



**A sociological look at the encounter between self-other link based on Horton Cooley's Theory
(Case study: novel of "I lead you to my other" by Aicha Arnaout)**



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Amir Farhangdust¹

PhD Candidate in Arabic Language and Literature, Azarbaijan Shahid Madani University, Tabriz, Iran.

Abdolahad Gheibi¹

Professor in Arabic Language and Literature, Azarbaijan Shahid Madani University, Tabriz, Iran.

Mahin Hajizadeh¹

Professor in Arabic Language and Literature, Azarbaijan Shahid Madani University, Tabriz, Iran.

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Abstract

The concepts of self and other in the modern era have undoubtedly diverged from premodern understandings. One effective approach to comprehend this connection is through the lens of sociological formulations. Charles Horton Cooley, a prominent American sociologist, offered a distinct perspective on this issue. His empathetic, introspective approach posits the self as inherently connected to society. He argues that understanding the self is impossible outside the context of society and the reflected perceptions of others. Cooley categorizes this interconnectedness into four forms: organic dependency, the other as imagination, the looking-glass self, and the self and group as another. Each form possesses unique characteristics.

This novel approach to self and other serves as the theoretical framework for the present analysis of Aicha Arnaout's novel, "I Lead You to My Other." The novel's central theme, evident in its preface, is explored through a scientific lens using Cooley's theories. This essay demonstrates that the Syrian-Albanian author was not unconcerned with Cooley's sociological ideas and proposed forms of self-other connection. Through the creation of "Saros" an invisible entity crucial to the story, Arnaout vividly portrays the encounter with an imaginary other, or "the other as imagination." Furthermore, the deep and distinct relationships Maryam, the novel's protagonist, forms with various characters exemplify the concepts of organic dependency, the looking-glass self, and the self and group as another. These details, supported by evidence from the novel, were initially outlined at the beginning of this research.

Keywords: Self, other, Horton Cooley, Aicha Arnaout, novel of "I lead you to my other".

¹. Corresponding Author Email: Abdolahad@azaruniv.ac.ir



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