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Epistemological Aspects of Life-Writing

Introduction

Autobiography is a narrative which introduces real life in aesthetic literary way. Introduction of a serious content of human life with all complex social relationships in appealing form makes this genre popular for both readers and researchers from diverse humanitarian and social fields. Besides fulfilling the role of being a source of “first hand” information about real social relationships and a form of art, autobiography is a social activism which brings about positive changes for both the author and the reader in epistemological and ontological levels. Its impact is long-lasting, as the problems introduced in such works are potentially ubiquitous, repeatable throughout history and in different cultures.

Life-writings are one of the forms of participatory method used in social studies. The authors’ description and interpretation of diverse relationships, their biases and assumptions open multiple interpretive perspectives for readers and researchers who are also not free from subjectivity to reassess sometimes established beliefs and attitudes. Autobiographies, as a means to reveal invisible sides of the self, which can be either typical or different for readers, besides their major function of self-analysis in order to conciliate the inner and outer worlds, have potential to sustain harmonic relationships in different levels: first, between the authors’ individual selves and social conventions surrounding them; second, between the reader and the writer through consciousness raising and reassessments of values in the process of reading the other’s life; third, among cultures, developing consciousness of culture-based perceptions of certain behaviors which are conventional for one culture and considered to be “unthinkable” or “senseless” for another. Autobiographies reveal diversity in “similar cultures” and similar patterns in very different cultures.

In cultural diversity of autobiographies the readers find similarities based on gender roles, which make global dialogues possible. Autobiographical discourse introduces “truths” which can be transformative, sometimes with possible contradictory variants of interpretation. Social truths through individual representation ease the task to understand that possible contradictions and variations of the truth do not make it less reliable. On the contrary, it kindles the readers’ inclination to search for reliable sources enabling to understand the reason of certain variations of this truth. As Schaffer and Smith explain, “Since personal story telling involves acts of remembering, of making meaning out of the past, its ‘truth’ cannot be read as solely or simply factual. There are different registers of truth beyond the factual: psycho logical, experiential, historical, cultural, communal, and potentially transformative.” (Schaffer, Smith 2004:7). This potential transformation opens

space for the author and readers to reevaluate their own personal stories and develop self-cognizance and consciousness of diversity and commonness.

Life writings demonstrate individuals' psychological dynamics; they show true life experiences through the lenses of personal assessment which is a response to diverse social structures. Autobiography is a genre in which confessions, facts, analyses merge with aesthetic forms. As Richard Rorty argues, "life narratives develop empathy and community because people tend to care for strangers if a sense of identification has been stimulated, and narratives are the ideal mechanism through which to do so" (M. Jolly. R.Rorty 1993: 112).

The ubiquitous phrase— 'knowledge is power' assumes that disconnection from knowledge, unavailability to reach appropriate sources create silent, submissive agencies who estimate " themselves as being incapable of knowing or thinking, appeared to conduct little or no internal dialogue and generally felt no sense of connection with others. "Their "acts of knowing" involved only specific actions and behaviors occurring in the present" (Love and Guthrie2002: 25).

In the book entitled "Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind" by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986) the authors differentiate five epistemological stages in the process of women's cognitive development. In their investigations they inquired 135 women with diverse backgrounds and analyzed the dynamics in respondent women's self-perception at different stages of changing knowledge perspectives. These epistemological levels are silence, received knowledge, subjective knowledge, procedural knowledge, and constructed knowledge. Diverse cultures encourage development of different cognizant levels; for some communities the stage of Silence is the only sufficient area for women, for others the first two stages are the "female area". In cultures which encourage gender equality the first two stages are usually skipped but they also can take place in specific conditions or as a result of trauma. This cognitive development is individual but at the same time they contain trustful information about cultures.

In this paper I am trying to connect the stages of cognitive development to the process of autobiography writing because this activity "posits a series of tensions", first, between the indefinitely renewed stuff of existence with its accompanying inner discourse and the writing that seeks to arrest and circumscribe it"(Olney 1980: 199). The "renewed stuff of existence" creates new levels of knowledge, which in its turn provokes forming a new ontological medium with renewed relationships. Heterogeneous time patterns in the autobiography, attempt of self-identity with the hope to "organize" the past and open up new perspectives on the future from the author's side; attempt to catch subtle peculiarities in the author's identity and the readers' consideration them in their own context, create a labyrinthine situation which is a model of real life surrounding both the author and the reader in different modifications. The "unfinished self" leaves the reader with opportunity to build conjectures about the author's further life and connect them to expectancies from their own future.

Indefinitely renewed stuff of existence involves various interruptions of different scales and importance. Interruption is a discursive effect of gender politics, self-representation and evidences the possibilities of and limitations on women's self-representation. Each text in itself is an instance of how women's agency and efforts at self-representation exist in complicated relation to each other and to the texts in which we read them. The tradition of women's autobiography is interrupted one. What is being interrupted in autobiography is the more entrenched coherence of "subjectivity", on one hand, and, on the other, the cultural production of "writing" through the silencing of women. Externally, rupture works against hegemonic discourses of identity, whether they are psychological or political. (Gilmore 1994: 49)

This paper investigates relationships between dynamic, interchangeable epistemological levels and the process of life-writing; it argues that life writing stimulates the author's transference into more mature levels of cognizance, and autobiographical texts raise consciousness and develop empathy on the basis of stimulated sense of identification.

