

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR: A LITERARY APPRENTICESHIP

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SUMMARY

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on

Simone de Beauvoir : a Literary Apprenticeship

Simone de Beauvoir, a major figure in French intellectual life of the Twentieth Century, decided at a young age to be a creative writer. She did not publish her first work until the age of thirty five. During the years between 1929, when her academic studies were completed, and 1939 when she was engaged in writing L'Invitée, a novel of whose value she was confident, she served in a conscious and determined manner a literary apprenticeship.

Literature was to remain the dominant source of material, being more significant to her throughout most of this period than experience or imagination. Non-fiction informed about what was felt to be the 'real' world and fiction supplied literary models. During these years she wrote much, often in styles derived from current reading.

In spite of the fact that she had received from family and school a thorough grounding in the literature of her own country, she ultimately rejected many of the examples or lessons which French texts proposed. It is possible that a dislike for literature by writers deemed 'bourgeois' was motivated by her repugnance for the values of her family and class.

As a child Simone de Beauvoir had responded wholeheartedly to certain foreign books which offered possibilities of identification with heroines and situations. Throughout her apprentice years the same process of recognition was to be essential before she could derive sustenance from her reading. Much contemporary literature from abroad was published in French translation and it was to texts investigating new methods of narration or techniques of representing consciousness which she turned.

By the time Simone de Beauvoir began L'Invitée she had absorbed much from certain French authors, from detective fiction, from English novelists, from Kafka, but particularly from current American writers. She had assimilated the lessons derived from her literary preparation and was strong enough to write at last with a personal and independent voice.

Avant-propos

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List of Abbreviations

<u>I'Am.</u>	<u>I'Amérique au jour le jour.</u>
<u>C.A.</u>	<u>La Cérémonie des adieux. suivi de Entretiens avec Jean-Paul Sartre.</u>
<u>D.S.I or II.</u>	<u>Le Deuxième Sexe</u> Volume I or Volume II.
<u>E.</u>	<u>Les Ecrits de Simone de Beauvoir</u> , ed. C. Francis et F. Gontier.
<u>E.de J.-P. S.</u>	<u>Les Ecrits de Sartre</u> , ed. M. Contat et M. Rybalka.
<u>F.A.</u>	<u>La Force de l'âge.</u>
<u>F.C.</u>	<u>La Force des choses.</u>
<u>L'I.</u>	<u>L'Invitée.</u>
<u>M.J.F.R.</u>	<u>Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée.</u>
<u>P.</u>	<u>Privilèges.</u>
<u>Q.P.S.</u>	<u>Quand prime le spirituel.</u>
<u>T.C.F.</u>	<u>Tout compte fait.</u>

Other abbreviations are explained in the course of the study.

INTRODUCTION

The work of Simone de Beauvoir, if one considers the bibliographical evidence, has most frequently been interpreted in relationship to current preoccupations. Thus, the women's movement has - rightly - recognised in her a person who was one of the first in the post-war period to voice preoccupations which have since become familiar. Her memoirs have been variously interpreted, critics and public alike hailing a witness of her time. The relationship with Sartre has also excited attention being perceived partly as a construction owing much to her dedication partly as a model of a possibly ideal relationship in modern western society where the traditional family ties are becoming more relaxed. Her attitudes to religion, to death, to the natural world have been examined as has her political stance. All these interests may broadly be termed sociological. They are of certain value and such studies are relevant in a precise way to a full understanding of Simone de Beauvoir's thought. It should not be forgotten, however, that she saw herself principally, and in her early days completely, as a writer of imaginative fiction, not as a philosopher, in spite of her early training, nor as a sociologist. Even in her fifties, participating in 1964 in a debate organised by the Communist group Clarté, she compared the sociological and literary approaches and, while recognising all the advantages of the former, claimed supremacy for literature:

Sauvegarder contre les technocraties et contre les bureaucraties ce qu'il y a d'humain dans l'homme, livrer le monde dans sa dimension humaine, c'est-à-dire en tant qu'il se dévoile à des individus à la fois liés entre eux et séparés, je crois que c'est la tâche de la littérature et ce qui la rend irremplaçable.¹

Few studies, with notable exceptions, among them that of Terry Keefe who recognises "The deep seriousness of Beauvoir's attitude to writing..."², have

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1. Que peut la littérature ?, Paris, Union Générale d'Editions, 1965, p.92.
 2. Simone de Beauvoir, a study of her writings, London, Harrap, 1982, p.225.

concentrated on the literary values of her creative fiction and yet as a novelist and writer of short stories she achieved much. The purpose of this study is to analyse in depth the way in which she prepared herself self-consciously and with constant determination to fulfil what was perceived as a literary vocation.

Using Simone de Beauvoir's memoirs as principal witness while also deriving much external evidence from an examination of what publishers made available and from parallel sources, such as library cards or other autobiographies, I have endeavoured to reconstitute her reading during the formative period of youth and early maturity and to analyse the way in which this reading shaped both her view of the world and her narrative style. Simone de Beauvoir waited many years before she could produce a novel deemed worthy of publication: this period was not barren, she was actively learning the mastery of her trade between 1929 when her formal education ceased and 1943 which was the year in which L'Invitée was published. After this novel, her creativity was unchecked: novels, philosophical essays, polemical writings, even a play poured from her pen within a very short period of time. In L'Invitée the narrative style was already mature and successful, it required very little modification in later works. This success had been gained by means of dedication throughout the apprentice years.

During the course of the following pages the literary traditions with which Simone de Beauvoir sought to familiarise herself are investigated. Brought up and educated within a family imbued with strong feelings about the value of French literature, she developed an equally strong reaction against the conventional literary values of her family and class. She turned to French authors whom she felt were unappreciated by the middle-classes, but her main source of pleasure and inspiration was in the literature from abroad then becoming available in France. Russian, German, English and American writing all caught her interest and she read extensively within these very different traditions. At the same time she was practising her writing by composing novels and short stories modelled on her

current enthusiasms. What she read provided her with a range of experience still lacking in her own life and with which she also investigated a variety of modes of expression. During this extensive learning period, she was gradually coming nearer to the time when she would not express herself in a manner determined by others but would have the confidence to use her own, forceful, voice. Her narrative technique, however, was shaped by what she had studied and the purpose of this investigation is to ascertain what went into the making of Simone de Beauvoir as a creative writer.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BEGINNINGS OF A LITERARY APPRENTICESHIP

The second volume of Simone de Beauvoir's autobiography, La Force de l'âge, contains a record of the years 1929-1944. It begins with an account of the private sort of liberation which was hers in 1929 and finishes with the more public experience of the historical event of the Liberation of Paris in 1944, reflecting with this movement from the personal to the general the author's own philosophical evolution from an individualistic ethos to a concern with, and commitment to, the Other.

At the beginning of this period Simone de Beauvoir's freedom was personal; it was based to some extent on economic autonomy: she was now earning her own living by means of part-time teaching, and, what was more, she had at last exchanged the confines of the family home for the independence of a rented room. She felt that she had gained emotional liberation through her relationship with Sartre and a rejection of 'bourgeois values' such as marriage and the institution of the family. Finally, she had acquired what may be termed intellectual freedom as, by means of her successful studies, she had emancipated herself from the demands of the reading lists and programmes of work imposed by the examination syllabus. It must be remembered here that Simone de Beauvoir had decided to sit for the agrégation examination in 1929, when she was only twenty-one in order to escape from home as soon as possible:

... j'étouffais à la maison, je voulais en finir au plus vite.¹

Indeed, she became the youngest agrégée de philosophie in France. This helps to explain the pressure under which she lived while she was a student.²

By passing her examinations she had conquered the freedom to think, behave,

1. T.C.F., p.22.

2. cf. Chapter Three for a fuller discussion of her studies.

read and study as she herself wished and had no longer to respond to external dictates. Small wonder then that the first words of La Force de l'âge should be:

Ce qui me grisa quand je rentrai à Paris, en septembre 1929,
ce fut d'abord ma liberté.¹

It is with the question of intellectual development and with the use that Simone de Beauvoir made of her liberty in this context that we are concerned here. The young Simone de Beauvoir had pursued her studies with enthusiasm and energy, she had certainly been initiated into some aspects of contemporary literature by her cousin Jacques but her intellectual life had been governed and, to a certain extent, restricted by family disapproval and this had seriously limited the range of her reading. Suddenly in 1929 she was given the opportunity and the leisure to read anything that took her fancy² and with Sartre both as mentor and as companion, for the educational process went both ways: they taught and influenced each other, she read non-stop:

L'hiver au coin de mon feu, l'été sur mon balcon, fumant
avec maladresse des cigarettes anglaises, je complétais ma
culture.³

The ten years from 1929 onwards are presented to the reader of la Force de l'âge as years of apprenticeship, the period when the young Simone de Beauvoir was

1. F.A., p.15.

2. The wide and unregulated reading to which Simone de Beauvoir abandoned herself with such intensity from 1929 onwards may even be seen as a further aspect of the revolt against her parents and what their bourgeois life style represented. Hitherto they had interpreted the outside world for her:

Mes études, mes lectures m'étaient imposées par la société.
Celle-ci, je ne l'ai d'abord connue que par la médiation de
mes parents.

T.C.F., p.28

and, once free from what she felt was their constricting presence, she was able joyfully to read whatsoever she wished without having to explain or defend herself. Thus the attraction of those texts which exposed the moral defects of her parents' social class.

3. F.A., p.56.

learning the techniques of her chosen trade. She had known from an early age that she wanted to write. The earnest note she made in a diary at about the age of twenty-one is revealing:

J'ai envie d'écrire; j'ai envie de phrases sur le papier, de choses de ma vie mises en phrases.¹

She must also have been aware that hers was not to be an inspiration which expressed itself freely, inventing its own rules and necessities as it flowed along. Examination success had been achieved by hard work and literary proficiency would have to be acquired in a similar fashion by means of dedication and application.

There is a telling remark in the second volume of le Deuxième Sexe at a point where Simone de Beauvoir is discussing the example offered by Colette. In the account, provided in her memoirs, of those authors whom she read and whose literary productions or even whose example marked her, it is interesting to note that Colette hardly figures.² In the Nineteen Thirties the serious young student and teacher, whose ambition was to write, clearly felt she had little in common with the sensuous older woman who still enjoyed a slightly shocking reputation. And yet, from the number and range of references to Colette in le Deuxième Sexe, it becomes evident that she read the latter's novels and autobiography with sympathy while she was working on her research for her study of the female condition. She refrained, in that book, from adopting an attitude of total admiration for Colette's point of view about women and the female role but she respected wholeheartedly, as one craftsman recognises another's achievement, the meticulous work and

1. F.A., p.30.

2. Simone de Beauvoir records in les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée how, at the age of sixteen, she read Colette, along with Anatole France, the Goncourt brothers and other writers. She had found rows of expensive and bound novels with cut pages in bookstalls around the Odéon so she treated these establishments as free libraries and read these authors there, standing up at the shelves. There is no critical discussion of these authors but a revealing comment about the happiness which literature provided. M.J.F.R., pp.155-156.

dedication which was an integral part of Colette's professional life:

Ce n'est pas seulement grâce à ses dons ou à son tempérament que Colette est devenue un grand écrivain; sa plume a été souvent un gagne-pain et elle en a exigé le travail soigné qu'un bon artisan exige de son outil; de Claudine à la Naissance du jour, l'amateur est devenue professionnelle: le chemin parcouru démontre avec éclat les bienfaits d'un apprentissage sévère.¹

The vocabulary is striking, it belongs to the world of work and it demonstrates clearly Simone de Beauvoir's attitude to her own talent and achievement through her choice of the qualities which she discerned as praiseworthy in Colette. The will, the desire to write, must be there, the would-be author must possess certain gifts, but, above all, writing is seen by Simone de Beauvoir as a craft, the rules of which must be learned, and which must be practised with continual dedication.²

It is clear that both Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir thought of writing in these terms and applied the concept of serving an apprenticeship to their own experience. At one point in her memoirs Simone de Beauvoir observed '...écrire est un métier',³ while elsewhere she discussed '...mon apprentissage de l'écriture'.⁴ Similarly, when Sartre was interviewed about his early days, he stated that, without necessarily being fully aware of it at the time, he was serving an

1. D.S., II, p.549.

2. When she discusses her father's delight in acting and the theatre it is significant that Simone de Beauvoir rules out the possibility that he might, given his love of literature, have become a writer. She stresses in this connection the sheer effort, hard work and devotion that this career demands while acting, she says, avoids the perils of creation, the actor moves in a universe created by someone else:

...si mon père fut un lecteur passionné, il savait que l'écriture exige de rebutantes vertus, des efforts, de la patience...L'acteur élude les affres de la création.

M.J.F.R., p.37.

3. F.A., p.374.

4. T.C.F., p.31.

apprenticeship:

L'apprentissage se faisait dans le roman même. La Nausée a été un véritable apprentissage. Il fallait que j'apprenne à raconter, à incarner des idées dans un récit.¹

Intending to become not just a writer but a famous one,² Simone de Beauvoir set out to prepare herself. Looking back on those years 1929-1939 from the vantage point of 1972 when she was in her mid-sixties, Simone de Beauvoir comments on the good fortune she enjoyed at that time. She had escaped from the empty repetition of routine which is what she considers the majority of people experience in their working life, her present reading and her future writing combined to allow her to transcend the common lot. Nevertheless, although the apprenticeship which she was serving allowed her this privilege, it was also hard and testing:

Et j'avais les yeux fixés sur un avenir prometteur: je deviendrais un écrivain. C'est dans mon apprentissage de l'écriture qu'essentiellement ma liberté était engagée. Il ne s'agissait pas d'une tranquille ascension, pareille à celle qui m'avait menée à l'agrégation de philosophie, mais d'un effort hésitant: des piétinements, des reculs, de timides progrès.³

The first part of her apprenticeship was thus her extensive reading. The impressively long and varied list of writers and books she furnishes in her memoirs seems at first sight to be disparate and random. When discussing, for example, the time spent away from Sartre at the beginning of their liaison, she mentions that:

J'en occupais une grande partie à des lectures que je menais avec désordre.⁴

Discussing her and Sartre's interests elsewhere she adds, grandly: '...nous lisions

1. C.A., p.520.

2. cf. M.J.F.R., p.142. Asked at the age of 15 to define her ambitions she wrote: "Être un auteur célèbre".

3. I.C.F., pp.30-31.

4. F.A., pp.55-56.

tout ce qui paraissait'.¹ Nevertheless, it is undeniable that there does emerge from this jumble of titles² of everything from crime magazines to treatises on economics and philosophy a definite pattern. The pattern falls into place when we understand the full force of Simone de Beauvoir's projet originel³ which she summarised in two allied slogans: 'savoir et exprimer'⁴ and 'connaître et écrire'.⁵

The first half of these strikingly similar phrases refers to Simone de Beauvoir's insatiable curiosity about the world in which she lived. In Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée, for instance, she describes her initiation into the study of philosophy and the excitement this aroused in her, in spite of the defective way in which the subject was taught in her private school, le Cours Adeline Désir. The excitement is explained thus:

...j'avais toujours souhaité connaître tout; la philosophie me permettrait d'assouvir ce désir, car c'est la totalité du réel qu'elle visait...⁶

It is typical and revealing that she should choose here to emphasise, by underlining tout and by using the word totalité, the universality of her desire for knowledge. Before she felt herself able to write she felt that she must undertake 'une espèce de vaste travail qui était d'assimiler le monde'⁷ as she summarised Sartre's similar

1. F.A., p.142. Cf. page 15 where the joint nature of Simone de Beauvoir's and Sartre's reading is discussed.
2. See bibliography for catalogue of authors and titles mentioned in La Force de l'âge and Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée.
3. projet originel has been quoted directly in French as it is a phrase frequently used by Simone de Beauvoir in the opening pages of Tout compte fait when in 1972 she looked back over her life and was struck by the continuity she discerned in it and by the consistent way she had fulfilled her earliest ambitions.
4. T.C.F., p.22.
5. T.C.F., p.38.
6. M.J.F.R., pp.158-59.
7. C.A., p.257.

aim in discussion with him. Elsewhere, she explained her thirst for knowledge thus:

Oui, à douze ans j'étais tentée par la paléontologie, l'astronomie, l'histoire, par chaque nouvelle discipline que je découvrais: mais elles faisaient toutes partie d'un projet plus vaste qui était de dévoiler le monde et je m'y suis appliquée.¹

We note here the constancy from a very young age of Simone de Beauvoir's ambitions.

Simone de Beauvoir's apprenticeship to the craft of author included several complementary activities: the first was to find out as much as possible about the world and the way it worked, for before she could write about it she had to understand it. Finding out, for the studious young Simone de Beauvoir, meant an extensive course of reading,² and to this she devoted herself. She had never shirked hard work, in fact she had enjoyed the strenuous preparation for her examinations for, as well as the prospect of freedom that success in them would bring, she felt that the effort she was making meant that she was using her time and her capacities to the full, a pleasure she had learned in her childhood.³ When she talks, for instance, about her life in 1934:

Je m'appliquai pourtant, comme les autres années à m'instruire et à me distraire.⁴

or again, recounting the artistic failure of the novel on which she had been engaged and her decision to abandon it:

1. T.C.F., p.39.

2. This activity was soon supplemented by travel, both as a tourist and as an habitual and energetic walker, as a further means of dévoilement. The aspect of Simone de Beauvoir as 'l'écrivain-voyageur, témoin du monde physique' has been studied at length elsewhere in, for example, La Nature chez Simone de Beauvoir, Claire Cayron, Paris, Gallimard, 1973. Les Essais CLXXXV, the quotation is from page 20.

3. She explains her need to live life to the full in an early paragraph in les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée (pp.67-68). Another instance of the persistence of the negative influence of early upbringing.

4. F.A., p.220

Mieux valait lire, m'instruire, en attendant une inspiration favorable.¹

the terms which she uses are revealing. They suggest the industrious and diligent student, they show how constant is her need to learn and how serious was her commitment to this further stage in her education.

When we look at the non-fiction titles we see that by reading Marx, Rosa Luxembourgh, Trotsky, she was trying to acquire a theoretical background to modern political movements, an explanation of the forces which affect the destinies of the mass of people. There is, at the same time, a firm desire to understand the individual both on a theoretical basis and on a personal one, which explains notes like the following, referring to her reading during a skiing holiday over Christmas 1934:

...nous lisions un livre de géographie humaine...Nous avons aussi emporté un gros ouvrage de physiologie; nous nous intéressions surtout au système nerveux...²

Works such as these described the forces underlying individual lives and reactions. The urge to reflect on individual cases explains the strong attraction experienced by Simone de Beauvoir for books which allowed an intimate understanding of human psychology. Diaries, autobiographies, collections of letters all provided material expressed often on a literary level while crime magazines and newspapers furnished more everyday material for comprehending the mysteries of the human psyche.

1. F.A., p.207.

2. F.A., p.214. The enthusiasm brought to her reading and the pleasure she gained thereby, as well as the earnest nature of her devotion to it as part of her apprenticeship are exemplified in the following:

L'histoire était un de mes points faibles; je décidai d'étudier la Révolution française.

F.A., p.208.

She records her delight in gaining an understanding of events which had previously lacked meaning for her and then continues:

Je m'astreignais à ce travail avec autant de rigueur que si j'avais préparé un examen.

Ibid.

It should, perhaps, be made clear at this moment, since Simone de Beauvoir often refers to herself and Sartre together, that she and Sartre shared a common reading programme. Evidence for this comes from La Force de l'âge, where she continually records discussions with Sartre about what they had read. There is also in the interviews with Sartre an exchange on this subject¹ which makes the joint nature of their reading absolutely precise. Simone de Beauvoir states there that the list of books which she provided in La Force de l'âge refers to Sartre's reading as well as her own. He agrees and says that often one copy of a book served them both. Their ambition to be writers was shared, the idea of apprenticeship applied to each of them and their joint reading, too, was felt by each to be an important means of apprehension of the outside world. When Sartre was asked in old age to define what his reading during the Nineteen Thirties had meant to him, he replied:

Ca a toujours été le contact avec le monde. Un roman, un livre d'histoire ou de géographie, ça me renseignait sur le monde.²

This observation reinforced a previous remark³ to the effect that he believed a writer should know everything about the world. The same desire for knowledge is true of Simone de Beauvoir.⁴ Throughout her career she remained faithful to her motto of connaître et écrire which formed her original ambition, as is witnessed by a statement she made in an interview given in 1978:

Je ne lis pas beaucoup de romans, parce qu'il n'y en a vraiment pas beaucoup qui me touchent. Je lis beaucoup de

1. Cf. C.A., p.256: Sartre is speaking: "Souvent un volume nous servait à tous les deux, et nous en parlions beaucoup ensemble".
2. C.A., p.252.
3. Cf. C.A., p.249.
4. Simone de Beauvoir's desire for dévoilement, which implies what Sartre called 'se renseigner sur le monde', ante-dates the relationship with Sartre. Here, as frequently, we experience the phenomenon, not of Sartre the leader encouraging his disciple to follow him along the way that he has decided, but of two independent people, whose views before they met already converged and who chose to walk together along the same path.

livres d'histoire, des reportages, des essais, des livres d'ethnographie, des revues de psychanalyse, c'est plutôt cela qui m'intéresse.¹

We can perceive the same desire for instruction, the same urge to seek explanations about both the behaviour of the generality of mankind and about the psychology of the individual. There is a continuity in Simone de Beauvoir's preoccupations, which is a wish to be in direct touch with the world. In fact we discern here the need for dévoilement we recognised in the pleasure of the young schoolgirl who had just embarked on the study of philosophy. The first half of her mottoes, connaître, or savoir, does not involve the acquisition of knowledge for erudition's sake alone, however; Simone de Beauvoir did not read so widely, piling fact on fact, for the mere joy of amassing information. The pleasure and delight she gained from her wide reading came from understanding the relationships between the facts she discovered. Dévoilement, the lifting of the veil, meant to her the ability to penetrate the surface provided by appearance and thus to comprehend more fully the nature of reality.

When Simone de Beauvoir looked back at her younger self, she was harsh in her judgement about the way she then explained reality and seemed almost to reject solidarity with the person she then was. She sums up in 1960 the young woman she had been in the Nineteen Thirties:

J'étais avide de savoir, et je me contentais de leurres.²

Her experience of life, the explanations she gave herself at that time, seemed to her later self corrupt because of a combination of ignorance, to a certain extent wilful, and mauvaise foi. The explanation she offered for this state of affairs was partly that she was still a victim of the mystifications of her bourgeois upbringing and education:

...je ne me guéris pas du moralisme, du puritanisme qui m'empêchaient de voir les gens tels qu'ils sont, ni de mon

1. E., p.592.

2. F.A., p.373.

universalisme abstrait. Je demeurai pénétrée de l'idéalisme et de l'esthétisme bourgeois.¹

The other part of the explanation, and possibly the larger, is supplied by her violent wish not to see a political dimension in her life, because of her single-minded concentration on personal happiness. When she refers to her 'entêtement schizophrénique au bonheur'² she is alluding to her refusal to recognise at that time the part played in her private story by the social element, the force that History exerts in the destiny of the individual. The War had to come before she could face this necessity, and learn to feel solidarity with the Other. Nevertheless, the reading and the other intellectual or cultural activities described with such attention are shown as a necessary part of her apprentice years:

La culture imparfaite que j'ai acquise était nécessaire à son dépassement.³

The verb engranger she uses to describe this acquisition and retention of knowledge provides an image which enables her to compare her intellectual activity with the work of a farmer. Although she did not yet know the best way to exploit her knowledge, the amassing of it remained a useful activity and when at last in 1939 she was forced to re-think the assumptions on which she had based her life, her wide reading was to provide a firm basis on which to build.

Most people learn about the nature of reality through personal experience, which can often be a painful if enriching process. When in the Nineteen Thirties the young Simone de Beauvoir attempted to carry out the second half of her mottoes, écrire, exprimer, she had only a limited amount of this which could serve as springboard to her imagination. In spite of her adolescent revolts and her parents' loss of income her life had always been secure emotionally and financially.

1. F.A., p.372.

2. F.A., p.372.

3. F.A., p.373.

Apart from the painful time when her friend Zaza had died, she had known a fairly constant happiness. She felt at moments that her middle-class upbringing had mystified almost as much as educated her but, as we have seen, lacked the will to explore reality directly, an exploration which might have supplied the explanations she needed. At this stage in her life, books, read casually for pleasure or studied in detail, contributed much of the experience of the world which she at that point lacked. Her extensive reading programme was not a frivolous dissipation of energy, deflecting it from her serious purpose, the creation of works of literature, but an earnest attempt to enter into the mysteries of the times in which she was living and in this way to prepare herself to be an author.

She set out then to learn how to write. She did this in two main ways: firstly and obviously by the practice of writing itself:

Dix ans, tout de même, c'est long, et pendant cette période,
j'ai noirci beaucoup de papier.¹

She wrote much and her autobiography describes several attempts at novels or shorter works which, she asserts, in the end amounted to little as works of literature although they taught her many lessons about composition. One of these early literary productions has since been published.² It is a series of interlinked short stories, where the bourgeoisie are attacked with a fierce irony; it contains much of interest, while being at times clumsy in arrangement. One must admire her perseverance and the faith in herself which enabled her to continue for such a long time without achieving anything tangible by way of books published. The second way in which she began to learn how to write was by means of her reading of fiction. She read imaginative works extensively, for pleasure, for inspiration, for models on which to base her own work, as a substitute for experience and for lessons in technique. The two activities, writing and reading creative literature,

1. F.A., p.374.

2. Quand prime le spirituel, Paris, Gallimard, 1979.

went on at the same time, the one shedding light on the other.

On the conscious level Simone de Beauvoir had rejected:

...le faux spiritualisme, le conformisme étouffant,
l'arrogance, la tyrannie oppressive...¹

of the middle class amongst whom she had passed her youth. Her first attempts at writing were marked by memories of her adolescent struggles against what she esteemed to be the characteristics of the class she had in horror. She was, in her early maturity, suspicious of any direct expression of feeling in art as she had accustomed herself to regard this as counterfeit, as 'bourgeois' exploitation of the sentiments; what she then found appealing was the impersonal, the art which made its statements while avoiding as far as possible the individual or subjective approach. She was attracted to art which was stylised or emblematic such as that to be seen in medieval illuminations and tapestries. In modern paintings and films she derived great pleasure from the works of the surrealists. In the theatre she adored puppets and marionettes,² the non-human dolls seemed to her to attain a sort of inhuman purity which at that time she valued above all else in art.

Simone de Beauvoir believed that this desire for sublimated feeling explains why her reading of Alain-Fournier and Rosamond Lehmann should have inspired her writing during the early period of her independent life. A first attempt to compose a novel,³ carried out, we are told, without much conviction as her happiness at the time prevented the commitment necessary for literary composition, soon became

1. T.C.F., p.19.

2. F.A., p.45. This survives into her early fiction. Not only is an important character in her second novel connected with a puppet theatre but the sympathetic Gerbert in L'Invitée develops an interest in marionettes and creates a show using them.

3. Simone de Beauvoir discusses these early writings, the first three of which remain untitled, in La Force de l'âge. The first one is treated in pages 64-65 the second in pages 106-110, the third in pages 156-160, the fourth, which was eventually published in 1979, in pages 229-232, the fifth, which finally became L'Invitée, in pages 323-326 (these chapters were deleted in the published version), and pages 346-353.

nothing but pastiche of the pure, fairy-tale world evoked by these two authors. The novel was abandoned after three chapters. The poetic fantasy of great imaginative power was not to prove a genre in which Simone de Beauvoir excelled. Nevertheless, the discovery of where one's genius does not reside is useful, it helps define exactly what one can do and thus a failed early novel can contribute to the success of a later one.

The poetic novel having been put away, Simone de Beauvoir did not try to write another until her year in Marseilles when she was away from Sartre. This novel was completed, its main theme was one which was to preoccupy her for many years: the fascination of the Other. It told the story of an inexperienced young girl's admiration for an older woman, the director of a puppet theatre, successful and artistically creative. The plot was made more complicated, in order to suggest the density of real life, by the inclusion of a transposed account of her friend Zaza's death, which incidentally was intended to demonstrate the thesis that bourgeois narrow-mindedness can amount to a vile tyranny. This episode in Simone de Beauvoir's life underpins much of her first two volumes of autobiography. The novel has not yet appeared in print so we have to accept Simone de Beauvoir's own criticisms of it; she said she was as yet unable to handle description of groups of more than three people, but her main failure was to make the tensions in the life of the character who represented Zaza not sufficient to be responsible for her death. In short, the failure of the novel was because that character lacked verisimilitude. Nevertheless, it is clear that Simone de Beauvoir had gained valuable practice with the effects which could be gained from varying the point of view:

Geneviève était vue par Anne, ce donnait un peu de mystère à sa simplicité; on voyait Mme de Préliane et Anne par les yeux de Geneviève, et celle-ci sentait qu'elle ne les comprenait pas bien; par-delà ses insuffisances, le lecteur était donc invité à deviner une vérité qui ne lui était pas brutalement assenée.¹

1. F.A., p.110.

It took Simone de Beauvoir many years and several lengthy experiments before she felt able to develop her own writing style and master literary techniques. One of the problems she had to surmount was lack of experience which could provide subject matter on which to base her fiction. Another was that in her attempts to write she relied too much on the style or themes of those authors she most admired. We have noted how Alain-Fournier's influence, for example, had to be exorcised; others, too, had to be shaken off. She had read much of Stendhal, whom Sartre also greatly admired, during her year as a teacher in Marseilles and had particularly appreciated what she had discovered of his journals and letters. This author inspired her third endeavour. The novel, on which she worked for two years, contained as its main characters a brother and a sister, Pierre and Madeleine, who were to be the modern versions of Julien Sorel and Lamiel. It was set to describe their apprentice years. The theme was to be 'ma haine de l'ordre bourgeois'¹. In her style Simone de Beauvoir tried to emulate the satirical cynicism of her model. Describing the novel in her autobiography she was of the opinion that it was not without merit, particularly when Madeleine, the reincarnation of Lamiel, is faced in her turn with the problem of the Other, a problem which deeply perplexed the author herself and therefore one where she could call on her own hesitations and uncertainties and in this way give depth and a certain note of sincerity to the character. Also, the first chapter where she describes her protagonists' childhood, exploiting her own memories, gained the approbation of her friends who thought it had the charm of certain English novels. This suggests that she was able, when evoking events that were within her own experience, to write in a convincing and interesting manner. Yet, in the first

1. F.A., p.156.

version of the novel she abandoned personal reminiscence when she made her hero, the modern Julien Sorel, end on the guillotine;¹ melodrama, however, was not her strong suit and, realising this, she re-worked the plot, retaining, nevertheless, a marked element of satire directed against the bourgeoisie. She also tried to evoke the death of Zaza once more, only to find that she was still unable to provide the character with credible motivation.

In spite of its virtues, we are told, this novel was again a failure, for certain elements of the story, certain backgrounds, such as when Pierre becomes involved in politics, lack verisimilitude, the characters do not always possess the required depth. It was an advance, however, on its predecessors, and its author had not completely lost two years:

J'avais fait des progrès dans l'art de raconter une histoire, de mener une scène, de faire parler les gens.²

Simone de Beauvoir accorded herself a year's respite from writing, during which she continued to read as voraciously as ever and to reflect. She decided when she again set pen to paper that she would restrict her ambition very severely, she would talk about people, events and backgrounds which lay within her own experience, which also would provide the theme to link the short stories which she felt were all that could be achieved within her limited aims. The theme was once more an attack on the bourgeoisie. There are five stories, each dealing with the experience of a young woman and each story was based either on a person whom the author had known or else on her memories of her own childhood and youth. Since the stories were nearer to her own experience they were much more alive than her previous novels, although the savage anti-bourgeois satire sometimes

1. While in Marseilles she met the wife of a convicted murderer and had fantasised about him and his case:

...je vis en Bougrat un sympathique aventurier, victime d'une haineuse conspiration bourgeoise et je formai vaguement le projet d'utiliser cette histoire dans un roman.

F.A., p.104

2. F.A., p.159.

turned to caricature. Once more her creative imagination was fired by her current reading: the author who inspired her on this occasion was John Dos Passos and we examine the stories more closely in chapter 8.

B.T. Fitch, among others, has remarked on what he sees as a lack of creative imagination shown in the early work of Simone de Beauvoir;

Dans le présent contexte, le premier intérêt de ces deux livres autobiographiques est de nous montrer combien la part de l'imagination est mince dans la création romanesque de l'auteur.¹

If the plots, characters and background of the early novels are compared with events in her own life as described in the memoirs, close relationships are to be found between fiction and reality. We have seen that in her apprentice years the nearer Simone de Beauvoir dared to come to her own experience, the better the work she produced would seem to have been; and, in fact, her early writings appear, from her account of them, to lack substance since subject matter for a novel had not yet emerged from her own life to be transposed into fiction. The reader who has enjoyed les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée might possibly object here that in her struggle for emancipation from social class and family there could have been ample material for a novel with as its theme her formation, her education and her eventual rejection of these: a sort of bildungsroman. The reason why she was not able to use this material lay in the fact that she could not yet master sufficient detachment. She had, by an effort of will-power, cut herself off from much of her past but feared nevertheless to explore its effect on her. As she was to suggest in an essay written after the war:

On est toujours plus influencé qu'on ne croit par les idées qu'on combat...²

Certain events, and in particular the death of her friend Zaza, had so grieved her

1. Le Sentiment d'Etrangeté chez Malraux, Sartre, Camus, Simone de Beauvoir, Paris, Minard, 1964, Bibliothèque des Lettres Modernes, p.149.

2. P., Faut-il brûler Sade?, p.65.

that she was unable to write about them indirectly, which explains her lack of success when she attempted to do so in the second, third and fourth of her apprentice novels, yet she could not bear to discuss them directly either. In fact, as late as 1937 even, Simone de Beauvoir was terrified by the idea of talking openly about her own experience in a work of fiction. By this date, she had attempted four times to construct novels or short stories, all of which she had deemed more or less unsatisfactory. When Sartre at last suggested to her that she could base a novel on herself, her reaction was one of horror:

Me jeter toute crue dans un livre, ne plus prendre de distance, me compromettre: non, cette idée m'effrayait.¹

Her early life had to wait until 1958 and the appearance of the first volume of autobiography before it could furnish the theme of a book which, paradoxically, in spite of its objective, even documentary, content has almost the form and arrangement of a novel.² Nevertheless, with Sartre's encouragement, she decided to create and develop a character in her next novel who would embody some of her own experience of life and who would be faced with the problems she had herself encountered and which had tormented her. Having profited from the lesson she taught herself in her fourth attempt at composing fiction: to limit her ambition and to restrict herself to the description only of what she knew directly, she embarked

1. F.A., p.324.

2. Simone de Beauvoir herself recognises that the Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée have a shape and unity that the other volumes of her autobiography lack and offers an explanation:

...les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée ont une unité romanesque qui manque aux volumes suivants. Comme dans les romans d'apprentissage, du début à la fin le temps coule avec rigueur.

T.C.F., p.24

There is a similar organisation and unity in the first volume of Clara Malraux's autobiography le Bruit de nos pas. It is interesting however that Simone de Beauvoir should compare les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée to "un roman d'apprentissage" as it provides further support for our view of these early years.

in 1937 on a fifth novel which was eventually to become L'Invitée. With this fiction she was finally successful, she had achieved her ambition:

...réaliser ma vocation encore abstraite d'écrivain, c'est-à-dire trouver le point d'insertion de la littérature dans ma vie.¹

A lack of material in her own life, and a lack of confidence in the value of her own experience, contributed to delay Simone de Beauvoir's emergence as a writer, but she had, in these apprentice years, ample time to reflect on how to compose a literary work when the moment for creativity at last arrived. The fiction which she read for pleasure she also studied closely so as to derive lessons in the technique of narrative, presentation of characters, organisation of the plot and arrangement of the time sequence. Whatever she read, and her tastes were catholic, she would discuss with Sartre and others so that her ideas were clarified by being tested. In this way, her reading became doubly part of her life, part of her own experience, as is demonstrated by the following exchange:

J.-P. S. - Certains personnages romanesques ou vrais nous servaient de référence.

S.de B. - Oui, c'était très intégré à notre vie, tout ce que nous lisions.¹

She read modern literature particularly extensively and from a variety of cultures which included works from England and America, from Russia and Germany as well as from France. In the following chapters we shall examine closely what she read in order to determine what her reading contributed to the formation of Simone de Beauvoir as a writer.

1. F.A., p.368.

2. C.A., p.256.

CHAPTER TWO

INITIATION TO FRENCH LITERATURE

It is evident from the account given in the Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée that Simone de Beauvoir considered she received an unusually thorough grounding in French literature. When she looks back on her life in the fourth volume of her autobiography she links her induction into the world of culture with the decline in the family fortunes caused by the effects of the First World War and with the class situation of her family. Whatever the reasons were which encouraged her parents to develop in her a love of reading it is certain that a life-long passion for books originated in her childhood:

Réduits à une demi-gêne, mes parents ont misé sur les valeurs culturelles plus que sur la 'dépense ostentatoire' à laquelle mon père aurait été enclin. Ils m'ont proposé comme principale distraction la lecture, divertissement peu coûteux. J'ai aimé passionnément les livres.¹

Initially, it was Simone de Beauvoir's mother and school teachers who encouraged the young child to read but when it became clear to her father that she was intellectually gifted he decided to assume much of the responsibility for his daughter's literary education:

Depuis que j'allais en classe, mon père s'intéressait à mes succès, à mes progrès et il comptait davantage dans ma vie.²

While Madame de Beauvoir was finding for the young Simone suitable children's

1. T.C.F., p.17.

2. M.J.F.R., p.28.

books,¹ and when she was a little older giving her those novels in the series La Bibliothèque de ma fille which she had herself enjoyed as a girl,² and while the teachers at the Cours Désir were beginning to instil in the earnest schoolgirl a solid knowledge of seventeenth-century French literature, Monsieur de Beauvoir was introducing his daughter to those authors he himself prized. He was admirably suited for the task, having from his youth onwards an inordinate love of literature, possibly finding compensation in this field for difficulties elsewhere in his life. His daughter writes of him as a schoolboy:

...réfractaire aux sports, à la gymnastique, il se passionna pour la lecture et pour l'étude.³

and then, during the next stage of his life:

Etudiant, il découvrit avec jubilation la littérature qui plaisait à son temps; il passait ses nuits à lire Alphonse Daudet, Maupassant, Bourget, Marcel Prévost, Jules Lemaître.⁴

When he married he educated his young wife and introduced her to the world of literature and then later, when he became a father, he took it upon himself to shape the literary tastes of his clever elder daughter, although of course he left all other responsibility for the upbringing of the children to his wife. This induction to the république des lettres seems to have commenced when Simone de Beauvoir was

1. These books are evoked in a list in the early pages of Simone de Beauvoir's autobiography:

A plat ventre sur la moquette rouge, je lisais Madame de Ségur, Zénaïde Fleuriot, les contes de Perrault, du chanoine Schmidt, les albums de Töpfer, Bécassine, les aventures de la famille Fenouillard, celles du sapeur Camember, Sans Famille, Jules Verne, Paul d'Ivoi, André Laurie, et la série des 'Livres roses' édités par Larousse, qui racontaient les légendes de tous les pays du monde et pendant la guerre des histoires héroïques.

M.J.F.R., p.52

2. M.J.F.R., p.89.
3. M.J.F.R., p.35.
4. M.J.F.R., p.36.

about eight years of age. Firstly, he helped her to express herself correctly. He carefully checked the accuracy of her written French, sending back to her with all mistakes corrected the letters she wrote to him while he was at the Front and he made her do difficult dictation exercises during the school holidays. The pedagogic aspect of Monsieur de Beauvoir's attitude to Simone did not upset the child as might have been expected. On the contrary, the relationship between father and daughter was enhanced: being intelligent she easily learned to avoid the grammatical traps he set for her and thus made few errors; the father was proud of the daughter and she basked in his esteem. His ruling passion was the theatre and he had much experience as an amateur actor, he assembled a small anthology of poetry which he taught her to recite effectively. Finally, he introduced her to those of his favourite authors whom he deemed suitable for her age:

Il me lut à haute voix les classiques, Ruy Blas, Hernani, les pièces de Rostand, l'Histoire de la Littérature française de Lanson, et les comédies de Labiche.¹

The tripartite pattern formed by mother, school and father thus established continued into Simone de Beauvoir's adolescent years. Madame de Beauvoir supervised her daughter's overall education.² She provided her with respectable

1. M.J.F.R., p.39.

2. Madame de Beauvoir, her daughter tells us, believed firmly in her responsibilities as a Catholic mother and she consulted frequently with Church associations when she wished for help or guidance with her task:

Aussi pénétrée de ses responsabilités que papa en était dégagé, elle prit à coeur sa tâche d'éducatrice. Elle demanda des conseils à la confrérie des 'Mères chrétiennes' et conféra souvent avec ces demoiselles.

M.J.F.R., p.41.

She was not unusual in this: there was felt to be a general need for advice on how to give the young a Christian education which would allow them to cope with the temptations and dangers of the modern world. It was this need which explained that the Abbé Bethléem's list of books to read and books to avoid was in its 11th edition in 1932 and which, as late as 1933, made the canny publishers Nelson claim on the cover of their books for children and young people 'Romans pouvant être mis entre toutes les mains'. This was on the paper cover of Nelson's edition of l'Abbé Constantin by Halévy. cf. Abbé Louis Bethléem, Romans à lire et romans à proscrire: essai de classification au point de vue moral des principaux romans et romanciers, 1500-1932 (11th edition, 1932).

books suitable for young people:

des livres enfantins, choisis avec circonspection...¹

The child studied Corneille, Racine and Molière at school and her father was responsible for what he believed was her serious literary formation, attempting to transmit the genuine pleasure which he derived from his reading. It irritated him that the Cours Désir, the Catholic school which his daughters attended, had such a limited and narrow-minded attitude to education in general but particularly to the teaching of literature. He became so dissatisfied that at one stage he even suggested removing his daughters from the school and sending them to a lycée. For varying reasons - Madame de Beauvoir's were religious, Simone's were sentimental: she feared separation from Zaza - both mother and daughter opposed the idea and the girls remained at the Cours Désir.²

In 1920, when Simone de Beauvoir was twelve years old, middle-class parents still felt that it was part of their duty as educators to exercise the closest supervision over their children's reading, especially if those children were daughters.³ Madame de Beauvoir, so aware of her responsibilities as mistress of the home and guardian of its purity that she had once snatched Claudine à l'école from the maid and confiscated it, took her rôle most seriously. Certain books were banned altogether, others were censored:

Quelquefois, avant de me remettre un livre Maman en épinglait ensemble quelques feuillets...⁴

Simone de Beauvoir tells us in her memoirs that this censorship was justified by the

1. M.J.F.R., p.53.

2. The gravity of his doubts about the teaching of the Cours Désir can be measured by the fact that Simone de Beauvoir returns to this episode in T.C.F., pp.20-21.

3. Cf. what Theodore Zeldin writes about authority within the family in his chapter on children in Volume I, pp.315-342, and on guides to reading for Catholic parents in Volume II, p.368 of his France 1868-1945, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, Volume I, 1973, and Volume II, 1977.

4. M.J.F.R., p.83.

teachings of the Catholic Church and the Catholic school which she attended.¹ The danger to faith and even to life itself provoked by unsupervised reading on the part of the young formed the subject of a sermon she heard during the retreat made immediately before her communion solennelle. The preacher illustrated his argument with an appropriate example:

Une petite fille, étonnamment intelligente et précoce, mais élevée par des parents peu vigilants, était un jour venue se confier à lui: elle avait fait tant de mauvaises lectures qu'elle avait perdu la foi et pris la vie en horreur. Il essaya de lui rendre l'espoir, mais elle était trop gravement contaminée: à peu de temps de là, il apprit son suicide.²

By censoring her daughter's reading, then, Madame de Beauvoir was protecting her from the occasion of sin and was thus safeguarding her immortal soul. Monsieur de Beauvoir, on the other hand, was an atheist, he moved in a wider world than his wife, he valued ideas and he revered literature, he had even expressed disapproval of the blinkered viewpoint of the Cours Désir. Nevertheless, he was in this instance at one with his wife. For him the reason was social, the youthful innocence of daughters had to be protected from corruption, certain worldly knowledge was for married ladies only. He, too, therefore exercised censorship:

...dans l'Aiglon même, mon père faisait des coupures.³

The system of close supervision had two weak points: the parents' trust in

1. The much more open attitude of Clara Goldschmidt's Jewish family can be judged from an episode related in her memoirs. A lady finds her with Victor Hugo's Marion Delorme and feels it is her duty to warn her parents that she is reading unsuitable material. Her parents' response is to laugh, they do not even consider censorship:

Ils rient, je les entends se dire que je ne peux pas y comprendre grand-chose, mais qu'en tout cas cela ne peut pas me faire de mal.

Clara Malraux, Le Bruit de nos pas, I Apprendre à vivre Paris: Grasset, 1963, p.83.

2. M.J.F.R., p.85.
3. M.J.F.R., p.111.

their daughter's obedience and the availability of the family library. In spite of their confidence in her, curiosity and greed for printed matter united to overcome all scruples and when, after initial experiments, reading forbidden books did not seem to result in harm she abandoned herself whenever she could to the delights of the clandestine activity of reading uncensored adult literature:

Désormais, chaque fois que je me trouvais seule à la maison, je puisais librement dans la bibliothèque...Quand mes parents sortaient le soir, je prolongeais tard dans la nuit les joies de l'évasion.¹

This took place during Simone de Beauvoir's early adolescence and there was as much desire for sexual information as for literary satisfaction to explain this thirst for reading, yet at the same time as she was attempting to complete her sexual education in this rather incoherent way she was also gaining much pleasure, 'des heures merveilleuses', in extending her literary culture.

To illustrate the extent of her reading, the page in her memoirs where she recounts this development contains the following names: Sacha Guitry, Capus, Tristan Bernard, Flers and Caillavet, Bernstein, Bataille, Musset, Bourget, Alphonse Daudet, Marcel Prévost, Maupassant, les Goncourt, Farrère and Colette².

We have to face here a curious puzzle. Simone de Beauvoir came from a family which valued literature, her mother went to much trouble to choose books for her, she studied French literature at school, her father took pride in his knowledge and love of literature and yet in the account we are given of the wide reading of her youth she talks very little of gaining enjoyment from books by authors who are considered the great masters of French literature. When she read, in a pleasurable clandestine way, the contents of her father's library the names and titles she mentions form a remarkably homogeneous body. They belong to that literature which was popular when her father was a student and young man about

1. M.J.F.R., pp.111-12.

2. Cf. M.J.F.R., p.111.

town during the last years of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth. There were many dramatists in the list because of his love for acting and the theatre. Amongst the playwrights mentioned, several, such as Sacha Guitry, Capus, Tristan Bernard, Flers and Caillavet, had much in common: they produced amusing light comedies which were sometimes sophisticated or even satirical but often superficial and light-weight. An interest in psychology, particularly in the dramatic presentation of extremes of passion and even of the abnormal, explains the presence in the collection of works by Bernstein, Bataille or Bourget. Monsieur de Beauvoir lived in a society which was officially most respectful of women but in his private reading he showed his liking for writers whose works had the effect of denigrating women by showing female irrationality and lack of self-control, or even the scandalous and sometimes aberrant sexuality of their feminine subjects. Bataille's Maman Colibri (1904), for instance, has as its theme the study of a middle-aged woman's passion for her son's friend, and books by Farrère or by Colette, particularly the Claudine novels, could be described as perverse, even morally shocking.¹ He prided himself on his intelligence and taste and admired fine writing, reacting with appreciation to the Goncourt Brothers' écriture artiste or to the polished style of Maupassant or the vivid prose of Daudet.

Some of what was in his library is still read but most of those authors mentioned by his daughter are nowadays neglected. It is possible that his tastes have become so dated because he particularly esteemed two qualities in his reading: style and entertainment. There is, on the whole, an absence in his library of the reflective, of the deeply questioning, of books which examine society and find it wanting. The 'society' novels of Marcel Prévost, whose Les demi-vierges of

1. We remember that Colette's Claudine novels, although published between 1900 and 1903, were still regarded as unfit for the unmarried, if adult, maid's eyes in 1919 and note that they figured nevertheless in the master's library. (M.J.F.R., p.84)

1894 Simone de Beauvoir tells us she read in secret,¹ or the entertaining adulteries of Sacha Guitry take for granted the continuing existence of bourgeois values. These books amuse but do not disturb.

Monsieur de Beauvoir was born in 1877. If one thinks of what was available, given his theatrical interests, one discovers he had the opportunity of forming part of the audience at Antoine's Théâtre Libre since it did not close until April 1896, he could have seen new and exciting plays at Lugné-Poë's Théâtre de l'Oeuvre where Ubu Roi, for example, was produced in 1896. It would seem, however, that he restricted himself, according to his daughter's account, to the Romantic theatre of Rostand and Hugo, to dramas of passion, and to witty, light, drawing-room comedy. A similar conclusion seems to be valid about his taste in prose fiction where there are very few "great" writers mentioned. One can only conjecture as to why this was so, was there pressure from his pious wife,² was it a measure of his basic unhappiness that he did not wish to be disquieted by what he read, only

1. M.J.F.R., p.112.

2. The following extract illustrates the extent of the disapproval of the official church for French literature:

Much of what the world had judged to be best in the literature of France was, in this period, on the Catholic Church's Index of Prohibited Books. Abbé Louis Bethléem produced a guide to tell the faithful what books they could safely read and what they ought to avoid. This showed that in 1932 most of the 'love stories' if not the complete works of Balzac, Dumas, Flaubert, Stendhal, Zola, E. Sue, Maeterlinck and Anatole France were on the Index, as well as Montesquieu, Rousseau, Bentham, Darwin, Kant and even Taine's History of English Literature. The books which were recommended were those of Dickens, Conan Doyle, George Eliot, René Bazin, Henri Bordeaux and above all a host of obscure writers who clearly sold very well because they had this Catholic accolade.

entertained,¹ or was it that his daughter is misrepresenting his tastes in her memoirs in order to make the reader see him as more limited than he was in reality? There is no answer to this without outside evidence and the question is immaterial in our study. What is significant is that this limited range of what may be termed 'bourgeois' literature is what Simone de Beauvoir represents herself as having read in depth in her adolescence which is a period of one's life when one reads most freshly and when one is liable to be most marked by one's reading.

It is generally thought that Simone de Beauvoir read very widely as a girl. Anne Whitmarsh, for example, would seem to suggest this when she describes her childhood:

...she soon took to clandestine reading from her father's large library.²

The relatively numerous list of names given by Simone de Beauvoir helped conceal the narrow band of interests. It is true that she read much; books were, as Terry Keefe says:

...a vitally important source of pleasure and instruction during her childhood.³

Yet for much of the time the pleasure was limited. She was mainly reading, in fact, the books of a certain social class and discovering that she did not really

1. Simone de Beauvoir does mention elsewhere that his tastes were wider, 'il prisait Voltaire, Beaumarchais...' (M.J.F.R., p.124), but it is in character that these two authors should be esteemed by him for are they not both witty and entertaining? She does not record that she read books by these authors in his library though in an interview given in 1960 she says that:

J'avais lu clandestinement toute sa bibliothèque: Zola, Maupassant, France, Bourget, etc.

E., p.384.

Zola was hardly mentioned in les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée surprisingly enough.

2. Anne Whitmarsh, Simone de Beauvoir and the Limits of Commitment Cambridge University Press, 1981, p.6.
3. Terry Keefe, op. cit., p.8.

appreciate what pleased that class. She found little inspiration in the French literature which she was offered openly or which she read secretly. She despised her teachers and does not seem to have shown any enthusiasm for the works by Corneille, Racine or Molière on the school syllabus. She found the books offered by her mother were too tame:

...ces vertueuses idylles ne m'amusaient qu'à demi.¹

and the literature to which she was introduced by her father, either directly or indirectly, did not satisfy her either. Until the age of eighteen she read much, motivated by a curious gluttony, a compulsion to devour the printed word, but without intense excitement. She observes in a telling way:

...aucun auteur ne réussit à m'émouvoir.²

Certain authors, certain novels did, however, supply the young Simone de Beauvoir with what she was craving: a possibility of identification between the imaginary world of the book and her own; a recognition of her self or of her own situation which both stimulated her ambitions and reassured her that she was not the only person to think as she did. When she read Louisa May Alcott's Little Women series or when she slowly deciphered George Eliot's The Mill on the Floss in the original English, then the miracle of recognition occurred. Comparing herself with the heroines, Jo March and Maggie Tulliver, she was enabled both to envisage a future where she would be successful and independent and to come to terms with a present which she found increasingly uncomfortable. It is perhaps inevitable that the books which played such a significant part in her adolescence should belong to other literary cultures, given what we know of her experience of French literature. Their role will be analysed in depth later.

After the exploration of her father's library, Simone de Beauvoir's next

1. M.J.F.R., p.89.

2. M.J.F.R., p.111.

reading was for the most part functional. She was reaching an age when she had to concentrate on her studies and much of what she now read was ingested without any real enjoyment for the practical purpose of improving her chances in the baccalauréat examinations. She was still being presented with a bourgeois view of culture, her father guided her in her study of history and the books he recommended,¹ the literary history and criticism which she was encouraged to read,² even the books which helped prepare her for the philosophy papers,³ all contributed to put forward to her the same value system:

On ne peut imaginer enseignement plus sectaire que celui que je reçus. Manuels scolaires, livres, classes, conversations: tout convergeait.⁴

She was not yet rebellious to the values of her family; at this stage she accepted passively the reading lists recommended by her elders. Her overriding concern was her loss of Christian faith, about which she felt obliged to dissimulate.

Nevertheless, when in late adolescence Simone de Beauvoir began the natural process of querying parental values and tastes, the first fierce battles were waged in the field of French literature. She now openly disliked those novels her father regarded as masterpieces; she had been less than enthusiastic when she had read, at his behest, Le Lys rouge and Les dieux ont soif by Anatole France who, he

1. '...papa se délectait des ouvrages de Madelin, de Lenôtre, de Funck-Brentano; on me fit lire quantités de romans et de récits historiques, et toute la collection des Mémoires expurgés par Madame Carette' M.J.F.R., p.129.
2. 'Je lisais Faguet, Brunetière, Lemaître'... M.J.F.R., p.155.
3. 'Je m'initiai à la philosophie en lisant La Vie intellectuelle du Père Sertillanges, et La Certitude morale d'Ollé-Laprune qui m'ennuyèrent considérablement' M.J.F.R., p.157. When she studied this subject at school her teacher was, of course, a priest, the abbé Trécourt, who relied extensively on the (Catholic) text book. Nevertheless she was given a reading-list: 'Les lectures qu'il nous indiquait manquaient de sel; c'était L'Attention de Ribot, La Psychologie des foules de Gustave Lebon, Les Idées-forces de Fouillée' M.J.F.R., p.158.
4. M.J.F.R., p.128.

announced, was the 'plus grand écrivain du siècle'.¹ Irritated by her lack of response and in order to convince her of France's worth, he gave her the four volumes of La Vie littéraire for an eighteenth birthday present. This brought matters to a head. In her discussion of the literary figures revered by Monsieur de Beauvoir and her own attitude to them, it emerges that Simone de Beauvoir linked them very closely with a precise social class and a particular way of thinking.² She had consciously made the connection which she had unconsciously detected several years before. The books admired by the bourgeoisie were rejected in moral tones:

L'hédonisme de France m'indigna. Il ne cherchait dans l'art
que d'égoïstes plaisirs: quelle bassesse! pensai-je.³

Her scorn for Maupassant is similarly expressed:

Je méprisais aussi la platitude des romans de Maupassant
que mon père considérait comme des chefs-d'oeuvre.⁴

This rejection of her father's literary values is explicitly linked with a repugnance for what may be termed his social values. 'Le culte de la famille', the way in which her middle-class family affirmed and strengthened itself, was criticised firstly. This may originally have been no more than the natural irritation felt by an active young person for lengthy and boring family reunions; it was fuelled however by a strong reaction against the system of surveillance and

1. M.J.F.R., p.188.

2. For a discussion of what is meant by bourgeois in this context it is instructive to study the opening pages of Zeldin's France 1848-1945. He establishes that the epithet bourgeois was not necessarily linked with an objective class situation nor with the possession of capital, although these of course had their rôle to play. Being bourgeois involved an attitude of mind, a style of life, determined by certain values. As appearances were important, Zeldin talks about 'a certain decorum', it was inevitable that embarrassing or awkward truths should sometimes be concealed in order to give a good impression of correctness. Zeldin, op. cit., Vol. I, The Pretensions of the Bourgeoisie, pp.11-22.

3. M.J.F.R., p.189.

4. M.J.F.R., p.189.

censorship exercised by her parents in the name of family responsibility. It is, in the memoirs, given a wider import when she associated the idea of family feeling with her father's beliefs on the subject of marriage. At the age of eighteen she was not a feminist, she did not wish to campaign for political equality or female suffrage, but she had a strong feeling for natural justice and took for granted, as a relic of her Catholic training, the moral if not the social equality of the sexes, for she had believed that the soul was sexless and that women had a chance of gaining sanctity which equalled that of men. Her father's attitude that men were allowed infidelities whereas women had to behave with strict virtue was one which both shocked her sense of morality and at the same time diminished her as a person. She was thus led to label as immoral the bourgeois sexual code as she understood it from her father. It outraged her sense of justice and hurt her self-respect, causing her to judge her father harshly:

L'attitude de mon père à l'égard du 'beau sexe' me blessait.
Dans l'ensemble, la frivolité des liaisons, des amours, des
adultères bourgeois m'écoeuraient.¹

Simone de Beauvoir had passed from criticism of her father's literary tastes to a similar attack on the family and then his sexual values came under scrutiny; it would not be long before she saw her father and the family as representing a whole social class to be rejected:

Je refusais les hiérarchies, les valeurs, les cérémonies par
lesquelles l'élite se distingue; ma critique ne tendait,
pensais-je, qu'à la débarrasser de vaines survivances: elle
impliquait en fait sa liquidation.²

Gradually her criticisms became more open and more structured, they were being transformed into a systematic rejection of bourgeois values as 'peu à peu ma rancune se tourna en révolte'.³

1. M.J.F.R., p.189.

2. M.J.F.R., p.190.

3. M.J.F.R., p.190

It is typical of Simone de Beauvoir that her attack on the bourgeoisie as a social class should have been prefigured by criticism of what she saw as their literary values. Literature to her then, and for much of her subsequent career, was as real to her as life, as we shall see throughout this study of her development.

The first stage in Simone de Beauvoir's 'emancipation' from what she regarded as bourgeois literature came in fact a few months before her eighteenth birthday. She had left the Cours Désir and its prejudices behind her in the summer of 1925, having passed the second part of her baccalauréat examination. In the autumn she enrolled at two Catholic establishments, studying Mathematics at the Institut Catholique and preparing for a licence ès lettres at the Institut Sainte-Marie at Neuilly, while she also attended lectures at the Sorbonne.¹ For the first time she was able to read French literature in pleasurable and exciting freedom. She records herself, for example, reading Balzac and the abbé Prévost at the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève as the first actions of her new life:

...je me plongeais dans La Comédie humaine ou dans Les Mémoires d'un homme de qualité.²

The delight in French literature was increased when she began to attend classes at Neuilly. These were given by Robert Garric, a Catholic intellectual well-known for his work in suburbs like Belleville with the Equipes Sociales, a lay association whose aim was to break down barriers between the social classes by taking culture to the workers. Simone de Beauvoir's cousin Jacques, with whom she believed herself to be in love but who for his part did not seem to notice her, knew Garric. She therefore decided to force herself on the latter's attention by the

1. During the academic year 1925-26 Simone de Beauvoir worked for three certificats de Licence: Mathematics, Latin and French Literature. She also began the study of Greek. For fuller details of her academic studies, see Chapter 3.
2. M.J.F.R., p.171. The fact that she read these well-known texts for the first time in a public library tends to confirm what we have already suggested: the narrow range of her father's library. Both authors she mentions had a reputation amongst the conventional bourgeoisie for licentiousness.

brilliance of her work, in this way she would have a chance of impressing Jacques. The concern and determination she brought to her literary studies were therefore partly motivated at first by self-interest but Garric's gifts as a teacher soon encouraged her to work hard simply to gain his approval for her own sake. His class became the high spot of her week and her admiration for him was such that even her close and loyal friend Zaza thought it excessive.¹

Simone de Beauvoir read much Sixteenth and Eighteenth century literature that year, as Marguerite de Navarre and Diderot were on the syllabus and she also studied Ronsard and D'Alembert as background. After an uncertain start, for her preparation at the Cours Désir had not been thorough, she worked her way to the top of the class, receiving from Garric 'des éloges enivrants'.² She so impressed him that she was allowed to sit the literature examination early, in the March diet, and passed brilliantly:

En mars, je fus reçue avec éclat au certificat de littérature.³

Her initial scheme worked perfectly: Garric praised her to Jacques and Jacques at last paid her close attention, taking over from her father and from Garric the responsibility of continuing her literary education.

There was at this time, in 1926, a gap in her life: she was without a guide. The quarrel with her father, when she had cut herself off from the literary tradition represented by Anatole France, had taken place three months earlier. She had chosen Garric to replace him as 'ses explications de Ronsard m'éblouirent',⁴ but he was preparing her for an examination and she seems to have regarded the literature which he taught as little more than a means to an end. When, having

1. Cf. M.J.F.R., p.173, 179, 183.

2. M.J.F.R., p.183.

3. M.J.F.R., p.184.

4. M.J.F.R., p.173.

passed her certificat, she returned to his classes, Garric's magic no longer operated. She heard him lecture on the set texts with growing despondency as she discovered that she was a mere observer and not a participant:

Je l'écoutais encore parler de Balzac, de Victor Hugo: en vérité, je dus m'avouer que je m'évertuais à prolonger un passé mort; j'étais une auditrice mais non plus son élève: j'avais cessé d'appartenir à sa vie.¹

This confession confirms that it had been the teacher who excited her admiration rather than the subject he taught. Neither Garric's brilliance nor the academic thoroughness of the Sorbonne² had succeeded in kindling in her a genuine and longlasting feeling for the power of French literature. She had conscientiously studied the texts on the syllabus, she had even begun to read for herself but French literature had not stimulated her imagination:

...je tenais les oeuvres littéraires pour des monuments que j'explorais avec plus ou moins d'intérêt, que parfois j'admirais, mais qui ne me concernaient pas.³

Simone de Beauvoir represents herself in her memoirs as being in a paradoxical situation, she wished for liberty and resented her dependence on the one hand; yet on the other she seems curiously passive, reading and studying docilement.⁴ It would seem that she read what she was told to read, that she waited for literature to be revealed to her, that she did little literary exploration of her own. It is surprising that someone as alert, as intelligent and as eager to read as Simone de Beauvoir should not have known anything of contemporary

1. M.J.F.R., p.196.

2. Indeed, the lectures at the Sorbonne may well have had the effect of stifling appreciation in French literature:

A la Sorbonne, les cours de littérature m'ennuyèrent; les professeurs se contentaient de répéter d'une voix molle ce qu'ils avaient jadis écrit dans leurs thèses de doctorat.

M.J.F.R., p.174

3. M.J.F.R., pp.185-186.

4. M.J.F.R., p.128.

literature. She says that it was in Garric's classes that she heard the names of Gide and Péguy mentioned for the first time, but she obviously did not take up these references for she had read nothing of the 'new' writing until the late Spring of 1926 when her cousin Jacques first lent her books by Alain-Fournier, Montherlant, Cocteau, Barrès, Claudel, Valéry and Gide.

There is a recurrent pattern in the early part of Simone de Beauvoir's autobiography with respect to reading. This takes the form of the sudden, joyful discovery of a world of plenty after an experience of deprivation or scarcity. When she recounts how her mother gave her a subscription to a lending-library she qualifies the event as '*une des plus grandes joies de mon enfance*';¹ the joy originates in the swift accession to '*le paradis, jusqu'alors inconnu, de l'abondance*'². It forms a sharp contrast with the account a few pages previously of the careful domestic arrangements of the de Beauvoir household:

A la maison, on ne laissait rien perdre: ni un croûton de pain, ni un bout de ficelle, ni un billet de faveur, ni aucune occasion de consommer gratis.³

The world of the bourgeoisie with its respect for moderation and decorum becomes, in the library's plenty, superseded by a world of excess where it is legitimate suddenly to break all the rules governing everyday life and consume with greed.⁴

When she gained secret access to her father's library, the experience is described in similar terms. She uses the device of an extensive list to indicate abundance and the joy she derived from her reading, as we have already seen, is less from the quality of the books than from their quantity. Another aspect of

1. M.J.F.R., p.71.

2. M.J.F.R., p.71.

3. M.J.F.R., p.67.

4. On each occasion in Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée where Simone de Beauvoir recounts her sudden departure from the norms of everyday life when she breaks into the world of abondance, she uses words which suggest this: '*de multiples convoitises*' (p.71), '*je regardais avec convoitise*' (p.110), '*j'étais si goulue*' (p.186).

Simone de Beauvoir is emphasised in this recurring pattern and that is her wish to possess completely: once she has read all the books they will belong to her, and she will be the governing consciousness of the library, she will have asserted herself as unique, dominating subjectivity. As a child, gazing at the rows of books she had thought: 'tout cela est à moi'.¹ Now again, at the age of eighteen she wished to assimilate everything. With reference to Simone de Beauvoir's desire to 'possess' the new books she was reading, she describes them as sweets or fruit to be devoured, swallowed up in the fullest sense of the word:

Je trouvai sur sa table une dizaine de volumes aux fraîches couleurs de bonbons acidulés: des Montherlant vert pistache, un Cocteau rouge framboise, des Barrès jaune citron, des Valéry d'une blancheur neigeuse rehaussée d'écarlate.²

So eager was she that, having exhausted Jacques' library, she took out a subscription to Adrienne Monnier's Maison des amis des livres³ and, as well as borrowing in a regular fashion, she smuggled many more books out in her briefcase. The plenitude of the new world of literature is signalled by the even more extensive list of names; in the ten pages where she recounts this episode she quotes the names of at least sixteen writers⁴ and numerous titles of individual books.

1. M.J.F.R., p.71.

2. M.J.F.R., p.185.

3. Adrienne Monnier kept a bookshop and lending library La Maison des amis des livres at number 7, rue de l'Odéon, opened in 1915, which specialised in modern French literature, poetry in particular. She and Sylvia Beach had met in 1917 when Adrienne was 25 and Sylvia 30. With Adrienne's encouragement, Sylvia opened a shop nearby in 1919, Shakespeare and Company, where she concentrated on contemporary American and English works. Simone de Beauvoir was also a faithful member of this lending library. Students and genuine book lovers were encouraged by both women - Sylvia Beach, for example, offered a 20% reduction on the fees of her lending library to students, teachers and members of Adrienne Monnier's library cf. Sylvia Beach and the Lost Generation, N.R. Fitch, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1985, pp.35-44.

4. Cf. M.J.F.R., pp.185-95. The writers are Montherlant, Alain-Fournier, Cocteau, Barrès, Claudel, Valéry, Gide, Jammes, Mauriac, Radiguet, Larbaud, Proust, Marcel Arland, Jean Prévost, Ramon Fernandez and Stanislas Fumet.

Again, she evokes the lack of sustenance of what she had previously been reading, in this case the 'official' literature of her examination syllabuses, and then stresses the physically, as well as mentally, intoxicating effect of this new literature:

Je lisais Gide, Claudel, Jammes, la tête en feu, les tempes
battantes, étouffant d'émotion.¹

There is yet another occasion in her autobiography when the pattern is repeated. In La Force de l'âge she describes how, with Sartre, she penetrated the world of literature in an even wider sense when she read books from many countries,² England, America, Germany, Russia and from different levels, not 'serious' literature only but travel books and detective stories also. Again, the reader is given a bewildering list of titles and names to illustrate the claim: 'Nous lisions énormément'³, again the element of extravagance fits in with her rejection of bourgeois moderation.

In each of these accounts the list of titles and authors has a dual function: the names indicate abundance and they show how she consumed an entire library or an entire literary movement, thus making it her very own possession. Having assimilated what was on offer, she was then able to choose the guide who would lead her to the next conquest.

1. M.J.F.R., p.186.

2. This episode occurred during the winter 1929-30 when foreign books were much more available in translation than previously. As Zeldin writes:

It is indeed only recently that foreign books have been translated into French in any numbers. In 1913, only 127 translations of foreign books were published (half of them from English). Between the wars, under the influence of such men as Gabriel Marcel, foreign books for the first time appeared in significant quantities: 430 translations in 1929, 834 in 1935 and over 1000 in 1938, that is reaching 13 per cent of all books (a proportion which has been equalled, but not exceeded since).

Theodore Zeldin, op.cit., Vol. II, p.360.

3. F.A., p.51.

The first delight that Simone de Beauvoir derived from the new literature revealed to her in the Spring of 1926 was from the shock of recognition. To emphasise the importance of this element she uses this word or similar phrases several times when she discusses the experience of discovery in her autobiography:

...ils [the books] exprimaient des aspirations, des révoltes que je n'avais pas su me formuler, mais que je reconnaissais.¹

or again:

Il est normal que je me sois reconnue en eux car nous étions du même bord.²

and once more:

J'étais exactement dans la même situation.³

She gained much consolation and support from her reading for it revealed to her that she was not alone in her mode of thought and it therefore encouraged her to persist in her movement away from her parents' values.

So strong was the consolation that she derived from these books that literature took the place left vacant in her life by her loss of faith. There is a paragraph in Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée where, possibly satirising her younger self, she describes the ardour of her devotion in religious terms. The paragraph finishes dryly:

Je me nourris de littérature: mais c'était alors la seule réalité à laquelle il me fût possible d'accéder.⁴

When she analyses why Gide, Barrès and the others whom she adored should have affected her so strongly she suggests, furthermore, reasons connected with her class situation: these writers were in the same relationship to their class as she

1. M.J.F.R., p.186.

2. M.J.F.R., p.193.

3. M.J.F.R., p.194.

4. M.J.F.R., p.186.

was:

'bourgeois, mal à l'aise dans leur peau'.¹

The qualities which she tells us that she found in these writers, inquiétude,² sincérité, immoralisme³ were largely those which would support her in her resistance to the pressures of the family. She was very willing to question what had been instilled in her, sincerity had almost become an ethical necessity forced on her by the reaction against bourgeois hypocrisy. As for a rejection of traditional morality, she was still leading a remarkably sheltered existence and, unaware of real issues, was willing to accept abstract ideas without content or reference to them. When in 1929 she entered a wider world and began to liberate herself from the influence of the 'new' literature which had at first overwhelmed her, it is significant that she saw its writers primarily as 'bourgeois', as 'fils de famille désaxés',⁴ for much of her life in the 1930s was a conscious reaction against the bourgeois principles of her family milieu. By labelling her previous heroes thus, she is explaining why she was to reject them as models. She says of these writers that they were disturbed by the recent war and had been led to question the values of their class without, however, going so far as to reject them. Thus, at the same time as Simone de Beauvoir is describing in her memoirs her dependence on writers like Gide, Barrès, Valéry or Claudel⁵, she is already

1. M.J.F.R., p.193.

2. Disquiet was a fashionable pose in 1926. Zeldin writes: 'Between the wars a cult of adolescence developed in protest against adult values'. This was a new phenomenon, particularly encouraged by writers like Gide who 'praised restlessness, anxiety, and desire and hated everything the family stood for' (op. cit., Vol. I, p.334). This is, of course, an oversimplification but it indicates, nevertheless, what nourishment Simone de Beauvoir was looking for when she devoured books by these writers.

3. M.J.F.R., p.194.

4. M.J.F.R., p.194.

5. M.J.F.R., p.193.

preparing the reader for her later abandonment of them.¹ She discerns, with the benefit of hindsight, a lack of revolutionary fervour in their cultivation of the individual, in their refusal of commitment implied by the praise of inquiétude, and pours scorn on them:

La guerre avait ruiné leur sécurité sans les arracher à leur classe; ils se révoltaient mais uniquement contre leurs parents, contre la famille et la tradition...ils n'avaient pas du tout l'intention de bousculer la société.²

It was their content, their subject matter, which at first appealed to her. This literature, to which she had been introduced by a young man only six months older than she was, told her that she was right to reject the values of her parents' generation. Nevertheless, her ardent admiration was ultimately sterile for, in spite of her initial joy of recognition at seeing descriptions of her own situation, she could find in these books no-one and in particular no heroine with whom to identify positively. When she had read Little Women or The Mill on the Floss an identification with the heroines had enabled her to transcend the immediate difficulties of her existence and propose to herself a vision of the future where she would be active and creative. She derived only temporary and unsatisfactory encouragement from her reading of books by Alain-Fournier, Gide or Claudel:

J'aimais le Grand Meaulnes, Alissa, Violaine, la Monique de Marcel Arland: je marcherais sur leurs traces.³

One can see immediately that, once an ardent and enthusiastic young woman had recovered from an infatuation caused by the enchanting style of such writers, the renunciation and self-sacrifice offered by the characters they created should have

1. Already in La Force de l'âge describing herself in 1930, that is only four years after the devotion to Claudel recorded in Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée, Simone de Beauvoir is able to mention without any explanation that she and Sartre shared 'une aversion pour Claudel' (F.A., p.52). The sharpness of her reaction against him is perhaps an indication of the extent of her earlier admiration.

2. M.J.F.R., p.193.

3. M.J.F.R., pp.195-96.

little attraction. It is typical of Simone de Beauvoir, as she presents herself in her *Memoirs*, that her first reaction was to model her own life on the literary heroes or heroines she admired. Her appetite for life and enthusiasm for its physical pleasures conflicted at a deep level with ideals of renunciation and abstinence.

