Simone de Beauvoir’s *Le deuxième sexe* in the Arab World

**Abstract:** When Simone de Beauvoir’s magnum opus *Le Deuxième Sexe* (1949) was first published, it was subject to a great deal of debate; yet, in its essence, the book is revolutionary and has had tremendous impact worldwide. This is evident by the divers languages in which it was translated, among which is Arabic. The first translation of the book into Arabic appeared in 1979, that is, thirty years after its original publication. Since then, several reprints, as well as new translations have been published. While Beauvoir comprehensively approached “woman” from various perspectives, her philosophical project proved to be problematic and has brought to bear on the book’s reception in the Arab world. Given the sensitivity of the topic of *Le Deuxième Sexe*, its translation into Arabic reflects socio-cultural factors which have had an impact on the popularity of the book. Thus, the aim of the paper is to examine the trajectory of the book in the Arab world, while investigating whether a possible underlying contention exists between, on one hand, a western feminist discourse, and, on the other hand, an Arab patriarchal discourse. It will also examine the Arab institutions, as well as authors, who have, so far, translated the book, while highlighting the latter’s paratext. Last, but not least, it will discuss the book’s famous title, which is translated into Arabic as “The Other Sex,” an issue worthy of investigation, so as to point out the implications of such translation discrepancy.

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