Silence

The first cognitive level is silence which can be a metaphor for lack of voice or unwillingness to perceive, analyse or understand the self and surrounding. A woman of silence is totally dependent on those in authority, not questioning or voicing an opinion (Belenky et al. 1986). The reality within which she exists creates a kind of vacuum, isolated space with clear norms and concrete behavioral expectations from her. Expressing her personal thoughts is very difficult as she lives in the present and normally speaks of specific concrete behaviors. Depending on to what extent the culture encourages gender inequality or women's humiliation, a woman of silence goes through one or several of abuses, which are emotional, physical, sexual. Women at this stage accept the decisions of authorities as norms without analysis and attempts to understand reasons. Belenky et al (1992) emphasize that women in the status of silence were raised "in profound isolation under the most demeaning circumstances" and that their feelings of being "deaf and dumb" originate belief that they lack "meaning-making and meaning-sharing abilities", rather than a lack of intellectual endowment. They do not explore the power that words have for either expressing or developing thought (Belenky, et al. 1986:25).

It is important to distinguish between strategic silence and "taken-for-granted" or "natural" silence. "They (many feminists) consider that silence and any devalued feminine activities are seen as a strategy to speak and to be heard as well as to interrupt cultural norms and to subvert the status quo".(Ayadi2014, 67).When silence is a strategy, the agency under the disguise of voiceless status or indifference intends to commence a high-scale action directed to change her life or others' lives. The silence in Belenky and et' s research is natural and indicates the condition when the person who experiences this condition tends to absorb outside authoritative opinions and orders without any intention to question them. It is rooted in lack of self-confidence, consideration outer authorities more knowledgeable to allow them to lead their lives. It is either lack of opinion or constant struggle to surpass it.

Silence can grow into a strategy of resistance, as a reaction to multiple facets of oppression. In this case it is silence on surface, it is a strategic disguise of epistemological activity directed to influence on essential ontological aspects of life. At cognitive level the agency is not silent if inner-dialogue, self-analysis, self-assessment and other complicated processes take place on mind.

In the cognitive status of “natural” silence a woman cannot write autobiography, because self-description is an impossible task for her. The authors of “Women’s way of knowing” explain it with lack of conversation in silent women’s lives. “One young woman, deeply puzzled by such questions (“How would you describe yourself to yourself?” etc.), said, “I don’t know... No one has told me yet what they thought of me” (Belenky et al. 1986:31)

Banine, a French writer of Azerbaijani origin, was born in 1905 in Baku, Azerbaijan, to a wealthy and influential family. Her autobiographical diology “Caucasian days” and “Parisian days” describe her life from birth till 1946, the year when she published the first part of her autobiography. “Caucasian Days” cover the years 1905-1922, when the author lived in Baku, Parisian Days illustrate the author’s life in Paris from 1922 to 1946. Banine’s mother died in childbirth and she, the youngest child of the family was brought up by her grandmother, aunts, German nanny. From early childhood Banine contrasted Eastern and Western cultures, the former represented by her grandmother, the latter by her favorite German nanny. Although there is not any explicit oppression or violence in this autobiography, the author illustrates psychological obstacles related to her gender. Her silence does not come from brutal imposition by the surrounding, however she is unhappy with insufficient psychological contact with her father, disturbed by the condition that he rarely spoke with her. Belenky et al. suggest that silence is rooted in lack of communication. Banine also clearly mentions that if her father was slightly more attentive and communicated with her, it would have been less difficult to be frank in expression of her feelings. In her 15, Banine struggles to tell her father about her love to a Russian Bolshevik, however due to previous lack of communication between them, she finds it difficult and keeps silent when he speaks up and suggests her marriage with a 35-year-old man who would instead help him to receive a passport and flee from Bolsheviks who had built their authoritarian regime in his motherland and put him into prison. Her father gives her one day to make her decision, she keeps silent, and this silence is accepted as her positive answer. In Azerbaijan there is such a saying “Silence is a notion of consent”. This worldwide known phrase is well rooted for suitability to this culture. Besides, silence as an answer to a marriage proposal could be well interpreted as happy but modest acceptance of this offer, when the agent of the action is judicious enough not to show her joy for “the most important event” in her life. She left her father’s question unanswered, which allowed the assumption of her family that the response was affirmative. Banine writes that she was sitting alone waiting the mullah (religious person) in the other room to confirm her marriage. “I was keeping a book in my hands. But I could not read. People are wrong when they say that reading diverts your mind from problems... I was keeping the book, but I could not

read it. Only one thought was turning in my confused head: I will belong to Jamil... I was feeling suffocating grief. However I could not cry. My grief was mixed with the hatred towards my father and Jamil, and this did not allow me to cry. The door opened, my aunts entered, hugged me firmly. I did not complain even to them. It was meaningless” (Banine, *Caucasian Days* 1992:172).

The context of the autobiography makes it clear that in case Banine complained, her aunts as owners of received knowledge who stepped to this stage due to their ages and who were transferors of traditions to younger generations, would inevitably try to persuade her that this marriage was the best choice for her. It also was normal that the choice was not made by her. A 15-year-old girl could not be considered by them to be an agency or producer of knowledge or attitude. Her age, gender and status created for her a frame of silence where she was feeling safe and others were thinking of her to be happy.

There is another episode in the second part of Banine’s autobiography. When in Paris, Banine’s elder sister after a long time of hesitation told her father about her intention to marry with a Spanish artist, who was not Muslim but Catholic, his reaction was unexpected indeed. Father said that of course he would be happy if they were in Baku and he would be able to marry his daughters with Muslims, but the circumstances and times were different and he did not object against this marriage at all. The changed conditions and new environment did not encourage silence and unlike Banine who in her 15 did not dare to tell her father about her love to a Russian Bolshevik, Zuleykha, her elder sister, was encouraged with the surrounding and spoke up to talk about her personal choice. Their father was explicit enough in his response because he was experiencing a sense of guilt for having imposed silent acceptance of marriage.

