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## **Herstory. The Value of Diaries as Sources for the Study of Women's Independence Discourse: The Category of Viewpoint**

### **1. Introduction**

Language historians in many places<sup>1</sup> express, explicitly or implicitly, their belief in the value of diaries as historical and linguistic sources. I share this position and in this work I seek to point out the value of this type of text as a source for the study of a language's linguistic past in the broadest sense, reviewing the material from the perspective of language use. This increasingly frequent treatment of language and its products in scientific analyses, including diachronic analyses, as an action, an effect of interaction, of interpersonal relations, is an extremely attractive viewpoint, as it allows a coherent perspective of the communicative categories related to language in connection with the knowledge and value systems of the speakers. The research field determined by the category of discourse is therefore set in motion, both in its empirical dimension (the object of research) and methodological dimension (the research method).

The material so valuable for such research is memoirs, diaries, chronicles and personal journals from World War I.<sup>2</sup> Their generic classification is of less importance; a strict definition of the genre in their case is neither entirely possible nor cognitively useful for the purposes assumed here. All of them may be classified as the fourth literary genre, which for Roman Zimand is the literature of personal document [Zimand 1990]. In the perspective of the analyses undertaken in

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1 This thought was most eloquently expressed by Bogdan Walczak [2002: 193–194].

2 The bibliographic addresses of the texts analysed, along with the abbreviations used, may be found at the end of the paper. I cite quotes according to editions. Bold fonts in quotes are mine, other emphases are copied from the original.

this study, as well as future studies, an important feature of this writing is that it conveys “knowledge about life, which is assumed to be true” [Zimand 1990: 9], it is “a sincere confession, a testimony of the era” [Zimand 1990: 11]. Its content is intentional in nature. The influence of various factors determining the view of reality cannot be excluded, an aspect that will be discussed later in this outline, but this does not change the fact that diaries may be considered a record of authentic thoughts and experiences. This is their first value.

In addition to the personal and truthful dimension of diary writing, another of its values is that the events presented in the diaries “were described in a manner different from the accepted or official ones” [Zimand 1990: 27].<sup>3</sup> This (predicted at this stage of the research) dissimilarity is related to the authorship of the works. For the texts studied here are written by women. Four texts were analysed: a multi-author volume entitled *Śłużba Ojczyźnie* (Serving the Homeland; hereinafter: SO), two diaries from cities under siege: Lviv (DL) by Zofia Romanowiczówna and Przemyśl (DP) by Helena Jabłońska, as well as the diaries of Zofia Nałkowska (DN). The authors were direct participants in the historical events mentioned: either as soldiers, nurses, intelligence officers, letter carriers, agitators, organisers of financial aid and food suppliers, or, finally as observers.

The discussion around *écriture féminine* today is no longer controversial, but it is still necessary to establish that the issue of women’s writing involves the need to ask questions “about the relationship of women to power, to the social order, to the order of language” [Kłosińska 2003: 221]. From this perspective, the situation is particularly peculiar in the context of historiography, whose traditional androcentric perspective has been valid for centuries. Today, herstory is an increasing presence in the popular consciousness. It is worth emphasising that the process of reclaiming women for history is not just about so-called compensatory history, i.e. supplementing “the historical narrative with lost chapters on the forgotten half of the human race” [Bobako 2009: 4]. Today, thanks to French annalists studying protracted social processes, an equal part of the historical narrative is, as well as the traditional record of political events, the everyday experience of communities hitherto overlooked in historiography, including women. The idea is as much to emphasise the importance of history written “on the distaff”, poorly represented in scientific and didactic circles, as it is to discover the “phenomenon of women’s experience of history” [Dąbrowska 2004: 7] and to try to determine whether there exists a specific language of this experience. For research designed in this way, women’s literature of personal document is an excellent area of exploration.

3 This phenomenon is what Zimand calls excess. For him, it is the basis of the literariness of the texts [Zimand 1990: 26–28].