When she was living independently of her parents and their milieu after her success in the agrégation examination of 1929 she found herself independent also of the literature which had previously encouraged her rebellion. 'Modern' literature did not serve, in the long-term, as a model or as an inspiration. Yet there was one writer of this group who did exercise some influence over Simone de Beauvoir: Alain-Fournier. Le Grand Meaulnes had, in fact, cast a spell over almost an entire generation of adolescents in the period between the wars.¹ The style of this novel affected her way of thinking and her literary expression in particular for several years, even after she had met Sartre, left home and made herself financially independent. The wistfully romantic mood of the novel, the sublimation of sexuality it suggests, the beauty of Alain-Fournier's description of the countryside and nature united to appeal strongly to her imagination and coincided with the last stirrings of her religious upbringing where appetites of the flesh were regarded with puritanical suspicion. It is also possible that at the moment of rejection of her family she might have turned to a book extolling the simple happiness and innocent certainties of childhood, a period of her own life when she was happily in harmony with her family. The attraction of the mysterious and unattainable melted away, however, when Simone de Beauvoir tried to write in the style of Alain-Fournier.² Reality, which in the early 1930s succeeded in fulfilling her wishes, physical as well as intellectual, dispelled the insubstantial glamour of

1. Zeldin (op. cit., Vol. II, p.358 and p.386) notes that Alain-Fournier's early sales were 'substantial'; Le Grand Meaulnes sold as many as 59,523 copies between its publication in 1913 and 1931. This was at a time when large printings were not a regular practice; in fact this novel is one of the best sellers of the century in France.

2. cf. chapter on Rosamond Lehmann.

Alain-Fournier's adolescent world and by the end of 1931 she was disenchanted with him and his style and ready to learn from other masters, such as Stendhal. Later, Simone de Beauvoir was scathing about her former hero, attacking Alain-Fournier satirically in Le Deuxième Sexe when she discusses le mystère féminin¹ and assimilating him in La Pensée de droite aujourd'hui to the right-wing writers who form the subject of her polemic:

La seule réalité dont l'écrivain bourgeois décide de tenir compte, c'est la vie intérieure, sorti de là, il ne cherche qu'à s'évader: dans le passé, ou à travers l'espace, ou dans l'irréel.²

The writer whom she and her friend Zaza had so admired has now been excluded.

It is noticeable in her account of her early delight in this new literature, a delight which was so intense that she copied long extracts into her notebooks and learned certain passages by heart, that Simone de Beauvoir showed little interest in the way these authors write. Their subject matter was what counted for her, their style is scarcely praised:

Les livres que j'aimais devinrent une Bible où je puisais des conseils et des secours...³

This perhaps explains why her reading of poetry pleased but did not inspire her. In many ways Simone de Beauvoir's literary ambitions run counter to the mood of much of the poetry she then read.⁴ She is, both in her novels and in her

1. Cf. D.S. I, p.304.

2. P., p.187-188.

3. M.J.F.R., p.186.

4. In Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée she is recorded as having read, at the age of 18 or a little more, Valéry, Claudel, Jammes, Baudelaire, Max Jacob and Laforgue. In Tout compte fait she writes that the poets 'chers à mes vingt ans' were Laforgue and Saint-Léger Léger and that she still reads Baudelaire, Rimbaud and Mallarmé from time to time, although on the whole her response in 1972 was still to the content not the style:

Elle [poetry] m'a été d'un grand secours dans ma jeunesse: j'aimais me réciter des vers.

T.C.F., p.191.

autobiography, eager to describe the totality of an experience, to recreate all aspects of her past life and so her style tends to state rather than to suggest. This explains how she gained consolation from the reading of poetry but the condensed, allusive language, rich in imagery, of her favourite poets did not affect, in the long run, her own literary style.

In an article published in the New York Times in 1947 at the end of her lecture tour in the States, Simone de Beauvoir explains further why the style of these writers, poets as well as novelists, whom she had admired so much in her youth should not have influenced her own. The reason is derived from Existentialist philosophy. She and Sartre wished to integrate everyday life, people's humbler projects as well as their nobler ones, into literature, to take the here and now and present it to the reader. When she was trying in the 1930s to work out her own style and subject matter she found that Gide, Valéry or Giraudoux were working in a dead language, using worn-out conventions. When this happens, she said in her article, the language of literature becomes cut off from everyday reality. These writers produced works which were merely abstract enquiries without relevance to 'la vérité immédiate des aventures humaines'.¹

Admiration for the French literature popular before the 1930s, then, is presented by Simone de Beauvoir as being a stage in her intellectual development, rather than as an inspiration. Possibly this reading strengthened an ambition which she had already formulated to herself:

Et, de plus en plus, je voulais écrire. C'est devenue une nécessité.

- Pour être romancière?

- Oui, je voulais écrire des romans. Je voulais parler aux gens personnellement, comme certains écrivains m'avaient parlé à moi.²

but it did not ultimately help her to forward it. Support for her ambition would come from elsewhere.

1. E., p.355

2. E., p.385.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DISCOVERY OF STENDHAL AND READINGS IN CURRENT FRENCH FICTION

The moment has come to establish the exact details of what Simone de Beauvoir had achieved in her intellectual and literary development by the time she left the family home in 1929 when she was twenty-one. She had gained extremely high academic honours¹ and such success had to be earned over years of intense and disciplined hard work which may be set out as follows. Simone de Beauvoir passed the first part of her baccalauréat in 1924, with the mention bien and the second part, where she concentrated on Mathematics and Philosophy, in 1925. Although she wished to continue with her study of Philosophy she was discouraged from doing so as her school teachers found this subject too dangerous; she therefore began in September to prepare the certificats which would enable her to take a licence in Mathematics or in Arts. Both these subjects she studied at Catholic establishments, the Institut Catholique and the Institut Sainte-Marie at Neuilly; these, it was felt, did not expose respectable girls to the dangerous ideas current in the wider state system. In March 1926 she passed her certificat de littérature, in June 1926 her certificats in Mathematics and in Latin. By now her interest in Philosophy was too strong to be repressed and in March 1927 she gained a certificat in the History of Philosophy; in June of the same year she passed in Philosophie générale et logique and in Greek. In March 1928 she took her seventh and eighth certificats in Ethics and in Psychology and so achieved her licence in Philosophy. With just a little more effort she could have prepared for the Philology certificat and would then have been able to claim a licence ès lettres also. By this

1. It would appear that Simone de Beauvoir came near to being classed first rather than second in the agrégation examination for two of the professeurs on the Jury later revealed that they hesitated for a long while between her and Sartre when considering who should gain first place. Reported in Sartre, A. Cohen-Solal, Paris, Gallimard, 1985, p.116.

stage, however, she was more sure of her ideas, needs and interests, she had experience of the Sorbonne and thus was able to propose an ambitious project of her own. She would take a short cut and start immediately on a diplôme d'études supérieures while preparing at the same time for the agrégation examination of the following year. This course of study was agreed with Brunschwig and she embarked on a mémoire entitled Le concept chez Leibniz. For the next fifteen months she worked extremely hard; her memoirs repeatedly tell us:

Je continuai de travailler à bride abattue.¹

or

Je continuais de travailler d'arrache-pied.²

or again,

Je ne me relâchai pas, le concours approchait et j'avais un tas de lacunes à combler...³

Her diligence was rewarded by liberation from her family. Nevertheless, this intense concentration on academic success had as its corollary that aspects of general culture were to a certain extent neglected. Simone de Beauvoir simply did not enjoy the leisure which a student like Sartre had available to him; neither was it possible for her to be open to the latest developments in the arts, given the sheltered nature of her education.

While Sartre had lived in La Rochelle, residing with his mother and step-father, he had acquired much the same sort of middle-class culture. Both young people read books by Claude Farrère for example,⁴ but in 1920 Sartre returned to Paris as a boarder at the lycée Henri-IV where he found his fellow students in première engrossed in Proust, Giraudoux, Morand and Gide. He passed the first

1. M.J.F.R., p.287.

2. M.J.F.R., p.294.

3. M.J.F.R., p.309.

4. Cf. C.A., pp.246-47.

part of his baccalauréat in 1921 and the second in 1922 and then, instead of being committed to the pursuit of certificats de licence as was Simone de Beauvoir, he spent two years at the lycée Louis-le-Grand preparing for his entrance examination and then five years, 1924-1929, at the Ecole normale supérieure. He was able to present his diplôme d'études supérieures on L'Imagination in 1926 and thus could concentrate exclusively after that date on preparation for the agrégation. He sat this examination and failed in 1928 but was successful in 1929.

While Simone de Beauvoir took four years to move from her second baccalauréat to her agrégation, Sartre made the same journey in seven years. During this period he was acquiring a solid culture, particularly in literature and the cinema, and was, by virtue of his privileged position as a normalien, aware of the most recent developments in these fields. Surrealism, for instance, which he had discovered while still at school, was the dominant tendency at the Ecole Normale, and it seems, influenced Sartre a good deal both in the long and short term. He even tried to write surrealist poetry.¹

Confined to the examination syllabus and condemned to spend most of her time in study, Simone de Beauvoir was at a cultural disadvantage when she entered the group formed by Sartre and his friends:

Car Sartre n'était pas le seul qui m'obligeât à la modestie: Nizan, Aron, Politzer avaient sur moi une avance considérable. J'avais préparé le concours à la va-vite: leur culture était plus solide que la mienne, ils étaient au courant d'un tas de nouveautés que j'ignorais...²

1. Cf. J'avais dix-huit ans quand je suis entré à L'Ecole normale. Et les surréalistes en avaient vingt-cinq. Il n'y avait pas une très grosse différence d'âge. On lisait L'Immaculée Conception, Eluard, Breton; ça a été très important pour moi, je me rappelle, puisque j'ai fait des exercices de style surréalistes. D'ailleurs j'ai essayé d'imiter les poèmes de L'Immaculée Conception. Et même j'avais commencé à penser sur les fous, à ce moment-là. Comme étant des surréalistes, si vous voulez.

C.A., p.180

2. M.J.F.R., p.343.

Given this situation, it was inevitable that she should once more feel the need for guidance. She seems to have relied for a short while on a young man she calls Herbaud in her memoirs;¹ he encouraged her to read more widely, he talked to her of their fellow 'individualists': Sylla (sic), Barrès, Stendhal and Alcibiades,² he presented her with copies of the popular magazines Détective and l'Auto and he discussed with her books which had marked her youth such as The Mill on the Floss and those which were at present exciting her admiration such as Tessa Kennedy's The Constant Nymph or Le Grand Meaulnes. Yet again, Simone de Beauvoir mentions the element of recognition when describing her friendship with Herbaud:

...en rencontrant Herbaud j'eus l'impression de me trouver moi-même: il m'indiquait mon avenir.³

Herbaud was a married man, however, and, unsuccessful in the written part of the agrégation in 1929, he left Paris in July. It was at this point that Sartre finally assumed the rôle of literary guide.

Simone de Beauvoir began to read extensively now and, with Sartre as mentor, turned to a wide range both of popular and serious modern literature. She was also reading independently and gaining intense pleasure from doing so; initially, this reading consisted of books by first British and then American authors which were becoming increasingly available in France both in translation and in the original English. This writing from abroad excited her imagination, it was new and from a different culture and thus untainted by association with academic study or commendation from her family. Secondly, many of the English authors in particular were women, the central characters they created were female and the problems or situations they explored were specifically feminine and so she could

1. This is the name she uses in Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée for René Maheu who was at the time a fellow student of Sartre's at the Ecole normale supérieure and who was later to become Director of U.N.E.S.C.O.

2. M.J.F.R., p.311.

3. M.J.F.R., p.314.

recognise herself more fully in their novels. Thirdly, the many experiments with narrative method stimulated her intellectual interest and helped shed light on the queries which she and Sartre were beginning to formulate in their discussions about the technique and philosophy of fiction. Certain aspects of the books she read at first, such as those by Tessa Kennedy or Rosamond Lehmann, helped prolong her interest in the imaginative and adolescent world of Le Grand Meaulnes, other aspects widened her horizons dramatically and contributed in no small way to the development of her own individual style as a writer. This is so much the case that later chapters of this study will analyse in detail what Simone de Beauvoir was to derive from her reading first of English then of American literature.

At this stage in her evolution she had rejected the established French authors admired by her father and the jeunes aînés to whom Jacques had introduced her. She was reading as much as ever, but taking surprisingly little interest in the novelists of her own country. Balzac, Flaubert and Zola, for instance, are scarcely mentioned in her memoirs. There is, however, one major exception to her attitude of disdain: the work of Stendhal is always discussed with the warmest regard.

The attitude of the literary public to the works of Stendhal was not completely straightforward in the 1920s or the early 1930s; there were varying strands in public taste. There was a lingering academic interest in Stendhal, centred on the Ecole Normale Supérieure, where Lucien Herr, a follower of Taine, and then Gustave Lanson admired Stendhal's achievement. Lanson, a dictator of literary taste, valued Stendhal as a writer and deemed him a force to be reckoned with but entertained severe reservations about Stendhal the man:

L'homme est assez vulgaire, un peu déplaisant, tour à tour grossier ou prétentieux: on lui a fait tort en étalant indiscrètement ses paperasses, ses notes les plus plates ou les plus sottes. Il a dit ce qu'il avait à dire dans deux ou trois romans, et dans quelques nouvelles: comme nos classiques, il faut le chercher là, et non ailleurs. En dehors

des grandes lignes de sa vie, ses aventures personnelles ne sont guère intéressantes.¹

A right-wing nationalist and aesthetic view of Stendhal was developed by Barrès in particular, in books such as the series Le Culte du moi (1888-91) or the trilogy Le Roman de l'énergie nationale (1897-1902) the effect of which was long-lasting and not limited merely to the right-wing reader. We remember, for instance, how Herbaud included both Barrès and Stendhal in his constellation of individualist heroes. In these books Barrès annexed Stendhal to his own cult of the strong individual, the man of energy, l'être exceptionnel. Even the Ecole normale educated Léon Blum contributed to this aesthetic view of Stendhal with Stendhal et le Beylisme (1914 and 1930).

The growing fascination with Stendhal the man and the acceptance in academic and literary circles of the quality of the novels led from 1913 onwards to the first serious scholarly edition by Champion. The text was produced by literary historians, demonstration of the extent to which Stendhal was now integrated into the academic tradition, while at the same time contemporary literary figures, Barrès, Gide and Valéry spring to mind, were invited to produce Préfaces. Thus, a Catholic and Nationalist writer, an atheist of Protestant origin and a poet, whose main concerns were aesthetic, were able to come together to promote Stendhal as a thoroughly modern author. When, for instance, in 1929 Simone de Beauvoir read Lucien Leuwen² the edition available contained Valéry's avant-propos.

While it would seem then that by 1929 Stendhal had gained the respect both

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1. Histoire de la littérature française Gustave Lanson, Paris, Hachette, 1920, p.1006.
 2. Cf. M.J.F.R., p.314.

of the cultivated reading public and of the University,¹ there was at the same time amongst the older-fashioned Catholic, middle classes an anti-Stendhal feeling, derived from traditionalist literary critics. We have already noted Lanson's reservations, but these were reinforced by writers such as Emile Faguet and Jules Lemaître who were conservative and nationalist in outlook. Brunetière also had finally dissociated himself from the promotion of Stendhal; the man was felt to be immoral and divisive, his books were likewise mistrusted. He was esteemed, in short, to be a morally pernicious writer. Simone de Beauvoir, who read Faguet, Brunetière and Jules Lemaître while preparing for her baccalauréat,² would undoubtedly have been aware of prejudice against Stendhal.

If her attention had been drawn to Stendhal by Herbaud initially, then encouragement to read him was reinforced by her rapidly developing friendship

1. It is worth noting that the Champion edition was the first which tried to establish reliable texts of this unfinished novel and of the Journal. A mitigated form of censorship still prevailed for the Journal: it was expurgated but in the interests of scholarship the offending passages were printed separately and folded into a pocket at the back of the book so that it became a matter for the individual conscience whether they were read or not. The Champion edition did not contain Lamiel or the Chroniques Italiennes. These had to wait for Henri Martineau, a doctor turned bookseller established in the rue Bonaparte, who began in the late 1920s an edition of Stendhal, without notes but claiming textual reliability. L'édition du Divan contained seventy-nine volumes; it included Lamiel (1928) and the personal writings: Journal, La vie de Henry Brulard, Souvenirs d'égotisme and many volumes of Correspondance. Simone de Beauvoir was most interested in these latter.

2. M.J.F.R., p.155. Lanson writes of Brunetière:

Depuis 1894, il nous a montré que toute une conception sociale était inscrite dans son esthétique. Il s'est fait dans l'ordre social, comme en littérature, l'avocat de la tradition, de l'autorité, et par suite de l'Eglise, qui incarne pour lui la tradition et l'autorité.

A writer such as Stendhal, who, as Lanson observed 'aimait à bousculer la morale bourgeoise' (op.cit., p.1010) would have been very little appreciated by the later Brunetière.

with Sartre who, we are told, loved this author as much as he did Spinoza.¹ The latter's work reveals a summit of philosophical achievement, the former was equally great, representing almost the ideal literary creator. Sartre's delight in Stendhal was a permanent factor in his life, as the editors of his Oeuvres Romanesques observe:

Stendhal a toujours été l'un des auteurs préférés de Sartre et il représente pour lui une sorte d'idéal en littérature. Vers la fin de La Nausée, Roquentin déclare qu'il aurait voulu vivre avec Fabrice del Dongo et Julien Sorel,²

and this is further borne out by the numerous occasions, both in Sartre's private notebooks and in writing intended for publication, when he praises Stendhal. In the carnets kept during the period of the drôle de guerre, for instance, when he was re-reading the beginning of La Chartreuse de Parme, he notes that the character of Fabrice is 'une source perpétuelle de bonheur'.³

Stendhal, then, was persuasively recommended to Simone de Beauvoir and that was sufficient to encourage her to read him for herself. When she did so, she discovered much that was to engage her own attention and even her loving admiration. She did not merely accept the views of others; Sartre's, for example, were for the most part concerned with aesthetics and the rôle of necessity in the creative process. She formulated independently, over a period of time, the reasons for her own regard for this author.

Simone de Beauvoir admired Stendhal so much first because she, in common

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1. 'Il aimait autant Stendhal que Spinoza et se refusait à séparer la philosophie de la littérature'. M.J.F.R., p.342.
 2. Oeuvres Romanesques J.-P. Sartre ed. M. Contat and M. Rybalka with G. Idt and G.H. Bauer, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris, Gallimard, 1981, p.1770.
 3. Les Carnets de la drôle de guerre J.-P. Sartre, Paris, Gallimard, 1983, p.410.

with many readers, saw in this author the enemy of the bourgeoisie¹. A sincere and lasting hate of this social class has been one of the constants of her moral and political stance throughout her entire life and a writer who represented clearly the hollowness of middle-class values and who exposed hypocrisy inherent in such a system would immediately gain her interest. We remember that the literature of Gide's generation, about which she had first been so enthusiastic, was eventually rejected since she felt that such works in the final analysis accepted middle-class values. Stendhal never did so: the esprit de sérieux, a phrase with which she and Sartre summarised the shortcomings of the bourgeoisie, was alien to him:

On sait combien Stendhal hait l'esprit de sérieux: argent, honneurs, rang, pouvoir, lui paraissent les plus tristes des idoles; l'immense majorité des hommes s'aliènent à leur profit; le pédant, l'important, le bourgeois, le mari étouffent en eux toute étincelle de vie et de vérité...²

There is evidence also, both from Simone de Beauvoir's memoirs and from Sartre's conversations with her which are transcribed with La Cérémonie des adieux, that in their youth they interpreted a love for Stendhal as a defiance of accepted middle-class conventions. She reports that her friend Zaza was reading Stendhal with enthusiasm:

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1. Having read Lucien Leuwen with Valéry's Preface, Simone de Beauvoir might well have sympathised with his discussion of the effect which encounters with eccentric English people would have had on Stendhal. England, according to Valéry, is a country tolerant of excess: 'elle ne hait pas d'être choquée' whereas the provincial France, which Stendhal detested, imposed an odious uniformity on its inhabitants. Valéry's evocation of Stendhal's view of the French provinces does not seem far from Simone de Beauvoir's own view of the Bourgeoisie:

Songez...à la petitesse, à l'économie, à l'absence de tout caprice, aux habitudes sottes ou sordides, à toutes les vertus antipassionnelles - (terreur de l'opinion, terreur de la dépense, terreur d'aimer ce que l'on aime)...

This description reminds us of certain moments in Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée where the careful moderation of the de Beauvoir household was reviled. Oeuvres Paul Valéry, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris, Gallimard, 1962, p.566.

2. D.S.I., p.367.

Elle venait de redécouvrir Stendhal avec admiration. Sa famille le haïssait si catégoriquement qu'elle n'avait pas réussi jusqu'alors à surmonter tout à fait cette prévention; mais en le relisant ces jours derniers, elle l'avait enfin compris, et aimé sans réticence.¹

Simone's and Zaza's love for Stendhal is mentioned here in terms which associate it with the flouting of bourgeois family values. In a similar way, Sartre has said that his own reading of this author was an act of revolt directed against adults; speaking of the warnings against Stendhal current in his milieu:

...ça ne devait pas se lire entre dix-sept et dix-huit ans, parce que ça défraîchissait les enfants, ça leur donnait des idées sombres, ça les dégoûtait de la vie...²

he continues:

Alors, un auteur comme Stendhal, je l'ai lu avec les gens de mon âge et contre ceux qui étaient plus âgés, même les professeurs.³

Thus, the pleasure derived from reading Stendhal was intensified by the feeling that one was rejecting the esprit de sérieux of the adult world, refusing, on the literary level, to become integrated into the middle-class value system.

In itself, an attack on the bourgeois world would not have been sufficient to explain how Stendhal's writings retained Simone de Beauvoir's respect. She admired greatly the positive moral code which she felt he derived from assaulting the negativity of the bourgeoisie. Stendhal, the enemy of hypocrisy was also the champion of sincerity. This quality, termed authenticity⁴ by Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, became during the 1930s one of their touchstones of merit and Stendhal

1. M.J.F.R., p.357.

2. C.A., p.251.

3. C.A., p.251.

4. Authenticity was a quality which had as its basis a non-intellectual spontaneity of response to experience; c.f. the chapter in this study on the Adolescent, which explores the survival of a value system derived from this private myth until 1939 and beyond and shows how it defines characters, Xavière for example, invented in novels by Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre.

was seen as being one of the few precursors to have elaborated its constituent elements. Simone de Beauvoir discerned authenticity in Stendhal's depiction of women, in particular. Cut off, because of their inferior and dependent status, from the 'real world' of false values inhabited by their menfolk, Stendhal's women are in fact able to be true to themselves:

...elles ont plus de chance de préserver ce naturel, cette naïveté, cette générosité que Stendhal met plus haut que tout autre mérite; ce qu'il goûte en elles, c'est ce que nous appellerions aujourd'hui leur authenticité¹

In Stendhal's novels, three of Simone de Beauvoir's needs: to read a writer who attacked the bourgeoisie, the wish for authenticity and the desire for literary heroines with whom to identify, were answered at the same time.

In Le Deuxième sexe Simone de Beauvoir discusses the "myths" by means of which women are kept in a dependent and inferior state; she turns to the work of certain male authors: Montherlant, D.H. Lawrence, Claudel, Breton and Stendhal in order to analyse their treatment of femininity and to determine if they exploit these "myths". Stendhal is the only one of the five of whom she almost unreservedly approves. She sees in his depiction of women a refusal to consider them as objects; for him they are independent subjectivities:

Jamais Stendhal ne se borne à décrire ses héroïnes en fonction de ses héros: il leur donne une destinée propre. Il a tenté une entreprise plus rare et qu'aucun romancier, je crois, ne s'est jamais proposée: il s'est projeté lui-même dans un personnage de femme.²

This key character is Lamiel, the little girl who undermines her virtuous foster parents' rules with the phrase 'c'est bête', who becomes the liberated woman discussing with a young priest her sexual exploits in astonishingly modern terms:

...Je n'ai pas cru faire mal en me donnant à des jeunes gens pour lesquels je n'avais aucun goût. Je désire savoir si l'amour est possible pour moi. Ne suis-je pas maîtresse

1. D.S., I, p.368.

2. D.S., I, p.376.

de moi? à qui est-ce que je fais tort? A quelle promesse est-ce que je manque?¹

It was in the academic year 1931-1932 that Simone de Beauvoir read Stendhal most closely. Living in Marseilles, apart from Sartre and her other friends, she spent much time with books; she devoured a great deal of his intimate writings, his Journal and Correspondance and a number of books on him. This concentrated attention on Stendhal did not immediately modify her literary ambitions. The novel on which she was currently working, which had as themes both the mirage of the Other and 'la sclérose bourgeoise',² cause of Zaza's death, had little to do with this aspect of current reading. Both themes were based on people and episodes in her recent life, she reveals in La Force de l'âge. When, however, she had time to reflect on what she had read, then she set out to write another novel, again partly based on her own experience but on this occasion:

Je pris pour modèle Stendhal que l'année passée j'avais beaucoup pratiqué. Je me proposai d'imiter ses audaces romanesques pour raconter l'aventure qui dans ses grandes lignes était la mienne: une révolte individualiste contre cette société croupie.³

Her novel was, to say the least, ambitious in scope; it would have both a masculine and a feminine view point, and her central characters would be the modern versions of a stendhalian hero and heroine, setting out together to attack and exploit the corrupt middle-classes. The plot, as Simone de Beauvoir recounts it, sounds melodramatic: in one version the hero dies, like Julien, on the guillotine. The links with Stendhal seem principally to be provided by a joint hatred for the bourgeoisie and an attempt on her part at a certain tone:

...je m'appliquais au cynisme et à la satire.⁴

1. Lamuel Stendhal, Paris, Le Divan, 1928, p.279.

2. F.A., p.109.

3. F.A., p.156.

4. F.A., p.157.

Once again she attempted to incorporate the story of Zaza's death, and this distorted the balance of the plot; once again she tried to evoke, through the medium of the Lamiel character, the mirage of the Other. What was new, it appears, was the description of milieux, especially political, of which she did not have first hand knowledge. The novel was over-ambitious and the young author having realised this, she hastily finished the final chapters and laid it on one side.

It remains that Simone de Beauvoir had been so impressed by her reading of Stendhal that she wished to imitate his novels. The attempt had not worked, in that she could not yet produce a publishable text, but positive lessons could nevertheless be derived from it. She retained her desire to portray the middle-classes in a negative fashion: a satirical treatment of the bourgeoisie may be discerned in all of her novels, even in L'Invitée where the mauvaise foi and hypocrisy of Claude and Suzanne's marriage, for example, are taken for granted. Later, an entire novel, Les Belles Images, is centred on the inauthenticity of the bourgeois way of life. Simone de Beauvoir was however learning that if she limited herself to the description of what she personally knew and felt, such as the fascination exercised over her by the Other, she would be more effective. Eliminating Stendhal's voice as one to be directly imitated meant that she was a stage nearer to the discovery of her own. She would nevertheless remember his treatment of feminine characters and would always remain sympathetic to his detestation of hypocrisy, but she would not copy him again in her fiction.

Despite the apparent transience of Stendhal's influence, it is possible to suggest, as a final point, that his intimate writings, rather than his novels, retained a more durable effect on Simone de Beauvoir. Fascinated as always by journals, letters, autobiography and biography, her reading of Stendhal must have enchanted her and encouraged her to write her own personal account of her life. The appetite for revelation of the intimate being, for dévoilement, for total knowledge, is the same appetite which led her to attempt the re-creation of her own life in its

totality. We perhaps are indebted to Stendhal for the volumes of Simone de Beauvoir's autobiographical writings.

When, several years later, Simone de Beauvoir undertook responsibility for the education of her young protégée, Olga, she encouraged the girl to read:

Je lui faisais lire Stendhal, Proust, Conrad, tous les auteurs
que j'aimais...¹

This declaration of affection for Proust's writing is the only one in the first two volumes of her memoirs; however, when she confessed in 1972 that she was experiencing a reluctance to re-read even authors who had been favourites, such as Kafka or Stendhal, she added that there were still two who had retained their power over her:

Et il y a deux écrivains que j'aime presque infiniment
retrouver: le Rousseau des Confessions et Proust.²

When younger, Simone de Beauvoir was much more niggardly in expressing admiration for established French writers. It is possible that her hatred of the bourgeoisie was responsible for this; nevertheless, she read what her contemporaries were publishing with a varied degree of interest.

Simone de Beauvoir was not to stay for long in Marseilles; in June 1932, at the end of the academic year she was offered a post in Rouen which she accepted with pleasure. Henceforward she was never far from Paris and thus was able to follow closely the most recent artistic and literary developments. She retained her admiration for Stendhal but, leading a less solitary life than in Marseilles and more able to procure the latest books, she was now reading in a different way. Whereas in Marseilles she had found it difficult to acquire reading matter and had concentrated on a very few authors, Stendhal or Katherine Mansfield, whom she had studied in depth, now she kept up with a variety of writers.

1. F.A., p.241.

2. T.C.F., p.195.

Autumn 1932 was marked for her, as for many others, by a great literary event, the appearance of:

Céline comme un coup de tonnerre avec son Voyage au bout de la nuit.¹

Earlier that year, Céline, Louis-Ferdinand Destouches a practising doctor, had sent a copy of the manuscript of this novel both to the publisher Gallimard and to Robert Denoël of Denoël et Steele. Gallimard's readers hesitated, they had already several years earlier rejected Céline's play L'Eglise and also his Semmelweis; Denoël, however, was unconditionally enthusiastic; Céline therefore chose to publish with Denoël. The novel gained a tremendous and immediate success. Although it had its opponents as well as its supporters, it was a book which everyone, interested in the latest literature, wished to say that he had read:

En deux mois quelque cinq mille articles lui sont consacrés, 50,000 exemplaires du Voyage s'arrachent, l'éditeur passe ses commandes dans trois imprimeries pour satisfaire la demande, quatorze pays achètent les droits de traduction, les commis - libraires font la queue rue Amélie.²

Amongst the delighted readers of Voyage au bout de la nuit were Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre who both read the novel again and again, so frequently and so thoroughly that:

Nous en savions par cœur un tas de passages.³

They discussed at length the reasons for its importance to them personally and to literature in general. As ever when Simone de Beauvoir began to admire a literary work, she responded to elements within it which she claimed to recognise as her own: in the case of Céline, the recognition process involved what was thought at

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1. This phrase is to be found in Simone de Beauvoir's preface to a book of photographs of the Thirties: James Joyce à Paris: ses dernières années. The preface is reprinted in Les Ecrits de Simone de Beauvoir, p.419.
 2. Gaston Gallimard: un demi-siècle d'édition française Pierre Assouline, Paris, Balland, 1984, p.220.
 3. F.A., p.142.

the time a similar attitude towards established, middle-class society:

Son anarchisme nous semblait proche du nôtre.¹

Céline, they felt, attacked their own favourite targets: he shared their loathing for the military and its heroism and he ridiculed colonialism; mediocrity, clichés, second-hand thinking were satirised. All that Simone de Beauvoir detested in the bourgeoisie was treated with devastating vigour in Céline's novel.

Simone de Beauvoir was in 1932 almost totally a-political: because of her hatred of the stifling middle-class environment of her youth she was left-wing in her sympathies but in an unreflecting, almost instinctive or emotional, way. Thus she was responding positively to "une affinité de surface"² only between her ideas and those of Céline as developed in Voyage au bout de la nuit. It was the same for Sartre. Ideologically, as Contat and Rybalka demonstrate in their essay on La Nausée, there is little in common between the positive values which emerge from Sartre's writings and the ultimate sterility of Céline's view of life - as expressed, for example in the closing lines of this novel:

De loin le remorqueur a sifflé; son appel a passé le pont,
encore une arche, une autre, l'écluse, un autre pont, loin,
plus loin... Il appelait vers lui toutes les péniches du fleuve
toutes, et la ville entière, et le ciel et la campagne et nous,
tout qu'il emmenait, la Seine aussi, tout, qu'on n'en parle
plus.

The contrast established between left and right-wing anarchism is even more striking in the case of Simone de Beauvoir who in 1932 was optimistic, had a gift for happiness and a profound belief in life, qualities which have remained constant and are expressed throughout her work. Once her immediate enthusiasm for Céline had been assimilated therefore, it would seem that she began, with Sartre, to formulate restrictions about his socio-political attitude:

1. F.A., p.142.

2. Oeuvres Romanesques Jean-Paul Sartre op.cit.,p.1665.

Mort à crédit nous ouvrit les yeux. Il y a un certain mépris haineux des petites gens qui est une attitude pré-fasciste.¹

The example of Céline is complicated by the problem of his later writings, his anti-semitism and his experiences both during and after the war. It is difficult, when reading La Force de l'âge to disentangle how objectively Simone de Beauvoir is evoking Céline. Is she seeing him from the viewpoint of the politically naïve young woman she was in 1932, or is she regarding him with the disillusioned and knowing eyes of 1960? In any case, she pays tribute to Céline and then scarcely mentions him again in her autobiography. Moreover, in the extensive conversations with Sartre, published with la Cérémonie des adieux, she does not refer to Céline even when discussing in detail which authors marked their joint lives.²

Nevertheless, Céline did deeply affect the literary formation both of Simone de Beauvoir and of Sartre. Simone de Beauvoir in La Force de l'âge clearly signalled the latter's debt to Céline, as did Sartre himself: the epigraph to La Nausée, for example, is taken from L'Eglise.³ In her own work the relationship is not formally recognised although its existence can be detected. The influence of Céline was profound in the context of both their literary styles. Céline's achievement was to demonstrate triumphantly in 1932 that the language of

1. F.A., p.142.

2. Sartre himself was slightly more generous: in Ecrire pour son époque, an essay written at the same time as those included in Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, he made the suggestion, a daring one for 1946:

Peut-être Céline demeurera seul de nous tous.

E. de JPS, p.675.

3. 'C'est un garçon sans importance collective, c'est tout juste un individu'. This was from the play which Gallimard had refused in 1927 but which Denoël et Steele published in 1933 after the success of Voyage au bout de la nuit. It was produced for the first time at the Théâtre des Célestins in Lyons in 1936 and was not put on in Paris until January 1973. Thus, Sartre had not seen it acted when he wrote La Nausée, in fact he claimed not to have read it even but to have been given the quotation by someone else. Nevertheless, its retention is a significant recognition of Céline's importance to Sartre. See Oeuvres Romanesques J.-P. Sartre, op. cit., p.1719.

literature could be close to the language of everyday speech, that the formal, academic, self-conscious literary constructions which were recognised by the educated classes as 'good' language were not necessarily the only or even the best language for the depiction of everyday life. From the beginning of their literary apprenticeship it was the significance of the everyday which Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre wished to evoke in their imaginative writing:

...saisir l'homme et les événements humains dans leur rapport avec la totalité du monde...¹

As she observed in her autobiography, Céline wrote:

...dans un style, sur un ton qui nous enchantaient. Céline avait forgé un instrument nouveau: une écriture aussi vivante que la parole.²

The effect of Céline's language and thematic material on Sartre's literary style was astounding.³ The example of Céline was to show how the Twentieth

1. In Littérature et Métaphysique from L'Existentialisme et la sagesse des nations Simone de Beauvoir, Nagel, Paris, 1963, p.106.

2. F.A., p.142.

3. ..."la bombe Céline a d'abord - et pas seulement sur Sartre - un effet de décongestion: une langue littéraire est possible qui ne soit pas la langue du bien dire homologué..." M. Contat and M. Rybalka, op. cit., p.1666.

It was not so much Sartre's syntax or vocabulary which were modified by his reading of Céline, it was rather his attitude to the language of literature:

Grâce à Céline, tout devient licite,...il est désormais permis de parler de tout, et sans périphrases. En émancipant le lexique, en assouplissant la syntaxe, Céline a permis l'entrée en scène du corps dans le roman français monopolisé jusque là par la psychologie.

op. cit., p.1666.

Sartre's style at that moment had two registers; in his letters, which were composed with half an eye to eventual publication (cf. C.A., p.229) he wrote in a lively way noting down the experiences through which he was passing. These letters, "la transcription de la vie immédiate", provided a strong contrast with his imaginative work which was in "un style très classique, guindé même" (C.A., p.174). Stiff, formal, old-fashioned, derived from extensive reading of Nineteenth Century authors, Sartre's literary style did not marry with his ambitions. It was, Simone de Beauvoir tells us in La Force de l'âge, the example of Céline which liberated him from the hold of tradition, thus enabling him to write his fiction in the same direct, taut manner which he used for his letters. Referring to Céline's writing, Simone de Beauvoir says:

Sartre en prit de la graine. Il abandonna définitivement le langage gourmé dont il avait encore usé dans La Légende de la vérité.

F.A., p.142.

Century could develop new methods of expression to accommodate the new subject matter which both Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre wished to evoke in their novels. She also applied Céline's lessons gradually to her own fiction, her language became more supple and less cerebral and her subject matter less theoretical. Her own experiences, almost in their entirety, physical as well as philosophical or psychological, became material for literature. The set of linked short stories which she began to compose in the Spring of 1935 and which have lately been published as Quand prime le spirituel, illustrated this movement towards the development of a personal voice. It was the lesson derived from reading Céline, reinforced almost simultaneously by what she was learning from Dos Passos and then a little later from Hemingway, which helped her move away from an abstract vision of characters. She desisted from evoking the modern equivalents of Stendhalian heroes or heroines and realised that she should describe individuals in the totality of their relationships with people, with objects, with ideas. Literature as she conceived it would thus recuperate all aspects of life, not merely the noble or psychological but those relating to the body and its needs also. In L'Invitée these needs particularly concern the senses and can perhaps be thought of as trivial as well as of supreme importance: whisky, jazz-music, cigarettes,¹ the gaiety of artificial lighting at night, the joy of observing fellow inhabitants of the cafés and inexpensive hotels, all these form the background, of the novel and also contribute to the action. These are the physical pleasures of the urban environment; when evoking the country Simone de Beauvoir is far from Céline's influence and her characters experience the need to test their bodies in a more strenuously physical way, to feel the exhaustion of being stretched to their physical limits by demanding exercise which leads to the achievement of satisfied well-being ministered to by

1. For women, drinking spirits in cafés, smoking in public still retained in the Nineteen Thirties an aspect of protest and almost of rebellion against the social code of the 'respectable' middle-classes. Simone de Beauvoir's heroines are flaunting their liberated status as well as satisfying their physical needs.

having their simple wants - soup, red wine, warmth, easy companionship - fulfilled. We are now approaching Hemingway's field of influence.

In L'Invitée, thanks partly to Céline, Simone de Beauvoir is most successful in her evocation of concrete aspects of everyday life; her descriptions are firmly based on the reality of personal experience and expressed in a direct and supple style, not particularly colloquial but personal and non-academic. Yet these concrete experiences which succeed each other in the pages of this novel are not trivial when taken together, they do not merely form a somewhat exotic background - that of the life of a certain type of Parisian intellectual in the Thirties - they demonstrate a will to see people as a whole, to show the unity of experience expressing a certain vision of the world.

Other contemporary French writers were read by Simone de Beauvoir with sympathetic interest in the period after 1929 during her apprenticeship. Malraux is perhaps the most interesting. Born only seven years before Simone de Beauvoir, he may be considered to belong to the same generation but he made a precociously early start to his literary career so that he was already an established figure with his major novels behind him when she was publishing her own first novel in 1943. Clara Malraux's autobiography, Le Bruit de nos pas, for instance, describes the extraordinary youthfulness of the couple she and Malraux formed from June 1921 onwards, when already he was becoming known in literary and artistic circles. The Galérie Simon published Lunes en papier, dedicated to Max Jacob, as early as 1921 and his first major work, la Tentation de l'Occident appeared, published by Grasset, in 1926.¹ It was in 1928, however, when Les Conquérants gained the Prix Interallié that Malraux began to reach a wider public. His reputation was considerably enhanced when in 1933, published by Gallimard and no longer by Grasset, his major novel, la Condition humaine was awarded the Prix Goncourt. Simone de Beauvoir

1. Simone de Beauvoir had been loaned this book in her student days by a teacher whom she admired at the Institut Sainte-Marie. In her memoirs she notes this fact but makes no commentary. cf. M.J.F.R., p.221.

read his book with great care and it clearly made her reflect deeply, not so much at first about its political aspects, given her lack of interest in such matters, but rather more about its evocation of a relationship between a man and a woman based on reciprocity and equality.¹ However, she refers in La Force de l'âge to la Condition humaine with circumspection:

Dans la N.R.F. paraissait la Condition humaine dont nous pensions du bien et du mal: nous en estimions l'ambition plutôt que l'exécution.²

She found the subject matter worthy of respect, perhaps because it accorded with her left-wing anti-bourgeois views, but found its technique less compelling, even "rudimentaire".³ In fact, the ambivalent attitude was constant for many years: in 1935, she condemned Le Temps du mépris; in 1937 she approved of L'Espoir because of its political content and attitude. Nevertheless, at no time does Simone de Beauvoir express a wish to emulate Malraux either thematically or stylistically. Malraux was read with interest, with a certain amount of perhaps unwilling respect for the literary value of his novels or for his political attitudes, but never as a model. The essential element of recognition was missing and when identification was impossible - either with the characters or with the novelist's literary or technical ambitions - then Simone de Beauvoir could not gain profound or longlasting benefit from reading works by that novelist. In fact, after the war, Simone de Beauvoir and Malraux moved to opposing political positions and her sympathy evaporated. In 1972 she wrote a savage attack on Malraux and his Anti-mémoires, describing him as a mythomaniac incapable of a direct confrontation

1. She returns to the relationship between May and Kyo, describing it with admiration in both volumes of Le Deuxième sexe. Vol. I, p.294 and Vol. II, p.506. Kyo's attitude merits the accolade: 'humaine et émouvante'; the relationship calls on the authenticity of response from each member of the couple.
2. F.A., p.142-43.
3. F.A., p.143.

with reality.¹

There was a similar muted response to the works of Saint-Exupéry. She read this author with much interest, strengthened by the fact that Sartre greatly prized him, but she herself does not seem to have gained directly from what she read. She did not recognise herself or her problems in his novels. Sartre derived from Saint-Exupéry² an insight as to the way in which objects, such as an aeroplane, modified a person's perception of the world and he used this insight as a further stimulus to urge the diminution of the rôle of description for its own sake, or for the sake of aesthetics, in literature. Action, which involves the manipulation of objects, both reveals their existence and also reveals the basic enterprise and world view of the characters. Simone de Beauvoir accepted this analysis, but in her case as we shall see, the novels of Hemingway, where she recognised elements of shared concern, rather than the examples of Saint-Exupéry's aviators, stimulated her interest and involved her at a deep level.

None of the many other contemporary French novels Simone de Beauvoir read was to mark her style. Those of Nizan, Sartre's petit camarade from school and Ecole normale days, gained a positive, if basically uncomprehending, response. Later in the decade, Queneau was to awaken her sympathy firstly with Les Derniers jours in 1935; she read Valéry Larbaud, Morand, Drieu la Rochelle, Bernanos who earned her unwilling respect, and many others. Perhaps the only contemporary French writer to affect Simone de Beauvoir's future work was Michel Leiris whose L'âge d'homme³ made her give profound consideration to the writing of autobiography, reinforcing what she had derived from the reading of Stendhal.

1. T.C.F., p.172-75.

2. cf. Sartre's essay on Situation de l'écrivain en 1947 in Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, pp.286-87 and F.A., p.447 and p.535.

3. Paris, Gallimard, 1939.

Regarder un objet et dire honnêtement ce qu'il a vu...¹

This, according to Simone de Beauvoir in 1972, should be one of the aims of the novelist and in the early years of her apprenticeship, among contemporary French authors, there was only Céline whom she found to encourage her to approach the writing of fiction in this deceptively simple way. Her literary elders, such as Gide, Proust or Valéry, she felt had achieved much but their example was one to be reacted against, not followed. For a while the avant-garde had enticed her, she had admired Le Grand Meaulnes in particular, but this, too, after her initial excitement and delight, she found not to lead anywhere. It would seem that finally she mistrusted much of French literature, finding it tainted by its association with the social class she so detested. Only Stendhal, mistrusted by many of that same class, escaped condemnation. She could not, in the final analysis, accept direction in that stage of her life from those whom she considered as 'bourgeois' authors. However, she was reading a great deal of literature in translation and, with an open mind, was able to gain much pleasure and guidance in her literary apprenticeship from her reading in other cultures.

1. T.C.F., p.174.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN AND GERMAN WRITERS

During Simone de Beauvoir's childhood and youth she had, on the whole, acceded to literature through the mediation of her parents. We have seen how her mother, in her rôle of educator, had encouraged her to read certain carefully chosen books including some English ones; but her father, however, did not admire foreign literature, Anatole France was his idol, he despised Dickens:

Un élève de Conservatoire, qui répétait avec lui une pièce de M. Jeannot intitulée Le Retour à la Terre, déclara un soir avec impétuosité: 'Il faut s'incliner très bas devant Ibsen!' Mon père eut un grand rire: 'Eh bien, moi, dit-il, je ne m'incline pas!' Anglaises, slaves, nordiques, toutes les oeuvres d'outre-frontière lui semblaient assommantes, fumeuses et puérides.¹

She received from her parents, then, a solid literary foundation in the French tradition, but chafing against her family and milieu she was ready to be bored or exasperated by the authors they admired. When she outgrew the books recommended to her by her cousin Jacques, she turned to fiction from abroad for sustenance; motivated to some extent by a reaction against what she had read until then.

In the inter-war period there was a vogue in France for foreign literature. There was much available, the extent of which can be determined by reference to publishers' lists. The principal publisher of translations was then Pierre-Victor Stock who founded in 1926 what was to prove an influential series: 'le Cabinet Cosmopolite':

Il avait eu la bonne idée de racheter le fonds du libraire-éditeur Albert Savine, de développer le département des traductions étrangères au point d'en faire l'image de marque de sa maison.²

1. M.J.F.R., p.172.

2. P. Assouline op.cit., p.368.

At almost the same time as Stock, the respected publisher Plon launched a collection which was to achieve almost equal significance: les Feux croisés¹ under the direction of Gabriel Marcel. These series joined the already established Les Prosateurs Etrangers modernes of Reider, while in the Albatross Modern Continental Library appeared foreign literature in its original language. Publishers were remarkably eclectic in their choice of foreign literatures and of titles: in 1931, for instance, Le Cabinet Cosmopolite could announce with pride books from Germany (7 titles), South America (1 title), Austria (5 titles), Denmark (4 titles), Spain (1 title), the U.S.A. (5 titles), Finland (1 title), Flanders (1 title), Hungary (1 title), India (3 titles), Italy (1 title), Japan (2 titles), Norway (4 titles), Poland (1 title), U.S.S.R. (3 titles), Sweden (2 titles), German-speaking Switzerland (2 titles) and from the U.K. (13 titles). The series Feux croisés was as wide-ranging and as adventurous. By August 1933 it had published novels from Germany (3 titles), Spain (1 title), the U.S.A. (3 titles), Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Japan (1 title each), Italy (2 titles), the U.S.S.R. (4 titles) and the U.K. (16 titles). We note the preponderance of English literature. Gaston Gallimard of the N.R.F. was careful to surround himself with a committee of readers who were able to give intelligent and knowledgeable advice about foreign authors. Benjamin Crémieux, for instance, was an Italianist, responsible for translating Pirandello into French and for presenting to the French reading public the works of Verga, Borgese, Moravia² and Svevo. There was also Bernard Groethuysen who specialised in German literature and who introduced Kafka at a very early stage, four years after the Czech writer's

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1. It is clear from her memoirs that Simone de Beauvoir appreciated Marcel's choice of titles:

...j'absorbai ...toutes les traductions publiées dans la collection des Feux croisés

F.A., p.56.

2. Simone de Beauvoir records very little of her reading in Italian literature other than Moravia: les Ambitions déçues. F.A., p.303.

death in 1924, into the N.R.F. He also furthered the cause of literature in German by publishing Hermann Broch and Robert Musil. Brice Parain, who was to become friendly with Sartre when the firm of Gallimard was negotiating about the publication of La Nausée, was both a philosopher and a Russianist by training. He joined Gallimard in 1927 and urged the publication in French of Russian literature, particularly contemporary novels. He was entrusted with the directorship of a series entitled Jeunes Russes in which were to appear books by Sholokhov, Ivanov, Tikhonov, Fédine, Pilniak and Ilya Ehrenbourg.¹

Even though a-political Simone de Beauvoir was emotionally sympathetic to left-wing causes; Sartre's friend Nizan belonged to the Communist party; others of their friends were socialists. It was natural, then, for Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre to wish to understand events in what was felt to be the home of Socialism, the U.S.S.R. She read with close attention, therefore, all of the novels which appeared in Brice Parain's series and others:

...nous lisions tous les jeunes auteurs russes qui étaient traduits en français.²

She also made certain that she saw those Russian films which were showing in Paris. Her reaction to what she read and saw was ambivalent:

Notre curiosité oscillait de l'admiration à la méfiance.³

Politically more alert and active than Sartre or Simone de Beauvoir and wishing to persuade them of the positive achievements of the U.S.S.R., their friend Nizan attempted to enlarge their horizons:

Nizan nous recommanda tout particulièrement le singulier roman d'anticipation de Zamiatine, Nous autres...⁴

1. For information about the composition and specialities of Gallimard's panel of readers, I am indebted to the book on Gaston Gallimard by Pierre Assouline to which I have previously referred.

2. F.A., p.52.

3. F.A., p.52

4. F.A., p.52.

He must have concealed certain facts from his friends¹ for although this novel, We in English, had been written in 1920, it was little known in Russia where the régime had condemned it² and refused its publication. Its author had spent several years working in England and was an engineer as well as a critic specialising in English literature.³ When We was published abroad in Russian, without his knowledge or approval, the Russian authorities intensified their persecution of Zamyatin. Eventually, his despair became such that he begged Stalin for permission to leave Russia. In 1932 he settled in Paris where he died five years later. Given these facts, Simone de Beauvoir's comments:

...cette satire prouvait que l'individualisme survivait en U.R.S.S. puisqu'un tel ouvrage pouvait y être écrit et imprimé...⁴

achieve an unintended irony. Nevertheless, her critical faculties remained

1. Simone de Beauvoir showed that she was uncomfortably aware of this trait as the following exculpatory sentence shows:

Le ton familier, presque confidentiel, de sa conversation excluait toute arrière - pensée de propagande; et certainement, il ne mentait pas; mais parmi les vérités dont il disposait, il choisissait celles qui pouvaient le mieux séduire...

F.A., pp.212-13.

2. We has still not been officially recognised in Zamyatin's own country:

Although it circulated in typescript form, it has never been published in the Soviet Union. Except in émigré editions, in translations or in a few battered MSS, it is unknown to Russian readers beyond the bold or the lucky few.

We Y. Zamyatin, translated B.G. Guerney, introduction M. Glenny, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1984, p.10.

3. Zamyatin was inspired to write We by his reading of H.G. Wells whose science fiction novels are: "...a new and entirely original species of literary form" employed "to reveal the defects of the existing social structure and not in order to construct some paradise of the future". Thus the Russian author will indirectly attack tendencies in contemporary Soviet society. The quotations are from Zamyatin's essays on H.G. Wells discussed by M. Glenny, op.cit., p.11.
4. F.A., p.52.

perceptive, she responded to the beauty and originality of the early descriptions of the future city:

Je n'ai jamais oublié la cité de verre merveilleusement transparente et dure, qu'il avait dressée contre un ciel immuablement bleu¹

while also fully recognising the pessimism of the ending:

...l'accent et le dénouement du livre ne laissaient rien à l'espoir.²

She did not develop her intuitions by asking why Zamyatin should be so negative in his anti-Utopian fantasy or by finding at least part of the answer in the nature of contemporary Russian society. In this she was unlike George Orwell who read the same French edition of We as she. In his case, the Russian author was most influential: We became the literary inspiration for 1984. Only once did Simone de Beauvoir turn to fantasy in her own fiction, and in her novel Tous les hommes sont mortels it was the historical past rather than the future which she evoked. It seems that We was the only Russian novel to stir her imagination; other works were dull, marked by the relentless optimism of Socialist Realism.

A curiosity about Russian literature was for Simone de Beauvoir associated with that part of her original ambition which was not to write but to understand fully her epoch and the world in which she lived. The dévoilement of the reality of life in post-revolutionary Russian interested her, rather than a renewal of literary technique. As she says in her autobiography:

Un certain nombre de romans nous découvrirent un moment de la révolution que nous ignorions: le rapport entre la ville et les campagnes, entre les commissaires chargés des réquisitions ou des collectivisations et les paysans butés sur leurs droits de propriétaires.³

She speaks warmly of Sholokhov's art on occasions admiring especially the

1. F.A., p.52.

2. F.A., p.52.

3. F.A., p.146.

complexity of Terres défrichées, but does not derive any lessons from modern Russian writers. Neither does she speak in her memoirs of having been excited by the reading of the Russian classics such as Dostoevsky. In Tout compte fait she refers to this last writer in a list which includes Balzac, Zola and Dickens who are all authors whose works she can not summon up the interest to read again but who have never in any case been 'particulièrement chers' to her.¹ Tolstoy she uses in le Deuxième Sexe as a case history. It would seem then that in the long run she was to gain little from Russian literature, although the pleasure of satisfying intellectual curiosity was considerable.

Sartre came from a family where German was automatically the second language and thus he was more at home in the German cultural tradition in a way that Simone de Beauvoir could not emulate.² His interest was more strongly drawn to philosophy than to literature; nevertheless, he and Simone de Beauvoir read some contemporary German books. In La Force de l'âge she refers to Wassermann: l'Affaire Maurizius and to Döblin: Berlin Alexanderplatz,³ what she read then did not stimulate her curiosity.

She was not even inspired by Brecht's anti-bourgeois approach. Simone de Beauvoir records that she saw The Threepenny Opera in October 1930, produced in French by Gaston Baty; she was more impressed by the style and décor of the play

1. T.C.F., p.195.

2. In spite of this, it would seem that Sartre was not a gifted speaker of the German language. When discussing the year that Sartre spent in Berlin A. Cohen-Solal mentions:

son désintérêt évident - barrière de la langue? - pour d'éventuelles rencontres.

and stresses the way in which he remained within a tightly-knit French speaking group. A. Cohen-Solal, op. cit., p.148.

3. This is a stream-of-consciousness novel, cited in an influential study of narrative technique: 'the most famous German offspring of Ulysses'. See Transparent Minds, Dorrit Cohn, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978, p.63 where Döblin's technique of rendering consciousness is compared with that of Sartre in L'Intimité.

than by its political content. She and Sartre seem to have drawn from the play a message which Brecht did not intend:

L'oeuvre nous parut refléter le plus pur anarchisme...¹

but as she observed:

Nous ignorions tout de Brecht...²

Sartre, meanwhile, who was very musical, learned all the songs and Weil tunes by heart and they appropriated the slogan Beefsteak d'abord, morale après, as it accorded with their reaction against bourgeois idealism. She makes few further references to Brecht in La Force de l'âge and does not speak of him with enthusiasm.³

It was not until 1933, when she and Sartre extended their acquaintance with Kafka's work, that her first genuine excitement about literature in German became manifest.⁴ She had first heard Kafka's name mentioned while on a trip to Brittany accompanied by Sartre during the Easter of 1932. During a break in the almost incessant rain, they were sitting in a field in the countryside outside Saint-Pol-de-Léon and Sartre was leafing through a copy of the N.R.F.:

Il me lut en riant une phrase qui faisait allusion aux trois plus grands romanciers du siècle: Proust, Joyce, Kafka - Kafka? Ce nom baroque me fit sourire, moi aussi: si ce Kafka avait été vraiment un grand écrivain, nous ne l'aurions pas ignoré...⁵

Their certainty that they were perfectly well-informed about contemporary

1. F.A., p.54.

2. F.A., p.54.

3. Cf. F.A., p.147. She records disappointment with his film Kuhle Wampe.

4. In 1933-1934, while in Rouen, Simone de Beauvoir had language lessons so that she could read German literature in the original:

...je continuais à prendre des leçons d'allemand, je lisais à l'aide d'un dictionnaire Frau Sorge, Karl und Anna, le théâtre de Schnitzler.

F.A., p.173.

5. F.A., pp.114-15.

literature must be admired. Nevertheless, they must have searched out Alexandre Vialatte's translation of La Métamorphose, which had appeared in the N.R.F. in 1928, in order to discover why Kafka merited such praise, for when they read Le Procès, published the year following the N.R.F. article, they were already acquainted with the earlier story. This time they were willing to accept Kafka's worth. For Simone de Beauvoir, the essential elements of recognition of herself were present:

Notre admiration pour Kafka fut tout de suite radicale; sans savoir au juste pourquoi nous avions senti que son oeuvre nous concernait personnellement.... Kafka nous parlait de nous; il nous découvrait nos problèmes, en face d'un monde sans Dieu et où pourtant notre salut se jouait.¹

Struck by the beauty of Le Procès, read while Sartre was in Berlin, and finding Kafka even more relevant than Faulkner, whom she had discovered at the same time because he communicated directly about those concerns which mattered deeply to her, Simone de Beauvoir became marked by his vision of the world. She and Sartre incessantly discussed Kafka and the topics he raised, on Sartre's return from Berlin for Easter 1933. They each felt, we are told, that like Joseph K, they were on trial in that they had been entrusted - but by whom? - with a mission: to write; that the mission was at the same time unreasonable, in the sense that there was no pre-existing necessity for it, and yet it was the basis of their lives, their very justification.

What they derived from reading firstly Le Procès:

un des livres les plus rares, les plus beaux que nous ayons lus depuis longtemps.²

and from la Métamorphose, then later from Le Château:

encore plus extraordinaire que Le Procès³

1. F.A., p.193.

2. F.A., p.193.

3. F.A., p.447.

was to remain permanently with Simone de Beauvoir and with Sartre. Kafka's influence, it would seem, was both assimilated at the profound level while yet remaining difficult to discern. It is certain, for example, that La Nausée owes much to Kafka: Simone de Beauvoir herself makes a comparison between Joseph K. in Le Procès and Antoine Roquentin¹. Paul Nizan, also, in a review of La Nausée observed that

M. Sartre pourrait être un Kafka français²

and even an anonymous English reviewer found Sartre's novel to be

half-way between Céline and Kafka.³

Yet, even in a situation where links between the two authors were immediately perceived, the analysis of what Sartre owed to Kafka is curiously imprecise. As Contat and Rybalka remark in their essay on La Nausée, this novel reveals

l'influence - plus profonde, mais formellement peu
apparente de Kafka.⁴

If it is difficult to define exact connections between Kafka and Sartre's first novel, then the situation is likely to be similar with Simone de Beauvoir and her own first novel, L'Invitée. However, there is, we would suggest in Simone de Beauvoir's case, a clearer relationship between the constrictive world of Kafka's Trial and the enclosed Parisian society evoked in L'Invitée. The claustrophobia and guilt through which Joseph K. and Françoise move have much in common; what is more, Simone de Beauvoir has deliberately chosen to employ at key moments a vocabulary of guilt and innocence which owes much to the terminology of the law courts and which provides, of course, the dominant imagery of Kafka's novel.

In The Trial, the reason for Joseph K's arrest is never specified, he always

1. F.A., p.193.

2. Ce Soir, 16 mai 1938.

3. T.L.S., 3 December 1938.

4. M. Contat and M. Rybalka, op.cit., p.1666.

remains unaware of why he is on trial. At the beginning of the novel, he is merely informed by his two unexpected visitors:

'You can't go out, you are arrested'. 'So it seems,' said K.
'But what for?' he added. 'We are not authorised to tell you
that. Go to your room and wait there.'¹

Although the grounds for his inculpation are not made clear, he has to face Examining Magistrates and Advocates, he feels he must draw up a plea though he does not understand the Advocate's behaviour:

Was the Advocate seeking to comfort him or to drive him to
despair?²

Later, when he meets the Painter, he learns that he is embroiled for life in the meshes of the Court with its 'ostensible acquittal' and its 'indefinite postponement'. In a way, he has already realised the fact that declarations of innocence are merely temporary and that he is condemned to live for the rest of his life as a man on trial. Initially, it had seemed to him that his arrest was possibly a form of practical joke organised by his colleagues at the bank on the occasion of his thirtieth birthday but his life becomes inevitably dominated by the case, so much so that when, almost a year later, two men visit him at his lodging he instantly recognises that sentence has been passed and that he has been found guilty. These two nondescript men are to be his executioners.

A vague atmosphere of menace is present throughout the narration. For Joseph K, there is no respite from his constant preoccupations with his case, there is no-one to whom he can turn for reliable advice; he is alone, anxiously aware that all his energies should be concentrated but, as he does not know the charges against him, he is frustrated and unable to direct his efforts in a useful manner. In a way, therefore, every aspect of his life, his beliefs and his behaviour is on trial and he feels generalised guilt.

1. The Trial, Kafka translated by Willa and Edwin Muir, Penguin Modern Classics no. 907, Harmondsworth, Penguin, p.9.

2. op. cit., p.139.

It is precisely this atmosphere of guilt and judgement which is necessary for the development of Simone de Beauvoir's theme in L'Invitée for in this novel where the central character can not accept the existence of the Other as being as full or as real as her own, the judging eyes of the Other intrude, accuse and finally declare Françoise guilty. The heroine has a more positive and active personality than Joseph K however, and she resists the judge's condemnation, preferring rather to abolish the verdict by murdering her judge. Nevertheless, until this moment, Françoise has been inextricably caught in the meshes of Xavière's often negative judgements about her; the vocabulary of justice, of guilt or innocence, as in The Trial, becomes of key importance to the thematic development of the novel.

Faute, for example, is a significant word. At first it is employed in a possibly light-hearted, certainly casual way.¹ In a night club, the young girl Xavière, who has been informally adopted by the heroine, is disappointed by Françoise's account of the sentimental behaviour of a woman whom Xavière has just admired:

- Il y a une femme brune à côté d'elle qui est bien belle.
Comme elle est belle!
- Sachez qu'elle a pour amant de coeur un champion de catch; ils se baladent dans le quartier en se tenant par le petit doigt.
 - Oh! dit Xavière avec reproche.
 - Ce n'est pas de ma faute, dit Françoise.
Xavière se leva ...
 - Elle me hait en ce moment, pensa Françoise.²

She goes off to dance, leaving Françoise alone, we are possibly intended to wonder if she is punishing Françoise. The latter's response to Xavière's reproach has been that of a mature person to a child: promising people can be inconsistent, they can behave in an unworthy way. She herself, we are explicitly told,³ is not disturbed by Xavière's rejection of her, even though this implies a negative judgement.

1. We are reminded of Chapter I in The Trial when Joseph K thinks that his arrest could be taken as a joke.

2. L'I., p.31.

3. Françoise sourit avec orgueil, L'I., p.31.

Subsequently, she is not quite so light-hearted; she has already learned that Xavière has to be managed with tact otherwise she will blackmail those accompanying her with her guilt feelings thus making her friends feel guilty also.

Il fallait éviter que Xavière pût se croire en faute, sinon elle deviendrait rancuneuse et maussade.¹

In the next stage of the novel Françoise, aware of the mechanics of Xavière's behaviour, decides not to accept the guilt which Xavière is forcing on her. They are at the theatre and the older woman has asked her friend Gerbert to show Xavière around backstage as she is new to Paris and to theatrical life. Xavière resents this request, feeling doubly injured: she is being patronised by Gerbert and neglected by Françoise:

- Gerbert ne vous a pas menée dans les coulisses?
- Il me l'a proposé, dit Xavière,
- Ca ne vous amusait pas?
- Il avait l'air tellement gêné, dit Xavière, c'était pénible. Elle regarda Françoise avec une rancune avouée. J'ai horreur de m'imposer aux gens, dit-elle violemment. Françoise se sentit en faute...²

Thus Xavière has provoked a reaction of guilt in Françoise but this feeling is almost immediately shaken off:

- Elle prend tout au tragique, pensa-t-elle agacée. Elle avait décidé une fois pour toutes de ne pas se laisser empoisonner la vie par les morosités puériles de Xavière.³

Nevertheless, the rejection of guilt can only be temporary, for in spite of the words 'une fois pour toutes', Françoise is in the process of being trapped within Xavière's judgement of her. Françoise is soon on trial as Xavière unfolds a réquisitoire⁴

1. L'I., p.42.

2. L'I., p.54.

3. L'I., p.54.

4. L'I., p.61.

against her way of life which becomes almost immediately a jugement¹. Like Joseph K, whose initial reaction we recall was that the accusation against him was a joke, Françoise has to discover that the accusations against her are not frivolous, as she had thought, but of weighty consequence, for this time her lover, Pierre, attaches value to Xavière's words. Shortly, Françoise is doubting the correctness of her own behaviour and assessment of the girl:

Certainement, par paresse, Françoise avait simplifié Xavière, elle se demandait même, avec un peu de malaise comment elle avait pu pendant les dernières semaines la traiter en petite fille négligeable...²

We see that she is beginning to inhabit a world of generalised guilt similar to that of Joseph K. As she and Pierre endlessly discuss Xavière's behaviour, the feelings of distress which this causes become an intimate part of her existence:

...elle avait dans la bouche un drôle de goût trouble qui ne voulait pas s'en aller.³

Simone de Beauvoir thus establishes an atmosphere in which the innocent Françoise of the opening scene is gradually transformed into a culprit. Xavière levels a precise accusation against her at the end of the novel:

Vous étiez jalouse de moi parce que Labrousse m'aimait. Vous l'avez dégoûté de moi et pour mieux vous venger vous m'avez pris Gerbert.⁴

Françoise accepts the truth of the accusation:

C'était vain de tenter une défense. Plus rien ne pouvait la sauver.⁵

And then, unlike Joseph K, she reacts. She rejects the verdict:

1. L'I., p.62.

2. L'I., p.69.

3. L'I., p.72.

4. L'I., p.437.

5. L'I., p.437.

Non, dit-elle, non ... Non, répéta-t-elle. Je ne suis pas cette femme.¹

Simone de Beauvoir continues to employ the legal vocabulary with which she has created her atmosphere when Françoise makes one last effort to avoid her punishment by accepting her guilt and thus conciliating her accuser:

J'ai été coupable envers vous, dit Françoise. Je ne vous demande pas de me pardonner. Mais écoutez, ne rendez pas ma faute irréparable.²

Xavière insists on making Françoise into a criminelle and Françoise decides that she will indeed defend herself at last, she will murder Xavière. The last words of the novel remove Françoise from the atmosphere of The Trial with its guilt and innocence:

Personne ne pourrait la condamner ni l'absoudre. Son acte n'appartenait qu'à elle.³

By means of her action she has reinstated herself as unique consciousness, she has annihilated the Other and the judgements of the Other. In this way, guilt has been abolished and she is liberated from its constricting tentacles.

This ending of the novel has posed problems to many critics and it is a subject confronted directly by Simone de Beauvoir herself in her own analysis of L'Invitée.⁴ It may be suggested that the murder of Xavière shocks the reader mainly because such a solution to Françoise's problems is out of place in the Kafka-esque universe so carefully established by the author. When, in The Trial, Joseph K accepts the verdict and its consequences as inevitable, the reader follows him, for his ignoble death is a logical and necessary development of the opening pages. In L'Invitée, however, when Françoise hears the verdict on her behaviour she suddenly moves into a far different world which it is more difficult for the unprepared reader

1. L'I., p.438.

2. L'I., p.439.

3. L'I., p.441.

4. F.A., pp.324-25 and pp.346-49.

to accept. This world is that of detective fiction; here it is normal to murder those whose existence is inconvenient to one's happiness. We shall study in a later chapter exactly how much Simone de Beauvoir owed to her reading of crime reportage and detective stories. Here, we must point out that at the last moment she seems to abandon the dominant vision of her novel - which was surely inspired by her admiration for Kafka - a vision of claustrophobia where the central character becomes a victim of the Other's condemning judgements. The author shifting into another mode thereby reasserts the primacy of the Self and the possibility of escape. Simone de Beauvoir has written her best work out of her own direct experience, in fact, until she was able to tap this experience, she could not successfully construct fiction. She herself possessed a highly positive and active personality which she used, to a certain extent, as inspiration for the character of Françoise. It would seem then that it would be extremely difficult for her to construct a heroine who could passively accept Xavière's condemnation which leads to the point of annihilation of the Self.¹

Does this therefore mean that the rest of the novel is invalidated by the ending? We would suggest not. It does not solve the problem which confronts Françoise, it merely confirms the fact that the philosophical basis to her existence is unsound. By insisting that she is Unique Consciousness, and by annexing the existence of Others, she has put herself in a position where the behaviour of a moody, arrogant and self-obsessed adolescent can demonstrate the falseness and self-deception around which her life is organised. Unwilling to emerge from this position, she operates the lever which will open the gas supply to Xavière's room in the same way as Alexander seized the sword to cut through the Gordian Knot. She

1. Simone de Beauvoir is consistently on the side of life in her novels, even though this may involve defeats or compromise. In Les Mandarins, for example, Anne rejects suicide even though she is in despair. A late novel, Les Belles Images, has an ending where the heroine Laurence recognises the emptiness of her own life but determines to fight tooth and nail to ensure that her daughters will have their chance.

is not resolving her problem, she is not disentangling the reasons which explain her suffering, but in fact is choosing to remain in the claustrophobic world where the judgement of the Other is supreme. She will, in fact, remain on trial.

The very atmosphere of L'Invitée bears similarities with the dreamlike obsessive world of The Trial. We are told in La Force de l'âge that the friendship with Olga, entered into with pleasure while Simone de Beauvoir was teaching in Rouen, had become painfully complicated with Sartre's participation in it. Having reacted as a young girl against her father's sexual code, she had decided not to conform with bourgeois conventions about male-female relationships. She would therefore integrate Sartre's intense feelings for Olga into her own system and the couple formed by the two older people would become a 'trio'. Simone de Beauvoir transposed into the fiction of L'Invitée the difficulties which ensued in a manner reminiscent of Kafka. The innocent friendship became 'cette machine doucement infernale' in the stifling provincial atmosphere:

notre trio vivait sous cloche, en serre chaude, dans
l'oppressante solitude de la province...¹

Without a means of escape into a larger world, each member of the trio was enclosed within it and suffered emotionally.

Although L'Invitée is set in Paris,² Simone de Beauvoir has managed to reconstruct the claustrophobic atmosphere of the emotions which was present in

1. F.A., p.266.

2. In La Force de l'âge, Simone de Beauvoir discusses this aspect of her novel and confesses that, in her opinion, the Parisian setting for her fictional trio's obsessions is a mistake - life is too varied and free in Paris for two people, intelligent, successful and open to experience, to be obsessed by a moody teenager. She herself has shown that the reverse was indeed the case in her own experience nevertheless:

J'avais escompté qu'à Paris nous échapperions naturellement à ce labyrinthe où la solitude de Rouen nous retenait; mais non. Sartre n'en finissait pas d'épiloguer sur les conduites d'Olga; je perdais l'espoir de trouver une issue et je commençais à être excédée de tourner en rond.

F.A., p.291.

her original experience. In the same way as Kafka's The Trial has the obsessive atmosphere of a dream: Joseph K cannot escape from the knowledge he is on trial, wherever he goes there are allusions to his case; L'Invitée, with its interminable conversations, its repetitions and its evocation of a woman trapped in some implacable mechanism, is equally claustrophobic. Terry Keefe mentions the number of chapters which end with Pierre and Françoise analysing the minutiae of Xavière's behaviour; this is not a failing on the part of the novelist, it is a deliberate choice of method which allows a particular atmosphere to be created. There are, however, in L'Invitée two occasions when Françoise does escape, unlike Joseph K, from her almost intolerable situation.

Françoise's illness provides the first respite and the second is occasioned by her walking tour in the mountains with Gerbert. These episodes are modelled on events in Simone de Beauvoir's own life, but in L'Invitée they are forced to play an important part in the plot. For instance, no sooner is Françoise on the road to recovery than Pierre monopolises her attention with his interpretations of Xavière's behaviour and she is caught once again:

Elle se remonta un peu sur les oreilles: ça la fatiguait, cette discussion, la sueur commençait à perler au creux de son dos et dans la paume de ses mains. Elle qui croyait que c'en était fini de toutes ces interprétations, ces exégèses où Pierre pouvait tourner en rond pendant des heures... Elle aurait voulu rester paisible et détachée, mais l'agitation fébrile de Pierre la gagnait.¹

The pressure builds up once more when Françoise is feeling better and the atmosphere of the novel seems even more claustrophobic because of the contrast. The anguish which comes from being enclosed is further linked to the fact that for Françoise there is no escape or possibility of development. At the opening of the novel Françoise wishes the present to be fixed. She has defined once and for all the key aspects of her life: both Pierre and her relationship with him; also her

1. L'I., p.215.

dealings with others are likewise stereotyped. In the first chapter, Françoise speculates as to the possibility of a love affair with Gerbert:

Elle ferma les yeux. Elle ne pouvait pas dire: je t'aime. Elle ne pouvait pas le penser. Elle aimait Pierre. Il n'y avait pas de place dans sa vie pour un autre amour.¹

Her thoughts are revealing in their rigidity. In conversation with Pierre shortly after this moment, the static nature of Françoise's life is confirmed when he comments on her lack of intellectual curiosity:

...c'est drôle cette espèce de recul que tu as dès que quelque chose de neuf s'offre à toi.
- La seule nouveauté qui m'intéresse, c'est notre avenir en commun dit Françoise. Que veux-tu, je suis heureuse comme ça!