Father’s sense of guilt is the result of internalized morality. Banine while wordlessly accepting the marriage proposal also experienced the sense of guilt before herself, but in case she refused, she would not anyway be able to avoid this feeling. Unlike her father she had to meet the expectancies of the collectivist culture. If she had broken silence and refused, she would inevitably experience shame for having broken prescribed to her gendered code to be useful. In this vicious circle the sense of guilt was unavoidable and in these circumstances Banine chose to sacrifice herself and keep silent, because she was very young and would not be able to overshout loud voices of traditions in a collectivistic culture.

As a relational feminine agency she also experiences empathy, tries to understand the position of her father. When Banine and her husband were in Istanbul waiting for their visas to arrive and enable them to go to Paris, her father wrote to her husband asking to stay in Istanbul and wait for his coming there because he had a business talk with him. Jamil, as an obedient son –in-law stayed there and let her go. Banine writes that it was her father’s sense of guilt which made him go for it and free her from the man with whom she was bound against her will. She also understands Jamil’s feelings and feels guilty for not answering to his letters addressed to her in Paris. Banine says that none of them was guilty in that unpleasant circumstances, on the contrary, both of them were victims of arbitrary conditions.

Received Knowledge

In Belenky's et al. (1986) definition, a woman is at the stage of receiving knowledge if she accepts knowledge from outside, but for diverse disempowering reasons, such as dependency on the knowledge of others, lack of self-confidence, does not express her opinion. She accepts and with years can further transfer the information to others. If at younger age these agencies received this authoritative information as a dogma for lack of confidence, at later periods of their life (if they have not left this stage of cognitive development for the next stage) they usually seem to have shaped their approaches to suit the expectations of those in authority. Sometimes in the roles of mothers, mother-in-laws or elderly members of family they act as authority towards younger females of the family.

If an individual at the stage of received knowledge is asked to characterize herself, she will repeat what the authoritative voice told about her. Received knowledge is very concrete and free from all kinds of ambiguity; this knowledge has a nature of absolutism. This bargaining process is suitable for both of the knowledge provider and its receiver because it confirms the position of the former and provides a safe space for the latter.

Banine's mixed environment allows her to choose (not imposed) authority, a source of knowledge which provides a paradigm to follow. Azerbaijan's specific cultural environment which is neither utterly European, nor Asiatic, and patriarchal in a specific way, Muslim with peculiar (secular) touch of interpretation of religion, created for her a specific type of silence, characteristic for this region. Banine's silence and her quest for an authoritative source of knowledge are reasoned in her search of approval from the chosen by her authority. As her mother died on the day of her birth, she unconsciously accepts her grandmother as a mother archetype, what makes her critical to those of behaviours and attitudes from grandmother which she would not like to possess herself when she comes to her grandmother's age. She adores her German nanny, who however cannot either be a role model or have an authoritative voice for her because she is from another world and her voice would be rather disapproved than approved in the community she lived in. As an outsider the German nanny was not a source of behavioral and value developing knowledge.

Banine chooses as an authoritative voice her cousin and best friend Gulnar, with whom she shares childhood environment, who is a part of her society and who is brave to break conventions. Gulnar is different and Banine admires her for braveness. She is a kind of person who does not analyse the own life. She lives and enjoys moments in it. On the day when Banine was expected to give answer to her father about marriage, she sends Gulnar to Andrei, the Russian Bolshevik whom Banine loved and with whom she arranged to elope, to inform him about the situation and tell that Banine could not go with him, Gulnar elopes with Andrei leaving her husband. The autobiography talks about several further marriages of Gulnar as well. In several parts of her life writing Banine says that she would wish to be as Gulnar who is free from thoughts, anxieties and analyses. Banine concealed her plan to elope with Andrei from Gulnar. She was feeling that if revealed this secret, Gulnar would inevitably approve this and she was afraid to not be able to resist her

authority and stand back from this plan. Gulnar would not be concerned about her uncle's (Banine's father's) suffering in Bolsheviks' prison. Banine is afraid of possibility to be split between two authorities – Gulnar, her role model, chosen by her and imposing patriarchal conventions. At the stage of received knowledge it is impossible to make decisions and the authority with stronger voice usually wins the battle. Banine tells Gulnar about her plan to elope only when she has to ask her to go to Andrei and explain the situation. Gulnar gets angry for not being informed before. She does not give advices, because Banine asks to leave her, takes four pills at ones and goes to bed.

Banine's transition to the next stage is not smooth. After marriage she seems to be independent in developing her own approaches. Her husband Jamil is aware of her attitude to him and does not insist on following national family traditions. After a couple of years Banine persuades him to make a passport for her and leaves for Paris. On her arrival in France, she returns back into the level of received knowledge. A new territory makes her submissive and she keeps silent when husband of her sister ridicules her clothes, when her step-mother finds for her a job in a fashion house, when Gulnar comes to Paris and insists on introducing Banine to her husband's friend.

The levels of silence and receptive knowledge create a medium in which independence, urgency of responsibility seem to be danger or challenge. When the agent experiences necessity to transfer to the next level which confines responsibility, she instinctively desires to flee from expected challenges, go back to the safe space, where her conscious was coded by authorities. The transitional level of subjective knowledge is the hardest stage because if a person has reached its threshold, it is also very difficult to go back to ignorance and one can hardly surpass her intention to analyze. This transitional time-space reality immerses the agent into endless analyses, attempts of self-recognition. "When women have difficulty in seeing themselves as self-important and with less professional face to lose, it follows that the use of "I" and its dailiness in the text are expressions of neither authorial authority nor of egoism. Rather, the I is the voice of individual skepticism from the margins; in many instances not only the I of difference, but one of subversive diffidence in the face of scienticism" (Okely 1992: 12). Writing the own life empowers to challenge this individual skepticism through developing self-recognition.