Finally, the diaries reveal a multiplicity of viewpoints, understood as a linguistic category, and this value of women's literature of personal document is the subject of analysis below.<sup>4</sup> The specific goal this pilot and preliminary overview of the material will be to identify the viewpoints on the war and, at the same time, to reconstruct its image emerging from the narratives of female authors.<sup>5</sup> I consider the diversity of viewpoints' to be another value of women's literature of personal document in the study of discourse of women's independence.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Authors of *Służba Ojczyźnie* (Serving the Homeland)

Let us begin with a book of memoirs of female participants in the struggle for independence. For proper interpretation of the text, it is necessary to take into account several factors. Firstly, the accounts are written *ex post*, published in 1929 in an independent Poland, which at the dawn of its autonomous existence had to concentrate on shaping the right attitudes and behaviours desirable in the newly formed state. Secondly, the volume was commissioned by an editorial committee chaired by Aleksandra Piłsudska. Thirdly, and finally, following from the previous remark, all the authors represent the same outlook, belonging to the supporters of Józef Piłsudski, whose cult after the May coup became the official state ideology. The consequence of these factors must be the recognition that these statements are entangled in the state discourse, realising the demand for a certain way of remembering and experiencing a pivotal moment for the national community.

The reconstruction of the way the war is conceptualised must factor in the fact that at the centre of the narrators' value system is the **idea of independence**, the thought of restitution of the Polish state. In the words of one: "We are united by a common feeling of this Poland, which is about to 'explode' any moment now, whose hours begins to strike joyfully on the clock of history" [SO: 6]. Their political and social involvement determines not only their actions, but also the way they talk about them. Its notable feature is the unequivocal identification of war with the chance to win independence. It is difficult to find in these memoirs descriptions showing the drama of the fighting, the death of loved ones, the destruction of culture, the barbarism of soldiers and the hardships of

4 Jerzy Bartmiński defines it as follows: "a subject-cultural factor that determines the way to speak about an object [...] about the choice of features that are stated about the object in specific statements and fixed in meaning" [Bartmiński 1999: 110].

5 For the sake of methodological order, it should be said that I understand discourse in the spirit of Polish linguistics (the approach of Bożena Witosz is the closest to my understanding, see Witosz 2016). I distinguish it here on the basis of the sender criterion and the subject criterion (let us emphasise that independence is understood in the perspective of an enslaved state remaining under partition).

the occupation. These experiences are downplayed, as implied in the sentence: “I came out of this oppression relatively unharmed, having lost only two teeth, which were knocked out with a butt by some Ukrainian” [SO: 258], or marked by unemotional, synthetic, reporting phrases that sound particularly indifferent when juxtaposed with the experiences they speak of:

[...] we were tormented by the occupiers. [SO: 33]

[...] a lot of our boys died there. [SO: 376]

We were burying our heroes for days. [SO: 244]

[...] soldier’s graves on roadsides. [SO: 93]

Water in all the trenches – and it’s a cold November. [SO: 46]

I saw how the forest filled with the wounded: some were walking, supported by colleagues. [SO: 57]

The graves of the sisters, who died a soldier’s death, testify to their work in independent Poland. [SO: 117]

The Cadet School was quiet and gloomy despite the victory. Of the crew of sixty-some men, more than twenty have been lost. [SO: 270]

White children, swollen because of hunger, were wandering the streets and falling down helplessly. [SO: 285]

Sometimes there is only an emotional epithet, an accumulation, a maximiser of content in the form of a generalising pronoun *everywhere*, *whole*, an exclamation mark or an ellipsis signifying silence in the face of a frightening reality, such as:

It is so **immensely sad** to see those killed, those with whom one had barely spoken a few hours ago. [SO: 45]

**Horrible** sight of four hanged boys – all between the ages of 9–12. [SO: 44]

In addition to all the miseries of war, **a terrible** famine came to our homes. [SO: 285]

The joy of the day was marred by **the terrible** news of the death of 14-year-old Jurek, Ms. Zagórska's son. He died a soldier's death that night in Łyczakowski cemetery. [SO: 244]

The surroundings are **very** dilapidated **everywhere** – bare chimneys sticking out **everywhere**, here and there a grave with a crooked, hastily erected cross... forests burned or cut down. [SO: 44]

[...] **the entire** field is covered with corpses. The ground burrowed deeply with bullets – lots of fired shells **everywhere** – destruction all around, trees uprooted lie on the ground. [SO: 46]

**Terrible** hell here! [SO: 45]

She was shot in the jaw, and to make matters worse, the Ukrainians got her. [...] The Russian countrywomen felt deeply sorry for her and said **terrible** things about their soldiers. [SO: 274]

