



UNIVERSITY OF BANJA LUKA
УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ У БАЊОЈ ЛУЦИ

FILOLOGY FACULTY

**REEXAMINATION OF GENDER RELATIONS IN THE
WORKS OF MARGARET FULLER**

MASTER THESIS

MENTOR:

Tatjana Bijelić, PhD

CANDIDATE:

RADMILA PRIJEVIĆ



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PHILOLOGY FACULTY

RADMILA PRIJEVIĆ

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COMMITTEE:

1. Tatjana Bijelić, PhD

2. Petar Penda, PhD

3. Ognjen Kurteš, Asst.Prof.

BANJA LUKA, DECEMBER 2018.



**УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ У БАЊОЈ ЛУЦИ
ФИЛОЛОШКИ ФАКУЛТЕТ**

РАДМИЛА ПРИЈЕВИЋ

**ПРЕИСПИТИВАЊЕ РОДНИХ ОДНОСА У ДЈЕЛИМА
МАРГАРЕТ ФУЛЕР**

МАСТЕР РАД

МЕНТОР:

проф.др Татјана Бијелић

ЧЛАНОВИ КОМИСИЈЕ:

проф.др Татјана Бијелић

проф.др Петар Пенда

доц. др Огњен Куртеш

Бања Лука, децембар 2018. године

МЕНТОР: Др Татјана Бијелић, ванредни професор за ужу научну област Специфичне књижевности – англоамеричке књижевности, на Филолошком факултету
Универзитета у Бањој Луци

НАСЛОВ МАСТЕР РАДА: Преиспитивање родних односа у дјелима Маргарет Фулер

ABSTRACT:

The new world of nineteenth century industrialism and capitalism created a disruption of the established social order. Margaret Fuller struggled to define her role among the political and social changes in nineteenth century America. Through her works, Fuller had an important, immediate effect on her society. In her literary work she made an effort to comprehend the nature of the female-male relationship and she clearly articulates her unique point of view on male-female relationship in her works. Fuller's political argumentation was based on the transcendental theory on human nature. She boldly spoke about the liberation of the sexes from the socially-constructed norms on the roles of men and women. Her gender consciousness began the process of change, in the patriarchal American society, by attacking double standards applied to women. It was necessary to insist on self-development of woman's population and to provide equal access to education for women and men. Her proclamations, challenged traditional concepts of family life in American society. The main goal of this research is to reexamine how the social and psychological disharmony in nineteenth century America played its part in the degradation of women.

Key words: Fuller, woman, society, self-development, male-female.

АПСТРАКТ:

Нови свијет индустријализације и капитализма деветнаестог вијека довео је до разарања успостављеног друштвеног поретка. Маргарет Фулер се борила да дефинише своју улогу усред политичких и друштвених промјена у Америци деветнаестог вијека. Кроз своја дјела, Фулерова је имала битан, директан утицај на своје друштво. У својим књижевним дјелима настојала је да схвати природу мушко-женских односа и у њима јасно изражава свој ставу погледу тих односа. Фулерино политичко образлагање је било базирано на трансценденталној теорији људске природе. Она је одважно говорила о ослобођењу полова од друштвено устаљених норми које се односе на улоге мушкараца и жена. Њена освјештеност везана за мушко-женске односе покренула је процес промјене у патријархалном америчком друштву нападом на двоструке стандарде који су се односили на жене. Било је неопходно устрајати на саморазвоју женске популације и обезбједити једнак приступ образовању за жене и мушкарце. Њене изјаве представљале су изазов традиционалном концепту породичног живота у америчком друштву. Основни циљ овог истраживања јесте да преиспита на који начин је друштвена и психолошка дисхармонија у америчком друштву деветнаестог вијека одиграла пресудну улогу у деградацији жена.

КЉУЧНЕ РИЈЕЧИ: Фулер, жена, друштво, саморазвој, мушко-женско.

НАУЧНА ОБЛАСТ: Хуманистичке науке

НАУЧНО ПОЉЕ: Језици и књижевност (Специфичне књижевности-енглеска књижевност)

КЛАСИФИКАЦИОНА ОЗНАКА ПРЕМА ЦЕРИФ ШИФРАНИКУ- Н 004

ТИП ОДБРАНЕ ЛИЦЕНЦЕ КРЕАТИВНЕ ЗАЈЕДНИЦЕ: Ауторство- некомерцијално без прерада (CC BY-NC-SA)

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MENTOR: Tatjana Bijelić, PhD, associate professor of narrow scientific field Specific Literature- Anglo-American Literature, on Philology Faculty, University of Banja Luka

THE TITLE OF MASTER THESIS : "Reexamination of gender relations in the works of Margaret Fuller"

SCIENTIFIC FIELD: Liberal Arts

SCIENTIFIC BRANCH: Language and Literature (Specific Literature-English Literature)

CE MARKING ACCORDING TO CERIF CODE-BOOK: H 004

TYPE OF CHOSEN LICENCE OF CREATIVE COMMONS:

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Introduction

This master thesis, "Reexamination of gender relations in the works of Margaret Fuller" researches an important aspect of feminist thought in American literature of the nineteenth century. The main hypothesis of this analysis deals with gender relations in the Romantic context. This paper sets out to investigate how Fuller's gender consciousness began the process of changing the roles women played in nineteenth-century American society. American romantic writers often rejected contemporary moral, personal and social values, instead they valued emotional freedom and individuality, and rejected rationalism and the firm boundaries of tradition. Margaret Fuller, the famous writer of the nineteenth-century, activist and reformer, and also one of the first advocates of feminist thought, dealt with many of fundamental problems facing marginalized groups of that period, especially women. Margaret Fuller struggled to define her role during the political, sociological, and ideological changes sweeping America. Her well-reasoned criticism of the rigid sexual roles of her time established her reputation as a revolutionary feminist who pushed the limits outside the assigned gender boundaries. Since power is mainly associated with masculinity, Fuller argued that the nature of power needed to be reconsidered in order to change the male domination which was entrenched in society. Fuller also began to explore women's subordination in society. She advocated for radical change in the stereotypical gender roles of her time and in the power dynamic between men and women.

In my thesis I will explore Margaret Fuller's ideas concerning both female and male roles and the norms that regulate those roles. The ideas that influenced her literary accomplishments were determined by the society she grew up in. Margaret Fuller's literary work was determined by certain social norms such as strict differentiation between the gender roles, and her work served women as a tool in fight for women's liberation. My research is focused on how Fuller's literary work was influenced by cultural, economical, and political norms of nineteenth-century America: "As a feminist, Fuller played key role in opening up a space, both theoretical and literal, for other women to contemplate and discuss issues of gender and of women's social,

cultural, and intellectual subordination." ¹Considering that the literary works of Margaret Fuller were determined by her social circumstances, I'll draw on the ideas of sociological criticism while conducting my analysis because Fuller's literature actually represents societal norms on acceptable behaviour. This type of analysis shows the impact of society on literature and how literature is viewed in society. Based on that analysis, the author, her life, and her work will be put in the socio-historical context of that time, which had impact on her writing. I will use sociological criticism, considering that art, in this case literature, actually represents manifestation of societal behaviour. I will also use close analysis of Fuller's socially-engaged works using the opinions of prominent feminist literary critics such as Elaine Showalter, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Simone de Beauvoir. This analysis will help us to explain in what way woman as individual was expected to behave during Fuller's time.

The main goal of this research is to reexamine how the social and psychological disharmony in American society played its part in the degradation of women during Fuller's lifetime. In her works, Fuller pointed out how the authority of men leads to limited self-accomplishments of women and how this affected different spheres of social life. Through this paper I will point out how gender stereotypes of men and women were formed and defined by the norms of the society of the time and how those gender stereotypes were formed. Fuller firmly believed that the differences between men and women are socially imposed, they are not conditioned by certain natural order. Margaret Fuller, along with Emerson and Thoreau, was included in the literary, theological, and philosophical movement known as Transcendentalism.