This double transition and contrast between inner lack of confidence and European surrounding creates a huge conflict which brings her to the extreme situation, to the boundary condition, where she stops because cannot see her future, cannot realize where to go. She thinks about suicide as the only solution. But a bird flying over her head becomes an epiphany to open her eyes to see possibility of positive transformation through self-analysis and self-recognition. She decides to write autobiography. It was a conscious and determined transition to another epistemological level where the agent would inevitably be a source of subjective knowledge and from where she would not be able to return. After developing self-recognition in autobiographies through retrospective analysis the person cannot go back to the position of natural silence or received knowledge. Now the notion of absolute truth ceased to exist giving its place to constant search for self-identity and strife to build sound relationships.

Subjective Knowledge

“Once, Grando (Banine’s partner in Paris) presented me a little nice gun. Thus, he tried to stimulate in me passion to hunting. He hanged a little rabbit from a tree, started to teach me how to target and offered to shoot. Poor animal, feeling its close end, was fluttering in the loom. I shot, but failed to hit. My second and third bullets also missed the mark. I threw the gun on the ground and cried because of shame. Many years passed after this, and now I am able to see how years can change a person. Today, nobody in the world can make me shoot at a bound helpless creature: I cannot understand that young person – me – and I am terrified by her cruelty. Why did “she” decide to cold-bloodedly target and shoot at the poor animal? Why did she do that – for curiosity, cruelty or for somebody’s favour? My today’s essence cannot explain that action of that mine. But it is one and the same person, and my past and present is a unified fate of those “two” (Parisian Days 2006: 142)

Banine uses conceit*, a metaphor to show metamorphosis which took place in all spheres of her life. Providing a concrete episode she gives explicit information about her attitude to other’s opinion, to developing her own standpoint in its dynamics. When a person becomes able to look at the previous self from the recent perspectives, she turns to be a producer of knowledge who is curious to know the motives the past self had while making certain decision. Banine writes that she cannot understand that young woman who was targeting a bound animal. Sometimes people feel difficulty to explain their motives in the past, however, analysis of those puzzles lifts the burden of unpleasant reminiscences. Having shared unpleasing past experiences which cannot be explained from the recent perspective, is another peculiarity of the author’s personality and these episodes open new areas for both the author and the reader to build internal dialogues.

The level of subjective knowledge is challenging because different from the first two stages it requires self-analysis through individuation. This challenge often makes this cognitive stage unavailable or unreachable territory for an individual. Here the gender-based difference in self-perception is even more obvious because the transition from the status of knowledge receiver to the position of knowledge creator is far from being smooth, on the contrary, this transition involves diverse relationships with different social institutions. If men separate “the familiar world of authority-right-we as against the alien world of illegitimate-wrong-others (Perry’s 1970, 59)”, patriarchal societies impose women the opposite roles. “Something usually happens in a woman’s life to encourage her to go from a receiver of knowledge to progress to the level of subjectivity. The woman begins to accept that she has a voice, “an inner source of strength” lying within herself, and an opinion that is due to past experiences. She recognizes that she does not have to agree with the authority but is still cautious about voicing opinions. Truth is experienced within oneself but not acted upon for fear of jeopardizing the associations one has with others at the same level” (Pamela R. H. Bailey summarizing Belenky, et al. 1986:54-58).

Many autobiographies are intended to be written at this stage of cognitive development because the agent starts questioning and reasoning the voices of outside authorities,

* From the Latin term for “concept,” conceit is unconventional, logically complex, metaphor whose delights are more intellectual than sensual

stops listening to them and commences inner dialogue. Life writing develops the sense of self and takes the author to the following stages of cognitive development. Creating a specific balance between ontological and expressive levels of self-analysis, freeing the self from the conventions of surrounding institutions with their impositions, the author uses deconstructive discursive methods to isolate, abstract herself in order to avoid distractors obscuring her view on the authentic self, and after having fulfilled this task, uses another discursive method which can be aggregation based on elective affinities. The author's participation after having passed through individuation is a different from her initial involvement level, because now those social institutions have lost their dogmatic power to control her choices, on the contrary, she has become empowered to consciously negotiate with them her status. 'Individuation means precisely the better and more complete fulfillment of the collective qualities of the human being, since adequate consideration of the peculiarity of the individual is more conducive to better social achievement than when the peculiarity is neglected or suppressed' (Jung 1993: 182)

The self-perception is interrupted at this point. The agent who develops subjective knowledge becomes able to draw lines between herself and her mother and grandmothers and cease to see themselves as their continuation. Interruption takes place at different levels; ontological, allowing the agent to draw a line between her previous existence and recent life, social – the agent re-evaluates her relationships with different social institutions, personal – transference from the status of ruled to the status of ruler in her own life and sometimes an influential model for others. "Interruption becomes a key rhetorical strategy of obtaining a voice and assuming the position of the speaking subject in the political and aesthetic arenas".(EwaZiarek 2012: 41). In their autobiographies women writers usually give a special place to description of their mothers and grandmothers and usually they are critical to them. The developer of subjective knowledge tends to interrupt the continuation of the lineage of submissive women's patterns, separate herself from the traditional model and continue her way consciously relying on her self-analysis and self-recognition.