The quotes cited above are almost all descriptions of wartime experiences. For a 393-page story, this is objectively not much. The accounts are dominated by terms denoting warfare that emphasise the main idea and driving force behind the wartime struggle, i.e. Poland's independence. The struggle for independence is regularly referred to as a *service* or *cause* and clarified with contextual valued epithets designating the goal and identifying its pursuers *niepodległościowa* (*independent/independence*), *Polish, our: independence action* [SO: 3], *independence movement* [SO: 3, 137, 160, 345], *independence work* [SO: 15, 138, 165, 174, 350], *serve our cause* [SO: 35], *our cause* [SO: 23], *Polish cause* [SO: 38, 145, 362]. There are also names that emphasise the necessity of action (*civic duty* [SO: 22]) and absolute dedication to the cause – *self-sacrifice* (*devotion*) [SO: 22]. Let us add that the opportunity to be involved in a *great moment of history* [SO: 5] evokes maximum enthusiasm, euphoria, allows one to exude inexhaustible energy, and a quite frequent background to the memories is the image of friendly weather, the elements of which are brightness, sunshine, spring and singing birds, referring to the culturally established opposition with an axiological dimension: bright = good, dark = bad [on this topic, see: Hawrysz 2018].

### 3. Zofia Romanowiczówna

A different point of view is taken by the author of *Lviv Diary*, Zofia Romanowiczówna. She is 72 years old when the war breaks out. She is a recognised and extremely active social activist, teaches Polish history to young people, organises public reading rooms, initiates raffles to provide funds for patriotic work and founds the Klaudyna Potocka Society, the so-called *klaudynki* (Claudines), a women's organisation aimed at rousing patriotic feelings, self-education, propagation of reading, knowledge of history and native traditions. She takes on many other initiatives because, as she says, "I have to love a lot and act, one day spent without work, without doing something, without doing something for someone, weighs me down unbearably" [DL2: 44]. The patriotic upbringing she received at home resulted in her active participation in the January Uprising, Romanowiczówna delivered correspondence, produced ammunition, sewed linen and prepared dressings for field hospitals [Bujak, access 2022; Sudolski 2005]. These aspects of her biography are important because they determine the point of view adopted by the author of the diary, which may be described as **nationality-oriented and private**. A strong yearning for independence is intertwined here with an awareness of the high price that must be paid for the freedom of the homeland. The constant clash between these two aspects of the war is evident in many passages found in the diary. Warfare is referred to as a *crime* and is labelled with attributes denoting strong condemnation: *wretched, monstrous, terrible*, but it is also described with the highest pathos: *a historical moment*. War arouses extreme feelings: it generates fear and suffering on the one hand, combined with hope and excitement on the other, cf.:

I strongly believe in a better fate for the Homeland, I fear only about the huge death toll still to happen, I fear inconceivably not only for those who I care about, and are on the battlefield, for the children of friends and relatives – oh God! ...finally, those horrors unheard of that they predict will happen in the spring. [DL2: 256]

Our cause, thank God, is doing better and better, but how much more suffering is still to come, and the resolution is still far away, and so is peace desired so much, longed for, not to mention the growing misery, the sacrifices of young lives, hearts torn... [DL2: 296]

The war, this wretched, terrible war continues – people are dying, so many victims! Such outrageous suffering! [DL2: 270]

And the war, this miserable, huge, heinous crime continues, and for the dear Homeland no brighter horizons are opening yet – and poverty all around, and misery abounds and... falls, unfortunately! – and my loved ones suffer, and I with them, so vividly, so intensely. [DL2: 267]

Every now and then, there are shameful revelations of things that bring disgrace on us, and I such a historic moment – God, God!... [DL2: 324]

[...] our poor Legions, our fears and hopes, the works and sacrifices of others, for admiration, above all and tragedies in the families, ah! [DL2: 267]

The Supreme Committee creates legions – “legions” again, ah, like those in the past, so devoted, holy, and hopefully happier. [DL2: 252]

I tremble and my soul is on fire. Yesterday upon hearing this news it was as if I grew wings and I became young again. [DL2: 251]

A similar extreme may be seen in the juxtaposition of those passages that speak of the most painful losses, because they involve loved ones, with passages in which the author shows the highest praise and approval of the willingness to sacrifice one's life in the fight for the homeland, a clear feature of the romantic attitude, for example:

So many, so many families deprived of husbands, fathers, sons – it's terrible! and morally, and materially. [DL2 258]