I will also investigate how Fuller's work responds to that of Wollstonecraft's. The two of them raised points that were new to the American public. As Phyllis Cole claims Fuller with her literary work *The Great Lawsuit* incorporated some of Wollstonecraft's basic beliefs about women's intellectual development. Fuller had read Wollstonecraft while growing up, and Wollstonecraft, was a major influence during Fuller's education and formative years. Wollstonecraft had experienced the French Revolution, and her "*Vindication of the Rights of*

¹Wayne, 2005, p.17

Woman was written against the tumultuous background of the French Revolution and the debate it spawned in Britain.² While Fuller realized that the French Revolution was a great step for women's entrance into public spheres of society. "Wollstonecraft is directly grounded in liberty, experiencing the French Revolution as her immediate scene of commitment; half a century later, Fuller found in the French Revolution her first evidence that "as the principle of liberty is better understood (...) a broader protest is made on behalf of Woman."³ Both of them spoke out with a tremendous force about women's education, marriage and motherhood, and women's duties in society. Since in French Revolution women took active part against their inferiority, Fuller recognized its significance for advocating women's civil and political rights. "Fuller (1845:14) recognized the historical importance of the French Revolution,²⁵ which 'bore witness in favor of woman'", although it maintained the traditional distinction between private and public spheres and did not allow women to enter the public arena..."⁴ Simone de Beauvoir like Wollstonecraft and Fuller argued that women are taught by society to act in a feminine way. Simone de Beauvoir is one of the most important feminist thinker and social constructionist. Her classic study of women *The Second Sex* (1949) is a development and culmination of ideas that Mary Wollstonecraft had formulated in the *Vindication of Rights*".⁵ Both Wollstonecraft and de Beauvoir claimed that women's subordinate role is all due to patriarchy. Simone de Beauvoir sees women's liberation as possible only by deconstruction of the male cultural construct that classifies woman as *Other*. She condemns women who are tempted to stay inferior to men. Beauvoir makes it clear that women must stop being complacent about their position in a dominant male society and to stand up and fight for themselves: "Woman may fail to lay claim to the status of subject because...she is often very pleased with her role as the *Other*".⁶ Woman is seen as second to man in patriarchal society. Her famous sentence from *Second Sex* "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman."⁷ actually means that woman's roles are socially constructed. She argues that sex is biological while

² https://en.m.wikibooks.org/wiki/Feminism/Literature/A_Vindication_of_the_Rights_of_Woman#/search

³ <https://www.margaretfuller.org/index.php/news/101-what-fuller-did-for-feminism>

⁴ Mocci, 2018, p. 47-68

⁵ Evans, 2001, p.268

⁶ <https://www.marxist.org/reference/subject/ethics/de-beauvoirs/2nd-sex/introduction.htm>

⁷ De Beauvoir, 1949, p.283

gender is socially constructed. "Beauvoir assembles an historical account using examples from literature, politics and philosophy to argue that to fully understand what is to be a woman requires moving beyond biology as destiny to examining the myths of femininity, myths often created by and for men, and then towards constructing emancipatory practices."⁸ But for Margaret Fuller gender is not socially constructed: "For Fuller, gender like religion is neither a fixed category nor a meaningless social construct but a dynamic cognitive and relational sign of the constantly metamorphosing soul of the universe."⁶⁸ Indeed, so androgynous idea of gender that it would seem to preclude any gender program for women."⁹ According to Simone de Beauvoir, Fuller's work was the base for expanding woman's sense of freedom and authenticity. Like Fuller, she suggests that woman needs to gain access to a public sphere and emerge as individual. "In the *Second Sex* Simone de Beauvoir accuses Victorian England of having isolated woman in the home'..."¹⁰ Elaine Showalter's study is focused on literature written by women and creating a method for analysing it. Her literary work *A literature of their own* (1977) advanced a literary theory known as "gynocriticism". "Showalter was one of the leading figures in US feminism in 1970s. She coined the term "gynocriticism", which refers to a mode of criticism with a feminist standpoint."¹¹ In her literary work *Inventing Herself* she writes about women who followed their own life paths. She wrote about Margaret Fuller's genius, and Fuller's struggle to overturn the rigid barriers of traditional thinking on male roles in society."But Fuller's mythic persona, as the priestess, thinker, and uncommon woman, also gave her justification to be different and to make her own rules."¹².

In my analysis of Fuller's literary work, I'll show significance of her radical ideas concerning gender differences, women's role in marriage, and education of women. She fought to expand women's sphere in society, and open up new roles for women in public sphere. Extremely radical ideas about gender differences could be seen in Fuller's literary work: "how Judith Butler's extremely radical ideas of today about gender as something we do rather as something we are, can be found in Chopin's and Fuller's texts over 100 years earlier. This connection between two

⁸ www.bennygoodman.co.uk/simone-de-beauvoir-the-second-sex-social-construction-of-women-and-implications-for-wellbeing

⁹ Capper, 1992, p.118

¹⁰ <https://tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00497878.1972.9978298?journalCode=gwst20>

¹¹ Castle, 2013, p.244

¹² Showalter, 2001, p.47

nineteenth-century and one twenty-first century writers prove that there exists the feminist research tradition that the next generation can build on."¹³ Her reaction against Enlightenment rationalism emphasized the emotional, and fundamental human need for individual self-development. I'll show how the discourse surrounding women's role in society is tightly linked to education of women. Being educated provided women the tools to engage in active participation in a society dominated by men. Education also insured that women could be intellectually and economically autonomous. Through this paper I will show how Fuller took up her pen in defence of women, and boldly argued for women's intellectual development.

1. Margaret Fuller and nineteenth-century America

As the onset of industrialization and growth of the market economy rapidly transformed American and European societies, family life also went through substantial upheavals. The rapid merchantile growth and migration to larger cities changed the traditional roles within the family. Men left home to work in offices and factories and took full responsibility for the financial support of the family, while women were supposed to devote themselves to domestic duties and childbearing. The suffragists argued that the oppression of women was caused by the expansion of capitalism: "They identified and criticized capitalism as a major source of woman's oppression, addressed themselves to the position of working women, spoke out boldly against the sexual double standard and exploitation of women, and were beginning to identify marriage and the family even more than political disfranchisement- as the basic source of woman's oppression." ¹⁴

The two ideals of American womanhood that were prevalent in New England in the 19-th century America were *the Republican Mother and True Womanhood*. The concept of *Republican Motherhood* was born during the American Revolution and it was based on separate

¹³ <https://tampub.uta.fi/gradu03263>

¹⁴ DuBois, 1998, p.69

sphere ideology. It challenged the public/private dichotomy of separate sphere ideology, and placed men in the public sphere and woman in the domestic sphere of American society. *True Womanhood* proclaimed that women who assumed active public roles were committing crime against their families. "The attributes of True Womanhood, by which a woman judged herself and was judged by her husband, her neighbours, and society could be divided into four cardinal virtues—piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity."¹⁵ Domestic ideology idealized the woman in the home as the center of spiritual and moral goodness for the nuclear family. But, it is obvious that many 19-th century American families didn't fit into this family ideal. While middle and upper class women had the "privilege" to remain at home, the majority of women, the not so fortunate, lower-class, worked as the poorly-paid domestic servants or labourers in factories. They had to go to work until their children were old enough to take their place as the second wage-earners because their husbands couldn't provide enough financial resources to support their family. "While domestic ideology implied that all women should live more retired, reserved lives, devoted to apparently light labor of taking care of the home for the men who entered into economic world, the reality for most women, especially lower-class women and women of color was far different. Many women began to or continued to work outside the home as domestic workers as well as factory operatives, especially in textile industry."¹⁶ Wealthy women played a very important role in their husbands' political and business affairs. They planned formal dinners, balls, and other social gatherings, so their sense of self-worth was measured by their husbands' success. "Women were expected to uphold the values of stability, morality and democracy by making home a special place, a refuge from the world where her husband can escape from the highly competitive, unstable, immoral world of business and industry."¹⁷ A woman's obligation was to protect her stronger half by making their home a shelter and escape from the real world. "Home was supposed to be a cheerful place, so that brothers, husbands and sons would not go elsewhere in search of a good time."¹⁸ For women the best advice was to be domestic: "The true woman was unquestionably by her own fireside - as, daughter, sister, but most of all as wife and mother."¹⁹ Accordingly, an

¹⁵Welter, 1996, p.152

¹⁶ENGL405-6.1-Womens-Sphere-and-the-Emergence-of-the-Womens-Rights-Movement-FINAL.pdf

¹⁷<https://csivc.cunny.edu/history/files/lavender/386/newwoman.pdf>

¹⁸Welter, 1996, p.163

¹⁹<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2711179>

unmarried woman had 'no purpose' in life; her worth of sense of purpose depended on her relationship with her father or husband.

These two main cultural values and gendered expectations contained and reexamined within my work are important in order to understand Fuller's life, her writings and her struggle to encourage women to speak in public against their oppression and being active politically. American society of the nineteenth century challenged the traditional concepts of family life. Women were oppressed by patriarchal dominance. American society was rocked by major social, intellectual, political and cultural transformations such as industrialization, merchantile growth, westward migration, fight for rights of women and other oppressed groups."The structure of separate gender spheres in the nineteenth century male public worlds of commerce and industry, female private worlds of domesticity and family played a crucial role in construction of both gender and sexuality in the period."²⁰This "domestic ideology" of the Revolutionary War period was the impetus for the emergence of feminism in the nineteenth century . Through Fuller's work, gender consciousness was raised in women and they began changing their position by attacking gender-double standards. A number of American women insisted on self-development of the female population. Women wanted to develop their minds fully and to provide equal access to education for both sides. American Revolutionary War (1775-1783) lasted for eight years. It was the war over American independence, against British colonization. During the Revolutionary era male and female writing were focused on improvements in women's education. The Revolution heightened importance of equality between the sexes. As I already mentioned, the ideal of true womanhood that was born during American Revolution was *Republican Mother*, who had an important role in their children's education: "Women's access to education was expanded so that they could instruct their children. After the American Revolution, Republican Motherhood contributed to women's increased roles in education, abolitionism, and women's"²¹ Before the American Revolutionary War, education for most-middle class American girls was based on acquiring practical domestic skills. In the post-Revolutionary War period, women began to be educated using modified version

²⁰ Greven, 2016, p.9

²¹ <https://course.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory>

of the curriculum offered to men. The education for girls consisted on memorization of the facts, but independent reasoning was offered to boys.

