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Note from the Book Review Editor / Note de la responsable des recensions

This inaugural issue of the renewed *Simone de Beauvoir Studies* includes three notable reviews of recent Beauvoir publications. These works, published in the last two years, have been chosen because they mark major milestones in the reception of Beauvoir's writings this year, when the seventieth anniversary of the publication of *Le Deuxième Sexe* in 1949 is being celebrated with a range of international conferences and events. These milestones include all of Beauvoir's autobiographical writings compiled in a prestigious Pléiade collection; a monograph that takes Beauvoir scholarship in new directions by using a new interpretative methodology of engaging with other thinkers, past and present, to discuss her ideas on feminism and anti-racism; and the largest collection of essays on Beauvoir's work ever published in English.

The first review is Michel Kail's wonderful reading of the Bibliothèque de la Pléiade editions of *Mémoires I* and *II*, which comprise a complete collection of Beauvoir's memoirs, with the addition of supporting material such as editorial notes on the text, interviews with Beauvoir, and a chronology, and is accompanied by an illustrated album with a narrative history by Sylvie Le Bon de Beauvoir. Only one such album is published each year, and so Beauvoir's album takes its place alongside that of George Sand, Colette, and Marguerite Duras. This publication in the Pléiade, a Gallimard series that has published the classics of the French tradition and translated international literature since 1931, demonstrates the esteem with which Beauvoir's writings are held in France today and is likely to encourage further scholarship. In another landmark in Beauvoir studies, *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* has been included in the French agrégation examination in modern literature (*lettres modernes*) this year. This is the first time any of Beauvoir's books have appeared on the list of proposed texts for this significant examination. While these inclusions are welcomed, albeit as overdue, and perhaps as a contemporary sign of increasing recognition of women writers in important cultural institutions, other questions can be asked. For example, why were Beauvoir's memoirs, and not *The Second Sex* or *The Mandarins* chosen for Beauvoir's first entry into the Pléiade? Is this acceptance in the literary Pantheon too narrow in scope and possibly limiting of the radical potential of Beauvoir's work? Furthermore, why was Beauvoir's work

selected for the literary examination rather than the philosophy examination Beauvoir herself passed with such distinction? As an indirect response to such questions, Michel Kail, author of *Simone de Beauvoir philosophe*, considers and outlines in a compelling way in his review the distinctive significance of Beauvoir's memoirs to her writing as a whole.¹

Second, Qrescent Mali Mason reviews political theorist Lori Jo Marso's *Politics with Beauvoir: Freedom in the Encounter*, considering how Marso presents both imagined and real encounters between Beauvoir and other thinkers in order to enrich Beauvoir's own accounts of the politics of violence and its relation to freedom and oppression, for instance in encounters with the work of Hannah Arendt, Frantz Fanon, and Richard Wright. Mason's review also creatively and critically engages with Marso's venture into an exciting new field that is growing in Beauvoir studies, that of philosophy of film and the promise of Beauvoir's writings to develop richer interpretations of cinema's feminist and philosophical potential. This text also develops comprehension of Beauvoir as a political theorist in dialogue with critical race studies and so enriches a dialogue engaged by Margaret Simons, Kathryn T. Gines (now Kathryn Sophia Belle), Sonia Kruks, and Patricia Hill Collins, among others.²

Finally, *A Companion to Simone de Beauvoir*, edited by Laura Hengehold and Nancy Bauer, is reviewed by Gayatri Devi. This is only the second *Companion* of this kind, intended to provide an authoritative and clear guide to the work of an author, following *The Cambridge Companion to Simone de Beauvoir*.³ It is an ambitious work, comprising forty essays by well-known international scholars on Beauvoir's philosophy, fiction, autobiography, and feminism. Devi's reflective review traces the interweaving themes of analysis, including the concepts of ambiguity and situation, and controversial issues of interpretation, such as the analogy drawn between race and gender in Beauvoir's work, and *The Second Sex's* reception and legacy, as well as emerging areas of scholarship, for exam-

1 Michel Kail, *Simone de Beauvoir philosophe*, Paris, Presses Universitaire de France, 2006.

2 Margaret Simons, *Beauvoir and "The Second Sex": Feminism, Race, and the Origins of Existentialism*, Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield, 2000; Kathryn T. Gines (Kathryn Sophia Belle), "Sartre, Beauvoir, and the Race/Gender Analogy: A Case for Black Feminist Philosophy," in *Convergences: Black Feminism and Continental Philosophy*, ed. Maria Davidson, Kathryn T. Gines, and Donna Dale Marcano, New York, State University of New York Press, 2010, pp. 35–51; Sonia Kruks, *Simone de Beauvoir and the Politics of Ambiguity*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2012; and Patricia Hill Collins, "Simone de Beauvoir, Women's Oppression, and Existential Freedom," in *A Companion to Simone de Beauvoir*, ed. Nancy Bauer and Laura Hengehold, Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2017, pp. 325–338.

3 Claudia Card, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Simone de Beauvoir*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006.