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MACMILLAN MODERN NOVELISTS

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

Terry Keefe

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To Sheila and Laura

Contents

<i>General Editor's Preface</i>	viii
<i>Simone de Beauvoir's Major Works</i>	x
Introduction	1
1 Beginnings and <i>Quand prime le spirituel</i>	10
2 <i>L'Invitée</i>	33
3 Beauvoir's 'Moral Period': <i>Le Sang des autres</i> and <i>Tous les hommes sont mortels</i>	59
4 <i>Les Mandarins</i>	97
5 Final Stories: <i>Les Belles Images</i> , <i>La Femme rompue</i> and 'Malentendu à Moscou'	129
Conclusion	166
<i>Notes</i>	175
<i>Select Bibliography</i>	184
<i>Index</i>	188

General Editor's Preface

The death of the novel has often been announced, and part of the secret of its obstinate vitality must be its capacity for growth, adaptation, self-renewal and self-transformation: like some vigorous organism in a speeded-up Darwinian ecosystem, it adapts itself quickly to a changing world. War and revolution, economic crisis and social change, radically new ideologies such as Marxism and Freudianism, have made this century unprecedented in human history in the speed and extent of change, but the novel has shown an extraordinary capacity to find new forms and techniques and to accommodate new ideas and conceptions of human nature and human experience, and even to take up new positions on the nature of fiction itself.

In the generations immediately preceding and following 1914, the novel underwent a radical redefinition of its nature and possibilities. The present series of monographs is devoted to the novelists who created the modern novel and to those who, in their turn, either continued and extended, or reacted against and rejected, the traditions established during that period of intense exploration and experiment. It includes a number of those who lived and wrote in the nineteenth century but whose innovative contribution to the art of fiction makes it impossible to ignore them in any account of the modern novel; it also includes the so-called 'modernists' and those who in the mid- and late twentieth century have emerged as outstanding practitioners of this genre. The scope is, inevitably, international; not only, in the migratory and exile-haunted world of our century, do writers refuse to heed national boundaries – 'English' literature lays claim to Conrad the Pole, Henry James the American, and Joyce the Irishman – but geniuses such as Flaubert, Dostoevsky and Kafka have had an influence on the fiction of many nations.

Each volume in the series is intended to provide an introduction to the fiction of the writer concerned, both for those approaching him or her for the first time and for those who are already familiar with some parts of the achievement in question and now wish to place it in the context of the total *oeuvre*. Although essential information relating to the writer's life and times is given, usually in an opening chapter, the approach is primarily critical and the emphasis is not upon 'background' or generalisations but upon close examination of important texts. Where an author is notably prolific, major texts have been made to convey, more summarily, a sense of the nature and quality of the author's work as a whole. Those who want to read further will find suggestions in the select bibliography included in each volume. Many novelists are, of course, not only novelists but also poets, essayists, biographers, dramatists, travel writers and so forth; many have practised shorter forms of fiction; and many have written letters or kept diaries that constitute a significant part of their literary output. A brief study cannot hope to deal with all of these in detail, but where the shorter fiction and non-fictional writings, private and public, have an important relationship to the novels, some space has been devoted to them.

NORMAN PAGE

Simone de Beauvoir's Major Works

Titles given in bold type indicate works examined in some detail in the text.

- 1943 ***L'Invitée (She Came to Stay)*** – novel
- 1944 *Pyrrhus et Cinéas (Pyrrhus and Cineas)* – essay
- 1945 ***Le Sang des autres (The Blood of Others)*** – novel
 Les Bouches inutiles (Who Shall Die?) – play
- 1946 ***Tous les hommes sont mortels (All Men are Mortal)*** – novel
- 1947 *Pour une morale de l'ambiguïté (The Ethics of Ambiguity)* – essay
- 1948 *L'Amérique au jour le jour (America Day by Day)* – account of
 first two visits to America
 *L'Existentialisme et la sagesse des nations (Existentialism and the
 Wisdom of Nations)* – collection of essays
- 1949 *Le Deuxième Sexe (The Second Sex)* – essay in two volumes
- 1954 ***Les Mandarins (The Mandarins)*** – novel
- 1955 *Privilèges (Must We Burn Sade?)* – collection of essays
- 1957 *La Longue Marche (The Long March)* – essay on China
- 1958 *Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée (Memoirs of a Dutiful
 Daughter)* – memoirs (1908–29)
- 1960 *La Force de l'âge (The Prime of Life)* – memoirs (1929–44)
- 1963 *La Force des choses (Force of Circumstance)* – memoirs
 (1944–62)
- 1964 *Une Mort très douce (A Very Easy Death)* – account of
 mother's death
- 1966 ***Les Belles Images (Les Belles Images)*** – novel
- 1968 ***La Femme rompue (The Woman Destroyed)*** – collection of
 three stories

- 1970 *La Vieillesse* (*Old Age*) – essay in two volumes
- 1972 *Tout compte fait* (*All Said and Done*) – memoirs (1962–72)
- 1979 ***Quand prime le spirituel* (*When Things of the Spirit Come First*)**
collection of five stories completed in mid-1930s
- 1981 *La Cérémonie des adieux, suivi de Entretiens avec Jean-Paul Sartre* (*Adieux: A Farewell to Sartre*) – account of Sartre's death, and interviews
- 1990 *Journal de Guerre* (*War Diary*) – diary (September 1939–January 1941)
Lettres à Sartre (*Letters to Sartre*) – letters (1930–63)
- 1992 **'Malentendu à Moscou' – story completed in mid-1960s**
- 1997 *Lettres à Nelson Algren. Un amour transatlantique* – letters

Full details of all of these works – in French and, where available, in English translation – are given in the Bibliography. There is no single standard edition of Beauvoir's fiction. Both original versions and translations have appeared in various collections. Pagination varies, occasionally even from one printing to another. All page-references in this book are to the editions specified in the Bibliography. In the case of Beauvoir's fiction itself, bracketed references are first to the translation and then to the French original, in the form: '153/189'. Only in especially important cases have I given references to the English as well as the French text for other works. I have very frequently had occasion to amend translations, in the interests of accuracy. Accumulating evidence unfortunately shows that, in certain specific ways, some published English translations of Beauvoir's fiction significantly distort the impact of her texts.