Françoise is rejecting the idea of change, both for others and for herself. Initially, the reader sees her as contented with the life which she has constructed but when Xavière introduces disruption and uncertainty then she cannot adapt to the new situation. What originally is perceived as merely a component of Françoise's personal, possibly moral, attitude is then developed so that it applies to the network of her relationships and to the way she sees her situation within the world. Blind to the genuine possibility of liberty, constantly attempting to make people conform to her stereotyped, non-varying definitions of them,² Françoise is indeed imprisoned in a claustrophobic universe.

Dorrit Cohn has commented on the way in which the narrated monologue at the end of The Trial suggests to the reader the existential implications of the text.³ Simone de Beauvoir's novel ends with a similar narrated monologue the final words of which reveal the full horror of the heroine's choice: by killing Xavière

1. L'I., p.19.

2. cf. Françoise's definition of her relationship with Pierre:

On ne fait qu'un, se répéta-t-elle.

L'I., p.27.

3. Transparent Minds, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978, pp.122-24.

Françoise has opted to remain within her prison:

C'était sa volonté qui était en train de s'accomplir, plus rien ne la séparait d'elle-même. Elle avait enfin choisi. Elle s'était choisie.¹

Simone de Beauvoir recognised the absurdity of direct imitation of Kafka. When, in 1942, she read Maurice Blanchot's novel Aminadab her feelings were mixed. Certain parts of the novel were appealing because of their link with current preoccupations but on the whole she found that it lacked interest:

...dans l'ensemble, le roman de Blanchot semblait un pastiche de ceux de Kafka.²

The opening of this novel describes in a factual, seemingly objective, way a sequence of actions undertaken by someone called Thomas. The atmosphere has a surrealist, dream-like quality, the ordinary being charged with an obscure and yet profound significance. The novel is directly reminiscent of Kafka and its incidents, such as those concerning the door and its keeper, are clearly associated with the priest's story in The Trial. The novel, in spite of its qualities, fails as Simone de Beauvoir suggests, because it is too derivative. Her own novel shows the influence of Kafka in a more subtle way: the atmosphere of L'Invitée is pervaded by the Czech author's vision of the world. Kafka is not directly imitated. She has not attempted to create another version of The Trial, yet she found inspiration in his work which enabled her to depict a claustrophobic world of anguish and arbitrary judgement.

1. L'I., p.441.

2. F.A., p.551.

CHAPTER FIVE

EXAMPLE AND ENCOURAGEMENT: ENGLISH LITERATURE

Simone de Beauvoir's first direct contact with English literature came about in early adolescence when her mother bought her novels written in English so that she could improve her command of the language. As her mother was a most careful housewife, these novels were deemed to have an additional virtue: they provided reading matter which lasted a long time:

...ma mère m'emmenait quelquefois dans un petit magasin proche du cours, acheter des romans anglais: ils faisaient de l'usage car je les déchiffrais lentement.¹

Simone enjoyed the feeling that she was wrestling with and mastering a difficult and resistant medium, the English language, and thus her intellect was satisfied when she read them. Moreover, the novels provided her with an additional pleasure because they were exotic and escaped complete comprehension, they thus ministered to her imagination also:

Je prenais grand plaisir à soulever, à l'aide d'un dictionnaire, le voile opaque des mots; descriptions et récits retenaient un peu de leur mystère; je leur trouvais plus de charme et de profondeur que si je les avais lus en français.²

The childhood reading encouraged by her father had included a solid diet of traditional French authors; of English books, apart from those bought her by her mother, she had read Gulliver's Travels in translation, later some H.G. Wells³ and some Dickens. She refers in Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée, recording her adolescent perplexities about the mysterious rôle played by love and marriage

1. M.J.F.R., p.71.

2. M.J.F.R., p.71-72. An early instance of the pleasure to be derived from dévoilement, see Chapter 1, The Beginnings of a Literary Apprenticeship.

3. When her mother gave her La Guerre des Mondes she had checked its contents and censored the novel by pinning together certain of the pages! M.J.F.R., p.83.

in adult life, to David Copperfield and the hero's two marriages. It is surprising that this novel made such a weak and limited impression on her: Dickens' strongly autobiographical work is as moving as The Mill on the Floss which stirred her deeply. Both novels deal with childhood sufferings. David is as isolated as Maggie, perhaps even more so, being an orphan and separated from known and loved surroundings and faces. David Copperfield is more positive in tone and one would expect the optimistic and ambitious young Simone de Beauvoir to be attracted by David's success for at the end David has become a successful writer and has attained happiness in his marriage. Possibly the fact that the hero was a boy was the reason Simone de Beauvoir does not seem to have been touched emotionally or imaginatively by his story; she was in search of models with whom she could identify and female characters with specifically feminine experience could best supply these.¹

It was in books written by women and where the experience of girls is recounted that Simone de Beauvoir found matter which contributed to her emotional development and to the clarification of her ideas about her future rôle and career. The two books which most marked her adolescence were written in English: Little Women, which we shall discuss in the context of American literature, and The Mill on the Floss, which remained for Simone de Beauvoir a touchstone of merit. When, for instance, a new friend assured her of his love for it, he was certain of a place in her affections,² and when, after the War she came

1. Simone de Beauvoir had been greatly excited in her youth by one novel centred on boys, L'Ecolier d'Athènes by André Laurie, but it was not their male life and deeds in themselves which had allowed her to develop a myth, based on the two heroes, which had relevance to her own life. What had attracted her was the contrast in the characters of Théagène and Euphorion - the assiduous, serious but rather dull student compared with the brilliant, gifted and stimulating one, the tortoise and the hare, in essence. She was able, as intellectual and moral qualities were being discussed, to substitute herself and her friend Zaza for the Athenian schoolboys.

2. Cf. M.J.F.R., p.323. The friend was Herbaud.

to write le Deuxième sexe, she referred on numerous occasions to this novel and its author.

The novels of George Eliot were greatly appreciated in France, as has been shown by Margaret Mein in her study of Proust and his precursors.¹ There she records how much the adolescent Proust appreciated The Mill on the Floss:

André Ferré relates, that from the age of thirteen or fourteen to seventeen, 'Proust lisait et relisait le Moulin sur la Floss'.²

She also quotes from a letter written in 1910: 'deux pages du Moulin sur la Floss me font pleurer'.³ Dr. Mein's conclusion is that an intensely close reading of George Eliot may well have led Proust to self-awareness and helped him to elucidate his own philosophy.⁴ Simone de Beauvoir experienced a similar intensity of reaction when reading novels by George Eliot, The Mill on the Floss in particular, and was led by her reading to a positive view of herself and what she conceived her mission in life.

Simone de Beauvoir read George Eliot initially for educational purposes. At school she had, by working on an explication, become acquainted with Silas Marner; and then her mother, feeling no doubt that George Eliot was an eminently 'respectable' author, bought her a copy of Adam Bede and, unusually for so careful a parent, handed it to her without checking its content. This apparently innocuous novel precipitated, in fact, a crisis in the moral development of the carefully nurtured young lady who was reading it, for its heroine becomes pregnant while unmarried. It was not the existence of unmarried mothers which scandalised the

1. A Foretaste of Proust, Margaret Mein, Farnborough, Saxon House, 1974. Cf. p.123 where the admiration for George Eliot's work of Proust, Gide, the Abbé Brémond, A. Thibaudet, Charles du Bos, Edmond Jaloux and Bergson is recorded. We also remember that George Eliot's novels were recommended by the Catholic Church: cf. p.33 of this study.

2. op.cit., p.125.

3. ibid., p.123.

4. ibid., p.187.

young Simone de Beauvoir, it was fear at the prospect of her mother discovering that she knew that such unhappy people could exist and that sexuality could be expressed outside marriage. She says that this knowledge on the part of a well brought-up young girl was felt to be a moral scandal and the awareness of this confirmed Simone de Beauvoir's belief that she was set apart from her family in that she had to conceal from them her growing acquaintance with such details.

When she then lost her faith she was even more cut off from her family: her overt behaviour did not change, she still went to Mass where she took Communion, for example, and yet she felt that her lack of belief together with the guilt associated with her dissimulation banished her from the possibility of simple happiness with her family. It was at this crucial period in her spiritual and personal development that Simone de Beauvoir read George Eliot's The Mill on the Floss and the English novel exercised a profound attraction on her. There were too many resemblances between the life of its heroine, Maggie Tulliver, and between what Simone de Beauvoir conceived her own character and situation to be for her easily to forget it;

Maggie Tulliver était comme moi divisée entre les autres et elle-même: je me reconnus en elle.¹

The points of contact between the fictional heroine and the young girl who at times saw her life as potential material for a story are many. There is the love of the countryside, stressed by George Eliot and associated in her novel with the innocent happiness of childhood. When, for example, Tom takes Maggie fishing, the atmosphere of the Round Pool and its beauties encourages better feelings in both children:

The sight of the old, favourite spot always heightened Tom's good humour... Maggie thought it would make a very nice heaven to sit by the pool in that way...²

1. M.J.F.R., p.141.

2. The Mill on the Floss, Part One, Chapter Five, pp.34-35. References are to the Everyman's Library edition, Dent, London, 1964. The novel will henceforward be referred to as M.F.

Simone de Beauvoir read the novel while on holiday in her own particular version of heaven: the garden of her grandfather's country house at Meyrignac. Her most intense feelings of joy had always been associated with the countryside:

Mon bonheur atteignait son apogée pendant les deux mois et demi que, chaque été, je passais à la campagne.¹

Life was more relaxed, more free during these months and this certainly contributed to Simone de Beauvoir's happiness, but principally she enjoyed the communion with the natural world² and she responded at a very deep level to the English novel where Nature was appreciated as 'the mother tongue of our imagination'.³

Secondly, the heroine's appearance as a child: dark-haired, untidy, badly clothed and perceived by most people as physically unattractive, counted for Simone de Beauvoir as she was passing through a stage in her adolescence when she was at her least pleasing physically and criticised by her family for her appearance. She talks, for instance, of her father who:

sans méchanceté, mais sans ménagement... faisait sur mon teint, mon acné, ma balourdise, des remarques qui exaspéraient mon malaise et mes manies.⁴

She could in the externals of her life identify with the frequently scolded Maggie who, as a child, is made to feel ashamed of her brown skin, straight, badly cut hair and dirty pinafores, but who like many an ugly duckling is transformed and grows up to be 'a tall, dark-eyed nymph with her jet-black coronet of hair'.⁵ The suggested promise of future beauty must have been gratifying to Simone de

1. M.J.F.R., p.76.

2. In her description of the pleasure she derived from nature during these holidays, Simone de Beauvoir's prose attains an almost poetic intensity. Cf. M.J.F.R., pp.80-82.

3. M.F., p.36.

4. M.J.F.R., p.103.

5. M.F., p.353.

Beauvoir who, like Maggie, had dark hair and who has remembered in her later writing Maggie's semi-humorous complaint to her lover about how hard authors are on brunettes and her longing for a novel with a different pattern: 'a story where the dark woman triumphs'.¹

It was not just the outer characteristics of Maggie that reflected back to Simone de Beauvoir her own vision of herself. There was the tension in the girl's life which came from her parents' differing attitudes to her; Simone de Beauvoir, at this stage in her life, resented her mother's close and narrow supervision and still to a certain extent admired her father, associating him with a wider intellectual world. In The Mill on the Floss, Maggie's mother and her mother's family, the Dodsons, were critical of the girl while her father and his family admired and cherished her. It must have been reassuring for Simone de Beauvoir to read about a heroine whose mother was so demonstrably narrow-minded and stupid - and who thus could be despised in a satisfying way - and whose father kept a special place in his heart for his daughter, 'the little wench' as he lovingly called her.

And yet, Simone de Beauvoir's early admiration for the superior intellect of her father was complicated in adolescence by the fact that he no longer seemed to delight, as he once had done, in her superior intelligence and intellectual achievements. Like Maggie Tulliver, she had always loved books and learning and storytelling; reading about Maggie's father and his mixture of pride and irritation towards his daughter's capacities helped clarify her own ideas with respect to her father. Mr. Tulliver praises his little daughter's cleverness to a friend, but the praise is associated with anxiety, for cleverness is misplaced in a woman:

1. Cf. D.S. II, p.88. Here Simone de Beauvoir refers to Maggie's outburst and interprets it in the light of feminine stereotypes: the blonde woman in literature is passive, refuses initiatives and pleases because of her lack of intellect; the virile, active and intelligent brunette is punished for these very qualities, and this is illustrated in The Mill on the Floss when Maggie is rejected, then drowned while the gentle Lucy marries Stephen.

"She understands what one's talking about so as never was. And you should hear her read - straight off, as if she knowed it all beforehand. And allays at her book! But it's bad - it's bad," Mr. Tulliver added, sadly, checking this blamable exaltation; "a woman's no business wi' being so clever; it'll turn to trouble, I doubt."¹

He has already in conversation with his wife expressed similar pride and doubts:

"Too 'cute for a woman, I'm afraid," continued Mr. Tulliver, turning his head dubiously first on one side and then on the other, "It's no mischief much while she's a little 'un, but an over 'cute woman's no better nor a long tailed sheep - she'll fetch none the bigger prize for that."²

Monsieur de Beauvoir's attitude to his clever daughter was similar to that of Mr. Tulliver; while she was young he had been proud of her achievement, but when she was approaching womanhood, he felt bitterly her lack of conformity to the bourgeois ideal of femininity. The bitterness was more galling to him as his lack of financial success was responsible for the necessity for his daughter to have to earn a living by exploiting her intelligence:

Quel dommage que Simone ne soit pas un garçon: elle aurait fait Polytechnique.³

Ma cousine Jeanne était peu douée pour les études mais très souriante et très polie; mon père répétait à qui voulait l'entendre que son frère avait une fille délicieuse, et il soupirait.⁴

In Maggie's unhappy position, Simone de Beauvoir could recognise herself and through this externalisation of her own problems assess her situation more clearly.

Maggie's father, too, wished that his daughter were a boy:

It's a pity but what she'd been the lad - she'd ha' been a match for the lawyers, she would.⁵

1. M.F., p.13.
2. M.F., p.8.
3. M.J.F.R., p.177.
4. M.J.F.R., p.175.
5. M.F., p.15.

Maggie's love of books and her dislike of girls' pastimes, such as sewing patchwork, were further elements which encouraged Simone de Beauvoir to recognise herself in her. Yet perhaps the most telling point about George Eliot's heroine was her emotional and spiritual isolation. Maggie has a keen need to love and be loved, nevertheless she is alone; she adores her older brother but is often rebuffed by him. His harsh judgements are the result of adherence to narrow and unyielding principles and there is no room in his world for the unpredictable or the passionate. Maggie's deepest needs are not understood by those around her, value her as they might, and when she chooses to remain true to her own conscience by not marrying when she has been compromised, her spiritual isolation is echoed in the social abandonment which she suffers.

At this period in her life, as we have seen, Simone de Beauvoir herself felt alone within the family unit: 'marquée, maudite, séparée';¹ 'je me résignai à vivre en bannie',² and could thus identify closely with Maggie.

This identification with the heroine was not complete or final. There came a moment when Simone de Beauvoir, already strongly confident in her own capacities, in spite of momentary hesitations, separated herself from the destiny of George Eliot's heroine. Although she wept sincerely over Maggie's defeat and death:

C'est au moment où elle se retirait dans le vieux moulin, méconnue, calomniée, abandonnée de tous, que je brûlai de tendresse pour elle. Je pleurai sur sa mort pendant des heures. Les autres la condamnaient parce qu'elle valait mieux qu'eux; je lui ressemblais et je vis désormais dans mon isolement non une marque d'infamie mais un signe d'élection.³

1. M.J.F.R., p.140.

2. M.J.F.R., p.141.

3. M.J.F.R., p.141. In point of fact, Maggie returns, dishonoured, to the mill which has been acquired by her brother only to find that he excludes her from it and she has to find a lodging elsewhere. Also, and ironically, her stupid mother and proud aunt Glegg do not abandon her. Simone de Beauvoir does not remark on the loyalty of Maggie's female relations.

it is clear that Simone de Beauvoir felt that she had gained personal strength through this vicarious experience of defeat. Maggie renounces the possibility of happiness, she clings to old loyalties:

...the long past came back to her, and with it the fountains of self-renouncing pity and affection, of faithfulness and resolve.¹

In the name of the past she accepts the sacrifice of her passionate nature. The flood comes at this supreme moment of renunciation and leads her to be re-united with her estranged brother, their childhood love is renewed and they drown together. At this tragic moment the author emphasises the power of their past life:

The boat reappeared - but brother and sister had gone down in an embrace never to be parted: living through again in one supreme moment, the days when they had clasped their little hands in love, and roamed the daisied fields together.²

The young Simone de Beauvoir having sobbed over Maggie's fate was able to determine that hers would not be a similar one although she and Maggie were similar in being superior beings. She would benefit from Maggie's example and would not merely survive but triumphantly impose herself both on those around her and in a wider world. She would not be ruled, as was Maggie, by loyalty to the past but would derive strength from a vision of the future.

The identification with George Eliot's heroine had helped restore Simone de Beauvoir's self-respect; valuing her own self more, she was enabled to reject what she found unsatisfying about the heroine's destiny and to find in the experience of realising and digesting the book's lessons a positive encouragement to be a writer:

A travers son héroïne, je m'identifiai à l'auteur: un jour une adolescente, une autre moi-même, tremperait de ses larmes un roman où j'aurais raconté ma propre histoire.³

1. M.F., p.485.

2. M.F., p.491.

3. M.J.F.R., p.141.

She had transferred her identification from Maggie to Maggie's creator, George Eliot, and would no longer feel such extreme guilt at being different, she would assume that difference and concentrate on the intellectual life. The reading of The Mill on the Floss had strengthened her determination to write and the intensity of George Eliot's depiction of childhood and adolescence had enabled her to perceive her own story as worthy of literary treatment.

When, in La Force de l'âge, Simone de Beauvoir drew up the account of what she had gained in the period of her apprenticeship, the years 1929-1939, she referred in the context of her supreme ambition - to be a successful novelist - once more to The Mill on the Floss and its author:

Je désirais passionnément que le public aimât mes oeuvres; alors, comme George Eliot qui s'était confondue pour moi avec Maggie Tulliver, je deviendrais moi-même un personnage imaginaire: j'en aurais la nécessité, la beauté, la chatoyante transparence; c'est cette transfiguration que visait mon ambition.¹

We note the continuity of her preoccupations. Simone de Beauvoir was originally fired by her adolescent enthusiasm for The Mill on the Floss, and her enthusiasm was expressed in clear stages: firstly, an identification with the heroine, which allowed her to shed feelings of culpability due to being different and indeed encouraged her to glory in being apart and to interpret her solitude as a source of strength rather than of shame. Then, secondly, identification with Maggie's

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1. F.A., p.375. The ideas, vocabulary and imagery employed in this extract are not dissimilar from those used by Sartre at certain moments in La Nausée which had just been composed at the time recalled by Simone de Beauvoir in her memoirs. Near the beginning of Sartre's novel there is, for instance, a scene in the café Le Rendez-vous des Cheminots where Roquentin, listening to the card-players, suffers an attack of nausée. This is resolved when the waitress plays for him the jazz record Some of These Days. Describing his reaction to the record, Roquentin used the vocabulary nécessité, beauté, transparence and then his life itself is associated with these qualities. He says 'Je suis dans la musique' (p.38) and 'Moi, j'ai eu de vraies aventures. Je n'en retrouve aucun détail, mais j'aperçois l'enchaînement rigoureux des circonstances' (p.39). His life has taken on the necessity associated with a work of art and a similar transformation is what Simone de Beauvoir hoped for at that time from the novels which she would compose.

creator, rejecting the negative aspects of the novel associated with the heroine's defeat at the hands of middle-class society, she was thus enabled to remain in touch with positive and life-enhancing values. Now, at the moment when she was about to compose a novel which she felt sure would be worthy of publication she returned to the spring of inspiration which George Eliot and her fictional heroine had provided, the two were seen as fused, their example was totally positive. We see also Simone de Beauvoir's constancy in her awareness of what would be the subject matter of her future novels: herself and her life, 'ma propre histoire, je deviendrais moi-même un personnage imaginaire'. In fact, by recreating her life in fiction she would be rescuing her self from death and oblivion and her adolescent ambition to write novels over which future adolescents would weep was clearly a way of replacing the idea of eternal life, in which she no longer believed, by a literary equivalent. George Eliot had become united with her creation Maggie Tulliver in a sort of literary Hall of Fame or Valhalla; when she, Simone de Beauvoir, had written her own novels, she, too, would survive in the same way.

When, in her late adolescence, her cousin Jacques signified his willingness to assume the rôle, hitherto played by her father, of cultural initiator, she was eager to receive the knowledge he had to impart. She then devoured greedily the French authors, her 'jeunes aînés', whom he recommended. Nevertheless, this literature, stimulating and liberating though it might be, also came to her through the mediation of another. This fact did not lessen her excitement, but the works by Jammes, Gide, Rivière or Cocteau, could not signify in her life quite so much as the literature which she was shortly to discover for herself which would be free from the taint of association with the world of the French bourgeoisie. This literature came from another tradition, one to which she was already sympathetic because of The Mill on the Floss. Contemporary fiction from England was becoming available in France from 1928 onwards. Novels such as Margaret Kennedy's The Constant Nymph or Rosamond Lehmann's Dusty Answer, which had

enjoyed spectacular success in England, were being translated very quickly into French, and Simone de Beauvoir read them immediately and assimilated all they had to offer.

One such novel which enjoyed a great deal of success, both in London and in Paris, was Michael Arlen's The Green Hat. It appeared in translation as Le Feutre vert in Paris in 1928 and was read almost as soon as it was published with much appreciation and interest by Simone de Beauvoir and her circle.¹

The Green Hat is superficially a shocking novel - 'modern' in its rejection of conventional morality - which deals with the lives of rich men and women who move between London and Paris. It describes their glamorous appearance, their fast cars and their love affairs. What could be thought of as sordid is portrayed as possessing an almost tragic dimension: the heroine, for instance, gives birth to an illegitimate baby in a Paris clinic, the baby dies and the mother herself is very close to death. This woman, aptly named Iris Storm, causes emotional turbulence in all who come in contact with her. She is a femme fatale, taking and discarding lovers, but in spite of this promiscuity she remains in some fundamental way faithful to her original love, from whom she has been separated. Finally, she commits suicide by driving her Hispano into a tree; her choice of death is a noble sacrifice of herself so that others may be happy. She is, in an everyday sense, immoral but has, on a more elevated plane, always remained true to her own inflexible code of honour. Iris is presented in the book as a superior woman, as a true heroine:

J'admirais Iris: sa solitude, sa désinvolture et son intégrité
hautaine.²

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1. In les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée, we are told that Zaza had evidently read le Feutre vert and had absorbed its message, for she nicknamed Simone de Beauvoir 'la dame amoral' (p.327) after its heroine; her friend Pradelle was obviously acquainted with the novel also. Simone lent it, too, to Herbaud who did not appreciate what he felt was an encouragement to feminine promiscuity.
 2. M.J.F.R., p.325.

Simone de Beauvoir's early reading was, naturally enough, partly in quest of models - heroines rather than heroes - with whom she could identify. They could be used to clarify her own situation and their example could provide support in her struggles for autonomy. The reading of The Green Hat helped turn her thoughts towards the fact that she had a body as well as a mind, it was able to contribute the possibility that she could envisage sexual relationships.

The romanticism of Michael Arlen's depiction of innocence in debauch, of fidelity in promiscuity, is not unlike the sentiments expressed in the poem Non sum qualis eram bonae sub regno Cynarae by Ernest Dowson with its refrain: 'I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion'. The poet describes how the memory of an early love intervenes to drain all joy from present encounters and how he has remained deeply true in spite of what may seem disloyalties. It is not surprising, then, that Simone de Beauvoir should have responded enthusiastically to the sentiment of the poem, as mediated through the film Cynara which she and Sartre saw on their visit to London in 1933. In La Force de l'âge she writes:

'Je t'ai été fidèle à ma manière, Cynara': cette phrase, en exergue du film, devait devenir pour nous pendant des années une espèce de mot de passe.¹

The idea that superior fidelity is possible while a host of superficial encounters is occurring, which are not destructive of the deeper loyalty, an idea which is, in effect, a basis of the Sartre-Simone de Beauvoir union, can be seen to have one of its origins in the message of Dowson's Nineties poem or its closely linked literary descendant, the scandalous Twenties novel, The Green Hat. The relationship between Pierre and Françoise in L'Invitée illustrates this particular sexual philosophy, for each of the partners enjoys minor affairs while remaining totally committed to each other.

The Constant Nymph and Dusty Answer, both written by women, strongly

1. F.A., p.149

affected Simone de Beauvoir for their central characters were girls in her own stage of development: Tessa, Judy were in their late adolescence and hovering on the brink of sexual exploration. Once again Simone de Beauvoir had discovered heroines with whom she could identify. She read La Nymphé au coeur fidèle in 1928 and sent it to her close friend Zaza with whom she discussed everything of significance; the novel scandalised Madame Mabilie, Zaza's mother. Like The Mill on the Floss, like Le Grand Meaulnes, it became for Simone de Beauvoir a sort of cult book; initiates could recognise and respond to each other by means of its magic name. In Le Deuxième Sexe II, there is, contained in the chapter La Jeune Fille, an enthusiastic study of Margaret Kennedy's novel and its heroine. Tessa has been able to retain her autonomy even at moments when others' concerns are uppermost in her mind. She is an example of pure authenticity and:

La jeune fille sensible et généreuse, réceptive et ardente,
est toute prête à devenir une grande amoureuse.¹

It is interesting that Simone de Beauvoir read The Constant Nymph not long before her friendship with Sartre.

Dusty Answer, Poussière as it was translated into French, was also a key text in Simone de Beauvoir's emotional and literary development. Emotional, as it showed her a heroine gradually emancipating herself from past ties so as to face whatever the future might bring, with independence and self-sufficiency; literary, as its style, often of wistful fantasy, cast its spell over her own and her next attempts at novel writing would be closely influenced by Rosamond Lehmann. The depiction of a young girl's feelings helped shape her own reactions, too, and played its part when Simone de Beauvoir came to develop the character of an adolescent in L'Invitée. The myth of the adolescent and Rosamond Lehmann's contribution to its development will be analysed at length in Chapter Six.

1. D.S., II, p.119. 'L'harmonieuse Tessa' also figures in the first chapter, L'Enfance, as an illustration of the 'trouble bizarre' puberty and adolescence cause young girls. cf. D.S. II, p.55.

We have seen in Chapter Four that at the moment when Simone de Beauvoir began to read widely for her personal pleasure and from a wish to extend her horizons, the dominant foreign literature, in terms of the number of texts translated and their general availability, was English. This was a culture to which she was most receptive, being able to read texts in their original language should she so wish, and having already gained much pleasure from English novels. She now, therefore, began to read as much as she could, while at the same time consuming books from other literatures.

Irish literature she considered to be so close to English that it may be discussed at this point. Sartre had already read the Irish writer Synge and had gained from him the idea of the Baladin, the wanderer who transforms through his stories the raw material of everyday life, this became one of their common myths. Together they enjoyed another Irish novel in translation, Le Pot d'or. This novel by the Irish writer James Stephens, The Crock of Gold, had appeared in French translation in the early Nineteen Twenties.¹ Stephen's gentle story, full of quiet humour, was read with pleasure by both Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir in the early stages of their liaison. It immediately furnished them with another myth which explained their commitment to literature through its depiction of the Leprecauns and their trade. The Leprecaun's business is to make shoes:

"Do you never do anything else but make shoes, sir?" asked Seumas.

"We do not," replied the Leprecaun, "except when we want new clothes, and then we have to make them, but we grudge every minute spent making everything else except shoes, because that is the proper work for a Leprecaun."²

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1. The Crock of Gold was originally published in 1913 and met with great acclaim, winning the Prince Edmond de Polignac prize of £100 in 1913. The French translation Le Pot d'Or appeared described as 'Littérature anglaise' in a series entitled les Prosateurs Etrangers modernes, along with books by Hardy, Thoreau, Dreiser, Synge and Ananda Coomaraswamy.
 2. The Crock of Gold, James Stephens, ill. W. Jones, Macmillan, London, 1922, p.73.

In the same way, the two young people were self-destined to a trade - the trade of writing, and they called their future books their petites chaussures. Like the Leprecauns they would grudge every minute spent away from productive work: 'Avant toutes choses la littérature'¹ would be their motto. The Crock of Gold did not teach them the importance of literature, but it allowed them to integrate the grandeur of their ambitions into everyday life. The vocabulary of the myth persisted for many years, for in a letter written to Simone de Beauvoir in 1941 Sartre alluded to the novel, L'Invitée, on which she was then working as 'votre belle petite chaussure'².

As has been suggested, contemporary English literature, or rather, literature then considered as English, supplied Simone de Beauvoir with rôle models in the shape of heroines in whom she could recognise her own experience and with myths which gave a rationale to her existence as a potential novelist. It also provided lessons in the technique of novel writing:

Quant aux auteurs anglais, c'est sous un tout autre angle que nous les abordions, ils se situaient dans une société bien assise, ils ne nous ouvraient pas d'horizons: nous apprécions leur art.³

Amongst the English novelists whom she recorded in La Force de l'âge as having read and studied, there figures first of all Virginia Woolf to whose experiments both Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir paid close attention. Themes and characters were often of equal interest. Meredith, an older writer whose novels re-appeared in French translation during the Nineteen Twenties and early Nineteen Thirties, was read carefully by them and Tragic Comedians gave rise, indeed, to a long discussion on the topic of self-consciousness and authenticity. This continued

1. F.A., p.22.

2. Lettres au Castor, Volume II 1940-1963, J.-P. Sartre, Paris, Gallimard, 1983, p.149.

3. F.A., p.52.

to preoccupy Simone de Beauvoir, it figures in L'Invitée where the character Elisabeth is felt by other people to be inauthentic, self-consciously acting the part of an artist or a liberated woman, rather than just being an artist and liberated. Elisabeth in the novel is near breakdown much of the time for she herself senses the lack of true commitment in her life. Ironically, Sartre at one moment¹ reproached Simone de Beauvoir with the observation that she was behaving like a Meredith heroine as, having fought hard for freedom, she was now throwing it away. She reacted to this attack on her self-esteem with painful remorse and feelings of guilt, which took a long time to be assuaged.

Simone de Beauvoir records in La Force de l'âge that she read Wuthering Heights, The Old Wives'Tale, Precious Bane, Point Counter Point, A High Wind in Jamaica and gives the following list where English, Irish and American books jostle together:

Outre les livres que je lus avec Sartre, j'absorbai Whitman, Blake, Yeats, Synge, Sean O'Casey, tous les Virginia Woolf, des tonnes d'Henry James, George Moore, Swinburne, Swinnerton, Rebecca West, Sinclair Lewis, Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson... et même, en anglais, l'interminable roman de Dorothy Richardson qui réussit pendant dix ou douze volumes à ne raconter strictement rien.²

This list continues with French nineteenth-century writers, eighteenth-century letters, books on mysticism and Karl Marx jumbled together with many others.

The result of this reading was the gradual acquisition of a personal literary culture. Elements from these novels fused together to provide her with models, with ideas, such as the scene in A High Wind in Jamaica when the child Emily

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1. "...il me comparait à ces héroïnes de Meredith qui après avoir lutté pour leur indépendance finissaient par se contenter d'être la compagne d'un homme". F.A., p.66.
 2. F.A., p.56.

becomes conscious that she has a self,¹ which will help her with her future work and with technical lessons about the presentation of reality in fiction, the organisation of the story or the development of the characters.

One further writer, strictly speaking from New Zealand rather than from England, who impressed Simone de Beauvoir at this stage in her life and who provided her both with a persona on which she could model herself and with an example of certain technical skills, was Katherine Mansfield.

It was during 1931-32, in Marseilles, that she began to read Katherine Mansfield with deep interest. A colleague, an English teacher, had recommended this author to her and, involved in her first full-time post, she turned to Katherine Mansfield for some of her literary sustenance. She read the short stories, of which two collections had been published in French translation, Félicité and La Garden Party et autres histoires, and also her more personal writings, her Journal and her letters. Such intimate works were always attractive to Simone de Beauvoir as permitting a greater possibility of dévoilement, for the writer was revealed more directly, she thought, in these first person accounts.

The introduction by Louis Gillet in 1928 to Félicité² shows us what qualities in Katherine Mansfield's writing were stressed at that time. Using background material supplied by Middleton Murry, an exotic picture was first sketched of Katherine Mansfield's life in New Zealand, then a pathetic view was given of her illness and death. She was presented to contemporary French readers as a tragic heroine, a lover of France, a supreme artist with an elliptic, poetic style, recreating 'des impressions d'enfance';³ in her work there was everywhere 'une

1. The discovery of the self is often a key scene in the childhood of Beauvoir's heroines, cf. D.S. II, p.55, Emily is remembered.
2. Katherine Mansfield, Félicité, translated by J.G. Delamain and with an introduction by Louis Gillet, Paris, Stock, 1928, forms part of the series Le Cabinet cosmopolite.
3. op.cit., p.xii.

fraîcheur, une beauté d'images qui, en une ligne, peignent un caractère, un site, un paysage...'.¹

Simone de Beauvoir found stories about childhood and early life attractive; she had enjoyed the description by George Eliot of Maggie Tulliver's young days and, herself learning how to write, she was always interested in the technical qualities of those authors she admired. She had not yet completely emerged, moreover, from a fascination with the poetic, so Louis Gillet's presentation of Katherine Mansfield would have been sympathetic to her. Nevertheless, what seems to have principally attracted her in Katherine Mansfield was the persona which she swiftly associated with this writer:

J'aimais Katherine Mansfield, ses nouvelles, son Journal et ses Lettres; j'avais cherché son souvenir parmi les oliveraies de Bandol et je trouvais romanesque ce personnage de 'femme seule' qui lui avait tant pesé. Je me disais que moi aussi, je l'incarnais, quand je déjeunais sur la Canebière au premier étage de la brasserie O'Central, quand je dînais au fond de la taverne Charley, sombre, fraîche, décorée de photographies de boxeurs; je me sentais 'une femme seule', tandis que je prenais un café place de la Préfecture, sous les platanes, ou accotée à une fenêtre du Cintra sur le Vieux-Port.²

The response is complex, there is a naive mixture of pride in her own achievement: she is now a 'grown-up', an independent and mature woman, self-sufficient and sure enough of her own resources to venture wherever she wishes; and also the feeling that she is acting a rôle; she associates herself, for instance, with the ideas suggested by her adjective 'romanesque'. We remember how Simone de Beauvoir frequently appropriated for herself the characteristics and destinies of those literary heroines to whom she felt close. There emerges, however, one dominant idea: solitude, a continuing preoccupation of Simone de Beauvoir in her youth and early maturity. A belief in her own essential apartness, even isolation affected her

1. op. cit., p.xiii.

2. F.A., p.106.

response to Maggie Tulliver as it did when later she read about Iris Storm and united these two vastly dissimilar fictional characters in her mind with the real writer, Katherine Mansfield.

We must question why this was the case. On one level it is certain that as an adolescent she felt an outsider within the family unit; as she still respected and loved her family she took on herself the responsibility for being different and so felt both alone and guilty. As she grew older she became able to value herself and her capabilities more, and could then project the responsibility for her difference on to her family; they, not her, were now at fault. Nevertheless, Simone de Beauvoir's basic position remained unchanged: she was alone and, feeling herself isolated, her interest was aroused by others who suffered, it appeared to her, in a similar way.

On a deeper level, however, a fear of others and a dependence on others haunted Simone de Beauvoir. For illustration, it is helpful to examine the account in La Force de l'âge¹ of the beginnings of the relationship with Simone Jolivet, later to become the companion of Charles Dullin and whom she calls Camille. This woman, about whom she had heard fantastic stories and whom she had not at that stage met, was endowed by Simone de Beauvoir with immense prestige:

Telle qu'elle existait pour moi, à distance, elle avait l'éclat
d'une héroïne de roman.²

Simone de Beauvoir, for various reasons, felt at a great disadvantage when she was compared with Camille, even though she tried hard to defend herself. Camille's dismissive view of her tended to triumph:

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1. The pages 71-80 of La Force de l'âge examine in detail why Camille had such prestige and describe the different stages in Simone de Beauvoir's reaction to it.
 2. F.A., p.71. Once again, we see the close relationship between literature and real life as perceived by Simone de Beauvoir, she turned to novels and the world of novels to provide material for experience. The literary world was as real as the world in which she lived.

Malgré toutes ces restrictions, j'avais bien de la peine à tenir tête à son image.¹

When she eventually met Camille she was overwhelmed by the force of the other's personality which, together with her narcissism, combined to destroy any confidence Simone de Beauvoir had in herself. She writes that after the meeting:

Je marchai longtemps dans les rues de Montmartre, je tournai autour de l'Atelier, en proie à un des sentiments les plus désagréables qui m'aient jamais saisie et auquel convient, je crois, le nom de l'envie. Camille n'avait pas laissé s'établir entre nous de réciprocité; elle m'avait annexée à son univers et reléguée à une place infime...²

The strength of her feelings on this occasion reveal her vulnerability. Outwardly, she had liberated herself, had gained the intoxicating independence to which she refers in the opening words of La Force de l'âge, but nevertheless the disapproving attitude of her family and their milieu had retained some of its effect. In her fear of the negative opinion of Camille and indeed in her acceptance of Camille's verdict we can see the persistence of childhood patterning. We must admire Simone de Beauvoir's underlying robustness of character in this instance, for her defeat was only temporary; with the help of trusted and sympathetic friends she was able to assert the positive nature of her value system and to regain her self-esteem, escaping gradually from the charm laid on her by Camille. Nonetheless, she had taken a severe knock.

This episode demonstrates the fragility of her self-confidence in that she could be so disturbed when she came up against an eccentric, self-regarding personality. It explains why she should admire women who seemed to her self-sufficient, independent and at the same time creative. She adopted Katherine Mansfield as the latest in a series of models.

Happy in her teaching in Marseilles, glorying in the discovery of the outdoor life, aware that she was successfully adapting to the separation from Sartre, she

1. F.A., p.77.

2. F.A., p.79.

saw herself as an embodiment of her ideal: 'la femme seule', and as she was living in an area which had figured in Katherine Mansfield's life, as almost another Katherine Mansfield.

There is, however, an element of complacency in her description, of play acting; she visualised herself, from the outside, almost as she would perceive a character in a novel; of this period she says:

...j'avais cessé de me mépriser. Et même je me plaisais.¹

Simone de Beauvoir projected the qualities which she admired in Katherine Mansfield, and through Katherine Mansfield in herself, on to one of the characters in her second attempt at novel writing. Madame de Préliane would be 'une femme seule', independent, creative, elegant and intelligent. We can see that it is the model of the other writer's life which has inspired her here rather than her fiction: the Journal and Letters, not the short stories.²

Later, Simone de Beauvoir was tacitly to admit the dangers of succumbing to the temptation of living as if one was a heroine in a novel, of living inauthentically, concerned primarily with one's appearance to others, when in her collection of short stories, published as Quand prime le spirituel, she invented the character Chantal, a young teacher in her first post. Chantal, too, likes to think of herself as triumphantly alone and independent:

Et moi, insouciante des visages vulgaires qui m'entouraient, indifférente à l'amitié, à l'oubli, soudain victorieuse, triomphante, je me plongeais avec ivresse dans la solitude, comme dans une eau pure et glacée.³

Chantal is revealed to be merely acting a part, full of mauvaise foi she is not truly 'seule' but always aware of others' opinions and views of her; when two desperate pupils put her to the test by asking her for help she fails them abominably as she is

1. F.A., p.105.

2. The character was also partly based on a friend, Madame Lemaire.

3. Q.P.S., p.49.

not committed to the rôle she has assumed. Simone de Beauvoir cunningly situates Chantal at the beginning of the story by making her talk fulsomely about her favourite books: ...'mes chers inséparables compagnons, mes chers livres: Proust, Rilke, Katherine Mansfield, Poussière, Le Grand Meaulnes...'.¹ These are books which she herself had loved and which she now felt she had outgrown, at least in the cases of Rosamond Lehmann and Alain-Fournier. The irony was directed as much against her past self as against Chantal.

Although the immediate effect on Simone de Beauvoir of her reading of Katherine Mansfield was to adopt that author herself as a model for a way of life, she also found much to attract her interest in the short stories. In the collection Félicité, the first story, Prélude, certainly caught and retained her attention.² The story concerns a young woman, Beryl, who lives with her sister and brother-in-law, Linda and Stanley. Beryl is pretty and attractive and aware of it, her thoughts are beginning to turn towards marriage and sexuality. In a way, she is too aware, for she is conscious that for much of the time she is acting a part, that of the pretty girl, and she is unable, even when alone, to coincide totally with the part she is acting. In some subtle way she cannot become authentic. At one moment she looks at herself in a mirror and at first she admires her appearance, telling herself how attractive she is:

'Oui, ma chère, il n'y a pas de doute, tu es vraiment une petite beauté.'

A ces mots, sa poitrine se souleva, elle prit une longue respiration de joie, fermant à demi les yeux. Mais tandis qu'elle se regardait, le sourire s'éteignit sur ses lèvres et sur ses yeux. Oh Dieu, elle était revenue à son même jeu.

1. Q.P.S., p.50.

2. Simone de Beauvoir refers to Prélude in the second volume of le Deuxième Sexe, for example, where she quotes extensively from this story to illustrate her thesis about the narcissism of the adolescent girl (D.S. II, pp.92-93). In the same book, where there are frequent references to the life of Katherine Mansfield (p.284, p.447, p.482, p.554 among others) there is also a lengthy extract from Sur la Baie about Linda's feelings for her husband and children.

Fausse, aussi fausse qu'avant, fausse comme lorsqu'elle avait écrit à Nan Pym, fausse seule avec elle-même à présent.

Quel rapport y avait-il entre elle et cette personne de la glace et pourquoi ce regard fixe? Elle se laissa tomber à côté de son lit et enfonça sa tête dans ses bras.

- Oh! s'écria-t-elle, je suis si malheureuse. Je sais que je suis sotte, rancunière et vaniteuse. Je joue toujours un rôle. Je ne suis jamais vraiment moi-même un instant. Et, d'une manière très nette, elle vit son faux moi monter et descendre les escaliers, rire d'un rire spécial en roulades quand il y avait des visites; se tenir sous la lampe si un homme venait dîner, pour qu'il puisse admirer la lumière sur ses cheveux; faire la moue et la petite fille si on lui demandait un air de guitare. Pourquoi?

...Méprisable, méprisable! Son coeur était froid de rage. 'C'est extraordinaire comme tu peux persister' disait-elle à son faux moi.¹

Mirrors have been for a long time a fruitful source of literary and visual symbolism.² One has only to think of Lewis Carroll, or of Cocteau, of Stendhal's young Bishop of Agde, or even of what is suggested by the absence of mirrors in Sartre's Huis clos. In the extract from Katherine Mansfield we may see how the author has gained striking effects from having her heroine contemplate with growing horror the self which she presents to the world. In fact, she is using this scene in order to make a profound statement about the rôle of 'respectable' young girls and the humiliations and deceptions willingly, for the most part, accepted in their quest for a husband. Beryl has fabricated a false self in order to please other people, men, potential husbands in particular, and, dazzled by this self, she has

1. In Rosamond Lehmann's Invitation to the Waltz another young girl, Olivia, looks in a mirror in a narcissistic way. This scene is quoted in D.S., II, pp.90-91. This novel was translated in 1933.
2. J.-R. Audet has commented most perceptively on her use in L'Invitée of what he terms scènes de miroir and analyses two of the most significant at length, pp.41-44. Both these scenes concern Françoise, in the second, particularly, Françoise contemplates herself with horror as what she sees in the mirror is not a docile reflection of the everyday Françoise, loved or respected by those around her, but the treacherous betrayer which she has become in Xavière's eyes. She now sees her 'criminelle figure' (L'I., p.438). Simone de Beauvoir face à la mort, J.-R. Audet, Lausanne, l'Age d'Homme, 1979, pp.41-44.

become unable to differentiate between what is authentic in her from what is assumed. Finally, she decides that all is assumed. It is revealing, in the context provided by the Katherine Mansfield story, that Simone de Beauvoir makes her character Elisabeth in L'Invitée look in the mirror on at least four occasions, for Elisabeth is depicted as leading a false life, she in this novel is the embodiment of inauthenticity.

When at the beginning of Chapter Four Elisabeth is preparing to go to the theatre we are told: 'elle se regarda dans la glace avec perplexité'.¹ She is trying to decide what to wear and how to do her hair, but also, at a deeper level she is trying to define herself and her way of life:

Elle aurait pu avoir une autre vie; elle ne regrettait rien, elle avait librement choisi de sacrifier sa vie à l'art.²

Later in the same chapter she catches a glimpse of herself in a mirror and sees herself as another person, as she appears to others: 'elle vit ses cheveux roux, sa bouche amère'.³ But, significantly, after the reader has seen her from the viewpoint of Françoise and Pierre, despised for the falseness of her life, there is a moving scene when she shows that she is aware of her pretence, and this realisation is conveyed by a reference to mirrors. Her life and its trappings, her work, her possessions are a mere décor, bearing the same relation to reality as an image seen in a mirror:

Elle monta l'escalier, alluma l'électricité. Avant de sortir elle avait dressé la table, et le souper avait vraiment bon air. Elle aussi avait bon air avec sa jupe plissée, sa veste écossaise et son maquillage soigné. Si l'on regardait tout ce décor, dans une glace, on pouvait se croire en présence d'un vieux rêve réalisé.⁴

1. L'I., p.74.

2. L'I., p.74.

3. L'I., p.83.

4. L'I., p.237.

Like Beryl, she realises that 'tout était faux'¹ in her life, her actions are 'des actions en toc',² she is 'une vivante parodie de la femme qu'elle prétendait être'³ and all that she knows are 'faux semblants'.⁴ Simone de Beauvoir does not provide a solution in L'Invitée to Elisabeth's problem,⁵ in her enunciation of it, however her reading of Katherine Mansfield may well have helped.

During the early Thirties, Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre also read novels by D.H. Lawrence; she says of them:

nous reconnûmes son talent; mais sa cosmologie phallique
nous ébahit; nous jugeâmes pédantes et puériles ses
démonstrations érotiques.⁶

Nevertheless, D.H. Lawrence could not merely be assigned a place as a minor writer, they were fascinated by what was reported about his personality and read as many of the memoirs which were appearing about him as they could. He is another of the English writers to figure extensively in Le Deuxième Sexe II so that it is clear that Simone de Beauvoir's interest in him was persistent, and in fact he, or rather one of his literary tenets, provided the rationale behind the two first chapters of L'Invitée. These two chapters, which were later suppressed, described the childhood and adolescence of Françoise and the adolescence of Elisabeth. They were written in accordance with D.H. Lawrence's teaching that characters in novels should have "roots". Having followed his example, however, Simone de Beauvoir was later to realise that her characters, sophisticated, urban, intellectual,

1. L'I., p.237.

2. L'I., p.235.

3. L'I., p.237.

4. L'I., p.237.

5. Characters similar to Elisabeth are present in Simone de Beauvoir's later fiction; their problem is only once resolved. Denise in Le Sang des Autres escapes from her inauthentic existence when she joins the Resistance movement.

6. F.A., p.52.

did not need to be situated as his did, coming frequently from a precise regional or social situation. The two chapters contributed little to the claustrophobic atmosphere of L'Invitée where the trio of central characters is locked together in a seemingly never-ending present. It is revealing that Simone de Beauvoir should have been so impressed by D.H. Lawrence's immense gifts that she wished to follow his advice. The power of his beliefs, expressed in his novels, about male-female relationships, the 'cosmologie phallique' which she found so astounding, affected her also, in a negative way, so much so that in 1949 she felt impelled to devote an entire section of the first volume of Le Deuxième Sexe: Les faits et les mythes to a refutation of D.H. Lawrence.¹

When we examine which English authors meant a great deal to Simone de Beauvoir and contributed to her 'apprentissage', we see that, apart from George Eliot who occupied a privileged place in the evolution of Simone de Beauvoir's development and the formulation of her ambitions, those who counted most were either modern women authors, Lehmann, Kennedy, Mansfield, Woolf, or else authors for whom female experience was a central concern, Arlen, Meredith or even D.H. Lawrence. She gained from these writers the possibility of developing her self-esteem by means of appropriating the positive qualities of the heroines with whom she identified; she gained, from George Eliot in particular, encouragement to write, from Virginia Woolf she derived, as we shall see, encouragement to think how to write, how to shape and present experience, and in writers such as Rosamond Lehmann she found material which supported and enlarged her present experience. It is no exaggeration to assert that in her early

1. cf. D.S. I, pp.331-342, D.H. Lawrence ou l'orgueil phallique. In this section she refers extensively and directly to the novels, Women in Love, Sons and Lovers, Lady Chatterley's Lover, The Plumed Serpent, etc. and concludes that Lawrence is, in a profound sense, anti-feminist: 'il est infiniment plus difficile pour la femme que pour l'homme de se soumettre à l'ordre cosmique, parce que lui s'y soumet de façon autonome, tandis qu'elle a besoin de la médiation du mâle' (D.S. I, p.342).

reading of English literature, Simone de Beauvoir acquired a twofold benefit: the renewal of literary technique, and the content of those novels and stories which she read combined to shape her own development as a writer and as a person.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MYTH OF ADOLESCENCE: ROSAMOND LEHMANN

Simone de Beauvoir read Poussière by Rosamond Lehmann in 1929 and her admiration for the novel gave a cast to her thoughts which later experience and reading were to develop. She stressed that young people held a privileged position in her own and Sartre's view of the world.¹ It was not the fact in itself of being young which determined this favoured place in their esteem as not all young people were admired. She clearly felt little that was positive for many of her pupils in Rouen who, 'confites dans la bigoterie',² had already, she asserts, adopted the attitudes and opinions of their 'bourgeois' parents and were thus excluded. Simone de Beauvoir's definition of youth involved the possession of a certain openness of mind, a spontaneity of response and, it must be said, a sympathy with her own beliefs. She and Sartre had developed, in fact, an idealised picture of youth based on a certain updated Romanticism which possessed for them the power and fascination of a myth and to a certain extent they sought out young people who could incarnate their imaginary model.

One of the principal constituents of their common myth involved strong anti-bourgeois feeling; the ideal young person had not yet developed and would, it was trusted, never develop the carapace of 'bourgeois' certitudes. These were, in themselves, repulsive to Simone de Beauvoir as they were based on the attitudes which she felt had oppressed her youth and she assumed that those with whom she was in sympathy would automatically share her hatred for the middle-classes. Speaking of her young friend, Olga, for example, Simone de Beauvoir observes in La Force de l'âge:

1. cf. F.A., p.250.

2. F.A., p.170.

Par son dédain des vanités sociales et son rêve d'absolu, elle nous était très proche.¹

The assumption that adherence to a middle-class value system had a deleterious effect on youth was given a sort of rational justification by asserting that young people who were spontaneous, fresh and unpredictable in their reactions were nearer the truth than others more set in their ways of thinking.² Olga, for example:

...possédait cette vertu que nous tenions pour essentielle: l'authenticité; elle ne truquait jamais ses opinions ni ses impressions.

The suggestion implicit in remarks such as these was that others were 'inauthentic' in their responses and, relying on preconceived opinions, were in fact falsifying their experience.

A further quality which was present in their idealised picture of adolescence was an element of uncompromising revolt:

...nous avions le culte de la jeunesse, de ses tumultes, ses révoltes, son intransigeance.³

This also, involving rejection of the adult world, formed part of Simone de Beauvoir's constant campaign against middle-class values. It was strengthened at the same time by her own unease at the place which she herself occupied in middle-class society: in it by virtue of being a teacher, but not of it because of her hostility to the established order of things.

1. F.A., p249.

2. F.A., p.238. The search for authenticity is a thread which runs from one end to the other of Sartre's Carnets de la drôle de guerre for instance. Authenticity is there represented as a superior moral state and Olga, 'cette conscience nue et instantanée, qui semblait seulement sentir, avec violence et pureté' (op. cit., p.102), is shown as an example of a being who is naturally authentic. Simone de Beauvoir also was preoccupied with the need to be authentic:

nous n'approuvions que les sentiments spontanément provoqués par leur objet, les conduites qui répondaient à une situation donnée.

F.A., p.48

3. F.A., p.250.

Finally, it emerges that to Simone de Beauvoir these qualities which she deemed to be possessed by the ideal adolescent: authenticity, revolt and an intensity of reaction, all qualities derived from liberty from responsibilities, had as result that the adolescent was endowed with a further quality, that of purity.¹ The young person had not compromised with the adult world, had rejected its falsehoods and stereotypes and, true to the nature of his own response, was enabled to become the conscience of those older people who had the merit of understanding and admiring him but who had themselves accepted compromise and the making of concessions in order to fit into existing society.

Simone de Beauvoir emphasises that the real young people with whom she was close did not themselves necessarily judge her in this way, that in fact they resented the character of oracle or conscience forced on them. She and Sartre nevertheless projected these rôles on to their unwilling young friends, and in particular on to Olga and J.-L. Bost² who became the incarnation of the myth

1. The purity has sexual connotations also. Xavière is often perceived by Françoise as possessing the character of la vierge sacrée; her reaction to the thought of Pierre sleeping with Xavière is partly based on jealousy, partly on a feeling of horror at what would be a sacrilege. Similarly, in Dusty Answer, Judith and Mariella are presented in terms which emphasise their virginal purity which must not be defiled and which, in Mariella's case, seems figuratively to resist marriage and maternity.
2. Discussing this young man, Simone de Beauvoir writes:

Nous nous étions amusés, au cours de ces années, à inventer un personnage auquel nous nous référiions souvent: le petit Crâne...Jacques Bost...nous parut l'incarnation du petit Crâne.

F.A., p.253

In this paragraph of almost two pages Simone de Beauvoir describes how she and Sartre forced this young man, only nineteen years old, and a student of Sartre's, to fit into their pre-conceived ideas of how such a person should ideally be. She shows how for herself and for Sartre, their impulses were basically literary. A myth, derived from literature, was attached to a real person who then became a source of literary inspiration. She observes that Jacques Bost inspired the character of Boris in Sartre's L'Age de raison while her own character of Gerbert in L'Invitée has clear affinities with her description in La Force de l'âge of Bost.

which their elders had created. Referring to the process in the case of her friend Olga, Simone de Beauvoir writes:

Elle devint Rimbaud, Antigone, les enfants terribles, un ange noir qui nous jugeait du haut d'un ciel de diamant.¹

From this quotation there also emerge certain further aspects which contribute to the understanding of the myth she and Sartre elaborated together and which help elucidate where it originated.

During Simone de Beauvoir's lengthy apprentice years, progress was hampered partly because she had not yet developed mastery of basic literary skills, such as description and development of characters or manipulation of plots, and partly because of her own type of creative imagination which needed direct experience to use as a springboard. Lacking experience, she set about gaining it through recourse to literature, which provided early inspiration for literary composition. Similarly, it can be shown that much of the inspiration for the mythical portrait of the ideal adolescent came from literature also, for literary references abound. Rimbaud's life was easy to romanticise so that it became both legendary and exemplary, his name is used here as shorthand for the idea of the young man of genius and moral purity who is in revolt against middle-class values.² It is significant that Pierre in L'Invitée is able to create a sort of complicity with the wayward, adolescent Xavière by relating to her the life of Rimbaud. It is as if he were initiating her

1. F.A., p.250.

2. c.f. Etiemble's discussion on the attitudes towards Rimbaud in his book on the poet written with the collaboration of Yassu Gaucière. Rimbaud, Paris, Gallimard, 1936.

into a new cult, a cult where she will eventually play the leading rôle.¹ The incorporation of Rimbaud, in particular, into a private mythology was, like most of their literary experience, common to both Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. In La Force de l'âge, for instance, the latter writes about using Rimbaud and similar literary personalities as models; such people, she thought, lived lives superior to the petty contingencies and compromises which make up everyday life for the rest of mankind:

Je voulais qu'on dédaignât les fuites contingences de la vie
quotidienne, comme avaient fait, pensais-je, Rimbaud,
Lautréamont, Van Gogh.²

Looking back on this admiration, Simone de Beauvoir puts it into context and categorises it as 'une fuite': unwilling to question the bases on which her life was then established, she protected her precarious security by myth-making. Rimbaud was one of the constituent elements of a powerful myth: young, pure and in violent

1. Pierre is a character who is based on two people known intimately by Simone de Beauvoir: Charles Dullin and Sartre. The evocation of the Rimbaud myth is typical of Sartre's obsessions during the Nineteen Thirties. Recently the notebooks which he kept during the first part of the War have been published and references to Rimbaud in these demonstrate the strength and persistence of the myth of Rimbaud for Sartre. He writes on the 22 November 1939:

Vis-à-vis de Gauguin, Van Gogh et Rimbaud j'ai un net
complexe d'infériorité parce qu'ils ont su se perdre. Gauguin
par son exil, Van Gogh par sa folie et Rimbaud, plus qu'eux
tous, parce qu'il a su renoncer même à écrire.

op. cit., p.143

He admires these heroes because they are in some way 'authentic': being close to the brink of madness they go beyond the limits of everyday life. Authenticity, in fact, is considered the supreme virtue, and in order to achieve it 'il faut que quelque chose craque' (ibid.). He accuses himself in effect of being too reasonable, preserved from extremes and madness by his commitment to his self-imposed mission to be a writer.

2. F.A., p.155.

revolt against everyday life which became by sleight of hand 'bourgeois'.¹

Antigone, in Sophocles' play of the same name, can be seen as representing the conflict between the state and established society on the one hand and the individual conscience on the other. She dies because she has not compromised, has asserted a moral superiority and is thus, a mere girl, judging and finding wanting the apparatus of the state.

The third literary reference in the evocation of values and symbols associated with Olga, seen as the incarnation of youth, is to Cocteau's novel Les Enfants terribles. Published in 1929, it describes a group of adolescents who reject the norms of everyday adult life and construct for themselves an alternative, rarefied world, infinitely attractive and alluring.

Early reading then had certainly contributed to Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir's formulation of a myth of adolescence; Greek plays, novels by Cocteau or even by Gide which Simone de Beauvoir had read, had excited her admiration; these authors had singled out adolescence as a special and superior epoch in life.² Later, she and her close friend Zaza had become devoted to Le Grand Meaulnes which is, of course, a novel centred on adolescent experience; indeed, it may be argued that its heroes cling to adolescence and reject the more complicated demands of adult life. Robert Gibson, in his introduction to an English edition of Alain-Fournier's

1. Simone de Beauvoir's sincere admiration for Rimbaud, once purged of the more romantic or mythical content, was celebrated in the ending to the final chapter Vers la libération of Le Deuxième Sexe, where she says that the new, liberated woman will perhaps justify Rimbaud's prophecy:

La femme libre est seulement en train de naître; quand elle se sera conquise, peut-être justifiera-t-elle la prophétie de Rimbaud: 'Les poètes seront! Quand sera brisé l'infini servage de la femme, quand elle vivra pour elle et par elle, l'homme - jusqu'ici abominable - lui ayant donné son renvoi, elle sera poète elle aussi! La femme trouvera l'inconnu! Ses mondes d'idées différeront-ils des nôtres? Elle trouvera des choses étranges, insondables, repoussantes, délicieuses, nous les prendrons, nous les comprendrons.'

D.S. II, p.559

2. Cf. the treatment of adolescence in Gide's novel Les Faux-Monnayeurs.

novel, stresses its youthful aspects, seeing it as:

incomparably the most delicate rendering so far achieved of the romantic adolescent consciousness.¹

All these authors, exciting and interesting though Simone de Beauvoir undoubtedly found them, centred their work for various reasons on male experience of adolescence and were therefore ultimately unsatisfactory. It seems highly probable that Rosamond Lehmann's Poussière was particularly impressive to Simone de Beauvoir and her friends as it dealt with feminine experience in 'its exposure of a young woman's varied and powerful passions'.² It is certain, however, that this novel, together with its successor Invitation à la valse, published in London in 1932 and in France in 1933,³ contributed much to the forging by Simone de Beauvoir of her own personal myth of adolescence. Evidence for this comes from several sources: from La Force de l'âge; from the second volume of Le Deuxième Sexe, l'Expérience vécue, where allusions to Rosamond Lehmann's early novels abound in the chapter entitled La Jeune Fille, and these literary references are used to help frame a definition of the adolescent girl; and from L'Invitée in particular where Xavière possesses many of the traits of the young girls described by Rosamond Lehmann. These three, autobiography, theoretical work and novel, combine to show how Simone de Beauvoir found material in her reading which she adopted into her private mythology and which helped shape her view of the world.

Dusty Answer, Rosamond Lehmann's first novel, was published in 1927 in

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1. Le Grand Meaulnes, Alain-Fournier, ed. R. Gibson, London, Harrap, 1968, p.xxxii.
 2. Janet Watts in her introduction to Invitation to the Waltz by Rosamond Lehmann, London, Virago Modern Classics, 1981, no page references.
 3. Invitation à la valse has proved very popular indeed in France: its position as a sure-fire best seller was so assured that it figured, as number eight, among the very first novels to be published by Livre de Poche, a reflection of its place in public taste.

England and as Janet Watts¹ writes had gained a succès fou amongst literary reviewers and the general public alike. It was translated into French in 1929 when it was given the not very accurate title of Poussière.² The French title has resonances which are altogether different from those possessed by the English one, this latter refers to the epigraph, a quotation from one of the young Simone de Beauvoir's preferred English authors, George Meredith:³

Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life!

This quotation would have agreed well with Simone de Beauvoir's lack of belief in moral absolutes.

Dusty Answer⁴ is the story of the childhood, adolescence and early womanhood of Judith Earle; her own development is bound up with a family who live in the next door house - '...ces enfants d'à côté qui arrivaient, repartaient, mystérieux, saisissants; tous cousins, sauf deux frères, tous garçons, sauf une fille...'.⁵ Judith is clever and goes up to Cambridge University where she reads English and gains a first class degree. Love and friendship form part of the novel's themes: there are suggestions of homosexuality and lesbianism as well as descriptions of heterosexual feelings. Judith often plays the role of observer or of confidante but she develops strong and loving relationships: with places, such as her home or Cambridge; or with people, such as the family next door or with a girl,

1. Janet Watts, op. cit., (no page numbers).

2. Poussière, translated by Jean Talva, Paris, Librairie Plon, 1929 (Feux Croisés, âmes et terres étrangères, 2e série, no. 3). We shall quote from the French as this is the version read and discussed by Simone de Beauvoir and her friends.

3. Cf. M.J.F.R., p.294. The lines are rendered into French thus:

Ah! la réponse jetée à l'âme que brûle le désir de certitudes
en cette vie...quelle poussière!

4. Dusty Answer, Rosamond Lehmann, London, Chatto and Windus, 1927.

5. Poussière, p.1.

Jennifer, who is a fellow student. One by one, all these fail her but at the end of the novel she has overcome the despair caused by these successive abandonments and feels herself to be mature enough to face life alone:

Elle était affranchie enfin de sa faiblesse, de sa futile obsession de dépendance envers autrui. Elle n'avait plus personne qu'elle-même, et c'était mieux..¹

There are, according to the account given in Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée, personal reasons for Simone de Beauvoir to identify with Judith, the heroine of Dusty Answer. The first of these comes from a similarity of age and situation: Judith is intellectually gifted, her background is upper middle-class (although her family are wealthy unlike the de Beauvoirs), but perhaps most important, she is in love with a young man, Roddy, who does not reciprocate her intense feelings, and yet who pays sporadic attention to her thus allowing her to believe that he could perhaps, in time, love her. This situation is reminiscent of the relationship between Simone de Beauvoir and her cousin Jacques as she has described it in the first volume of her memoirs.² A second basis for identification is established by the ending of the novel also, where the heroine decided that she alone shall be responsible for her own happiness and declares that she is strong enough not to need to submit herself to others. This must have been a source of inspiration to the young Simone de Beauvoir, confirming her own desire for independence while at the same time strengthening it.

The novel was clearly a topic for discussion within her circle: her friend Zaza, for example, uses it as a point of reference when analysing her own situation.³ Zaza was overwhelmed by the power of Poussière, and writes to her friend Simone that she found its heroine 'magnifique et attachante', although as a practising Christian she thought the novel was, in the final analysis, unsatisfactory

1. Poussière, p.382.

2. Cf. M.J.F.R., p.316 particularly.

3. M.J.F.R., p.356.

because Rosamond Lehmann does not allow her heroine a religious or spiritual dimension to her life. This last criticism would not, of course, have been accepted by Simone de Beauvoir who was at that time still living at home but in open rebellion against the religion practised by her mother. The resolutely un-spiritual aspects of Judith, a girl eager to enjoy life, make a third basis for identification.

The description in La Force de l'âge of her first adult attempt at a novel reveals the strength of Simone de Beauvoir's attachment to Poussière:

Il y avait un vieux château, un grand parc, une petite fille qui vivait auprès d'un père triste et silencieux; un jour, elle croisait sur une route trois beaux jeunes gens qui passaient leurs vacances dans un manoir voisin...¹

The situation echoes very exactly that of Judith, and Simone de Beauvoir says that the literary style of this attempt owed much to Miss Lehmann, as well as to Alain-Fournier. The influence of Rosamond Lehmann is clearly one that had to be exorcised before Simone de Beauvoir could develop her own voice.

Further evidence for the strength of Simone de Beauvoir's interest in the novels of Rosamond Lehmann can be discovered in the second volume of Le Deuxième Sexe where, in the chapter La Jeune Fille, she discusses the lesbian tendencies hinted at in Poussière,² the moment in the life of the adolescent girl which precedes sexual initiation as described in L'Invitation à la valse³ and the 'générosité docile' of Lehmann's heroines in these two novels.⁴ She qualifies the girls as marked by a sort of receptiveness, they are awaiting experience and while in this expectant state they are amazingly aware and tender. The two later topics do not concern us at this moment but the first, the suggestion of lesbianism, is most relevant to the evolution of L'Invitée.

The fact that Simone de Beauvoir comments on the lesbian aspects of the

1. F.A., pp.64-65.

2. D.S. II, p.96.

3. ibid., pp.90-91.

4. ibid., p.118.

relationship between Judith and Jennifer in Dusty Answer, a lesbianism stressed perhaps when Jennifer deserts Judith for a friendship with another woman, is interesting in the light of the ambiguous relationship described between Françoise and Xavière in L'Invitée. There is in nineteenth-century French literature and earlier a tradition of discussion of this type of relationship, authors such as Balzac and Baudelaire come instantly to mind, and in more modern writing it has been explored, by Colette particularly, so that Simone de Beauvoir is writing in a tradition and is not innovating in this respect.¹ Yet the treatment of the close friendship of the two girls in Dusty Answer bears a strong resemblance to the way the friendship is presented in L'Invitée. Judith and Jennifer are extremely close, emotionally and intellectually, there is, too, some physical contact between them, touching of hands, or goodnight kisses for instance, and they certainly use the vocabulary of love. In the following extract Jennifer, jealous, has asked whether Judith is in love with a man with whom she has just been out:

Je ne veux pas que vous aimiez quelqu'un, dit Jennifer.
J'aurais envie de le tuer. Je serais jalouse.
Son regard soucieux, pesant, se posa sur le visage levé de
Judith et elle ajouta: "Moi, je vous aime."

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1. Although she read much Mauriac in her youth and clearly appreciated him then, Simone de Beauvoir makes no mention of having read Conscience instinct divin the first version of Thérèse Desqueyroux which was published in la Revue Nouvelle in March 1927. This early draft of the novel emphasised both strong revulsion of Thérèse for Pierre's love-making and, equally strong, the sensuality of her feelings for his sister Raymonde:

Rien ne vaut que cet accord inexprimable, que ce rythme
d'un sang étranger qui épouse le rythme de mon sang.

Thérèse does not engage in sexual activity with her friend but the passage in which she evokes her feelings for Raymonde makes clear that she feels for the girl in a lesbian way. When she agrees to marry Pierre it is in order to maintain a close relationship with his sister and it is therefore not surprising that she finds her husband's love-making disgusting. In the final version of Thérèse Desqueyroux the relationship with Bernard's sister is less obviously lesbian; yet something of the power of the original version remains in the description of the early friendship between Thérèse and Anne, as she was renamed, and in the description of the wedding night. F. Mauriac Conscience instinct divin in Oeuvres romanesques et théâtrales complètes II, edited by Jacques Petit, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris, Gallimard, 1979.

A ces mots, sous ce regard, Roddy s'évanouit de nouveau sans qu'elle en souffrît. Jennifer, une fois de plus, aveuglait, obscurcissait tous ses sens, Jennifer seule régnait.¹

In spite of Jennifer's 'power', it is not certain whether the heroine wishes to have an intimate physical relationship with her, although there is a suggestion that Jennifer herself may have wanted the friendship to be transformed in this way. She writes in a letter explaining why she deserted Judith:

Vous êtes pure, éthérée, je ne le suis pas.²

The friendship between the two girls, however, finally escapes precise definition and categorisation; it is not a clearly lesbian relationship, is it a simple intellectual connection between two students; it is, almost by definition, belonging as it does to that moment in Judith's life which precedes fulfilment, shifting and uncertain. She recognises this herself and accepts it:

Mais l'instabilité, l'insécurité avaient leur prix; elles signifiaient douleur, renouvellement, perpétuelle naissance; elles signifiaient que jamais vous n'iriez, à la dérive, vers la résignation, l'acceptation, la vieillesse.³

The same shifting and uncertain qualities are shared by the friendship between Françoise and Xavière in L'Invitée. In Simone de Beauvoir's novel there are similar physical contacts, with the similar uncertainty as to whether these are the innocent demonstration of a simple friendship or whether they reveal an underlying sensuality and possibly lesbian feeling. There is a similar intensity in the

1. Poussière, p.162-63.

2. Poussière, p.364. This is a word which Françoise applies to Xavière: when talking about her friend's face, Françoise refers to 'cette transparence éthérée' (L'I., p.67); Xavière has the power of transferring her ethereal qualities; at a later stage she kisses Françoise 'Sous ces lèvres douces, Françoise se sentait si noble, si éthérée, si divine...' (p.348). Simone de Beauvoir is stressing an apartness which comes to a certain extent from Xavière's virginity. She is at various moments 'cette austère petite vertu' (p.200), 'un ange' (p.232), her face is usually 'impalpable' (p.231), she is 'une âme transparente et pure' (p.272), and so on. Ethereal qualities were also possessed paradoxically by Iris Storm of The Green Hat. See p.221 of the French translation.

3. Poussière, p.166.

relationship: Françoise's commitment to it is so strong that even when she is suffering profoundly because of Xavière's behaviour, she still continues the friendship. Nevertheless, there is an ambiguity in the association which is comparable to that already described in the relationship between Judith and Jennifer. Part of this ambiguity comes from the fact that Xavière's feelings and reactions are always mysterious as she is always described from the outside; she is the Other.¹ Thus the reader has no solid basis by means of which Xavière can be judged. As we are never shown the workings of her mind from the inside, the reader can, like Françoise and Pierre, only ascribe motives to her, the reality of which can never be confirmed. What is equally responsible for the ambiguity is that Françoise herself is uncertain as to what she wants from the friendship. At some points in the novel Françoise wishes to dominate Xavière and this domination certainly does not seem to be merely a question of intellectual superiority alone, or even to belong totally to a situation where a more experienced person takes a young beginner under her wing, although both these aspects are certainly present. There is something maternal in the following extract, for example, where Françoise is trying to persuade Xavière to leave provincial life and its narrowness behind her and to come and settle in Paris which will provide a more stimulating and suitable environment for the gifted person that Françoise esteems her young friend to be:

Et le jour que vous déciderez, vous n'aurez qu'à m'écrire:
J'arrive; et vous arriverez. Elle caressa la main chaude qui
reposait avec confiance dans sa main. Vous verrez, vous
aurez une belle petite existence toute dorée.

- Oh! je veux venir, dit Xavière; elle se laissa aller de tout

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1. Simone de Beauvoir has reversed the roles played in the friendship between Judith and Jennifer: in Dusty Answer the narration is from the viewpoint of the inexperienced Judith who is finally isolated, in L'Invitée the viewpoint is that of the experienced Françoise and it is Xavière who is abandoned. Even Françoise's maturity is not sufficient to enable her to interpret Xavière's actions in a definite way and similarly in Dusty Answer, when more experienced people are seen through the eyes of the adolescent Judith, their true nature remains invisible to her. In a profound sense, she fails to perceive Jennifer or Roddy, they remain incalculable, Other.

son poids contre l'épaule de Françoise; un long moment elles demeurèrent immobiles, appuyées l'une contre l'autre; les cheveux de Xavière frôlaient la joue de Françoise; leurs doigts restaient emmêlés.

- Je suis triste de vous quitter, dit Françoise.

- Moi aussi, dit Xavière tout bas.

