (Example: Chateaubriand's *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*).

Writing his story, whether in the form of memoirs, family chronicles, autobiographies or autobiographical novels, is however a personal and intimate project, far from the echoes of the world and the "great" history. It happens, however, that these two writing projects are superimposed because the individual history is inseparable from general history. The memoirs of Simone de Beauvoir, while retracing the personal and intellectual itinerary of a woman of exception, are also remarkable historical documents. There are a large number of works of the twentieth century which, without openly historical ambition, bear witness to the trace

of history, its traumas and its fractures in the consciousness of the author / narrator.

It is this privileged link between personal history and history that we propose to trace in the texts of Simone de Beauvoir through the figures of filiations. Personal history is first and foremost a part of family history. Nobody creates or develops ex nihilo. It is important to know where we come from and who we are. However, the autobiographical project may give more or less space to these main actors of childhood and adolescence, which are parents. For the author of interest to us, this place is primordial: filiation represents an anchor in personal and family history and, because of precise historical circumstances, access to the "great" History.

For her, language expresses the substance of things, and literature can clarify the mysteries of life. She confesses that it is always books that strengthened her against the fear of nothingness. Even when she was young, she thought that the world contained nothing more precious. In *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*, he states: "As long as there were books, happiness was guaranteed to me. As she reads, she broadens her horizon; as she writes, she metamorphoses ignorance into knowledge. Wanting to give literature an important place in her life, Simone de Beauvoir sees her play the leading role of "Manifesting Ambiguous, Separate, Contradictory Truths." In "The Force of Things II", she writes that her overriding goal is to give "price to words and truth," so her project of knowing the world always remains closely linked to that of expressing it. Literature opens the world to her and allows him to demystify it; it also allows him to reach horizons never explored. Writing is for her the most important way to deal with others, and the most important way to know life.

The autobiographical works of Simone de Beauvoir are written from a philosophical perspective. We must note that this author has tried all her life to follow the lines of existentialist thought to live and to build his future. Her works are not written to illuminate the Sartrian doctrines, which are also hers. But perhaps Simone de Beauvoir tries in her Memoirs to show us how a life can be organized from the perspective of existentialism. In her memoirs, Simone de Beauvoir insists on how she made use of her freedom and the role she played in her own life. Through her autobiographical volumes, Simone de Beauvoir reiterates this theme: "Freedom was our only rule", she writes in *The Force of Age*.