Feminist ideas were triggered by major social, intellectual, cultural, economical, and political transformations in America and Europe during the nineteenth century. Women's rights activists focused on education, equal pay, and property rights. Women's involvement in social issues such as anti-slavery campaigns had great importance for the development of the women's movement: " But it began with the "woman question," and antislavery played an important part in the development of the women's movement, primarily through its impact on individual women who began as abolitionists and then became increasingly active on behalf of woman's rights." ²²The woman's fight has been seen as a tendency to define the role of women pointing out their limited sphere of influence compared to that of men. Women fought to gain political rights, to improve the content and quality of their education, and to expand the possible employment options open to women. Many scholars label Fuller a "feminist". But the terms gender and feminism weren't used in antebellum America. "Her call for women's full participation in all aspects of society was uncompromising (...)'We would have arbitrary barrier throwndown. We would have every path laid opento Woman as freely as to Man...!'"²³

The greatest, early expression of American Enlightenment liberal feminism is The Declaration of Sentiments, issued at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. It was greatly based on Declaration of Independence. This manifesto advocated for basic rights for white women in the United States. Fuller's work may have served as an inspiration for Seneca Falls Convention. The Declaration was issued just three years after Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*. *Woman in the Nineteenth century* is radical text: "It became a 'classic of feminist thought,' and would go on to pave the way for the Seneca Falls Convention three years later..."²⁴

²²www.teachushistory.org/second-great-awakening-age-reform/articles/historical-background-antislavery-womens-rights-1830-1845

²³ Bailey & Wiens, 2013, p.96

²⁴ <https://www.google.ba/amp/s/americanrenaissanceii.wordpress.com/2010/02/18margaret-fuller-and-seneca-falls-amp>

2. New England Transcendentalism

"Romanticism was an artistic, literary, and intellectual movement that originated in Europe toward the end of the 18th century."²⁵ It reached America in the early 19th century. Romantic writers and artists rejected reason and tradition, celebrated emotional freedom, creativity and wrote about moral issues. Romanticism emphasized the individual, emotional, personal and irrational. American Romantics venerated Nature, and rejected the materialistic world. That heterogeneous group of well known young thinkers, writers, critics, philosophers, most of whom were related with the Unitarian circle, namely Ralph Waldo Emerson, George Ripley, Amos Bronson Alcott, Theodore Parker, W.H. Channing, Henry David Thoreau and others belonged to a philosophical movement, New England Transcendentalism. This Romantic movement originated in the area around Concord Massachusetts. From Unitarianism the transcendentalists took a concern for self-culture, an interest in moral reform, neo-Platonic concept of piety and interest in literature. "Unitarianism was in many ways the religion of the elite classes, and Unitarian intellectuals coined terms like *self-culture* and *active mind* in their quest for the perfection of individual character as humankind's spiritual destiny."²⁶

Transcendental ideas were grounded in the belief that divine truth could be known intuitively. Although this was a religious movement, it was against some religious traditions and dogma of the time, due to its goal of adherents striving to achieve spiritual and personal understanding of the nature of God. They believed that God was present in every aspect of life and that his being could be experienced only through personal intuition. They believed that God was related to humans and nature, therefore they looked for God through nature and humanity. They insisted on immediate and personal communication between the believer and Christ. They called for the instant application of these ideas to each believer's life. They supplied the ground work for a new philosophy that had its foundations in understanding of human nature. "From this grave peril the Transcendentalists found an escape in flight to the spiritual nature of man, in virtue, of which he had an intuitive knowledge of God as a being, infinite and absolute in power, wisdom, and goodness;(...)"²⁷ Most of the Transcendentalists became involved in social reform movements,

²⁵<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romantic-literature-in-English>

²⁶ Wayne, 2006, p.295

²⁷ Fortingham, 1880, p.190

raising their voices for anti-slavery and woman's rights. They proclaimed that men and women were spiritually equal, and that they should be treated equally in every aspect of their lives.

Fuller was inspired by Emerson's concept of self-reliance, so she put her principles on equality of sexes into action, and influenced Transcendentalists and others by her work. She stood side by side with her male fellows in the Transcendental movement in the fight for equality of every individual. "Ironically, however, she is not a citizen sharing equal status with her fellow transcendentalists. The philosophic concepts to which she and other transcendentalists in general subscribe and by which she would expect to transcend the limitations of her society are, in practice, written and read differently by her than by men. Transcendentalism, as it is propounded by Fuller's male contemporaries, would appear to support woman's equality. The romanticization and idealization of the individual provides 'revisionary critical and social possibilities of that subject.'²⁸In the consciousness of each individual subjectivity, an ideal society can be founded."²⁸

Inspired by Alcott's model, Fuller began offering women a series of talk "conversations", intellectually challenging the participants and giving them the opportunity to express their doubts and difficulties. Fuller's *Conversations* represented the major contribution to progress and emancipation of women. These "conversation classes" were held in Elizabeth Palmer Peabody's West Street bookstore in Boston in 1839. Conversations proved very popular and Fuller actively recruited women in fight for emancipation of women. Those meetings helped women to express their opinions and discuss the issues of women's social, cultural, and intellectual subordination: "Fuller wanted the women in her classes to reach through their socially constructed outer shells to the vital "I" she believed was "within" them. She wanted them to identify with the gods and goddesses that had vitalized Greek life before the men of their own Judeo-Christian culture embodied God as an all-powerful patriarch that limited women's potential."²⁹In her *Conversations* Fuller was addressing women who thought too little for themselves, advising them to express their opinions and beliefs freely. She tried to provide women with some of the same intellectual benefits to men had, but which society denied to women. Her goal was to improve the education of women in order for them to be able to liberate themselves from the male-dominated oppressive society.

²⁸ Buckley, 1997, p.34

²⁹ Murray, 2012, p.164

Fuller's personality, intellect and passionate beliefs were the key factors in encouraging women to speak for themselves: "Anecdotes about Fuller initiating discussion at her *Conversation* present her as an impassioned, dramatic speaker; though not always positive (...) Fuller as an orator had a type of magnetic aura that Emerson called "Mother power", a quality that Fuller would later use to her advantage in her discussion of the empowered woman."³⁰In the early 1880s, Fuller was the editor of the magazine *Dial* which had been founded by Emerson along with other transcendentalist in order to promote their philosophy to the public. It lasted for four years, and helped Transcendentalists to become an important philosophical influence in religion, philosophy, and literature. The Transcendentalist periodicals of the time helped to establish Transcendentalism as a movement and spread their interpretation of the world to a much larger audience. Their engagement in the process of self- culture, challenged individuals to cultivate themselves. The idea of self-culture was developed by Channing and Emerson. They believed that every human being has a potential to develop a godlike self. They believed that that is possible through cultivation of the soul, actually through the right development of the selfless quality. "*Self-culture* is about human perfectability that is possible through cultivation of the soul that is an active organism. Channing believed that each individual has a soul, so that like "plant" or "animal", the "nobler" character of any person is capable of growth."³¹ In the *Dial*, Fuller published her theoretical essays and her early feminist work *The Great Lawsuit*, later she expanded it into a book *Woman in the nineteenth century*. The Transcendentalist notion of God is the cornerstone on which Fuller based her feminist arguments in *Woman in the nineteenth century*. Transcendentalists believed that everyone has a soul that allows self –culture. Fuller claimed that that equality of souls is what makes women and men equal in every aspects of their lives. Fuller successfully represented Transcendental beliefs through her work and life as a woman, struggling with the same conflicts as every other woman of her time. She also claimed that the position of woman was deliberately oppressed, and that there was no coincidence that women were legally, socially and culturally disadvantaged, she is "made for a man, to be ruled and formed by him rather than possessing, like him, an immortal soul."³²

³⁰ LaRocca&Alfonso, 2015, p.70

³¹ <https://hdl.handle.net/2144/1411>

³² <https://hdl.handle.net/2144/1411>

The *Dial* was an American magazine published from 1840 to 1844. The *Dial* published works of Theodore Parker, Henry David Thoreau, Jones Very, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, Emerson, and of course Margaret Fuller. It was of great importance thanks to theoretical essays. Fuller's importance in the *Dial* is reflected in the *Essays on Critics*. Fuller in her theoretical essays articulated her radical views on male-female relations, and the role of women in society, arguing for woman's liberation and against limitation or restrictions imposed by society. Fuller insisted that women's rights were God given, and that no law should impose obstacles to women's abilities to lead and to control their lives. Fuller, like all Transcendentalists questioned the norms of criticism. In her essay "A Short Essay on critics", Fuller states: "The critic, then, should be merely a poet, not merely a philosopher, not merely an observer, but tempered of all three. If he criticize the poem, he must want nothing of what constitutes the poet, except the power of creating forms and speaking in music. He must have as good an eye and as fine a sense; but if he had as fine an organ for expression also, he would make a poem instead of judging it."³³ Orestes Brownson called Fuller "the highest priestess of American Transcendentalism"³⁴ acknowledging her importance and influence among the Transcendentalists.

