Recovering Her-Story of Islamic Revolution: A Critical Analysis of Selected Memoirs of Diasporic Iranian Women

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Abstract:
Writing a memoir is a way of re-appropriating the past and a device to redress the enforced silencing of the "subaltern," the marginalized. It is also seen as a strategy for political empowerment. The memoir form does not focus solely on the personal development of the subject rather it seeks to deliberate on a particular context in which history is made. The subject of a memoir is a real person who refers directly or indirectly to the incidents taking place in the history of a country. In the process, a memoir provides access to personal histories, minor resistances and gaps in official history. When women turn subjects of their own histories, they re-centre the knowledge produced about them and articulate the silences of the recorded history. The paper undertakes to study three memoirs by diasporic Iranian women–*Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi, *Lipstick Jihad* by Azadeh Moaveni and *Persepolis* (graphic memoir) by Marjane Satrapi–in the backdrop of the Islamic Revolution of Iran of 1979. The examination of the texts reveals an alternate history of the daily struggle of the Iranians, especially those of women, as they protest against the newly imposed veiling and other restrictions. Iranian women's discourse challenges the mythification of an ideal Muslim woman and appropriation of religion by the theocratic regime. Iranian women's reaction to the retrogressive steps of Ayatollah Khomeini defines women's engagement with feminism in the region. The memoirs grasp the whole picture of the Islamic revolution and underline its implications for the women of Iran as well.

Keywords: Memoir, history, Islamic Revolution, Iranian diaspora, Persian women, Her-story, Islamic identity, veil, East versus West, patriarchy.

Memoirs are usually celebrated for being the "authentic" firsthand accounts, almost considered a slice of life taken from the subject's life as it intersects with the life of the nation or society. But they are not trusted as a form of historiography because of the intentional or unconscious element of personal interest that creeps into the account. George Egerton identifies this peculiarity as the "endemic defect" of the memoir. It is by virtue of this

"endemic defect" that the memoir challenges the hegemonic discourses toppling the masternarrative from its superior position. It replaces "history" with multilayered her-stories. It may not lay its claim on being reliable history, but certainly disputes the truthfulness and adequacy of the official history. "History is always the group's language, the official narrative that is pressed between covers of gold and trotted out for ritual ceremonies of self congratulation" (Mernissi 10). As Fatema Mernissi admits in the introduction to *The Veil and Male Elite*, "the memoirs are intended to be narratives of recollection, gliding toward the areas where memory breaks down, dates get mixed up, and events softly blur together, as in the dreams from which we draw our strength" (10).

The most popular form of literature exposed to a wide readership and critical acclaim in the first decade of the 21st Century is the Iranian memoir. Memoirs are being written more often, with greater confidence by Iranian diasporic writers with western readership in mind. Although Iranian feminist critics Farzaneh Milani and Afsaneh Najmabadi claim that there had been no established tradition of autobiography in Iran, yet they have stimulated a lot of critical response. Invariably, all of them address the issue of the institutionalization of patriarchy following the revolution and its implications for women. Iranian memoirs are rooted in a turbulent period of Iranian history and culture with the US "war on terror" looming large on the horizon. According to Roya Hakakian, a journalist and writer, writing a memoir is a revenge of sorts. She insists that the greatest jihad under Islamic theocracy was "one against the self." Under the Khomeini regime, all difference between the public and private was obliterated. Imposition of the veil and execution and imprisonment of dissenters became a norm. Self-censorship and state censorship led to the silencing of individual histories. The diaspora, exiled, and the refugee who left following the revolution eventually became the carriers of history. The historical moment of the Islamic Revolution got frozen in the memory of the exiled taking the shape of memoir. These life narratives, told from women's perspective, recount the everyday history of persecution, trauma, exile and loss of the home leading to "a little death of the self." Consequently, a re-centering of history takes place in these memoirs. Women are building a formidable her-story through the writing of memoirs. They are re-appropriating the past to redress the enforced silencing of the marginalized. It is also a strategy for political empowerment. Her-story is different from history in the way women select the fragments from the past and the manner in which they choose to present them. Walter Benjamin once said, "To articulate past historically does not

mean to recognize it 'the way it really was'…It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger" (par.vi).