Autobiography writing becomes a discursive process which creates a friendly medium for the author to repeatedly go through her past life looking at the events, values and attitudes differently. The woman in her recent status enters into dialogue with the woman who lived her life, preferring to surpass her own voice, was unheard and unrecognized, and they create a dialogue. Chaotic elements of life becomes a narrative. In other words, the subject moves via autobiography, from hysteria to historia (Gilmore1994: 55), or from chaos to self-recognition. Having broken the silence of single consciousness the author gains transcendent perspective. Two consciousnesses communicate; this communication is psychologically safe and friendly because not any of them has the ultimate word. This rebirth from discursive death or the process of self-revelation has different stages.

The level of subjective knowledge is multilayered. The first phase of this cognitive process is separation or interruption. The separation can be physical and psychological when the agency rejects her previous silent, knowledge receiving self. She can physically escape the reality with which she used to identify herself or psychologically deny her pre-

vious status. Physical separation is always followed with psychological, which, however, can also take place alone and is illuminating to reveal different aspects of the woman writer's personality. The reasons that bring to separation can be different, but they can be generalized under the condition of impossibility to continue the life in its previous way. The woman, who becomes conscious of the necessity of changes, stops, isolates today's self from the yesterday's, draws a line between them, tries to study the reasons and circumstances which created the yesterday's woman. The new self investigates the previous self, tries to find the authentic voice, to distinguish it from that authoritative dogmatic one unconsciously considered by the previous self as being authentic. The former self tries to be sincere, but the latter self strives to find contradictions between her personality and persona, define the reasons which cause a conflict between them. Psychological conflict caused by silence, suppressing of the own authentic voice, pretending that her life was happy or bearable, gets released into words, analysis, confessions, epiphanies, hindsight and creates mental comfort and harmony.

In the end of *Parisian Days* Banine confesses that there is a huge discrepancy between her recent life and that she expected it to be in Paris. She is tired of pretending to be happy, strong and confident. In the final episode she thinks of her life, wonders how it would be if she stayed in Baku, thinks about suicide. This short journey to the past encourages her to try herself in writing. It seems to be incarnation as a text, a chance to live her life again, this time from the angle of the subjective knowledge owner. This flashback helps the reader understand the author more clearly. She has started writing when there was an urgent need to have her subjective voice, when there arose a hope to be able to reassess and change her life.

Banine analyses her past decisions from the perspective of her recent status. She clearly explains that the reason of her marriage with a person she did not love was her cowardice. She also remembers that at her 15 she made her decision under the influence of received knowledge, in accordance with conventional expectations. She writes that she hated her father for this, but the self with subjective knowledge finds the reason in her authentic self, links her choice to internal rather than external factors. The owner of subjective knowledge talks about her past self who lacked this knowledge. The reader observes in which peculiar ways the author deconstructs her past life.

Procedural Knowledge

Belenky et al. (1986) talk about separate and connected knowing. A woman who is conscious that she owns voice, tries to make it heard for both herself and others. This voice develops and becomes more audible in the process of life-writing. "A connected knower empathizes with others and feels it is her responsibility to help them understand their situation so they might make the best decision".(Pamela R. H. Bailey).

Women use relational model of the self not an autonomous model. Even in the autobiographies with strong individuation tendencies there is attempt of further participation. Women who are immersed in multiple social roles, experience a strong need for individuation in order to clarify for herself the own role in any given relationship.

A person perceives the self as an individual, as a relational agent and as a group member. A variety of research suggests that men and women differ in their interdependent orientation: whereas women tend to be more relationally interdependent, men tend to be more collectively interdependent.

Individual, relational, and collective self are different aspects of personality. Writing an autobiography is a tendency to individuation for recognition of authenticity, but not an attempt to annihilate or minimize the relational motive of the self. Individuation means precisely the better and more complete fulfillment of the collective qualities of the human being, since adequate consideration of the peculiarity of the individual is more conducive to better social achievement than when the peculiarity is neglected or suppressed' (Jung 1993: 182) Susan Sontag emphasizes that "a written account— which, depending on its complexity of thought, reference, and vocabulary, is pitched at a larger or smaller readership". The author of this quote talks about a photograph, which "has only one language and is destined potentially for all"(Sontag 2004:18). Autobiography is a more dynamic and more expressive self-portrait with the same participation function. It shows the process of identity formation, its subjective and objective aspects.

The journey from silence to speech, self-expression implies gaining a hearer. Banine finds herself to be able to talk about different social institutions from two perspectives: Azerbaijani as the land of her childhood and early youth and Western European as the place where she spent all her life after the age 17 . In the episode when her uncle comes back from Moscow, gathers all family members to inform them that at last, Banine's father decided to marry for the second time, the emphasis is made on the questions everybody asked about that woman. "Who is her father? What is he selling?". When they knew that he was only a poor engineer and did not sell anything, they sighed. Banine makes an ironical remark: "No matter what to sell, oil or watermelon, the important matter was to sell something"(Banine, *Caucasian Days* 1992: 47). When Banine's uncle also said that she hesitated for a long time to answer positively to his brother's proposal, everybody got very surprised. Banine understands and explains their perspective. These people thought that with that amount of fortune, not any woman could refuse her father. Banine also understands her step-mother's perspective: it was very difficult for a woman who lived in Paris and received European education to get accustomed to those noisy, querulous, gossiping people. She sometimes expresses her attitude to the described events, sometimes her attitude can be conjectured from the context and sometimes her attitude remains enigmatic. As she sees herself as an individual, she now is able to separate herself from all communities to look at each of them separately, or sometimes including herself into one or several of these communities and look at her life from the other perspective.