- Ma petite Xavière, murmura Françoise; Xavière la regardait, les yeux brillants, les lèvres entrouvertes; fondante, abandonnée, elle lui était tout entière livrée. C'était Françoise désormais qui l'emporterait à travers la vie.¹

Françoise is here the older woman, willing to assume responsibility for Xavière's development and happiness. She has been holding Xavière's hand somewhat in the way a mother would her young daughter's: for encouragement and to increase the confidence which the girl has in her, and yet there is a good deal of sensuality, even an erotic content, in this passage which has very little connection with a mother-daughter relationship. Eroticism is present in the second paragraph where the two women's bodies, not just their hands, are in contact and when in the final paragraph Xavière's appearance is described. We must remember, too, that the description is from Françoise's viewpoint and that any value judgements are her own interpretation of Xavière's appearance: the girl is portrayed in terms which seem to signal her as a potential sexual partner. She is completely available for Françoise it is stressed, and the more experienced woman accepts willingly at the end of this scene what seems to be the girl's gift of herself:

Je la rendrai heureuse, décida-t-elle avec conviction.²

There is, then, a definite suggestion of a physical attraction between the two and yet when at a later stage Xavière dances with Françoise in a way suggestive of physical passion, Françoise rules out the idea of a precise sexual relationship:

Elle sentait contre sa poitrine les beaux seins tièdes de Xavière, elle respirait son haleine charmante; était-ce du

1. L'I., pp.40-41.

2. L'I., p.41.

désir? Mais que désirait-elle? Ses lèvres contre ses lèvres?
Ce corps abandonné entre ses bras? Elle ne pouvait rien
imaginer, ce n'était qu'un besoin confus de garder tourné
vers elle à jamais ce visage d'amoureuse et de pouvoir dire
passionnément: elle est à moi.¹

Xavière's body represents an erotic temptation which is evoked in detail with mention of breasts, mouth, lips, with embraces, and which is then rejected. Nevertheless, Xavière does represent another sort of temptation for Françoise, one which in certain cases may be associated with erotic relationships: she wishes to dominate the girl, to possess her metaphysically as it were. This is suggested in the final words of the passage: for reasons associated with Françoise's belief that she alone is the privileged subjectivity in her particular world, she must dominate the girl, she must annex Xavière completely.

It is here that Simone de Beauvoir's depiction of a relationship between two women becomes much richer and more subtle than that shown in Dusty Answer. Rosamond Lehmann's heroine is, like Françoise, torn between a man and a woman but at the same time she takes care to keep the two relationships apart: Roddy and Jennifer are not allowed to meet. Sometimes, when suffering the pains of her unrequited love for Roddy, Judith seeks refuge with Jennifer, but that is as near as she will let each of the objects of her affections approach one another:

Pas un mot, pas une syllabe à Jennifer. Elle et lui ne devaient jamais se rencontrer, même en pensée. Le plus profond instinct l'interdisait.²

This separation of the objects of Judith's love has as result that Poussière is more simple in design, the heroine moves from one love on to another, whereas in L'Invitée the basic situation is immediately made complex by the fact that Françoise has close emotional links both with Xavière and with Pierre at the same time and thus the patterns in L'Invitée can be more varied. Françoise, committed to both partners, is at different moments torn between her lover and her friend,

1. L'I., p.271.

2. Poussière, p.190.

shifts her allegiance from one to the other and back again, while also trying with increasing desperation to reclaim her former primacy as unique subjectivity; the partners, too, have a relationship with each other which, as it develops, alters the nature of their feelings for Françoise.

The impetus which led Simone de Beauvoir to write L'Invitée came, she tells us in her memoirs, from certain precise events in her private life. These are discussed in La Force de l'âge particularly¹ and relate to the attempt which she and Sartre made to enlarge their couple into a 'trio'. Simone de Beauvoir had gained the friendship of a young girl, one of her pupils in Rouen, Olga Kosakiewicz, whom she had met in 1932. Sartre had later become fascinated by the girl and a difficult and uncertain period in Simone de Beauvoir's life ensued. She was eventually able to exorcise the pain involved in the radical questioning of the bases on which her life had been established by means of literary composition. Remembering the valeur cathartique which she derived from the act of murder at the end of the novel where the character loosely based on herself kills off the character loosely based on Olga, she writes:

Surtout, en déliant Françoise, par un crime, de la dépendance où la tenait son amour pour Pierre, je retrouvai ma propre autonomie.²

L'Invitée is thus a transposition, achieved with great literary skill into fictional terms of an actual situation, painfully experienced in her own life by Simone de Beauvoir. And yet, why should she describe the situation, and in particular, the relationship between the two women in quite this precise way? She had read Poussière in her youth, she had discussed it with her friends. She had been so marked by it that she had attempted imitation and it is clear that she remembered the novel with loyalty so that she could cite Rosamond Lehmann's books as late as

1. Cf., pages 246-71.

2. F.A., pp.348-49.

1949 in Le Deuxième Sexe. Thus when she had the idea of composing a novel based on her own experience of being a woman poised between a man and another woman, it is not surprising that certain elements of Poussière, which describes a similar situation, should surface in L'Invitée. Simone de Beauvoir had, stored within her memory, a framework ready for her imagination.

Rosamond Lehmann also provided further material for Simone de Beauvoir's imagination to feed on in her depiction of adolescence. The heroines of her early novels are trembling on the brink of experience, they are untried, without a fund of worldly knowledge and thus are uncertain of themselves and possibly insecure and yet because of their situation, they feel deeply, react instantly and spontaneously to events and are true to the nature of their responses. Half child and half woman, the Rosamond Lehmann heroine in some way transcends the tired and jaded people amongst whom she moves.

Judith Earle, the adolescent heroine of Dusty Answer, possesses qualities which Simone de Beauvoir found admirable. She is open to experience and reacts to it in a direct and spontaneous way. She lives in a state of heightened awareness which can transform everyday events, such as going out into the garden on a February evening, into actions which admit her into an 'enchanted world'.

Nevertheless, there is to be found at the same time in Rosamond Lehmann's conception of Judith's character a coolness which betokens a certain unwillingness, even a fear, to commit herself fully to a relationship. This is suggested in a significant episode at the beginning of Part Two when she is excited by the idea of renewing her friendship with the alluring family next door. Unable to remain quietly indoors, or to sleep, she swims in the river. There is a sensuality in the description of her feelings as the water surrounds her naked body, a fearful awareness of pain as a necessary part of the embrace and yet her partner is water: fluid, insubstantial, cold. Her surrender to it is not total for her mind is apart from the experience, thinking about the house next door and its occupants. The references to the moon and its mysteries emphasise the virginal aspects of Judith's

feelings:

Cette eau glacée lui faisait mal; elle respirait en haletant, par grands souffles convulsifs; mais, au bout d'un instant, elle se mit à nager avec vigueur, en descendant le courant. C'était une douleur exquise d'être nue sous l'emprise glacée de l'eau... Nager seule, sous le clair de lune, était un mystère sacré, qui la passionnait. L'eau était amoureuse de son corps; elle s'abandonnait, tout en y résistant à sa mordante étreinte.¹

Later in the novel, Judith's love for her fellow student, Jennifer, seems essentially to be non-sexual, in spite of its physical manifestations. This absence of sensuality is shown as the ultimate reason for Jennifer's abandonment of her for the more experienced Geraldine. She needed a more complete commitment than the cool love which Judith was able to offer. Indeed, the heroine is depicted as almost consciously refraining from the commitment for which she is at the same time yearning. She has remained aloof from a total lesbian relationship, partly because of her love for Roddy, and yet he is clearly homosexual and thus unattainable.

In choosing Roddy Judith is, in fact, behaving in a way which conforms with Simone de Beauvoir's later analysis of the adolescent: she is both seeking out yet refusing experience. Her final brave declaration of self-sufficiency and strength, initially so impressive to a reader in late adolescence struggling to assert herself, was on mature reflection seen as narcissistic and sterile.

C'était cela le bonheur - ce vide, cet état de légèreté incolore, ce non-penser, ce non-sentir.²

The concept of happiness for Simone de Beauvoir involved much more than the nothingness so admired by Rosamone Lehmann's heroine. Judith in Dusty Answer chooses to linger in adolescence, the novel's final words being:

Bientôt, elle serait capable de penser: "Ensuite?"
Mais pas encore.³

1. Poussière, pp.57-58.

2. Poussière, p.382.

3. Poussière, p.382.

so that the dominant impression with which the reader is left is of a girl delaying entry into adult life.

It is this presentation of Judith the adolescent which remained with Simone de Beauvoir after she had purged herself of the desire to compose a novel in the poetic, dreamy style of the English author. When in L'Invitée she created the character of the adolescent Xavière, she visualised her both as a destructive menace who must be eliminated if Françoise is to survive, and at the same time as a fascinating and exciting young girl. Many of Xavière's admirable qualities can be traced back to Simone de Beauvoir's study of Rosamond Lehmann. A number of elements in Simone de Beauvoir's life and experience contributed to the elaboration of her perception of adolescence; much in the original shaping of what was to develop into a personal myth came from Rosamond Lehmann.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DEVELOPMENTS IN NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE: VIRGINIA WOOLF AND JAMES JOYCE

The couple formed in 1929 by Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir believed in the power of words to define and possibly to preserve the world about them. They put all their life into words, spending hours describing to each other and to their friends the most trivial details and impressions of their surroundings, such as the reflections in a cup of coffee. They analysed endlessly the behaviour and reactions of their fellows, both those people within their own circle of acquaintance and people unknown to them whom they observed in cafés or in the street. This activity had, in effect, a double purpose: it both endowed them with a common present, as they did not yet enjoy a shared past, and also it was practice for their future mission as writers; thus the putting into words of their close observations formed part of their apprenticeship. There was, however, one problem associated with the description of the world about her which troubled Simone de Beauvoir. Her personality, as she depicted it in her memoirs, had one particular constant - from the violent childhood tantrums evoked in les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée, through the vehemence of the young girl proclaiming that feelings should be intense:

Moi je pensais qu'on ne peut pas aimer sans haïr.¹

through to her account of the passionate mature woman she became - her character was one of extremes. She was, it seems, often moved almost to ecstasy by certain landscapes, situations or experiences; Sartre teasingly labelled these states of mind her trances.² The problem as she perceived it was how to recreate the reality of these intense emotions. Was there a truth possessed by strong

1. M.J.F.R., p.329.

2. F.A., p.44.

feeling which would make its description more worthwhile, more vivid and immediate? This is not, of course, an original topic to be confronted by would-be writers, but it was one on which Simone de Beauvoir had to reflect before she herself could come to terms with creative writing. For help, she turned first to the novels of Virginia Woolf as she felt that this English writer had sought in her fiction to reduce the gap between the direct apprehension of life and its evocation or re-creation in fiction. This author was beginning to be well-known in France, particularly amongst those people interested in the development of the novel. Simone de Beauvoir seems, from the evidence of her autobiography, to have discovered the writings of Virginia Woolf when Mrs Dalloway, which had appeared in London in 1925, was published in French translation in 1929 with a valuable introduction by André Maurois. Sartre and she read with keen interest, and, because of the nature of her literary pre-occupations at that time, she felt personally involved with Virginia Woolf's researches:

...je me sentais très directement concernée par les réflexions de Virginia Woolf sur le langage en général et sur le roman en particulier...¹

André Maurois' presentation of Mrs Dalloway discusses just those topics which would fix the attention of the young Simone de Beauvoir, who was at that moment a person who hoped to write novels, who disdained the techniques of the 'traditional' novel, thinking that they had served their term but were now out of date and who wished to convey in words the 'true', the 'authentic' nature of experience. When she read the following lines about the literary technique of the English author, she must have experienced a sort of fellow-feeling:

Or, tout en appliquant avec beaucoup d'adresse les procédés qui avaient si bien servi les grands romanciers de l'époque précédente, une George Eliot, un Hardy, un Galsworthy, Virginia Woolf n'était pas satisfaite; elle se demandait si leur travail honnête, solide, ingénieux pour produire l'impression de la vie, n'était pas, en un sens plus profond, un

1. F.A., p.44.

travail inutile et même dangereux: 'La vie est-elle ainsi, se demandait-elle, faut-il que les romans soient ainsi?'¹

Maurois continues with a discussion of relativity and authenticity in the genre of the novel and makes an extended comparison with the works of impressionist painters who were dealing with the effects of light. Artists, such as Monet, assert that it is false to claim that objects have a single appearance, there is not the haystack, cathedral or poplar tree but the haystack, cathedral or poplar tree at a particular time of day and in a particular light. He continues:

Il est faux, pensait à son tour Virginia Woolf, qu'un caractère soit un objet à décrire de l'extérieur. Un esprit humain n'est autre chose que le cours continu des images et des souvenirs. Si un romancier veut être vrai, il importe qu'il soit fidèle à ces images glissantes.²

A further telling point he makes, given the interests of the potential novelist who Simone de Beauvoir was, concerns Virginia Woolf's belief in the importance of the simple happiness of everyday life:

...cette vision qu'elle a de la beauté et de la grandeur de la vie considérée dans ses actes les plus simples.³

The attention of both Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir was caught and they went on to read whatever appeared by Virginia Woolf, with extreme care, studying her novels to see if indeed she managed to convey the authentic feeling of existence. They appreciated that she tried to overcome the differences between the way a person experiences the world and the way traditional narration describes that experience, by means of experiments with technique and style. Aware that a person is much more than what he or she seems to be at any one point in time and that the life of the mind is much more than what is suggested by words spoken aloud in conversation, she attempted with her modified stream of consciousness

1. Mrs Dalloway, V. Woolf, Paris, Stock, 1929, préface A. Maurois, p.VII.

2. op.cit., p.VIII.

3. op.cit., p.XII.

or inner monologue, her manipulation of time, and her use of imagery¹ to present characters in a deeper and more intimate manner, revealing their inner life as well as their outer surface.

We propose to examine closely a work by Virginia Woolf so that we can see what Simone de Beauvoir gained from her meditation on the achievement of that author. Mrs Dalloway is the first novel by Virginia Woolf that Simone de Beauvoir read and it is the one to which she refers most often, not only in her autobiography but also in her theoretical writings, le Deuxième Sexe in particular.² She records in the opening pages of La Force de l'âge that she was an eager reader of the English novelist, consuming: "tous les Virginia Woolf".³ As by 1930 only Mrs Dalloway was in translation, it is highly likely that she read other titles in English, borrowing from Sylvia Beach's library, Shakespeare and Company. There is evidence from her library card, held in the Sylvia Beach papers in Princeton, that The Years was borrowed in this way and that, therefore, Simone de Beauvoir read this novel at the time of its English publication, a year before it appeared in French. Sartre did not read easily in English and this perhaps explains why Mrs Dalloway should be the Virginia Woolf novel which Simone de Beauvoir came to know most thoroughly for, being available in French at an early date it was the book whose content and technique she and Sartre could discuss most profitably.

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1. It is revelatory of the power of Virginia Woolf's use of imagery that when Sartre wrote to Simone de Beauvoir in 1931 about the chestnut tree which was later to play such an important rôle in La Nausée, he should refer to Virginia Woolf, comparing his attempt at description, which he refers to as exhausting the arsenal of imagery, with an effort worthy of her own transformation of reality. F.A., p.111.
 2. Simone de Beauvoir refers frequently to the works of Virginia Woolf in the second volume of le Deuxième Sexe, l'Expérience vécue, which is not surprising given the feminist interests of the English writer; cf. p.357; p.417; p.447 where Mrs Dalloway is each time quoted with approval, whether the satisfactions of 'la vie mondaine' or the joys of being a housewife and hostess are evoked. With respect to the latter, Simone de Beauvoir makes it clear that this aspect of women's life can be either an empty round of duty or it can be what Clarissa Dalloway makes of it: generosity and fête.
 3. F.A., p.56.

In Mrs Dalloway Virginia Woolf presents a central character, Clarissa Dalloway, the fashionable, middle-aged wife of a leading M.P. who is a society hostess and her 'double', Septimus Smith, a young clerk married to a simple Italian girl. These two act as opposites: female and male, sane and insane, the one who feels:

For she had come to feel that it was the only thing worth saying - what one felt.¹

and the one whose war experiences have killed in him the ability to respond:

...the appalling fear came over him - he could not feel... His brain was perfect; it must be the fault of the world then - that he could not feel.²

The action of the novel is concerned with the people with whom Clarissa comes into contact, either directly or indirectly, on a Wednesday in the middle of June, 1923, when she is giving a party in her London house, and with Septimus' movement on the same day towards suicide.

In the flow of the narrative the novelist moves from consciousness to consciousness, presenting thoughts and conversations in the third person, but always from within the characters' minds so that the reader experiences their inner life. Although the writer evokes the minutiae of everyday life, the prose style she uses is often poetic in tone with highly charged images which reinforce the ability allowed the reader to penetrate the minds of the characters. Simone de Beauvoir had felt drawn by Virginia Woolf's quest, later summarised in an essay published as a preface to Nuit et jour:

Pour révéler l'humanité, elle emploie avec une exquise maîtrise le récit suivi, le dialogue, le monologue intérieur, le contrepoint verbal, voire: la description des objets et des paysages. Cependant, avec les moyens variés, la substance de son oeuvre n'a point changé: il s'agit toujours de nous donner un contact aussi intime que possible avec cette vie de la conscience qu'elle tient pour la seule réalité.³

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1. Mrs Dalloway, Virginia Woolf, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1964, p.210. The novel will be referred to in this chapter as Mrs D.
 2. Mrs D., pp.97-98.
 3. René Lalou, introduction to Nuit et jour, Virginia Woolf, Paris, Editions du Siècle, 1933, pp.XIV-XV.

And, in spite of being told by Sartre that the attempt to convey the total reality of an experience was fruitless as the writer's mind must of necessity organise what is incoherent and often random, she too adopted a narrative style which employed a technique of inner monologue. In L'Invitée, Simone de Beauvoir adapted this technique to suit her own purposes, restricting herself to the revelations of three characters' minds only, unlike Virginia Woolf who in Mrs Dalloway moved from consciousness to consciousness taking in most of the characters who appeared in the novel.

Simone de Beauvoir found fruitful in her study of Virginia Woolf the way in which this writer forced the careful reader to consider the question of point of view. This matter is linked to that of inner monologue, for in Mrs Dalloway, although the author moves among the thoughts and impressions in the minds of the characters, thus diminishing to a certain extent the direct power of the author's point of view, a definite authorial attitude does emerge. An example of the way Virginia Woolf manipulated viewpoint and interior monologue may be seen in the treatment of the eminent medical specialist, Sir William Bradshaw. He is depicted as an unpleasant person, whose attitude is 'anti-life' in spite of his admirable reputation in a profession dedicated to the preservation of life. The doctor's odiousness is conveyed in various ways traditional in fiction: the author adopts a satirical tone when discussing him, emphasising for example his rich possessions, the deadening effect he has on his wife and the tyrannical power he exerts over his patients. He becomes the immediate cause of Septimus Smith's suicide when he decides to separate the disturbed young man from his wife and send him to a mental hospital; finally, his repulsiveness is confirmed when, towards the end of the novel, Mrs. Dalloway herself, who by this time has earned the sympathy and respect of the reader, rejects him:

Why did the sight of him...curl her up?¹

1. Mrs D., p.202.

None of these methods which encourage the reader to find this character unsympathetic are new, it is easy to show that a person is disagreeable by making him do disagreeable things, but Virginia Woolf has also used a further device which must have caught Simone de Beauvoir's attention as she was to use it herself in L'Invitée.

In Mrs Dalloway Virginia Woolf showed characters from the 'inside', she even passes into the minds of people who play only a minor role in the novel as, for instance, the girl Maisie Johnson, who asks directions of the Smith couple in Regent's Park. The character of Maisie springs to life, for the reader is enabled to coincide with her experience for an instant. Sir William Bradshaw, however, is always shown from the outside; in this world of inner lives he remains an alien. The reader is prevented, therefore, from identifying with him, he remains cut off from the reader's sympathies. Simone de Beauvoir used this same device to great effect in L'Invitée, where she recounts the thoughts passing through the mind of the central character, Françoise, where she enters, too, into the inner life of certain of the other characters, by narrating the thoughts of Gerbert and Elisabeth but refrains from entering directly into the experience of the other members of the 'trio', Pierre and Xavière. These two are always perceived from the outside, and thus it always remains difficult for the reader to identify with them as their experience, thoughts or reactions are never transparent for the reader as are those of Françoise, Gerbert or Elisabeth. Simone de Beauvoir comments on this deliberate limitation of vision:

J'incarnai en Xavière l'opacité d'une conscience fermée sur soi: je ne la montrai donc jamais de l'intérieur.¹

and:

Il y a plusieurs raisons qui m'ont détournée de regarder le monde par les yeux de Pierre; je lui attribue une sensibilité, une intelligence au moins égales à celles de mon héroïne: si je les avais présentées dans leur foisonnement vivant, le

1. F.A., p.349.

roman eût été déséquilibré, puisque c'est l'histoire de Françoise que j'ai choisi de raconter.¹

Virginia Woolf had chosen not to show Sir William Bradshaw from the inside in order to undermine the authority of this 'pillar of the establishment'; she is in a way making a political point about a crucial if less central character by means of a literary device. When Simone de Beauvoir showed Pierre, a character more important in her novel, from the outside she did so partly from artistic reasons of balance and partly for the same reason that made her show Xavière from the exterior: she wished to make a philosophical point central to the theme of her novel about the relationship between Subject and Object. Françoise considered herself at the beginning of the novel as unique subjectivity and the reader is helped to accept her point of view since the two most important people in Françoise's life are seen only from the outside.

There is a similarity, also, in the way that the two novelists present the thoughts of those characters whose inner life they choose to reveal. Simone de Beauvoir did not in L'Invitée use the technique of stream of consciousness,² as developed by James Joyce, for example, and neither did Virginia Woolf in Mrs Dalloway although she used a version, called by Daiches 'recitative', in The Waves. The English writer had read Ulysses when it first appeared but did not immediately appreciate it, describing Joyce's novel as 'a memorable catastrophe - immense in daring, terrific in disaster'.³ She was, nevertheless, acquainted with the famous concluding scene of Ulysses where Molly Bloom lies in bed thinking over the day's activities, her mind ranging far and wide; this scene is written as a stream of

1. F.A., pp.350-51.

2. "the narrative method whereby certain novelists describe the unspoken thoughts and feelings of their characters, without resorting to objective description or conventional dialogue." The Oxford Companion to English Literature, editor Margaret Drabble, Oxford, Oxford University Press, Fifth edition 1985, p.944.

3. How it strikes a contemporary in The Common Reader, p.325.

consciousness. On the other hand, Virginia Woolf, the 'central intelligence' or narrator, never abdicates before her characters as is implied by James Joyce's stream of consciousness technique: in Ulysses Joyce seems to disappear and Molly Bloom, for instance, takes over. Both Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre had become acquainted with the work of James Joyce in the Nineteen Thirties, as is shown in the conversations between them given with La Cérémonie des adieux¹ and there are also several references in La Force de l'âge to the literary technique of James Joyce,² although, curiously enough, Simone de Beauvoir does not record at any one point that she read Ulysses although it was published in 1922 by Sylvia Beach, whose bookshop she frequented, and was available in French translation in 1929. This is a surprising omission given the number of texts of minor importance which she noted as having read. In La Force de l'âge she rejects what she felt was the 'subjective' nature of his presentation of reality, but Sartre was interested in the idea of stream of consciousness and even gave a public lecture on the subject of Joyce in Le Havre while he was a teacher there. In any event, Simone de Beauvoir was involved enough to contribute an appreciative introduction to a book of photographs of James Joyce's Paris.³

There are, nevertheless, at least two occasions in Simone de Beauvoir's fiction when she attempts pure stream of consciousness; the first can be found in her early collection of short stories Quand prime le spirituel when we read the thoughts which pass through the mind of a middle-aged and middle-class woman as she kneels in prayer; the second forms the story Monologue in the collection entitled La Femme rompue, written almost thirty years later. There is a

1. C.A., p.254.

2. See F.A., p.114; p.144; p.191.

3. James Joyce in Paris: His Final Years, Gisèle Freund and V.B. Carleton, preface by Simone de Beauvoir, New York, Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1965.

remarkable consistency of theme and treatment in these two examples: on each occasion the reader is allowed to examine a mind at its most transparent so as to perceive the mauvaise foi of the character who is thereby revealed. In the case of the first story, Anne, the technique reveals what the young author felt was bourgeois hypocrisy: a mother's tyranny masquerading as Christian virtue. In Monologue the hysterical woman's thoughts make clear to the reader what she is herself unwilling to recognise, that she has driven her young daughter to suicide.

In Mrs Dalloway the reader always feels that there is a unity of experience beneath the different nature of the characters. Virginia Woolf, then, rejected the technique, as found in James Joyce, of stream of consciousness while nevertheless insisting on revealing the inner life of her characters. Passing from one to the other, she opens their minds for the reader's attention, so that he can identify with their experience for a moment, but the experience of any one character does not become the single experience of the novel as a whole. Simone de Beauvoir sympathised with Virginia Woolf's initiative and was herself to reject stream of consciousness and first person narrative in L'Invitée. Although the reader is invited to empathise with the experience of Françoise, as the narration is usually from her point of view, and as also the reader can see inside her mind so that hers is most often the viewpoint from which one surveys the events of the novel, there is usually a barrier to total identification.¹ This barrier is represented by the third person narrative. Just as in Mrs Dalloway where the narrative slips in and out of minds, the way into Françoise's consciousness can be signposted, by phrases, for instance, such as 'pensa Françoise', but more usually the reader slips into communion with her thoughts without any signal to indicate that the third person narrative which sees Françoise from the outside has now shifted so that she is seen from the interior. Examples of this can be found on every page but for a closer

1. For a more technical and extended survey of such narrative techniques, evolved from style indirect libre and named "narrated monologue", see Transparent Minds, op. cit., chapter 3 particularly.

examination let us consider an episode in the second chapter. Françoise has invited Xavière to accompany her friend Elisabeth and herself to a night club. The evening begins awkwardly: Xavière is jealous of Elisabeth, while Elisabeth is suffering from an unhappy love affair:

Elles sortirent du café; sur le boulevard Montparnasse, un grand vent balayait les feuilles de platanes; Françoise s'amusa à les faire crisser sous ses pieds, ça sentait la noix sèche et le vin cuit.

- Voilà au moins un an que je ne suis pas retournée à la Prairie, dit-elle.

Il n'y eut pas de réponse. Xavière serrait frileusement le col de son manteau; Elisabeth avait gardé son écharpe à la main, elle semblait ne pas sentir le froid et ne rien voir.

- Que de monde déjà, dit Françoise. Tous les tabourets du bar étaient occupés; elle choisit une table un peu écartée.

- Je prendrai un whisky, dit Elisabeth.

- Deux whiskies, dit Françoise. Et vous?

- La même chose que vous, dit Xavière.

- Trois whiskies, dit Françoise. Cette odeur d'alcool et de fumée lui rappelait sa jeunesse; elle avait toujours aimé les rythmes du jazz, les lumières jaunes et le grouillement des boîtes de nuit.¹

The narrative voice is third person and at first one might think that the women are all being observed by an outside narrator who is watching them leaving the café and walking along the Boulevard amongst the autumn leaves. There is, however, a subtle indication that Françoise is possibly a privileged character, from the point of view of the depth of vision which the reader is allowed to have of her, in that we are given an idea of her feelings with the verb s'amusa. The punctuation here is made to work hard, too, for in this sentence the comma is surely given the strength of 'because': the evocative scents rising from the dry leaves explain why Françoise is experiencing pleasure in walking through them. The other two women are not associated with the action or with its pleasant results, we have no evidence as to

1. L'I., p.30.

whether they enjoy the smell of the leaves or not. The narrator, having slipped unobtrusively into Françoise's inner life, could then again be observing all three characters from the outside as a remark by Françoise is recorded without any commentary, there is a flat statement that what she has said meets with no response and then we are given two successive snapshots of the behaviour of Françoise's companions. The snapshots could have been taken by an outside narrator, but if we think about the force of the verb semblait referring to Elisabeth's indifference to the cold and to her surroundings, the question arises, seemed to whom? Studying the text we realise that Françoise is the observer and that the narrative viewpoint again coincides with her experience. She has made a remark which has been ignored, she must now be looking at her companions in turn, awaiting some response from them. We are still seeing through her eyes when we read the phrase about all the bar stools being occupied as this part of the sentence explains why she had to choose a particular table. Later, when she is sitting at the table, having ordered the drinks, the reader is allowed a more direct access to her thoughts as she indulges in a nostalgic evocation of 'la poésie des bars', the narrated memory signalled by the pluperfect. In details such as this Françoise is endowed with a past. Nevertheless, the narrative voice is still in the third person, the reader is not allowed to coincide totally with the experience of the heroine, even though he is able to share her thoughts and see through her eyes. We are reminded of Genette's useful distinction between 'qui voit' and 'qui parle'.¹

Virginia Woolf eschewed stream of consciousness and used third person narrative, even when she penetrated into the inner life of her characters, signposting the movement from outside narration by phrases such as 'he thought', 'she thought'. She did not allow her characters, even the most privileged like the eponymous Mrs. Dalloway, to use the first person narrative as she wished to

1. Figures III, G. Genette, Paris, Le Seuil, 1972.

subordinate them to the overall theme of the book. This was not dependent on the behaviour or the reactions of any one individual character but rather emerged from the way all the characters behaved and felt and remembered. The author's search for 'life itself' and her meditation on time, we remember that this novel was originally conceived as The Hours, meant that first person narrative, which allows, even encourages, a reader to identify directly with a particular character would have been totally inappropriate.

We have seen an example of the way in which Simone de Beauvoir manipulates the viewpoint in the narrative flow of L'Invitée while retaining a third person narrative voice. There is a further device to be noted which has affinities with elements of Virginia Woolf's later work. At certain moments in the story, particularly moments when Françoise is experiencing an emotion with great intensity, the narrative voice changes from third person to first. There is an example of this shortly after the scene we have examined in the nightclub. The other two women are dancing and Françoise, alone at the table, is looking around at the picturesque, rather exotic, occupants of the nightclub:

Françoise sourit avec orgueil; chacun de ces hommes, chacune de ces femmes étaient là, tout absorbé à vivre un moment de sa petite histoire individuelle, Xavière dansait, des sursauts de colère et de désespoir secouaient Elisabeth. Au centre du dancing, impersonnelle et libre, moi je suis là. Je contemple à la fois toutes ces vies, tous ces visages. Si je me détournais d'eux, ils se déferaient aussitôt comme un paysage délaissé.

Elisabeth revint s'asseoir.

- Tu sais, dit Françoise, je regrette que ça ne puisse pas s'arranger.¹

These moments of intensity are rare and Simone de Beauvoir does not use this device frequently in L'Invitée, but when she does employ it, the effect is striking. As we have seen in this instance there is no transition, no modulation from one person of the narrative voice to another, the reader is suddenly and unexpectedly

1. L'I., p.31.

allowed to coincide totally with the experience of the character. This abrupt insight is swiftly over and then the narrative voice returns to the third person. We are forced at this point to ask two connected questions: why does Simone de Beauvoir use the third person as her basic narrative voice, and yet invite the reader to identify with a particular character? and why does she from time to time switch to the first person? The second question is easier to answer than the first; the reason for the switch in voice is partly connected, as has been suggested, with powerful feeling: the emotion felt by the character is so intense that it overflows from the confines set by third person narrative; and is partly connected with an idea which can only be termed philosophical. The character, Françoise, feels very strongly that she is the privileged consciousness around which her world is organised, she is all subjectivity, the unique subjectivity, and other people are satellites. At certain exalted moments, such as the one described above, her intuition of this state of affairs seems to be confirmed, and at these moments the narrative voice coincides totally with her thoughts. We see then that the switch into first person narrative has a double effect; it suggests that the character is experiencing a moment of heightened emotion and it enables the reader to share that emotion more closely as the barrier which usually separates him from the character has been removed. The unusual concept, that Françoise is the unique subjectivity and that her consciousness of people and things is necessary so that they can exist, is made more acceptable to the reader also when he can see directly through Françoise's eyes. This brings us, however, back to our first question. It might be thought that Simone de Beauvoir would have wished to convey the idea that Françoise thought of herself as Subject and of other people as mere Objects by the simple device of using first person narrative, when the action would clearly be seen through Françoise's eyes and when all other people would of necessity be opaque both to her and to the reader. In La Nausée, for instance, Sartre, by employing the convention that Roquentin was keeping a diary, was able

to use first person narrative and gain the benefits that that implies. The theme of L'Invitée has affinities with the theme of La Nausée, as both novels are concerned with the way their central characters apprehend the world.¹ In fact, Simone de Beauvoir's use of narrative voice is extremely subtle. She wishes the reader to accept Françoise's unusual philosophical point of view, she wishes the reader to sympathise with Françoise, literally to feel with her as she is gradually but inevitably dislodged from the privileged position she claims for herself at the beginning of the book. The reader must be involved with Françoise, for if he is not then the book loses its raison d'être. And yet, Françoise is clearly in the wrong, she is a moral murderer, abolishing the independent existence of those around her, in the opening pages of the novel, an actual murderer in the closing pages. The reader must then also be aware that Françoise has organised her life in such a way that crime is the inevitable outcome. This is where narrative voice plays its part. As we have seen, the narrative is arranged so that the reader usually sees, not with Françoise's eyes, but from Françoise's viewpoint. The subtle but distinct difference ensures that the reader thoroughly understands Françoise's point of view, as he almost shares her experience, but because he does not completely identify with her, the third person narrative preventing total coincidence, he retains just sufficient detachment to be able to judge her behaviour and the philosophical system which animates her. In order that the reader can gain further detachment Simone de Beauvoir at times abandons her heroine and allows one of the secondary characters to take over the narration for a while. Effects of perspective are thus created.

1. One major difference is that Roquentin is more concerned with objects, Françoise with people.

It can be seen then that although both novelists used a similar narrative technique, their aims were different. Simone de Beauvoir had, as she told us in her autobiography, meditated on the example of Virginia Woolf and her presentation of reality and in spite of her initial excitement had eventually found the English author wanting:

Soulignant la distance qui sépare les livres de la vie, elle semblait escompter que l'invention de nouvelles techniques permettait de la réduire; je souhaitais la croire. Mais non! Son plus récent ouvrage, Mrs Dalloway, n'apportait nulle solution au problème qu'elle soulevait.¹

At this early stage in her life Simone de Beauvoir still wished to convey 'total truth' in the novels she would write and could not bear to accept advice from Sartre about the necessity for the literary artist to select and give order to his material,² and so she was led to reject Virginia Woolf's example. She took from Virginia Woolf nevertheless what she found useful and her study of the latter's nouvelles techniques bore much fruit. We have seen how Simone de Beauvoir was led through her reading of Virginia Woolf to clarify her own ideas and to think about the allied techniques of viewpoint and first/third person narrative with regard to the presentation of characters and action. In the end, her use of viewpoint and narrative person allowed the reader something which Virginia Woolf denied him, that is, a measure of freedom vis-à-vis the central character as reader and character hardly ever totally coincide, a space being left for the reader to judge the character.

The question of literary style cannot be eluded. Virginia Woolf had evolved a style which came very near to poetry. On the whole, Simone de Beauvoir's literary

1. F.A., p.44.

2. In this context compare what Sartre wrote in his notebooks while he was on active service at the beginning of the war:

Parbleu, je sais bien que dans un roman il faut mentir pour être vrai. Mais j'aime ces artifices, je suis menteur par goût, sinon je n'écrirais point.

Les Carnets de la drôle de guerre, p.197.

impulses are not poetic,¹ although it must be said that there is a sort of poetry present in L'Invitée in the evocations of cafés, nightclubs, theatres and flea market and in the descriptions of the literary and theatrical characters who inhabit this milieu, which exists alongside but separate from the world of the respectable middle-classes. Simone de Beauvoir had been introduced to 'la poésie des bars'² in her youth by her cousin Jacques and this milieu retained for her the excitement, the freedom and the charm and grace of the exotic which it had then represented in her narrow life. This is the poetry of the city, celebrated in prose rather than verse by Françoise when she looks around her in the nightclub, for instance:

A la table voisine une blonde un peu marquée et un très jeune garçon se tenaient tendrement les mains; le jeune homme parlait à voix basse, d'un air ardent; la femme souriait avec précaution sans qu'aucune ride vînt craqueler son joli visage passé; la petite grue de l'hôtel dansait avec un marin, elle se serrait tout contre lui, les yeux mi-clos; la belle brune, assise sur un tabouret, mangeait d'un air lassé des ronds de banane.³

The charm of the description of this 'floraison humaine' comes partly from the details selected by the author which give depth to the picture and partly from the way that these people are arranged, with a suggestion of a past which has included a variety of feeling and experience, to convey an atmosphere of sensuality.

The poetic image, however, or the concept of the novel itself as extended poetry, which is seen in Mrs Dalloway and exemplified in The Waves, is not usually

1. Sartre's literary impulses did not lead him to poetry either, although he appreciated poetry and was a perceptive critic, fascinated by Mallarmé for example. There is an episode in Sartre's Carnets where he writes a poem and then repudiates most of it with horror:

Je relis mon poème de tout à l'heure et je suis plein de honte, non seulement parce qu'il est mauvais mais parce que c'est un poème, c'est-à-dire, pour moi, une obscénité. Dire que j'ai tutoyé le printemps, c'était de mauvaise grâce mais enfin je l'ai fait.

(Carnets, pp.308-09)

2. T.C.F., p.27.
3. L'I., p.31.

part of Simone de Beauvoir's range. She does, of course, use images which can be forceful: Xavière in L'Invitée is represented at one point as a monstrous octopus-like creature threatening Françoise's very existence:

...elle [Françoise] fuirait jusqu'au bout du monde pour échapper à ses tentacules avides qui voulaient la dévorer toute vive.¹

But generally the few figurative expressions she employed in L'Invitée tend to be conventional. Françoise runs away from Xavière and Pierre in the same scene 'comme si une tornade l'eût emportée',² she is extremely distressed 'comme au sortir d'une agonie'.³ It would seem then that the essential element of poetry in Virginia Woolf's narrative style found little echo in that of Simone de Beauvoir who, once her admiration for the mystical and imaginative had vanished, liked to anchor her characters very firmly in the everyday world. And yet at times Simone de Beauvoir felt it was necessary to transcend the everyday world, to leave it behind and in this context it is instructive to compare an episode from Mrs Dalloway and one from L'Invitée. Both Mrs. Dalloway and Françoise are experiencing the power of jealous hatred. Mrs. Dalloway is thinking about Miss Kilman (a suggestive name) who she fears has alienated her daughter's affections:

It rasped her, though, to have stirring about in her this brutal monster! to hear twigs cracking and feel hooves planted down in the depths of that leaf-encumbered forest, the soul; never to be content quite, or quite secure, for at any moment the brute would be stirring, this hatred, which, especially since her illness, had power to make her feel scraped, hurt in her spine; gave her physical pain, and made all pleasure in friendship, in being well, in being loved and making her home delightful, rock, quiver, and bend as if indeed there were a monster grubbing at the roots, as if the

1. L'I., p.321.

2. L'I., p.321.

3. L'I., p.322.

whole panoply of content were nothing but self love! this hatred!¹

This highly figurative passage suggests most strongly, with its primeval and animal allusions, the intense and primitive power of the life of the emotions and the fear which it can produce. It is a genuine organic image. Simone de Beauvoir describes a similar situation at the end of L'Invitée when Françoise's hatred and fear of Xavière come to a crisis:

Elle traversa le couloir, elle titubait comme une aveugle, les larmes brûlaient ses yeux: 'J'ai été jalouse d'elle. Je lui ai pris Gerbert.' Les larmes brûlaient comme un fer rouge. Elle s'assit au bord du divan et répéta hébétée: 'J'ai fait cela. C'est moi.' Dans les ténèbres, le visage de Gerbert brûlait d'un feu noir, et les lettres sur le tapis étaient noires comme un pacte infernal. Elle porta son mouchoir à ses lèvres. Une lave torride et noire coulait dans ses veines. Elle aurait voulu mourir.²

This is an attempt to write in a heightened poetic style; the use of repetition, the allusions to the colours red and black with the resort to the associations that these possess: hell, darkness, fire, volcanoes, the contrast suggested by feu noir, all these elements are marshalled to convince the reader of Françoise's desperation. The final impression, though, is of conventionality, the rhetoric is not new, from the initial 'elle titubait comme une aveugle' throughout the lengthy association of

1. Mrs D., p.15. Simone de Beauvoir would have read in S. David's translation:

'Elle s'énervait pourtant de sentir ce monstre, cette brute remuer en elle, de sentir dans son âme, au profond de cette forêt encombrée de feuilles, des griffes se planter et d'entendre des rameaux craquer. Jamais n'être tout à fait contente, tout à fait tranquille. A tout moment, le monstre, cette horreur, pouvait bouger. Depuis sa maladie surtout, cela l'irritait, la blessait dans ses nerfs, lui faisait mal, et toute la joie qui vient de la beauté, de l'amitié, que l'on éprouve à se bien porter, à être aimée, à rendre sa maison charmante, semblait chanceler, branler, et ployer comme si, vraiment, il y avait un monstre qui rongait les racines, et que toute la panoplie du bonheur ne fût que de l'égoïsme. L'horreur!' (p.12).

The translation, in fact, has altered hatred to horreur seeking the more concrete.

2. L'I., p.437.

feelings and fire, the reader recognises this vocabulary. It is dramatic, almost melodramatic.

Simone de Beauvoir, then, did not derive a literary style from Virginia Woolf. She did not in L'Invitée usually aim at writing in a poetic way and when she did so, which happened infrequently, the attempt was not wholly successful.

There was one aspect of Virginia Woolf's treatment of Mrs. Dalloway's life which would, however, have impressed Simone de Beauvoir. With Sartre, she wished to make of the novel a medium where the minor joys and pleasures of everyday life could be celebrated at the same time as she discussed topics of higher philosophical import. When, later, she was to read stories by Hemingway she experienced a shock of pleasure and recognition which came from seeing his incorporation into the literary the non-literary experiences of drinking, eating or smoking which formed part of her univers familier.¹ There is in Mrs Dalloway already an acceptance of the everyday world, even a love of the everyday world which was noticed approvingly by Simone de Beauvoir, and to which she returned in Le Deuxième Sexe.² When she read descriptions by Virginia Woolf, such as that when Mrs. Dalloway returns home after a morning's shopping and hears, as she enters her house, the familiar sounds of everyday life:³

The cook whistled in the kitchen. She heard the click of the typewriter. It was her life, and bending her head over the hall table, she bowed beneath the influence, felt blessed and

1. F.A., p.144.

2. As well as previous references which have been noted, Simone de Beauvoir praises Virginia Woolf for the way she treats the natural world. D.S. II, p.554.

3. Mrs D., p.33. The French version which Simone de Beauvoir would have read is:

La cuisinière sifflait dans la cuisine; elle entendit le tic-tac de la machine à écrire. C'était sa vie, et, se penchant sur la table du hall, elle se recueillit, se sentit bénie, purifiée, et se dit, en prenant le bloc où était inscrit un message, que de pareils moments sont des boutons sur l'arbre de la vie, des fleurs de la nuit, pensa-t-elle (une rose exquise avait-elle fleuri pour elle seule?)...

purified, saying to herself, as she took the pad with the telephone message on it, how moments like this are buds on the tree of life, flowers of darkness they are, she thought (as if some lovely rose had blossomed for her eyes only)...

she must have enjoyed this celebration of the trivial actions of daily life.

A final point to be made concerns the way in which Virginia Woolf manipulates time in her novels. In Mrs Dalloway, for example, when the action seems to be confined to the events occurring on one day in June, the reader sees the day precisely set out with a sequence of times from morning to night. In her original notes for this novel, Virginia Woolf referred to it as The Hours, and the reader is aware of the presence of Big Ben whose notes mark the passing of time and divide the day into sections. Yet this simple treatment of time is overwhelmed by the power of memory. The time marked by Big Ben, 'clock time', is invaded and destroyed. The minds of the characters range back and forth, in and out of the immediate present, over their past lives, into the future even at moments, so that the reader perceives that their previous experience is not finished and complete, but ever present and alive. The usual idea of time as a succession is thus transcended and enriched. Similarly The Waves, governed by its central image of waves eternally breaking on the shore and with the use of the present tense in the recitatives, evokes a suggestive and enriched view of time. Simone de Beauvoir was to reflect deeply on the idea of time in the novel and it is clear that this was a topic which she and Sartre discussed during their joint reading. One remembers, for instance, that the subject of Sartre's essay on Faulkner, published in June and July 1939, was La Temporalité. In L'Invitée Simone de Beauvoir still uses a conventional approach to time: the growing apprehensions of the heroine are represented in a clearly defined sequence. Françoise moves through time from one extreme philosophical position - the Other has no reality, to its opposite - the Other exists, therefore I have no reality. The conventional chronological framework of the book is reinforced with references to historical events such as the Munich crisis and then the outbreak of the Second World War. Time, then, is

seen by the author of L'Invitée in the traditional way as a sequence. She did, however, reflect on the treatment of time as she was writing this novel and determined that, although there would, of course, be the passing of time between scenes, the conversations would always be given in full in order to enable the reader to come to his own conclusions about the meaning of these conversations. Thus, in the dialogue time would exist for the reader in the same way that it did for the characters and in fact the extensive conversations reinforce the claustrophobic effect so that the reader shares with the characters the feeling of being imprisoned inside some machine infernale.¹

To summarise, although Simone de Beauvoir was to find much matter for reflection in novelists such as Faulkner and Hemingway, her early reading of Virginia Woolf was surely to help shape her preoccupation with the presentation of characters in the novel, the narrative technique and the organisation of time. Her meditation on the works of Virginia Woolf, a meditation shared by Sartre,² even if it led her finally to reject Virginia Woolf's approach to fiction, helped alert her to the existence of certain literary problems and possible techniques for dealing with them. Certain elements of L'Invitée, in particular the narrative technique by means of which the heroine and certain other characters are revealed to us while others are shown only from the exterior, and also the joy and delight in everyday life owe something to Simone de Beauvoir's study of Virginia Woolf.

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1. With growing command over technique it was in her second and subsequent novels that Simone de Beauvoir was to manipulate the time sequence for various effects.
 2. Cf. '...j'ai tenté de tirer profit des recherches techniques qu'ont faites certains romanciers de la simultanéité tels Dos Passos et Virginia Woolf'. Les écrits de Sartre, p.113.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DETECTIVE FICTION, CRIME, VIOLENCE AND MURDER:
NARRATIVE STRATEGIES AND ATMOSPHERICS

It was not only serious literature written in English that Simone de Beauvoir read and about which she reflected. She shared the enthusiasm of many of her contemporaries for the lighter fiction of the detective story:

Et nous faisons une grande consommation de romans policiers, dont la vogue était en train de se répandre.¹

The importance of this 'vogue' can be measured by the number of series and collections of detective novels, many being translated from the English, which appeared in France in the Nineteen Thirties.²

Some of these collections contained hundreds of titles: Dorothy L. Sayers' Lord Peter et l'inconnu, appearing in 1939, was number 282 in the series of Le Masque; Agatha Christie's novels were also published in this series, Sad Cypress, 1933, translated as Je ne suis pas coupable, came out in France as late as 1944 and was number 339. It was L'Empreinte who published Freeman Wills Crofts whose Un homme à la mer of 1937 was already number 117 in that collection. In her memoirs Simone de Beauvoir points out that in the Thirties the genre of the detective story was beginning to be regarded by the cognoscenti with *some* respect:

1. F.A., p.53.

2. Some of the major series figure in the following list:

L'Empreinte published by Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique

Police Sélection published by Librairie des Champs-Élysées

Le Masque published by Librairie des Champs-Élysées

Le Domino Noir published by A. Redier

Collection Mystères L'X published by Editions Excelsior

Collection Détective published by Gallimard

Les meilleurs romans étrangers published by Hachette contained detective stories, by E. Phillips Oppenheim, for example.

There were also editions in English of detective fiction published by The Albatross of Hamburg, Paris and Bologna and series in French originating in other European countries but available in Paris of which Détective Club, les maîtres du roman policier anglais published by the Editions Ditis of Geneva is a typical example.

La collection de "L'Empreinte" venait de se créer, et des critiques consacraient des articles sérieux à Edgar Wallace, à Croft, à Oppenheim.¹

It is possible that the appearance of critical studies of detective fiction helped justify her reading of this frivolous type of literature but the more earnest Simone de Beauvoir, not accustomed to read for entertainment, was initially encouraged to try lightweight novels by Sartre who had retained from his childhood a lively taste for them. The adventure story he had adored as a boy developed, for him, into the detective story as the latter contained "ce vieux fond d'aventure qui m'amuse".² Writing of his passion for this genre in 1964, he asserts:

...aujourd'hui encore, je lis plus volontiers les "Série Noire" que Wittgenstein.³

While Simone de Beauvoir was completing her studies, her tastes in literature and in the other arts, such as cinema, were strong and decided but restricted, being in many ways typical of her age and class.⁴ The meeting and friendship with Sartre vastly expanded her frame of reference; when she talks about this period in her memoirs she shows how Alain-Fournier had to give way to Pierre Souvestre and Marcel Allain and intellectual films made room for a more popular variety. Sartre had set about democratising Simone de Beauvoir's taste:

Sur les quais de la Seine, Sartre m'achetait des Pardaillan et des Fantômas qu'il préférait de loin à la Correspondance de Rivière et de Fournier; il m'emmenait le soir voir des films

1. F.A., p.53. The same literary phenomenon of serious, critical articles devoted to detective fiction had been happening in England, according to Dorothy L. Sayers: "Mystery-mongering has become self-conscious; monographs and critical studies are appearing" (Great Short Stories of Detection, Mystery and Horror, Second Series, ed. D.L. Sayers, London, Victor Gollancz, 1931, Introduction, p.11).
2. C.A., p.253.
3. Les Mots, J.-P. Sartre, Paris, Gallimard, 1964, p.61.
4. Cf. the account given by the cosmopolitan Clara Malraux in Le Bruit de Nos Pas of her intellectual and literary formation. The range and diversity of her interests form a marked contrast with the narrowness of Simone de Beauvoir's.

de cow-boys pour lesquels je me passionnais en néophyte car j'étais surtout versée dans le cinéma abstrait et le cinéma d'art.¹

The brilliant detective who always resolves the enigma is the obvious modern successor to Pardaillan, Chéri-Bibi or Fantômas: all-powerful heroes. The detective's enquiry into the crime with blind alleys, sudden reverses, confrontations and revelations and inevitable success is the modern equivalent of the plot of the adventure story.²

In the early Thirties, Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre were travelling by train a good deal. She relates that after a year in Marseilles she was appointed to Rouen:

Moi, je ne pouvais rêver un meilleur poste que Rouen, à une heure du Havre, à une heure et demie de Paris. Mon premier soin fut de me procurer un abonnement de chemin de fer. Pendant les quatre années que j'y enseignai, le centre de la ville pour moi demeura toujours la gare.³

Sartre's experience was similar; he commuted between Tours and Paris while doing his military service and then, while teaching, between Le Havre and Paris or Le Havre and Rouen. Thus they both had extensive empty time to be filled. Wishing to divert himself with "Quelque chose de non-culturel...",⁴ Sartre found that the detective novel admirably ministered to his need. Simone de Beauvoir was persuaded and was to discover, with him, that in fact the light reading, undertaken solely for pleasure, supplied serious lessons to those interested in learning the craft of fiction. In the conversations recorded with la Cérémonie des adieux Sartre

1. M.J.F.R., p.338

2. D.L. Sayers went so far as to identify the modern detective story with Arthurian romance and epic poetry; "...the detective steps into his right place as the protector of the weak - the latest of the popular heroes, the true successor of Roland and Lancelot". D.L. Sayers, op. cit., p.16. It could be added that the first and detective story is Oedipus, where the criminal sought for is the detective!

3. F.A., p.125.

4. C.A., p.252.

recognised his debt, which Simone de Beauvoir shared, to detective fiction:

En fait je ne me rendais pas compte que les romans policiers me cultivaient.¹

It is seen from such remarks this genre had something in common with more elevated ones in that its effect is firstly to please and then, by pleasing, to instruct.

Possibly because detective fiction is a minor genre, its conventions reveal themselves more easily, and since in the Nineteen Thirties the English were felt to be its acknowledged masters (or mistresses as women writers were uncommonly successful as plotters of murder), we have turned to Dorothy L. Sayers for an elucidation of these conventions so as to ascertain what someone wholly apart from Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir considered them to be. She discussed the history of the genre and treated with careful intelligence the rules and conventions which had evolved since the pioneering work of Edgar Allan Poe. In her opinion the great contribution of the detective story to the creation of suspense was the use of viewpoint:

The skill of a modern detective novelist is largely shown by the play he makes with various viewpoints.²

Changing the viewpoint enabled the author of the detective story to reveal clues and to maintain suspense both at the same time. It is a highly conscious and sophisticated device by means of which greater depth and complexity could be added to the plot and it is one which both Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir adopted.

Dorothy L. Sayers' main conclusions about the conventions of contemporary detective fiction are that we must firstly take the existence of a tightly organised plot centred on the resolution of an enigma for granted as this is the necessary basis for the genre. Then we should be aware of the vital part played by the

1. C.A., p.252.

2. op.cit., p.34.

external details of everyday life and notice the relative lack of interest in the characters' inner life. The allied questions of narrative voice and viewpoint reveal themselves to be of fundamental importance both as problems and as solutions to technical difficulties. In fact as a way of creating suspense, so necessary to maintain the reader's co-operative interest, the way the viewpoint can shift is a significant feature of the detective story which is written to entertain. If it does not produce pleasure it is nothing.

Many of the points Dorothy L. Sayers made about the technique of this genre are, it can be seen, entirely relevant to the work of Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir and they have acknowledged their awareness of its conventions. Two intelligent readers who were serving their apprenticeship as novelists - both La Nausée and L'Invitée are works which are masterpieces in the literal meaning of the word¹ - found much of immediate utility in their study of these novels. As Simone de Beauvoir, while lecturing in America, stated in 1946, by which time she was a successful author having published three novels, many useful lessons may be drawn from detective fiction:

L'une des tâches les plus difficiles en littérature est la description de l'action: cela exige une grande habileté technique. Le roman policier par définition, décrit une action: s'il est bon on peut en tirer beaucoup de leçons utiles.²

There is an account in La Force de l'âge of how these 'leçons utiles' were put into practice. There, Simone de Beauvoir records how she urged Sartre to re-shape the book on which he was then working; provisionally entitled Melancholia, from the Dürer engraving, it was later to become La Nausée. Originally based on a much earlier work, La Légende de la Vérité, which was written in a stiff and 'old

1. "A piece made by a journeyman or other craftsman aspiring to the rank of master in a guild or other craft organisation as a proof of his competence" (The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, Random House, New York, 1967).

2. E., p.356.

fashioned¹ style, the new novel, too, suffered from a lack of liveliness and sparkle. Simone de Beauvoir criticised it as "une longue et abstraite méditation sur la contingence".² She continues:

J'insistai pour que Sartre donnât à la découverte de Roquantin [sic] une dimension romanesque, pour qu'il introduisît dans son récit un peu du suspense qui nous plaisait dans les romans policiers.³

Sartre was in agreement with this advice and set about re-organising his material. This meant that his philosophical preoccupations with the perception and interpretation of the external world had to be expressed in terms of an enigma to be resolved by a detective with the help of clues cunningly distributed throughout the course of the story.

Keith Gore in his study of La Nausée points out the effect of the great set pieces of description:

...each of them helps to throw light upon the state of Roquentin's thinking at the moment when they take place, and also points the way forward to a closer understanding of the situation in which he finds himself.⁴

There could hardly be a better definition of a clue. The suspense in La Nausée comes from the fact that the enigma, that is contingency, only has partial light shed on it by each separate revelation. Just as in the detective novel, each clue has both to reveal and mystify at the same time. If we examine the very beginning of the novel, we see that the existence of a mystery is immediately suggested in the Feuillet sans date. The mystery must be of serious import as its effects are to make Roquentin feel afraid, he says twice "j'ai eu peur" so that the gravity of the mystery is underlined for the reader's attention. The mystery is at once associated

1. Cf. the discussion of Céline and his language in Chapter Three.

2. F.A., p.111.

3. F.A., p.111.

4. Sartre: La Nausée and Les Mouches, Keith Gore, Studies in French Literature No. 17, Arnold, London, 1970, p.18.

with the way Roquentin perceives objects; searching to understand, as the detective seeks for truth, he gives the particular example of the pebble which he tried to pick up. This pebble is the clue, part of the evidence necessary to resolve the enigma, but obeying the conventions of detective fiction, Sartre, in line with Simone de Beauvoir's advice, both reveals the clue while at the same time obscuring its significance. He does this by means of description in straightforwardly realistic terms from Roquentin's viewpoint:

Le galet était plat, sec sur tout un côté, humide et boueux
sur l'autre.¹

This is exactly the way clues were presented in the English detective story: an enigma exists, a partial revelation which will contribute to its solution is provided by the novelist, who wishes to play fair with his readers, but the explanation is in itself mystifying until it is put together with everything else. At that moment, a complete pattern takes shape when all the clues suddenly receive a new significance as they are seen to contribute to the final, aesthetically pleasing because total, revelation. The pebble which was at the origin of Roquentin's awareness of the mystery reappears at the moment of revelation so as to take its place in the pattern:

Et le galet, ce fameux galet, l'origine de toute cette
histoire: il n'était pas...je ne me rappelais bien au juste ce
qu'il refusait d'être. Mais je n'avais pas oublié sa résistance
passive.²

Just as Hercule Poirot in Agatha Christie's novels recapitulates at the moment of revelation all the elements of the mystery and re-interprets the clues, which have been fairly presented to the reader's attention, so Sartre when his hero finally understands the mystery:

L'essentiel c'est la contingence. Je veux dire que, par
définition, l'existence n'est pas la nécessité.³

1. Oeuvres romanesques, J.-P. Sartre, op. cit., p.6.
2. *ibid.*, p.154.
3. *ibid.*, p.155.

re-interprets the clues supplied by his perception, for example, of Adolphe's braces or the beer glass in the Café Mably. Roquentin is behaving exactly as does the detective in classic detective fiction. By his recourse to the conventions of this type of novel, Sartre has indeed given a genuine excitement to his story and the structure of the detective novel has helped the reader to follow what would otherwise have been a difficult and possibly arid philosophical argument.

Simone de Beauvoir's intellectual commitment to the detective story shows how there were sound technical reasons for her as an aspiring novelist to turn to detective fiction. That her commitment was strong was demonstrated by the fact that she was able to convince Sartre of the practical validity of what had been derived from their reading, which had positive results in the successful re-organisation of La Nausée for which she provided the impetus. At the same time, there are commitments other than intellectual. Sartre, for instance, had been initially attracted to this genre because of his profound loyalty to the adventure story, but there is no record that Simone de Beauvoir shared this particular feeling. Nevertheless, for her also there were emotional reasons which encouraged her interest. It was not merely the stylistic or technical qualities of the detective novel which fascinated her, it was the subject matter, violent crime and sudden death, which enthralled her imagination.

Simone de Beauvoir's interest in real-life crime has already been noted in an earlier chapter.¹ Throughout La Force de l'âge there are recurrent allusions to crimes which captured the popular and her own imagination. The reading of accounts in newspapers and magazines of the sensational crimes and trials of the day followed by lengthy discussions with Sartre, "commentant avec Sartre crimes, procès, verdicts...",² gave her a double satisfaction. It pleased her that the

1. Cf. Chapter One, p.8 and p.14.

2. F.A., p.223.

background evidence often revealed the more unsavoury aspects of the hated bourgeoisie, all the more hated because she held this class responsible for a precise crime, the hounding to death of her beloved friend, Zaza.¹ The detestation of the bourgeoisie explains her addiction to certain magazines:

J'achetais souvent Détective qui s'attaquait alors volontiers à la police et aux bien-pensants.²

Secondly, the study of these crimes helped explain human behaviour, these extreme cases having much to teach about those people who did not have recourse to murder or serious crime in their own, everyday lives, but who, nevertheless, would experience something of the heightened emotions which led to such crimes:

Les cas extrêmes nous attachaient, au même titre que les névroses et les psychoses: on y retrouvait exagérées, épurées, dotées d'un saisissant relief les attitudes et les passions des gens qu'on appelle normaux.³

1. Anne Whitmarsh discusses the death of Zaza and its effect on Simone de Beauvoir's thought in the introductory chapter of her study. She states in conclusion "Simone de Beauvoir saw her death symbolically as an assassination for it epitomised the crushing effect of the bourgeois family on a young girl", Simone de Beauvoir and the Limits of Commitment, Cambridge University Press, 1981, p.7. This echoes what Simone de Beauvoir herself had to say on the subject:

...c'est à travers l'entourage de Zaza que j'ai découvert combien la bourgeoisie était haïssable... L'assassinat de Zaza par son milieu a été pour moi une expérience bouleversante et inoubliable.
T.C.F., p.19.

2. F.A., p.135. For the background to the publication of Détective, see P. Assouline's Gaston Gallimard. It would seem that the magazine was 'longtemps honni par la commission de surveillance des journaux' and was thus esteemed as less than respectable. Nevertheless its financial success was such that it subsidised the Nouvelle Revue française; op.cit., pp.225-231.
3. F.A., p.135. One of the cas extrêmes which Simone de Beauvoir discusses extensively in this context is that of the Papin sisters which stirred her own and Sartre's imagination. In fact, Sartre made the hero of his short story Erostrate reflect about the strange case of these sisters, maids who brutally killed their mistress. This famous crime continued to stimulate attention: Jean Genet's play Les Bonnes, published by J.-J. Pauvert in 1954, was based on it, as was the film Les Abysses made in 1963. There appeared in the same year in Les Temps Modernes an article by a psychiatrist, Dr. Louis le Guillant, analysing the case and contemporary reports of it. He quotes Simone de Beauvoir in his article: "Seule la violence de leur crime...nous fait mesurer l'atrocité du crime invisible", Les Temps Modernes, 19e année, no. 210, novembre 1963, pp. 868-912. See also Oeuvres romanesques, J.-P. Sartre, op. cit., p.1843 for further information as to the effect of this case on the collective imagination.

Both these pleasures, the entertainment gained from revelations of the moral infamy of the bourgeoisie and the delight derived from the feeling that they were learning to understand human psychology, contributed to Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir's joint project: "dévoiler le monde", which involved penetrating the barrier erected by appearances so as to arrive at a genuine understanding of the world about them. At the same time, however, a third pleasure, stimulated by her interest in crime, and so strong that it may almost be termed obsessive, began to emerge for Simone de Beauvoir: a powerful appeal to her imagination.

Simone de Beauvoir's interest in crime was centred principally on those instances where murder had been committed and certain of these actual crimes clearly set her literary imagination to work. An encounter, during the year she spent teaching in Marseilles, with people connected with what she calls a "fait divers retentissant",¹ had literary consequences as it helped to inspire her third attempt at composing a novel. The memory of another fait divers, an account of a young man who killed a taxi-driver rather than confess that he was unable to pay the fare, assumed a symbolic importance and is associated in her memoirs with the ending of L'Invitée when the heroine kills Xavière rather than have Xavière live with the knowledge of Françoise's moral poverty.

Her preoccupation² with murder and violent death betrays an obsession

1. F.A., p.104. See this study p.21- p.22

2. This is not too strong a word, the allusions to murder in La Force de l'âge are surprisingly frequent. Apart from the examples to which reference has already been made, Simone de Beauvoir discusses her reactions to the trials of Gorguloff (p.116 and p.137), Falcou (p.135), Hyacinthe Danse (p.138), Violette Nozières (p.138), Michel Henriot (p.222) and Malou Guérin (p.223). All these people were accused of murder. Then, also, she describes her speculations about the reasons which led an apparently happy young couple to commit suicide (p.136), her thoughts about the suicide of one of Sartre's pupils (p.258), her delight in a scandal associated with religious milieux in Rouen, which involved the death of a girl (p.255), the lively interest, similar to that stimulated by Freeman Wills Crofts' (whom she persistently calls Croft) detective novels, excited by Inspector Guillaume's report into the death of le Conseiller Prince (p.221), while her indignation at the violently repressive treatment meted out to juvenile delinquents (p.221) should perhaps also be included in this list.

central to her thoughts and to her inner, affective life so powerful as to go beyond what was necessary to her literary imagination. A meditation on death forms a thread which runs through her work. To take her four early novels alone: after the murder of Xavière in L'Invitée, there is the agony and eventual death of Hélène which form the framework of Le Sang des Autres; death provides the principal theme of Tous les hommes sont mortels, the story of Fosca, the immortal man to whom death is denied; Les Mandarins, dealing with the immediately post-war period, cannot ignore death, both on a world and on an individual scale.

This haunting by the spectre of death,¹ her "horreur morbide de la mort",² was both described in her memoirs and expressed in her fiction. It seems most likely that detective fiction helped exorcise for her during this period of her life "le côté scandaleux de la mort",³ as she termed it in her interview with Audet. The detective or murder story, each example of which contains, by definition, at least one case of violent death, is paradoxically, a reassuring and not a shocking genre. The death which, for a while, has disturbed the even tenor of existence is finally incorporated into a satisfying pattern, pleasing both to the intelligence which has been grappling with the problem and to the emotions in so far as justice has been done and balance has been restored. When the detective solves the case at the end of the story, he puts death in its place for death becomes an integral part of the pattern, both necessary yet subordinate to the revelation of the enigma. Furthermore, death in the 'classic' English detective story, the most widely available in France in the Thirties, is deprived of its more fearful and grisly associations, since one of the conventions of the genre is that the puzzle should

1. Jean-Raymond Audet discusses Simone de Beauvoir's 'obsession de la mort' with great perception in his study entitled Simone de Beauvoir face à la mort. Also, cf. Simone de Beauvoir: Encounters with Death Elaine Marks, New Brunswick N.J., Rutgers University Press, 1973.

2. Audet op.cit., p.139.

3. Audet, op.cit., p.139, Simone de Beauvoir's own words.

remain as far as possible on the intellectual plane and that the reader's feelings should not be deeply engaged:

A too violent emotion flung into the glittering mechanism of the detective-story jars the movement by disturbing its delicate balance.¹

A detached attitude in the narration is necessary, while the victim should either be a character the reader finds unpleasant or one whose acquaintance he has barely had time to make. The horror associated with violent death is thus diminished. This calm acceptance of death, an essential part of the detective story, would appeal strongly to someone whose mind was occupied by the social and psychological implications of those murders dealt with in famous trials, who was personally fearful of death and whose dreams, moreover, were haunted by the memory of a particular death, that of her friend, Zaza:

Souvent la nuit elle m'est apparue, toute jaune sous une capeline rose, et elle me regardait avec reproche.²

Detective stories played their role in Simone de Beauvoir's inner, imaginative life. When she says:

Le crime était un de mes fantasmes familiers.³

the fantasies she describes very often took the shape of situations drawn from the pages of detective fiction. Indeed, she says that she amused herself constructing plots for such stories centred on herself as the murderer. Her most frequent fantasy was of being in a courtroom, in the dock on trial for her life, having committed a murder. There is romanticism in this powerful evocation of one person ranged against the bourgeois apparatus of the court:

Je me voyais dans le box des accusés, face au procureur, au juge, aux jurés, à la foule, portant le poids d'un acte dans lequel je me reconnaissais, le portant seule.⁴

1. D.L Sayers op.cit, p.38.

2. M.J.F.R., p.359.

3. F.A., p.325.

4. F.A., p.325.

Literary reminiscences help shape the fantasy: the thought of Julien Sorel, in the courtroom at Besançon on trial for his life defying the bourgeoisie's scorn with his own heroic disdain, springs inevitably to mind, particularly in view of Simone de Beauvoir's admiration for Stendhal. This particular type of scene is, moreover, almost a cliché of the detective story. There is an abundance of such confrontations amongst the stories translated from English into French in the Nineteen Thirties; we have, for instance, Dorothy L. Sayers' Strong Poison which appeared in France in 1934 as Lord Peter, détective. This novel opens dramatically with Harriet Vane in the dock on trial for her life, the judge, the jury, the lawyers and the public are described in detail. When the jury cannot agree, a re-trial is ordered and the novel finishes with a fresh courtroom scene. In a further example, Flowers for the Judge by Margery Allingham, it is the 'jeune premier', Mike Wedgwood, who braves the rigours of the Central Criminal Court at the Old Bailey and faces the prosecution's hostility from the infamy of the dock. This book was published in France in 1936 as Un homme disparaît and contains, again, closely described episodes, amounting to whole chapters, where the apparatus of the court is arrayed against the prisoner on trial for his life. There is evidence that Simone de Beauvoir was acquainted with this novel and that it fired her imagination. In the suppressed first chapter of L'Invitée, begun in 1937 and recently published in les Ecrits de Simone de Beauvoir, there is the following passage:

...dans un roman policier qu'elle avait lu, il y avait un homme qui se volatilisait soudain, à l'angle d'une rue noire; mais c'était un roman et d'ailleurs on le retrouvait à la fin.¹

In this passage the heroine, caught out in cheating by a teacher, is wishing she, too, could simply disappear so that her fault would remain unknown. In the Allingham novel, Tom Barnabas, disappears in the way described by Simone de Beauvoir:

...aussi complètement et discrètement qu'une goutte d'eau dans une mare.²

1. E., p.288.

2. Un homme disparaît tr. H. Jeandidier, Paris, Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1936. Collection l'Empreinte no. 99, p.8.

As one witness reports:

...une minute, il était là, et la minute d'après il n'y était plus. Au milieu du trottoir, à quinze yards de cette boutique, il a disparu pour ne plus jamais revenir.¹

Another says, using a phrase which was to impress Simone de Beauvoir:

Monsieur Barnabas marchait le long du mur...
- Eh bien, il s'est volatilisé.²

Mr. Campion, the detective, eventually tracks down the missing Barnabas and the novel ends with their meeting and conversation, during which the method of disappearance is explained. Simone de Beauvoir has referred to this story in her own novel so as to demonstrate to her young heroine that in life, as in detective fiction, there are no miracles.

The form taken by Simone de Beauvoir's fantasies owed much to her reading of English detective fiction. This genre also inspired her creative imagination when she set about writing L'Invitée as we shall see.

There is a further point to be made: associated with the idea of murder in detective stories is a feeling for justice, for the fair distribution of responsibility and culpability. When the detective reveals all at the end of the novel he absolves the innocent and accuses the guilty. When Simone de Beauvoir tells us that:

...sous son aspect métaphysique, le meurtre me fascinait.³

and when she insists, in her fantasy life, that she has committed murder she is, in effect, asserting a form of truth: not that she is indeed a murderer, but that she is morally guilty. She was aware that she was, by her way of life, committing a "crime" which might be termed metaphysical. She was disloyal to those ideals which she and Sartre held as fundamental. Having struggled to achieve independence she had now alienated it and was relying on her relationship with

1. op.cit., p.121.

2. op.cit., p.233.

3. F.A., p.325.

Sartre to justify her life in the same way that her belief in God, and before that in her parents, had justified her life when she was a child. Talking in the early pages of La Force de l'âge of the relationship with Sartre, she makes this link explicitly:

Sartre n'avait que trois ans de plus que moi; c'était, comme Zaza, un égal; ensemble nous partions à la découverte du monde. Cependant, je lui faisais si totalement confiance qu'il me garantissait, comme autrefois mes parents, comme Dieu, une définitive sécurité.¹

In the first part of this quotation, Simone de Beauvoir asserts that she and Sartre were on the footing of equality, but her use of the conjunction cependant to introduce the subsequent sentence reveals that she did not choose, in the early days of their relationship, to recognise this equality in a practical way.² Acute enough to be conscious that she was, in this way, betraying the liberation for which she had fought so bitterly, betraying those principles on which her alliance with Sartre was founded and also betraying herself as an autonomous and responsible being, she was not willing nevertheless to modify her way of life:

Depuis que j'avais rencontré Sartre, je me déchargeais sur lui du soin de justifier ma vie; je trouvais cette attitude immorale mais je n'envisageais aucun moyen pratique d'en changer...³

Feeling that she was leading a life of 'mauvaise foi', a life based on an immoral attitude, and led by her narcissism⁴ to identify with the characters in detective

1. F.A., p.31.

2. J.-R. Audet goes so far as to state that Sartre became for Simone de Beauvoir a permanent substitution for the absent God of her childhood. "Voilà Sartre consacré Dieu pour toujours!" he exclaims à propos of this very quotation, op.cit., p.55.

3. F.A., p.325.

4. For narcissism, we have already seen how Simone de Beauvoir identified herself with the heroines of those books she admired. She was herself Maggie Tulliver (M.J.F.R., p.141), Iris Storm in The Green Hat (M.J.F.R., p.327), Théagène in André Laurie's L'Ecolier d'Athènes (M.J.F.R., p.115). Discussing this passionate identification, Elaine Marks refers to Simone de Beauvoir's "metaphysical exhibitionism" and sees it as the motivation of her career as a writer, op.cit., p.115.

fiction who were arraigned for murder, she was, by putting herself on trial and finding herself guilty, expressing in her fantasy life a reality of her everyday existence and punishing herself for her acceptance of it.

Murder fascinated her because it was such an extreme crime that only punishment for murder could purify her from the guilt associated with her immoral abdication of independence. Simone de Beauvoir shows no concern here for victims and she was clearly uninterested in the mechanics of crime. Her fantasy is concerned with its epilogue, the trial, not with the wish to kill a precise person for the victim of her murder was her own independent self. Put on trial, she would have to assume an entire and total responsibility for the crime and by this means regain her alienated independence. Simone de Beauvoir had no intention of committing murder in reality but to save herself she would commit it symbolically in her writing. In this way part of the subject matter and form of L'Invitée was decided.

The detective story satisfied for Simone de Beauvoir a number of different exigencies during the period when she was preparing herself to be a writer. It gave her formal lessons about the technicalities of novel-writing, it helped minister to her preoccupation with death, where it possibly helped reassure her fears, it gave a framework for her feelings of culpability and helped determine the shape of her first successful novel. The minor, frivolous genre, on examination, reveals itself to be of prime importance to the development of Simone de Beauvoir as a novelist.