The paper undertakes a detailed analysis of *Reading Lolita in Tehran* (2008) by Azar Nafisi, *Lipstick Jihad* (2005) by Azadeh Moaveni and a graphic memoir *Persepolis* (2008) by Marjane Satrapi. All three of them have studied and worked in the West. Their memoirs lament the loss of a bright, dynamic and progressive culture to the Islamic Republic that acted as a catalyst for these memoirs. The word memoir is linked etymologically to the idea of mourning through memoir and carries with it the shadow left by the dead. It also mourns the transformation of Iran from a progressive country to a dystopia for women. While Azar Nafisi taught as a Professor at the University of Tehran at the time of the revolution and left the country after falling out with the authorities, Azadeh Moaveni and Marjane Satrapi can be called the daughters of the revolution. Moaveni spent the years of war and political separation abroad but inherited the feelings of pain and loss from her parents. She returned to Iran to find a country taken over by the Islamic Republic. Satrapi was an adolescent at the time of the revolution who left for Europe as she realized the precariousness of life for women in Iran. These three writers attempt to re-narrativize the Islamic Revolution of Iran and its implications for Iranian women. Their memoirs react to the retrogressive moves and hypocritical stance of the totalitarian government regarding observation of gender segregation and veiling.

The Islamic Revolution

The history of Iran is narrated as a fall into colonialism. In pre-revolutionary Iran, due to the impact of colonialism and Western reforms introduced by Reza Shah, women had started venturing into the public sphere. The mass unveiling order by Reza Shah Pahlavi in 1936 was a culmination of Shah's attempts to westernize the Iranian society. Pahlavi was also vocal about his reformist agenda which equated veiling with women's backwardness. By the government decree of 1936, women of all age groups were forced out of their veils. As a result veil-less women became the target of the wrath of reactionaries. Unveiling came to be equated as a sign of imperialism and a threat to Iranian identity. Pahlavi's mindless mimicry of western modernity was called *Westoxification* (*Gharbzadegi*) by a prominent Iranian writer and thinker.

The Islamist movement, in contrast, projected women empowerment campaigns as leading to western decadent practices, godless secularism, promiscuity and weakening of the family unit. Shah's ideas of reform imposed from above eventually precipitated into the 1979 Islamic Revolution which was a watershed moment for women in the history of Iran. Iranian women had participated alongside men in the revolution only to be betrayed later on. The Shah of Iran, "a puppet of England," was dethroned and exiled. The monarchy gave way to the Islamic Republic of Iran. To women's chagrin, the clock was reversed many years back as far as women's rights were concerned. In post-revolutionary Iran, the regime sent out contradictory messages to women. They were encouraged to participate in the rebuilding of Iran after the revolution but their legal rights were severely curtailed. Under the Ayatollah's regime, the age of marriage for girls was reduced to nine, the right to divorce and children's custody was taken away from women. They were forbidden to move in public without a veil and unaccompanied by a male relative (*mahram*). In the 1980s, miniskirts common in the early decades gave way to headscarves again. Women found themselves increasingly disenfranchised by the hardened stance taken by the revolution after its initial "spring of freedom." Mandatory veiling was projected as the Republic's attempt to protect the faith and dignity of women. Unveiled or improperly veiled women and mingling of genders in public was forbidden by the state. This new religious fervor empowered men to monitor the appearance and behavior of women. Within a month of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini exhorted women to wear the Islamic form of modest dress. This led to demonstrations but the regime assured women that government was not willing to impose veiling and that Khomeini only believed in guiding women. These justifications notwithstanding, veiling was re-institutionalized slowly and diplomatically till it was made mandatory in all public offices in 1980. This step could only evoke disorganized resistance and ultimately the regime went on to make veiling compulsory for all women in 1983.

The introduction of mandatory veiling and Sharia-based law estranged the Iranian women who had been enjoying many liberties under Reza Shah. They fought the ordinance tooth and nail. The transgressors were persecuted, jailed, flogged and humiliated. They were treated like criminals for wearing makeup or violating the obligatory dress code. Their criminalization was turned into a spectacle to instill fear in those women who did not conform to the Islamic Republic's gendered disciplinary apparatus and stepped out of its firmly guarded boundaries. The regime also exhorted women to put on the veil using such methods as political rhetoric, slogans and wall-writings. Motherhood, however, was hailed

and valorized. Equality with men was considered degrading as it alienated them from their essential nature. Khomeini appealed to women to contribute to society by fulfilling their Islamic duty. Women were elevated in the political rhetoric as the "pillars of the nation, forts of virtue and chastity." It is this construction of the image of an ideal Muslim woman that urged women to take up the pen and write back to the regime.