I fear for one child of friends – ah! – no... Our Lady of Częstochowa, protect him!... [DL2: 302]

[...] the heart breaks at the thought of those countless victims who have already lost their lives and who will die – of those crippled, of young people whose health is destroyed, perhaps forever, of hearts torn by grief... – in addition to, or perhaps as a result of, stagnant life. [DL2: 313]

Yet he longed to die for the Homeland, and so strong was his premonition of such a death that it had become a certainty for him. He knew he would die, and he still went – it's wonderful, after all! [DL2: 257]

They were fired by their holy zeal, love of the Homeland, and iron will, to save the Polish stronghold from the violence of savage, brutal blackness. [DL2: 305]

The nationality-based and private perspective also influences the attitude toward Ukrainians, especially when they quite unexpectedly occupy the city, which the author regularly refers to as *my beloved Lviv* [DL2: 260], *our beloved Lviv* [DL2: 305], speaking with delight about the riches accumulated there:

My beloved Lviv was supposed to be in their hands and we, subjects to this wild Republic, not only Republic of peasants, but Republic of half-bandits – our spiritual and material wealth, historical mementos, cultural achievements, works of art, institutions, collections, all this would go into their hands! [DL2: 292]

At the beginning of the hostilities, she sees the Ukrainians as brothers, and calls the necessary fight against them a fratricide:

Something so terrible and so unspeakably painful has happened that the heart breaks. **Fratricidal war**, and then – murder and atrocities committed against the defenseless, against our Polish cavalrymen – by whom?... ah! by **brothers**, by the peasants in Ukraine. [DL2: 293]

As the Ukrainians wreak havoc in Lviv, however, resentment against them grows stronger. This may be seen in terms with pejorative overtones: *plunderers* [DL2: 301], *savage thugs* [DL2: 302], *devils*, *hyenas* [DL2: 304], *wild, brutal blackness* [DL2: 305], *Ukrainian gangs* [DL2: 306], *Ukrainian thugs* [DL2: 311], *wild hordes* [DL2: 313], *monsters*, *non-humans* [DL2: 321], *Ukrainian horde* [DL2: 323]. This extremely damning image is reinforced by animalistic metaphors and comparisons:

This blackness pounces on us constantly with the acrimony of a hungry wolf. [DL2: 307]

[...] bear paws [...]. [DL2: 320]

The Ukrainians crawled out from somewhere, like this vermin from under the ground, in huge numbers, and they are battering our people by taking back the towns already recaptured by us. [DL2: 320]

To conclude this theme, it is worth adding that a characteristic feature of Romanowiczówna's writing is the strong emotionalisation of the message, which



is expressed by both linguistic means (e.g., the terms *enormity*, *huge*, *inconceivably*, *outrageous*) and typographic means (spaced-out writing, ellipses, exclamation mark).

#### 4. Zofia Nałkowska

The **humanistic** perspective on war, i.e. recognising a person's dignity and rights, as the highest value is revealed in the diary of Zofia Nałkowska. The issue of Poland's independence is here strongly entangled in the events of an unprecedented time in history, which "is measured by an hourglass, through the neck of which blood trickles instead of coloured fluid" [DN2: 346]. Nałkowska has an ambivalent attitude to the looming possibility of restoring the Polish state to the maps of the world, and she writes straightforwardly: "This independence and all the issues intertwined with it, **I experience with joy and bitterness**. [...] up close, the historical fact breaks down into a multitude of small and **events hard to bear**" [DN2: 442]. In a synthetic outline on the war in Nałkowska's works, Włodzimierz Wójcik states that the writer "did not exhibit patriotic excitement, because she did not live with such excitement" [Wójcik 1999: 190]. On the contrary, in the foreground she saw all the horrors of war, leading to the dehumanisation and suffering of the average person. The aspects of war that emerge from the diary's descriptions fall within the semantic circle of *degradation*, *destruction*. It concerns:

a) human life:

And saddest of all is the thought that these legions include the best of the best. Our defeat comes before any defeat. After all, they **are lost first, before they die from bullets, in blood**. [DN2: 393]

b) physical forces:

The soldiers' **faces are yellow and black, they are haggard and tired**. The moment one has to stop because of street traffic, **they instantly sit down and lie down on the stones, completely in the mud**, despite the protests of the elders. **They swallow the rolls** received from passersby **greedily and sadly, like animals**. [DN2: 374]

c) human psyche:

Do I know well enough that each of these countless, continuous salvos entails the **torment and despair** of the people. [DN2: 391]

It is known that the south of the country already occupied by Austria, has an Austrian "orientation" which is a completely new, **psychological partition of Poland**. [DN2: 345]

## d) cultural heritage:

**Barbaric atrocities, looting and harrying** – I guess it's all perfectly fine during war, as long as it works. [DN2: 361]

## e) customs, morals:

**Europe has gone savage** during this one year of war. [DN2: 393]

[...] war is not only **bloodshed, savagery and defeat**. It is a gale for the breath, it is the **unmasking of unfamiliar values**, a hygienic game of **frightening amaze-ments and surprises**. One then watches the vast, **natural instincts of huge groups of humans**. And it is strange what a powerful bond the shared hatred creates, stronger than all love. [DN2: 342]

War, even with the image of an independent Poland in the background, is always a defeat paid for with blood and suffering. The diarist calls it a *futile sacrifice* [DN2: 388], *iron work, cloudy stubbornness, bloody anguish* [DN3: 40], *useless labour of suffering, unnecessary effort* [DN2: 348]. All these terms carry highly negative connotations. Therefore, Nałkowska's poignant and bitter-filled question "do such things ever really prevail" [DN3: 40] is not surprising.

### 5. Helena von Seifert Jabłońska

A completely different point of view, one might call **particularistic**, is revealed in Helena Jabłońska's *Dziennik z oblężonego Przemyśla* (Diary from besieged Przemyśl). For the clarity of the argument, it is necessary to add that the author found herself in Przemyśl to take care of the tenement houses abandoned by her sister's family, who fled to Vienna. The author is therefore constantly concerned about the property entrusted to her, and the journal is intended to document her efforts and endeavours to protect the property.

The fundamental trouble for Jabłońska in coping with the hardships of the war was that soldiers were housed with her. Cohabiting with them was difficult, and the expected gain transpired to be a loss [DP: 123]. Some of the destruction was deliberate, such as:

From 27th to 30th I had 550 people. Terrible distress. Captain Roliński rushed in with these men like a Tartar and ordered them to occupy everything by **force, to smash locks and windows**. [DP: 79]

**They break window panes**, it is impossible to find out who and from where. I have five broken window panes. [DP: 92]

Other destruction stemmed from a lack of respect for the goods in use. Here, lexis from the semantic circle of DAMAGE frequently appears, for example: *muck, sloppiness, disorder, damage, stench, harm, garbage*:

[...] this **muck, this filth, this stench**. [DP: 80]

10 horses in the stable. 4 cooks for 400 people. You can imagine how much **trash** and **muck** is generated every day. Where to take it away and who is supposed to do it, the cart is broken, the watchman is not there, and Lanikiewicz is threatening me with the magistrate. [...] I gave one cellar for the officers' mess and what a luxury they provided, 28 geese were placed there. They just splash, moisture will creep in and **messiness**. [DP: 152]

I constantly have troubles with the wells and the outhouses. Today the outhouses are clogged again. They wash the linen in the rooms and throw rags into the outhouses, they don't care that there is an outflow downstairs near the Then's house, as long as it is clean at their place. When I make a row, they lie and the damage is still there. [DP: 161]

I now inspect the rooms more often and I see more and more **damage**. How many nails they put in the walls, how many walls **they damaged**. I disabled the electric lights, but well, they have their own electricians, they repaired the wires, put in new lights and use electricity. At whose expense? [DP: 171]

And what terrible damage, what **sloppiness** has been left, long piles of **manure, garbage**, tons of cans. After all, 750 whiners were dining in the kitchen. [DP: 394]

Still further losses were caused by simple thievery:

Apparently, they matched the keys to the padlocks in the cellars, because my potatoes **are disappearing**. [DP: 224]

**They steal** what is at hand, shoe brushes, soap, pocket knives, candles, salt, cinnamon, cumin. [DP: 261–262]

The whiners are the worst. You can't tell them off because they immediately spit out threats, or heroic words: "We stood up for the country, we gave our blood and life, and you bastards, grudge a stick to us" and our hero is getting ready to start a fight holding a ripped board with a nail on it. [DP: 379–380]