It is interesting and useful to remember at this point that another French author with a deep interest in literature written in English, writing at the same time as Simone de Beauvoir but not as yet known to her,¹ was also inspired by the

1. The first reference to Queneau in Simone de Beauvoir's memoirs comes in La Force de l'âge where, on p.295, she records having read les Derniers Jours (1935): "Deux auteurs, inconnus de nous, éveillèrent notre sympathie: Queneau avec les Derniers Jours et Michel Leiris avec L'Age d'homme". She did not make Queneau's personal acquaintance until much later, during the war (F.A., p.575), and it was at this time also that she and Sartre became friendly with Michel and Zette Leiris.

genre of the detective story. Raymond Queneau took it as his departure point for Pierrot mon ami, published in 1942, within a few months of L'Invitée. In the prière d'insérer, composed by Queneau himself, the reader is explicitly, if teasingly, told or warned of this:

En écrivant Pierrot mon ami, l'auteur a pensé qu'évidemment le roman-détective idéal (le lecteur devenant trop malin) serait celui où non seulement on ne connaîtrait pas le criminel, mais encore où l'on ignorerait même s'il y a eu crime, et quel est le détective.

Un grand savant l'a dit "Il y a un certain plaisir à ignorer, parce que l'imagination travaille". (Claude Bernard)¹

Queneau's playful imagination juggles with the conventions of the genre in an amusing way to the puzzlement of the reader whose mind has been set to work along certain lines by the allusion to detective fiction. Finally, however, Queneau finishes his story in such a way that the reader must suspect that his earnest study of this verbal artefact has been misplaced:

Après un dernier regard sur les deux poubelles, Pierrot s'en alla.
Arrivé au coin de la rue, il s'arrêta. Il se mit à rire.²

Is Pierrot laughing at himself? Is Queneau laughing at his hero or at the reader? There is no way of knowing, but for our purposes it is sufficient to note that the author has played with the conventions of this popular and accessible branch of fiction in a self-conscious fashion, as he writes towards the end of his novel:

Il (Pierrot) voyait le roman que cela aurait pu faire, un roman policier avec un crime, un coupable et un détective, et les engrèvements voulus entre les différentes aspérités de la démonstration, et il voyait le roman que cela avait fait, un roman si dépouillé d'artifice qu'il n'était point possible de savoir s'il y avait une énigme à résoudre ou s'il n'y en avait pas, un roman où tout aurait pu s'enchaîner suivant des plans de police, et, en fait, parfaitement dégarni de tous les plaisirs que provoque le spectacle d'une activité de cet ordre.³

1. Raymond Queneau, Pierrot mon ami, Paris, Gallimard, 1942.

2. Pierrot mon ami, p.221.

3. op.cit., pp.210-11.

As a child will amuse himself with bricks, constructing a high tower for the express pleasure of knocking it down again, so Queneau reveals himself to have been playing in this novel. It will be seen that his use of the genre is much more subtle than that of Simone de Beauvoir and is, in fact, a prefiguration of the concerns of the Nouveau Roman, as Professor F. Kermode has shown.¹ What is to the point, nevertheless, is that Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir and Queneau were, at the same time, to find this relatively minor genre a fecund source of inspiration, deriving from it material for the literary imagination to play with.

When L'Invitée is examined, what aspects are present in this novel which owe their development to detective fiction in the English tradition? Two main categories are revealed: technical and thematic. The use of dialogue, the presence of an enigma which has to be solved by means of clues, thus creating suspense and the device of a shifting viewpoint are some of the "leçons utiles" which Simone de Beauvoir gained from her reading of this type of fiction and put into practice. A preoccupation with the idea of death, and, in particular, with murder, the

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1. In Novel and Narrative, The Twenty-fourth W.P. Ker Memorial Lecture, University of Glasgow, 1972, Professor Kermode analyses the significance of the structure of the detective story and sees it as providing much inspiration for the Nouveau Roman:

It happens...that in rejecting the old novel some self-conscious makers of the new have taken a special interest in detective stories. Their reasons for doing so are that they mistrust 'depth'; they regard orthodox narrative, with its carefully developed illusions of sequentiality and its formal characterisation, as a kind of lie. Thus they admire the detective story, in which the hermeneutic pre-occupation is dominant at the expense of 'depth', in which 'character' is unimportant, and in which there are necessarily present in the narrative sequence enigmas which, because they relate to a quite different and earlier series of events, check and make turbulent its temporal flow. The presence of ambiguous clues is also of great interest, especially if you give up the notion - and here is a major change - that they ought to lock together with great exactness, and abandon the attempt at full hermeneutic closure (all loose ends tied up). (p.16)

Queneau, Robbe-Grillet and Butor are discussed in this context.

annihilation of one human being by another, forms the basis of the whole novel, and demonstrates how Simone de Beauvoir has taken the subject matter of the detective story and has adapted it for her own purposes. L'Invitée is written under the sign of murderous death. The reader is immediately invited to meditate on this topic and apply his conclusions to what he is about to read since Simone de Beauvoir has chosen to use a quotation from Hegel as epigraph:

Toute conscience poursuit la mort de l'autre.

It is significant that the two main women characters first met at a party to celebrate the hundredth performance of the production by the actor-manager Pierre Labrousse of Sophocles' Philoctètes.¹ Their friendship, therefore, was instituted because of the performance of a tragedy. A third incitement which encourages the reader's thoughts to turn to the idea of death is the play on which the heroine and her companion are jointly working. This is Shakespeare's Julius Caesar which deals with the question of assassination. J.-R. Audet perceives this choice of play as exemplifying 'la technique parfois très subtile de l'auteur',² and it is true that Julius Caesar is most suitable for Simone de Beauvoir's purposes. The choice of this particular play, however, was not made with total freedom. We are told in La Force de l'âge that the character Pierre was modelled to a certain

1. This play is one of the few survivals from the two suppressed early chapters of L'Invitée: cf. Les Ecrits de Simone de Beauvoir pp.306-16. Reference to it in the published version of the novel helps establish an atmosphere, but in the suppressed chapter, the production of the play has genuine significance: Françoise disobeys her mother by going to see it, thus signalling her revolt against her milieu and at the play she meets Pierre for the first time.

2. Audet, op.cit., p.18.

extent on the actor-manager Charles Dullin¹ whose work at the Théâtre de l'Atelier had made him one of the most successful of the theatrical avant-garde:

J'ai emprunté à Dullin certains traits superficiels.²

In the autumn of 1936, shortly before she started to compose the first draft of L'Invitée, she and Sartre attended rehearsals of Dullin's production of Julius Caesar; she has described this experience in her memoirs and has related the keen emotions it awakened in her. What more natural, having endowed her hero with some of Dullin's characteristics, than to have him produce the very play on which she had recently seen Dullin at work? Not only the choice of play becomes significant but the use Simone de Beauvoir makes of it.

The play figures directly in the action of the novel in the third chapter when Françoise attends a rehearsal with Xavière for whom this is the first visit behind the scenes. The reader is forced during the course of the chapter to reflect again on the subject of death for the scene being rehearsed turns out to be the opening of Act Two which concentrates on the pressures experienced by Brutus from his conscience, his friends and his wife. The part of the scene which is emphasised

1. Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre had become friendly with Dullin in 1932 through the intermediary of Camille and had gained much enjoyment from attending rehearsals of his Richard III. His gifts astonished them, both his genius for acting:

Quand il disait un texte, il donnait l'impression de le créer à neuf.

and his range, for

Dullin réglait aussi les mises en places, les jeux de scène, les éclairages... (Both quotations from F.A., p.128)

This initiation into a totally new milieu delighted Simone de Beauvoir, who, over the years, became an habituée of Dullin's theatre.

2. F.A., p.351.

by Simone de Beauvoir is Brutus' meditation on death.¹

Dullin, whose example had inspired Simone de Beauvoir to make her hero an actor-manager rather than a writer or a teacher, had in his own production taken the role of Cassius. Although she terms this part 'assez ingrat',² it can offer much, Gielgud did not disdain it in the film version of Julius Caesar. Is it significant, then, that she made her fictional actor-manager switch from being a murderer to being the victim, Caesar himself? Pierre acts Caesar because he is the character with the strongest associations with blood and violent death and who even returns from beyond the grave. As portents of Caesar's death, statues spout blood, when he is assassinated the conspirators bathe their hands in his blood. The murderous aspects of the play which monopolises Pierre and Françoise's efforts are stressed during the episode of the dress rehearsal. The narrative viewpoint has passed to the 'inauthentic' Elisabeth who is desperately self-conscious and trying to experience a real emotion, while succeeding only in becoming more embroiled in mauvaise foi. Suddenly the murder of Caesar on the stage³ stimulates a sequence of violent images in Elisabeth's thoughts:

La nuit se fit dans la salle; une image traversa Elisabeth, un revolver, un poignard, un flacon avec une tête de mort; tuer,

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1. There is direct quotation from the play here, which underlines the preoccupation with death. Shakespeare's lines -

It must be by his death; and for my part
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general. (Julius Caesar II,i)

become in Françoise's adaptation:

il n'y a pas d'autre moyen que par sa mort; quant à moi je
n'ai aucun grief personnel contre lui mais je dois considérer
le bien public. (L'I., p.49)

2. F.A., p.295.
3. The link between Caesar the victim of assassination and Pierre in L'Invitée is suggested several times when Xavière refers to his rôle as a ghost; she seems attracted by the idea of loving or being loved by a ghost, a being to which she ascribes some of her own qualities. (L'I., p.71; L'I., pp.314-15).

Claude? Suzanne? Moi-même? Peu importait, ce sombre désir de meurtre gonflait puissamment le coeur.¹

Immediately, and in character, Elisabeth dissociates herself from these black feelings:

Elle soupira, elle n'était plus à l'âge des folles violences, ce serait trop facile.²

but nevertheless the point has been made: Julius Caesar is a play dealing with death and the connection between the death on stage and death connected with the characters in the novel has been established.

The apparent movement of the novel for the heroine is from life to death. At the beginning of L'Invitée, Françoise's mission is to animate, literally, to give life to what is around her. If we look at the early pages we see, for example, that the theatre where she and Gerbert are working is dead:

- Ce théâtre tout mort, chaque fois que je le traverse, ça me donne le frisson, dit Gerbert, c'est lugubre.³

but Françoise can resuscitate it:

Elle descendit un étage et poussa la porte de la salle; c'était comme une mission qui lui avait été confiée, il fallait la faire exister, cette salle déserte et pleine de nuit.⁴

At the end of the novel, however, Françoise takes an extreme decision, to take life away: "Anéantir une conscience".⁵

This movement would appear to create of L'Invitée a detective story written 'the wrong way round', for the apparent crime, the murder of Xavière, takes place at the end of the novel rather than in the opening pages as is usually the case. There seems, moreover, to be no mystery; Françoise clearly is the murderer, and

1. L'I., p.83.

2. L'I., p.83.

3. L'I., p.14.

4. L'I., p.12.

5. L'I., p.440.

without an enigma to resolve there can be no detective. This is not the case, for the murder of Xavière is only on one level the crime around which this novel is constructed. The real crime is elsewhere and, as in the majority of detective stories, it is described in the opening pages of the book: when Françoise tells Gerbert:

- On ne peut pas réaliser que les autres gens sont des consciences qui se sentent du dedans comme on se sent soi-même, dit Françoise. Quand on entrevoit ça, je trouve que c'est terrifiant: on a l'impression de ne plus être qu'une image dans la tête de quelqu'un d'autre.¹

It is true that Françoise is the guilty person but her real crime is to abolish other people as independent consciousnesses; in fact, she commits the philosophical equivalent of murder by annexing other people, both their physical reality and even their inner life and arranging them as part of the decor of a universe of which she forms the centre:

Leurs pensées, ça me fait juste comme leurs paroles et leurs visages: des objets qui sont dans mon monde à moi.²

Those few people about whom she cares, Pierre principally and, to a lesser extent, Gerbert and Elisabeth, are assimilated into her scheme of things by being made co-

1. L'I., p.17. For English readers this discussion has affinities with Alice's conversation with Tweedledum and Tweedledee about the Red King's dream.
2. L'I., p.17.

subjectivity with her.¹ When Françoise talks to Pierre about "notre avenir commun"² and he lovingly says to her: "Toi et moi, on ne fait qu'un",³ she repeats this to herself like a magic incantation or a charm to protect her from "des pensées louches" which would otherwise be harmful. All other people are effectively cancelled out and this can be seen as Françoise's basic offence. Xavière is the incarnation of the Other and Françoise's murder of her is the logical consequence of the original crime: the annihilation by Françoise of the Other as independent subjectivity.

Having been terrified of being a picture inside someone else's head, while insisting that other people are merely images in her own world, she is defenceless when the strength of Xavière's hate combined with her own feelings of guilt make Françoise see herself as a picture inside the young girl's mind:

Et maintenant, elle était tombée dans le piège, elle était à la merci de cette conscience vorace qui avait attendu dans

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1. Iris Murdoch's first novel Under the Net (Chatto and Windus, London, 1954) interestingly enough deals with a character whose life is arranged on a similar basis to that of Françoise. Jake Donaghue begins the novel with the confident assumption that he can understand the world and that the world is, in fact, organised in such a way that his is the central consciousness around which reality arranges itself. His friend Finn, Anna the woman he loves, Hugo who so preoccupies him, his acquaintances, all neatly fit into a scheme of things with himself at the centre:

I sometimes feel that Finn has very little inner life...and that is why he follows me about, as I have a complex one and highly differentiated. Anyhow, I count Finn as an inhabitant of my universe, and cannot conceive that he has one containing me; and this arrangement seems restful to both of us.

By the end of the book, he, like Françoise, has to realise that other people exist, that events occur independently of him and that his attempts to explain reality have all been failures. Unlike Françoise, his reaction is to laugh at this state of affairs, and accept it. Iris Murdoch studied Sartre's thought and her book, Sartre: Romantic Rationalist, appeared only the year before she published Under the Net.

2. L'I., p.26.
3. L'I., p.27.

l'ombre le moment de l'engloutir. Jalouse, traîtresse, criminelle.¹

There is an enigma in the novel, associated with Françoise's crime: this is the existence for her of the Other.² When she befriends Xavière she denies the subjectivity of the Other but, because of the friendship, she is gradually forced to accept the reality of Xavière's existence as independent consciousness.

Simone de Beauvoir tried to imitate the tight construction of the detective story, arranging episodes with care so that their significance is not immediately accessible, in the same way that a detective story writer will plant clues which will only become comprehensible in the light of later events. Even in the first part of L'Invitée when Françoise is shown as profoundly happy in her relationship with Xavière, whom she has integrated into her own life:

Ce qui l'enchantait surtout, c'était d'avoir annexé à sa vie cette petite existence triste; car à présent, comme Gerbert, comme Inès, comme Canzetti, Xavière lui appartenait; rien ne donnait jamais à Françoise des joies si fortes que cette espèce de possession.³

there are indications that all is not well. These take the form of minor resistances on the part of Xavière which disconcert Françoise:

Elle examina avec un peu de perplexité la figure maussade de Xavière.⁴

or, referring to the expression on Xavière's face when she is observing Elisabeth's tears:

...il y avait sur son visage du mépris et presque de la méchanceté. Françoise reçut avec un choc désagréable ce jugement malveillant.⁵

1. L'I., p.438.

2. In fact, the existence of the Other is explicitly linked by Françoise with the idea of death cf. pp.322-23. There is also an echo of La Rochefoucauld when Françoise refers to her inability to contemplate the possibility either of her own death or of the Other's life.

3. L'I., p.21.

4. L'I., p.22.

5. L'I., p.33.

At the time these resistances are not interpreted by Françoise as indicative of anything save childish petulance, it is only later that they will be revealed as profoundly significant: they were, in fact, clues which will, when put together with other evidence, induce Françoise eventually to confront the fact of Xavière's independent existence.

Simone de Beauvoir was determined to suppress in her own novel psychological analysis presented directly to the reader by an omniscient author. She wished to allow her reader to study the behaviour of her characters as it revealed itself in what they said and what they did. As her characters were intellectuals firmly anchored in their Parisien milieu and whose interest was mainly in words, there is rather more conversation in L'Invitée than accounts of actions and yet for these people, as possibly for Simone de Beauvoir, words have the effect of actions and so the conversations become as she intended, the action itself. Quoting the example of the American detective novelist Dashiell Hammett, as well as that of Dostoevsky, she asserted:

...toute conversation doit être en action, c'est-à-dire
modifier les rapports des personnages et l'ensemble de la
situation.¹

If we look at a particular example from L'Invitée we can see how Simone de Beauvoir set about achieving the integration of conversation and action which was her aim. In Part Two, Chapter Five the opening scene forms a whole and the way the author proceeds there is typical of her method.

The previous chapter has ended with Françoise in despair. She has been forced to accept that the Other exists and cannot be annexed, the assumptions on which she has based her life have proved false and she is contemplating 'la faillite de son existence'.² The scene, which is described in six pages, gives an account of

1. F.A., p.353.

2. L'I., p.324.

how Françoise is able to recover her emotional balance. She is encouraged by Pierre to recognise that although they are separate and independent subjectivities there is reciprocity between them and therefore each can co-exist in loving friendship. Of these six pages, five are made up of conversation and the five short paragraphs which are not in dialogue form contain Françoise's thoughts or describe her reactions to what has been said. The viewpoint throughout the scene is that of Françoise and we see how her anguish is transformed during her conversation with Pierre, the final words reveal, by means of an action, the reassuring effect of what has been said:

Elle prit son visage dans ses mains et le couvrit de baisers
sans rien répondre.¹

At the end of the scene Françoise, kissing Pierre, shows that she no longer considers herself alone. An action has taken the place of words but an action which demonstrates their effect. The remainder of the chapter, ironically enough, destroys her serenity which, she is to discover, is based merely on the illusion of reciprocity rather than on a reality. The discovery is made during a conversation where Xavière is resolutely silent about an important matter, thus maintaining her independence vis-a-vis Françoise. Silence here has the force of speech. Silence, the choice of refusal to communicate becomes an action with repercussions on Françoise and on the relationship with Xavière.

Simone de Beauvoir makes a most subtle use of the shifts, from an adapted third person narrative to a narrative based on Françoise as central consciousness, and switches point of view, from Françoise to Elisabeth or to Gerbert. She achieves effects of distance and perspective, for example, when after showing Françoise and Pierre's delighted enthusiasm for Xavière she entrusts the narrative to Elisabeth who sees Xavière with cynicism.

1. L'I., p.330.

Self-consciously, Simone de Beauvoir composed L'Invitée with the conventions and structure of the English detective story in mind:

...les épisodes sont souvent aussi énigmatiques que dans un bon roman d'Agatha Christie...¹

and constructed it around the idea of a crime, firstly moral and then an actual murder. At the beginning of the book Françoise was as morally guilty as Simone de Beauvoir had felt herself to be when she eluded responsibility for herself. The consequence of this, the murder of Xavière, enabled the author to have her heroine involve herself with an act for which she alone could be responsible, and this, by a sort of analogy, helped absolve her own self from her own 'crime':

Le meurtre de Xavière peut paraître la résolution hâtive et maladroite d'un drame que je ne savais pas terminer. Il a été au contraire le moteur et la raison d'être du roman tout entier.²

Crime and guilt, the specific crime of murder, the abolition of the Other, are at the very centre of the novel's inspiration, an inspiration which found help for its expression in a genre of fiction for which murder was the theme.

1. F.A., p.352.

2. F.A., p.349.

CHAPTER NINE

AMERICAN LITERATURE: A LIBERATION

The United States of America, l'Amérique as Simone de Beauvoir generally refers to this country in her memoirs, exercised an attraction over her which she experienced at a profound level and which was reflected both in the events of her personal and intellectual life as well as in her writing. In the period concerned, her acquaintance with America remained entirely theoretical and it must be said that her view of it was derived from the workings of the imagination rather than from factual knowledge. It was not until the immediate post-war period that first-hand experience was substituted for supposition. She was then able to make extensive visits to the U.S.A. between 1947 and 1951.¹ Her personal account, l'Amérique au jour le jour, which appeared in book form in 1948, having been extensively serialised from December 1947 onwards in Les Temps Modernes, was based on immediately recent experiences and impressions formed during her first two visits. The book reveals the extent to which America formed part of a mythical and exotic landscape, a landscape of the mind. This is expressed particularly in the opening pages when she is describing that period before the time when the city and the country of her imagination were replaced by direct experience of the real New York and then the real America.

It is revealing in l'Amérique au jour le jour to read her description of those moments when the legendary and the real world collide. Sometimes these are wonderfully exhilarating as when she discovers drugstores which are even more

1. From January to May 1947 Simone de Beauvoir went on a lecture tour of the U.S.A. sponsored by the French Government's Cultural Services department. She returned to Chicago for a fortnight in September the same year to be with the well-known writer Nelson Algren and made a third trip from May to July 1948 when she also explored Central America with him. In 1950 she spent a further two months in the States and in 1951 passed a final month there in Algren's company. In all she spent nearly a quarter of her time in America during these four years.

thrilling than her imagination could predict:

...ils résument pour moi tout l'exotisme américain.¹

she says happily. Their mixture of disparate elements, their lack of any quality which offers a European reference is so exciting that the idea of poetry is invoked:

Ils sont à la fois primitifs et modernes, c'est ce qui leur donne cette poésie spécifiquement américaine.²

In this instance reality does more than confirm the image, it transcends it, thus enhancing its potency.

Sometimes these moments are disappointing as when she visits the Grand Canyon on muleback. There is in her description a feeling of having been somehow cheated; although she has seen the Grand Canyon for herself and has thus fulfilled an ambition, giving life to a mental image, Simone de Beauvoir feels that she has not gained any real knowledge of it. Her acquaintance with the landscape of the Canyon remains superficial, unlike, for instance, her profound feeling for the hills of Provence. These she felt she had conquered and made her own by means of prolonged and repeated physical effort. The Canyon is obstinately alien to her. The sentence in which she summarises her failure is worthy of Saint-Exupéry's Petit Prince:

Les paysages non plus ne donnent rien si on ne leur donne pas quelque chose de soi.³

It contains a profound truth. One feels that the Grand Canyon of her imagination about which she writes:

A cause de ce mot si beau, Colorado, à cause d'images aperçues, il y a longtemps, bien longtemps j'ai rêvé de cet endroit; je ne sais trop pourquoi il me semblait entre tous hors d'atteinte: il incarnait le mystère de tous les paysages que je ne découvrirais jamais, il était le défi douloureux de l'impossible.⁴

1. l'Am., p.26.

2. l'Am., p.26.

3. l'Am., p.179.

4. l'Am., p.176.

represents an image of much more power than the Grand Canyon which she actually saw can ever possess. Nevertheless she has seen it, something has been gained even though her pleasure in the achievement remains ambivalent. She has exchanged a potent myth for a precise, if ultimately meaningless, souvenir.

We see in these two examples how Simone de Beauvoir brought with her to America ready-made assumptions about what she would encounter there. We see also how strongly inscribed in her consciousness were the ideas and images of America, its life and its landscapes.

Throughout *l'Amérique au jour le jour* Simone de Beauvoir chronicles her extensive travels, her conversations and her observations. Not only does she note down what strikes her eyes as unfamiliar, exotic or typical, she also comments extensively on what she sees and seeks to interpret phenomena¹ very often in the light of her existing, possibly defective ideas.

We have discussed *l'Amérique au jour le jour* because this book most clearly demonstrates the extent to which Simone de Beauvoir was governed in her view of America by images acquired at an earlier stage of her life, the Nineteen Thirties. It clearly reveals the nature of those images.

When, in 1960, Simone de Beauvoir looked back on her life in the Nineteen Thirties she confessed that her view of the United States lacked reality, that she and Sartre saw America in a way which exaggerated certain aspects of it and

1. It is clear that certain Americans disapproved violently of Simone de Beauvoir's evocation of their country and thought that she had arrived in America, not as a candid observer, but as a doctrinaire with pre-conceived ideas, of which they disapproved. Diana Trilling, for example, accused her of 'inaccuracies and distortions' in her presentation of the facts, and of having come to the U.S.A. with an already formulated mission:

She is manipulating the truth with a clearly discernible motive: to persuade her European readers of America's cultural and political depravity.

'America through Dark Glasses', *Twentieth Century*, CLIV, no. 917, pp.33-40, July 1953.

neglected others. This was because they looked at that country through 'prismes déformants'¹ which were mostly the cinema, the popular press together with novels of crime and violence, jazz and allied music. It was inevitable that, using such evidence, their view of the country and its culture should be partial.

The cinema was their preferred medium of discovery. Simone de Beauvoir frequently asserts this:

C'est le cinéma qui pendant longtemps a résumé pour moi l'Amérique.²

she says, referring to her earlier life.³ The cinema offered the twin attractions of excitement and the exotic: firstly, cowboy films set in vast deserts, then films detailing urban vice and violence in cities where gangsters and cops confronted each other, and finally visions of Hollywood glamour and sophistication. The power of the cinema was so compelling that the images it offered remained imprinted on the imagination, and helped control the response of both Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir to other ways of discovering America. The sensational press reports of gangsters, of police corruption, the crime novels in which they delighted merely confirmed what the cinema had already revealed:

Ainsi l'Amérique pour nous, c'était d'abord sur un fond de voix rauques et de rythmes brisés, une sarabande d'images: les trances et les danses d'Hallelujah, des buildings dressés contre le ciel, des prisons en révolte, des hauts fourneaux, des grèves, de longues jambes soyeuses, des locomotives, des avions, des chevaux sauvages, des rodéos.⁴

1. F.A., p.145.

2. l'Am., p.29.

3. Again, she writes when describing a visit to the cinema in New York:

C'est par ces images noires et blanches que j'ai d'abord connu l'Amérique...
l'Am., p.77.

4. F.A., p.146.

America, seen in this way, had become a mythical country.¹

There were also reasons which might be termed semi-political to encourage Simone de Beauvoir to turn towards America and American culture with ardent interest. Discussing, for example, the music of America which she and Sartre loved, the work songs, the negro spirituals, the blues, she interpreted these as manifestations of popular culture, as well as appreciating their validity as works of art. They were the expression of the hopes, joys, despairs of the ordinary people and were thus 'true', untainted by bourgeois definitions of art. Being of the people, they contained a collective truth which could become applicable to everyone, even to French intellectuals who themselves originated from the despised middle-classes. It is not accidental, for example, that Sartre, who shared her views, had a Jew and a Negress, representatives of two outcast races according to the ideas of middle-class America, as creator and performer respectively of the song in La Nausée.² Simone de Beauvoir herself writes of this popular music:

...la plainte des hommes, leurs joies égarées, les espoirs brisés avaient trouvé pour se dire une voix qui défiait la politesse des arts réguliers, une voix brutalement jaillie du coeur de leur nuit et secouée de révolte.³

We can discern here some of the attitudes which lay behind Simone de Beauvoir's enthusiastic acceptance of this aspect of American culture: an admiration for the yearnings of the ordinary man mirrored by a disdain for the conventional. One can

1. Thus, in La Nausée Sartre describes the composition of the jazz song Some of These Days which comforts and inspires his hero, the description reads almost like the scenario for an American film; the details of the sweltering heat, the Jewish songwriter stifling in his room on the twentieth floor of a Brooklyn building, the kids playing under the hosepipe, the brilliant city sky and the noting down of the tune by a sweaty, beringed hand: these details, written before Sartre had visited America, are all visual and derived from cinematic experience. The description clearly derives from the same 'sarabande d'images' mentioned by Simone de Beauvoir.
2. In fact, as is pointed out in the Pléiade edition (p.1747), Sartre mistakenly reversed the roles. In reality, the writer of the song, Shelton Brooks, was a negro, and its singer, Sophie Tucker, was Jewish.
3. F.A., p.145.

perhaps interpret this disdain as a denigration of those traditional art forms adopted by middle-class artists. There is also the implicit praise for what is felt to be spontaneous,¹ a supreme virtue for Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre at this time. In the phrase 'brutalement jaillie', sympathy for the hard conditions of the lives of the workers and negroes is expressed and finally a vague socialism emerges.

America provided a focus for certain of Simone de Beauvoir's preoccupations, it was an imaginary land where dreams could flourish. The America she constructed was largely untainted by the middle-class values which she detested in France and in Europe. As those aspects of American culture which she retained were popular, or at least expressed in popular art forms, she saw in her America a way of life which was in total opposition to that of the bourgeoisie. The spontaneity, the violence, the extravagance expressed in films, blues songs and novels attracted all the more because of her hatred of the class which had controlled her childhood and which was directly responsible for the death of her friend Zaza and many other persecutions. America was exotic also and fascinated because of this. Its landscapes, so important in the cowboy films, and the background of its urban life, fascinated. Even the door bells and light switches were excitingly different.² America was, in spite of the horrors which capitalism involved, abstract horrors which their minds recognised - lynch law, racism, unemployment - but which had no real content yet for Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, a country of energy and excess where all could become possible:

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1. We remember Simone de Beauvoir's admiration for the spontaneity of response manifested by the adolescents she tended to idealise.
 2. Cf. her delight when, actually in America, she discovers that the exotic has become everyday reality:

Tout m'émerveille, aussi bien les visions imprévues et celles que je prévoyais... J'ai reconnu aussi les boutons de sonnettes larges et plats que j'avais remarqués dans les films...
l'Am., p.20.

Néanmoins, par-delà le bien et le mal, la vie avait là-bas quelque chose de gigantesque et de déchaîné qui nous fascinait.¹

The lack of European moderation and self-restraint was stimulating. At this stage, when Simone de Beauvoir was still teaching, she did not even consider visiting the U.S.A. although one of her ambitions was to travel extensively and during this time she visited Spain, Italy, Greece, England, Germany and North Africa. She did not know any Americans either except perhaps Sylvia Beach, an honorary European. To her, therefore, the real America was totally unknown and so she could project on to it whatever she wished:

C'est ainsi que, paradoxalement, nous étions attirés par l'Amérique dont nous condamnions le régime, et l'U.R.S.S. où se déroulait une expérience que nous admirions nous laissait froids.²

This was not, in fact, a paradox. They had focussed on a simplified and partial vision of America rather than the real country. It is significant that for Sartre, for example, this vision ultimately derives from the comic books of his childhood and is based literally on images.³ For Simone de Beauvoir also the original fascination with America goes back to childhood experiences. In her case, the vision of America is derived from literature, from words rather than from images. In the same way as Sartre she was encouraged by what she read to see America as a land

1. F.A., p.146.

2. F.A., p.149.

3. Pour délirer de joie, il me suffisait de contempler les gravures en couleurs qui ornaient les couvertures. Buffalo Bill, à cheval, galopait dans la prairie, tantôt poursuivant, tantôt fuyant les Indiens. Je préférais les illustrations de Nick Carter. On peut les trouver monotones: sur presque toutes le grand détective assomme ou se fait matraquer. Mais ces rixes avaient lieu dans les rues de Manhattan, terrains vagues, bordés de palissades brunes ou de frêles constructions cubiques couleur de sang séché... En cette cité, comme en Afrique, sous le même soleil de feu, l'héroïsme redevenait une improvisation perpétuelle: ma passion pour New-York vient de là. Les Mots, p.180.

where heroism was possible; not for her the violence which attracted the young boy, but a promise of success and happiness, achieved by her own heroic mental exertions. This was a feminine version of Sartre's infatuation, the physical action by which the boy modifies the world becomes intellectual for the girl.

When Simone de Beauvoir was about ten years of age she read, in English in the Tauschnitz¹ edition, Little Women by Louisa May Alcott. It was a book which profoundly affected her both immediately and in the long term. What she gained from this novel was an inspiration which has lasted all her life. It was:

un livre où je crus reconnaître mon visage et mon destin...²

When she approved of a fictional character she strongly identified and even appropriated it; this time she became Jo who, she felt, was the particular favourite of the author. This character provided a positive image of the future Simone de Beauvoir which gave value to her present life as a child; so that:

Je devins à mes propres yeux un personnage de roman.³

She became all the more convinced that hers was a privileged consciousness charged with a particular mission which marked her out from the future of ordinary people and which raised her above the level of more attractive and 'feminine', if less clever, girls.

When we look more closely at the novel we find a variety of choices or models offered to the young girl reader. There are four heroines, shown as

1. Christian Bernhard Tauschnitz, a publisher established in Leipzig, began in 1841 to issue reprints of works in English. At first the authors were British but later he added American writers to his list. His books were paperbacked and bore the inscription "Not to be imported into Great Britain". Information from Desmond Flower in The Times, 1 October 1985.
2. M.J.F.R., p.89.
3. M.J.F.R., p.90. With the publication of Les Memoires d'une jeune fille rangée she did, in fact, give reality to this childhood vision. Her life became material for a book of which she was the heroine and although the book itself is based on reality, it is the volume of her autobiography which because of its content is the nearest in shape to a novel.

possessing faults which they are trying to overcome. Meg is the eldest daughter of the poor and pious March family; she is pretty and appreciative of finery, she even has yearnings towards luxury yet she is willing to sacrifice herself and renounce her worldliness, firstly by working as a governess to supplement the family income and then by following the promptings of her affectionate heart and marrying a poor but good man. Beth suffers from extreme shyness; this condition prevents her from attending school, but she is musical, hard-working, loving, motherly, devoting herself to a family of broken dolls and is given, in a way which is not revoltingly sanctimonious, to good works. Amy is very pretty, graceful and charming, her gifts are artistic; she is shown as often being shallow in her responses but the reader comes to see that her heart is true and that she is striving to develop and adhere to better values. Finally, Jo, Simone de Beauvoir's heroine, the most active of the four girls. It is significant that she has taken a boy's name for she rebels against the restrictions, such as those forbidding running or whistling, which her more lady-like and conventional sisters accept. She does not care much for girls or for girlish gossip, is forceful in expression, indeed her temper is fiery and she has trouble controlling it, and she disdains elegance of dress. All these characteristics would appeal to the young Simone de Beauvoir as they have appealed to countless girls since 1868. What is perhaps most admirable about her and which appealed to Simone de Beauvoir at a deeper level is her ambition. Jo wants to do 'something splendid' with her life. Apart from her family, her main love is literature: for her the library is 'a region of bliss',¹ and so her ambition is to be expressed through

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1. This is an observation which is often conventional, if not a cliché, but the pious Miss Alcott, daughter of a preacher, did not use such phrases lightly. Neither does Simone de Beauvoir when she recounts her own introduction to a similar world:

J'éprouvais une des plus grandes joies de mon enfance le jour où ma mère m'annonça qu'elle m'offrait un abonnement personnel...devant moi s'ouvrait le paradis, jusqu'alors inconnu, de l'abondance.

M.J.F.R., p.71.

writing:

I think I shall write books and get rich and famous; that would suit me so that is my favourite dream.¹

We have a sympathetic heroine indeed, guaranteed to appeal to a girl already drawn to the world of literature, and who had tried to write.² Jo's example encouraged Simone de Beauvoir to think of herself and her own ambitions with approval:

Je me crus autorisée moi aussi à considérer mon goût pour les livres, mes succès scolaires, comme le gage d'une valeur que confirmerait mon avenir.³

And, emulating Jo, she composed immediately two or three stories.

Her passionate identification with Jo was complete: even though the fictional March family was Protestant, it shared similar values with the Catholic de Beauvoirs and the households were alike socially, both now relatively poor after having been comfortably off. Jo scorned 'feminine' work and values, was devoted to literature and, finally, enjoyed a close relationship with Laurie, the boy next door; Simone de Beauvoir felt that she, too, enjoyed such a privileged friendship with her cousin, Jacques. There are, however, further aspects of Jo's character to which Simone de Beauvoir did not respond at all. In spite of her enthusiastic identification with the outgoing and energetic Jo, she did not notice that this character is shown as possessing a well-developed maternal instinct: she is Beth's 'little mother' for example, and in the course of the novel her 'boyish' qualities are

1. Little Women, L.M. Alcott, Associated Newspapers, London n.d., pp.188-89.

2. At about the age of eight she had written tales inspired not by her own experience, but by books. A foreshadowing of her adult attempts to write?

Ma première oeuvre s'intitula Les Malheurs de Marguerite
M.J.F.R., p.54.

The second was in imitation of La Famille Fenouillard and was called La Famille Cornichon. This latter had a certain success within the family and added to her prestige.

3. M.J.F.R., p.90.

perceived as defects she is encouraged to eliminate. In one of the final scenes she is congratulated by her father for no longer being the 'son Jo' of the previous year. When he returns from the war he tells her:

I see a young lady who pins her collar straight, laces her boots neatly, and neither whistles, talks slang, nor lies on the rug, as she used to do. Her face is rather thin and pale, just now, with watching and anxiety; but I like to look at it, for it has grown gentler, and her voice is lower; she doesn't bounce, but moves quietly, and takes care of a certain little person in a motherly way, which delights me. I rather miss my wild girl; but if I get a strong, helpful, tender-hearted woman in her place, I shall feel quite satisfied.¹

One feels that those qualities in Jo which appealed to Simone de Beauvoir were being carefully toned down by her creator and that a character much closer to the feminine stereotype of Victorian fiction was being developed. Despite this and similar passages the power of the original depiction of the character was such that the dazzled child could not recognise any further modifications to it.² This explains the strength of her reaction when in early adolescence she read the sequel Good Wives. She was horrified to find that the author had betrayed her by marrying the charming Laurie to the unworthy Amy, who was pretty, vain and

1. L.M. Alcott, op.cit., pp.294-95.

2. It was later in life, re-reading Little Women and Good Wives for the chapter on adolescence in Le Deuxième Sexe II that Simone de Beauvoir noticed this change in Jo. It is interpreted there as an example which demonstrates how the most independent, promising and determined young girls are forced to submit to the values of masculine society in the same way as Jo will submit to her future husband. She begins to fall in love with him when he scolds her severely about the trashy nature of her writing. She ceases temporarily to write and after marriage renounces literature for maternity and running a school. Her ambition to do 'something splendid' is achieved mainly by fulfilling her maternal instincts after all and not initially by her writing, although in the final volume of the series she is a well-known and successful author at last. Simone de Beauvoir does not seem to have read Jo's Boys however.

frivolous, thought Simone de Beauvoir, rather than to the intellectual Jo.¹ The strength of her attachment to Jo, indeed her total involvement with this fictional character, can be gauged by the violence of her reaction when she discovered who was Laurie's bride:

Je rejetai le livre, comme s'il m'avait brûlé les doigts. Pendant plusieurs jours, je restai terrassée par un malheur qui m'avait atteinte au vif de moi-même; l'homme que j'aimais et dont je me croyais aimée m'avait trahie pour une sotte.²

When Jo finally chose to marry a learned teacher many years older than herself and to set up a school with him for unhappy and disturbed boys, Simone de Beauvoir's feelings were mixed. She tells us that she came to approve the idea of Jo choosing a 'superior' man as his prestige endowed his partner with additional value. No doubt she shared to some extent, in spite of herself, the prevalent view that the male partner in a marriage should be more knowledgeable than the female, with the role of initiator. Dr Bhaer's superiority was moral and intellectual rather than sexual and this the young Simone de Beauvoir could admire and yet there is in her response more than a trace of anger and hurt at being rejected sexually when Laurie marries Amy rather than Jo/Simone. The reason is partly the lack of confidence felt by most adolescents: what if all men behave like Laurie and choose for looks rather than brains? must have been the anxiety at the back of her mind. There is also the question of the friendship with her cousin Jacques which she idealised and which she vaguely hoped would lead to marriage. Laurie's marriage

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1. Even in adult life Simone de Beauvoir felt bound to revenge herself on Amy; called 'une sotte' and 'blonde, vaine et stupide' in the Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée, Amy is further insulted in Le Deuxième Sexe II where she is 'l'insipide Amy aux cheveux bouclés' (p.88). Her blonde curls were possibly the final straw! It is recorded in a biography of Louisa Alcott that her father had theories about fair and dark people. Its author mentions '...Alcott's outrageous contention that dark-skinned people were demonic, and that blue-eyed blonds were closest to God'. Miss Alcott was possibly reflecting the paternal viewpoint when she made Amy blonde and rewarded her with Laurie. Louisa May, Martha Sexton, London, André Deutsch, 1978, p.123.
 2. M.J.F.R., p.106.

to Amy prefigured a precise rejection.¹ She was further disturbed when she came to consider the precarious basis for Jo's choice. It was a chance which had taken the girl to that particular house in New York where her future husband lived. What if she and he had never met? Surely, happiness had to be more certain and not based on chance encounters. The young girl was then led to meditate on the right sort of man to love and marry...

The content principally of Louisa May Alcott's books made them an integral part of Simone de Beauvoir's experience. It seemed to her that these two novels, she does not mention Jo's Boys or Little Men, offered a delightful image of herself in the shape of the character Jo. Having identified with Jo, her twin desires to be a successful writer and to be independent were encouraged. She took from her reading only what she wished, praise of the writer, of the intellectual, scorn for feminine pursuits and did not retain those elements of the books which were of no service to her, particularly the parts where conventionally feminine models were presented positively and with admiration.

There is more to these books, however, than their content. If that were not the case they would be read by sociologists or historians of the feminist movement only. They possess qualities of freshness and vigour which continue to delight young readers. First published in 1868 and 1869, they are still in print, new editions continue to appear. Miss Alcott's style is remarkably straightforward and direct, character is established by means of lively and often amusing conversation rather than by lengthy descriptions which would slow down the action. The opening scene, for example, when the four girls are grumbling about their lack of Christmas presents, clearly differentiates them, reveals their family circumstances, and shows that the girls have both failings and good qualities. The conversation with

1. This did in fact take place but Simone de Beauvoir in Sartre found her equivalent of Dr Bhaer while, unlike Jo, she did not have to renounce her vocation.

which the book starts is continued over more than four pages before the reader is supplied with swift sketches of the room in which they are sitting and of their own appearances. After this the author says:

What the characters of the four sisters were, we will leave to be found out.¹

The conversation and the action, scarcely interrupted by the short paragraphs of description, then resume. The style is extremely effective, Little Women is a model of how to gain and keep the interest of the reader. Miss Alcott had a pious aim when writing her stories yet the piety which might not be palatable to the modern reader is made acceptable by means of her humour, the heroines remain natural and credible because of their failures and imperfections. The moralising is reduced by means of the analogy with The Pilgrim's Progress, the piety becomes part of the action of the novel and is given in this way concrete, rather than abstract, expression.

Had the style of these books not been so lively, the narrative flow so spontaneous then Simone de Beauvoir would not have persevered, reading as she was in a foreign language. She gained much from L.M. Alcott: in the immediate present, encouragement to pursue her intellectual interests; in the longer term a strengthening of her intention to be a writer and finally, because of her enjoyment, a vision of America as a country where girls could be freely active and energetic, where things were possible which could not be achieved in the restrictive family where she lived. The vision of America, based on Jo's independence rather than her

1. op.cit., p.6.

submission,¹ which she developed in the Nineteen Thirties had its origin long ago in her childhood.

Little Women thus created an original sympathy for America. Films, music, newspapers further developed that interest and it was inevitable, given her belief in the supremacy of the written word, that Simone de Beauvoir should turn to American literature in order to find out more about this country and its culture. In La Force de l'âge she notes:

...j'absorbai Whitman...des tonnes d'Henry James..., Sinclair Lewis, Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson...²

This list relates to her reading during the period 1929-1931 while Sartre was doing his military service and represents part of her first intake of literature as an independent adult. The names she mentions here have a certain amount in common; they belong, in particular, to an older generation of writers, two of them

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1. In 1947 when she actually visited New England she had sadly accepted Jo's submission, although she had not come to terms with it. The responsibility lay with L.M. Alcott's father:

...ici, Louisa Alcott passa une partie de son enfance, rêvant d'évasion, écrasée par la tyrannie persuasive de son père, le pasteur, témoignant par son oeuvre timide des étroites limites entre lesquelles il était alors possible à une femme d'Amérique de prendre son essor.

l'Am., pp.278-79.

Simone de Beauvoir is perhaps mistaken here, however: Miss Alcott also wrote, under a pseudonym, exciting novels where energetic and wicked women exact a vengeance on men:

The A.M. Barnard stories read fluently, as easily as they were written. Louisa was tapping veins of emotion that lay very close to her skin. Revenge was a constant leitmotif of her brooding...Her characters could behave with the violence, anger and ruthlessness, that she kept tightly locked away. Her women could behave without regard to Concord ethics or Victorian claims of femininity.

M. Saxton, op.cit., p.261.

2. F.A., p.56.

even, Walt Whitman and Henry James, coming from an even earlier age.¹ The other three writers, Lewis, Dreiser and Anderson, were in 1931 established authors whose principal successes belonged to the recent past. Lewis, however, the youngest of the three, was awarded the Nobel prize for Literature in 1930² and he was still producing interesting work throughout the Thirties.

In her memoirs Simone de Beauvoir gives the impression that in this period of her life she was conscientiously acquiring a literary culture. Her initial reading of American literature was partly in response to the stimulus provided so long ago by Miss Alcott, partly to inform herself in an academic way. It seems that when she read American fiction her mind was fed but her imagination was not stimulated at first as the visual image remained more powerful than the written word:

Et l'Amérique nous livrait des images plus fascinantes sur l'écran que sur le papier. Le dernier best-seller américain, Babbitt [sic], nous parut laborieusement plat;³

Although she was clearly not excited by Sinclair Lewis's novel she considers the fact that she read it as worthy of comment and it is useful for us to glance at Babbitt so as to establish its qualities and understand the reasons which led to her rejection,⁴ as superficially its subject matter should have made it attractive to her.

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1. For reference: Walt Whitman died in 1892, Leaves of Grass was published in 1855; Henry James died in 1916. Sinclair Lewis 1885-1951. Main Street 1920, Babbitt 1922, Dodsworth 1929, Martin Arrowsmith 1925, It Can't Happen Here 1935. Theodore Dreiser 1871-1945. Sister Carrie 1900, An American Tragedy 1925. Sherwood Anderson 1876-1941. Winesburg, Ohio: A Group of Tales of Ohio Small-Town Life 1919, Poor White 1920, Dark Laughter 1925.
 2. The prize stimulated an interest in Lewis's work, much of which was translated into French in the early Thirties.
 3. F.A., p.52. Simone de Beauvoir did not recognise the humour of the novel.
 4. Babbitt was first published in 1922 in America. Our references are to its English edition published by Jonathan Cape in 1922. It appeared in French translation in the series Le Cabinet Cosmopolite published by Librairie Stock in 1930.

Babbitt is an indictment of the narrow conformity of small town life in the American Mid-West, which at the same time shows sympathy for the confused and lonely hero. The conventional real-estate dealer, George Babbitt, accepts the values of those around him while dimly feeling that life should have more to offer if only he could break free and find it. He rebels a little but the social pressure on him is too great and he accepts his defeat. He is involved in business deals of doubtful honesty and in spite of himself he consents to that involvement:

He was conscious that his line of progress seemed confused. He wondered what he would do with his future. He was still young; was he through with all adventuring? He felt that he had been trapped into the very net from which he had with such fury escaped and, supremest jest of all, been made to rejoice in the trapping.¹

Possibly it was the piling up of detail, a technique employed by Lewis to suggest the boredom and triviality of Babbitt's life, which rebuffed Simone de Beauvoir. Possibly it was Lewis's attempts to make his readers consider Babbitt as a typical solid citizen of a typical small town, rather than as an active hero, which discouraged her interest. Babbitt is one of a series of men, not an individual.² We see this in Chapter One where there is an extensive description of Babbitt first asleep, then reluctantly waking, getting up and preparing for a day at the office. Sleeping, his appearance is babyish, he has wistfully romantic dreams of a fairy child; awake, he gradually discards the yearnings towards freedom and heroism as he dresses. He puts on his spectacles and is transformed:

His head suddenly appeared not babyish but weighty, and you noted his heavy, blunt nose, his straight mouth and thick, long upper lip, his chin overfleshy but strong; with respect

1. Babbitt, p.376.

2. In this context Simone de Beauvoir herself used a very similar technique when describing the heroine, Laurence, of her own novel Les Belles Images. Laurence is a passive but confused member of the post-war "Consumer Society", she too is one of a series, her belongings and even her intimate feelings conform.

you beheld him put on the rest of his uniform as a solid Citizen.¹

In the second chapter of the novel, pains are taken to show Babbitt's life and surroundings as standardised. His bedroom is fully described in terms worthy of a salesman's catalogue, then we are told it is typical of bedrooms owned by those in his social group:

It was a master-piece among bedrooms, right out of Cheerful Modern Houses for Medium Incomes.²

and

Every second house in Floral Heights had a bedroom precisely like this.³

The other inhabitants of the ironically named town, Zenith, suffer, like Babbitt, without being aware of it, from 'standardisation of thought'. Babbitt differs from them in that he revolts, but in a mild way. He soon comes into line and is once again the solid citizen delighted by the approval of his peers:

He knew by the cheer that he was secure again and popular, he knew that he would no more endanger his security and popularity by straying from the Clan of Good Fellows.⁴

Lewis's quietly satirical treatment of the timid conformist is effective but not thrilling. Babbitt's acceptance of conventional values would have been discouraging to a young woman intent on rejecting such values. Simone de Beauvoir needed at this moment a more extreme and savage approach to middle-class life and thus her ability to respond to Sinclair Lewis's depiction of America was limited. She persisted, however, in reading his books, and was to remember his descriptions when she visited the U.S.A. after the War and found herself in a "Main

1. Babbitt, p.18.

2. Babbitt, p.23.

3. Babbitt, p.23.

4. Babbitt, p.375.

Street",¹ but his novels did not appear to impress themselves on her in any deep way. They instructed but did not excite.²

Although Simone de Beauvoir does not record any novels by Dreiser by name, she does suggest that she read several and that, in comparison with works by Sinclair Lewis,

...je préférerais l'épaisseur tumultueuse des vieux romans de Dreiser.³

Books by Dreiser available in France at that time were Douze Hommes,⁴ La Couleur d'une grande cité,⁵ both personal, and more reportage than fiction. They described a foreign, exotic, civilisation and its heroes or models. Dreiser's novels were in a way in advance of their time. Sister Carrie, for example, which recounts how a poor girl from the country exploits her body and her slight talent as an actress to rise to wealth and fame in New York and London, tells a story which is

1. Her comment is worthy of the satirical pen of Lewis himself, reflecting her bias against the American business world:

...j'aperçois seulement cette 'Main Street' que Sinclair Lewis a décrite. C'est à travers toutes les villes d'Amérique la rue des boutiques et des cinémas où par décret aucun arbre ne pousse; son ombre risquerait de désavantager tel ou tel magasin au profit de ses concurrents.

l'Am., p.83.

2. Curiously enough, Raymond Queneau translated a most interesting Sinclair Lewis novel: It Can't Happen Here which appeared in France as Impossible ici in 1937. It tells a story based on the idea of unscrupulous politicians trying to gain power so as to instal a Fascist dictatorship.
3. F.A., p.52.
4. This originally appeared in America as Twelve Men and is a set of character sketches.
5. This originally appeared in 1923 as The Color of a Great City and consists of sketches of "New-York, tel qu'il était entre 1900 et 1914 ou 1915". The writer concentrates on 'low' or working-class life but gives some glimpses of more brilliant aspects of the city. The sketches include: le port, les "bums", la gare des marchandises, la queue pour le pain, le tueur rouge, a description of the abattoirs. The section entitled D'où vient la chanson reminds the reader of Sister Carrie as it evokes the success of a female showbusiness star; Les Hommes dans la neige has links with Dreiser's description of the failure of Carrie's husband.

shocking. So shocking in fact that the only version available until recently was expurgated. It is likely that Simone de Beauvoir would have found attractive Dreiser's pessimism about morality, even middle-class morality, because it fitted in with her own detestation of the bourgeoisie; for him everyone, no matter what their social class, was capable of the worst. Alfred Kazin writes about:

Dreiser's deep belief that we do what a 'voice' in us tells us to do, and that voice is the criminal, thief, and murderer in us that everything in our conscious minds and our civilisation tries to suppress. The true source and inspiration of our actions is always illegitimate. Civilisation is an ordeal. Inwardly, we are always in flight.¹

An American Tragedy² tells us how an impoverished young man, Clyde Griffiths, murders a factory girl he has seduced and made pregnant because she is preventing him from marrying advantageously. The style is naturalistic and the account of Clyde's early progress from his godly family through jobs as newsboy, packing clerk, drugstore assistant and as a bell-boy in a smart hotel is detailed and credible. Nevertheless, Clyde is shown also in moral terms as someone who makes wrong choices from his childhood on, so that his eventual condemnation and execution in the electric chair form part of a larger pattern of tragedy, justifying the book's title.

By reading Theodore Dreiser, Simone de Beauvoir was on one level extending her acquaintance with American literature. Eager to satisfy her demanding intellectual curiosity she was widening her knowledge of this 'exotic' land of remorseless commercial pressure, of anti-intellectualism, of small towns and huge

1. Sister Carrie, T. Dreiser, introduction by A. Kazin, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1981, p.viii.

2. This appeared in French translation in 2 volumes in 1932.

cities, which was reflected in the range of character, the variety of incident and environment described by Dreiser. She was, at the same time, absorbing information about manipulation of plot and character. It is also possible that she was responding with sympathy to this novelist because of his political stance as it was expressed in the more journalistic documentary sketches available in France to which we have already referred. In the Twenties, Dreiser had been invited to visit Russia and, as Gide after him would do, had published an account of his visit;¹ in the Thirties he was becoming a well-known left-winger.² There are some hints of his political allegiance in Twelve Men, for example, where there is in the portrait A Mayor and His People a discussion of:

the vast gulf between the unorganised and ignorant poor,
and the huge beneficiaries of unearned...increment.³

Interest on the Left in Dreiser was such that, for example, the Communist Paul Nizan translated a text by him which was published in 1933.⁴ The book is an examination of contemporary America from a Socialist viewpoint and demonstrates the need for

un changement fondamental dans le système tout entier.⁵

The final words of the book are stirring:

De ce changement qui vient, tout peut naître: des hommes
et des femmes sages et forts, ardents à créer une vie plus

1. Dreiser Looks at Russia, 1928.

2. A biographer speaks of 'his movement towards the extreme left, which became notorious in the 1930s when he spoke out loudly and publicly on behalf of the Scottsboro boys, the Harlan County miners, Tom Mooney, and the Spanish Loyalists and which culminated in his joining the Communist Party in July 1945' Two Dreisers, Ellen Moers, London, Thames and Hudson, 1970, p.181.

3. op.cit., p.342.

4. L'Amérique tragique tr. P. Nizan, Paris, Editions Reider, 1933. This text appeared in a political series entitled La Collection Europe, other authors included Gandhi, Bakunin, R. Aron and Alain.

5. L'Amérique tragique, p.399.

sûre et plus belle...¹

Simone de Beauvoir was not stirred by Sinclair Lewis, since his Nobel prize in 1930 made him part of the literary establishment, but her interest was caught by the more Socialist Dreiser.

The third American writer mentioned by Simone de Beauvoir was Sherwood Anderson. He wrote about small town life and in his books we see demonstrated the power of instinct, especially sexual instinct, which controls the characters, despite the barriers they erect. Winesburg, Ohio is only loosely a novel; it is a series of sketches of some of the inhabitants linked together by the character of George Willard and by the background of the town itself.

This young man is a reporter on the local paper, the Winesburg Eagle; as he moves about the town people confide in him and relate their stories, feeling that he affords them the possibility of communication. George is based on the memories of Anderson himself although the narrative is in the third person not the first. An original quality of Winesburg, Ohio was its style, especially the crisp brevity and directness of Anderson's narrative technique where adjectives were used as sparingly as possible. In 1915 Anderson had read Gertrude Stein's Three Lives and had been inspired to develop a simpler, more repetitive style closer to the rhythms of popular speech. His mind was set to work and in the autumn of the same year he was able to achieve a new style of writing when he started on the stories about Winesburg, and it is this style developed and modified by Hemingway, which was to alert the young Simone de Beauvoir to the renewal of technique that was involved.

The three novelists, contemporary or of the recent past, selected as worthy of particular mention in her account of her literary education were those who made the strongest mark on her, but their contribution to her development as a writer was limited. Their works for the most part belonged to the post-War period but

1. l'Amérique tragique, p.342.

their literary technique, save for that of Sherwood Anderson, tended to be traditionally naturalistic. These novelists interested her because of their background and subject matter but, unlike the English novelists she was reading at the same time, she felt that they did not renew the form of the novel and it was renewal that she was seeking.¹

This thirst for the new explains a sudden alteration in her attitude to American literature when in 1933 she discovered a different sort of writing. Reading this new writing radically altered her perception of reality and affected her attempts to render it in fiction. She had found the work of a younger generation, born just before the century, and self-consciously 'modern'. The first author of this new grouping was Dos Passos whose 42e Parallèle, read in 1933, deeply affected both Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. In the same year she also read Hemingway, firstly a book of short stories, Cinquante mille dollars, then his novel Le Soleil se lève aussi and also some stories in English which were available in France. In 1934 she was delighted to read Faulkner, two of whose novels, Tandis que j'agonise and Sanctuaire, had just appeared in translation. The shock of this writing, the pleasure it gave and the creative stimulus it provided to Simone de Beauvoir were all profoundly felt. Lecturing in America after the War she said, speaking both for herself and for her fellows:

L'un des événements significatifs dans la littérature française durant l'entre-deux-guerres fut la découverte de la littérature américaine. Je me souviens avec quelle ferveur

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1. Simone de Beauvoir does not record by name other American books read during this part of her life (1929-32) but she says that she read 'toutes les traductions publiées dans la collection des "Feux croisés"' (F.A., p.56); by this time Nathaniel Hawthorne stories had been published, some Henry James and Ludwig Lewisohn's Israël, où vas-tu? as well as works by Dreiser and Lewis. Although she makes no comment in her autobiography about Hawthorne, she was pleased to be taken to visit in New England a house associated with his family, the model for the House of the Seven Gables, which suggests that she had read him with pleasure (I'Am., p.293). Contes by this author figured as number 10 in Stock's Le Cabinet Cosmopolite.

les initiés, ceux qui pouvaient lire l'anglais, se prêtaient les premiers livres de Dos Passos, Hemingway and Faulkner. L'apparition en français de Manhattan Transfer, de Farewell to Arms (L'Adieu aux Armes) et de Sanctuary (Sanctuaire) fut une révélation pour tous les lecteurs français.¹

In 1933 Simone de Beauvoir was still at a stage in her development where she retained in as a strong a form as ever the ambition to be a writer but had not yet found out what she wanted to write about. The insight gained at the age of ten from reading Little Women, that she should make herself and her own experience into the matter of a novel, had faded. For her the present moment was so fulfilling that it meant there were no gaps in her life, no pains to be soothed by means of literary endeavour. There was no space in her private world at that time in which the imagination could move creatively:

Contre la plénitude de mon bonheur, les mots se brisaient;
et les menus épisodes de ma vie quotidienne ne méritaient
que l'oubli.²

Reading Dos Passos then Hemingway and Faulkner did not immediately help by suggesting what she should write about but it did aid her in the search for her own voice and way of expression. These writers suggested a route for Simone de Beauvoir, and for Sartre too, out of the impasse where they felt they had been led by the tradition of writing in French. Oppressed, in spite of themselves, by the

1. E., p.353.

2. F.A., p.156.

burden of French culture¹ they turned to a new literature which expressed the truth of experience in a direct and seemingly spontaneous way.

What exactly was Simone de Beauvoir seeking in her wide reading, in her earlier study, for example, of contemporary English writing and its attempts to renew technique, and now in her eager consumption of American literature? She was looking, as of course all serious writers are, for a way of expressing the truth of an experience and she was beginning to link this search with a meditation on the role of language and technique in the novel. She felt in 1933 that the French literary language was becoming formalised, academic and precious, more concerned with style for its own sake and with abstract thought than with the real world. She had, a few years earlier, experienced genuine excitement when she had read books by contemporary French writers but then she had been living at home and studying for examinations. To a young student leading a life governed by restrictions these books had symbolised a daring rejection of the conventions, both social and literary: they had represented liberty. Moreover, this literature had been offered to her by her cousin Jacques, from whose personality it had acquired

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1. When Sartre visited America in 1946 he said in a lecture given at Yale University:

Nous n'avons pas recherché par délectation morose des histoires de meurtre et de viol mais des leçons pour le renouvellement de l'art d'écrire. Nous étions écrasés, sans en être conscients, par le poids de nos traditions et de notre culture. Les romanciers américains, sans traditions et sans aide, ont forgé, avec une brutalité barbare, des instruments d'une valeur inestimable.

E. de J.-P.S., pp.150-51.

It is revealing that Sartre, and Simone de Beauvoir also, should see this generation of American writers as working outside a tradition. Wishing to liberate themselves from the way their academic formation linked them to a middle-class culture, they did not see, or chose not to see, that Hemingway and others were themselves working within a tradition. This was in spite of the fact that Simone de Beauvoir had certainly read Whitman and Henry James and possibly Thoreau and Hawthorne. Later, Sartre was to read with great pleasure a translation of Moby Dick by Jean Giono which was published in France in 1941.

additional glamour. Now, however, she wished for something further: Gide, Cocteau, and the other writers who had made literature for her into a religion were still respected for their past achievement but their example was now rejected. She felt they were integrated too happily into the middle-class system and their assumption of bourgeois values was reflected in the empty concern for beauty in their prose style. Writing in the New York Times after the War Simone de Beauvoir referred to the atrophy, as she felt it, of French prose style where language had become an end in itself, cut off from everyday life:

Pour des écrivains comme Gide, Valéry, Giraudoux, la littérature est devenue un domaine abstrait; rien ne pouvait y être intégré avant d'avoir été réduit à des concepts par l'analyse ou la poésie. L'académisme et la préciosité sont les culs-de-sac de cette voie.¹

She sought her truth in an immediate and apparently spontaneous presentation of reality; because life is a succession of present moments for the characters in a novel, there should be no obvious shaping, no moulding of experience. The future, that is the ending of the novel, should not cast its shadow before it. Each consciousness is separate and therefore each experience is different from that of the other characters. It follows from this that there is no single 'truth' about any event or situation, the various 'truths' must emerge from the novel and be presented to the reader who must be free to adopt his own attitude towards them. The outside world presents resistance, obstacles to what the characters want, when they struggle against these the reader can be aware of the passing of time. To sum up, she thought that the novel should express:

...la vérité de la vie dans son matérialisme brut...présenter au lecteur la vie telle qu'elle se montre dans les mots et les actes des hommes.²

Given that ambition, she turned to the novels of the new generation of American

1. E., p.355.

2. ibid.

writers for examples of how to present existence in its raw authenticity. She said in the same New York Times article:

Ce qui nous a frappés chez les grands romanciers américains, c'est qu'ils s'efforçaient d'introduire dans leurs livres la vie toute palpitante; pour la décrire, ils se sont servis d'un langage vivant, et ils ont inventé des techniques hardies, souples, pour conserver la fraîcheur des événements qu'ils décrivaient.¹

Simone de Beauvoir did not immediately put into effect in her own writing the lessons she gained from reading Dos Passos, Hemingway, Faulkner or even, at a later stage, Dashiell Hammett. Her third attempt at a novel in her adult life was started soon after she had encountered works by Dos Passos and Hemingway but she had not yet had sufficient time to digest what these writers offered her. The impetus behind this third novel came from her deep and sincere hatred of the bourgeoisie which had been fed by her reading of Stendhal. Her next attempt, however, in 1935, was written in the light of her enthusiasm for Dos Passos. Although rejected for publication at that time it has since been issued and the extent of her indebtedness to the American author will be evaluated in the next chapter. Her fifth novel became L'Invitée and it is marked strongly by her reading of American literature, particularly of Hemingway. It contains, as does Hemingway's early work, and that of Sherwood Anderson's Winesburg, Ohio before him, both 'that special quality of truth which is conferred by memory and experience'² and also literary and stylistic devices derived almost directly from the American writer. A further chapter will be devoted to an examination of this aspect of L'Invitée. Faulkner, the last of this trio of American authors to be revealed to Simone de Beauvoir exerted some influence over the treatment of time in particular in L'Invitée, but it is her subsequent novel Le Sang des Autres which is

1. E., p.355.

2. Brian Way, 'Hemingway the Intellectual: A Version of Modernism' in Ernest Hemingway: New Critical Essays, ed. A. Robert Lee, London and Totowa N.J., Vision and Barnes and Noble, 1983, p.159.

most clearly marked by his technique. The influence of Faulkner also merits close study.

It was Simone de Beauvoir's reading of American literature which set her most firmly on the road towards becoming an author, which helped liberate her from what she felt was the burden weighing on her of existing writing in French and which helped her find her own voice. A spark was kindled within her when she read her first American literature: she saw a successful woman author and was encouraged by her example; she identified strongly with one of this author's characters and was further stimulated. When she was adult, American literature represented vitality, spontaneity and, the quality she valued most, authenticity in the representation of experience.

CHAPTER TEN

DOS PASSOS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONFIDENCE

The novel by John Dos Passos, Manhattan Transfer, had been read by Simone de Beauvoir before she had met Sartre and it had not impressed her:

...je lus...avec curiosité Manhattan Transfer qui, pour mon goût, sentait trop le procédé.¹

Later, when in 1933 she and Sartre together read 42nd Parallel in translation she was struck by the author's technical effects² and discerned much more positive qualities in his style:

42e Parallèle de John Dos Passos venait de paraître en français; il nous apporta beaucoup.³

It seems that Sartre did not need to be introduced to this author by Simone de Beauvoir as he had read already some Dos Passos in translation, 'je connaissais déjà Dos Passos' he reminded her in their 1974 conversations about what they read in their younger days.⁴ Sartre was particularly struck by the technique employed by Dos Passos to describe his characters, their actions and the times in which they lived; in discussions with Simone de Beauvoir he must have overcome any resistance she may have retained against the American writer for in La Force de l'âge she constantly adopts the pronoun 'nous' when referring to their reactions to him. Her viewpoint and that of Sartre now coincided and they both enjoyed and found it profitable to describe their own behaviour and attitudes in the third person and in an objective, detached way as if they were characters in a Dos Passos novel:

1. M.J.F.R., p.314.
2. Cf. C.A., p.269. Nizan encouraged Jean-Paul Sartre to look closely at the technique of novelists. Nizan talked to them, first and above all else, of Dos Passos's technique.
3. F.A., p.143.
4. L'Initiation d'un homme. 1917 had been published in 1925 while Manhattan Transfer had appeared in French in 1929. See Bibliography.

Il était cruel d'apercevoir les hommes à la fois à travers cette comédie de liberté qu'ils se donnent à l'intérieur d'eux-mêmes, et comme les reflets figés de leur situation. Nous nous appliquâmes souvent, Sartre et moi, à prendre ce double point de vue sur autrui et surtout sur nous-mêmes.¹

To the left-wing intellectuals which they were in the Thirties, even if they abstained from any definite political action, John Dos Passos must have been interesting as he shared their views and was, moreover, a more extreme and committed sympathiser of the Communist Party than themselves, adopting a clear political stance in his novels. Yet, although she and Sartre were both enthusiastic about Dos Passos, it is evident that they reacted in different and individual ways to what they found in his books. Sartre, who was to publish a study of Dos Passos in the N.R.F. for August 1938, was enormously and consciously influenced by elements of Dos Passos' style, as is shown by this exchange in the 1974 conversations:

J.-P. S. - Dos Passos m'a beaucoup influencé.

S. de B. - Il n'y aurait pas eu Le Sursis sans Dos Passos.²

The techniques developed by Dos Passos, which Sartre thought so fruitful, included 'newsreel' which involved compiling a montage of newspaper headlines, extracts from newspaper reports, snatches of popular songs; the inclusion of biographies of representative Americans of the quarter century and 'camera eye'. This last, written in an impressionistic prose style, was similar to free verse and used stream

1. F.A., p.143.

2. C.A., p.255. An amusing consequence of Sartre's adherence to the literary techniques elaborated by Dos Passos occurred when Anthony Powell reviewed in the T.L.S. Le Sursis published in England in 1947 as The Reprieve. Unfortunately, the sentences he quoted to illustrate Sartre's style could be made to suggest that a named English official - a real person - was sleeping with the novel's fictional heroine, Ivich. The official sued. "Under threat of legal action both newspaper and publisher capitulated at once... If, as it was rumoured he planned, Sartre had come to London to defend his novel in court, a great legal comedy - not to say farce - was missed". To Keep the Ball Rolling, Volume III, Faces in my Time, Anthony Powell, London, Heinemann, 1980, pp.210-11.

of consciousness. In this way Dos Passos attempted the description of the individual and collective lives of the Americans of his own time, showing the force of History at work while also allowing a certain amount of individual freedom to his characters. When Sartre, in the middle volume of Les Chemins de la liberté, wished to evoke the atmosphere of Europe at the time of the Munich Crisis, studying responsibility, complicity and the reactions of representative Europeans to the whole affair, he followed Dos Passos and used similar stylistic effects.

Simone de Beauvoir did not in her early novels respond in a like manner to the technique of Dos Passos' fiction. She, for her part, was immediately attracted by its political, or rather social, implications, principally the irony directed by this Communist sympathiser against the middle-classes; she noted, for instance,

...dans la classe supérieure, l'aliénation était radicale: une mort collective avait glacé tous les gestes, toutes les paroles, et jusqu'aux plus intimes balbutiements.¹

Still resolutely detesting the social class from which she felt she had escaped, she recognised a fellow feeling in Dos Passo and it was this tone of bitterness which she wished to emulate.

She had, as shown in Chapter Three, when inspired by Stendhal already depicted the bourgeoisie with some savagery; now, after studying Dos Passos, she could develop a more subtle technique to demonstrate this class's evasions, distortions and general mauvaise foi. In the mid-Thirties she began to write a set of inter-connected short stories, the first two of which, we are told, were a direct imitation of Dos Passos:

J'utilisais dans ces deux récits un ton faussement objectif, d'une ironie voilée qui imitait celui de John Dos Passos.²

Later, when she was writing the introductory chapters of L'Invitée, she again decided to model her style on that of the American author. When discussing the

1. F.A., p.143.

2. F.A., p.230.

heroine of this novel, Françoise, Simone de Beauvoir says:

Je ne lui donnais pas mes véritables souvenirs, je la décrivis à distance dans un style imité encore une fois de celui de John Dos Passos.¹

It so happens that, although neither the short stories nor the first chapters of L'Invitée were published at the time, since Brice Parain who read them for the publishers Gallimard did not like them,² they have both appeared in print recently. The short stories, entitled Quand prime le spirituel, were published in 1979, as were the previously suppressed initial chapters of L'Invitée which are part of Les Ecrits de Simone de Beauvoir. It is now possible, therefore, to study this early writing and to estimate the effect on it of Dos Passos.

The first story, entitled Marcelle, tells of the childhood of a model little girl, her adolescence, her marriage and its failure. The story is narrated in the third person but from the point of view of Marcelle into whose mind the reader enters from time to time. The events are therefore filtered through Marcelle's consciousness, even during seemingly objective narration: for instance, in the sentence:

Denis n'insista pas; il paraissait prendre plaisir à écouter la grossière musique de jazz et à regarder les femmes aux cheveux artificiels qui riaient toutes d'un même rire complaisant en se frottant contre les hommes.³

the first phrase would appear to belong to the objective narration, but the verb 'paraissait' suggests that Marcelle is attempting to interpret his behaviour and the adjective 'grossière' is obviously Marcelle's choice for it is loaded with her value. The description of the vulgarity and behaviour of the 'common' women who are

1. F.A., p.326.

2. 'Le livre était refusé. Brice Parain le trouvait mal bâti dans l'ensemble, terne dans le détail' F.A., p.334.

'J'avais remis à Brice Parain, tapées à la machine, les cent premières pages de mon roman, c'est-à-dire l'enfance de Françoise: il les jugea inférieures à mes nouvelles, et Sartre partageait cet avis' F.A., p.346.

3. Q.P.S., p.34.

absorbing her husband's attention shows, once again, Marcelle's judgement. The final phrase is revelatory of Marcelle's sexual preoccupations. There is in this story, as in the others in the collection, an attempt at constructing a double point of view: the reader, at the same time as he sees through Marcelle's eyes, is also evaluating her. The double viewpoint is achieved in several ways: partly through the clash of juxtaposition, partly through satire and partly through accounts of the characters' 'private' behaviour, and this usually means sexual, as being the most private.

In the sentence which we have just examined, Marcelle comments on the indiscreet sexual conduct of the girls in the dance hall; she has been forced to think about their sexuality and Denis' pleasure in it and shows herself both aware of her own sexuality and unwilling to accept it. Her reaction is betrayed in the following sentence by a physical action: 'Marcelle frissonna...'. She next attempts to cover up her 'unworthy' thoughts by means of high-minded references to:

...la richesse de sa vie intérieure...une vie pleine de joies graves, de travail, de hautes pensées.¹

Apart from the fact that these thoughts are out of place in a dance hall,² and Simone de Beauvoir achieves a satirical effect at Marcelle's expense by making

1. Q.P.S., p.34.

2. One is perhaps reminded here of another lady writer who gained a humorous, even satirical, effect when she made one of her female characters wish to be high-minded in a ballroom:

"I should like balls infinitely better," she replied, "if they were carried on in a different manner; but there is something insufferably tedious in the usual process of such a meeting. It would surely be much more rational if conversation instead of dancing were made the order of the day."

"Much more rational, my dear Caroline, I dare say but it would not be near so much like a ball."

Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen, O.U.P., 1965, pp.55-56.

Jane Austen's Miss Bingley was promptly squashed by her brother; the insufferable Pascal, on the other hand, indulges Marcelle in her 'spirituality'.

her entertain them there, the reader perceives Marcelle's attempt at self-mystification and judges her accordingly.