3. The concept of self-culture

Fuller dedicated her life to the intellectual progress of herself and other women through the use of self-culture. By applying the concept of self-culture in terms of women's position in nineteenth century America, Fuller sets herself apart from other Transcendentalists. She advocated for social justice, not only for women, but also for slaves, convicts, Native Americans, and other marginalized groups. Fuller fought for women's education, knowing that schools accepting or dedicated to the education of young women would be cornerstone for liberation of women's minds. She spread the thought that there is no limitations on women's abilities, advocating that self-culture is only a male privilege. "Fuller's belief in the potential of self-culture is one characteristic that aligns her with transcendentalism, however, as Charles Capper (1978) observed, her use of the concept in terms of women's position in the nineteenth century is exactly what sets her apart from

³³ Miller, 2012, p.368

³⁴ Greene, 1844, p.54

intellectual circle."³⁵Her practice of self-culture influenced social reform. "No one believed in the principle of self-culture more deeply, or embodied it more completely, than Margaret Fuller, for whom it stood as guiding principle. 'Very early I knew that the only object in life was to grow', she wrote."³⁶

Fuller believed that women should be given the same chances that men have. Her main focus was to convince both sides that the female nature was not and should not be limited to domesticity. She attempted to convince men to give women the freedom to express themselves and develop their potential. She tried to change women's inferior position in society by increasing their self-reliance and expanding of their roles in public sphere. Fuller, Thoreau, and Emerson challenged American society to reexamine the concept of self. Their literary works supported the idea of valuing oneself, supporting the revitalizing values of Transcendentalism. Their celebration of the individual self contributed to the American preoccupation with self-knowledge and self-improvement. Fuller uses Emerson's doctrine of self-reliance in her feminist rhetoric. "She also recorded how powerful the influence of Emerson's sermon was to her as 'from him I first learned what is meant by an inward life' and his preaching 'has been more beneficial to me than that of any American'. These notes imply Fuller's deep aspiration for 'self-assurance' and insight for ceaseless growth."³⁷

³⁵ Clark & Haloran, 1993, p.117

³⁶ Bailey, Viens & Wright, 2013, p.78

³⁷<http://hdl.handle.net/2144/1411>

4. Journalism as " the tool" for displaying radical ideas

In Fuller's hands journalism served as a tool with which she boldly advocated radical ideas. This could be seen through her concern for women prostitutes and convicts, convicts in general and mentally ill persons. She was aware that human behaviour and mental health could be improved by kind treatment, respect and human living conditions, believing that the key to the reformations of convicts and the recovery of the "insane" people was to treat them as human beings. The mentally insane were kept in madhouses which were basically jails where they received treatment as if they were prisoners, and their mentally health deteriorated. Fuller clearly stated those ideas in the Twenty- Fifth Report of the Bloomingdale Asylum for Insane. During the 1830s, an important movement to reform mental health care by building asylums began, and the first asylum called Bloomingdale Asylum was established by Quakers. It was important to create an appropriate environment in which it would be possible to create a home-like environment for curing the insane. Margaret Fuller advocated for good conditions, education, and kind treatment in prisons, and mental institutions hoping that decent treatment will improve rehabilitation of mentally ill persons and prisoners. She argued that mentally ill persons shouldn't be punished for their illness and locked up in institutions as prisons. "Within the walls of the institution, Bloomingdale and other asylums tried to replicate ordinary life as opposed to prison life- no numbers, no special haircuts, no uniforms, no marching from place to place."³⁸ Pliny Earl, physician to the Asylum stated in *Twenty-fifth Asylum Report of the Bloomingdale Asylum for the insane*: "For centuries, however this system was pursued in the treatment of the insane, and even at the present time, is not abolished in some places. In the most enlightened communities, there is still an impression that persons of disordered mind can be governed only through fear. But few ideas are more erroneous than this. It is not intended that fear shall enter, as a principle, into the system of management pursued at this institution."³⁹ Fuller's articles on women prisoners also had great influence on the improvement of their living conditions. She spoke publicly about the social and economic circumstances which were

³⁸ Mitchell, 1995, p.76

³⁹ Ibid., p.83

the main cause for women becoming prostitutes. She managed to discuss such a delicate topic as prostitution by paying close attention to her choice of words. Instead of using the word prostitute, she called them female convicts: "The language in these passages may seem very polite and veiled and therefore somewhat hard to follow, but Fuller has used this polite language to take a courageous position."⁴⁰ Fuller attacks double standards as a main reason for prostitution: "Fuller's argument moved the debate into the dangerous arena of class when she suggested that some women might choose prostitution as an alternative to the dreariness of a home life of poverty and family stress."⁴¹ In her column "Asylum for female convicts" she asks for donations in order to build a halfway house for those unfortunate women. She also writes about main reasons that pushed women into the world of prostitution, blaming economic and social circumstances. In a letter to Horace Greely she says: "I have always felt great interest in those women, who are trampled in the mud to gratify the brute appetites of men, and wished I might be brought, naturally, into contact with them."⁴² Fuller endorsed a campaign for constructing shelters for discharged woman prisoners: "See those little girls huddled in a corner, their neglected dress and hair contrasting with some ribbon of cherished finery held fast in a childish hand. Think what 'sweet seventeen' was to you, and what it is to them, and see if you do not wish to aid in any enterprise that gives them a chance of better days."⁴³

4.1. Appropriating Goethe's concept of self

Goethe's ideas were the foundations of Fuller's feminist belief in women's ability to progress as individuals, and to grow and reach their highest potentials: "For Fuller Goethe was a poet who represented 'the highest principle in the feminine form.'⁴⁴ Goethe's concept of self is embodied in the Goethean archetype but it is an agent striving for self-expression and self-development: "Goethe's archetype is not simply a 'plan'. It is a kind of agent at the heart of the thing, striving for self-expression, and to this end driving the thing's development. Both Romantic self and archetype

⁴⁰ Mitchell, 1995, p.52

⁴¹ Mehren, 1994, p.190

⁴² Mitchell, 1995, p.77

⁴³ *ibid.*,

⁴⁴ Capper & Giorcelli, 2008, p.38

reflect the wider attempt to reinstate the concept of action in our understanding of things and happenings in general."⁴⁵

It is a concept of action in our knowledge and understandings of things, and in understanding the world itself. It is interesting that Goethe's view of the self, actually takes as starting-point the concept of the plural self. The archetype, for Goethe, is not a generalisation, but the whole consisting of its elements, and the connection between these elements. "The archetype is not an individual 'primal' organism, but an experience of the unity that presents itself through multiple manifestations in organisms."⁵ The bat, whale and human for instance are present in the mammals archetype as they share the same structure, but as in the buttercup example, the archetype is present in a man, a whale or a bat as much as the man, whale and bat are present in the archetype."⁴⁶

A human being expresses his or her own individuality through her unique activity of reasoning, that way it is possible to create someone's freedom out of the archetype. The Goethean archetype matched quite closely with the Romantic concept of the self as a 'core': "Margaret Fuller responded quite positively to Goethe's belief in the power of one individual (...) Fuller juxtaposes Fourier's group mentality with Goethe's individualistic belief system: Fourier believed that 'better institutions (...) will make better men whereas Goethe expressed, in every way, the other side. If one man could present better forms, the rest could not use them till ripe for them' (W, 74) (...) accords with Fuller's idea that politics would not change woman's condition, but that personal enlightenment would."⁴⁷

In her various writings on Goethe, she also writes about his view on the redemptive power of woman: "In Faust we see the redeeming power, which at present upholds woman, while waiting for a better day, in Margaret. The lovely little girl, pure in instinct, ignorant in mind, is misled and profaned by man abusing her confidence. To the Mater Dolorosa she appeals for aid (...) refusing to receive temporal salvation by the aid of an evil power, obtains the eternal in its

stead (...) In the second part, the intellectual man, after all his manifold strivings, owes to the interposition of her who he had betrayed, his salvation. She intercedes, this time, herself glorified

⁴⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.gov/m/pubmed/11613316>

⁴⁶ Ebach, s.a., p.258

⁴⁷ LaRocca & Alfonso, 2015, p.67

spirit, with the Mater Gloriosa." ⁴⁸Self- culture represented a concept in both Unitarian and Transcendentalist circles, this notion of person being faced with problems of knowing and conceptualizing the self, creating the self and fulfilling it, in order to integrate the single self into society.

