

An Analysis of the Concept of Love in Proust and Stendhal with Emphasis on the Classical and Modern Conceptions of Consciousness

Dr. Morteza Babak Moin¹

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One of the main themes of Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* is that of love and it can be claimed that other themes in the novel take on meaning in their relation to this central theme. Even though in the analysis of love that he presents in this work Proust has been influenced by Stendhal's insights in his work *On Love* – and naturally there are common points between the two views – we should not ignore the basic difference that distinguishes them. This difference can be grasped through the difference between two conceptions of consciousness: first, a classical conception which is based on Descartes' interpretation of consciousness, and the other a modern one which is connected to Merleau-Ponty's understanding, among others. Presenting these two conceptions and introducing Proust's analysis of love by comparing it with Stendhal's insights, the present study will demonstrate the ways in which these different conceptions of consciousness can help us in analysing the essential and fundamental difference between Proust's and Stendhal's analyses of love.

Key words: The Phenomenon of Love, Proust, Stendhal, Classical Consciousness, Modern Consciousness.

1. Associate Professor of French Language and Literature, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch
bajo_555@yahoo.com