Constructed Knowledge

When Grandó was out and Banine was alone at home, she pondered about life. "My thoughts about the future were vague and agonizing. I was thinking about uselessness, meaninglessness of the life. But the thought about unexpected death was terrifying

me. I wanted to flee from this room. Will I be vegetating all my life, possible a long one? I escaped war, revolution, monotonous life of sisters-Muslims not in order to live similar to theirs' life. No, I protest against this! I am ready to stand hardships and poverty, but I cannot even think of being separated from my personal freedom. I obtained it with such a difficulty! (Parisian Days 2006: 88)

It is the most mature level of knowledge. "She wants a better quality of life for herself and for others"(Pamela R. H. Bailey). Empowered by the sense of completed self-analysis and self-interpretation, inspired with the accomplishment to have helped others through introducing the own story, the author definitely feels herself deserving a better life. This level is the culmination of cognitive development because as its background and root it has self-analysis, self-interpretation, understanding of others, introducing the own life experience to help the others. "During the transition into a new way of knowing, there is an impetus to allow the self back into the process of knowing, to confront the pieces of the self that may be experienced as fragmented and contradictory"(Belenky 1986: 136). They develop a narrative sense of the self – past and future. They do not want to dismiss former ways of knowing so much as they want to stay alert to the fact that different perspectives and different points in time produce different answers (Belenky 1986: 136)

I was unwillingly comparing all these (the nice apartment, evening gatherings and conversations in Paris) with "that" life and feeling difference. Would such kind of talks be interesting in my homeland, where destructive changes erased all past notions about interests and morality? Would a poor shoeless person think about fashionable clothes? Would a person think about love intrigues if his close relatives are suffering in prisons? There, in the homeland, shops and counters are empty; people experience difficulties because of inefficient electricity, they live in constant fear because of spreading terrible humours. All these make the life unbearable. Only three months before, I lived in a different planet, where in families they tried but were not able to keep Islamic traditions which lasted thousand years, where the air was filled with revolutionary slogans and calls. I lived inside all this revolutionary turmoil and heard the calls of the new wave. A little bit more, and I would have gone by another way. If I was a little bit braver...(Banine 2006: 89)

...But there is an absolutely different world here; the life here (in Paris) flows in a secure measured way. And it pulled me out of the past, severe, cruel life. Now I was able to see the difference between disaster and happiness, life and death, grief and joy, all which fill the world. I was thinking about millions, billions of people who lived in a world with constant contradictions, about fates of those people, about what I am not aware of. A huge wave of life rushed upon me and kindled my desire to cognate everything in its way, to go through fire, drink from all its wells, even from those which are filled with poison...

That is the decision which would change the author's life. "To cognate everything" is followed with metaphorical expressions "go through fire", "drink from poisonous wells". It creates another, more complicated metaphor to express all difficulties of the cognitive process, after having experienced of which the author is not the same person who she was before. She is not tolerant to outside authoritative voices; she cannot sup-

press her voice and does not absorb received knowledge. She is a producer of knowledge, and her voice has been developed enough to inspire others to change their lives. Besides, facilitating changes in the own life and others' lives inspire to create a more conscious, empowered future. Autobiographic effort of self-display sets in motion compromise the hope of a self-discovery that would open up a perspective not only on the past but on the future. (Olney 1980: 199) The look from outside as an omniscient and omnipotent creator justifies the author in the position of a ruler and director. "Change requires both processes of interruption and continuity in order to advance newer modes of doing" [Papacharissi, Easton]. As an owner of constructed knowledge the author looks at her personality in the context of diverse realities. She is also able to retrospectively see different knowledge positions (or perspectives) she experienced in the process of her cognitive development. When the conflict between social conventions and psychological inconvenience becomes tense, there appears a need to find the sources of contradictions. The internal voice seeks to break the silence encouraged by outside authorities for many years. At the end of this long and usually painful process the person realizes that "truth now resides within the person and can negate answers that the outside world supplies"(Belenky et al 1986: 54).

Conclusion

This paper probes the dynamics of the relationship between ontological and epistemological aspects of the writer's personality in the process of life-writing. In particular, it attempts to show the interrelation between personal cognitive development and autobiographical writing which has within it the potential for wider transformative social resonance. It might be argued that in certain instances the impact reaches into the social dimension, extending outward the positive changes in author and reader. My study brought classification of different functions of life-writings and their connection with cognitive levels and personal-social relationships; this study defined different functions of autobiographies, which can be classified as follows:

Personal motives – to define the meaning of the own life, to create a coherent self, silence the voices of imposing conventions, break one's own silence, get empowered;

The second motive is to raise consciousness, to help others recognize their own problems, reassess one's sense of guilt, develop more cognizant approach to diverse social institutions and relationships.

The third function of autobiographies is to help understand cultural and religious differences in perception of different concepts.

The fourth function is developing empathy on the basis of identification stimulated by thus achieved empathy and insights. The study argues that these functions are interwoven with the main focus on personal motives, because only having understood the self, one becomes able to make others conscious of shared problems and inspire to find solutions. Autobiographies help understand subconscious preferences and choices of different cultures and accept diversities. Autobiographies help the authors develop their subjective knowledge, encourage them to approach to events in analytic ways. Taking control of the

own life through creating the self as a text, attributing to the new self such qualities as independent thinking and evaluating ability, leads to empowerment which kindles desire to stimulate raising of consciousness in others, showing them their own experience within this process of cognitive development. The psychological interruptions take place when the person feels developed enough to move to the next stage, or in other words, when they have been empowered enough to think of further positive changes in their personality and relationships. The social interruption happens when the author begins to develop in her subjective knowledge reassessing her relationships at very diverse levels. She ceases toxic relationships, imposing authoritative voices in her life and builds new relationships based on harmony and justice.