I could not leave the house, because **they rob**, chop, burn my place. [DP: 411]

**They unbolted** the padlocks, the staples, locks are broken, the padlock to the wine cellar is broken too. The lock appears to have been picked, as it is not damaged. Every single bottle has been **stolen**. [DP: 503]

So, everything is **gone**, the bedding, the wine, the carpets, the tapestries, the crystals, glassware, the china, the cloths, the clothes, the shoes, the harness, the saddle, the saber, the countless things, and isn't it funny that I'm sitting here. [DP: 510]

The private perspective makes Jabłońska's complaints about food shortages an important part of the war experience; in a city under siege, hunger and overpriced food become a common experience:

High prices in the city, bread costs 50 hlr for half a kilo and it is difficult to get it – lousy butter for 480 [hlr] per kilo, eggs are almost impossible to come by. [DP: 95]

High prices – not even high prices, for 100 florins he could not even get a loaf of bread or a packet of tobacco. [DP: 98]

In the city people wail for bread. He can hardly buy anything anymore, onions are as expensive as pineapple. [DP: 153]

There is nothing in the stores, nothing! Lack of sugar and bread is the worst. Everyone has money, but hunger is already terrible. [DP: 175]

Commodity prices are going up significantly. Kerosene, yeast, leather are nowhere to be found, and I don't have shoes. I must have soles and corks made from the revolver case. [DP: 516]

High prices are getting even higher. [DP: 594]

Movement of goods is halted, high prices are getting even higher, life is awfully expensive, very difficult. [DP: 605]

Poland does not appear in this perspective. If one wanted to define the author's ethnos, one should probably think of a Galician, since Jabłońska is worried about the Russian occupation of Lviv or Lublin, but on the pages of the diary she appears as a loyal citizen of the Habsburg monarchy. This is borne out by the inclusive *we* when referring to battles waged by the Austrian army, or the pronoun *our* to describe soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian army:

Lublin reportedly occupied by **our** [soldiers]. [DP: 77]

At Kraśnik **we won** but with a big loss. [DP: 78]

**We fight** worse than in a hostile country because we don't know who to beware of. [DP: 83]

Today our patrol on Winna Góra met a Moscow patrol that shot **our** [patrol] dead. [DP: 93]

Occasionally there are mentions of Poles or important national holidays in the diary, but they evoke no more vivid emotions; in one place the author even admits that she forgot about the service to mark the anniversary of the November Uprising ("Today I just realised that it was the November anniversary yesterday and various services" [DP: 247]).

## 5. Summary

The literature of personal document, as one that presents an individualised vision of reality (which is not to say that it is not entangled in various discourses), seems particularly useful for the study of women's independence discourse. As the analysed texts have shown, it is an area where different points of view clash, points of view that affect the sometimes completely different creation of representations of the objects of discourse. In the eyes of the authors of *Serving the Motherland* representing the national liberation perspective, the war is the noblest impulse giving rise to the freedom and independence of the Republic. In Romanowiczówna's diary, there is constant tension between the private, intimate and consequently painful, and the public, which builds up the history of the general public, and is therefore joyful. Nałkowska looks at the war through the prism of human suffering and sees it as a disaster in every dimension. Finally, Jabłońska's particularistic viewpoint brings out the economic and property-related aspect of the war.

The usage of language, which is always from a particular perspective, in the works analysed here clearly shows that it does not reflect reality, but profiles, interprets and co-creates it. The value of the literature of personal document for the study of women's independence discourse is therefore determined not only by a perspective that is different (originally) from the male perspective (or, more broadly, the official one), but also by the internal differentiation of this discourse related to broadly understood ideology.

*Translated by Magdalena Perdek*

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### **Herstory. The Value of Journals as Sources for Researching Women's Independence Discourse: The Category of Point of View**

The general aim of this outline is to indicate the diverse merits of women's personal document literature for the study of women's independence discourse. The specific objective is to identify the various points of view (understood as a linguistic category) that emerge in the texts regarding war and to reconstruct the image of war that emerges from the narratives of the female authors. Consequently, it can be said that the value of women's personal document literature for researching women's independence discourse is determined not only by its different perspective (presumably distinct from the male or official perspective) but also by the internal diversity within this discourse, which is connected to the broadly understood ideology.

**KEYWORDS:** point of view; personal document literature; women's independence discourse; World War I.

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