Simone de Beauvoir composed directly satirical effects which become an extremely bitter attack on the class represented by the characters in the short stories - the bourgeoisie. An example of this savage description may be seen in the following extract which reads like pastiche of Dos Passos:

Dans le métro bondé, le soir, en rentrant chez elle, Marcelle se demandait tristement si le vide de son coeur serait jamais comblé, elle regardait avec désespoir les hommes aux mains calleuses, les femmes aux visages terreux, ces yeux qui ne reflétaient aucune lueur d'idéal; ...elle aurait voulu parler à ces déshérités de la beauté, de l'amour, du sens de la souffrance avec des mots si convaincants que leur vie en eût été transfigurée. Elle ne pouvait rien pour eux; sa charité inutile s'ajoutait au malaise physique que lui causait l'odeur de la sueur humaine, et le contact des corps grossiers lui donnait des nausées si fortes qu'elle était souvent obligée de descendre et de faire à pied la fin du trajet; rentrée chez elle, elle embrassait longuement son visage dans la glace...¹

Apart from the fact that the people about whom Marcelle is thinking are genuine workers, at grips with the 'real' problems of life, while at this stage she is a voluntary social worker depicted as dealing with these problems at second-hand, she is, in effect, despising those who are travelling with her by playing the role of a moral Lady Bountiful who will hand out poetry to make the workers accept their condition. There is a very clear satirical intention in this passage which is emphasised by the almost comic contrast between the elevated tone of Marcelle's thoughts and the nature of her reaction to the physical presence of the workers. The end of the passage reveals the veritable object of her love - herself!

A further way in which Simone de Beauvoir manipulates the reader into adopting a precise attitude towards the characters she describes is by means of the details which she gives about their sexual behaviour. It was perhaps less usual in the Thirties for a woman writer to talk so frankly about her woman characters' sexual experiences, whether these were with a partner or solitary. The accounts of Marcelle's masochism or of Lisa's sexual behaviour are not gratuitous: the details

1. Q.P.S., pp.9-10.

of Marcelle's wedding night, for instance, help delineate the abnormal psychology hidden by her apparent normality: only by abdicating deliberately all participation in the sexual act, by making herself into an object which her husband can exploit for his pleasure alone, can Marcelle herself experience any pleasure.¹ Simone de Beauvoir wished to demonstrate how Marcelle continually transforms free actions into necessities, even in the most intimate aspects of behaviour, and how she mystifies both these around her and ultimately herself, too.

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1. The frank sexual descriptions may remind one of the similarly frank details in Le Mur. Sartre's short stories were written at about the same time as those included in Quand prime le spirituel. When Sartre wrote to Simone de Beauvoir, reporting on his conversation with Jean Paulhan during which the latter accepted Sartre's novel Melancholia (to be re-named La Nausée) and was discussing the collection of short stories, he said, alluding to this aspect of them:

J'ai dit: "Elles sont un peu...heuh...heuh...libres. Je touche aux questions en quelque sorte sexuelles." F.A., p.305.

There are, in fact, certain straightforward parallels in both sets of stories: in L'Enfance d'un chef, for example, the young Lucien finds himself in bed with the homosexual Bergère, while in Simone de Beauvoir's Marguerite the schoolgirl heroine is in her turn enticed into bed by the lesbian Marie-Ange. Lulu in Intimité masturbates, as does Lisa in Simone de Beauvoir's story which bears her name.

There are parallels also in the way that certain characters are presented and in the qualities they possess. Madame Darbedat in La Chambre, suffering from a mysterious illness which confines her to her room, whose wish is that:

...la souffrance, des lectures graves, une attention vigilante et tournée vers ses souvenirs, vers ses sensations les plus exquises, la mûrissent comme un beau fruit de serre.

Oeuvres romanesques, op. cit., p.235.

is reminiscent of Marcelle as she appears in Simone de Beauvoir's story entitled Anne. She, too, has suffered, she, too, has a mysterious illness and turns towards serious reading, contemplation of the past and cultivation of her memories as a justification for her present existence. The aim of both sets of stories can at times be very similar: a study of mauvaise foi and the tricks by means of which the characters deceive themselves and others. The professeur de lycée, Chantal, carefully arranging the appearance of her life is psychologically very near the unintellectual Lulu who composes the way her own actions appear with equal care.

Finally, a profound entente can be seen in the narrative technique of the two collections of stories. Shifting viewpoint, interior monologue, biting irony, all these reflect the joint nature of Sartre's and Simone de Beauvoir's researches into the métier of author during their apprentice years.

It is evident that there is much hostility shown in this story towards the central character who is presented as the embodiment of mauvaise foi. She lies to others and to herself about her nature, her thoughts and her desires. Marcelle sees herself acting a rôle which she has chosen freely for herself; the reader, though, can penetrate the obfuscation of her language to distinguish a personality other than the one she has officially adopted for herself. In the subsequent stories we see many other characters who, in their turn, are living in this way.

Simone de Beauvoir was thus marked by Dos Passos' depiction of the bourgeoisie in his novels. When one thinks of James Merivale in Manhattan Transfer who is stiff, unfeeling, concerned above all with appearance and family position, one can understand what attracted her so much and why, as she says, the American author influenced to such an extent her collection of short stories. It would seem, then, that her initial reaction of enthusiasm and commitment to Dos Passos' view of a certain section of society, which led to her imitating it in her own work, was because it coincided with her own deeply felt rejection of the bourgeoisie.¹ The negative, even though passionate, feeling of hatred which this class inspired in her could not, however, take her very far at this time; it sufficed, perhaps, to fuel one short story but was not enough to provide energy for a series of five. If one compares Simone de Beauvoir's stories with those of Sartre in Le Mur, L'Enfance d'un chef particularly shares the same destructive impetus directed against the middle classes, but this story possesses a density which hers lack. The detail of Sartre's analysis of the bourgeoisie, the variety of the milieux through which Lucien Fleurier moves, the historical and ideological structure of this class, its economic background, all are integrated into a devastating and effective attack. Simone de Beauvoir could not yet achieve as rich an effect in her five stories as Sartre did in one, because her detestation of the bourgeoisie, sincere and

1. She was responding primarily to what Sartre termed 'la haine, le désespoir, le mépris hautain' which he saw as characteristic of Dos Passos' style.

strong, sanctioned by her reading of Dos Passos, was external to her most central concerns.

These become more evident when one turns to the two suppressed introductory chapters of L'Invitée. The first of these describes the childhood of the heroine, Françoise, the second deals with her encounter and developing friendship with Elisabeth, the sister of Pierre with whom Françoise will eventually unite her life. Simone de Beauvoir still wished to attack the bourgeoisie, the first chapter especially shows the oppressive nature of the controls enforced over the child, and the satirical impulse, so strong in Quand prime le spirituel, is still present though in a much more dilute and possibly more subtle form. When, for example, the middle-class parents send their daughter to a state lycée, the mother's advice to Françoise:

Sa mère lui avait conseillé de ne pas frayer avec des jeunes filles qui n'appartenaient pas à son milieu...¹

catches very well the tone of complacent belief in the superiority of the class to which their family belongs. This later criticism is not strident as it was in the short stories, it is conveyed by the depiction, without commentary, of the behaviour and attitudes prevalent amongst a particular group; it is for the reader to make the necessary commentary and formulate any condemnations. In this, Simone de Beauvoir has approached much nearer to the technique of Dos Passos. Yet, there is in the two chapters an emerging theme which was later to prove itself as a more fruitful source of inspiration not present in the novels of Dos Passos.

This theme is personal rather than social in origin; the developing writer was concerned not with how her characters can fit into a class oppressive by its very nature and which therefore can be attacked violently but rather with how one particular person, modelled on herself, can co-exist with two or three other people. At last she was beginning, encouraged by Sartre, to gain enough confidence to deal

1. E.p., p.290.

in fictional form with her own situation. Within her own experience, however, there was a strange difficulty: the full acceptance of the existence of the Other:

la conscience d'autrui demeurerait pour moi un on-dit...¹

This difficulty was at the basis of all her relationships except those with a restricted number of privileged people who were 'annexed' into her own world. As she became more aware of this situation Simone de Beauvoir also became conscious that it could be explored in fiction in a much more precise way than her generalised hatred of the bourgeoisie.

In the second suppressed chapter of L'Invitée, Simone de Beauvoir can be seen to be moving away from direct imitation of one aspect of Dos Passos' achievement and towards a treatment of the first genuinely positive theme to spring from her direct experience. In this chapter, the heroine, Françoise,² becomes fascinated by Elisabeth, a girl encountered at school. Hitherto, Françoise has been proud of her achievements and has seen herself, while still subject to oppressive and arbitrary rules because she is a child, as the organising consciousness of the world:

...elle avait l'impression d'être le centre du monde; c'était à elle, et à personne d'autre qu'était confiée la mission de faire exister le plus grand nombre de choses possibles, les plus variées, les plus belles.³

When she meets Elisabeth, she is dislodged from this position at the centre of the world having been seduced by her friend's glamour and calm, unquestioning assumption of superiority. Suddenly, all meaning drains away from her own life while she credits Elisabeth with being the unique consciousness who gives meaning and value to the world. At one stage in the chapter, referring to an argument she has had with her parents, Françoise thinks:

1. F.A., p.324.

2. Simone de Beauvoir gave this character her own mother's name, thus signalling that she was going to deal with experience very close to her own, but was still too reserved to talk about herself directly.

3. E., p.286.

...ce n'était pas une vraie scène, pareille à celles qu'Elisabeth avait vécues; c'était sans force, sans relief, rien qu'un peu d'agitation vaine.¹

We see here what was later to dominate the action of L'Invitée. This first account of the fascination possessed by the Other who must be either taken over or suppressed if one's self is to retain any validity is very far from the concerns of John Dos Passos, and when Simone de Beauvoir began to develop this theme she was leaving imitations of the American author far behind.

And yet the influence of Dos Passos was to prove more pervasive; while reading his novels Simone de Beauvoir had not only found approval for her violent reaction against the class of her parents but she had also encountered a new style of narration which embodied a sympathetic political viewpoint, a method of depicting a vast range of characters in an attempt to describe a society almost in its entirety and a literary style modelled on contemporary speech. When evaluating the effect on Simone de Beauvoir of reading Dos Passos it is useful to consult Sartre's essay as he was expressing in it ideas which he and she had elaborated in common.

For Sartre it was clear that firstly Dos Passos wanted to make his readers aware of the world in which they lived:

Voyez pourtant la curieuse entreprise: il s'agit de nous montrer ce monde-ci, le nôtre.²

and that one of the means used to achieve this state of awareness was to pile action on action, fact on fact, using the conjunction 'and' to link sentences rather than causal connections. Sartre summarises this:

Raconter, pour Dos Passos, c'est faire une addition.³

The effect of the accumulation of sentences, each with equal weight, was,

1. E., p.311.

2. N.R.F., août 1938, p.292.

3. op.cit., p.294.

according to Sartre, to eliminate value as no event or action possessed any special significance which could distinguish it from any other event or action. The lives that Dos Passos described make the reader feel the weight of destiny which bears down on them and Sartre suggests that the narrative tense employed reinforces the feeling that his characters' lives are a collection of facts anchored in a sort of continuing present tense. By means of this narrative style the author is adopting 'la perspective de l'histoire'¹ and a political stance is necessarily involved with this:

Dans la société capitaliste les hommes n'ont pas de vies, ils
n'ont que des destins...²

Thus, by leading his readers to an awareness of the way the capitalist system stifles the freedom of the individual Dos Passos is encouraging them to reject this society in which 'les jeux sont faits'.

Simone de Beauvoir, still serving her apprenticeship as a novelist, did not yet possess the technical skill to manipulate such ideas and did not wish to do so, being as yet uninterested in any form of political activity.³ In the trilogy, U.S.A.,⁴ Dos Passos takes thirteen characters whom he studies in depth from their birth onwards sometimes to their death, sometimes as far as the late Nineteen Twenties. The narrative is carried forward from the point of view of these thirteen people, one person holding the centre of the stage in each section of the story but with their lives crisscrossing with those of a multiplicity of others. As we have seen, Simone

1. op. cit., p.296.

2. op.cit., p.296.

3. Certain elements of her later novels, such as Les Belles Images where she describes the complacent lives of the well-off technocratic and liberal middle class, show that her study of Dos Passos bore later fruit.

4. Simone de Beauvoir had read the trilogy in its entirety, either in French or in the original American. The 42nd Parallel and 1919 were available in translation in the Thirties and her library card reveals that she borrowed the final volume The Big Money from Shakespeare and Company in April 1936, the year of its American publication. She was still reading Dos Passos in 1940, borrowing The Adventures of a Young Man in August.

de Beauvoir was interested in the use of multiple viewpoint and she used Dos Passos' device of interlocking characters in Quand prime le spirituel where each story is narrated from the viewpoint of one of a group of linked characters and shares a common fund of background and events while containing experiences which are proper to that story alone. She was able when she began to write L'Invitée to manipulate successfully a larger number of characters but these still evolved within a restricted milieu. The wish to evoke the whole of a particular period, as Dos Passos had in U.S.A. and as Sartre was to do in his trilogy Les Chemins de la Liberté, did not visit her until much later, well after the War. By that time she had developed, after writing three novels, the technical skills necessary to organise very many characters and to describe a variety of backgrounds. The novel she then produced was Les Mandarins and the period described was post-Liberation France. She did not choose to use in this novel the technical devices which Sartre derived from reading Dos Passos but it must surely rely on the American novelist for some of its inspiration and in particular on his vast evocation of a whole society at a certain moment in its history.

It is arguable that Simone de Beauvoir drew more on her reading of Dos Passos when she came to write not fiction but her autobiography. In her memoirs there are echoes of techniques he employed in his great trilogy to encourage a certain feeling of verisimilitude. In the same way as in his Newsreel passages, she includes snatches of popular song, newspaper headlines, lists of films, books, plays and so on which appeared in a given year; she draws on many sources besides her memory - the accounts of others, letters, diaries, research in libraries. The resulting achievement reflects her wish to recreate as near total a picture as possible of her past self and the milieu in which she and her associates lived; this picture has been built up in a way similar to the way John Dos Passos has constructed a view of America in the opening thirty years of this century.

There are three pages at the beginning of Dos Passos' trilogy which serve as

an introduction or prologue to his great enterprise. Entitled U.S.A., they describe a restless young man, possibly the author, moving alone about the country. These few pages, however, are not in praise of that young man but rather a hymn to the speech of Americans, the man would be alone, but for one aspect of life:

Only the ears busy to catch the speech are not alone; the ears are caught tight, linked tight by the tendrils of phrased words, the turn of a joke, the sing-song fade of a story, the gruff fall of a sentence; linking tendrils of speech twine through the city blocks, spread over pavements, grow out along broad parked avenues, speed with the trucks leaving on their long night runs over roaring highways, whisper down sandy byroads past wornout farms, joining up cities and filling stations, roundhouses, steamboats, planes groping along airways; words call out on mountain pastures, drift slow down rivers widening to the sea and the hushed beaches...U.S.A. is the speech of the people.¹

Simone de Beauvoir was eager to reproduce in her work 'the speech of the people' as Dos Passos had termed it. When she and Sartre had read Céline's Voyage au bout de la nuit they had realised that, because of its language alone, it was an outstanding literary achievement. They were all the more excited as they wished by this time to write their own novels in a prose style which would be immediately accessible and which would gain force from being modelled on the strengths and energies of the patterns used in everyday speech. Reading Dos Passos reinforced this determination fired by Céline's potent influence. The tape-recorded conversations between Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir published with La Cérémonie des adieux impress by the number of times Sartre stresses that the writer's subject matter is and must be the world about him; the following two quotations are typical of several similar references:

...je pensais que le roman devait rendre compte du monde, tel qu'il était...le monde des gens vivants.²

and

Un écrivain n'a qu'un sujet, c'est le monde.³

1. U.S.A., J. Dos Passos, Constable, London, 1938, pp.vi-vii.

2. C.A., p.177.

3. C.A., p.264.

As Sartre, with Simone de Beauvoir in agreement, was moving towards a philosophical position, existentialism,¹ which took as its point of departure a direct and spontaneous apprehension of the outside world without the mediation of ready-made theories or beliefs to interpret that experience, so in their literary development they began to reject the more traditional narrative language which they themselves had used² in the early stages of their literary apprenticeship. She had chosen, for example, to emulate the poetic style of writers such as Alain-Fournier. Later, dissatisfied with the stylistic models proposed by contemporary masters, in this context Simone de Beauvoir refers disparagingly to the 'phrases marmoréennes de Gide, d'Alain, de Valéry',³ and wishing to describe the outside world in its immediacy they rejected the idealistic approach. It was natural, therefore, that they should be excited by the narrative style of a writer who sings the praises of everyday speech and who uses its rhythms and its vocabulary to evoke the life of 'the people'.

Consciously Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir set out, fired by the example of Dos Passos and a little later of Hemingway, encouraged by their reading of Céline, to describe the world about them in a style related to, but not directly imitating, the speech of everyday life.

Simone de Beauvoir in L'Invitée has left 'le merveilleux'⁴ and the 'poétiques aventures'⁵ far behind; her heroine lives in what is a recognisably "real" world with

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1. Sartre spent 1933-34 in Berlin studying the contemporary German philosophy which was to confirm the orientation of his own thinking.
 2. In Sartre there is a philosophical reason for the way he describes the world - anti-idealism: 'je n'avais qu'une idée, c'est que toute théorie qui ne disait pas que la conscience voit les objets extérieurs comme ils sont, était vouée à l'échec' (F.A., p.205).
 3. F.A., p.142. cf. also Chapter Nine of this study.
 4. F.A., p.65.
 5. *ibid.*

which she is struggling to come to grips. The style she developed was supple enough to include popular usage and rhythms in the narrative passages as well as in the extensive conversations. The fact that the narrative is always filtered through the consciousness of one of the characters makes the sometimes almost popular usage more acceptable as being in character and appropriate. When Gerbert is wondering what his reactions to active service in the army will be:

...il aurait bien voulu savoir, si oui ou non il aurait peur,
mais ces trucs-là, c'était imprévisible.¹

or when Pierre tells Xavière:

Vous perdez comme ça un tas d'occasions précieuses.²

and asks her:

C'est-il ça?³

these characters are using the vocabulary and constructions of everyday life. The result is that the reader has a more direct feeling for the characters, an impression of spontaneity has been created. The style of this novel becomes a little more complex, however, when we study the way in which the women characters, Françoise, Elisabeth and Xavière, express themselves. A typical example of Françoise's speech is shown in this sentence taken from an inner monologue when she is in bed unable to sleep after a trying scene between Pierre and Xavière:

Ses exigences, ses jalousies, ses dédains, on ne pouvait plus
les ignorer, puisque Pierre se mêlait d'y attacher du prix.⁴

This short extract reveals that the style which Simone de Beauvoir had developed was "mixed": the first part of the sentence is reminiscent of the traditional vocabulary of the emotions and is thus literary, even academic, in inspiration revealing Françoise's mania for accurate representation of states of feeling, while

1. L'I., p.276.

2. L'I., p.64.

3. L'I., p.69.

4. L'I., pp.73-74.

the sentence construction is based on the spoken language which gives an everyday framework to the fevered emotional analysis. Placing the objects of the verb at the beginning of the sentence and then adding emphasis by repeating them as an object pronoun, 'les', using the pronoun 'on' to refer to herself are examples of colloquial usage; as is the way in which 'se mêler de' is used here. Two narrative styles meet fruitfully. In fact, close examination of the novel reveals that Françoise, as well as the other female characters, expresses herself in a style which is mostly correct, if relaxed, but which echoes the sentence patterns of everyday speech. She is a writer, we see her at the beginning of the novel adapting Shakespeare's Julius Caesar for Pierre to act and during the course of the story she is engaged in writing a novel, although we are not, unfortunately, given many details about it.¹ It is thus reasonable to suggest that this character, from whose point of view most of the action is narrated, would be aware of how words fit effectively together and that, given her educated and literary background, she would be likely to speak or think in a careful and precise way.

Some critics have attacked Simone de Beauvoir's literary style, these strictures were more frequent at the moment when she was awarded the Prix Goncourt, and have accused her of crudity and vulgarity, criticisms which were often made retrospectively to apply to her earlier novels.² In fact L'Invitée was

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1. Françoise at one stage describes her novel to Xavière: it is a book about adolescence:

- C'est sur ma jeunesse, dit Françoise; je voudrais expliquer dans mon livre pourquoi on est souvent si disgracié quand on est jeune. L'I., p.149.

This is the only time when the content of her novel is mentioned.

2. Gonzague Truc, for example, bitterly criticised the style of Les Mandarins which he found 'dans le plus mauvais goût du jour'. He continued by noting its reliance on the patterns of everyday speech but found this a severe defect:

Sa forme colle à la conversation courante et au vocabulaire usuel. Or, on sait ce que sont devenus cette conversation et ce vocabulaire: une parfaite déformation ou décomposition du langage, et l'ordure même.

He continued by saying that L'Invitée where this style was already present, but not in so declared a form, was already out of fashion. Une société existentialiste in Ecrits de Paris, mai 1955, 77-81, p.77.

most carefully composed. The two narrative styles, that based on the spoken language and that which has its roots in traditional literary narrative, complement each other; the rhythms and patterns inspired by everyday speech give suppleness and strength to the psychological analysis and precise descriptions of behaviour. It is a style which gives part of its vitality to Simone de Beauvoir's first published novel and which was to serve her well in the future.

We have noted Sartre's insistence that the writer had to turn to his immediate experience of the world about him, this insistence was shared by Simone de Beauvoir; they recognised in Dos Passos someone who was felt to be a kindred spirit, one who had undertaken to reveal our own world to us. Dos Passos was the first of the contemporary American writers to gain the admiration of Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, but their reading of his work was closely followed by the discovery of Hemingway and the even more stimulating encounter with Faulkner's novels.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE REAL WORLD APPROACHES: ERNEST HEMINGWAY

In Simone de Beauvoir's autobiography there is an amusing account of her and Sartre's introduction to German phenomenology. In the year 1932-33 their friend, Raymond Aron, was studying Husserl's work at the Institut Français in Berlin. Visiting Paris during the course of this year he went with them to a bar in Montparnasse where they ordered cocktails:

Aron désigna son verre: "Tu vois, mon petit camarade, si tu es phénoménologue, tu peux parler de ce cocktail, et c'est de la philosophie!"¹

Simone de Beauvoir records that Sartre went pale with emotion, his ambition for years had been to be able to discuss directly any object in the world about him, thus integrating it into a philosophical system. The effect of what Aron had told him was so powerful that Sartre bought a book on Husserl on the way home from their meeting and later applied to go to Berlin the following year in succession to his friend. This anecdote has more significance than philosophical: it is also relevant to their joint ambitions as novelists. They wished in their future novels to be able to incorporate the entirety of the world in which they lived directly as it was experienced:

...exprimer la vérité immédiate des aventures humaines.²

The human adventures which she intended to describe involved the larger, more serious questions of life; for instance, her linked short stories Quand prime le spirituel taken together illustrate how middle-class values pervert a variety of relationships: husband-wife, teacher-pupil, mother-daughter, even the relationship with the self is distorted by mauvaise foi. At the same time there were less

1. F.A., p.141.

2. E., p.355.

serious aspects of daily life to which she wished to give due honour:

...une promenade, un déjeuner, une conversation...¹

Such modest pleasures, like the apricot cocktail of the conversation with Aron, added a certain joy to everyday existence giving it colour and flavour. They were, she thought, worthy of inclusion in a literary enterprise which intended to reflect the totality of experience. It was with delight that Simone de Beauvoir discovered an author who wished to evoke the tragic aspects of existence while endowing his characters with an exuberant physical life where pleasures played an important part.

Ernest Hemingway had by this date established a considerable literary reputation for himself in France.² Indeed, it was while he was living there that his work found publishers in America, and it was also available in Paris almost from the beginning of his career as a writer. He came to the attention of French critics in 1924 when an avant-garde set of short sketches, in our time, was published in very limited edition. It was the sixth of a series edited by Ezra Pound, grandiloquently described as 'The Inquest into the state of contemporary English prose'. In 1926 Adrienne Monnier³ printed a story of his in a little magazine she edited⁴ and the consequence of this was that he came to the attention of the

1. F.A., p.144.

2. For an account of French attitudes to Hemingway in the Thirties see 'French Reactions to Hemingway's Works between the Two World Wars' by Roger Asselineau in The Literary Reputation of Hemingway in Europe, ed. R. Asselineau, Paris: Minard Lettres Modernes, 1965.

3. See Chapter Two p.43.

4. Hemingway wrote to his American publisher Maxwell Perkins from Paris on 24 April 1926:

Am working on a couple of stories. La [sic] Navire D'Argent published a 15,000 word story of mine translated a couple of months ago and various frenchmen got very excited and made extravagant statements about it so now they all want them and I have a fine french market (in francs).

E. Hemingway, Selected Letters, ed. Carlos Baker, London: Granada, 1981, p.202.

Nouvelle Revue Française who published stories by him in 1927 and 1928 in their review. The magazine Bifur also published one of his stories in 1929.¹ The NRF had liked Hemingway's work so much that Gallimard brought out a collection of his stories entitled Cinquante mille dollars in 1928. Critical reception was enthusiastic and in the subsequent years other stories were translated as well as his first two major novels, Fiesta² and A Farewell to Arms which appeared in reverse order in 1932 and 1933. His satirical attack on Sherwood Anderson, The Torrents of Spring, and a further collection of stories, In Our Time, were also published in English in France in 1931 and 1932. By 1933, when Simone de Beauvoir read his work for the first time, he was a relatively well-known and well established author with a leading firm of publishers and five books in print. His two novels, were particularly well translated by Maurice-Edgar Coindreau whom Asselineau rightly calls 'a most distinguished practitioner...an extraordinarily gifted and versatile translator'³ and who was later to render a similar service for Faulkner's novels. As a further boost to their presentation of Hemingway to the French public, Gallimard had asked leading literary figures to provide introductions to the novels, thus Drieu la Rochelle wrote the preface to L'Adieu aux armes while Jean Prévost introduced Le Soleil se lève aussi. André Maurois had already written a presentation of Hemingway's story Je vous salue, Marie which had appeared in a collection of American stories in 1931. These critics chose to praise precisely those aspects of his work which would appeal to Simone de Beauvoir: they stressed an effort for authenticity, his characteristic use of dialogue, the directness of his

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1. Bifur in its last number, 8, which appeared in June 1931, published an extract from Sartre's La Légende de la vérité. In La Cérémonie des adieux Simone de Beauvoir suggested (p.198) that this was the first time that he had appeared in print, although Contat and Rybalka show that this was not so. In any case, Bifur picked out much of the most promising writing of the new generation.
 2. See Bibliography for an explanation of this title.
 3. op.cit., p.45.

style and his appreciation of physical pleasures. Prévost, for example, wrote about Hemingway's:

...puissance dramatique, la manière brève et forte de voir et de peindre... Tout écrivain qui connaît son métier en louera les dialogues, la progression d'effet, l'absence de rhétorique et d'effets faciles, tout un art impeccable dans sa rudesse. D'autre part, on ne peut pas dire de lui que trop de raffinements ou de complexités intellectuelles le réservent à une élite. Chaque vérité qu'il note au galop frappe le lecteur, n'importe quel lecteur, d'une sorte de saisissement charnel.¹

He must have made Hemingway even more attractive to the anti-bourgeois Simone de Beauvoir when he stated in the same preface that the American writer did not appeal to the majority of lady readers, those who make or mar a writer's reputation by 'les conversations autour du thé, l'éloge d'une bouche élégante...!.

Hemingway's pessimism was noted by critics, some of whom balanced his ultimately tragic view of life with his appreciation of the joys which life had meanwhile to offer. André Maurois had stressed that:

...les personnages de Hemingway vivaient. Ils ne parlaient pas de leur âme, ils ne 'délabrynthaient' pas leurs sentiments, ils commandaient des boissons, des dîners, ils juraient, ils riaient...²

Some commented, as Prévost, on his lack of intellectualism but the more discerning noted that within his appearance of simplicity there was a careful concern with elements of style, particularly in the rendering of speech. Simone de Beauvoir was searching for a technique in fiction more direct, less intellectual and psychological than that used by contemporary French writers. Given her needs, it was inevitable that she should be seriously interested in a writer who was presented to French readers in the way that Hemingway had been by both publishers and critics. In La Force de l'âge she writes:

1. Introduction to Le Soleil se lève aussi, p.vii.

2. André Maurois's introduction to Je vous salue, Marie, in Les Romanciers américains, p.193.

50,000 Dollars et Le Soleil se lève aussi nous firent connaître Hemingway; je lus en outre en anglais un certain nombre de ses nouvelles.¹

It is possible that the experience of reading a considerable amount of Hemingway's work, book after book, was more powerful than if she had read his books or stories singly over the years. If we examine these stories and this novel we shall be able to determine what characteristics of Hemingway's work inspired her admiration when she read them in 1933.

Both these books represent Hemingway's very early work: three of the short stories date back to In Our Time of 1925, the others are taken from the Men Without Women collection of 1928 but all had been written in 1926 and published in 1927. These productions are very close to the events of the First World War and are the first fruits of his attempts to work out an aesthetic which could include, within the realm of art, the violent and brutal as well as the polite or the beautiful. What were her reactions? As we have seen when she really admired a writer and responded at a deep level to his or her work she uses in her memoirs the vocabulary of recognition to evoke the intensity of her emotion. Having discovered Hemingway's work her reaction was similar:

...derrière les belles histoires d'amour et de mort qu'il nous racontait nous reconnaissons notre univers familier.²

The element of recognition here refers to more than the background of Le Soleil se lève aussi which is composed of the cafés, restaurants and dancing places of Paris which would have been well-known to Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre, it involves a sympathy and what she felt to be a shared ambition operating on a much more profound level.

In La Force de l'âge her first comment on Hemingway's achievement refers to his 'individualisme', what might be termed his cult of the hero. She had only

1. F.A., p.144.

2. F.A., p.144.

recently liberated herself from the glamour of the wistfully romantic heroes and heroines of her late adolescence and the tougher but, in their own hardboiled way, the equally romantic Hemingway heroes with their permanently impossible love affairs must have struck the same chord in her as Alain-Fournier's or Rosamond Lehmann's.¹ She returns in her discussion of Hemingway to his glorification of the individual, at a later stage where she firmly dissociates herself from it. Writing in 1960, having reached a point in her political evolution where she believed firmly in political commitment, she criticises her past self and Hemingway also;² herself for

1. Indeed, the heroine of Fiesta, Lady Brett Ashley, is reminiscent of Michael Arlen's Iris Storm whom Simone de Beauvoir had admired a few years earlier. Unwittingly, Hemingway made Brett similar to Iris both in superficial details, such as the man's felt hat which both heroines wore, and also in a deeper way. Both heroines flout accepted moral codes and are casually promiscuous, both have a strict personal moral code which leads them, in different ways, to self-sacrifice. Contemporary critics remarked on the likeness, much to Hemingway's irritation. He claimed never to have read Arlen. Later critics, too, discerned a resemblance. In 1961 Evelyn Waugh made the connection between Iris Storm and Brett, whom he called Bret, linking these characters with Aldous Huxley's Mrs Viveash and with his own Virginia Troy. All these are "The ghosts of romance who walked between the two wars".

Cf. letter to Maxwell Perkins, Hemingway's publisher from Paris, 16 November 1926 on p.224 of the Selected Letters.
Unconditional Surrender, E. Waugh, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1964, p.200.

2. There is often in the autobiography this double viewpoint: Simone de Beauvoir resuscitates her past self, describing the world as experienced by that other person; she also, as her present self, comments frequently in an acerbic manner, on the assumptions, beliefs or acts of the woman she once was. Here the reader feels that the younger Simone de Beauvoir is reprimanded for having been deluded by Hemingway's bourgeois individualism. The political reaction of the Left to Hemingway's work and persona, the two are inextricable, is interesting. In the U.S.S.R., for instance, he was very much admired until the publication of For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940), his novel about the Spanish Civil War. Although he fought on the Republican side he was critical in it of some of the Communist figures and portrayed certain Fascists with some sympathy. The novel clashed with official Soviet ideology and Hemingway's status suddenly changed; he had been one of the most popular authors in translation but was ignored for a fifteen year period until he redeemed himself with The Old Man and the Sea. This was interpreted in the U.S.S.R. as having been written in praise of the pride and dignity of the ordinary worker and Hemingway was re-instated. In 1960, when Simone de Beauvoir published La Force de l'âge, Hemingway ranked tenth on the Russian best-seller list. c.f. Hemingway's revival in the Soviet Union 1955-1962, S.J. Parker in Hemingway in Europe, op.cit.

her naïve belief in individualism, and Hemingway, by implication, for having fostered it. In spite of her hate for the bourgeoisie, she still in 1933 was marked by the assumptions of her bourgeois education about the power of the individual:

...les implications sociales de ces romans nous échappaient puisque, égarés par l'idée que nous nous faisons de notre liberté, nous ne comprenions pas que l'individualisme est une prise de position par rapport à la totalité du monde.¹

She admired the unity of Hemingway's conception of character, where the body and the intelligence were shown as one:

...pas de distance chez ses héros entre la tête, le coeur, le corps.²

His open and frank discussion of sexuality pleased her, too, although this aspect is more relevant to *l'Adieu aux armes* than to the titles she quotes here. She makes a comparison between Hemingway and another tough, adventurous novelist of violence, André Malraux, to Hemingway's advantage. The French writer's concept of eroticism as depicted in *La Condition Humaine*, also published in 1933, she felt both exaggerated the power of sexuality while at the same time degraded it. Ferral wishes to use Valérie, the lovers in *l'Adieu aux armes* are equal in their passion.

She appreciated the way in which Hemingway gave full importance to the minor pleasures of life and also made these fulfil a dynamic function in the novel by making them reveal telling aspects of his characters' feelings or situations:

...il nous disait méticuleusement quels vins, quelles viandes appréciaient ses personnages et combien de verres ils buvaient; il rapportait leurs menus propos; sous sa plume, des détails insignifiants prenaient soudain un sens.³

Simone de Beauvoir continues her evaluation of what Hemingway meant to her by talking about his technique. She asserts:

La technique d'Hemingway, dans son apparente et adroite

1. F.A., p.144.

2. *ibid.*

3. *ibid.*

simplicité, se pliait à nos exigences philosophiques.¹

She is thinking about his style with particular reference to the existence of objects in the external world and how these can be present in a novel. We have returned to the apricot cocktail and phenomenology. For Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre consciousness was turned towards the exterior world; the very fact of consciousness meant an awareness that the outside world and other people in it existed² and were defining one's own existence by means of their observation of oneself. In the Nineteen Thirties they were moving towards a philosophical system later termed Existentialism at which they arrived by way of Sartre's study of Husserl. The reading of Hemingway provided a concrete example which demonstrated how their ideas could be expressed in fiction. As Iris Murdoch observes, "The novelist proper is, in his way, a sort of phenomenologist."³

Mary Warnock, referring to Husserl's article on Phenomenology in the Fourteenth Edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica defines Phenomenology thus:

Essentially, phenomenology consists in the analysis of what is available to introspection in its generality, without making use of any extraneous knowledge of causes, or of natural laws which apply to the outside world, which the practiser of phenomenology may have.⁴

If applied to the function of the writer of fiction this system of philosophy clearly involves an awareness of the outside world, an observation of it, shedding as far as possible pre-conceived ideas as to what ought or ought not to be discussed. There is no noble - which merits literary discussion, and no ignoble - about which the writer should be silent. Mary Warnock continues:

1. F.A., p.144.

2. For Simone de Beauvoir at this stage the existence of other people was still theoretical, she was unable to internalise this knowledge until the end of the decade. Nevertheless, she was obviously aware intellectually of the Other.

3. Sartre, Romantic Rationalist, London, Collins The Fontana Library, 1967, p.9.

4. The Philosophy of Sartre, Mary Warnock, London: Hutchinson University Library, 1965, p.21.

...two features stand out as essential to the phenomenological method. First, there is the often repeated injunction to perform a reduction - that is, to examine experience as it is internally presented to one. And secondly, following from this, the main task of philosophy will emerge as the discovery of the nature of the world from a certain point of view, as it is presented, that is to say, to my consciousness of myself, which goes along with, and contains, every experience of the world that I have.¹

We see that the phenomenological writer is thus enjoined to observe the world and a further important point emerges: the writer's observations can only be subjective. An objective or impartial presentation of experience or description of what is present in the world is thus not valid but a falsification of the nature of reality.²

Hemingway's presentation of objects can be integrated into a philosophical system such as the one that Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre were beginning to elaborate. In Hemingway's world objects do not enjoy an independent existence, such as they do in the world of Balzac, for example; they are always presented to the reader through the awareness of one of the characters in his stories or novels, they have a subjective existence only. The third chapter of Fiesta opens with a description of a street in Paris during an evening in late Spring, but all that is shown to the reader - the lights, the passing crowd, the horse cabs, the prostitutes as they saunter by - is shown through Jake's eyes. The whole scene is presented subjectively and to emphasise this Hemingway repeatedly uses verbs which insist on the fact that Jake represents the unifying consciousness, the subjective observer:

1. Mary Warnock, The Philosophy of Sartre, pp.22-23.

2. It was in the name of these principles that Sartre attacked François Mauriac in his article 'M. François Mauriac et la liberté' in the February, 1939 number of the N.R.F. In an interview given in 1960 Sartre said, in modification of his earlier position:

Je crois que je serais plus souple aujourd'hui, en pensant que la qualité essentielle du roman doit être de passionner, d'intéresser, et je serais beaucoup moins vétilleux sur les méthodes. C'est parce que je me suis aperçu que toutes les méthodes sont des truquages, y compris les méthodes américaines. On s'arrange toujours pour dire ce que l'on pense, au lecteur, et l'auteur est toujours présent. Le truquage américain est plus subtil, mais il existe.

Quoted in Les Ecrits de Sartre, p.72.

I sat watching...I watched...and watched...lost sight of...
watched...and saw...I caught her eye.¹

There are seven verbs which refer to vision in the thirteen lines of this paragraph.

In a similar way, awareness of events is restricted in Hemingway. The reader, forced to coincide with the viewpoint of the narrator, shares the narrator's subjective knowledge only. There is no single absolute truth, merely a set of subjective truths. The effect of this was in Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir's eyes to make of the novel a more authentic vehicle for the reproduction of experience. It was especially the presence of objects in Hemingway's novels which impressed both of the apprentice writers. They speak of this aspect in very similar terms, linking it with the treatment of time, which they each felt posed a serious problem for the novelist. They were more able to see their way towards dealing with this problem after they had read William Faulkner's novels. Meanwhile, they noted that the device of limited and subjective vision endowed those objects mentioned by the narrator with great significance. Simone de Beauvoir writes:

...il réussissait à donner aux objets une énorme présence, précisément parce qu'il ne les séparait pas de l'action où ses héros étaient engagés; en particulier, c'est en utilisant les résistances des choses qu'il parvenait à faire sentir l'écoulement du temps.²

She concludes her discussion of what Hemingway meant to her by saying:

Un grand nombre des règles que nous nous imposâmes dans nos romans nous furent inspirées par Hemingway.³

At a later stage in her biography, when discussing the genesis of L'Invitée, she

1. Fiesta, E. Hemingway, London, Jonathan Cape, 1975, p.20.

2. F.A., p.145. In his article on Mauriac, Sartre makes exactly the same point when he refers to Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms:

Les choses, dans l'admirable l'Adieu aux armes de Hemingway, sont des pièges-à-temps, elles peuplent le récit d'innombrables résistances, menues, têtues, que le héros doit briser les unes après les autres.

reproduced in Situations I, Paris, Gallimard, 1947, p.52.

3. F.A., p.145.

repeats this statement:

Des influences que j'ai subies, la plus manifeste est celle d'Hemingway que plusieurs critiques ont signalée.¹

There are certain elements in the construction of L'Invitée which clearly owe their existence to her mastery of techniques gained from reading Hemingway. Simone de Beauvoir herself points out two of these: the subjectivity of the narration and the use of dialogue. In L'Invitée events happen, objects exist, people behave for the narrator as he or she perceives them at that moment. Terry Keefe, in his discussion of this particular aspect of the novel, brings out very clearly how this affects the narrative technique.² As for dialogue, referring to Hemingway, Simone de Beauvoir says:

J'ai aussi cherché à imiter, comme lui, le ton, le rythme du langage parlé sans craindre les redites et les futilités.³

These lessons instilled by Hemingway were reinforced as we have seen by her reading of the less serious literature of detective fiction in which the manipulation of point of view is an essential part of the process whereby the reader's awareness of events is controlled. The question of dialogue, also, was affected not only by Hemingway but by her reading of Céline and, to a certain extent, Dos Passos. There is no question, however, that she was most marked by Hemingway's concern for a sort of classic simplicity. He did not seek in either narration or dialogue to write exactly as people speak, he made this plain in a letter to his sister, Carol, where he offered some good advice:

Look, if you're trying to write I'd suggest that you avoid the sort of style employed...in conversation; i.e. mis-used adjectives as ejaculations to cover a sort of mental vacancy. ...Try and write straight English; never using slang except in Dialogue and then only when unavoidable...⁴

1. F.A., p.353.

2. Terry Keefe, Simone de Beauvoir: A Study of her Writings, London, Harrap, 1983, pp.149-150.

3. F.A., p.353.

4. Hemingway: Selected Letters, pp.307-08.

What he tried to do in his writing, following Gertrude Stein's advice, in the early days in Paris when he was working with her and Ezra Pound and was friendly with James Joyce, was to catch the rhythm of speech. The more extreme usages of slang or colloquialisms are evanescent, the cadences of the language are more lasting. As Gertrude Stein remarked of someone who admired her work:

He liked the sound of her writing and then he liked the sense
and he liked the sentences.¹

It is the sound which comes first. In his dialogue Hemingway is not afraid to use echoes and repetitions and to employ a certain amount of contemporary idiom, for the sake of immediacy and verisimilitude, but his syntax remains traditional. He gives the illusion that he is transcribing speech as the narrator heard it, but it is an illusion only.

The dialogue in L'Invitée follows the pattern set first by Céline and Dos Passos, then by Hemingway. It gives an impression of the spoken word by using the rhythms and, to a certain extent only, the patterns of everyday speech. The vocabulary and syntax are more informal and relaxed than that of writers such as Gide, Mauriac or even Malraux, yet Simone de Beauvoir's novel differs from Hemingway's model in one important respect. His characters are usually simple, non-intellectual men of action or unsophisticated youngsters and they express themselves simply and vigorously as one would expect such people to do. Jake Barnes of The Sun Also Rises is no exception even though it may be thought he is more intellectually inclined: he is a newspaperman and thus works with words; he likes to read, we see him with a book by Turgenev for example. His war experiences, however, have made him fear rhetoric and the mis-use of words. He warns Brett when she is glorying in the memory of the intensity of her love for the bullfighter:

1. The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, Gertrude Stein, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1966, p.247.

You'll lose it if you talk about it.¹

In fact, he uses his plain, reticent way of speaking as a protection against pain. Hemingway has again made the style of the dialogue reveal a fundamental truth about the character. Simone de Beauvoir's characters, on the other hand, love words; words are their medium and they are prepared to spend hours refining their use of them. This, too, is revealing. Françoise, Pierre, Elisabeth are almost self-consciously intellectual; they are middle-class, highly educated, their professions, novelist, actor, painter encourage them to develop their faculties of sensitive observation and they have a profound need to understand even nuances of behaviour or of feeling.

There is a moment in the novel when Pierre is having his first real conversation with Xavière; she has made a disagreeable remark and he encourages her to define exactly why. He almost bullies Xavière in his insistence which takes almost two and a half pages of the novel to recount.² Many aspects of Simone de Beauvoir's use of dialogue come together in this passage. There are some elements of the spoken language but on the whole a conventional syntax and a carefully

1. Fiesta, p.284. Interestingly, Sartre made his hero, Roquentin, experience a somewhat similar fear of verbalisation. Roquentin is comforting himself after a premonition of la nausée by evoking his keenest memories, which he terms 'histoires vivantes':

J'en pêche une, je revois le décor, les personnages, les attitudes. Tout à coup je m'arrête: j'ai senti une usure, j'ai vu pointer un mot sous la trame des sensations. Ce mot-là je devine qu'il va bientôt prendre la place de plusieurs images que j'aime. Pléiade ed., p.42.

Here, as in the Hemingway novel, words have the power of dissipating the intensity of memory. What was most fresh and real will become a cliché because of the deadening effect of words. Simone de Beauvoir does not seem to have experienced this paradox for a writer. When on p.221 of L'Invitée the word love between Xavière and Pierre is pronounced Françoise realises that it is 'un mot décisif' which brings something new into being. We are reminded of Stendhal's version of a 'trio' in la Chartreuse de Parme where Mosca feels that mention of love between Fabrice and la Sanseverina may create the very emotion he fears.

2. L'Invitée, pp.67-69.

chosen and educated vocabulary are used. The narration is from Françoise's point of view and so this use of language is realistic. The conversation reveals Pierre's obsessive nature; there are already hints of the claustrophobia which the 'trio' will experience in the inextricable way the three are already linked. Pierre is already trying to impose himself on Xavière by means of intimidation and is neglecting Françoise. Xavière, flattered and enticed by Pierre, is at the same time fearful of him. She reveals both her adolescent purity and her womanly sensuality to the attentive and observant Françoise who is fascinated by Xavière's charm which tempts her to be possessive about the girl. Yet, at the same time, Françoise is also exasperated by her immature posturings and uncomfortably aware that Xavière is displacing her with Pierre. She is driving a wedge between their hitherto united selves. This passage displays very well the other rule which Simone de Beauvoir had evolved during her literary apprenticeship: that conversation should form part of the action of the novel. The forthcoming struggles between Françoise, Xavière and Pierre are predicted here during the course of this dialogue.

There are other links between L'Invitée and Hemingway's world. The background, for instance, of this novel is very reminiscent of that evoked in the first part of Fiesta, the cafés and dance halls are similar, and sometimes even the same - le Dôme, for example, is frequented by both sets of characters. The life led by Jake and his friends, away from any family ties, without marriage or children, going from public place to public place, living in hotels, eating in restaurants, against a background of prostitution and irregularity, which is merely presented to the reader without any commentary, is continued by Françoise and her friends in exactly the same way but ten years later. There is less emphasis on food and meals in Simone de Beauvoir's novel - the impotent Jake derives much pleasure from what he eats - but when she does describe what her heroine eats, the description, in the same way as Hemingway's, is functional. The severity of Françoise's illness is partly shown through the food left on her mantelpiece:

Sur la cheminée, Pierre, Xavière, Elisabeth avaient vainement amassé des nourritures alléchantes: le jambon s'était racorni; les abricots s'étaient confits dans leur jus, la crème renversée s'était effondrée dans une mer de caramel.¹

An impression of unpleasant seediness, even of collapse, has been economically created by means of the description of this stale food. A totally different feeling of simple and relaxed happiness is described during the walking tour which Françoise makes later in the novel with Gerbert:

...ils marchaient tous deux d'un même pas. Une même fatigue heureuse les habitait et ensemble ils évoquaient en silence le vin rouge, la soupe, le feu qu'ils espéraient trouver là-haut.²

Drink, wine, of course, but especially whisky, is consumed in impressive quantities in both novels. L'Invitée opens with a scene set far into the night where the empty whisky bottle is an important 'prop', along with the ashtray full of cigarette ends and the two glasses. All these emphasise the atmosphere of comradeship between Françoise and Gerbert. Engaged on the task of adapting Shakespeare's Julius Caesar for Pierre to produce, they have spent ten days together, working on their joint enterprise; the empty bottle bears witness to their close collaboration. The idea of fetching a new, full bottle comes to Françoise as an excuse to look round the theatre in a proprietorial way, as the theatre, she feels, needs her presence to animate it. The objects, and it is typical of someone marked by Hemingway's influence that these should be bottles of whisky, are integrated within the action of the novel and bear witness to the passing of time.

It is interesting that in L'Invitée, as in Fiesta, there should be an interlude of respite from the painful intensity of feelings in the complex and claustrophobic city. In Fiesta the hero and his friend Bill go to the mountains on a fishing holiday. In this pastoral retreat innocent merriment and fun can exist, the delights of

1. L'I., p.191.

2. L'I., p.390.

comradeship emerge, the simple pleasures of the men fishing, talking, drinking together are undiluted by the complicated treacheries of city life or sexual relationships. Even the Englishman, Mr. Harris, who joins them is affected by the temporary lightening of atmosphere. The fact that their inn should be near Roncesvaux is significant for in the mountains they are in contact with an older tradition of friendship and loyalty, both noble and innocent. The remission afforded by this mountain idyll can only be temporary, however: a telegram arrives from his friends, and Jake has to descend to Pamplona and to the pattern of betrayals which will be created anew during its fiesta. In a very similar way, Françoise finds refuge in the mountains from the tensions of Paris life as a member of the trio. She takes Gerbert with her as a companion on a walking holiday and, like Jake in Fiesta, she experiences innocent and simple pleasures. These are both physical and emotional. On the one hand, Françoise enjoys the arduous walking during the day and the relaxation which comes in the evening; the food and wine being more appreciated because of the physical fatigue of a body taxed to its limits. On the other hand, she begins an affair with Gerbert which is characterised by a lack of the complex demands which have defined her relationships with Pierre and Xavière. Tendresse is a key word which recurs at least five times when she is describing her feelings for Gerbert.¹ In La Force de l'âge Simone de Beauvoir refers to this interlude as 'si gaie, si innocente'² and these qualities could also be ascribed to the joking, happy relationship between Jake and Bill. Nevertheless, for Françoise the holiday in the mountains is a temporary respite only, immediately on her return to Paris she is involved in a system of betrayals. Indeed this 'innocent' loving friendship between her and Gerbert is in itself a betrayal of Xavière.

1. Françoise refers to her 'tendresse' for Gerbert p.390; she has a dream of 'bien-être tendre' with him p.391; she feels 'un élan de tendresse' for him p.399; she tells him she wants to sleep with him 'par tendresse' p.403 and asks him: 'Vous n'avez jamais senti comme j'avais de la tendresse pour vous?' p.403.

2. F.A., p.348.

The episode in the mountains represents in each novel a return to a different moral order, that of Nature and the natural world. In a letter to his publisher, Hemingway asserted:

The point of the book to me was that the earth abideth for ever... I didn't mean the book to be a hollow or bitter satire but a damn tragedy with the earth abiding for ever as the hero.¹

Similarly, from her childhood onwards, Simone de Beauvoir had loved the countryside and had found within it an inexhaustible source of pleasure and renewal.² In fact Françoise and Gerbert's mountain holiday is based on an actual walking tour made by Simone de Beauvoir in 1935 in the same way as Jake and Bill's fishing trip in Fiesta is based on one made by Hemingway and a group of friends in 1925. Both writers had in their own life felt a profound need to return to the natural world and they endowed their heroes with the same urge. Though the claims of civilisation are finally paramount, both Jake and Françoise are strengthened, if only temporarily, by their retreat from it. Françoise has gained from the interlude peaceful tranquility and the warmth of Gerbert's uncritical companionship which will sustain her on her return to Paris³ and the world of anguish.

Hemingway has sometimes been compared with Kipling, by Evelyn Waugh for example,⁴ because of his fascination with how things are done, with the mechanics of skills such as fishing, or sports such as bullfighting, boxing or racing, which he

1. Ernest Hemingway, Selected Letters, p.229.
2. This aspect of Simone de Beauvoir's experience is discussed in La Nature chez Simone de Beauvoir Claire Cayron, Paris, Gallimard, 1973.
3. There is some tension in the account of the holiday but this derives from the difficulty Françoise experiences firstly in departing from her usual code and also as an older woman making advances to a younger man. When these tensions are resolved the atmosphere is immediately relaxed, joyful and simple.
4. Quoted in Hemingway's English Reputation by D.S.R. Welland, p.32 in Hemingway in Europe.

always describes meticulously. Hemingway's heroes are most intensely themselves when they are singlemindedly concentrating on the exercise of these skills. Simone de Beauvoir, earnestly acquiring her métier by training herself to be a writer, approved of this aspect of Hemingway's fiction and in the same way as Jake is shown in the opening pages of Fiesta at work as a newspaperman so her characters are also presented as workers. She endows the central characters of L'Invitée in Chapter One with modest but honest ambitions, they are not eager for success in worldly terms, they wish to be skilled at their trade:

Elle sourit à Gerbert:

- Vous non plus, vous n'êtes pas ambitieux.

- Non, dit Gerbert, pour quoi faire? Il hésita. J'aimerais pourtant bien être un jour un bon acteur.

- Comme moi, j'aimerais bien écrire un bon livre. On aime faire bien le travail qu'on fait. Mais ça n'est pas pour la gloire et les honneurs.

- Non, dit Gerbert.¹

When Françoise is reflecting on the relationship with Pierre on which her life is now founded, she feels that it is the work they do in common, rather than their sexual liaison, which unites them:

...parmi toutes les chances dont elle se félicitait, elle mettait au premier rang celle de pouvoir collaborer avec lui; leur fatigue commune, leur effort, les unissaient plus sûrement qu'une étreinte; il n'était pas un instant de ces répétitions harassantes qui ne fût un acte d'amour.²

Thus we are shown Pierre, in the early stages of the novel, at work, directing a rehearsal, getting the best out of his actors, himself acting the role of Julius Caesar, with overall responsibility for the success of the production.

Nevertheless, despite all Simone de Beauvoir's consciously recognised debts to Hemingway, her novel is finally very different from anything he produced. It is

1. L'I., p.17.

2. L'I., p.49.

easy to suggest that this may be because his active male heroes lead much more physically energetic lives than do the citybred, word-intoxicated intellectuals of L'Invitée or because his honed and terse style is far away from Simone de Beauvoir's repetitions.¹ These aspects may contribute to the dissimilarity but the real explanation is elsewhere. We have seen that the early pages of L'Invitée are those which bear the closest kinship to Hemingway's style and technique.² As Simone de Beauvoir became more assured her novel developed in a way independent of Hemingway; the claustrophobic atmosphere of the trio, evoked by those intentional repetitions on which Terry Keefe has commented, the obsession with the existence of the Other, the fascination exerted by Xavière, all these contribute to create a novel where the metaphysical is dominant and where a philosophical problem is expressed in a concrete way. We see in the course of L'Invitée an instance of a writer finding her own voice. Simone de Beauvoir had begun the book by thinking of all those writers who had during her long apprenticeship served her as models. The names of many of them are quoted in her memoirs when she discusses the composition of this novel. These include D.H. Lawrence, Faulkner,

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1. Terry Keefe says of L'Invitée: 'To say that it is too long is perhaps a naïve comment, but certain types of conversation and certain patterns of event (no fewer than seven chapters end with Françoise and Pierre alone together discussing what Xavière has done, or some other issue relating to her) recur so often that some loss of interest on the reader's part is inevitable from time to time.' Op.cit., p.157-58.
 2. Curiously enough both Hemingway in Fiesta, his first novel, and Simone de Beauvoir in L'Invitée initially wrote an introductory section where they presented their characters and described the background of these. Each writer decided to cut out these expository pages on the advice of friends. After discussion with Scott Fitzgerald, Hemingway did so in order to make the action of his novel move more swiftly. The two introductory chapters of L'Invitée were excised not because these chapters slowed down the progress of the novel, but because they would have confused the reader's reaction to its main theme. The mauvaise foi and self-deception of adolescent girls is incidental to the subject of the novel and by plunging her readers directly into Françoise's life as an adult, when she is explaining to Gerbert her inability to believe in the existence of the Other, Simone de Beauvoir gains improved focus. She is then able to associate mauvaise foi with Xavière and not with her heroine Françoise.

John Dos Passos, Dashiell Hammett, Agatha Christie, Dostoevsky as well as Hemingway. Yet suddenly her style becomes her own. The reason for this is very much bound up with her subject matter, which comes out of her own experience. The intensity of the novel, its effectiveness are possibly linked to the way so much personal distress was honestly explored in the text. At last with L'Invitée she was achieving her ambition to make of her own life the substance of a novel she herself was writing even if, ironically, it was her anguish and not her happiness which was inspiring her. As she was writing L'Invitée she felt creative joy, and linked to this was the pleasure of writing about herself and thus preserving the elements of her life:

...je m'arrachais à l'argile quotidienne, j'entrais en chair et en os dans la splendeur des mondes imaginaires.¹

Nevertheless, a solid technique was necessary before her problems could be explored and expressed in her fictional writing in a manner pleasing to the reader, and much of this technique she owed to Hemingway. The presentation of characters, the role of objects and the way these are perceived, the use of dialogue and the development of the action all depend upon her close study of Hemingway.

After she had published L'Invitée and had become, with Sartre, one of the leading literary and intellectual figures of the immediate post-war scene in Paris, Simone de Beauvoir was offered the opportunity of a meeting with Hemingway. The evening seems to have been light-hearted although the contact remained superficial. An account of it is given by Simone de Beauvoir² and by Hemingway's younger brother Leicester, nicknamed the Baron, in his book My Brother, Ernest

1. F.A., p.353.

2. La Force des Choses, p.27.

Hemingway.¹ Both stories converge in their description of the large amount of alcohol consumed and the fact that Sartre left the party early. Both stories suggest that the meeting did not engage any of the parties at a deep level. By this time Simone de Beauvoir had written Le Sang des autres as well as L'Invitée; she had published her philosophic essay about the necessity for committed action, Pyrrhus et Cinéas, and had also composed her play, Les Bouches inutiles. She was a recognised author, with her own individual style and although a meeting with Hemingway could still amuse and interest her, the time for learning had passed.

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1. Another afternoon Marcel [Marcel Duhamel, Hemingway's translator] came in. He was excited. 'Sartre wants very much to meet you. So does his girl.'

'All right,' Ernest decided. 'Tell them to come about eight. The Baron will still be here. He can be bartender.'

Sartre came on time. He was a short man with myopic eyes and a friendly laugh. His girl, Castor, better known as Simone de Beauvoir, was taller, darker, and more likeable. We started on champagne. About the third bottle, Castor wanted to know how seriously ill Ernest really was...

I refilled glasses beyond the sixth bottle before having a nightcap and returning to my barracks up by the Etoile.

'How did it go last night?' I asked the next morning.

'Fine,' Ernest yawned. 'We sent him home soon after you left. We talked all night. That Castor is fascinating.'

Years later, when her book The Second Sex was published, Ernest commented to friends that he was disappointed in the book and thought she could have done much better.

CHAPTER TWELVE

MASTERY OF LITERARY TECHNIQUE: FAULKNER

It was Maurice Edgar Coindreau who, more than anyone else, was responsible for introducing the novels of Faulkner into France and who exerted himself by means of articles, prefaces and translations to make the work of this difficult author more understandable to the French novel-reading public. Coindreau, an agrégé of Spanish, was a Lecturer at the University of Princeton from 1923 onwards. He first became known to the publisher Gallimard when he sent to Paris a draft translation of part of Manhattan Transfer on which he had been working in America with the active assistance of Dos Passos himself, their friendship having dated from 1920 when both men were in Madrid. Gallimard received Coindreau's version with enthusiasm and the entire novel was published in France in 1928.¹

Coindreau, with the help of one of his students, had become extensively acquainted with Faulkner's work by 1930 and he had been greatly excited by what he read. He submitted an article on the American author which was published in the Nouvelle Revue Française in June 1931 and proposed the translation of some of the short stories from the 1931 collection entitled These Thirteen. Of these Une Rose pour Emily appeared in Commerce² in the issue of Winter 1932; it was possibly to be Faulkner's most famous short story, powerful in its horror. The Nouvelle Revue Française published Septembre ardent in its edition dated January 1932.

Malraux, by this time associated with Gallimard and the N.R.F., and Valéry Larbaud had also become interested in Faulkner, and so translations of two of his

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1. Cf. Chapter Ten of this study where the effect of this translation and that of 42nd Parallel on Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre is described.
 2. For details about this avant-garde review see Sylvia Beach and the Lost Generation N.R. Fitch, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1985, p.176, where its foundation, funding and directors are described.

major novels were undertaken. Coindreau himself worked on As I Lay Dying which appeared in 1934 with a preface by Valéry Larbaud while the translators R.N. Raimbault and Henri Delgove preceded him with their version of Sanctuary in 1933 which was accompanied by a preface from Malraux. After that date, most of Faulkner's more important works appeared in France before the War: Light in August in 1935, Sartoris in 1937 and The Sound and the Fury in 1938, while the short stories These Thirteen appeared in 1939. These major novels were accompanied by short stories and articles in the literary reviews and frequently by prefaces. The articles and prefaces attempted to put Faulkner in context by providing biographical information, explaining his regional affiliations and exploring his themes, preoccupations and cast of thought.

Nevertheless, in the Thirties Faulkner was regarded, in spite of efforts to popularise him, as a 'difficult' author¹ so that when in 1933-1934 Simone de Beauvoir discovered his work, although she was not in the avant-garde of literary taste she was certainly among the first of the general public to recognise the value of what he had to offer French readers.

The perceptive article which Coindreau published in 1931 already suggests all those points about Faulkner's achievement which were developed by readers and critics throughout the rest of the decade, and which were shared by Simone de Beauvoir. Hailing Faulkner as:

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1. Faulkner's work was perceived as 'difficult' even as late as 1939 after the publication of five of his major novels, as is shown by the publisher's advertisement for Treize Histoires:

"A défaut d'une initiation, ces Treize Histoires fourniront au moins quelques points de repère, laisseront entrevoir quelques portions d'un fil conducteur qui pourrait être de quelque secours au néophyte désireux de pousser plus avant dans la lecture de Faulkner".

Librairie Gallimard: Bulletin mensuel de Renseignements Bibliographiques
inset in N.R.F. juin 1939, p.249.

un romancier puissamment original et d'une extraordinaire vitalité.¹

Coindreau comments on his mastery of technique:

...Le travail d'une main habile et rigoureuse.²

His universe is controlled by the idea of inevitability or destiny:

...on a vraiment l'impression d'un mécanisme impeccable où tous les rouages s'enchevêtrent avec la précision d'un mouvement d'horlogerie.³

He even remarks, as did Malraux in his preface to Sanctuary, on the link between Faulkner's concept of the novel and detective fiction where in both cases the reader has to search for clues and solve puzzles.⁴

He then returns to analyse more deeply the exact nature of the American novelist's success. This, he believes is based on two aspects of his work; the first is:

...une technique qui, ici, (i.e. in Sanctuary) touche à la perfection.⁵

Coindreau finds that Faulkner has mastered in superb fashion the art of evoking what can not be stated, that is the unconscious, and thus rendering with

1. N.R.F. juin 1931, p.926.

2. ibid., p.926.

3. ibid., p.926.

4. Malraux explained the action of Sanctuary in terms of destiny and its inexorable power; their destiny is

dressé, unique derrière tous ces êtres différents et semblables, comme la mort derrière une salle des incurables.

and by this means he linked Faulkner's fiction both to the power of Greek myth and to the suspense of modern literature:

L'intrusion de la tragédie grecque dans le roman policier.

quoted in Les Ecrivains américains de l'entre-deux-guerres P.Brodin, Paris, Horizons de France, 1946, p.157.

5. ibid., p.927.

hallucinatory power the most tragic of scenes. One is reminded of Simone de Beauvoir's memoirs about the importance to her in the early Nineteen Thirties of 'les cas extrêmes'¹ when one reads in this article that it is precisely the extremes of human life which catch Faulkner's imagination:

Les dégénérés, les fous, les idiots sont les personnages favoris de William Faulkner. Usant de sa technique de l'inexprimé,² il en fait des figures d'une puissance étonnante.²

The second aspect of Faulkner's style to be underlined is his emphasis on the power of sexuality; Coindreau mentions:

la magie d'un style frémissant de sensualité.³

and his insistence that death and sex alone are the twin constants of the human condition. Coindreau quotes from Faulkner himself:

Le sexe et la mort, porte d'entrée et porte de sortie du monde, a-t-il écrit dans Mosquitoes.⁴

We can thus see suggested, as early as June 1931, those aspects of Faulkner's novels which will later be recognised as of intimate concern to her own development as a novelist. Indeed, when Simone de Beauvoir records her reactions to Sanctuary, As I Lay Dying and to Light in August they will bear marked similarities to what we have found in Coindreau's article.

She and Sartre realised almost immediately that Faulkner's work would have

1. Cf. Chapter on Detective Fiction.

2. N.R.F., juin 1931, p.928.

3. *ibid.*, p.929.

4. *ibid.*, p.929. This early novel had to wait until 1948 to be published in French; it then appeared translated and introduced by Raymond Queneau, Paris, les Editions de Minuit, 1948. It is significant that in his presentation Queneau principally comments on the development of Faulkner as a novelist in terms of technique:

Il avait vécu entre autres un 'événement créatif', il avait résolu un problème de technique, il était passé du monde de l'empirisme chimique dans celui de la théorie verbale.

special significance for them:

Nous nous tenions toujours au courant, Sartre et moi, des nouveautés. Deux noms marquèrent pour nous l'année. L'un fut celui de Faulkner dont on publia presque simultanément en français Tandis que j'agonise et Sanctuaire.¹

These novels appeared during the academic year which Sartre spent in Berlin and they discussed both Kafka, the other author to impress them that year, and Faulkner at length on Sartre's return to France for the Easter holidays.² When Light in August was translated and published with a preface by Coindreau the following year the novel was received with enthusiasm:

Le seul livre qui marqua cette année fut la traduction de Lumière d'août de Faulkner.³

Simone de Beauvoir does not mention further titles by Faulkner in La Force de l'âge although she writes there that when recovering from her illness in the Spring of 1937 in the South of France:

Je lisais des nouvelles de Faulkner, je me gorgeais de soleil.⁴

Simone de Beauvoir's library card reveals that these short stories must have been the collection Doctor Martino and other stories published in America in 1934. She borrowed this set of fourteen stories on April 22, 1937 and they were not returned until a date in May, possibly May 20. She thus read Faulkner in English as well as in French. Her library card shows that during April 1937 she also borrowed Absalom, Absalom! which had been published in America only the

1. F.A., p.191. In fact Sanctuaire, mentioned second and discussed in second place in La Force de l'âge, appeared first in France. Simone de Beauvoir is restoring the novels to their order of composition and publication in America; she would have been aware of their original publishing history through her acquaintance with Sylvia Beach's bookshop and library Shakespeare and Company.
2. F.A., p.194.
3. F.A., p.244.
4. F.A., p.303.

previous year and, like the Doctor Martino collection,¹ was not published in France until after the War. Simone de Beauvoir does not mention, in her account in La Force de l'âge of which books were worthy of note, having read Sartoris or The Sound and the Fury, possibly because by the time when she came to write her autobiography Sartre had already reviewed them on the occasion of their appearance in French translation,² thus rendering unnecessary any discussion.

It is certain that she was still enthusiastic enough about Faulkner to be borrowing books by him from Shakespeare and Company in the dark days of July and August 1940.³ She was one of fifty-three faithful who maintained their subscription to the library at that time, and although she does not record that fact in her memoirs⁴, her library card reveals that she borrowed a good deal of contemporary British and American fiction which she read in English. Could this

1. One story from this collection did appear in French before the War. This was Il était une reine, a version of There was a Queen which was published in the Nouvelle Revue Française in August 1933, translated by Coindreau. The fact that it could appear here before being published in book form in America is explained by it having appeared in a magazine from where it was taken by Coindreau.

2. Sartoris compte-rendu by Sartre, N.R.F., February 1938.
Le Bruit et la fureur: la temporalité chez Faulkner, N.R.F., June and July 1939.

3. Writing of those days, Sylvia Beach noted:

Beaucoup de Parisiens revinrent d'exode et mes amis français furent enchantés de retrouver Shakespeare and Company toujours ouvert. Ils se jetèrent aussitôt sur nos livres et je me retrouvai plus occupée que jadis.

Shakespeare and Company Sylvia Beach, translated G. Adam, Paris, Mercure de France, 1962, p.234.

Simone de Beauvoir was, of course, one of those who had left Paris in June 1940, to return in July, after l'Exode.

4. In La Force de l'âge for July 1940 she writes:

...je lisais Hegel à la Nationale qui, à présent ouvrait dès le matin. Hegel me calmait un peu.

F.A., p.472.

have been a minor act of faith and of defiance in Paris at that particular moment? Among the titles recorded on her card there figure two by Faulkner: The Unvanquished, published in the U.S.A. in 1938 and the strange Wild Palms of 1939 with its two intertwined stories.

When Simone de Beauvoir was composing L'Invitée¹ she had enjoyed the opportunity to read most of Faulkner's work published before the War and had exploited that opportunity to the full, reading both the excellent translations available and texts in the original language. She had, in fact, amassed knowledge about Faulkner and had made the American novelist part of her literary experience. She had meditated on his technique and his subject matter; she and Sartre had together reflected deeply about his achievement and she had had sufficient time both to absorb and digest what he had to offer her.

Her immediate response was two-fold:

...ses récits nous touchaient à la fois par leur art, et par leurs thèmes.²

Faulkner's literary technique was found to be dazzling in its mastery of complexity and on the other hand she was highly appreciative of the manner, particularly in Sanctuary, in which Faulkner revealed the corruption behind the mask of so-called 'respectable' society.

Initially the complexity of Tandis que j'agonise was impressive:

...la nouveauté et l'efficacité de sa technique nous étonna.³

This novel relates the story of the death and burial of Addie Bundren. Although she has lived and died in the hill country of Yoknapatawpha County, she wishes to lie away from her husband and children in the town cemetery at Jefferson where her

1. Je commençai L'Invitée en octobre 1938, je le terminai au début de l'été 1941...

F.A., p.381.

2. F.A., p.192.

3. F.A., p.191.

own relatives are buried. Bridges are down, fords are uncrossable, the family is pitted against fire and flood but after nine eventful days, Addie's body is laid to rest in Jefferson. The plot is straightforward, but the least important aspect of the novel.

As I Lay Dying is a technical tour de force; it is composed of fifty-nine sections, each one named after one of the fifteen characters from whose viewpoint that part is written. These viewpoints are orchestrated so that a picture gradually emerges of the family, of a whole rural society even, a way of life and the values which govern it. Forty-three of the sections belong to the members of the Bundren family - even the dead mother, not yet buried, addresses the reader. The remaining sixteen belong to members of the community who are brought into contact with the Bundrens as the body progresses on its painfully difficult journey to Jefferson. The reader is impressed by the novel's rhythm, both of the vernacular writing and of the alternation of viewpoints, as the story moves along. Simone de Beauvoir's comment reveals just how much attention she had given to the construction of As I Lay Dying:

...non seulement il orchestrait adroitement une pluralité de points de vue, mais en chaque conscience il organisait le savoir, les ignorances, la mauvaise foi, les fantasmes, les paroles, le silence, de façon à plonger les événements dans un clair-obscur d'où ils émergeaient avec un maximum de mystère et de relief.¹

She understood thoroughly Faulkner's intentions and achievement. Her reading of novelists such as Virginia Woolf had already sensitised her to the wealth of resources available to a novelist by means of manipulation of point of view. Here she discovered an author who could use this device so fruitfully that out of the multiplicity of points of view a new and rich understanding could emerge.

It is interesting that she interprets the brief third section, belonging to the child, Vardaman, the nineteenth in the novel as a whole, which consists merely of

1. F.A., p.192.

the words:

My mother is a fish.

in terms of surrealism, when a relatively simple association of ideas in the child's mind could provide a more straightforward explanation. Vardaman catches a large fish just before the death of his mother and probably he associates its death with that of his mother; it is possible, also, that, like his brother Darl, who will eventually be recognised as crazy and locked away in the asylum in Jackson, the innocent child is gifted with a degree of prescience. He can, perhaps, foresee that the coffin containing his mother's body will later fall into the river. Simone de Beauvoir, without ever having been tempted herself to use the techniques of surrealism, was fascinated in her youth by this movement¹ and its transformation of everyday reality. It is not usual to interpret Faulkner's work in terms of surrealism, Simone de Beauvoir is breaking new ground in this respect. Her comment, however, referring to the Marx brothers and to:

...cette fallacieuse matière chère aux frères Marx comme à Dali...²

suggests also that she was aware of another important component of As I Lay Dying which is its humour. Tall stories are part of rural life and this account of the efforts of an incompetent family to bury their mother is, on one level, a humorous tale akin to the broad humour of folk-lore.

Simone de Beauvoir writes that she found Faulkner's art fascinating and she analyses As I Lay Dying accordingly. When she came to consider his thèmes it is to Sanctuary that she refers, for here she felt Faulkner displayed openly the power of sexuality which is more usually concealed. This force he revealed both as the hidden motive behind actions and destructive as an all-consuming fire.

1. She endowed the character Marcel in Le Sang des Autres with surrealist preoccupations.
2. F.A., p.192.

Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir had rejected the psychological explanations of Freud as they disliked what they understood by his theory of the unconscious which clashed, they felt, with their own emphasis on the liberty of the individual. If man was indeed free he could not be controlled by impulses of which he was not even aware; if aware, he should be able to control them. Nevertheless, Simone de Beauvoir had accepted, in practice, something akin to Freud's idea of the sub-conscious:

Une de nos contradictions, c'est que nous nions l'inconscient; cependant Gide, les surréalistes et, malgré nos résistances, Freud lui-même, nous avaient convaincus qu'il existe en tout être un "infracassable noyau de nuit"*: quelque chose qui ne réussit à percer ni les routines sociales ni les lieux communs du langage mais qui parfois éclate, scandaleusement.¹

* André Breton

What she admired in Faulkner was his evocation of this secret core of being which she felt he interpreted in Freudian terms. Simone de Beauvoir was attracted by the notion of dévoilement and by those writers who revealed and denounced the mystifications practised by respectable society. In Sanctuary:

...Faulkner ne se bornait pas à dire que derrière le visage de l'innocence grouillent des immondices: il nous le montrait; il arrachait son masque à la pure jeune fille américaine; il nous faisait toucher, derrière les cérémonies doucereuses qui camouflent le monde, la tragique violence du besoin, du désir et des perversités qu'entraîne leur assouvissement...²

For Simone de Beauvoir Faulkner was, first, a novelist in whose work brilliant technique, particularly that of point of view, and thematic material concurred to gain her undivided attention. The death of her friend Zaza was ever present in her mind; the stories which she was writing in 1934 demonstrate that this was the case. Novelists whom she esteemed forced the middle-classes to cast aside their hypocrisy and accept the truth of their own sexuality and the depiction of:

1. F.A., p.135.

2. F.A., p.192.

ces intimes et honteux brasiers qui dévorent en secret les
ventres mâles et femelles.¹

had her entire approbation.