Life-writing serves to demonstrate to readers the whole process of the author's cognitive development. In individual stories, approaches and analyses, they find typicalities and similar patterns. Commonness stimulates identification and develops empathy which consequently encourages global dialogues. The autobiographical discourse creates a context informing about subtleties of all aspects of human lives.

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შაფაქ დადაშოვა (აზერბაიჯანი)

ბიოგრაფიული ნაწარმოებების შექმნის ეპისტემოლოგიური ასპექტები რეზიუმე

საკვანძო სიტყვები: ბანიანი, ავტობიოგრაფიული პროზა.

სტატიაში შევისწავლით პიროვნების ონტოლოგიურ და ეპისტემოლოგიურ ასპექტებს შორის დამოკიდებულების დინამიკას ცხოვრების აღწერის პროცესში. უპირველეს ყოვლისა, განვიხილავ ბელენკის და სხვათა თეორიულ-ემპირიული კვლევებს, არსებულ კულტურული და სოციალური მოლოდინის სფეროში ქალის კოგნიტიური განვითარების პრობლემის გადასაწყვეტად. სტატიაში ავტობიოგრაფიული ნაწარმოებები გაანალიზებულია, როგორც თვითამოცნობის მეთოდოლოგია და ისინი განხილულია, როგორც საიმედო წყაროები, ანთროპოლოგების, ფსიქოლოგების, სოციოლოგებისთვის კულტურების გასაგებად, რამდენადაც ამ ნაშრომებს შემოაქვს კონტექსტუალური და ინდივიდუალური სუბიექტურობა ყველა სახის განზოგადებაში და საშუალებას იძლევა დავინახოთ კოლექტიური ცნობიერება ინდივიდუალური კუთხიდან. ჩემი ვარაუდით, ჰუმანიტარული და სოციალური დისციპლინების მეთოდების კომბინაციის გამოყენება, სხვადასხვა კულტურებში შექმნილი

ავტობიოგრაფიების ანალიზისას, ხელს შეუწყობს კოლექტიური იდენტობის უფრო სიღრმისეულად გამოვლენას.

თეორიული კონცეფციების დადასტურებისთვის წარმოდგენილია ბანი-ნის ავტობიოგრაფიის ანალიზი. ბანინი დაიბადა აზერბაიჯანში, ცხოვრობდა ამ ქვეყანაში 17 წლამდე, შემდეგ გადავიდა საფრანგეთში, სადაც ის ცხოვრობდა სიცოცხლის ბოლომდე. მისი ავტობიოგრაფია აღწერს კოგნიტიური განვითარების სხვადასხვა ეტაპებს, სოციალური ურთიერთობების მიმართ მის აზიურ და ევროპულ ხედვას. ავტობიოგრაფია მკითხველს უჩვენებს ავტორის კოგნიტიური განვითარების მთელ პროცესს. ცალკეულ ისტორიებში, მიდგომებსა და ანალიზში, ისინი გამოავლენს მსგავს სურათებს. საერთო მახასიათებლები სტიმულს აძლევს იდენტიფიკაციას და განავითარებს თანაგრძნობას, რომელიც შემდგომ ხელს უწყობს გლობალურ დიალოგებს. ავტობიოგრაფიული დისკურსი ქმნის კონტექსტს, რომელიც გვაძლევს ინფორმაციას ადამიანის ცხოვრების ყველა ასპექტის თავისებურებების შესახებ.

ჩემი დასკვნები გვიჩვენებს, რომ ბიოგრაფიული ნაწარმოებები კოგნიტურ და სოციალურ საქმიანობას წარმოადგენს. რამდენადაც ისინი ორიენტირებულია როგორც ავტორზე, ასევე მკითხველზეც. მეთოდოლოგია მიმართულია ცნობიერების ამალღებაზე, თანაგრძნობის გაძლიერებაზე და ინტერკულტურული ურთიერთგაგების გაზრდაზე. სხვა კულტურათა შინაგანი ნორმების და დამოკიდებულებების ცოდნა და გააზრება მკითხველს ეხმარება თავი კომფორტულად იგრძნოს კულტურის მიმართ სენსიტიურ საკითხებთან მიმართებაში. კვლევაში ნავარაუდევია, რომ ავტობიოგრაფიების შესწავლის გზით, სოციოლოგებს პირდაპირი წვდომა აქვთ ავთენტურ წყაროებთან, რომლებშიც გენდერზე ბაზირებული მოლოდინია ჩამოყალიბებული, ის, თუ როგორ ხდება მონაწილეთა იდენტობისა და ინტერესების ფორმირება კულტურის ფარგლებში, როგორც პირდაპირი, ასევე არაპირდაპირი იძულების თვალსაზრისით. ის ასევე გვთავაზობს შემდგომი კვლევის შესაძლებლობას, სხვადასხვა კულტურებში კოგნიტიური განვითარების მსგავსი სურათების კვლევის გზით. იმის შესწავლა, თუ როგორ იქმნება ნორმები სხვადასხვა კოტექსტში, ასევე შესაძლებლობას გვაძლევს დავაკავშიროთ ნორმები, როგორც ადგილობრივ/ისტორიულად კონსტრუქტიული ნორმების მიმანიშნებელი და არა, როგორც ყოვლისმომცველი დიქტატი.

