

Valentia

The literary deity in the paratext of the novel

HOSSEINIAN, Tayebeh

PhD in French Language and Literature,
Shahid Beheshti University

Before being an autobiography, *Valentia* interprets the literature's divine nature in its domination over the author. The creator of the work, Marie d'Agoult, under the influence of this despotic force, ties her literary identity to a male name to find a field of literary activity. As for her personal life, *Valentia* represents aspects of her personality. Convinced of the uselessness of virtue towards her unfaithful husband, the badly married woman abandons herself to the desires of forbidden love, but she does not find refuge there so ends her life. The events are hardly any different from the author's life and, this raises questions: *Valentia*, does she reflect the image of her creator, and if so how to justify the author's male name? By the way, the pseudonymous practice alludes to the complexities of the female presence in the literary world. The text relates the dark life of a woman in a traditional society and, the paratext is an area of female exclusion from social activities. Thus, the author and the character, have two behaviors in the same situation. One of them ignores his aristocratic origin and claims his rights. The other, powerless to direct his destiny, submits to self-inflicted death. This paper, comparing two women, depicts different ways of facing the same situation and attempts to shed light on these differences and similarities.

Keywords: gender discrimination, aristocratic origin, male pseudonym, authority of literary institutions.