4.2. "Leila"- feminine source of life itself

Fuller's essay "Leila", published in 1841. in the Dial, is "one of the most important texts that Fuller wrote. An extremely dense, elliptical, and textured piece of writing, "Leila" reads like a compendium of myths."⁴⁹ She writes about being godlike, being unable to achieve intellectual and spiritual satisfaction within a society."Redrawing the boundaries of faith, "Leila" represented Fuller's most significant attempt to reconfigure the cultural imaginary by mapping onto it images of the Goddess to supplement the figure of God."⁵⁰ Fuller explored the creative power of women within the context of the Transcendental ideology. This showed us how Fuller had struggled with her culture's hostility to intellectual women. She condemned male sexual puritanism and their insistence that intellectual work must be framed with the traditional rigid forms. Fuller's "Leila" represents the symbol of suppressed creativity, and conceptualization of gender norms were fully expressed through the character of *Leila*: "Whatever the source, Fuller's 'Angel Leila' is a Wandering phantom, a 'mighty sea' that at night 'swells up' and 'rushes over you till you plunge on its waves, affrighted,' (...) As such, Leila is apparently meant to represent the feminine source of life itself, but Fuller realizes this force will drown the seeker if it is not restrained by the polite conventions of daily life."⁵¹ *Leila*, as an unrealised feminine component of the Fuller's spirituality provides the access to the divine, which was constrained by male-dominated society created by social gender norms favoring men. In *Leila*, Fuller expressed her inability to attain intellectual and spiritual satisfaction within the society of her time. She claimed that the way to achieve spirituality

⁴⁸ Reynolds, 1998, 74-75

⁴⁹ Steele, 2001, p.83

⁵⁰ Ibid., p.84

⁵¹ Murray, 2012, p.172

was in the ability to restore the balance between the intellectual and the feminine, and therefore soothe the tension between transcendental principles and gender roles.

"Leila" depicted the personification of a distinctly nineteenth century woman: "who was exalted for the piety and yet excoriated for spiritual initiative cherished as mothers and condemned for their sexual impulses, worshiped as true women while being sacrificed to restrictive social codes."⁵² With the character of Leila, Fuller attacked the notion of gender conceptualization and her fight in undermining this sort of conceptualization. Leila was the victim whose individual cultivation was oppressed by sex-based religious and social boundaries.

Leila carries a powerful erotic charge, but Fuller tried to sublimate Leila's erotic energy in a "quest for the ideal."⁵³ According to critics, it can be seen as autobiographical narrative, and that Fuller's homoerotic desire for her friend Barker, who she passionately loved. In Leila we can supposedly see a disguised image of Anna Barker, and Fuller transforms her image in the figure of the Goddess. As a result, "Fuller's imaginative exploration of the Goddess turns into a mythic exposition of the lesbian imaginary drawing on the field of eroticized images around the image of Anna, Fuller transmutes them unto profound mythic narrative of psychological dissociation and regeneration."⁵⁴

5. The concept of female gender

Fuller's fathers shaped her comprehension of the world. Margaret's literary work "Autobiographical Romance" is an unfinished collection of semi-autobiographical sketches, written when she was thirty years old. Here she interpreted the privilege of her classical

education during a time of patriarchy that undermined woman's intellectual pursuits. "Autobiographical Romance" was published posthumously in her *Memoirs*. This literary work gives us brief insight into Fuller's education and childhood as well.

⁵² Steele, 2001, p.91

⁵³ Ibid. p.89

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.89

Through "Autobiographical Romance" she described her father's strong intellectual influence and her mother's absence from Fuller's life. Fuller's mother was very fragile and she neglected Fuller after the death of her younger sister.

"Autobiographical Romance" begins with the words "My father". She grieved for her dead father but also about the damage he had caused her. He educated Fuller rigorously by constant applications and memorizing the facts from various subjects, which had serious consequences on the development of Fuller's personality. The beginning is mostly about the damaging effects of his education. "In the beginning of this literary piece, Fuller details the exacting instruction of her father, Timothy Fuller, Jr. a Harvard graduate, lawyer, and lawmaker who is portrayed as a driven man, possessing a "sagacious energy"⁵⁵. Even though he is aware of the limitations imposed on women in early nineteenth-century America, he is determined to educate his daughter so that she, like him, could make a place of "distinction in the community."⁵⁶

He believed that classical curriculum would make Margaret the ideal intellect. It is obvious that for Margaret her father represented a role model she had to measure herself against. She fought with her father's cultural barriers, and limitations while reflecting on her childhood as she was writing this. In one section of her autobiographical sketch which she entitles "Overwork" Fuller said: "Poor child! Far remote in time, in thought, from that time, I look back at these glooms and terrors, wherein I was enveloped, and perceive that I had no *natural childhood*."⁵⁷ In the next section entitled "Books" she defined this notion of a "natural childhood", here she wrote about her father's high regard for Augustan writers. She resented Augustan writers and her father's affection for this "artificial" body of work: "Trained to great dexterity in artificial methods, accurate, ready, with entire command of his resources, he had no belief in minds

that listen, wait, and receive. He had no conception of the subtle and indirect motions of imagination and feeling."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Bailey, 2013, p.82

⁵⁶ Rapatzikoul, 2008, p.118

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.119

⁵⁸ Capper, 1994, p.36

Fuller argued that reading classical literature work should not be the foundation for developing a child's imagination, instead children should let thoughts come. She is convinced that children shouldn't have to read, but they need to learn from their own experience. She was against her father's methods "based on the idea that the child was an empty container, and their aim was to teach intellectual and moral rigour (...) through constant application and memorizing of the classics."⁵⁹ Timothy managed to provide an educational experience for his daughter but in doing so he had limited the development of her female identity. His way of educating his daughter was due both his ignorance and his inability to realise the emotional needs and vivid imagination of his daughter. Fuller's father was a rather typical nineteenth century man. His figure actually represents typical nineteenth century man. He deprived her of a normal childhood, which had its consequences. She wrote: "Indeed he demanded accuracy and clearness in everything: you must not speak, unless you can make your meaning perfectly intelligent... 'But,' 'if,' 'unless,' 'I am mistaken,' and 'it may be so,' were words and phrases excluded from the province where he held sway (...) He had no conception of the subtle and indirect motions of imagination and feeling (...) I had too much strength to be crushed..."⁶⁰

Fuller was never liberated from the moral dictates of her Puritan male ancestors because of the way her father had raised and educated her. Fuller compared her father's education and upbringing with the Roman tradition as a stern discipline, while comparing her mother's influence as similar to the "enchanted gardens" in Ovid's ancient Greece. She mourned the damaging effects of her patriarchal upbringing; the consequences of which she felt for the rest of her life: "By linking her father's authority to the image of Rome, Fuller disclosed the cultural mythology that oriented the lives of many American men. For in this 'character' and 'outward relations' she observed her father was one of the class which surrounding conditions have made major above us."⁶¹

Her literary work reveals hidden trauma caused by her father, that, and in some perverse way was very important part of the formation of Fuller's identity. Her strong relationship with her father, was in many ways like the relationship between the teacher and the student. Fuller was never liberated from the moral dictates of her Puritan male ancestors. "she was still the product of a

⁵⁹ Capper & Giorcelli, 2007, p.81

⁶⁰ Fuller & Giorcelli, 1976, p.39

⁶¹ Steele, 2001, p.126

Puritan ancestry..."⁶² Fuller's mother also had an influence on her daughter's upbringing and development, and she represented an emotional shelter for Fuller's broken soul. Fuller often draws attention to her mother's garden, and the way her mother took care of it and kept it alive by pouring her soul in every inch of the garden. Her mother's garden was a comforting refuge for Fuller. Before Fuller could turn to the memories of her mother's garden, she needed to resolve her personal issues caused by her father's instructions. She was referred to the interior of the house as masculine world, and she represented her mother's garden as 'an emblem of domestic love.'⁶³ The author described her mother's figure in autobiographical memoir, her mother was: "a creature (...) bound by one law with the blue skirt, the dew, and frolic birds..." and filled with spontaneous love for every living thing, for man, and beast, and tree, which restores the golden age."⁶⁴ She was also wrote another metaphor regarding her mother's carefully kept garden where she spent the happiest time of her childhood years: "her mother's garden is a cosy nest for her fledging mind"⁶⁵ The garden was a secret space of maternal warmth and comfort. Fuller's childhood memories of her mother were always on her mind, even after her mother's death. Her mother's absence adds up to loss and regret in her "Autobiographical Romance". Fuller's mother was emotionally shaken by death of her youngest daughter at infancy, and that cause the distance between two of them. The role of mother figure is often absent from Fuller's life. This kind of upbringing generated Fuller's singularity and isolation: "Later in the "Autobiographical Romance", Fuller amplified her vision of saving female power when she re-created the beneficent influence of her mother's garden."⁶⁶ She felt that her mother projected her femininity through her garden, just as men expressed their masculinity through traditional academic disciplines. Fuller claims that her feminine-self was induced by her mother's garden,

while her masculine side was rooted in a way her father educated her."Here I felt at home. A gate opened thence into the fields,- wooden gate, made of boards, in a high, unpainted board wall, and embowered in the clematis creeper. This gate I used to open to see the sunset heaven (...) How exquisitely happy I was in its beauty, and how I loved the silvery wreaths of my protecting vine!