სტატიაში გამოკვლეულია ქალის ავტობიოგრაფიების კონცეფცია. მასში შესწავლილია პიროვნების ინდივიდუალური და სოციალური მხარეების ურთიერთქმედების გზები. ავტობიოგრაფიის წერის პროცესში, როდესაც ავტორი გაივლის ინდივიდუალიზაციის, მისი ავთენტური ხმის ძიების და სხვადასხვა ერთობლიობებში მონაწილეობის მისთვის შესაფერისი ფორმის შერჩევის პროცესებს და განსაზღვრავს მისი ინდივიდუალური ხმის და სხვადასხვა პირობითობებითა და ნორმებით ნაკარნახევის თანაფარდობას. თეორიული დაშვებები დაკავშირებულია აზერბაიჯანელი მწერლის, ბანინის ავტობიოგრაფიის ანალიზთან. ამ ავტობიოგრაფიაში ავტორი აღწერს საკუთარ პიროვნებას, ასახავს მის კულტურას, დამოკიდებულებებსა და ფასეულობებს, რომლებიც მის დროს არსებობდა. უდავოდ საჭიროა სხვადასხვა ავტობიოგრაფიების შემდგომი კვ-

ლევა, კოგნიტიური განვითარების კუთხით, ასევე თვით-იდენტიფიკაციაზე მათი ზემოქმედების თვალსაზრისით, რაც მოიცავს გენდერთან დაკავშირებული მოლოდინის შედეგების მნიშვნელოვან ემპირიულ კვლევას დაგენდერთან დაკავშირებულ დანაშაულის გრძნობაზე სხვადასხვა კულტურებში არსებულ შეხედულებებს. იმ ავტობიოგრაფიების კითხვას, სადაც ავტორი მუდმივად განიცდის დანაშაულის გრძნობას, განიცდის მეტისმეტ დატვირთვას, გენდერზე ბაზირებული მოლოდინის გამო, შეუძლია აამაღლოს მკითხველის ცნობიერება და გადააფასოს დამოკიდებულებების მკითხველებისთვის და ხელახლა ააგოს დამოკიდებულება სოციალურ ინსტიტუციებთან. ამ სფეროში შემდგომი კვლევები ასევე გამოავლენს იმის მიზეზს, თუ რატომ ჩნდება სხვადასხვა კულტურებში ქალების ავტობიოგრაფიები სხვადასხვა სიხშირით და კოგნიტიური განვითარების რა დონეებს მიესაღმებოდა ან არ მიესაღმებოდა, სხვადასხვა კულტურებში.

ავტობიოგრაფიები საშუალებას გვაძლევს გავერკვეთ სხვადასხვა კულტურის დრო-სივრცულ რეალობაში, შევხედოთ მას ავტორის თვალთ და ამავე დროს, შევძლოთ დავინახოთ ის ავტორის აღქმისა და ინტერპრეტაციის მიღმა. ბიოგრაფიები გვაძლევს მდიდარ ინფორმაციას ინდივიდუალურ-სოციალური დამოკიდებულებების შესახებ. ყოველი ცალკეული ავტობიოგრაფია უნიკალურია, რამდენადაც ის წარმოადგენს უნიკალური ადამიანის ცხოვრებას, მისი ავტორისეული ინტერპრეტაციით. თუმცა, სოციალური მეცნიერებები, რომლებიც დაინტერესებული არიან კოლექტიური კულტურული დამოკიდებულებებით და ქცევებით, ამ ტექსტებს, როგორც კვლევით წყაროებს, იყენებენ. „საზღვრებში, რომლებიც კვეტს სამყაროს და ახდენს მის გლობალიზაციას, პირადი და სოციალური პოზიციები, პიროვნებასა და იდენტობაში, სულ უფრო და უფრო მჭიდრო, ჰეტეროგენული და კონფლიქტურიც კი ხდება (ჰერბერტ ჯ.მ. ჰერმანსი). ავტობიოგრაფია ქმნის კონკრეტულ მეტაფორას, სინეკდოქურ იერარქიას, ერთიანის შესაცნობად, მისი ნაწილების მეშვეობით და ნაწილების შესაცნობად, ერთიანის მეშვეობით, ანუ სოციალური დამოკიდებულებების შესაცნობად, პირადი დამოკიდებულებების მეშვეობით და პირიქით. რამდენადაც ავტობიოგრაფიები ინდივიდუალური ადამიანების ცხოვრებას შეეხება, ყველა განზოგადება, ერთი შეხედვით, მოიცავს გამარტივების და ნაკლებად შეფასების საფრთხეს, ინდივიდუალური ადამიანის ცხოვრებაზე საუბრისას და დაუშვებს განზოგადებულ სოციალურ დამოკიდებულებას, მათ მიღმა. მაგრამ, ამავე დროს, ისინი წამოჭრის ფუნდამენტურ ეპისტემოლოგიურ შეკითხვებს კოლექტიური ქვეცნობიერის, თვითაღქმის და თვითშეფასების შესახებ, რამდენადაც პიროვნებებს აუცილებლად აქვთ შეხება სოციალურ კონცეფციებთან და ინსტიტუციებთან არსებული პირობითობების მიღებით ან უარყოფით. ავტობიოგრაფიაში აღწერილი დამოკიდებულებები მკითხველს აცნობს ამ კონცეფციებს, ავტორის შეხედულებებს მათ შესახებ, ასეთი შეხედულებების განმსაზღვრელ მიზეზებს და პირობებს, რომლებმაც წარმოშვა ასეთი მიზეზები. რეალური ცხოვრების გამოცდილება წარმოშობს თანაგრძნობას, უნივერსალური კონცეფციების ცნობის და ინდივიდუალური იდენტიფიკაციის სტიმულირების გზით.