Reading Lolita in Tehran: Real and Imaginary

Nafisi taught English Literature at the University of Tehran in the 1980s and got expelled for refusing to comply with the directions of the rigid regime. The regime not only imposed a dress code for teachers and students but also banned the teaching of certain western classics in the university. At that point began her estrangement with the system. Against this backdrop, her secret class was engendered on Thursdays. She embarked on a teaching mission gathering seven of her best students in the privacy of her home in order to follow her passion for books. The memoir is divided into four sections namely Lolita, Gatsby, James and Austen depending on the works they take up for analysis. In the course of teaching, the literary classes spill on to the doings of the Islamic Republic and the personal lives of the seven students. The classes in the living room run parallel, like an underground stream, to the external life interpreting the events happening in Tehran through Western classics. The moment of denouement comes when Nafisi finally decides to leave for the USA and the classes disperse. Her departure coincides with the coming of age of all her students. Throughout their classes they continue discussing their doubts, dreams and plans for the future in the wake of new restrictions under the theocratic system.

Reading Lolita in Tehran is an imaginative and intellectual piecing together of historical events. It owes its origin to the author's habit of diary keeping. This re-membering of the past, as Tony Morrison terms it, is different from history as it disrupts the chronological sequence and claim to authenticity of the official history. Daphne M. Grace points out that the writer of autobiography is justifiably at liberty to manipulate his or her construction of a past out of the fragments of memory. "For doing so, she adopts different means of emphasis, juxtaposition, commentary and omission" (Smith 45). Nafisi's memoir is aimed at creating an alternate reality which provides the marginalised a refuge in the repressive regime bent upon the subordination of women. This class is their safety valve. In the section titled Lolita, she says:

> Our class was shaped within this context, in an attempt to escape the gaze of the blind censor for a few hours each week. There, in that living room, we rediscovered that we were also living, breathing human beings; and no matter how repressive the state became, no matter how intimidated and frightened we were, like Lolita, we tried to escape and to create our own little pockets of freedom. And like Lolita we took every opportunity to flaunt our insubordination: by showing a little hair from under our scarves, insinuating a little colour into the drab uniformity of our appearance, growing our nails, falling in love and listening to forbidden music. (Nafisi 25-26)

Akin to Woolf's "Room of One's Own," the group exercises an active withdrawal from hostile reality. The reading of texts helps the students understand their own selves and their precarious situation in the Islamic regime. The texts committed to "democracy, freedom and equality" convey to the girls that to comply with the totalitarian regime is similar to "participating in their own execution" or "dancing with their jailor." In Nabokovian terms, the room is the space ruled by imagination and curiosity–the very essence of insubordination and individualism. Nafisi deliberately embarks on a mission of reading and teaching the selected texts that can help them in their "present trapped situation as women." She hopes to find a link between the "open spaces" the novels provided and the "closed ones they were confined to." The memoir in books, as Nafisi calls it, is self-reflexive in this sense. The critical reading of the works attributes a quality of transcendence to literature. It explores the ways literary works sustain people in hard times. The Thursday classes serve as a platform for the girls to reorder the crisscross of their lives, further complicated by the absurd and whimsical nature of the regime.

Nafisi, too, is "at home" in her living room, "the other world of tenderness, brightness and beauty" where her students come to life after unveiling, baring their colourful selves and shedding the clumsiness of a black robe. Nafisi articulates the sense of alienation Iranian women experienced in the new regime using the symbol of the room. She contemplates the room as symbolizing her nomadic and borrowed life which sets off the theme of feeling exiled in one's own homeland. The room where curiosity, imagination and transgression rule through reading is an oasis in the desert of the alienated selves. Nussbaum opines that the milieu of the book group in *Reading Lolita in Tehran* is a highly cultured setting for the acts of transgression. It is a highly aestheticized space that turns its back to the street. While the girls enter the front door, the anarchy and oppressiveness of the outside world are cast off like

the *chador*. The opposition between reality and imagination is deliberate and sustained in the space of reading. The moment they leave the room, their return to reality is perceived as a return to alienation with their individuality and unique character dissolving into a nondescript and colourless mass under the latest directions for Muslim women in the Islamic regime. The symbol of “the room” recurs in many forms–the classroom, the room of the magician (Nafisi’s mentor), the green door and so on.