⁶² Murray, 2012, p.109

⁶³ Steele, 2001, p.41

⁶⁴ Fuller & Chevigny, 1976, p.39

⁶⁵ Rapatzikoul, 2008, p.124

⁶⁶ Steele, 2001, p.38

I never would pluck one of its flowers at that time, I was so jealous of its beauty (...) and it stands in nature to my mind as the emblem of domestic love."⁶⁷ Due to roles her father and mother played in her life, Fuller, in her autobiographical writings, Fuller wanted to show her personality as a unit split into two halves, masculine and feminine, an intellect that depended on the masculine upbringing and the heart that belonged to women's world. Her androgynous nature was expressed through her literary work. Women's identity was defined by men, and not by themselves, this understanding of women's inferiority had its roots back in Puritan tradition. "Women had no defined legal identity as an individual. Women grew to resent being repressed socially and legally with the constant law changes restricting the liberties permitted to their gender."⁶⁸ In Fuller's world success in social and political aspects of life was a male prerogative. Fuller's education according to masculine norms gave her access to ideas and concepts where she inevitably compared her own experience as a woman: "Thus, through the figure of her father Fuller was able to sketch the gendered partition of modern society, a world in which attainment of social-place and political authority was a male prerogative that came at high cost to the development of emotion, empathy, and an inner life"⁶⁹

Woman in the nineteenth century is a classic of feminist American literature, it deals with variety of subjects: the legal inequalities between men and women, how the present system abuses women's intellect and spirituality, in other words the psychology and education of women, the often negative effects of marriage, the hypocrisy of American society and etc. She boldly questions the taboo themes of sex and prostitution, and the double standard of morality. The book *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* grew out from the Fuller's essay *The Great Lawsuit*,

which first appeared in the *Dial* in July 1843. In this essay Margaret Fuller argues that: "man is capable of reaching a new level of enlightenment if he realizes the power of women."⁷⁰ In *Woman*, she avoids writing in the male style, and tries to establish more female style of writing. Fuller carefully choose this style of writing, following her own way of expressing her believes and

⁶⁷ Fuller & Chevigny, 1976, p.39

⁶⁸ <http://www.wou.edu/history/files/2015/08>

⁶⁹ Bailey, Viens & Wright, 2013, p.84

⁷⁰ <https://study.com/academy/lesson/margaret-fuller-the-great-lawsuit-summary-analysis.htm>

thoughts. "Fuller and all women are denied any abundance. They are effaced by the patriarchal structures, especially the patriarchal structuring of language."⁷¹ She tells us "Man" signifies both "man" and "woman", and uses terms and passages for more than one purpose: "Without male privilege in and access to language, Fuller is therefore limited in expressing the meaning of her literary self; she is limited in expressing her antisocial desire." After she 'prepare (s) the reader to meet (her) on (her) own ground' (W, 3)' at the start of *Woman*, she wants us to think about ideal of 'Man' and 'Woman' in contrast to and in contest with the social reality of 'men' and 'women'.⁷² She notes that her text examines the difference between the ideal and the reality of the time period she lived in. In fact, it not only examines how and why reality is *versus* the ideal; it hints at why the ideal is different reality as Fuller shows us, the social sphere of the nineteenth century "male". In *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, Fuller develops her concept of self by removing the expectations and restrictions placed on her by a patriarchal society and culture. She wanted to free women to pursue the development of their own potential. Fuller, like Wollstonecraft urges woman to seek greater independence from the home and family through and family through education. Wollstonecraft text "*A Vindication of the Rights of Women* begins as a plea for equal education of women and includes an ambitious and far-sighted proposal for a national school system."⁷³ She says that women can transform the domestic sphere of life into the breeding ground for educational reform, since only strong and openminded women and mothers could provide adequate education for their children. Fuller emphasizes the fact that women were taught what to do in society instead how they should behave from within. The true role of women is imposed by society, so it is difficult for them to develop self-respect within such constraints. According to Fuller women must realize the negative of social conditioning and sexual repression. And they need to realize that man had and were preventing them from developing their own powers. She urges women to educate themselves and become more self aware in order to be reborn mentally and emotionally. Fuller uses her skill of rhetoric, planted into her by her father, to help women to change their perception of themselves and to convince them that women just like men, possess minds and spirits. She also supports an essentialist "definition" of gender difference.

⁷¹ Buckley, 1992, p.4

⁷² *Ibid.*, p.84

⁷³ <https://survivingbaenglish.wordpress.com/vindication-of-rights-of-women-mary-wollstonecraft>

Distinctive attributes of "femality" sets women apart as "electrical in movement, intuitive in function, spiritual in tendency."⁷⁴

5.1. The Orphic doctrine

In *Women in the nineteenth century*, Fuller, urges woman to embrace her own self-reliance. That way she could model her life after that of the Holy Mother, to be devoted to her man, but at the same time to stay free. She is trying to say that woman should act according to the example of Holy Mother who symbolizes the "perfect balance of the independent and relational aspects of female individuality".⁷⁵ In the same work, Fuller also interprets Orpheus as a symbol of man's lack of faith in woman: "According to their own ideal, their own standard men are ignoble. Yet, they do not raise themselves; they instead denigrate anyone who is other. And whom they make other is a woman, both the ideal Woman and the woman of everyday society. (...) 'Once 'penetrated' by the serpent, the biblical symbol of forbidden sexual knowledge, the woman is removed from 'acceptable' male society and placed in male-defined hell. As a patriarchal possession, Eurydice is to call for Orpheus, rather than Orpheus for Eurydice. (W,13)."⁷⁶ Orpheus was a great poet and musician, and through his talent he was able to bring order out of chaos. He lost his wife, Eurydice, when a snake had bitten her and she died. He descended to Hades to save her. His music charmed the god of hell and he permitted Orpheus to take Eurydice home. Although, Death told Orpheus that he could save Eurydice only if he doesn't look back until they reach the world of living, he looks back and loses her permanently. She writes that Orpheus (man) fails to trust Eurydice (woman), that way he failed to rescue her. He doesn't want to raise up to her level. She is betrayed and abandoned. With the character of Orpheus, Fuller makes an allusion to her male contemporaries.

She points out that civic virtue of nineteenth century America is at stake. "The woman who has sexual knowledge summons her own rescue. She uses the male poet as an instrument rather than being used by the male. Women, then, have the author(ity) to write themselves out of the hell

⁷⁴ Gatta, 1997, p.44

⁷⁵ Adams, 1987, p.390

⁷⁶ Buckley, 1997, p.42

of man's making. Knowing of and therefore embodying antisocial desire, the woman, in the man's narrative, may be in hell. But it is a hell 'he' defines and 'she' accepts if she lives by the man's narrative."⁷⁷ Fuller says that woman is the one who can make any man rescuer but he makes himself a hero. Fuller emphasizes the need of Eurydice's self-representation, and refers to the strong female precursors in classical mythology. Fuller says "now the time has come when a clearer vision and better action is possible. When men and women may regard one another as brother and sister..."⁷⁸ She draws on Ovid's version of the myth in order to assert the integral role of the "feminine", by finding very strong female characters in Greek mythology, and that way she points out cultural significance of the Orpheus myth. She is convinced that balanced dualism lies in that ancient mythology. Fuller claims, that in order to achieve Orphic unity, both man and woman must develop themselves as fully as possible. Dovell argues that: "Fuller drew on concepts of Orphic dualism and romantic idealism to formulate her theories of gender fluidity and difference. (...) Fuller addresses these problems with her theory of gender fluidity and transitivity: if the feminine is represented, and Orphic union can take place, then both civic virtue and individual self-culture are possible."⁷⁹ Margaret claims that men don't rise themselves, they achieve their goals by denigrating anyone who is "other". She introduces the subject of woman's rights. Fuller saw Orphic doctrine as a path toward "spiritual rebirth and purity"⁸⁰, actually as the way to revelation. She was drawn to ancient cults cause they were forerunners of the Christianity, and represented "ecstatic union with God".⁸¹

⁷⁷Buckley, 1997, p.42

⁷⁸www.ingentaconnect.com

⁷⁹<https://www.history-culture-modernity.org/articles/10.18352/hcm.490/>

⁸⁰ Murray, 2012, p.167

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.167

5.2. Fuller's alternate self

Fuller introduces a reader with empowering female characters chosen from history, mythology and literature, in order to break down the idea of restricted woman. Here she also writes about her masculine upbringing, and the figure of her father. "I was put at once under discipline of considerable severity, and, at the same time, had a more than ordinarily high standard presented to me."⁸² She gives radical recharacterization of female identity through the character of 'Miranda'. She dramatizes a youthful and dynamic self and distances her current self from the imaginative character. "On this stage Fuller engages in conversation with an alternate self, Miranda. This Miranda is much like Fuller, 'a child of spirit. She took her place easily, not only in the world of organized being, but in the world of mind.'" (W, 28)⁸³ 'Miranda' is presented through series of dialogues between Miranda and Fuller. 'Miranda' represents an icon of the intellectual possibilities of women. She is reared by masculine culture and patriarchal upbringing not only as a woman but as a person as well. The presence of narrative voice makes the interpretation of the passages more complex. Through this character Fuller advocates the concept of a self-reliant woman. This female character embodies Fuller's attempt to create a woman that refutes the stereotype of the marginalized woman, limited by expectations of society. "Between Fuller and Miranda there emerges the story of an artistic self to whom 'outward adversity came, and inward conflict'; yet, because 'self-respect had early been awakened' she can now 'an outward serenity an inward peace' (W, 28)"⁸⁴

With the character of Miranda, Fuller tries to encourage 19th-century women readers to use reason as a weapon for liberation and to restrain their passion by doing so. In the passages about 'Miranda', she also reflects a firm belief in the equality of the sexes. She says that Miranda's interaction with men is mostly passionless. "Fuller and Miranda, women oppressed, must find in textual ambiguity and redirection a means to express the desires that defines their selves. They

⁸² Fuller & Chevigny, 1997, p.43

⁸³ Buckley, 1997, p.43

⁸⁴ Ibid. p.43

are not allowed to speak with a certainty of success or permanence. They cannot count on having desire understood, but the most untutored male can share in the oldest texts of the patriarchy."⁸⁵ Fuller advocates that women should act as independent human beings, able to freely express their reasoning. They would be able to express their individual identity only if they change the image they have of themselves.