When, in the following year, Simone de Beauvoir came to read in French, Lumière d'août, her original impressions of Faulkner's power were confirmed, then amplified. She and Sartre continued to admire his technical mastery:

...nous fûmes d'accord pour en admirer la nouveauté et
l'audace.²

and although Sartre had reservations about the style, disliking its 'redondance biblique', she willingly accepted its rhetoric and emphasis. The destructive power of thwarted sexuality was again recognised and appreciated:

Jamais encore le monde faulknérien, que le sexe embrase et
ensanglante, n'avait eu ce tragique éclat.³

The idea of inevitability, of the power held by Destiny over the characters in this novelist's world is expressed by means of reference to the past. Necessarily linked with his concept of fatality is the way in which Faulkner treats time. If the past determines the future, then the power of the present instant is diminished: time, as we ordinarily understand it, is cancelled:

Faulkner avait su donner une durée à son histoire tout en
annulant le temps; au beau milieu du livre, il le faisait
basculer: là où le destin triomphe, le passé et l'avenir
s'équivalent, le présent n'a plus de réalité.⁴

We are approaching here the ideas which Sartre expressed in his famous essay on Le Bruit et la fureur where he makes a distinction between Chronologie: time as we are accustomed to perceive it, that is the invented time of clocks and watches, and Temporalité, which is time as it exists within a Faulkner novel, where 'rien

1. F.A., p.193.

2. F.A., p.244.

3. F.A., p.244.

4. F.A., p.244.

n'arrive, tout est arrivé.¹ We can see how in their 1935 discussions he and Simone de Beauvoir are moving towards a clear understanding of Faulkner and in fact it is with a reference to Lumière d'août that Sartre illustrates the way in which Faulkner destroys time:

C'est parce qu'il a oublié le temps que le nègre traqué de Lumière d'août gagne tout à coup son étrange et atroce bonheur.²

Simone de Beauvoir thought deeply about the way Faulkner managed by manipulating the various techniques he had perfected to enrich the novel form and to achieve new and satisfying results. Her judgement on this novel is revealing:

En bousculant le temps, Faulkner enrichissait sa technique. Il distribuait encore plus adroitement que dans ses autres romans les ombres et les lumières; la tension du récit, le relief des événements faisaient de Lumière d'août une oeuvre exemplaire.³

This particular novel clearly impressed her at a deep level; we notice that it is for her une oeuvre exemplaire and she refers again to it on several occasions, when discussing the genesis of L'Invitée, for example:

J'admirais la manière dont Faulkner dans Lumière d'août dérange le temps.⁴

Although she continues by saying that she does not herself wish to invoke the concept of inevitable destiny in her own novel as she intends to portray the characters as d'imprévisibles libertés,⁵ it is clear that this particular example of Faulkner's fiction has remained uppermost in her mind. Even in 1948, in Le Deuxième Sexe when she is discussing Christian attitudes to the body she will

1. N.R.F., 1 juin 1939, p.1059.

2. N.R.F., 1 juillet 1939, p.147.

3. F.A., p.245.

4. F.A., p.325.

5. F.A., p.325.

illustrate her argument by means of a reference to this novel.¹

The opening pages of Light in August² have been chosen to show that in a more conventionally constructed novel than As I Lay Dying or The Sound and the Fury Faulkner still manipulates point of view to present character in a subtly full manner.

The first person the reader encounters is Lena, a simple country girl: "young, pleasant-faced, candid, friendly and alert"³ is how she will later appear to Armstid who gives her a lift in his wagon. We notice immediately that there is no description of Lena's appearance until she is seen by another. The reader is not allowed a glimpse of what she looks like by courtesy of an omniscient narrator, we have to see her through the eyes of others in the novel. This is a rule of Faulkner's style: the result is that the rôle of description becomes an organic part of the action. When Christmas, the central character, is introduced in Chapter Two, the reader is aware of a very strong physical presence and this is because he is perceived - his clothes, the look on his face, his bearing, through the openly judging eyes of Byron Bunch and the 'group of men at work in the planer shed'⁴ who will work alongside him for the next three years. That Byron's knowledge of Christmas

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1. Simone de Beauvoir is analysing the condemnation, especially by puritanical Christians, of female sexuality:

Depuis le Moyen âge, le fait d'avoir un corps a été considéré chez la femme comme une ignominie...dans le monde puritain entre autres la haine de la chair se perpétue; elle s'exprime par exemple dans Light in August de Faulkner; les premières initiations sexuelles du héros provoquent en lui de terribles traumatismes.

D.S.I, p.271.

Faulkner was constantly represented in France, from the date of Coindreau's first article, as a Puritan.

2. The references are to Light in August, Harmondsworth, Penguin, reprint 1985. It will be referred to in this chapter in abbreviated form as L.A.
3. L.A., p.11.
4. L.A., p.25.

does not grow much beyond what he could make of him during that long stare when he presented himself at the mill, is significant to the development of the plot. Description, therefore, does not slow down the action, but participates in it.

Simone de Beauvoir presents her characters in L'Invitée in this way. We are introduced to Gerbert's appearance through the eyes of Françoise in the introduction, but we have to wait until the fourth chapter until we get a glimpse of Françoise herself. Then, the narrative viewpoint belongs to Elisabeth and so it is possible for her to look at Françoise and think:

Elle était vraiment belle ce soir, elle avait planté un grand peigne dans ses cheveux et sur sa robe éclataient des broderies hardies; beaucoup de regards se tournaient vers elle sans qu'elle parût s'en apercevoir. C'était une joie de se sentir l'amie de cette brillante et calme jeune femme.¹

For the first time the reader sees Françoise as she appears to others and the irony is that Elisabeth, whose own life is full of self-deception, is mistaken also in the way she perceives Françoise. The plot is advanced for we have learned more about Elisabeth's needs: the joie reveals the way she lives through others, we are confirmed in our impression of Françoise as physically attractive while distrusting Elisabeth's judgement as to her behaviour. We know from the previous three chapters that she herself would not choose 'brillante et calme' to describe the way she feels.

The way in which Faulkner introduces Lena is telling; he uses the device of an impersonal narrator who coincides nevertheless with the character:

Sitting beside the road, watching the wagon mount the hill towards her, Lena thinks, 'I have come from Alabama: a fur piece'.²

The reader begins by observing Lena from the outside, then very soon he is coinciding with what she is thinking, and is aware of her from the inside. The case

1. L'I., p.80.

2. L.A., p.5.

is similar in the opening lines of L'Invitée where it is Françoise who is seen both externally and internally:

Françoise leva les yeux. Les doigts de Gerbert sautillaient sur le clavier, il regardait le manuscrit d'un air farouche; il semblait fatigué; Françoise avait sommeil elle aussi.¹

Verbs of appearing or seeming are associated with perception of Gerbert as the reader is supplied with information as to how his behaviour or his expression is being interpreted by Françoise. She herself, we are told, really is tired: as the narrative viewpoint coincides with her experience there is no need for verbs of suggestion. That hers is the dominant viewpoint is swiftly confirmed when the third person narrative suddenly changes, without even the framing verb 'penser' as mediator, into first person:

Et je suis là, mon coeur bat.²

In Faulkner's introductory paragraph the reader is in a similar manner given Lena's thoughts directly in the first person, so that we may coincide with her consciousness but in Lena's case, when this is about to happen we are given a mediating verb:

Lena thinks... or Thinking...³

There is an indication in Faulkner's text, in his use of italics for the second half of the first paragraph that two levels of Lena's thought are involved. The first set of thoughts, in rural idiom and involving repetition, represents Lena's conscious thoughts. She may even be talking to herself. The second, italicised thought sequence is slightly below the level of self-consciousness, here her thoughts are expressed in 'normal', even educated diction, as may be instanced by the use of the concessive clause. At this deeper level, surface differences, created by geography

1. L'I., p.11.

2. ibid., p.11.

3. L.A., p.5.

or by education, disappear.¹

Although Simone de Beauvoir uses a mixture of third person and first person narrative, the first person being employed to render intense thought, she does not need to use such subtle indicators to show conscious or less conscious thought. Her heroine is highly educated and highly self-conscious.

In Light in August every important character is aware of his or her past and of the past of others. Even Lena, the one person who, by reason of her pregnancy and her country simplicity, is in tune with nature and with the natural rhythms of life, and thus lives in straightforward enjoyment of the present², is immediately shown in association with past life determining her present behaviour. The opening pages show her in relationship to at least four different periods of her past: a flashback to the time before she was twelve when her parents were still alive; then the eight years she lived at Doane's Mill with her brother and his family; then the recent past, the four weeks she has been walking from Alabama to Mississippi in search of the father of her baby; and finally, the even more recent past earlier that afternoon when she walked past Winterbottom's farm. All these pasts, however, are evoked to demonstrate Lena's relationship to the present. Lena remembers them while waiting in an extended present for the arrival of Armstid's wagon and this fact is stressed by means of repetition.

Lena is shown in relationship with her past but as a person to whom the present is more important. She is pregnant, her past implies a future renewal,

1. "Thinking although I have not been quite a month on the road I am already in Mississippi, further from home than I have ever been before. I am now further from Doane's Mill than I have been since I was twelve years old." L.A., p.5. The underlining represents the italics in the printed text.

2. The account of her thrill at being able to afford a fifteen cent tin of sardines and her pleasure in eating them, despite all the obvious problems before her, is symptomatic of the fact that she lives most strongly in the present:

She begins to eat. She eats slowly, steadily, sucking the rich sardine oil from her fingers with slow and complete relish.

L.A., p.24.

governs our perception of her and her perception of herself. It is Lena's experience which frames the sombre and desperate story of Joe Christmas and thus the reader is provided with a measure of hope for the future. Joe Christmas's awareness of his past is constant, not only is his past ever-present, it is modifying and even controlling his present life while ensuring the destruction of any future. This aspect of the novel creates the feeling of tragic inevitability in Light in August.

Simone de Beauvoir could not accept Faulkner's notion of inevitability. In the first chapter of L'Invitée, although the two characters she presents share a rapidly sketched recent past: "dix jours de tête-à-tête",¹ it is one that Françoise finds quite reasonable to dismiss: "Maintenant, c'était fini."² For her, as for Gerbert, the present counts, the present and the future for which their recent joint project, working together to adapt a play for Pierre to produce, is merely the preparation:

- C'est presque dommage que nous ayons fini, dit-elle, je m'étais bien habituée à travailler avec vous.
- Mais ce sera encore plus amusant quand on mettra en scène, dit Gerbert.³

Nevertheless, Françoise's carefree acceptance in the opening scene of the pleasures of living in the present gradually turns sour and she comes to see the present as a trap. One of the aspects of belonging to the 'trio' which she finds most frustrating is the way in which Xavière, with deliberation as it seems to the older woman, sabotages attempts to give shape to their common existence. As Xavière lives only for the moment, past promises are repudiated, plans for the future collapse and the result is that the characters find themselves caught in a permanent present tense from which there seems no escape. It is perhaps significant that Lena comes from a simple, rural background; for the more complex and intellectual Françoise, the present becomes, in spite of its physical and other

1. L'I., p.14.

2. L'I., p.13.

3. L'I., p.14.

pleasures, a sort of purgatory.

Light in August is much more conventional in conception than the other novels by Faulkner which Simone de Beauvoir read in the Thirties. The story is strong, it is dominated by distinct characters, rather than by chronology; the style is dramatic and rich in symbols but these correspond with the subject matter; the facts and clues from the past are not carefully hidden, they painfully explain the dreadful suffering in the present. This is the novel to which Simone de Beauvoir responded most positively and she seized on elements in the style when they suited her purpose. The fluidity of narrative viewpoint enabled her to move in and out of the consciousness of certain of her characters; the method of description of characters enabled this to form part of the action of her novel, and the meditation on time bore fruit both immediately in L'Invitée and later.

Faulkner had a long-term effect on the development of Simone de Beauvoir's narrative style, particularly on her use of narrative viewpoint. In the three novels subsequent to L'Invitée she uses a 'double' viewpoint both in order to sustain a certain opaqueness and uncertainty about events, motivations and reactions and also to increase the dramatic tension. There is a tautness in her narrative which derives from the contrast between the characters, usually a man and a woman, from whose viewpoint the action is seen. In Tous les hommes sont mortels, for example, there is third person narration mainly from Régine's viewpoint and then first person narration by Fosca, the immortal man. In Les Mandarins, the viewpoints of Henri and Anne alternate, the passages that are recounted from Henri's angle are told in the third person, those which Anne narrates are directly in the first person.¹ The most complicated of all Simone de Beauvoir's novels, where

1. Terry Keefe has discussed with admirable relevance "The significance of the dual narrative" in Les Mandarins. Simone de Beauvoir: a study of her writings T. Keefe, London, Harrap, 1983, p.197.

the complexity owes something to Hemingway¹ as well as much to Faulkner, is Le Sang des autres. Here the viewpoint alternates again between a man and a woman and the narration of events, although always in the third person for Hélène, is both first and third, directly and indirectly subjective, for Jean. There are even in this novel as in Light in August or The Sound and the Fury italicised passages, where thoughts are revealed as intense memories crowd into Jean's mind.

In Le Sang des autres also as in The Sound and the Fury or Absalom, Absalom!, read in English the year after its publication in America, there is a violent yet controlled disruption of the time sequence. Simone de Beauvoir's novel is composed in thirteen sections; the time at the beginning of the narrative is an undeterminable evening in the middle of the War, most probably in 1941 or 1942. The second section takes place on the twentieth of November 1934, the third section at 2 a.m. of the original night, the fourth during 1936 or 1937, the fifth at 3 a.m. and eventually in the final section both narrative threads meet at dawn. This manipulation of the time sequence reminds the reader of novels such as The Sound and the Fury where the four separate sections, each with a different viewpoint, take place at different, not necessarily sequential, points in time. The first section is situated on Easter Saturday, the seventh of April 1928, the second on the second of June 1910, the third on the sixth of April 1928 and the fourth on the eighth of April 1928.

The motive for the complications of Faulkner's novel is to show the reader the force of the pressures which are being exerted on the young Quentin, the descendant of the degenerate Compson family, from which she finally escapes in the last section. Le Sang des autres tells of a group of people during the War who are involved in the Resistance movement in Paris. The heroine has been wounded

1. Hemingway experimented with narrative technique in his later novels and when necessary evolved a fairly intricate construction as in To Have and Have Not. This was a book which Simone de Beauvoir borrowed from Shakespeare and Company in July, 1940.

in action and the night through which the reader moves will end with her death. The journey back through the previous years is necessary to prove to the hero that her death will not be a burden on his conscience, inhibiting his future behaviour.

In this novel, Simone de Beauvoir adapts a technique used by Faulkner for her own very different ends. Hélène's farewell words to her lover liberate him. He is, unlike a Faulkner character, set free from his past because Hélène has encouraged him to accept guilt and responsibility as a necessary part of action and of human life:

...il accepte le risque, le doute et même le remords; il accepte sa condition d'homme. Il choisira, il agira.¹

We see Jean Blomart at the end of the novel looking towards the future and it is this attitude which distinguishes Simone de Beauvoir's vision of life from that of Faulkner. Living in the South, fully aware of its injustice, Faulkner's mode was essentially tragic, whereas Simone de Beauvoir has always a positive approach in her four early novels. It is only when, in 1968, she wished to show lives wrecked by mauvaise foi that she followed Faulkner's example and showed the power of the past determining 'la solitude et l'échec'² of the present.

Another aspect of Simone de Beauvoir's two latest works of fiction, Les Belles Images and La Femme rompue which has its origin in her reading of the Thirties is her loyalty to detective fiction:

J'aurais voulu que le lecteur lût ce récit comme un roman policier; j'ai semé de-ci de-là des indices qui permettent de retrouver la clé de la mystère: mais à condition qu'on dépiste Monique comme une coupable.³

This is exactly how readers of the time were encouraged to read the mysterious and complex novels by Faulkner.

Finally, when we seek for explanation of what it was in Faulkner and his

1. From the prière d'insérer for Le Sang des Autres.

2. T.C.F., p.143.

3. T.C.F., p.142.

fellow Americans which stimulated the creative imagination both of Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir and which incited them to take these authors as models we may find a good deal of the answer for both in Sartre's essay on Faulkner. There he expresses their admiration for his vitality, and again we think of Coindreau's article in 1931, and the grandiloquence which seemed admirably un-French in its excess:

...Faulkner est un homme perdu et c'est parce qu'il se sent perdu qu'il risque, qu'il va jusqu'au bout de sa pensée. Proust est un classique et un Français: les Français se perdent à la petite semaine et ils finissent toujours par se retrouver. L'éloquence, le goût des idées claires, l'intellectualisme ont imposé à Proust de garder au moins les apparences de la chronologie.¹

Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir found in American novelists and especially in Faulkner a literary courage, a willingness to take risks to express his ideas more completely, and a grandeur which denied all the bourgeois notions of restraint and decency instilled in them. It is small wonder that in a lecture to American students after the War, Simone de Beauvoir should have insisted that contemporary French writers owed much of their 'réalisme dynamique' to their study of American authors such as Dos Passos, Hemingway and Faulkner,² and that she should assert in 1965 that it was:

Faulkner qui modifia complètement notre conception de ce qu'un roman devait être.³

1. N.R.F., July 1939, p.148.

2. A French Novelist Speaks at Vassar: Poughkeepsie New Yorker 8, February 1947. Reprinted in E., p.145.

3. James Joyce in Paris, his Final Years G. Freund and V.B. Carleton. Preface by Simone de Beauvoir. Reprinted in E., p.418.

CONCLUSION

Literature, it would seem, became of supreme value for Simone de Beauvoir at a very early age; one of the first events recalled in Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée illustrates her attitude to the power which was an intrinsic quality of the written word:

Un soir, devant un ami de mon père, je repoussai avec entêtement une assiette de salade cuite; sur une carte postale envoyée pendant les vacances il demanda avec esprit: "Simone aime-t-elle toujours la salade cuite?" L'écriture avait à mes yeux plus de prestige encore que la parole: j'exultai.¹

The written remark had given a permanent value, even a legitimacy, to an evanescent whim and dignified the child in her own eyes. Some years later, at the age of fifteen, she had further developed her respect for the prestige of the written word. All artists were admirable. They justified and endowed with unique qualities the life of the individual, forming a necessary pattern from what would otherwise remain as random existence:

...le savant, l'artiste, l'écrivain, le penseur créaient un autre monde, lumineux et joyeux, où tout avait sa raison d'être.²

The supremacy amongst creators she reserved for the author, in particular the novelist; her respect was modelled originally on her father's admiration for writers and partly on her own realisation that this was a profession in which women could reach the peaks. We remember Simone de Beauvoir's enchantment both with the works and the persona of George Eliot. What was more, Simone de Beauvoir liked to inform:

Et puis j'avais toujours eu le goût de la communication.³

1. M.J.F.R., p.12.

2. M.J.F.R., p.142.

3. M.J.F.R., p.142.

If reading was not only a favourite diversion but also the key which unlocked understanding of the world, then writing was a way of sharing the knowledge thus gained. By putting her own experience into words she was also preserving her past life. The literary process was intimately linked with creativity in a much more profound manner. No longer believing in God, Simone de Beauvoir yearned still to believe in the necessity implied by the existence of the Deity. As a writer, she could assume His functions:

En écrivant une oeuvre nourrie de ma propre histoire, je me créerais moi-même à neuf et je justifierais mon existence.¹

The ambition, already formed we are told in adolescence, persisted. In 1972, taking stock of her life Simone de Beauvoir recognised that:

Ecrire est demeuré la grande affaire de ma vie.²

and proceeded to discuss the genesis of her latest books.

The writing, and especially the writing of literary works, remained, then, the constant preoccupation of Simone de Beauvoir, as it also was, for instance, of Clara Malraux whose ambitions were similar. There is a major difference between the two young women, however; the cosmopolitan background of the Goldschmidt family ensured that Clara's education was open to a diversity of influences including Germanic culture, Nordic legends and Italian Art. At the age of nineteen, she had already entered by way of her translations and interest in art into the world of Modernism and she was contributing to avant-garde reviews. In comparison, Simone de Beauvoir seems somewhat less adventurous. Her upbringing and education were, as we have seen, both intense and narrow in attitude, with an almost conscious rejection of what was foreign or new. Much of what she was to write in her early maturity was affected deeply by a revulsion from the literature mediated by those responsible for her education: her mother, her teachers, her

1. M.J.F.R., p.143.

2. T.C.F., p.131.

father and finally, her cousin Jacques.

Her mother provided her with 'safe', respectable reading matter: she would reject it and call it boring. Her teachers introduced her to the classics: she would not allow these to stir her imagination; in fact she would repudiate what her teachers offered and would attempt with Zaza to replace 'official' by private reading:

Mademoiselle Lejeune nous irritait par l'étroitesse de ses partis pris littéraires. Pour élargir nos horizons nous lisions beaucoup et nous discussions entre nous.¹

Simone and her sister disliked their teachers at the Cours Désir. Had her father been allowed to have his wish and send his daughters to a state lycée where they would have had access to a less doctrinaire approach and a wider range of reference, Simone de Beauvoir might well have been more relaxed in her attitude both towards the bourgeoisie and to their literature.

What her father encouraged her to read was more serious and evoked a more complex response. The literature in his library often subtly denigrated women by concentrating on the frivolous or scandalous: in her own works she would not conceal women's sexuality but would treat this aspect of femininity with respect. Sexual desires and behaviour would form part of a whole personality. Her father's preferred reading was frivolous and escapist, her own work was to be concerned with morality and deal with the concerns of people anxious to lead 'authentic' lives in a recognisable, contemporary world. In contrast to the superficial nature of what he read, she wrote novels dealing with philosophical questions, novels which were reflective and called established concepts into question.

The literary influence of books recommended by her dangerously attractive cousin Jacques was ultimately outgrown yet their seductive power helped shape future preoccupations. The idea that novels or poetry could communicate in a

1. M.J.F.R., p.151.

direct way with readers or that writers could discuss preoccupations shared with their public was initially exciting and persistent in its effect. An enduring admiration for the qualities of youth: spontaneity and freshness of response, unpredictability, authenticity, can be traced back to early delight in the works of Cocteau, of Gide or of Radiguet. Other aspects of authors admired in her late adolescence were, as we have seen, vehemently rejected, particularly after the encounter with Sartre and the beginning of an independent life. Much of what she read during this next stage was in reaction against what had gone before. She soon developed, nevertheless, a genuine delight in the new literature from abroad which was now available, even if her tastes were not for the avant-garde or experimental.

For Simone de Beauvoir the act of writing was essentially an act of communication and her inspiration was closely linked with personal experience. Her over-riding concern in the Thirties with literary technique was primarily derived from a desire to develop the most effective means of speaking directly to her readers. She wished to encourage them to accept her vision, founded as it was on an adherence to insights derived from phenomenology. The outside, material world exists in so far as it is perceived, therefore in novels objects should exist only as perceived by the central, narrating consciousness, for which the other characters remain opaque and which is itself opaque to them. In an article written in 1945 on the occasion of the production of her play, Les Bouches inutiles, Simone de Beauvoir, while discussing the difference between the techniques of the theatre and the novel, produced a definition of the latter. The novelist, she said, should not copy the real world directly as did the Naturalists but should suggest its complex reality:

C'est pourquoi l'intrigue cherchera à imiter la contingence des événements vécus, le langage imitera les hésitations, les incohérences du langage parlé, les conduites et les sentiments des héros reposeront sur des bases psychologiques...¹

1. E., p.330.

She had reflected deeply throughout many years of apprenticeship on the novelist's craft and had practised almost continually throughout this period, taking as models those writers, both serious and less earnest, whom she admired. Her literary education having been outlined in her memoirs it has been fruitful and revealing to document her preparation for the exercise of what was felt as a vocation and to reconstitute almost the totality of a literary formation.

When Simone de Beauvoir tried at first to write she described situations encountered in literature and evoked these in a style directly modelled, we are told, on that of authors recently read and admired. As she developed in confidence so she came nearer to finding her own voice. Books, having provided her with a fund of experience and a past, then furnished her with a methodology. She learned the technicalities of writing after studying what others had written. And yet, when she finally developed her own voice, it was idiosyncratic, not an imitation of others as may be seen from the following extract:

Françoise s'étira et reprit son stylo. Au bout d'un instant, elle se retourna. Gerbert gisait sur le dos, les yeux fermés; un souffle égal s'échappait de ses lèvres. Il dormait déjà. Il était beau. Elle le regarda un long moment; puis elle se remit à son travail. Là-bas, dans le train qui roulait, Pierre dormait lui aussi la tête appuyée contre les coussins de cuir, avec un visage innocent. Il sautera du train, il se haussera de toute sa petite taille; et puis il courra sur le quai, il prendra mon bras.

In this passage the narrative viewpoint is shifting, the tense, too, shifts, from the past of the main narration to the present of the character's consciousness when she is evoking the near future. The sentences in this paragraph, as in much of the novel, tend to be short and incisive. They provide swift descriptions of separate events and it is immediately noticeable that there are few causal connections between or even within the sentences. The reader is forced to supply any links that might exist between the actions. We can see in this example how Simone de Beauvoir has exploited in a personal way her awareness of the tradition in which she decided to work. As Dorrit Cohn has demonstrated in Transparent Minds in her

discussion of narrative technique the literature which Simone de Beauvoir read with most delight during her apprentice period was largely concerned with the way in which unspoken thoughts, feelings or perceptions were portrayed. By her manipulation of technique she has successfully constructed a representation of Françoise's consciousness which depicts her at the point of making an existential choice.

During her apprenticeship Simone de Beauvoir mastered a literary technique which enabled her to move out from her own experience so that it became exemplary. She refers to this same process in the article, Roman et théâtre previously cited, saying that the novelist is privileged:

...il peut s'intéresser à des cas singuliers car il a le moyen et le loisir de les approfondir assez pour en dégager la vérité générale.¹

We have shown Simone de Beauvoir's belief that analysis of the perhaps abnormal individual, whether a common criminal or even the Marquis de Sade, sheds light on the rest of society:

C'est le paradoxe, et en un sens le triomphe de Sade, que pour s'être entêté dans ses singularités, il nous aide à définir le drame humain dans sa généralité.²

By studying the literary apprenticeship of an unusual and extraordinary intense person we have found that the account of her experience has gained additional value as an exemplar. It sheds considerable light on the literary movement which came into prominence immediately before and after World War Two. We can understand this movement more fully by elucidating what contributed to the making of one of its members. Simone de Beauvoir's turning away from literature in French, although motivated as has been shown by personal reasons, becomes typical of a generation which was inspired to a greater or lesser extent by

1. E., p.328.

2. ? Faut-il brûler Sade?, p.13.

literature from abroad, either by translations from the German, and we think particularly of Kafka, but more frequently by literature written in English. Sartre, Camus, Queneau, Sarraute, Vian and others shared a common literary experience. Of the writers cited we have noted already Sartre's delight in English and American authors. We remember that Pierrot mon ami and L'Etranger were published almost simultaneously with L'Invitée: the former owes much to George du Maurier's Peter Ibbetson and to the complexities of the English school of detective fiction; the latter's debt to Hemingway was clearly recognised by Camus. Nathalie Sarraute's collection of literary studies: L'Ere du soupçon reveals her interest in those authors we have examined. It is this common movement away from French and towards literature from other cultures which we have documented in this study.

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Oeuvres, Paris, Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1962.

Paul WEBSTER and Nicholas POWELL

Saint-Germain-des-Prés, London, Constable, 1984.

Virginia WOOLF

Mrs Dalloway, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1964.

Mrs Dalloway pr. A. Maurois tr. S. David, Paris, Stock, 1929.

Nuit et Jour intro. R. Lalou tr. M. Bec, Paris, Catalogne 1933.

Mary WARNOCK

The Philosophy of Sartre, London, Hutchinson University Library, 1965.

Evelyn WAUGH

Unconditional Surrender, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1964.

Theodore ZELDIN

France 1868-1945, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, Volume I 1973, Volume II, 1977.

REVIEWS AND ARTICLES

There is an excellent essai d'inventaire bibliographique in La Nature chez Simone de Beauvoir by C. Cayron which lists books and articles written before 1972. Anne Whitmarsh, in Simone de Beauvoir and the Politics of Commitment, has also a full bibliographical section. Terry Keefe: Simone de Beauvoir, a study of her writings, has an interesting selected literary bibliography. The biographical study, Simone de Beauvoir, by C. Francis and F. Gontier, contains a bibliography for each chapter which provides much documentary help. Feminist bibliographies are to be found in le néo-féminisme de Simone de Beauvoir by J.J. Zéphir and in Judith Okeley's Simone de Beauvoir.

Reviews have been extensively consulted, among these figure the Nouvelle Revue Française, particularly for the years 1928-1939, les Cahiers du Sud, Mesures, la Revue bleue, the Mercure de France, Europe, Commerce et al.

PART FOUR

AUTHORS AND TITLES MENTIONED IN THE FIRST TWO VOLUMES OF SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY, WITH ANNOTATIONS.

Abbreviations

M.J.F.R. : Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée
Paris, Gallimard, 1958.

F.A. : La Force de l'âge
Paris, Gallimard, 1960.

An entry in brackets after the title in French refers to the original title and date of publication.

cf : Although the exact reference is not possible to establish, this title was available on the date stated in the text and agrees broadly with the indications furnished.

illust. : illustrated by

intro. : introduction by

pr. : preface by

tr. : translated by

Alfred ADLER

F.A., p.133

Le Tempérament nerveux: found more satisfying than Freud
cf. Eléments d'une psychologie individuelle et applications à la psycho-thérapie
Docteur Alfred Adler tr. le docteur Roussel, Paris, Payot, 1926 (Bibliothèque
scientifique).

Arthur ADAMOV

F.A., p.488

L'Aveu qui me consterna...
L'Aveu, Paris, Editions du Sagittaire, 1946.

ALAIN-FOURNIERM.J.F.R., p.185; *ibid* p.186

je lus, les larmes aux yeux,...Le Grand Meaulnes
ibid p.195; *ibid* p.219; *ibid* p.232; *ibid* p.250; *ibid* p.289; *ibid* p.323

See also F.A., pp.64-65

attempts a novel inspired by Le Grand Meaulnes
Le Grand Meaulnes, Paris, Emile-Paul frères, 1913.

The novel enjoyed a vast success; it was published in numerous editions, including
some specially for young people and some illustrated. It is still one of the century's
best-sellers of French literature.

ALAIN-FOURNIER - JACQUES RIVIERE

M.J.F.R., p.220

Simone de Beauvoir and Zaza borrow Correspondance from
Adrienne Monnier's library and discuss it with enthusiasm.

ibid., p.260

Reads with disappointment Correspondance, Volume 2.

ibid., p.338

Correspondance disdained by Sartre

Alain-Fournier - Jacques Rivière: Correspondance 1905-1914, Paris, Gallimard,
Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1926-1928, 4 volumes.

Louisa May ALCOTT

M.J.F.R., pp.89-90

Little Women: je crus reconnaître mon visage et mon destin.

ibid., pp.106-107

Good Wives: seen as betrayal.

ibid., p.141

Simone de Beauvoir read these novels in English in the Tauchnitz edition but they
were also widely available in French.

cf. Les Quatre filles du docteur Marsch (sic) d'après L.M. Alcott par P.-J. Stahl,
Paris, J. Hetzel, 1880.

The above translation was frequently re-issued. The catalogue of the Bibliothèque
Nationale records numerous translations and editions, some adapted, others
abridged and even some very close to the original text.

Marcel ALLAIN and Pierre SOUVESTRE

M.J.F.R., p.338

Sartre m'achetait...des Fantômas...

See also F.A., p.51.

This series of thrillers was reissued in the early Thirties:

Number 1 Fantômas, Paris, Fayard, 1932 through to Number 32 Fantômas est-il
mort? Paris, Fayard, 1934.

Hans ANDERSEN

M.J.F.R., p.53

childhood reading: The Little Mermaid
Andersen m'enseigna la mélancolie...

Sherwood ANDERSON

F.A., p.56

read while acquiring wider literary knowledge after
agrégation

L'homme qui devint femme. Trois nouvelles Paris, Emile-Paul frères, 1926.

Un Païen de l'Ohio tr. M. Gay, pr. Eugène Jolas, Paris, Editions Reider, 1927
(Collection les Prosateurs Etrangers modernes).

Winesburg-en-Ohio tr. M. Gay, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue

Française, 1927.

Un conteur se raconte. Mon père et moi tr. V. Llona, Paris, Kra, 1928 (Collection Européenne no.35).

Un conteur se raconte. Je suis un homme tr. V. Llona, Paris, Kra, 1928 (Collection Européenne no.37).

Tar tr. M. Gay et P. Genty, avertissement de René Lalou, Paris, Stock, 1931 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.58).

ANON

M.J.F.R., p.12 l'histoire de Charlotte

ANON

M.J.F.R., p.52 Valentin, ou le démon de la curiosité me fit grande impression

The title is typical of the improving moral tales for young children, written by le Chanoine Schmid.

cf. Pierre, ou les suites de l'ignorance, le chanoine Schmidt (sic) (Petite bibliothèque catholique du premier âge) s.d.

See also **SCHMID**

ANON

M.J.F.R., p.136 Her faith becoming shaky, she borrows a religious text from priest: Précis de théologie ascétique et mystique

See also *ibid.*, p.140.

Louis ARAGON

M.J.F.R., p.232 je lus Breton, Aragon; le surréalisme me conquiert. (January 1927)

cf. Une vague de rêves, Paris, Hors commerce, 1924.

Traité du style, Paris, librairie Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1928.

Both of the above are early surrealist texts.

cf. also Aragon's novel Le Paysan de Paris, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1926.

Paul ARBELET

F.A., p.105 read books on Stendhal while teaching in Marseilles
La Jeunesse de Stendhal, Paris, Champion, 1919 (2 volumes).

Marcel ARLAND

M.J.F.R., p.187

See also *ibid.*, p.195; *ibid.*, p.226.

Etienne, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1924.

Monique précédée de Terres Etrangères, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1926.

Michael ARLEN

M.J.F.R., p.324 J'aimais beaucoup...Le Feutre vert

See also *ibid.*, p.327.

Le Feutre vert (The Green Hat, 1924) tr. L. Caron, Paris, Plon, 1928.

François-Alphonse AULARD

F.A., p.208 Studying French Revolution

Amongst works of this historian figure:

Le Culte de la raison et le culte de l'être suprême, Paris, Alcan, 1892.

Danton, Paris, Picard-Bernheim, 1881.

L'Eloquence parlementaire pendant la Révolution française, Paris, Hachette, 1882.

MADAME D'AULNOY

M.J.F.R., p.52.

Seventeenth Century (c.1650-1705) writer of children's stories, especially fairy-tales. There were numerous editions, both of individual stories and of collections. A typical work in Simone de Beauvoir's youth was:

La Belle et la bête, Madame de Villeneuve suivi de Gracieuse et Percinet de Madame d'Aulnoy, Paris, M. Bauche, 1910 (Collection Enfantine numéro 4).

Marcel AYME

F.A., p.142 footnote La Jument verte
La Jument verte, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

Isaac BABEL

F.A., p.52 Cavalerie rouge admired

La Cavalerie rouge tr. et intro. Maurice-Parijanine, Paris, Editions Reider, 1928 (Collection les Prosateurs Etrangers modernes).

Gaston BACHELARD

F.A., p.551 L'Eau et les Rêves...nous intéressa

L'Eau et les Rêves, essai sur l'imagination de la matière, Paris, J. Corti, 1942.

André BAILLON

F.A.p.302 Le Perce-oreille du Luxembourg

Le Perce-oreille du Luxembourg, Paris, Editions Reider, 1928 (Collection les Prosateurs français contemporains).

Honoré de BALZAC

M.J.F.R., p.137 l'étrange idylle d'un homme et d'une panthère

Une passion dans le désert cf. La Comédie humaine, Paris, Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, vol.VIII, 1977, pp.1213-1232.

See also M.J.F.R., p.171

reads La Comédie humaine as act of independence
after leaving despised Cours Désir.

ibid., p.222

teaches Le Père Goriot at Equipes Sociales.

Théodore de BANVILLE

M.J.F.R., p.39 Le Pantin de la petite Jeanne (poem) written out by father
for Simone to learn and recite.

Pierre M.-F. BAOUR-LORMIAN

F.A., p.56 Read while acquiring greater knowledge of literature after
agrégation

Minor poet and tragedian of the Romantic period, (1770-1854). He also translated Ossian and Tasso.

Pio BAROJA

F.A., p.56 Read while acquiring greater knowledge of literature after
agrégation

Spanish novelist.

Essais amoureux d'un homme ingénu tr. M. Nelken, Paris, Editions Reider, 1924.

Zalocaïn l'aventurier tr. G. Pillement, Paris, Editions Excelsior, 1926.

Maurice BARRES

M.J.F.R., p.185 Cousin Jacques lends Simone: des Barrès jaune citron.

See also *ibid.*, p.193; *ibid.*, p.228; *ibid.*, p.311; F.A., p.91.

Du sang, de la volupté et de la mort, Voyage en Espagne, voyage en Italie, Paris, Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1894.

This work went into numerous editions, some with illustrations, but the édition définitive was published in Paris by Plon, 1921, in the series: Les oeuvres complètes de Maurice Barrès.

Georges BATAILLE

F.A., p.586

l'Expérience intérieure

l'Expérience intérieure, Paris, Gallimard, 1943 (Les Essais numéro 13).

F.A., p.587 footnote: La Part du diable

cf. La Part maudite: essai d'économie générale I. La Consommation, Paris, Les Editions de Minuit, 1949.

Henry BATAILLE

M.J.F.R., p.111

Clandestine reading in father's library

Bataille, (1872-1922), successful dramatist whose plays treated audacious subjects in a sentimental style.

Charles BAUDELAIRE

M.J.F.R., p.194

Reference is to Fumet's book on Baudelaire

Julien BENDA

M.J.F.R., p.245

Consults priest about her loss of faith; has book by Benda in her hand

cf. La Trahison des clercs, Paris, Grasset, 1927. This book met with great success; it was in its 30th edition by 1928.

Arnold BENNETT

F.A., p.52 footnote: Les contes de bonne femme de Bennet (sic)

Un conte de bonnes femmes tr. M. de Coppet, 2 volumes, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1931.

Henri BERGSON

M.J.F.R., p.232

reads Bergson for school philosophy class

cf. Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience, Paris, F. Alcan, 1889.

Matière et mémoire, essai sur la relation du corps à l'esprit, Paris, F. Alcan, 1896.

Le Rire, Paris, F. Alcan, 1900.

Georges BERNANOS

F.A., p.295

Le Journal d'un curé de campagne força notre estime

Le Journal d'un curé de campagne, Paris, Plon, 1936.

Tristan BERNARD

M.J.F.R., p.111

clandestine reading in father's library

cf. Mémoires d'un jeune homme rangé, Paris, Editions de la "Revue Blanche", 1899.

This reading bore fruit as Simone de Beauvoir remembered Bernard's novel when naming the first volume of her memoirs.

Henry BERNSTEIN

M.J.F.R., p.111

clandestine reading in father's library

Bernstein (1876-1953) was the author of successful dramas with themes of passion.

André BILLY

F.A., p.142

Billy's study of Diderot fed a taste for biography

Le XVIIIe siècle - Diderot, Paris, Editions de France, 1932.

William BLAKE

F.A., p.56

Blake figures in list of 'free' reading after agrégation

In the Twenties in England Geoffrey Keynes was editing the complete works of Blake for the Nonesuch Press.

Sylvia Beach displayed books by Blake in the window of Shakespeare and Company and two of his drawings adorned her shop (cf. Sylvia Beach and the Lost Generation N.R. Fitch, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1985, p.40 and p.41).Both Blake's poetry and his mystical writings were available in French translation: Le Mariage du ciel et de l'enfer tr. A. Gide, Paris, Aveline, 1923.Premiers livres prophétiques tr. et introduit par P. Berger, Paris, Editions Reider, 1927 (Collection Philosophie, dirigée par P. Morhange, numéro 3).Seconds livres prophétiques tr. et intr. P. Berger, Paris, Editions Reider, 1930 (Coll. Philosophie no.6).Chants d'innocence et d'expérience tr. M.L. et P. Soupault, Paris, Editions des Cahiers libres, 1927.Chansons d'innocence tr. Pierre Messiaen in Amitiés, décembre 1933, janvier 1934.**Maurice BLANCHOT**

F.A., p.551

Aminadab: pastiche of KafkaAminadab, Paris, Gallimard, 1942.**Jean-Richard BLOCH**

M.J.F.R., p.224

elle [Madame de Beauvoir] pâlit en feuilletant La Nuit Kurde...La Nuit Kurde, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle revue française, 1925.**Gaston BOISSIER**

M.J.F.R., p.148

reads Promenades archéologiques and promises herself that she, too, will travelPromenades archéologiques: Rome et Pompéi originally published in the 1890s, 10th edition, Paris, Hachette, 1911.Nouvelles promenades archéologiques: Horace et Virgile 8th edition, Paris, Hachette, 1913.**Paul BOURGET**

M.J.F.R., p.83

censorship justified by parents: entre les pages de Cosmopolis un grand danger me guettaitCosmopolis (illustrated), Lemerre, 1892. Also a new edition, Paris, Plon, 1925 (2 volumes).

See also M.J.F.R., p.111 for Bourget's works generally, and clandestine reading in her father's library.

Bertolt BRECHT

F.A., p.54

L'Opéra de quat' sous produced by Gaston Baty**Jean de la BRETE**

M.J.F.R., p.89

Mon oncle et mon curé: approved childhood readingMon oncle et mon curé, Paris, Plon, 1889.

Reissued frequently: couronné par l'Académie française, Prix Montyon.

André BRETON

M.J.F.R., p.232

je lus Breton, Aragon; le surréalisme me conquiert.. (January 1927)

See also F.A., p.135; *ibid.*, p.142.Breton's first Manifeste du surréalisme dates from 1924.

Simone de Beauvoir continued to admire surrealism, even seeing traces in Faulkner's As I Lay Dying and in films by the Marx Brothers.

Emily BRONTE

F.A., p.52 Les Hauts de Hurlevent in footnote
Les Hauts de Hurlevent tr. F. Delebecque, Paris, Payot, 1929.

Ferdinand BRUNETIERE

M.J.F.R., p.155 studied while preparing for baccalauréat
 Literary historian and critic (1849-1906), a convinced adherent of the traditional principles of the Catholic Church and whose political beliefs were reactionary.

P.-J.-B. BUCHEZ and P.-C. ROUX

F.A., p.208 reads: la collection de documents recueillis par Buchez et Roux, in order to learn about French Revolution
 cf. Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution française, ou Journal des Assemblées Nationales, depuis 1789 jusqu'en 1815, Paris, Paulin, 1834-1838, 40 volumes.

Pearl BUCK

F.A., p.400 La Mère...livre insipide...
La Mère tr. G. Delamain, pr. L. Gillet, Paris, Stock, 1935 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.78).

Albert CAMUS

F.A., p.538 L'Etranger pleased Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir
L'Etranger, Paris, Gallimard, 1942.

Alfred CAPUS

M.J.F.R., p.111 clandestine reading in father's library
 Dramatist (1858-1922), author of successful comedies dealing with Parisian life.

Madame CARETTE

M.J.F.R., p.129 ...toute la collection de Mémoires expurgés par Madame Carette

Madame Carette was the editor of a series:
Choix de mémoires et écrits des femmes françaises aux XVIIe, XVIIIe et XIXe siècles avec leurs biographies.

cf. Mémoires de Mme la Mère de la Rochejacquelein, Paris Ollendorff, 1911 (Collection pour les jeunes filles). This edition was re-issued (Paris, Albin Michel, 1926) in the same series and was couronné par l'Académie française.

cf. Mémoires de Mme Roland, Paris, Albin Michel, 1925.

As well as editing historical autobiographies for girls, Madame Carette also adapted literary texts:

cf. Eugénie Grandet, Paris, Plon, 1923 (Collection: Oeuvres des grands romanciers du XIX^e siècle adaptées pour la jeunesse).

M.-L. CAUMERY

M.J.F.R., p.52 ...les albums de...Bécassine...

A lengthy series of picture books dealing with the adventures of the simple Breton girl, Bécassine, was available. It ranged alphabetically from Bécassine aviatrice through to Bécassine voyage. The books, published by Editions de la "Semaine de Suzette" from the early years of the century, are without date. They are attractively illustrated and their appeal is such that numerous modern reprints have appeared.

CELINE (pseudonym of Louis-Ferdinand DESTOUCHES)

F.A., p.142 Le Voyage au bout de la nuit admired

Le Voyage au bout de la nuit, Paris, Denoël et Steele, 1933.

F.A., p.142 footnote Mort à crédit: reveals une attitude pré-fasciste

Mort à crédit, Paris, Denoël et Steele, 1936.

Miguel de CERVANTES

M.J.F.R., p.305 Read for relaxation while studying for agrégation

For childhood reading there were numerous adapted and illustrated editions of Don Quixote including, for example:

les Aventures de Don Quichotte de la Manche, Edition revue et corrigée par M. L'Abbé Lejeune, Paris, P.-C. Lehuby. s.d.

Don Quichotte de la Manche, Nouvelle édition mise à la portée de la jeunesse par Maurice Dreyfous, Paris, M. Dreyfous. s.d.

If, as a student, Simone de Beauvoir wished to read a more adult version of Cervantes' works then there was available, recently published:

Oeuvres choisies tr. et introduction par H. Collet, Paris, A. Colin, 1920.

Marc CHADOURNE

M.J.F.R., p.261 ...je lus [Vasco] avec presque autant de ferveur que

Le Grand Meaulnes

Vasco, Paris, Plon, 1927 (in series: Le Roseau d'or, Oeuvres et Chroniques 22).

This work was published in numerous subsequent editions, some of which were illustrated; it gained the Prix Paul Flat of the Académie française.

Michel CHOLOKOV (sic)

F.A., p.146 Terres défrichées admirable, un chef-d'oeuvre...

Terres défrichées tr. avec la permission de l'auteur par A. Orane et G. Roux, Paris, Éditions Sociales internationales 1933 (Horizons, Collection du roman international).

cf. also Les Défricheurs tr. D. Ergoz, Paris, Gallimard, 1933 (Collection les Jeunes Russes).

See also F.A., p.146 Sur le Don paisible, unable to finish it

Sur le Don paisible tr. V. Soukhomline et S. Campaux, Paris, Payot, tome 1 1930, tome 2 1931, tome 3 1936.

Agatha CHRISTIE

F.A., p.53 great readers of detective stories

F.A., p.352 technique of L'Invitée

cf. Le Meurtre de Roger Ackroyd tr. Miriam Dou-Desportes, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1927 (Collection le Masque no.1).

Les sept cadrans tr. Miriam Dou-Desportes, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1929 (Collections le Masque no.44).

L'Homme au complet brun tr. Juliette Pary, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1930 (Collection le Masque no.69).

Monsieur Brown tr. Juliette Pary, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1932 (Collections le Masque no.100).

L'Affaire Prothéro tr. Claude Pierre-Langers, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1932 (Collection le Masque no.114).

La Mystérieuse Affaire de Styles tr. Marc Logé, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1932 (Collection le Masque no.106).

Le Crime du golf tr. Marc Logé, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1932 (Collection le Masque no.118).

Le Train bleu tr. Louis Positif, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1932 (Collection le Masque no.122)

Le Secret de Chimneys tr. Juliette Pary, Paris, Librairie des Champs-

Elysées, 1933 (Collection le Masque no.126).

Les Quatre tr. X. Roux, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1933 (Collection le Masque no.134).

La Maison du Péril tr. Louis Positif, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1934 (Collection le Masque no.157).

Le Crime de l'Orient-Express tr. Louis Positif, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1935 (Collection le Masque no.169).

Cinq heures vingt-cinq tr. Louis Positif, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1936 (Collection le Masque no.190).

Le Couteau sur la nuque tr. Louis Positif, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1936 (Collection le Masque no.197).

La Mort dans les nuages tr. Louis Positif, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1937 (Collection le Masque no.218).

Pourquoi pas Evans? tr. Louis Positif, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1937 (Collection le Masque no.241).

CHRISTOPHE

M.J.F.R., p.52

childhood reading: ...les aventures de la famille Fenouillard...

La Famille Fenouillard Paris, A. Colin, 1893 (Collection la Bibliothèque du petit Français).

See also M.J.F.R., p.52 ...celles [les aventures] du sapeur Camember.
ibid., p.54 imitates la famille Fenouillard in early novel

Paul CLAUDEL

M.J.F.R., p.185

...des Claudel...

ibid.

l'Annonce faite à Marie

This play, first acted at the Salle Malakoff in Paris on Christmas Eve 1912, was published by the Editions de la Nouvelle revue française and was already in its 11th edition in 1917.

See also M.J.F.R., p.195 J'aimais...Violaine...

The early version of l'Annonce faite à Marie first appeared in l'Arbre, Paris, Société du "Mercure de France", 1901, but when Simone de Beauvoir was a student there was published: La Jeune fille Violaine, première version inédite 1892, préface de Jean Royère, Paris, Editions Excelsior, 1926.

See also:

M.J.F.R., p.186; M.J.F.R., p.193; M.J.F.R., p.290.

See also F.A., p.51 le Soulier de satin ...aversion...admiration...

Le Soulier de satin première journée, Paris, Plon, 1925 (In Series: Le Roseau d'or Oeuvres et chroniques number 5) with poems and essays by Hilaire Belloc, Jean Cocteau, Stanislaus Fumet, Max Jacob, Jacques Maritain and others; also published in 2 volumes: Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle revue française, 1928.

See also F.A., p.410 Tête d'or ...beau...fasciste...nazie...

L'Arbre: Tête d'or, l'Echange, le Repos du septième jour, la ville, la Jeune fille Violaine, Paris, Société du "Mercure de France", 1901 and numerous subsequent editions.

Jean COCTEAU

M.J.F.R., p.185

...un Cocteau rouge framboise...Le Potomak

Le Potomak 1913-1914 Précédée d'un prospectus, 1916, et suivi des Eugène de la guerre, 1915, Paris, Société Littéraire de France, 1919.

But ibid., Texte définitif, Paris, Delamain et Boutelleau (Editions Stock), 1925.

See also M.J.F.R., p.321.

See also F.A., p.447 Les Monstres sacrés

Les Monstres sacrés, portrait d'une pièce en 3 actes, avec 3 dessins de Christian Bérard, Paris, Gallimard, 1940.

COLETTE

M.J.F.R., p.84 ...maman avait arraché des mains de Louise [la bonne]
Claudine à l'école

Claudine à l'école, Paris, P. Ollendorff, 1900 and numerous subsequent editions.
 See also M.J.F.R., p.111; M.J.F.R., p.156.

Guy CHANTEPLEURE (pseudonym of Mme Jeanne DUSSAP)

M.J.F.R., p.89 permitted reading

This author produced romantic reading matter for respectable young ladies in the early years of this century; among examples of typical titles there figure:

Ames féminines, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1902.

L'Aventure de Huguette, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1904.

Le Baiser au clair de lune, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1908.

L'Inconnue bien-aimée, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1925, and many other titles in the intervening years and beyond.

Joseph CONRAD

F.A., p.241 encourages Olga to read: tous les auteurs que j'aimais.

Most of Conrad's oeuvre was translated into French. For the details which explain why this was so see:

Gaston Gallimard, P. Assouline, Paris, Balland, 1984, pp.89-90.

Amongst major works figure:

Lord Jim tr. P. Neel, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle revue française, 1922.

Une Victoire tr. P. Neel et Isabelle Rivière, Paris Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle revue française, 1924.

Typhon tr. A. Gide, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle revue française, 1925.

Le Nègre du "Narcisse" tr. R. d'Humières, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle revue française, 1933.

James Fenimore COOPER

M.J.F.R., p.81 Holiday reading

cf. Les Cavaliers de la Virginie, 2 volumes, Paris, A. Méricant, 1910.

Le Tueur de daims, Paris, Gautier et Languereau, 1924 (Collection Familia).

Le Dernier des Mohicans abrégé de l'anglais, Paris, Hachette, 1911 (Bibliothèque des écoles et des familles).

François COPPEE

M.J.F.R., p.39 Un évangile: poem written out by father for young Simone to learn by heart

Coppée (1842-1908) poet and dramatist. Oeuvres complètes, Paris, A. Houssiaux, 1909.

Pierre CORNEILLE

M.J.F.R., p.113 found irritating by Zaza

Freeman Wills CROFTS

F.A., p.53 Croft (sic) many detective stories read

L'Affaire Ponson tr. Georges Gillard, Paris, Editions Excelsior, 1930.

La Tragédie de Starvel tr. Georges Gillard, Paris, Editions Excelsior, 1931 (Collection Le Mystère no.11).

Le Cercueil Marin tr. Robert Saint-Prix, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1932 (Collection l'Empreinte no.12).

Mort subite tr. E. May Desmond, Paris, Editions Excelsior, 1932 (Collection Mystères l'X).

Le Meurtre de Groote-Park tr. A.F. Vincelles, Paris, Editions Excelsior,

1933 (Collection Mystères l'X).

Le Rail Sanglant tr. C.A. Vincelles, Paris, Editions Excelsior, 1933 (Collection Mystères l'X no.5).

Le Mystère de Cheyne tr. A.M. Jay, Paris, Editions Excelsior, 1933 (Collection Mystères l'X no.8).

Les Diamants volés tr. Robert Saint-Prix, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1933 (Collection l'Empreinte no.15).

La Dernière victime tr. S. Lechevrel, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1934 (Collection l'Empreinte no.23)

Un drame en mer tr. Perrine Vernay, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1934 (Collection l'Empreinte no.35).

Le Drame de l'Île de Wight tr. Hélène Jeandidier, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1935 (Collection l'Empreinte no.62).

Le Crime du siècle tr. S. Lechevrel, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1935 (Collection l'Empreinte no.78).

12h.30 de Croydon tr. S. Lechevrel, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1935 (Collection l'Empreinte no.84).

Perdu en mer tr. Perrine Vernay, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1936 (Collection l'Empreinte no.102).

Alphonse DAUDET

M.J.F.R., p.111 clandestine reading of novels in father's library

Daudet (1840-1897) is nowadays remembered for Lettres de mon moulin but was initially known for his Naturalist novels.

Mazo de la ROCHE

F.A., p.303 ...je lisais Jalna...qui m'assomma...

Jalna tr. S. Sallard, Paris, Plon, 1934 (Feux croisés).

DELLY

M.J.F.R., p.89

See also F.A., p.65 Il m'en est resté un petit côté "Delly", très sensible dans les premiers brouillons de mes romans.

This was a pious yet romantic novelist whose sentimental love stories, intended for a respectable young feminine public, were published from the early years of this century onwards. Many titles were re-issued in the Twenties in the series: la Bibliothèque de ma fille or in la Bibliothèque de Suzette, which were regarded by Catholic authorities as suitable reading for the young. Selected novels from a prolific range are:

Dans les ruines, Paris, Gautier et Languereau, 1903, reissued 1923 in La Bibliothèque de ma fille.

l'Exilée, Paris, Gautier et Languereau, 1908, reissued 1925 in La Bibliothèque de ma fille.

Esclave...ou reine?, Paris, Plon, 1910.

La Colombe de Rudsay-Manor, Paris, 5 rue Bayard, 1911.

Entre deux âmes, Paris, Plon, 1913.

la Chatte blanche, Paris, Flammarion, 1923.

Cœurs ennemis, laquelle?, Paris, Editions Jules Tallandier, 65^e edition, 1928.

Charles DICKENS

M.J.F.R., p.132

Quelques livres - Dickens...décrivaient de dures existences.

See also M.J.F.R., p.143 David Copperfield's love for Dora

cf. David Copperfield Edition abrégée, Paris, Hachette, 1910, in Bibliothèque des

Ecoles et des Familles.

This abridged translation was republished in 1920 in the same series, but with illustrations.

There was also available a full translation by P. Lorain, Paris, Hachette, 1912 and 1920.

Denis DIDEROT

M.J.F.R., p.171 Diderot on syllabus for licence ès lettres

See also F.A., p.56.

Lettres de Diderot à Sophie Volland ed. A. Babelon, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle revue française, 1931, 3 volumes.

Alfred DOBLIN (sic) (Döblin or Doeblin)

F.A., p.52 German literature

Berlin Alexanderplatz, Berlin, Die Geschichte von Franz Birkenkopf, 1930.

ibid. tr. de l'allemand par Zoya Motchane, pr. Pierre Mac Orlan, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

Fyodor DOSTOIEVSKY

F.A., p.353 the technique of L'Invitée

See also F.A., p.417 J'achète pour Sartre L'Idiot...

The complete works of this author were published in translation in the Thirties by Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle revue française:

- | | | |
|----------|---|------|
| tome 1 | <u>Crime et Châtiment</u> tr. D. Ergaz | 1931 |
| 2 | <u>Journal de Raskolnikov</u> tr. V. Pozner | 1931 |
| 3 | <u>Un joueur</u> tr. H. Mongault et <u>L'Eternel mari</u> tr. B. de Schloezer | 1931 |
| 4,5 | <u>Les Démons</u> tr. B. de Schloezer | 1932 |
| 6,7 | <u>L'Idiot</u> tr. A. Mousset | 1933 |
| 8 | <u>Les Carnets de "L'Idiot"</u> tr. B. de Schloezer | 1933 |
| 9 | <u>Souvenirs de la maison des morts</u> tr. H. Mongaux et L. Desormonts | 1932 |
| 10,11,12 | <u>Les Frères Karamazov</u> tr. B. de Schloezer | 1934 |
| 13,14 | <u>L'Adolescent</u> tr. P. Pascal | 1934 |
| 15 | <u>Nouvelles 1862-1865</u> tr. H. Mongaux et L. Desormonts | 1934 |

Theodore DREISER

F.A., p.52 prefers his novels to those of Sinclair Lewis

See also F.A., p.56.

Douze hommes tr. F. Hélie, Paris, Editions Reider, 1923 (Les Prosateurs étrangers modernes).

La Couleur d'une grande cité (New York) tr. P. Jeanneret, Paris, Stock, 1930 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.44).

Une tragédie américaine tr. V. Llona, Paris, Fayard, 1932, 2 volumes.

L'Amérique tragique tr. P. Nizan, Paris, Editions Reider, 1933.

Jenny Gerhardt intro. J. de Fabrègues, tr. Marie Cresciani, Paris, Editions du Siècle, 1933 (les Maîtres étrangers).

Pierre DRIEU LA ROCHELLE

M.J.F.R., p.227 only writer at N.R.F. to discuss political questions

See also F.A., p.87; p.442.

This writer published nearly all his work in the Twenties and Thirties with Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle revue française. The references are to this publisher except where stated.

Among his books there figure:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| <u>Interrogations</u> (poems) | 1917 |
| <u>Etat civil</u> | 1921 |
| <u>Plainte contre inconnu</u> | 1924 |

<u>l'Homme couvert de femmes</u>	1925
<u>La Suite dans les idées</u> , Paris, Au Sans Pareil, 1927.	
<u>La Voix</u> , Paris, Champion	1928
<u>Blèche</u>	1929
<u>Une femme à sa fenêtre</u>	1930
<u>l'Europe contre les patries</u>	1931
<u>Le Feu follet</u>	1931
<u>Drôle de voyage</u>	1933
<u>la Comédie de Charleroi</u>	1934
<u>Journal d'un homme trompé</u>	1934
<u>Socialisme fasciste</u>	1934
<u>Beloukia</u>	1936
<u>Rêveuse Bourgeoisie</u>	1937
<u>Gilles</u>	1939

Georges DUHAMEL

F.A., p.87 learns from him how to appreciate Berlin
 Novelist of the Pasquier and Salavin series, and writer on modern civilisation cf.
Entretien sur l'esprit européen, 1928.

Alexandre DUMAS (presumably DUMAS père)

F.A., p.56 Read while studying early nineteenth century literature
 after the agrégation in order to fill in blanks in her
 knowledge

Dumas (1802-1870) was a dramatist and writer of exciting historical novels. He was prolific in output and his works include 22 volumes of memoirs.

Georges DUMAS

F.A., p.25
 ibid., p.100 ...je mis dans les mains de ces adolescentes...un fascicule
 du Traité de Dumas qui parlait aussi du plaisir

cf. La Tristesse et la joie, Paris, Alcan, 1900.

Dumas was writing, with some help from collaborators throughout the Thirties, a Nouveau traité de psychologie published in fascicules by Alcan, Paris.

Volume 1	<u>Notions préliminaires</u>	1930
Volume 2	<u>Les Fondements de la vie mentale</u>	1932
Volume 3	<u>Les Associations sensibles, motrices. L'Equilibre et l'orientation. L'Expression. Les Emotions. Les Mimiques. le langage</u>	1933
Volume 4	<u>Les Fonctions et les lois générales</u>	1935
Volume 5	<u>Les Fonctions systématisées de la vie intellectuelle</u>	1936
Volume 6	<u>Les Fonctions systématisées de la vie affective et la vie active</u>	1939

Georges DUMEZIL

F.A., p.521 ...je m'intéressai beaucoup aux ouvrages de Dumézil sur les
 mythes et les mythologies...

Dumézil was interested in linguistics and participated in the linguistic conference in 1934 with scholars such as Vendryes. He was appointed to the chair of Indo-European Civilisation at the Collège de France in 1949. His supplementary thesis on Rites et Légendes du monde égéen was published at the same time as his main thesis, Le Festin d'immortalité (mythologie comparée), by the Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, Paris, 1924.

During the early days of the War there appeared: Jupiter, Mars, Quirinus - essai sur la conception indo-européenne de la société et sur les origines de Rome, Paris, Gallimard, 1941; Horace et les Curiaces, Paris, Gallimard, 1942.

Isadora DUNCAN

M.J.F.R., p.319 ...je lus Ma Vie...et je rêvai à ma propre existence.
Ma Vie tr. Jean Allary, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle revue française, 1928.

Ilya EHRENBURG

F.A., p.52 Rapaces (sic)
Rapace tr. G. Aucouturier, Paris, Gallimard, 1930 (Collection: les Jeunes Russes).
 cf. Le Deuxième jour de la création tr. M. Etard, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

George ELIOT

M.J.F.R., p.112 Silas Marner
 ibid., p.113 Adam Bede
 ibid., p.141 le Moulin sur la Floss...je le lus en anglais
 See also ibid., p.208, p.323.
 cf. also F.A., p.375.
The Mill on the Floss made a profound impression on the young Simone de Beauvoir.

Catherine EMMERICH

F.A., p.56 Sartre s'intéressait à la psychologie des mystiques
 cf. La Douloureuse passion de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ, d'après les méditations d'Anne-Catherine Emmerich, Paris, Debécourt, 1880, 30^e édition.
 cf. Vie de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ d'après les visions de la soeur Anne-Catherine Emmerich... recueillies par Clément Brentano, Tournai, H. Casterman, 1860.

Emile FAGUET

M.J.F.R., p.155 Read while studying for baccalauréat
 Faguet (1847-1916) was a literary historian and critic.

Michael FARBMAN

F.A., p.154 Je lisais...l'ouvrage de Farbman, sur le plan quinquennal -
Piatiletka
Piatiletka (Le Plan russe) Préface Jean Guéhenno, tr. Jeanne Guéhenno, Paris, Reider, 1931.

Claude FARRERE

M.J.F.R., p.111 Clandestine reading in father's library
Les Civilisés, Paris, Ollendorff, 1905 (Prix Goncourt 1905).
Mademoiselle Dax, jeune fille, Paris, Ollendorff, 1908.
 Both these novels were best-sellers and were constantly in print even until the outbreak of war in 1939.

William FAULKNER

F.A., pp.191-193 Tandis que j'agonise
 ibid. Sanctuaire
 ibid., pp.244-45 Lumière d'août
 ibid., p.303 des nouvelles, presumably Dr. Martino
 ibid., p.325, p.363
 Works by Faulkner available in French translation were:
Septembre ardent (Dry September 1931) tr. M.E. Coindreau, Nouvelle Revue Française, January 1932.
Une Rose pour Emily (A Rose for Miss Emily), tr. M.E. Coindreau, Commerce,

Winter 1932.

Sanctuaire (Sanctuary 1931) tr. R.N. Rimbault & H. Delgove, pr. Andre Malraux, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

Il était une reine (There was a Queen 1934) tr. M.E. Coindreau, Nouvelle Revue Française, August 1933.

Tandis que j'agonise (As I Lay Dying 1930) tr. M.E. Coindreau, pr. Valéry Larbaud, Paris, Gallimard, 1934.

Lumière d'août (Light in August 1932) tr. M.E. Coindreau, pr. M.E. Coindreau, Paris, Gallimard, 1935.

Feuilles Rouges (Red Leaves 1931) tr. R.N. Rimbault & Ch.P. Vorce, Europe, 15 May 1936.

Sartoris (1929) tr. R.N. Rimbault and H. Delgove, Paris, Gallimard, 1937.

Le Bruit et la fureur (The Sound and the Fury 1929) tr. M.E. Coindreau, pr. M.E. Coindreau, Paris, Gallimard, 1938.

Treize Histoires (These Thirteen 1931) tr. M.E. Coindreau, Paris, Gallimard, 1939.

Ramon FERNANDEZ

M.J.F.R., p.195 ...attempting to construct a new humanism...

Novelist: Le Pari, Paris, Gallimard, 1932; critic writing on Proust, Balzac, Molière, Mauriac; editor; writer of prefaces to English and Spanish novels.

Fernandez was co-author with Jacques Rivière of Moralisme et Littérature, Paris, R.A. Corrèa, 1932.

Paul FEVAL

F.A., p.113 La Fée des grèves

Féval (1817-1887) was an author of sensational novels, adventure stories and historical and regional stories. This novel was originally published in 1877 and went into numerous editions, often illustrated.

cf. La Fée des grèves nouvelle édition soigneusement revue, Paris, Albin Michel, 1924.

cf. La Fée des grèves illustrated by Malo Renault, preface by J. Joseph-Renaud, Paris, Crès, 1929 (In collection: l'Adolescence catholique).

Robert de FLERS and Arman de CAILLAVET

M.J.F.R., p.111 clandestine reading in father's library

Dramatic authors, collaborating on entertaining and sophisticated comedies. They enjoyed their greatest success from 1904 with Le Coeur a ses raisons until the outbreak of the First World War.

Zénaïde FLEURIOT

M.J.F.R., p.52; *ibid* p.57 childhood reading

Prolific writer (1829-1890) of children's novels principally addressed to little girls and published in Hachette's series, La Bibliothèque rose.

Antonio FOGAZZARO

M.J.F.R., p.143 Zaza et moi, nous fûmes bouleversées par...Daniel Cortis

Daniel Cortis tr. Paul Solanges, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1896. This version was still in print in 1947.

See also Un petit monde d'autrefois (Piccolo mondo antico 1895) tr. A.-M. Gladès, Paris, Hachette, 1897 (Petite Bibliothèque de la famille).

Fogazzaro (1842-1911) Italian novelist and poet, preoccupied with religion and whose novels examine the psychological conflicts of the strong central characters.

Sainte Angèle de FOLIGNO

F.A., p.56 Follows Sartre's lead and reads mystics

cf. Le Livre des visions et instructions de la bienheureuse Angèle de Foligno tr. E.

Hello, Paris, Poussielgue frères, 1868.

cf. also la Vie de Sainte Angèle de Foligno par le frère Arnaud, Clermont-Ferrand, Thibaut-Landriot, 1841.

Alfred FOUILLEE

M.J.F.R., p.158 recommended reading in philosophy class at school

Fouillée's doctoral thesis:

l'Evolutionnisme des idées-forces, Paris, Alcan, 1890, was in its sixth edition in 1920 (Bibliothèque de philosophie contemporaine).

He published also on la Psychologie des Idées-Forces (1892) and on Morale des Idées-Forces (1907). In the latter part of his career his attention became increasingly concentrated on moral and ethical issues:

Humanitaires et Libertaires au point de vue sociologique et moral, études critiques, Paris, Alcan, 1914.

La France au point de vue moral, Paris, Alcan, 1921.

Anatole FRANCE

M.J.F.R., p.156

M.J.F.R., pp.188-89 Le Lys rouge, Les dieux ont soif (sic); La Vie littéraire given to her in January 1926 as 18th birthday present by her father. Le Lys rouge, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1894.

Les Dieux ont soif, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1912.

La Vie littéraire, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1888-1892, 4 volumes.

Robert FRANCIS

F.A., p.244

La Grange aux trois belles, Le Bateau-refuge. Imitation of Alain-Fournier and fascist according to Simone de Beauvoir.

La Grange aux trois belles original publication Paris, A. Redier, 1933. Subsequently ill. M. Jacquot, Paris, J. Ferenczi et fils, 1936.

Le Bateau-refuge, Paris, Librairie de la Revue Française, 1934.

See also Le Gardien d'épaves, Paris, Gallimard, 1937.

The two books named by Simone de Beauvoir form part of an Histoire d'une famille sous la Troisième République which appeared in four volumes during the Thirties.

Sigmund FREUD

F.A., p.25

l'Interprétation des rêves, la Psychopathologie de la vie quotidienne

ibid., p.135

La Psychopathologie de la vie quotidienne tr. S. Jankélévitch, Paris, Payot, 1922.

Le Rêve et son interprétation tr. H. Legros, Paris, Gallimard, 1925.

cf. also:

Essais de Psychanalyse tr. S. Jankélévitch, Paris, Payot, 1927.

I Au-delà du principe de plaisir

II Psychologie collective et analyse du moi

III Le Moi et le soi

IV Considérations actuelles sur la guerre et sur la mort

V Contribution à l'histoire du mouvement psychanalytique

cf. also:

Cinq psychanalyses tr. M. Bonaparte et R. Loewenstein, Paris, Denoël et Steele 1935 (La Bibliothèque psychanalytique).

Stanislas FUMET

M.J.F.R., p.194

Notre Baudelaire

Notre Baudelaire, Paris, Plon, 1926.

Frantz FUNCK-BRENTANO

M.J.F.R., p.129 admired by Monsieur de Beauvoir

Funck-Brentano (1862-1947) was a popular historian.

cf. Légendes et archives de le Bastille, Paris, Hachette, 1898.

Le Drame des poisons, Paris, Hachette, 1900.

l'Affaire du Collier, d'après de nouveaux documents recueillis en partie par A. Bégis, Paris, Hachette, 1901.

The series which he edited, l'Histoire de France racontée à tous, was popularly admired. 11 volumes were published between 1909 and 1933, Flammarion producing a collected version in 1934.

Jean GENET

F.A., p.594 Notre-Dame des fleurs

cf. Notre-Dame des fleurs Monte-Carlo aux dépens d'un amateur s.d.

cf. also Oeuvres complètes tome 2, Paris, Gallimard, 1951 (tome 1 is Saint Genet, comédien et martyr J.-P. Sartre, Paris, Gallimard, 1952).

Simone de Beauvoir initially read Genet in Marc Barbezat's revue, L'Arbalète, during the war. In the same issue there appeared Sartre's Huis Clos, still entitled Les Autres, plus work by Queneau, Leiris, Claudel and Mouloudji. L'Arbalète no.8, April 1944.

André GIDE

M.J.F.R., p.182 Qui était ce Gide dont...il [Garric] avait prononcé le nom?

M.J.F.R., p.185 Les Nourritures terrestres

M.J.F.R., p.195 La Porte étroite

See also M.J.F.R., p.186; *ibid.* p.193; *ibid.* p.228; *ibid.* p.271.

See also F.A., p.88 Prétextes

F.A., p.296 Retour de l'U.R.S.S.

F.A., p.393 Journal

See also F.A., p.87; *ibid.* p.100; *ibid.* p.133; *ibid.* p.396.

Les Nourritures terrestres, Paris, Mercure de France, 1897, and les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1917.

La Porte étroite, Paris, Mercure de France, 1909.

Prétextes, Paris, Mercure de France, 1913.

Retour de l'U.R.S.S., Paris, Gallimard, 1936.

Journal 1885-1939, Paris, Gallimard, 1939.

Les Oeuvres complètes ed. L. Martin-Chauffier, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française 1932-1939, 15 volumes.

Gide published translations of Blake, Conrad, Shakespeare and prefaces to Fielding and Hogg. He was equally open to other literatures, working on Dostoïevsky, Goethe, Hermann Hesse, Thomas Mann, Pushkin, Tagore and Walt Whitman. Simone de Beauvoir, eager to read writing from other cultures, would have been further encouraged to do so by Gide's attitude.

Comte Arthur de GOBINEAU

M.J.F.R., p.131 Monsieur de Beauvoir reads to her l'Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines

ibid. p.39 he has read same text to his wife

Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines, Paris, Firmin-Didot frères, 1853-1855, 4 volumes. Reissued in 2 volume 2nd edition with preface and biography in 1884; this still in print in 1940.

F.A., p.56 les romans de Gobineau

cf. Nouvelles asiatiques, Paris, Didier, 1876.

Edmond et Jules de GONCOURT

M.J.F.R., p.111 clandestine reading of novels in father's library

See also M.J.F.R., p.156.

cf. Germinie Lacerteux, Paris, Charpentier, 1864.

cf. Journal des Goncourt. Mémoires de la vie littéraire, Paris, Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1887-1896, 9 volumes.