The emphasis on personal feelings adds the psychological dimension to the narrative. This function of literature enriches history by making it complex and subtle. Evelyn Accad is of the view that creative works are more appropriate to understand social and political realities because they give us the complete picture. They not only explore the social, political and cultural but also allow us to enter the imaginary and unconscious world of the author. Apart from her individual vision, an author suggests links to the collective “imaginary.” These complexities and subtleties are not found in more direct scientific documents. Nafisi plays mind games to come to terms with the traumatic experience. She imagines her body as disappearing while she is being searched by a female guard to cope with the pain of humiliation. Nafisi may be resorting to denial to deal with atrocities too terrible to confront. She also describes the paralyzing effect of fear instilled among women owing to harsh punishments under the regime.

The ordinance of re-veiling drew the maximum reaction from women. Most of Iranian women’s encounters with religious vigilantes happened on the issue of mandatory veiling. While the Islamic regime impressed upon Iranian women to see the veil as a symbol of national identity, Iranian diaspora perceived it as a vestige of Khomeini’s patriarchal ideology. Nafisi claims that the Islamic revolution did more damage to Islam by using it as an instrument of oppression than any alien ever could have done. Nafisi talks of recurring nightmares that she and her students continued having after the regime’s decree. She believes that the mandatory veiling was an attempt to force social uniformity through an assault on individual and religious freedoms, not an act of respect for traditions and culture. Her student Razieh was killed by the regime even though she had never torn off the veil from her body. All this, because they happened to belong to a rival religious group. The regime was intolerant of dissenting voices. Nafisi recounts little known histories of ordinary people including harrowing tales of torture, incarceration, rape and murder at the hands of the regime’s representatives. The women who refused to wear the veil were penalized and their

punishment was made into a spectacle to instill fear in public. On refusing to wear a veil, she explains, "We (Nafisi and her friend), in refusing to accept that ideal, were taking not a political stand but an existential one. It was not that piece of cloth that I rejected, it was the transformation being imposed on me that made me look into the mirror and hate the stranger I had become" (Nafisi 165). Nafisi cites the example of her grandmother who resented the fact that her veil, which symbolized her sacred relationship with god, had now become an instrument of power, turning the women who wore them into political signs and symbols.

Reading Lolita in Tehran ends at an optimistic note. Despite the Islamic regime's new restrictions on women's mobility and dress code, nobody can take away their right to think freely. This is the territory that the totalitarian state cannot sabotage. In that sense, *Reading Lolita in Tehran* celebrates the "Republic of Imagination." The memoir has come under attack by Iranian critic Farzaneh Milani who refers to it as a "cocktail of fact and fiction intermingled." But Nafisi's memoir promises an "epiphany of truth" which goes beyond the specific time and location and assumes transhistorical significance.

***Persepolis*: The Black and White World**

Persepolis is written in an autographic style popularly known as the comic book. It is unique in its juxtaposition of the comic form with the most serious in the Iranian history. Unlike the other two memoirs, it communicates more through its gaps and silences than its statements. Marjane Satrapi recounts the unfolding of the revolution in Iran from the perspective of a child which justifies the author's use of the medium comic, the literary form meant to be consumed by juveniles. Hence the narrative maintains its childlike tone and playfulness. The contrast between the seriousness of historical events and the comic style undermines the authoritative and grave tone of the official history.

Persepolis is a highly subversive text. It offers resistance to the dominant discourse indirectly. The Republic in its rhetoric hailed women as revered figures and reinforced the image of a vulnerable and bashful woman by glorifying the veil. Its slogan–a woman modestly covered is like a pearl within a shell–was a strong reminder of this image. Satrapi, in contrast, trivializes the veiling ordinance of the regime. In the chapter "The Veil" of *Persepolis*, Satrapi undermines the veiling ordinance of 1980 by showing young school girls using their headscarves as skipping ropes, as a harness, as a monster mask and in other ways that are contrary to their supposed purpose to guard female modesty. The second part of