There are obvious similarities between Fuller and Miranda, especially in the way in which Miranda's upbringing reflects the way Fuller's father raised Fuller. Elaine Showalter wrote that Fuller's education in childhood consisted of "rigorous education in reason, self- master and self-restraint."⁸⁶ Fuller was strictly taught by her father, although this kind of education was unusual for a woman during this time. Timothy's training of young Fuller was under the influence of Wollstonecraft's *Vindication*, and he was convinced that his daughter's mind should be fully developed. It is clear that 'Miranda' represents the Fuller's alter ego. Miranda represents both the social stereotypes of educated woman and the possible freedom from a restricted life. Miranda like Fuller was a woman trapped in her biology, trying to transcend limitations of her body and soul imposed by her father and the society of her time. Fuller had written that her father had no sentimental reverence for woman but he considered her as a living mind. While writing about her upbringing she omitted lifelong nightmares and headaches provoked by her child rearing: "image of her haunted father appears in the 'Miranda' section of Fuller's 'The Great Lawsuit' essay, 'To this ideal image of her father, to him whose 'image' lived in her, Fuller paid homage in words that reveal her continuing bondage to a haunting, godlike man..."⁸⁷ Fuller's controlling father caused in Fuller inner conflicts. Her psyche was tortured with the conflicting desires, as a woman she wanted to get free from her father's authority, but on the other hand as being his daughter, she sought for confirmation of his paternal love.

Through idealised female character of Miranda Fuller displays sense of self-dependence: "Fuller's idealized alter ego, Miranda, represented the Wollstonecraft regimen that her father Timothy designed for her, the training that allowed clarity of thought, knowledge of the universe, freedom

⁸⁵ Buckley, 1997, p.45-46

⁸⁶http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/english_diss/88/

⁸⁷<https://www.degruyter.com/downloadpdf/j/texmat-2016.6issue-1/texmat-2016-0004/texmat-2016-0004.xml>

in the world, and above all 'self-dependence' (...) Such a 'living mind' as Miranda's descended directly from Wollstonecraft, who urged women 'to *think*, and only rely on God'.⁸⁸ Fuller's failed identifications with her father and mother comes from her confusing gender identity. Fuller wrote: "My history presents much superficial, temporary tragedy. The Woman in me kneels and weeps in tender rapture; the Man in me rushes forth but only to be baffled."⁸⁹ Girl's socialization from early childhood to adulthood made them to see others in themselves. Women had to see themselves as worthy of life and deserving to exist. "From childhood Fuller's experiences 'made her feel torn between terms that her society considered mutually exclusive: female and intellectual.' As a woman, she was mocked for not conforming to standards of feminine beauty; as a thinker, she was patronized for deviating from the solemnity of the sermon or the essay."⁹⁰ Fuller considered that female identity should be redefined, and that both men and women must acknowledge female potentials. She advocated for the growth of women's intellectual capacities, which would urge development of the self-reliant women.

5.3. The nineteenth century gender division

The same social transformations that affected the issue of feminism of the time also greatly influenced gender consciousness. The concept of gender has always been an important term in feminist criticism, but until recently, it referred primarily to woman and also woman's writing. Gynocriticism claims that women's writing is affected by their gender. While feminist critique is concerned with a woman as a reader, gynocritics is considered with a woman as a writer. The feminist critique doesn't tell us anything about woman's feelings and experience, but it is male-oriented and concentrated on man's feelings. Gynocritique is concerned with the psychodynamic of a female creativity, female writers and their work and literary history. Fuller was a first-wave feminist and she fought for equal education, for women to have access to all professions and other

⁸⁸Bailey, 2013, p.17

⁸⁹Showalter, 2001, p.42

⁹⁰Ibid, p.42

issues included in or addressed by the first wave. But, on the other hand, her concept of gender was far beyond traditional notions of the nineteenth century, and Fuller comes close to the second wave of feminism which stated what about the concept of gender consciousness. Gender has come to refer to culturally ascribed characteristic of men and women. Throughout history cultures and societies have labeled certain behaviours as 'ideal' or 'aberrant' for men and for women. The stereotypical belief about essential gender differences identifies women with the body and men with the mind, where women's subordination is clearly intended. De Beauvoir argues that: "Gender is not only a cultural construct imposed by identity, but in some sense gender is a process of constructing ourselves."⁹¹ While one of the modern scholars second wave feminist, Judith Butler says: "If we accept that gender is constructed and that it is not in any way 'naturally' or inevitably connected to sex, then the distinction between sex and gender comes to seem increasingly unstable."⁹² For Fuller that is not enough to challenge male dominance over women. As Greven argued: "The capaciousness of Fuller's argument is such that the very concept of a gendered identity undergoes a rigorous reassessment (...) She offers a view of gender that is toughminded and utopian at once at its best, gender is a flexible, ever-evolving system."⁹³

Relations of power between the sexes can find common ground among theories of power which emerge from the experiences of domination and subjugation. "If we began with a general question about the association of power and gender, the answer would seem to be self evident: Power is associated firmly with the male and masculinity (...) Yet efforts to change the subordinate status of women require a consideration of the nature of power."⁹⁴ It is evident that Margaret Fuller in her works advocates for equality of men and women. "Since both sexes had come to view gender inequality as 'natural,' and because man benefited from the arrangement, change would have to come from women's continuing self-reliant maturation."⁹⁵ Women have to liberate themselves from patriarchal structures of society. "According to Gramsci the

supremacy of a particular group manifests itself through domination and intellectual /moral leadership. It is not a matter of regarding hegemony as an issue of repressive subordination by the

⁹¹<https://qz.com/1190996/scientific-research-shows-gender-is-not-just-a-social-construct/>

⁹² Salih, 2002, p.49

⁹³ Greven, 2014, p.63

⁹⁴ Nicholson, 1990, p.157

⁹⁵<https://transcendentalism.tamu.edu/rixonfuller>

hegemonic group..."⁹⁶One of the power theories *Gender theory of power* criticise present system of patriarchy. Feminist thinkers who support gender theory advocate the liberation of women from male dominance. "The Gender Theory of Power holds that currently power in each society is exercised through a system of real and effective social, economic and political equality of men and women in each society. The two classes of men and women must be equal partners in the exercise of power in each society."⁹⁷

Simone de Beauvoir's feminist masterpiece *The Second Sex* represents the starting point of second-wave feminism."It is at this turning point that works such as *The Second Sex* , by the French writer and philosopher Simone de Beauvoir (1997^a·1997^b) pave the way for the feminist discussion on gender roles and, consequently, on gender identity a social network of power relations (after the acknowledgement) that biological sex differences are not fixed."⁹⁸De Beauvoir claims that there is a distinction between sex and gender, and that an interaction between social and natural functions actually exists. She claims that woman is not regarded by man as an autonomous human being but rather as the *Other*, in opposition to man.Both sexes are to blame because men fail to see women as autonomous individuals and women accept this status satisfying themselves with life of material protection and a male-created state of being. She says that women should liberate their beings and existence from the chains of objectification, and than the deconstruction of patriarchy would be possible.According to her, women accept this subservient role because women are taught from childhood that they should be subservient. In the nineteenth century it was expected from women to be subservient to men. "Fuller argues for women's advancement as simply the development of human potential (...) she shows women's rights not as antagonistic to men, but as essentially related, since both men and women share a common human nature."⁹⁹

As Margaret Vanderhaar Allen says on the issue of power Fuller was strongly indecisive. Fullerrejected the idea that women were satisfied to exercise power indirectly through their

⁹⁶ [repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt>handle/1822/45995](https://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/handle/1822/45995)

⁹⁷ www.shareyouressays.com/knowledge/4-major-theories-of-power-class-elite-pluralist-and-gender-theories/112570

⁹⁸ repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/handle/1822/45995

⁹⁹ <https://www.coursehero.com/file/plo1ku/Men-and-women-will-marry-and-Fuller-knew-that-the-achievement-of-true-equality>

influence on a particular man. However, Fuller thought that liberated women would not crave public power, since it was not in woman's nature to crave public power and rule over others." Anticipating John Stuart Mill's later argument that power over one man was small compensation for women's loss of freedom, Fuller said that woman in their present condition of servitude too often used their power meanly and frivolously deprived of equality and freedom, they made the use of the arms of the servile-cunning, blandishment, and unreasonable emotion."¹⁰⁰