J. Wolfgang von GOETHE

M.J.F.R., p.305 tries to read Goethe as relaxation while preparing for the agrégation

cf. Goethe Lectures littéraires. Pages choisies des grands écrivains, Paris, A. Colin, 1911.

cf. also Correspondance entre Schiller et Goethe tr. et intro. Lucien Herr, Paris, Plon, 3^e édition, 1923.

Les Souffrances du jeune Werther, tr. et intro. J. Aynard, illus. Chodowiecki, Paris, Payot, 1927.

Lettres à Madame de Stein tr. E.H. intro. H. Lichtenberger, Paris, Stock, 1928 (Lettres, mémoires, chroniques).

Philibert, Comte de GRAMONT See HAMILTON

F.A., p.412

Julien GREEN

F.A., p.417 J'achète pour Sartre...le Journal de Green

Journal Volume 1, 1928-1934, Paris, Plon, 1938.

Volume 2, 1935-1939, Paris, Plon, 1939.

The Brothers GRIMM

M.J.F.R., p.52 childhood reading

Jean GUEHENNO

F.A., p.309 quote from article in Vendredi

Eugène de GUERIN

M.J.F.R., p.143 J'aimais...les journaux intimes...qui s'efforcent de retenir le temps

cf. Journal et fragments, Paris, G.-S. Trébutien, 1870.

cf. Journal et lettres ed. G.-S. Trébutien, Paris, Didier, 1862.

Lettres à Louise de Bayne (1830-1834) ed. E. Barthès, Paris, Gabalda, tome 1 1924, tome 2 1926.

Lettres à son frère Maurice ed. E. Barthès, Paris, Gabalda, 1929.

Daniel GUERIN

F.A., p.295 Fascisme et grand capitalisme...nous aida un peu à comprendre notre époque

Fascisme et grand capitalisme, Paris, Gallimard, 1936

Raymond GUERIN

F.A., p.521 Quand vient la fin - an account of his father's death: je fus prise à ce récit affreux

Quand vient la fin, Paris, Gallimard, 1941.

Sacha GUITRY

M.J.F.R., p.111 clandestine reading of his plays in Monsieur de Beauvoir's library

Guitry (1885-1957) was an actor and an author of light comedies.

Ludovic HALEVY

M.J.F.R., p.72 receives L'Abbé Constantin in illustrated edition as present from father

cf. L'Abbé Constantin, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1882.

L'Abbé Constantin illust. Madeleine Lemerre, Paris, Boussod, Valadon et cie, 1887.

This version was almost continually in print.

Octave HAMELIN

M.J.F.R., p.232 Philosophy read while student

cf. Essai sur les éléments principaux de la représentation, Paris, Alcan, 1925 (2nd edition, the work is Hamelin's doctoral thesis, presented in 1907).

cf. Le Système d'Aristote, Paris, Alcan, 1920.

cf. Le Système de Renouvier, Paris, J. Vrin, 1927.

Anthony HAMILTON

F.A., p.412 les Mémoires de Gramont

Mémoires du comte de Gramont contenant particulièrement l'histoire amoureuse sous le règne de Charles II, Cologne, P. Marteau, 1713.

There was an edition published in Paris by Garnier frères in 1853 with a notice sur l'auteur et préface by Sainte-Beuve. This was reissued in 1866 and reprinted by Garnier in 1930.

Dashiell HAMMETT

F.A., p.130 as precursor of a new sort of novel?

F.A., p.353 link with technique of L'Invitée

La clé de verre (The Glass Key 1931) tr. P.J. Herr, Paris, Gallimard, 1932 (les Chefs-d'oeuvre du roman d'aventures).

Sang Maudit (The Dain Curse 1929) tr. M. Gauwin, Paris, Gallimard, 1933 (les Chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventures).

L'Introuvable (The Thin Man 1934) tr. E. Michel-Tyr, Paris, Gallimard, 1934.

Le Faucon de Malte (The Maltese Falcon 1930) tr. E. Michel-Tyr, Paris, Gallimard, 1936.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich HEGEL

F.A., p.470 La Phénoménologie de l'esprit

ibid. p.472; ibid. p.482.

La Phénoménologie de l'esprit tr. Jean Hyppolite, Paris, Aubier, tome I 1939, tome II 1941.

Martin HEIDEGGER

F.A., pp.363-64 Sartre reading Heidegger in German and in translation

See also F.A., p.447; ibid. p.535.

Qu'est-ce que la métaphysique? suivi d'extraits sur l'Etre et le temps et d'une conférence sur Hölderlin par M. Heidegger tr. préface et notes de Henry Corbin, Paris, Gallimard, 1938.

Heinrich HEINE

M.J.F.R., p.229 quotation from Heine

Ernest HEMINGWAY

F.A., pp.144-45 50,000 Dollars, Le Soleil se lève aussi and 'un certain nombre de ses nouvelles'

See also ibid. p.191; ibid. p.353.

in our time Paris, three mountains press, 1924, in limited edition of 170 copies, for sale at Shakespeare and Company, rue de l'Odéon.

L'Invincible, short story (The Undefeated) in little magazine Le Navire d'Argent,

edited by Adrienne Monnier, March 1926.

Cinquante mille dollars, short story (Fifty Grand), in Nouvelle Revue Française, May 1927.

Cinquante mille dollars, collection of stories tr. Ott de Weymer, Paris, Gallimard, 1928. The stories in this collection were: Mon vieux (My Old Man); L'Invincible (The Undeatable); le Champion (The Battler); Le Village Indien (Indian Camp); les Tueurs (The Killers) and the title story.

Le Village Indien, short story (Indian Camp), in Nouvelle Revue Française, June 1928.

Les Collines sont comme des éléphants blancs, short story (Hills like White Elephants), in Bifur, no.3, 1929.

Je vous salue Marie, short story intro. André Maurois, in Les Romanciers Américains, ed. Victor Llona, Paris, Denöel et Steele, 1931. This was an anthology of American stories and included work by Sherwood Anderson, Louis Bromfield, James Branch Cabell, John Dos Passos, Ludwig Lewisohn, Jack London, Upton Sinclair, Gertrude Stein and Glenway Wescott.

The Torrents of Spring, Paris, Crosby Continental Editions, 1931.

L'Adieu aux armes (Farewell to Arms), tr. Maurice-Edgar Coindreau pr. Drieu la Rochelle, Paris, Gallimard, 1932.

In Our Time, Paris, Crosby Continental Editions, 1932, (Modern Masterpieces in English, no.6).

Le Soleil se lève aussi (Fiesta in U.K., The Sun Also Rises in U.S.), tr. M.-E. Coindreau pr. Jean Prévost, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

Les Vertes Collines d'Afrique (The Green Hills of Africa), tr. Jeanine Delpech, Paris, Gallimard, 1937.

Mort dans l'après-midi (Death in the Afternoon), tr. René Daumal, Paris, Gallimard, 1938.

François-Benoît HOFFMANN

F.A., p.56 rounding out her knowledge by reading late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century authors.

Hoffmann (1760-1828) was a dramatist and poet and met with success as a librettist for opera and operettas.

Johann Christian Friedrich HOLDERLIN

F.A., p.53 Empédocle caught her attention

La Mort d'Empédocle, drame, tr. André Babelon, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1930.

cf. Poèmes de la folie de Hölderlin tr. Pierre-Jean Jouve avec la collaboration de Pierre Klossowski, avant-propos de B. Groethuysen, Paris, J.O. Fourcade, 1927.

Richard HUGHES

F.A., p.52 Footnote: Un cyclone à la Jamaïque

Un cyclone à la Jamaïque tr. J. Talva, Paris, Plon, 1931 (Feux croisés no.16).

Victor HUGO

M.J.F.R., p.39

ibid. p.108

Monsieur de Beauvoir reads Ruy Blas and Hernani to Simone this practice continues

Edmund HUSSERL

F.A., p.142

ibid. p.189; ibid. p.208

Sartre buys Lévinas' book on Husserl

She reads in German: Leçons sur la conscience interne du temps

cf. also Emmanuel LEVINAS.

cf. Méditations cartésiennes. Introduction à la phénoménologie tr. G. Peiffer et E. Lévinas, Paris, Armand Colin, 1931.

Aldous HUXLEY

F.A., p.52

Footnote: ContrepointContrepoint (Point Counter Point) tr. J. Castier avec préface d'André Maurois, Paris, Plon, 1930, (Feux croisés no.15).Cercle Vicieux tr. R. Legrand, intro. Jean Fayard, Paris, Editions du Siècle, 1932 (Les Maîtres Etrangers no.12).Le Meilleur des mondes (Brave New World) tr. J. Castier, Paris, Plon, 1933 (Feux croisés no.26).cf. also Croisière d'hiver (Beyond the Mexique Bay) tr. J. Castier, Paris, Plon, 1935.Après le feu d'artifice (Brief Candles) tr. J. Ably, Paris, Plon, 1936 (Feux croisés no.52).**Panaït ISTRATI**

F.A., p.56

Rounding out her culture after agrégationcf. Enfance d'Adrien Zograffi, Paris, Reider, 1926.Adolescence d'Adrien Zograffi, Paris, Reider, 1928.Les Chardons du Baragan, Paris, Grasset, 1928 ("Les Ecrits" sous la direction de Jean Guéhenno no.8).See also **George ORWELL****Paul d'IVOI** (pseudonym of Paul DELEUTRE)

M.J.F.R., p.52

childhood reading

Prolific writer of adventure stories from the turn of the century whose books were still being reissued in the Thirties.

cf. Bibliothèque choisie de Paul d'Ivoi, Paris, J. Fayard, 1903.I les Cinq sous de LavarèdeII Président de la République malgré luiIII Un mort qui se porte bienIV Protégé des BoxersV Aux frais de la police ... and so on.**Max JACOB**

M.J.F.R., p.224

Le Cornet à déscf. Le Cornet à dés Edition complète, revue et corrigée par l'auteur, Paris, Stock, 1923 (Les Contemporains no.3).**Louis JACOLLIOT**

M.J.F.R., p.53

...Le Coureur des Jungles me bouleversaLe Coureur des jungles, Paris, C. Marpon et F. Flammarion, 1888.**Henry JAMES**

F.A., p.56

je lus...des tonnes d'Henry James...

ibid. p.402

Portrait de femmecf. La Bête dans la jungle version Marc Chadourne, Paris, Editions Victor Attinger, 1929.Dans la cage tr. M. Lanoire et D. Clairouin, Paris, Stock (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.34).Le Sort de Poynton tr. Madame David, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1929.Le Tour de l'écrou suivi de les Papiers de Jeffrey Aspern tr. M. Le Corbeiller pr. Edmond Jaloux, Paris, Stock, 1929.Un portrait de femme tr. et pr. P. Neel, Paris, Stock, 1933 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.73).

Francis JAMMES

M.J.F.R., p.186 excitement of reading "new" literature

cf. *ibid.* p.256; *ibid.* p.290.

Poet (1868-1938), whose verse dealt with subjects from the natural world. He became increasingly interested in religion and in the possibility of conversion to the Catholic faith, and reflected this preoccupation in his Mémoires.

cf. De l'Angélus de l'aube à l'angélus du soir, 1888-1897, first published in 1898.

cf. Mémoires: Volume III Les Caprices du poète, Paris, Plon, 1923. Mercure de France reissued Jammes' Oeuvres 1921, 1926.

Alfred JARRY

M.J.F.R., p.244 Ubu roi on loan from 'Pradelle'

Ubu roi, Paris, Mercure de France, 1896, reissued Paris, Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1921.

Karl JASPERS

F.A., p.47 Psychopathologie: Nizan and Sartre had corrected the proofs
Psychopathologie générale tr. d'après la troisième édition allemande par A. Kastler et J. Mendousse, Paris, Alcan, 1928 (Bibliothèque de Philosophie contemporaine).

Jean JAURES

F.A., p.208 je me plongeais dans l'Histoire de la Révolution

Histoire Socialiste (1789-1900), Paris, J. Rouff s.d. (1902, 1903)

Volumes 1-6 deal with the French Revolution.

l'Histoire socialiste de la Révolution française Edition revue par A. Mathiez, Paris, Librairie de "L'Humanité", 1922.

Pierre-Jean JOUVE

M.J.F.R., p.316 book on loan from Jacques

cf. poetry: Les Mystérieuses noces, Paris, Gallimard, La Nouvelle Revue Française, 1925.

Les Noces, Paris, Gallimard, La Nouvelle Revue Française, 1928.

cf. also novels: Paulina 1880, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1925.

Le Monde désert, Paris, Gallimard, La Nouvelle Revue Française, 1927.

James JOYCE

F.A., pp.114-15 article on Joyce in N.R.F.

ibid. p.144; *ibid.* p.191

Dédalus, portrait de l'artiste jeune par lui-même (Portrait of the Artist as a young man, 1916), tr. Ludmila Savitzky, Paris, Editions de la Sirène, 1924.

Ulysses, Paris, Shakespeare and Company, 1924.

Gens de Dublin (Dubliners, 1914), tr. Yva Fernandez, Hélène du Pasquier, Jacques Paul Reynaud, pr. Valéry Larbaud, Paris, Plon, 1926 (Collection d'auteurs étrangers publiée sous le direction de Charles Du Bos).

Pomes penyeach (not in translation, but published in Paris), Paris, Shakespeare and Company, 1927.

Ulysse, tr. Auguste Morel et Stuart Gilbert, traduction entièrement revue par Valéry Larbaud avec la collaboration de l'auteur, Paris, la Maison des amis des livres, Adrienne Monnier, 7 rue de l'Odéon, 1929.

Haveth Childers everywhere, fragment from work in progress, printed in Paris but published in New York, The Fountain Press, 1930.

Dubliners, Hamburg, Paris, Milan, The Albatross, 1932 (The Albatross Modern Continental Library, Volume I).

JUVENAL

M.J.F.R., p.171

on examination syllabus for licence ès lettres**Franz KAFKA**

F.A., pp.114-15

Reads of Kafka in N.R.F.

ibid. p.191; ibid. p.193 Métamorphose, Le Procès; ibid. p.447 Le Château; ibid. p.551.Métamorphose tr. A. Vialatte, La Nouvelle Revue Française tome 30, CLXXII, CLXXIII, CLXXIV, 1928.Le Procès tr. A. Vialatte pr. B. Groethuysen, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.La Tour de Babel tr. H. Parisot avec un dessin de Max Ernst, Paris, GLM, 1937Le Château tr. A. Vialatte suivi d'une note de Max Brod, Paris, Gallimard, 1938.La Métamorphose tr. A. Vialatte, Paris, Gallimard, 1938.Un divertissement tr. H. Parisot, frontispice de Max Ernst, Paris, GLM, 1938.Le Chasseur Gracchus tr. H. Parisot, Paris, GLM, 1939.La Chevauchée du seau tr. H. Parisot, Paris, GLM, 1939.Au Bagne tr. J. Carrère, Marseille, les Cahiers du Sud, 1939.**Karl KAUTSKY**

F.A., p.414

reading in wartime

cf. L'Internationale et la Russie des Soviets, Paris, Librairie Populaire, 1925.L'Oeuvre historique de Marx, Paris, Bruxelles, l'Eglantine, 1933.**François-Christophe KELLERMAN**

F.A., p.56

Maréchal de l'Empire (1735-1820), created Duc de Valmy and author of Napoleonic memoirs.

Margaret KENNEDY

M.J.F.R., p.286

La Nymphé au coeur fidèle admired by Simone de Beauvoir and by Zaza

ibid. p.323

La Nymphé au coeur fidèle tr. L. Guilloux, Paris, Plon, 1927 (Feux croisés no.1).

This novel was extremely popular in France and was published in numerous editions; Giraudoux adapted it for the French stage.

comte Hermann de KEYSERLING

F.A., p.53

Nous dédaignâmes les divagations de Keyserling, qu'on traduisait alors à tour de bras

Le Monde qui naît tr. et préface C. Sénéchal, Paris, Stock, 1927.Figures symboliques tr. et préface C. Sénéchal, Paris, Stock, 1928 (le Cabinet cosmopolite no.25).Le Journal de voyage d'un philosophe tr. A. Hella et D. Bournac, Paris, Stock, 2 volumes 1928, 1929.

And many more.

Sören KIERKEGAARD

F.A., p. 53

Nous ne fîmes pas particulièrement attention au Journal d'un séducteur

ibid. p.141; ibid. p.482 - passion for Kierkegaard; ibid. p.603 note

Le Journal du séducteur tr. et intro. J.J. Gateau, Paris, Stock, 1929 (Cabinet cosmopolite, série scandinave no.43).Traité du désespoir tr. K. Ferlov et J.J. Gateau, Paris, Gallimard, 1932 (les Essais no.5).

La Répétition tr. P.-H. Tisseau, Paris, F. Alcan, 1933.

le Banquet tr. P.-H. Tisseau, Paris, F. Alcan, 1933.

Crainte et tremblement tr. P.-H. Tisseau intro. J. Wahl, Paris, Editions Montaigne, 1935.

Ce que nous apprennent les lis des champs et les oiseaux du ciel tr. P.-H. Tisseau, Paris, F. Alcan, 1935.

Le Concept de l'angoisse tr. K. Ferlov et J.J. Gateau, Paris, Gallimard, 1935 (les Essais no.11).

La Pureté du coeur tr. P.-H. Tisseau, Bazoges-en-Pareds, Le Traducteur, 1936.

Riens philosophiques tr. K. Ferlov et J.J. Gateau, Paris, Gallimard, 1937 (les Essais no.111).

Antigone tr. et postface Pierre Klossowski, Paris, les Nouvelles lettres, 1938.

Arthur KOESTLER

F.A., p.422

Le Testament espagnol

Un Testament espagnol tr. D. van Moppès, Paris, A. Michel, 1939.

cf. also L'Espagne ensanglantée. Un livre noir sur l'Espagne, Paris, Editions du Carrefour, 1937.

Eugène LABICHE

M.J.F.R., p.39

Monsieur de Beauvoir reads to her comedies by Labiche

ibid. p.73

Labiche (1815-1888) was the author of entertaining comic plays, such as Un Chapeau de paille d'Italie, produced in 1851, and Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon, produced in 1860.

cf. Oeuvres complètes, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1978-1898.

see also ibid. pr. Émile Augier, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1922.

Jules LAFORGUE

M.J.F.R., p.230

quotes sentimentally from Laforgue

ibid. p.256

cf. Oeuvres complètes intro. et notes par G. Jean-Aubry, Paris, Mercure de France, 1925-1930.

There were numerous edition of Laforgue (1860-1887) in Paris during the Twenties, often with illustrations. An example of these is: Pierrot fumiste. gravures de Charles Martin, Paris, Editions Emile-Paul frères, 1927.

Le révérend père Ch. LAHR

M.J.F.R., p.158

lessons in philosophy at school

cf. Course de Philosophie suivi de notions d'histoire de la philosophie, à l'usage des candidats au baccalauréat ès lettres, Paris, Brigue, 1901 2 volumes.

cf. also Éléments de philosophie scientifique et de philosophie morale, suivis de sujets de dissertations donnés aux différentes Facultés, à l'usage des classes de Mathématiques A et B, Paris, Beauchesne, 1908.

Gustave LANSON

M.J.F.R., p.39

Monsieur de Beauvoir reads l'Histoire de la littérature française to her

Histoire de la littérature française, Paris, Hachette, 1894, and many subsequent editions.

Valéry LARBAUD

M.J.F.R., p.187

Madame de Beauvoir disapproves of this author

See also F.A., p.87.

Larbaud (1881-1957), novelist and critic, was the creator of A.O. Barnabooth and

did much to popularise in France literature written in English. He was closely associated with the Nouvelle Revue Française and also with Adrienne Monnier and Sylvia Beach doing much to help with the translation into French of James Joyce. A.O. Barnabooth. Ses oeuvres complètes, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1913.

André LAURIE (Pseudonym of Pascale GROUSSET)

M.J.F.R., p.52 childhood reading

ibid. p.115

André Laurie was the author of adventure and historical stories of a morally acceptable nature for young people. Titles such as Le Rubis du grand lama were published in the Bibliothèque des écoles et des familles.

David Herbert LAWRENCE

F.A., p.52 nous reconnûmes son talent

ibid. p.325 genesis of l'Invitée

Le Renard tr. L.A. Delieutraz, pr. J. Charpentier, Paris, Stock, 1928 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.27).

Amants et fils adaptation française J. Fournier-Pargoire, intro. G. de Catalogne, Paris, A. Redier, 1931.

Le Serpent à plumes tr. D. Clairouin, pr. René Lalou, Paris, Stock, 1931 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.56).

L'Amant de Lady Chatterley tr. R. Cornaz, pr. André Malraux, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1932.

Femmes amoureuses tr. M. Rancès, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1932.

Fantaisie de l'inconscient tr. C. Mauron, Paris, Stock, 1932.

La Femme et la bête tr. J. Gabalé, intro. E. Marsan, Paris, Editions du Siècle, 1932.

L'Homme qui était mort tr. J. Dalsace et Drieu la Rochelle, pr. Drieu la Rochelle, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

Les Filles du pasteur tr. C. Vercken, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

L'Homme et la poupée tr. A. Morice-Kerné et C. Vercken, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

La Fille perdue tr. H. et R. Alix, intro. René Lalou, Paris, Catalogne et Cie, 1933.

Le Paon blanc tr. J. Fournier-Pargoire, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1933.

La Vierge et le bohémien tr. E. Frédéric-Moreau, Paris, Plon, 1934 (Feux croisés no. 36).

Lettres choisies tr. T. Aubray, intro. Aldous Huxley, Paris, Plon, 1934 (Feux croisés no. 37).

l'Amazone fugitive tr. J. Fournier-Pargoire, Paris, Stock, 1936 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.82).

Frieda LAWRENCE

F.A., p.52

cf. Lawrence et moi tr. F. de Miomandre et C. Morestel, Paris, Gallimard, 1936.

Thomas Edward LAWRENCE

F.A., p.537 Les Sept Piliers de la sagesse

Les Sept piliers de la sagesse traduction intégrale par Charles Mauron, Paris, Payot, 1936.

Gustave LEBON

M.J.F.R., p.158 School studies in philosophy

La Psychologie des foules, Paris, F. Alcan, 1908 (13^e edition).

This was re-published after the Second World War by P.U.F. in the series:

Bibliothèque de la philosophie contemporaine.

Rosamond LEHMANN

M.J.F.R., p.356 Zaza criticises Poussière

See also F.A., pp.64-65 Tries to imitate Lehmann's style

Poussière tr. Jean Talva, Paris, Plon, April 1929 (Feux croisés, âmes et terres étrangères, 2e série, no.3).

ibid. but with avant-propos by J.-L.Vaudoyer, Paris, Plon, July 1929.

Une note de musique tr. Jean Talva, Paris, Plon, 1931 (Feux croisés, âmes et terres étrangères, no.17).

Lettre à ma soeur tr. Jean Talva, Paris, l'Artisan du livre, 1931.

L'Invitation à la Valse tr. Jean Talva, Paris, Plon, 1933 (Feux croisés, âmes et terres étrangères, no.30).

Intempéries tr. Jean Talva, Paris, Plon, 1936 (Feux croisés, âmes et terres étrangères, no.55).

Rosamond Lehmann has translated into English Les Enfants Terribles by Jean Cocteau and Geneviève by Jacques Lemarchand.

She wrote a preface for Olivia by Dorothy Strachey which appeared with Roger Martin du Gard's translation.

LEIBNIZ

M.J.F.R., p.232 philosophy read while student

ibid. p.334; ibid. p.335

Michel LEIRIS

F.A., p.295 l'Âge d'homme

F.A., p.573 l'Afrique fantôme

l'Afrique fantôme, Paris, Gallimard, 1934 (Les documents bleus no.12).

l'Âge d'homme, Paris, Gallimard, 1939.

Jules LEMAÎTRE

M.J.F.R., p.155 read while studying for baccalauréat

Lemaître (1853-1914) was a playwright and drama critic. It is as a critic that he was best known.

Népomucène LEMERCIER

F.A., p.56 Reading late Eighteenth, early Nineteenth century writers to round out her knowledge

Lemercier (1771-1840) was a prolific tragedian and poet whose works were highly respected by his contemporaries but remain generally unread today.

G. LENOTRE pseudonym of Louis-Léon Théodore GOSSELIN

M.J.F.R., p.129 Historian, admired by Monsieur de Beauvoir

This writer (1857-1935) specialised in the History of the Revolution including studies of the Chouannerie and la Vendée.

Léonide LEONOV

F.A., p.146 les Blaireaux admired

Les Blaireaux tr. M. Parijanine, pr. Maxime Gorky, Paris, Reider, 1932 (Les Prosateurs étrangers modernes).

cf. also La Rivière tr. B. de Schloezer, Paris, Reider, 1936 (Les Prosateurs étrangers modernes).

Gaston LEROUX

F.A., p.51 Sartre's admiration for Chéri-Bibi

cf. Premières aventures de Chéri-Bibi, Paris, Laffite, s.d.

Chéri-Bibi, Paris, A. Fayard, 1914 (Le Livre populaire no.111).

cf. also les Aventures extraordinaires de Joseph Rouletabille, Paris, Laffitte, 1909.
Leroux's popular novels were prolific in number and went into many editions.

Emmanuel LEVINAS

F.A., p.142

His book on HUSSERL bought by Sartre

La Théorie de l'intuition dans la phénoménologie de Husserl, Paris, F. Alcan, 1930
(Bibliothèque de philosophie contemporaine).

Sinclair LEWIS

F.A., p.52

Babbitt (sic)

ibid. p.56

Babbitt tr. M. Rémon, pr. P. Morand, Paris, Stock, 1930 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.42).

Lewis was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in December 1930; because of the interest in his work thus created, a number of translations appeared.

Notre Sieur Wren (Our Mr Wren 1914) tr. M. Rémon, Paris, Nouvelle Société d'Édition, 1931.

Arrowsmith (1925) tr. Des Hons, Paris, Firmin, 1931.

Un américain parle (The Man who knew Coolidge 1928) tr. Martin-Chauffier, intro. F. Fosca, Paris, A. Redier, 1931.

Sam Dodsworth (1929) tr. J. et A. Goldet, Paris, Plon, 1931 (les Feux croisés no.14).

Grand'rue (Main Street 1920) tr. S. Flour, Paris, Jacques Haumont Editions Nouvelles, 1932.

Coups de pompe gratis (Free Air 1919) tr. M. Rémon, Paris, Albin Michel, 1932.

Une vie comme une autre (The Trail of the Hawk 1915) tr. Legrand, Paris, Les Editions du Siècle, 1933.

Anne Vickers (Ann Vickers 1930) tr. M. Rémon, Paris, Stock, 1933.

Impossible ici (It Can't Happen Here 1935) tr. R. Queneau, Paris, Gallimard, 1937.

Georges LIMBOUR

F.A., p.586

admires Les Vanilliers

Les Vanilliers, Paris, Gallimard, 1938.

Pierre LOUYS

M.J.F.R., p.112

reads La Femme et le Pantin secretly

La Femme et le pantin (roman espagnol), Paris, Société du "Mercure de France", 1898.

LUCRETIVS

M.J.F.R., p.171

Figures on university syllabus

Rosa LUXEMBOURG

F.A., p.154

Tries to broaden her knowledge of social and economic problems

cf. Réforme ou Révolution, Paris, Editions sociales internationales, 1932 (Bibliothèque marxiste no.15).

Lettres de la prison, Paris, Librairie du travail, 1933.

La crise de la démocratie socialiste tr. R. Renaud, Paris, Société d'Éditions "Nouveau Prométhée", 1934.

Marxisme, réformisme et léninisme, avant-propos de L. Laurat, Paris, Société d'Éditions "Nouveau Prométhée", 1934.

cf. also L'Accumulation du capital tr. et pr. M. Ollivier, Paris, Librairie du travail, 1935 (Collection: Histoire et éducation prolétariennes no.8).

Eglise et socialisme tr. L. Rey, pr. M. Pivert, Paris, Librairie populaire du Parti socialiste, 1937.

Louis MADELIN

M.J.F.R., p.129

Historian admired by Monsieur de Beauvoir

Madelin (1871-1956) specialised in the history of the Revolution and Empire. His great work, in 16 volumes, was the Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire.

Hector MALOT

M.J.F.R., p.52

Sans famille: childhood reading

ibid. p.132

Sans famille, originally published in 1878, the adventures of a poor boy, a foundling as the title suggests, was an "ouvrage couronné par l'Académie française". It met with great success and was published in many editions, often illustrated, and is still in print today.

André MALRAUX

M.J.F.R., p.221

a teacher lends La Tentation de l'Occident

F.A., p.142

La Condition humaine

F.A., p.244

Le Temps du mépris

F.A., p.330

l'EspoirLa Tentation de l'Occident, Paris, Grasset, 1926.Les Conquérants, Paris, Grasset, 1928.La Voie Royale, Paris, Grasset, 1930.La Condition humaine, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.Le Temps du Mépris, Paris, Gallimard, 1935.l'Espoir, Paris, Gallimard, 1937.

Malraux also wrote numerous prefaces amongst which figure those to Sanctuary, Lady Chatterley's Lover and to Andrée Viollis' Indochine S.O.S.

Marguerite de NAVARRE

M.J.F.R., p.171

l'Heptaméron on University syllabus**Roger MARTIN DU GARD**

M.J.F.R., p.243

quotes from Jacques Thibault (June, 1927)

Martin du Gard's sequence of novels, Les Thibault, was published from 1922 onwards in Le Cahier gris 1922, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française. The order in which volumes appeared is as follows:

Le Pénitencier, 1922.La Belle Saison, 2 vols., 1923.La Consultation, 1928.La Sorellina, 1928.La Mort du père, 1929.l'Eté 1914, 1937.Epilogue, 1940.**Karl MARX**

M.J.F.R., pp.227-28

at Sorbonne, ignorant of Marx

F.A., p.56

je m'attaquai au Capital

ibid. p.154

cf. Le Capital, critique de l'économie politique avec une préface de Friedrich Engels, Paris, V. Girard et E. Brière, 3 volumes 1901-1902 (Bibliothèque socialiste internationale) and numerous other editions.

Albert MATHIEZ

F.a., p.208

reads history of French Revolution

Mathiez (1874-1932) specialised in Revolutionary history:

cf. Autour de Robespierre, Paris, Payot, 1925 (Bibliothèque historique).Autour de Danton, Paris, Payot, 1926 (Bibliothèque historique), and many others.

Guy de MAUPASSANT

- M.J.F.R., p.111 clandestine reading of novels in Monsieur de Beauvoir's library
 ibid. p.189 Je méprisais la platitude des romans de Maupassant
 Maupassant wrote six novels: Une vie (1883), Bel-Ami (1885), Mont-Oriel (1887), Pierre et Jean (1888), Fort comme la mort (1889) and Notre coeur (1890).
 His Oeuvres complètes were published by Conard, Paris 1907-10, 29 volumes.

François MAURIAC

- M.J.F.R., p.187 his novels condemned by Madame de Beauvoir
 ibid. p.228
 ibid. p.251
 ibid. p.290 les Souffrances du chrétien
 F.A., p.571 Mauriac writes to Simone de Beauvoir on publication of l'Invitée
L'Enfant chargé de chaînes, Paris, Grasset, 1913.
La robe prétexte, Paris, Grasset, 1914.
Le baiser au lèpreux, Paris, Grasset, 1922.
Génitrix, Paris, Grasset, 1923.
Le Mal, Paris, Grasset, 1924.
Le Désert de l'amour, Paris, Grasset, 1925.
Thérèse Desqueyroux, Paris, Grasset, 1927.
Souffrances et bonheurs du chrétien, Paris, Grasset, 1930.
le Noeud de Vipères, Paris, Grasset, 1932.
le Mystère Frontenac, Paris, Grasset, 1933.
La fin de la nuit, Paris, Grasset, 1935.
 Simone de Beauvoir read Souffrances du chrétien in the Nouvelle Revue Française, 1st October 1928.

Herman MELVILLE

- F.A., p.498 Sartre reads Moby Dick
Moby Dick tr. L. Jacques, J. Smith et Jean Giono, Paris, Gallimard, 1941.

George MEREDITH

- F.A., p.48 les Comédiens tragiques
 ibid. p.66 Meredith's heroines and Simone de Beauvoir
 There was a revival of interest in Meredith in the Twenties and early Thirties; novels which had previously been translated, such as l'Egoïste in 1904, were re-translated and reissued; others were translated for the first time.
Shagpat rasé (The Shaving of Shagpat 1856) tr. Hélène Boussinesq et R. Galland, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1921.
l'Egoïste (The Egoist 1879) tr. Y. Canque, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1924.
Les Comédiens tragiques (The Tragic Comedians 1880) tr. P. Neel, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1926.
La Carrière de Beauchamp (Beauchamp's Career 1876) tr. A. Monod, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1928.
La Maison de la grève (The House on the Beach, 1877) tr. Madame Georges Connes, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1929.
Diane de la Croisée des chemins (Diana of the Crossways 1885) tr. L. Wolff, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1931.
Le Conte de Chloé (The Tale of Chloe 1879) tr. D. Dourgnon, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1931.

Katherine MANSFIELD

- F.A., p.101

ibid. p.106 ses nouvelles, son Journal et ses Lettres
 cf. Félicité (Bliss and other stories) tr. J.-G. Delamain, pr. L. Gillet, Paris, Stock,
 1928 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.23).
La Garden Party et autres histoires tr. M. Duproix, pr. Edmond Jaloux, Paris,
 Stock, 1929 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.33).
Lettres tr. M.T. Guéritte, pr. Gabriel Marcel, Paris, Stock, 1931.
Journal précédé d'une introduction par John Middleton Murry tr. M. Duproix, Paris,
 Stock, 1932.
La Mouche tr. M.T. Guéritte et M. Faguer, pr. M.T. Guéritte, Paris, Stock, 1933
 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite no.71).

Henri MICHAUX

F.A., p.142 Un certain Plume, footnote
Un certain Plume, Paris, Editions du Carrefour, 1930.

MOLIERE

M.J.F.R., p.113 Zaza admires le Misanthrope

Thyde MONNIER

F.A., p.301 La Rue courte a reminder of Provence
La Rue courte, Paris, Grasset, 1937.

Henry de MONTHERLANT

M.J.F.R., p.185 books on loan from Jacques during Spring 1926. Le Paradis
à l'ombre des épées
Les Olympiques: le Paradis à l'ombre des épées et les onze devant la porte dorée,
 Paris, Grasset, 1924, 2 volumes.
 cf. also Le Songe, Paris, Grasset, 1922.
Chant funèbre pour les morts de Verdun, Paris, Grasset, 1924.
Les Bestiaires, Paris, Grasset, 1926.

George MOORE

F.A., p.56 In list of books read to round out her literary knowledge
Esther Waters tr. D. Halévy et Melle. Laparra, Paris, Editions du Siècle, 1933 (les
Maîtres Etrangers).
Confessions d'un jeune anglais (nouvelle édition), Paris, Stock, 1935.

Paul MORAND

F.A., p.51 book on New York
 ibid. F.A., p.87
New-York, Paris, Flammarion, 1930.
 cf. Londres, Paris, Plon, 1933.

Alberto MORAVIA

F.A., p.142 Les Indifférents, footnote
 ibid. p.303 ...Les Ambitions déçues qui m'ennuya un peu
Les Indifférents tr. P.-H. Michel, préface B. Crémieux, Paris, Reider, 1931.
Les Ambitions déçues tr. P.-H. Michel, Paris, Plon, 1937 (les Feux croisés no.56).

Hégésippe MOREAU

M.J.F.R., p.39 Hélas! si j'avais su figures in anthology of poems written out
 for her by her father

Th.H. MORGAN

F.A., p.303 Takes a book on embryology as holiday reading during
 convalescence
Embryologie et génétique tr. Jean Rostand, Paris, Gallimard, 1936 (l'Avenir de la

Science, collection dirigée par Jean Rostand).

Enrico MOULOUJJI

F.A., p.582 gains Prix de la Pléiade
Enrico, Paris, Gallimard, 1944.

Alfred de MUSSET

M.J.F.R., p.111 figures among 'forbidden' texts in father's library
 These include, as well as the Nuits which were authorised reading, his plays, Rolla
 and the Confession d'un enfant du siècle.

Friedrich NIETZSCHE

M.J.F.R., p.232 Je lus...avec ferveur Nietzsche while studying philosophy
 for licence

Nietzsche was originally translated by Henri Albert who with Mercure de France
 organised an Oeuvres complètes from 1907 onwards. There was a renewal of
 interest in Nietzsche in the Twenties when Albert's translations were reissued.
 Stock published new translations in the Thirties in the Cabinet cosmopolite series.
 cf. Ainsi parlait Zarathustra tr. Henri Albert, Paris, Mercure de France, 1898.
 Reissued 1921, 1924.

Aurore; réflexions sur les préjugés moraux tr. H. Albert, Paris, Mercure de France
 reissued 1919.

Le gai savoir, tr. Henri Albert, Paris, Mercure de France, 1901.

Ecce Homo tr. A. Vialatte, Paris, Stock, 1931 (Cabinet cosmopolite série
 classique).

Paul NIZAN

M.J.F.R., p.335 portrait of Nizan

F.A., p.36 portrait

F.A., p.84 Aden-Arabie; ibid. p.212 Antoine Bloyé; ibid. p.244 Le Cheval de Troie;
ibid. p.354 La Conspiration; ibid. p.480.

See also F.A., p.156; ibid. p.212; ibid. p.213; ibid. p.308.

Aden-Arabie, Paris, Les Editions Reider, 1932 (la Collection Europe).

Les Chiens de garde, Paris, les Editions Reider, 1933 (la Collection Europe).

Antoine Bloyé, Paris, Grasset, 1933.

Le Cheval de Troie, Paris, Gallimard, 1935.

La Conspiration, Paris, Gallimard, 1938.

Nizan also translated:

cf. Dreiser: l'Amérique tragique

also L. Fischer Les Soviets dans les affaires mondiales, Paris, Gallimard, 1933
 (Documents bleus no.9).

Sean O'CASEY

F.A., p.56 Read while extending her literary knowledge after the
agrégation

cf. Two Plays: Juno and the Paycock, The Shadow of a Gunman, London,
 Macmillan, 1930.

The Plough and the Stars, London, Macmillan, 1930.

The Silver Tassie, London, Macmillan, 1930.

Yuri OLECHA

F.A., p.213 recommended by Nizan

L'Envie tr. H. Mongault et L. Desormonts, Paris, Plon, 1936 (les Feux croisés no.50).

Leon OLLE-LAPRUNE

M.J.F.R., p.157 la Certitude morale

De la Certitude morale, Thèse de doctorat, Paris, L. Belin, 1880.

Ollé-Laprune (1830-1899), Catholic philosopher, editor of Aristotle and Malebranche and much in demand for "discours prononcés aux distributions de prix".

E. Phillips OPPENHEIM

F.A., p.53 great consumption of detective stories

Anna l'Aventureuse tr. Eve Paul Margueritte, Paris, Laffitte, 1909. Republished Paris, Editions cosmopolites, 1933 (Collection du lecteur no.92).

Bérénice, Paris, Laffitte, 1909.

Un crime mystérieux tr. J. Heywood, Paris, Flammarion, 1911.

Le Complot tr. Eve and Lucie Margueritte, Paris, Tallandier, 1911.

La Chasse à l'homme tr. Eve and Lucie Margueritte, Paris, Tallandier, 1912.

L'Heureux Pays tr. Eve Paul Margueritte, Paris, Société française d'imprimerie et de librairie, 1914.

La Disparition de Delora, Paris, La Renaissance du livre, 1918 (Collection in extenso no.34).

L'Imposteur tr. M.L.-M. Didier, Paris, Hachette, 1932 (Les Meilleurs romans étrangers).

Le Détective Benskin adapted F. de Tilly, Paris, A. Redier, 1932 (Collection le Domino noir no.32).

Prince du crime tr. Geneviève and Pierre-François Caillé, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1933 (Collection le Masque no.131).

George ORWELL

F.A., p.304 ...je fus captivée par la Vache enragée...

La Vache enragée (Down and Out in London and Paris 1933) tr. R.N. Rimbault et Gwen Guilbert, pr. Panaït Istrati, Paris, Gallimard, 1935.

Fédor Ivanovich PANFEROV

F.A., p.146 admire la Communauté des gueux

La Communauté des gueux Volume I tr. M. Borissov et Z. Lvovski, Volume II tr. Z. Lvovski et L. Silbert, Paris, Editions Sociales internationales, 1930, 1931 (Collection "Horizons").

John dos PASSOS

M.J.F.R., p.314 Manhattan Transfer

F.A., p.143 42e Parallèle

See also ibid. p.230; ibid. p.326.

L'Initiation d'un homme 1917 tr. by Marc Freeman, Paris, F. Reider, 1925 (in series les Prosateurs Etrangers Modernes).

Manhattan Transfer tr. by Maurice E. Coindreau, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1929.

42e Parallèle tr. by N. Guterman, Paris, B. Grasset, 1933 (in series Les Ecrits, directed by Jean Guéhenno).

1919 tr. M. Rémon, Paris, Editions Sociales Internationales, 1937 (in Collection Ciment, series directed by Renaud de Jouvenel).

Charles PEGUY

M.J.F.R., p.182

ibid. p.195

first hears of Péguy from Garric

reference to Joan of Arc

Samuel PEPYS

F.A., p.330

Journal read on skiing holiday

Journal (1660-1669) tr. Renée Villoteau, pr. Paul Morand, Paris, Gallimard, 1938
 (La Connaissance de soi, mémoires et écrits intimes, collection dirigée par Jacques de Lacretelle no.2). Volume II of Pepys' Journal was published in 1940 and was No.7 in this series.

Charles PERRAULT

M.J.F.R., p.52

childhood reading

Perrault (1628-1703), author of fairy tales which have been continuously read by generations of children.

Pablo PICASSO

F.A., p.583

acts in Picasso's play as la Cousine

Le Désir attrapé par la queue, Paris, Gallimard, 1945 (Collection Métamorphoses no.23).

Boris PILNIAK

F.A., p.52

La Volga se jette dans la Baltique (sic)

La Volga se jette dans la Caspienne tr. G. Aucouturier, Paris, Editions du Carrefour, 1931.

cf. also:

Scènes de la Revolution russe by I. Ehrenbourg, N. Nikitine, B. Pilniak, A. Remisov tr. S. Lieskov, Paris, La Renaissance du livre, 1923.

l'Année nue tr. L. Bernstein et L. Desormonts, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1926.

La septième république: le Tadjikistan tr. M. Matveev et P. Morhange, Paris, Reider, 1931 (Collection Europe).

PLATO

M.J.F.R., p.232

studies Plato for philosophy degree

Henri POINCARÉ

M.J.F.R., p.158

philosophy studies at school

ibid. p.195

lu avec émotion

Poincaré (1856-1912) was a scientific writer, interested in physics and mathematics. Some of his books were still in print after World War II.

cf. La Science et l'hypothèse, Paris, Flammarion, 1902.

La Valeur de la science, Paris, Flammarion, 1906.

Science et méthode, Paris, Flammarion, 1908.

Francis PONGE

F.A., p.575

le Parti pris des choses

Le Parti pris des choses, Paris, Gallimard, 1942 (Collection Métamorphoses no.13).

Jacques PREVERT

F.A., p.359

...nous goûtions les poèmes et les chansons...

Paroles, Paris, Les Editions du Point du Jour, 1945.

Although Prévert's collected poems were not published until after the war, he was well known in the Thirties for his film scripts, poems and songs.

Antoine-François, l'abbé PREVOST

M.J.F.R., p.171 Les Mémoires d'un homme de qualité

Reading this novel in the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève was one of the young Simone de Beauvoir's first acts of independence as a student after she had left the despised Cours Désir.

Jean PREVOST

M.J.F.R., p.195 attempting to construct a new humanism

Critic, essayist, novelist and writer of nouvelles. In the Twenties Prévost published biographies of "epicurean" writers:

Vie de Montaigne, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1926.

Agrippa d'Aubigné, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1928.

Le Chemin de Stendhal, Paris, P. Hartmann, 1929.

Marcel PREVOST

M.J.F.R., p.111 novels read in clandestine fashion in Monsieur de Beauvoir's library.

ibid. p.112 Les Demi-vierges

Les Demi-vierges, Paris, Lemerre, 1891 and many subsequent editions.

Prévost (1862-1940) was a successful and popular novelist who specialised in descriptions of sensational, for the period, feminine psychology.

Marcel PROUST

M.J.F.R., p.187 novels esteemed frivolous by Madame de Beauvoir

It is significant that Proust is not mentioned in Simone de Beauvoir's list of the 'jeunes aînés' whose work she discovered with joy in the late Twenties, although the complete novel had been published by 1927.

cf. F.A., p.100 scandalises by teaching Proust in Marseilles

ibid. p.114; ibid. p.144; ibid. p.241 where she encourages Olga to read Proust... que j'aimais.

Du côté de chez Swann, Paris, Grasset, 1913, reissued 1917 and 1919 by Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, who published all subsequent volumes.

A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs, 1918.

Le Côté de Guermantes part 1, 1920.

Le Côté de Guermantes part 2, Sodome et Gomorrhe part 1, 1921.

Sodome et Gomorrhe part 2, 1922.

La Prisonnière, 1923.

Albertine disparue, 1925.

Le Temps retrouvé, 1927.

Raymond QUENEAU

F.A., p.295 Les Derniers jours...éveillèrent notre sympathie...

F.A., p.551 Pierrot mon ami...les drôleries trop étudiées...

F.A., p.575 ...nous aimions beaucoup Les Enfants du limon...

Queneau, who had been associated in his youth with the Surrealist movement, published his first novel in 1933. Thereafter, he wrote poetry, novels, criticism, essays and made translations from English. He became closely associated with Simone de Beauvoir's circle towards the end of the war, a friendship which persisted for a number of years.

cf. Le Chiendent, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

Gueule de pierre, Paris, Gallimard, 1934.

Les Derniers jours, Paris, Gallimard, 1936.

Chêne et chien, roman en vers, Paris, Denoël, 1937.

Odile, Paris, Gallimard, 1937.

Les Enfants du limon, Paris, Gallimard, 1939.

Les Temps mêlés, Paris, Gallimard, 1941.

Pierrot mon ami, Paris, Gallimard, 1942.

Les Zioux, poèmes, Paris, Gallimard, 1943 (Les Métamorphoses).

Translations.

cf. Sinclair Lewis Impossible ici.

In July 1939, Queneau contributed many translations to the special number of Mesures. After the War, Queneau translated George du Maurier's Peter Ibbotson; a text by Faulkner: Moustiques; l'Ivrogne dans le brousse by Amos Tutuola.

Jean RACINE

M.J.F.R., p.113

admires Zaza's love for Racine

Raymond RADIGUET

M.J.F.R., p.187

one of novelists condemned as frivolous by Madame de Beauvoir

ibid. p.256

Le Diable au corps, Paris, Grasset, 1923.

Le Bal du Comte d'Orgel, Paris, Grasset, 1924.

Walter RATHENAU

F.A., p.414

wartime reading

cf. Où va le monde? Considérations philosophiques sur l'organisation sociale de demain tr. et avant-propos de S. Jankélévitch, Paris, Payot, 1922.

Hermann RAUSCHNING (RAUSCHNIG in text)

F.A., p.447

wartime reading on Nazi history

Hitler m'a dit, confidences du Führer sur son plan de conquête du monde tr. A. Lehmann avant-propos de M. Ray, Paris, Co-operation, 1939.

La Révolution du nihilisme tr. P. Ravoux et M. Stora, Paris, Gallimard, 1939.

Ernest RENAN

M.J.F.R., p.190

Reacts against what she has found in Renan

Renan (1829-1892), Biblical scholar, historian and critic, author of a famous Vie de Jésus (1863) and leader of French thought.

Jules RENARD

F.A., p.105

reads Journal

Le Journal de Jules Renard, Paris, F. Bernouard, 1927, 4 volumes.

RESTIF DE LA BRETONNE

F.A., p.56

Je lus...tout Restif de la Bretonne

Author (1734-1806) of novels evoking peasant life in the Eighteenth Century, such as Le Paysan pervers (1775) or La Paysanne perversie (1776). As he wrote some 250 novels, Simone de Beauvoir's claim is possibly exaggerated.

Théodule RIBOT

M.J.F.R., p.158

l'Attention: school studies in philosophy

Ribot (1839-1916) was an important writer on psychology.

la Psychologie de l'attention, Paris, F. Alcan, 1889.

Dorothy RICHARDSON

F.A., p.56 reads this novelist in English, is not inspired
 Richardson (1873-1957), author of a novel sequence brought together in 1938 as Pilgrimage, developed a narrative technique similar to stream of consciousness.
 cf. Backwater, London, Duckworth, 1916.
Interim, London, Duckworth, 1919.
Deadlock, London, Duckworth, 1921.
Pilgrimage, London, Dent, 1938, 4 volumes.

Arthur RIMBAUD

F.A., p.250 associated with myth of revolt and youth

Jacques RIVIERE

M.J.F.R., p.201 "c'est chic d'aimer Aimée"
 M.J.F.R., p.220 correspondence with Alain-Fournier
 ibid. p.271
Aimée, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1922.
Alain-Fournier - Jacques Rivière Correspondance 1905-1914, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1926-1928, 4 volumes.

François, duc de la ROCHEFOUCAULD

M.J.F.R., p.114 Zaza's admiration for his Maximes

Jules ROMAINS

M.J.F.R., p.290 Simone de Beauvoir rejects Le Dieu des corps
Psyché, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 3 volumes.
 1. Lucienne, 1921.
 2. Le Dieu des corps, 1928.
 3. Quand le navire, 1929.

Pierre de RONSARD

M.J.F.R., p.173 Garric gives dazzling classes on Ronsard

Edmond ROSTAND

M.J.F.R., p.39 Monsieur de Beauvoir reads plays to Simone
 ibid. p.72
 ibid. p.108
 ibid. p.110 parental censorship: L'Aiglon cut
 Dramatist (1868-1918) who met with great success through poetic plays often with historical backgrounds: Cyrano de Bergerac, produced in 1897, L'Aiglon 1900, were his most popular dramas.

Jean-Jacques ROUSSEAU

M.J.F.R., p.334 Sartre explains Le Contrat social
 See also STAROBINSKI

Raymond ROUSSEL

F.A., p.604 Leiris encourages her to read this author
 cf. Impressions d'Afrique, Paris, Lemerre, 1910.
Nouvelles Impressions d'Afrique, Paris, Lemerre, 1932.
 Leiris worked at le Musée de l'homme and had himself published a book on Africa.

Antoine de SAINT-EXUPÉRY

F.A., p.51 Nous fûmes pris par Vol de Nuit
 ibid. p.447 Sartre admire Terre des hommes
 ibid. p.535; ibid. p.551 mixed reaction to Pilote de guerre
Vol de nuit pr. André Gide, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1931.
Terre des hommes, Paris, Gallimard, 1939.
Pilote de guerre, Paris, Gallimard, 1942.
 Sartre is recorded by Simone de Beauvoir as having a great admiration for Saint-Exupéry whom he compared with Heidegger. She does not seem to have appreciated this author with equal intensity.

SAINT-JEAN PERSE (pseudonym of Alexis Saint-Léger Léger)

M.J.F.R., p.336 'Herbaud', René Maheu, makes her read Anabase
Anabase, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1924.

Ernst von SALOMON

F.A., p.142 La ville: footnote
La ville tr. N. Guterman, Paris, Gallimard, 1933.

Jean SARMENT

M.J.F.R., p.317 quotation from this author
 Playwright of the Twenties:
 cf. Le Pêcheur d'Ombre, Paris, Imprimerie de l'illustration, 1921.
Le Mariage d'Hamlet, Paris, Imprimerie de l'illustration, 1922.
Les Plus beaux yeux du monde, Paris, Fasquelle, 1926.

le chanoine SCHMID (Schmidt in text)

M.J.F.R., p.52; ibid. p.55 childhood reading
 ibid. p.111 his stories had engaged her emotionally
 Le chanoine Schmid was an early Nineteenth century German writer of children's books many of which were translated into French: there are no fewer than 2,666 entries in the Bibliothèque Nationale printed general catalogue alone, as well as those in later catalogues. He was popular with parents because of his moral teaching, and popular also with the young because of his simple, direct style which gives the impression, not of preaching but of communication at the child's own level. Typical of his titles which were published again and again are:
Clotilde, ou les bienfaits de la religion
Le Bon Fridolin et le méchant Thierry
Geneviève de Brabant, cf. M.J.F.R., pp.59-60
l'Histoire de Valentin Weber ou les dangers de l'étourderie
 This last appeared in 1867, for example, in the Bibliothèque religieuse, morale, littéraire, pour l'enfance et la jeunesse, publiée sous l'approbation de Mgr l'Archevêque de Bordeaux. This edition is a charming little book; it has a pale blue cover with much gilt decoration and a coloured inset picture of two children. Some of le chanoine Schmid's stories were still in print in the 1950s.

Arthur SCHNITZLER

F.A., p.173 reads Karl und Anna in German
 The Austrian writer had a certain vogue in France in the Twenties; several of his works were translated and published by Stock in the Cabinet cosmopolite series.

Arthur SCHOPENHAUER

M.J.F.R., p.232 read while philosophy student
 cf. Le Monde comme volonté et comme représentation tr. A. Burdeau, Paris, Alcan, 1924 (7th edition).

Pensées et fragments tr. J. Bourdeau Viedes, Paris, Alcan, 1906 (20th edition).

Jeanne SCHULTZ

M.J.F.R., p.89 allowed to read La Neuvaïne de Colette
La Neuvaïne de Colette, illust. E. Bayard, Paris, Plon, 1891.

Geoffrey SCOTT

F.A., p.142 un goût prononcé...pour les biographies
Le Portrait de Zélide tr. P. Neel, pr. André Maurois, Paris, Gallimard, 1932.

Sophie, Madame de SEGUR

M.J.F.R., p.23 Ourson forbidden
 ibid. pp.52-53; ibid. p.57; ibid. p.82 Les Vacances
 Favourite author (1799-1874) of books for children, particularly for girls. The message is moral but the style is lively enough for some of her novels to be in print today. Among some of her better known titles published in Hachette's Bibliothèque rose are:
Les Vacances (1859)
François le bossu (1864)
Les Malheurs de Sophie (1864)
Le Général Dourakine (1864)

Antonin-Dalmace, le père SERTILLANGES

M.J.F.R., p.157 bored by La Vie Intellectuelle read while preparing to study philosophy at school
La Vie intellectuelle, son esprit, ses conditions, ses méthodes, Paris, Editions de la "Revue des Jeunes", 1921.
 Le Père Sertillanges was an editor of St. Thomas Aquinas and an author of books on the relationship between the Christian and the State. During the First World War, his three series of sermons, numbering 51 in all, given in the church of Sainte-Madeleine in Paris, had been published to some acclaim.

William SHAKESPEARE

M.J.F.R., p.316 quotes from Othello
 F.A., p.128 Richard III produced by Dullin
 ibid. p.295 sees Julius Caesar produced by Dullin
 ibid. p.406 reads Henry IV Part I in Dullin's house

Ignatius SILONE

F.A., p.142 Fontamara: footnote
Fontamara tr. J.-P. Samson, Paris, Reider, 1934.

Ellen Zena SMITH (sic) in reality Helen Zenna SMITH or pseudonym Evadne PRICE

F.A., p.229 bouleversée by Pas si calme
Pas si calme (Not so quiet: Stepdaughters of War 1930) tr. R. Brua, Paris, Gallimard, 1931.

Jean STAROBINSKI

F.A., p.587 note: le rôle de la fête chez Rousseau
La Transparence et l'obstacle, Paris, Plon, 1957.

Wilhelm STEKEL

F.A., p.295 Nous nous passionnâmes pour la Femme frigide
La Femme frigide tr. J. Dalsace, Paris, Gallimard, 1937 (Collection Psychologie).
 cf. also l'Education des parents tr. H.P. Bernheim, Paris, Gallimard, 1938 (Collection Psychologie).

Lettres à une mère tr. N. Rozenblit et L. Baudouin, Paris, Gallimard, 1939 (Collection Psychologie No.9).

STENDHAL

M.J.F.R., p.311

ibid. p.314

F.A., p.105

praised by 'Herbaud' (René Maheu)

Je lus avec admiration Lucien Leuwen

reads Stendhal's Journal, correspondence and works about him

ibid. pp.156-57

writes novel modelled on Stendhal's style

ibid. p.241.

The Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion began to publish Stendhal's complete works in 1913, the series continued until 1940, without ever being completed. Paul Arbetet was the general editor.

The first title to be produced was La Vie de Henry Brulard in 2 volumes. Stendhal's Journal, editors Henri Debraye and Louis Royer, appeared in five volumes:

Volume 1 1923

Volume 2 1932

Volume 3 1932

Volume 4 1934

Volume 5 1934

Le Rouge et le Noir pr. Paul Bourget, 1923.

Armance edited Raymond Lebègue, pr. André Gide, 1925.

Lucien Leuwen edited and avant-propos Henri Debraye, pr. Paul Valéry, 1927.

Other préfaces were written by Charles Maurras, Henri de Régner and Romain Rolland.

La Chartreuse de Parme and Lamiel did not appear in the Champion edition.

Le Divan, general editor Henri Martineau, published La vie de Henry Brulard 1927, La Chartreuse de Parme 1927, Les Souvenirs d'Egotisme 1927, Lamiel 1928, the Correspondance 1933-1934 and the Journal 1935.

James STEPHENS

F.A., p.22

The Crock of Gold supplies myth about importance of work

Le Pot d'or (The Crock of Gold 1912) tr. A. et M. Malblanc, Paris, Reider, 1925.

cf. also Mary Semblant (The Charwoman's daughter 1911) tr. A. Chevalley, Paris, Reider, 1927.

Lytton STRACHEY

F.A., p.142

read Victoriens éminents, appreciated 'dévoilement'

Victoriens éminents tr. J. Dombasle, pr. André Maurois, Paris, Gallimard, 1932.

August STRINDBERG

M.J.F.R., p.305

Tries to read for relaxation while studying for agrégation

There were many translations, published by Stock in the Twenties in the Bibliothèque cosmopolite amongst which figure:

la Danse de Mort tr. M. Rémon, 1921.

Le Songe tr. de l'auteur, 1924.

La Chambre rouge tr. E. Avenard, pr. L. Maury, 1925.

La Sonate des spectres tr. M. Rémond, 1926.

Cinq pièces en un acte tr. T. Aurell, 1927.

Le Fils de la servante tr. C. Polack, 1927.

Jonathan SWIFT

M.J.F.R., p.62

childhood reading: les Voyages de Gulliver

Les Voyages de Gulliver has long been a favourite with French children; there have been numerous editions many illustrated by artists of the calibre of Grandville or Gavarni. Some editions were integral, some adapted, but many were shortened for children.

F.A., p.330 reads Journal à Stella on skiing holiday
Journal à Stella tr. R. Villoteau, préface Janine Bouissounouse, Paris, Gallimard, 1939 (la Connaissance de soi. Mémoires et écrits intimes).

Algernon SWINBURNE

F.A., p.56 read while acquiring more extensive knowledge of literature
 cf. Chants d'avant l'aube (Songs Before Sunrise 1871) tr. G. Mourey, Paris, Stock, 1909 (Bibliothèque cosmopolite).

Frank SWINNERTON

F.A., p.56 read while acquiring more extensive knowledge of literature
 cf. Nocturne tr. J. Muller-Bergalonde et M. Hentsch, intro. H.G. Wells, Paris, Plon, 1925 (Collection d'auteurs étrangers dirigée par Ch. Du Bos).

John Millington SYNGE

F.A., p.22 Sartre derives from Synge the myth of the "Baladin", the Playboy

cf. ibid. p.56; ibid. p.521

Le Baladin du monde occidental (The Playboy of the Western World 1907) Version de M. Bourgeois created in Paris at the Théâtre Antoine, 12 December 1913, published Paris, Editions de la Sirène, 1920.

Anton TCHEKOV

M.J.F.R., p.305 Tries to read for relaxation while studying for agrégation
 Chekhov's Oeuvres complètes were appearing in translation published in Paris by Plon from 1922 onwards in Charles Du Bos' series: les auteurs étrangers. The seventeenth and final volume came out in 1934 but most had been published by 1929.

THOMAS A KEMPIS

M.J.F.R., p.74 Daily reading from the Imitation of Christ

Leon TROTSKY

F.A., p.53 appreciated Ma Vie
ibid. p.154 trying to understand sociology and economics so reads La Révolution Russe

Ma Vie, édition abrégée en un volume, Paris, Reider, 1934.

cf. La Révolution défigurée, Paris, Reider, 1929.

La Révolution permanente, Paris, Reider, 1932.

La Révolution trahie tr. Victor Serge, Paris, Grasset, Volume 1 1936, Volume 2 1937.

Paul VALÉRY

M.J.F.R., p.185 books on loan from Jacques

ibid. p.193 feels she shares Valéry's enthusiasms

F.A., p.142 les phrases marmoréennes...de Valéry

La Jeune Parque, Paris, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1917.

Charmes, Paris, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1922.

les Poésies de Paul Valéry, Gallimard, les Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1929.

Variété, Paris, Gallimard, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française from 1924 onwards.

Simone de Beauvoir's attitude to Valéry seems to have evolved in a way similar to her attitude towards Claudel and Péguy: an initial unconditional enthusiasm which moderated, after the meeting with Sartre, to suspicion and reservation.

S.S. VAN DYNE

F.A., p.130 on railway journeys reads detective novels
cf. L'Assassinat du canari tr. R. Duchateau, Paris, Gallimard, 1930.

L'Affaire du Scarabée tr. P.-J. Herr, Paris, Gallimard, 1932.

Le Fou des échecs tr. A.-H. Ponte, Paris, Gallimard, 1932.

Le Chien mort tr. A.-H. Ponte, Paris, Gallimard, 1934.

Le Meurtre du dragon tr. E. Rinon, Paris, Gallimard, 1936.

Le Crime du casino tr. Ram Sew, Paris, Gallimard, 1938.

Van Dine wrote "classic" detective stories where plot ruled supreme, his detective was Philo Vance.

Achille de VAULABELLE

M.J.F.R., p.134 Persuaded of virtues of liberalism after reading his history
in grandfather's library

Histoire des deux Restaurations, Paris, Perrotin, 1844-1854 in seven volumes.

Jules VERNE

M.J.F.R., p.52

childhood reading

F.A., p.205

camping evokes pleasurable memories of reading Jules

Verne's La Maison à Vapeur

Verne (1828-1905) was the author of many imaginative adventure stories. He popularised scientific achievement and is now seen as one of the fathers of modern Science Fiction writing. His works include:

Voyage au centre de la terre (1864)

Vingt mille lieues sous les mers (1870)

Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours (1873)

Michel Strogoff (1876)

Andrée VIOLLIS

F.A., p.51 appreciation of documentary and travel writing

L'Inde contre les Anglais préface S. Lévy, Paris, Editions des Portiques, 1930.

Madame Viollis specialised in studies of countries or regions in the news. She wrote for instance about Alsace and Lorraine, about Shanghai, Japan, Russia and Afghanistan. One of her studies Indochine S.O.S. was published with a preface by André Malraux, Paris, Gallimard, 1935.

Jean WAHL

F.A., p.53

le Malheur de la conscience

Le Malheur de la conscience dans la philosophie de Hegel, Paris, Reider, 1929.

Edgar WALLACE

F.A., p.53

reads many detective stories

Les Trois justiciers tr. J.-P. Belin, Paris, Collection du Lecteur no.4, 1928.

also Les Trois Justiciers tr. J.-H. Robert, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1935 (Collection le Masque no.189).

L'Affaire Walton tr. Michel Epuy, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1929 (Collection le Masque no.28).

La Main dans l'ombre tr. Miriam Dou-Desportes, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1929 (Collection le Masque no.34).

La Mouche tr. J.-P. Belin, Paris, Collection du Lecteur no.8, 1929.

also La Mouche tr. Marie Mavraud, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1935 (Collection le Masque no.164).

Le Gentleman tr. Georges Mal, Paris, Gallimard, 1929 (Les chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventures).

Les Quatre tr. Georges Mal, Paris, Gallimard, 1930 (Les chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventures).

La Porte aux sept serrures adapted by Lizzie Laroye, Paris, Collection du lecteur no.44, 1930.

also La Porte aux sept serrures tr. Jacques Henri-Robert, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1935 (Collection le Masque no.178).

Angel Esquire tr. Pierre Lapre, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1931 (Collection le Masque no.91).

L'Appartement no.2 tr. France Desportes, Paris, Gallimard, 1931 (Les chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventure).

Le Roi de Boginda Paris, Gallimard, 1931, (Les chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventure).

Laquelle des deux? tr. Pierre Cobor, Paris, Hachette (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

Le Roublard tr. Colette Edmée, Paris, Gallimard, 1931 (Les chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventure).

Le Tueur tr. R. Rieffel-Dou, Paris, Gallimard, 1931 (Les chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventure).

L'Homme aux cent masques tr. Albert Vialis, Paris, Collection du Lecteur no.55, 1935.

Le Faussaire tr. Jules Jéraute, Paris, Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1931 (Collection le Masque no.78).

La Chambre No.13 tr. France Desportes, Paris, Gallimard, 1932 (Les chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventure).

Le Visage dans la nuit tr. L. Rieffel-Dou, Paris, Gallimard, 1932 (Les chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventure).

Le Capitaine des âmes tr. J. Niac, Paris, Gallimard, 1933 (Les chefs d'oeuvre du roman d'aventure).

Quelqu'un a tué tr. Georges Bertrand, Paris, Hachette, 1933 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

Le Mystère du train d'or tr. Jean Raymond, Paris, Hachette, 1934 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

Un Outsider du Derby: "le 55" tr. Guy Tarbel, Paris, Hachette, 1934 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

L'Homme du Carlton tr. Jean Cabalé and Odile D. Cambier, Paris, Hachette, 1934 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

Le Ruban vert tr. G. de Pracomtal, Paris, Hachette, 1935 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

Sanders tr. T. Tomassin, Paris, Hachette, 1935 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

Le Talisman mystérieux Paris, Hachette, 1935 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

Une Lueur dans l'ombre tr. L. Gara, Paris, Hachette, 1935, (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

La Rouille mystérieuse Paris, Hachette, 1936 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

La Terreur Paris, Hachette, 1936 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

L'Archer vert tr. Pierre Cobor, Paris, Hachette, 1937 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

Le Serpent jaune Paris, Hachette, 1937 (Les meilleurs romans étrangers).

Karl Jacob WASSERMANN

F.A., p.52

mildly interested by l'Affaire Maurizius

l'Affaire Maurizius tr. J.-G. Guidau intro. M. Muret, Paris, Plon, 1930 (Les Feux croisés no.12), 2 volumes.

cf. also Gaspard Hauser ou la Paresse du coeur tr. R. Altdorf, Paris, Grasset, 1933.

Mary WEBB

F.A., p.52

Sarn in footnote

Sarn (Precious Bane 1920) tr. J. de Lacretelle et M.T. Guéritte intro. J. de Lacretelle, Paris, Grasset, 1930.

H.G. WELLS

M.J.F.R., p.83

La Guerre des Mondes censored by Madame de Beauvoir

cf. La Guerre des Mondes tr. H.-D. Davray, Paris, Société du "Mercure de France", 1900. This translation was reissued with illustrations by M. Dudouyt, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1917 (Nouvelle Collection Illustrée no.96).

Rebecca WEST

F.A., p.56

Read while acquiring wider literary knowledge

cf. The Return of the Soldier, London, Nisbet, 1918.

The Judge, London, Hutchinson, 1922.

The Strange Necessity: essays, New York, Doubleday Doran, 1928, also London, Jonathan Cape, 1931.

The Modern Rake's Progress, London, Hutchinson, 1934.

Harriet Hume, a London Fantasy, London, Hutchinson, 1929.

Rebecca West's novels were not translated into French until after the War.

Raoul WHITFIELD (appears as WHITFELD)

F.A., p.130

...récits sanglants read on trains

Les Émeraudes sanglantes tr. M. Duhamel, Paris, Gallimard, 1931.

La "Vierge" fatale tr. E. Michel-Tyl, Paris, Gallimard, 1936.

Walt WHITMAN

F.A., p.56

read while acquiring wider literary knowledge after
agrégation

cf. Poèmes tr. L. Bazalgette, Paris, Reider, 1914.

Oeuvres choisies tr. Laforgue, Gide, Larbaud et al, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1918.

Virginia WOOLF

F.A., p.44

Mrs Dalloway

ibid. p.56

je lus...tous les Virginia Woolf

ibid. p.111; ibid. p.191

Mrs Dalloway tr. S. David, pr. André Maurois, Paris, Delamain et Boutelleau, Librairie Stock, 1929 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite, no.31).

Orlando tr. Charles Mauron, pr. Charles Mauron, Paris, Delamain et Boutelleau, Librairie Stock, 1931 (Le Cabinet cosmopolite, no.57).

Nuit et Jour tr. Maurice Bec, intro. René Lalou, Paris, Catalogne, Les Editions du Siècle, 1933 (Les Maîtres étrangers, no.19).

Les Vagues tr. Marguerite Yourcenar, pr. Marguerite Yourcenar, Paris, Delamain et Boutelleau, Librairie Stock, 1937.

Les Années tr. Germaine Delamain, pr. René Lalou, Paris, Delamain et Boutelleau, Librairie Stock, 1938.

William Butler YEATS

F.A., p.56

read while acquiring greater knowledge of literature

Yevgeny ZAMIATINE

F.A., p.52

Nous autres recommended by Nizan

Nous Autres tr. B. Cauvet-Duhammel, Paris, Gallimard, 1929 (Les Jeunes Russes).

Emile ZOLA

M.J.F.R., p.83

novels by Zola in father's library were prohibited

PART FIVE

TITLES BORROWED FROM SHAKESPEARE AND COMPANY

When Simone de Beauvoir described the explosion in her consumption of reading matter at the beginning of her period of liberty in 1929, she wrote

Je retournai de temps en temps à la Nationale; j'empruntai pour mon compte chez Adrienne Monnier; je m'abonnai à la bibliothèque anglo-américaine que tenait Sylvia Beach.¹

The Sylvia Beach papers at Princeton University Library do not at the moment reveal exactly what Simone de Beauvoir borrowed at that particular time from Shakespeare and Company although many of the books she read in English must surely have been supplied by this library. Her surviving library cards make interesting reading. They confirm, for instance, that she was still using Sylvia Beach's facilities on an intermittent basis in 1935, 1937 and even in 1940. She read rapidly, in English, choosing the latest books to appear in England or America, so that she had a good knowledge of books not yet translated into French.

On 4 September 1935 Simone de Beauvoir paid 15 francs subscription fee plus 30 francs deposit. In April 1937, a period which coincides with the illness described in *La Force de l'âge*,² she paid 25 francs, which enabled her to borrow one book at a time, plus 30 francs deposit, which was refunded on 20 May. She chose the following titles:³

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 7 April, 1937: | <u>The House in Paris</u> , Elizabeth Bowen, London, Victor Gollancz, 1935. |
| 9 April, 1937: | <u>Plagued by the Nightingale</u> , Kay Boyle, London, Jonathan Cape, 1931. |
| 12 April, 1937: | <u>The Years</u> , Virginia Woolf, London, Hogarth Press, 1937. |
| 13 April, 1937: | <u>The Big Money</u> , John Dos Passos, New York, Harcourt Brace and Company, 1936. |

1. *F.A.*, p.56.

2. *F.A.*, pp.295-296 and pp.299-304.

3. Information from Sylvia Beach Papers, Box 103, quoted with the permission of Princeton University Library.

- 17 April, 1937: Absalom, Absalom!, William Faulkner, New York, Random House, 1936.
- 20 April, 1937: Death of a Hero, Richard Aldington, abridged, London, Chatto and Windus, 1929; Paris, Henri Babou and Jack Kahane, 1930. Authorised, unexpurgated edition, 2 volumes, Paris, Henri Babou and Jack Kahane, 1930.
- 22 April, 1937: Doctor Martino and other stories, William Faulkner, New York, H. Smith and R. Haas, 1934. This last title was returned on 3 May.

During the uncertain period after the Fall of France, Simone de Beauvoir renewed her subscription, paying 25 francs and 50 francs deposit for the month, 25 July until 25 August; again, she was entitled to borrow one volume at a time. The records suggest that the final volume was never returned and that the deposit was retained so as to pay her arrears. The books she selected were:

- 25 July, 1940: Asiatics, Frederick Prokosch, New York and London, Harpers and Brothers, 1935.
- 27 July, 1940: The Unvanquished, William Faulkner, New York, Random House, 1938.
- 30 July, 1940: To Have and Have Not, Ernest Hemingway, New York, Scribner's Sons, 1937.
- 1 August, 1940: Adventures of a Young Man, John Dos Passos, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1939.
- 6 August, 1940: The Death of the Heart, Elizabeth Bowen, London, Victor Gollancz, 1938.
- 12 August, 1940: The Fifth Column and the First Forty-nine Stories, Ernest Hemingway, New York, Scribner's Sons, 1938.
- 26 August, 1940: Wild Palms, William Faulkner, New York, Random House, 1939.
- 27 August, 1940: Inhale and Exhale, William Saroyan, New York, Random House, 1936.
- 29 August, 1940: Native Son, Richard Wright, New York, Harpers and Brothers, 1940. Chosen for the Book of the Month Club, this book rated an additional levy of 2 francs per day.
- 2 September, 1940: Bird Alone, Sean O'Faolain, New York, The Viking Press; London, Jonathan Cape, 1936.
- 6 September, 1940: A Passage to India, E.M. Forster, London, Edward Arnold and Company, 1924.
- 16 September, 1940: Journeyman, Erskine Caldwell, New York, The Viking Press, 1935.