Persepolis shows Satrapi challenging the image of a pure, ideal and compliant Persian girl popularized by the Islamic regime. Satrapi is always trespassing the designated spaces despite the fact that transgression invited terrible retribution. Satrapi neither conforms to cultural expectations of society nor the Islamic regime's orders. She is unabashed about her sexuality. Nahid Mozaffari in her review of Satrapi's memoir observes that the model of a shy, pure and acquiescent Persian girl did not stand up to the test of real life and real women that populate Iran. Satrapi aims to correct the overwhelming image of Iran as a nation of "women in chadors and guys with guns" as she claims this image of Iran is far from the truth. The narrative also attempts to dispel the fallacies of the western observers and introduces the reader to the bright, progressive and liberated Iranian people.

A majority of Iranians disagreed with the extreme Islamic ideology of the regime. The memoir is replete with incidents of resistance where young Iranians defy the regime's orders by tricking the morality police. Satrapi, too, gets into ideological clashes with the religious authorities. While appearing for an interview for admission to an arts college in Iran, she is asked whether she had been wearing a veil while studying in Austria, to which she replies, "No, I have always thought that if women's hair posed so many problems, God would have certainly made us bald" (286).

Persepolis resists the war-mongering of the Islamic regime in the name of nationalism. After the revolution, Iran immediately went to war with Iraq which continued for nearly eight years. As the death toll in the war mounted, and the culture of death prevailed everywhere, the ideologues and militias tightened their control over the entire population. This gave the government an excuse to subordinate the issues of civil and political liberties to the so-called higher goals of protecting national sovereignty and avoiding US intervention. Satrapi exposed the hypocrisy of the government as it tried to cover the absurdity of war. Boys as young as sixteen were brainwashed into joining the crusade against Iraq making it seem like a religious mission. *Persepolis* brings out the cruelty and absurdity of war through its "slippages." Satrapi and her friends drowned themselves in drumbeats, drinks and dance while young boys were blown to pieces on the front with "keys to paradise" around their necks.

Though *Persepolis* employs black and white graphics, yet the text emphasizes that the truth consists of many shades of grey. The easy categorization of culture into eastern and western

is a white lie that underlies the reigning discourse. The whole edifice of Islamic regime was built on the pretext that the country needs to be saved from the corrupting influence of westernization. However, the gaps and silences in the memoir call into question this new form of Islamic nationalism and problematizes both pure Islamic and westernized identities. Nima Naghibi and Andrew O'Malley, while analyzing *Persepolis*, conclude that decoding the meaning of a comic book takes place in the space between panels, known in the comic book trade as the "gutter." "The gutters are empty spaces in the text that can either be filled with easy answers provided by the dominant ideology or they can function as sites of aporia. In the gutters between the panels of *Persepolis,* the reader has to interact with and interpret historical, political, and cultural silences; this is the space in which new meanings that deflate the overdetermined categories of East and West have the potential to be generated" (246).

Lipstick Jihad: **Women's Counter-Revolution**

Azadeh Moaveni, an Iranian-American, returns as a journalist to work in Tehran to have a first-person experience of her homeland, the subject of her mother's longings and exilic myths. On her return to Tehran, Moaveni finds the Iranian society "as culturally confused, politically deadlocked and emotionally anguished." Moaveni, inherited the memories of the "dark, evil force called revolution" from her parents. Returning two decades after the revolution, Moaveni studies the after effects of the revolution and women's ongoing struggle for visibility and space in the Iranian history. The memoir foregrounds that the past is the present is the future.

Iranian women invariably engage with the question of veiling because they believe that veiling is not about appearances alone. Moaveni, along with Nafisi, doesn't perceive mandatory veiling as a return to Islamic identity as the Republic would have them believe. Moaveni feels that putting on that dumb scrap of pink meant betraying her personal beliefs. "Though most women in modern day Iran might not consider the veil their highest grievance, they knew it symbolized the system's disregard for women's legal status in general. Mandatory veiling crushed women's ability to express themselves, therefore, denying them a basic human right" (Moaveni 170).

The veiling decree did not achieve the desired results. Conversely, it unleashed a whole lot of maladies unforeseen by the regime. Reactions to mandatory veiling were varied ranging from the paralyzing fear, depression, and neurotic behavior among women to the "schizophrenic"

way of life among younger Iranians. While depression was writ large over the faces of Iranian women of the generation of Moaveni's parents, the younger women reacted differently. The latter developed "survival games" to outsmart the moves of the morality police. They embarked on a "lipstick Jihad." Women broke into a riot of colours underneath their chadors. They indulged in colour with a vengeance despite harsh punishments. Gradually, they began simulating normalcy and asserting themselves–"women started wearing lipstick, exposing their toes and curves, wearing their veils halfway back 'as if' they have a right to be uncovered" (62). They started transgressing the defined border while dodging the watchful eyes of the morality police known as Basij. Iranian women fought the regime by resorting to fashion as resistance, observes Moaveni. She marvels at the intriguing concept of fashion as resistance. She sees the daily defiance of the dress code as part of the struggle.

Moaveni exposes the hypocrisy of the regime and the schizophrenic way of life Iranians had been leading. She says, paradoxically, restrictions meant to instill decency on the lines of Islamic faith, inflamed people's carnal desires. "Made neurotic by the innate oppressiveness of restrictions, Iranians were preoccupied with sex in the manner of dieters, constantly thinking about food. The constant exposure to covered flesh–whether it was covered hideously, artfully, or plainly–brought to mind, well, flesh" (Moaveni 71). Moaveni also exposes the Islamic regime's hypocrisy and lack of vision regarding the status of women in Iran. "The regime fed young people such contradictory messages–women were liberated but legally inferior; women should be educated but subservient; women should have a career but stick to traditional gender roles; women should play sports but ignore their dirty physical needs" (Moaveni 179). She challenges the double standards of the regime to readily label a woman as "westernized."

> Westernized was a convenient label for any female behavior that defied oppressive tradition. It could and was attached as easily to an Iranian woman who has never left Iran as it was to me raised outside. But men were like Teflon; the Westernized label did not stick. The other names for their conduct–hypocritical, womanizing, temperamental, fickle, bossy, headstrong–were still organically Iranian. The culture makes room for their transgressions. (200)

An Islamic nationalism was offered as an antidote to westernization denounced as west-toxication by the clerics. Under the leadership of Iran's supreme religious leader Ayatollah

Khomeini, a Sharia-based law was implemented according to which western-wear, alcohol, partying and intermingling of sexes was prohibited. Moaveni questions the justification of these draconian laws in *Lipstick Jihad*. She insists that ordinary Iranians were averse to the religious rhetoric of the regime. Iranians were not interested in discussions about the role of Islam in modern society as the "need for secularism was as obvious to them as the blue of the sky." In fact Iranians felt a harsh contempt for the clerics who had taken over an oil-rich country in the name of Islam and sunk its economy. Moaveni detests the government's attempts to run Iran like an "Islamic theme park." She reminisces that the cat-shaped country her father taught her to draw was secular Iran and not the Islamic Republic, and the sanctity of that difference was the foundation of their lives in the diaspora.

Conclusion

Acting as magnifying glass, the narratives perform the important function of revealing the micro histories of individuals. They unveil mass killings, extra-judicial executions, persecution, torture and disappearances under a totalitarian regime, facts normally hidden in the official history. In her article "Staying Alive," Ahdaf Soueif emphasizes the role of women as history keepers. "Preserving history and telling the story—these seem to be at the heart of [our] women's concerns right now" (119). Apart from this, women's writing engages in the war of symbols that usually follows the actual wars and revolutions. The examination of texts reveals that Iranian women are liberating themselves from religious prescriptions and reclaiming their social and political histories through writing. Nafisi, Moaveni and Satrapi re-inscribe Iranian women's identity which is far removed from the image of Muslim women commonly projected in the Islamic regime's rhetoric and the western discourse. They unanimously reject the identity thrust on them of women who have to carry the burden of tradition and culture. Despite the regime's newly imposed restrictions, women are gaining a victory in making their stories heard. Iranian diaspora writers, through their memoirs, are relentlessly engaged in the process of not only seeing but "seeing through;" not only articulating but interpreting the historical and political situation in their native and host countries. By putting the revolution and its implications for Iranian women in perspective, Iranian women are exposing the conspiracy of the regime to institutionalize patriarchy. Undoubtedly, in its imaginative appeal and interpretative quality, women's autobiographical writing will continue to have an edge over history.

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