In order to analyse Fuller's gender concept it is important to illustrate historical and cultural background. In the nineteenth century, relations between roles of men and women divided into masculine and feminine, private and public. American society, equated masculinity with reason and femininity with harmony and beauty. The formation and proper development of the female identity depended upon a distinct separation of female and male spheres, a woman's intellectual capacity could be used only in providing and securing the relationship to her husband and children, and woman's superiority could be displayed only in the domestic sphere. So, it is obvious that separate sphere ideology dictated that the only proper place for a respectable woman was in the home. This idea prohibited women from functioning or engaging in the public sphere. The proper woman's sphere was the world of morality and family, while man's sphere was the public one dealing with political, economic and social problems. "The doctrine of separate sexual spheres was supreme (...) and even suffragists were unable to change certain basic aspects of it. Most aspects of it notably, they accepted the particular suitability of women to domestic activities, and therefore their special responsibility for the private sphere, and did not project the reorganization of the division of the labour within the home."¹⁰¹

Fuller was convinced that a psychological and social disharmony of the nineteenth century was the result of gender divisions grounded upon internalization of male authority. Woman's self-development was restricted in many aspects of life. Fuller was convinced that equality between sexes would benefit men as well as women. American women had every right to develop self-reliance but they could achieve that only by transforming themselves. The question was "How to

¹⁰⁰Allen, s.a., p.238

¹⁰¹Moses & Hartmann, 1995, p.34-44

achieve that?". Fuller argued that stereotypical gender roles should be destroyed in order to liberate women's identity. As Judith Butler argued, gender is an act to be learned, rehearsed, and then performed with the performance rendering social laws explicit. "There exists an illusion about social reality but nothing is natural and gender is not natural either."¹⁰² Some feminist literary theorists claimed that gender has become a "discursive formation and which is inherently unstable and self-deconstructing. The meaning of gender is constantly deferred, endlessly multiple."¹⁰³ Fuller with concept of the Great Radical Dualism advocated that gender fluidity, masculinity and femininity exists in every individual.

5.4. The two sides of "radical-dualism"

Fuller's references to androgyny were various. In her works she makes statements about androgynous themes and androgynous nature of all men and women. She doesn't accept an exclusively biological and sociological definition of woman's nature, and she offers a vision of androgyny in which "male" and "female" interfuse.

Fuller didn't accept the idea that femaleness and maleness are physical classifications. She regarded gender as person's emotional and intellectual qualities. She challenges "radical dualism" and argues that the two sides of the dualism are not completely pure. Fuller claims that masculinity and femininity "are perpetually passing into one another. Fluids hardens to solid, solid rushes to fluid. There is no wholly masculine man, no purely feminine woman."¹⁰⁴ She argues that every human being has both masculinity and femininity aspects and that they intertwine in every individual. According to Fuller, the development of human beings is "two-fold", they possess both intellect and emotions, and it is wrong to think that masculinity is essentially defined by power and supported by logos.

¹⁰²<https://tampub.uta.fi/bitstream/handle/>

¹⁰³ Bordo, s.a., p.215

¹⁰⁴ www.quotatiospage.com/quote/1837.html

" *Energy and Harmony.*

Power and Beauty.

Intellect and Love.

...These two sides are supposed to be expressed in man and women, that is, as the more or less, for the faculties have not been given pure to either, but only in preponderance. There are also exceptions in great number, such as men of far beauty and power, and the reverse..., if these two developments were in perfect harmony, they would correspond to and fulfill one another, like hemispheres, or the tenor and bass music. "¹⁰⁵

"She notes how at birth an infant is assigned a role in life it is expected to play. For, unlike an animal, as it emerges into social life it acquires a language wherein it is designated, if male, as 'masculine', which Fuller defines as energy, power and intellect; of female, as 'feminine' defined by her as love, harmony and beauty. According to Fuller, had, these two sides develop in 'perfect harmony', then they would have corresponded to one another like hemispheres, or the tenor and bass in music'. "¹⁰⁶ She was searching for a new language to define masculine and feminine. In doing so, she derived new words from classical terminology: "Men, she argues, have both a "Vulcan" (masculine) and an "Apollo" (feminine) side;".¹⁰⁷ Through the images of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, and Muse, the fabled inspiration of art, Fuller represents the radical dualism of female personality. She asserts the "two aspects of women's nature". Minerva characterizes the masculine nature of women, that women should develop to achieve inner harmony. Minerva was a virgin, so in order to achieve this harmony women should restrain from social and sexual relations for a period of time. Muse, the female nature, exists in every woman. The image of Muse in a way represents the nineteenth century image of the *true woman*. In an attempt to make a balance between Muse's passionate energy and Minerva's self-reliance, Fuller criticized the limitations

¹⁰⁵ Reynolds, 1998, p.100

¹⁰⁶ Murray, 2012, p.220

¹⁰⁷ Steele, 1995, p.34

of conventional roles of women. Also, the paradigm of Muse and Minerva represents an instrument of social analysis: "the act of balancing the subversive potential of the Muse's passionate energy against the intellectual discipline of Minerva comments directly upon the repressive limitations of conventional female roles."¹⁰⁸ Fuller was determined to harmonize the balance or proportion between the intellect and the emotions in woman's nature, to restrain the progress of the Muse with Minerva's intellect thereby stopping women from becoming victims of their own sensibilities.

Fuller sets out an extensive discussion of the forms of marriage in *Woman*. She explains the importance of a companionship in a marriage, male and female roles in marriage are not the same but they are connected in their separation. It is obvious that boundaries between spheres weren't so strictly defined as ideology asserted them to be. She says that marriage is "pilgrimage toward a common shrine"¹⁰⁹ in which man and wife were equal partners. Fuller claims that woman's sphere is tightly tied to marriage. She rejects the idea that women should be educated to become better companions and mothers for men. She is convinced that feminism is no

way from damaging marriage, but that it will actually give it some meaning, while Stanton claims that if the principles of freedom and equality were put to practice the harmony of domestic circle could be destroyed. Family was the sticking point for feminism both legally and politically. According to Beecher Stowe's views, "women could best exert their moral influence through their roles in the Christian home and neighbourhood."¹¹⁰ Fuller gives a lengthy discussion to the questions of marriage. Fuller argues that the forms and aspects of marriage like intellectual companionship, household partnership, mutual understanding and expectations of the other half are various forms of interactions between women and men. "These are all instances of marriage as intellectual companionship. The parties meet mind to mind, and a mutual trust is excited which can buckled them against a million. They work together for a common purpose, and, in all these instances, with the same implement, the pen."¹¹¹ In her essay *The Great Lawsuit*, Fuller argues that

¹⁰⁸Steele, 1995, p.34

¹⁰⁹ Bailey, Viens & Wright, 2013, p.95

¹¹⁰<https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/woman-suffrage/woman-nineteenth-century-reform>

¹¹¹ Myerson, 2000, p.408

marriage is relationship of equality between two sides. Wollstonecraft like Fuller, envisages the classical ideal of higher friendship where equality and mutual respect among partners take place, which is a suitable model of equal and free relationship in marriage."The essay is both a defense of Fuller as an unmarried, intellectual woman and an argument in behalf of human rights. As such it intertwines a theme of personal exploration and rebirth with a vision of an out-of-kilter earth soon to be restored to harmony by self-reliant women who have been given freedom to seek self-knowledge..."¹¹² Fuller's *Great Lawsuit* finds the common ground with Wollstonecraft and Grimké regarding both religious themes and civil right arguments. Fuller contrasts the ideal of equality against social reality, giving the reader a chance to be an impartial judge and to change his or her mind after considering and understanding both sides of argument. First, the reader had to be convinced that the "laws of nature" were in fact cultural constructs. Invoking dominant male civic traditions, Fuller promotes gender equality through a spiritually enlightened, androgynous democracy. Fuller says that because men were intellectually incapable of conceiving women as anything other than made to serve a man, this arrangement of dominant male society suited them, so the progress would come only through women's continuing self-reliant maturation: "In the early pages of *The Great Lawsuit* she pointed to the struggle of women abolitionists to overcome the prejudice against women in speaking in public as the most prominent example of women's organized activity on their own behalf."¹¹³ Here Fuller creates her vision of equality and displays her ideas formed on Romantic literature, and Emerson's self-reliance. In *The Great Lawsuit*, Fuller gives an idealized version of marriage, putting both men and women in the light of equal importance. She claims that marriage is a union of intellectual, healthy companionship. Fuller argues that there is no essential difference between man and women. She is convinced that promoting self-reliance for both sexes has the power to enact change in public ideas and institutions. She didn't want to bolster "separate spheres ideology" by emphasizing women's differences.

¹¹² Murray, 2012, p.186

¹¹³ Argersinger & Cole, 2014, p.169

5.5. Universal gender norms

"Margaret Fuller, Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill (among others) are all considered "Enlightenment" feminists, according to Rossi. Their differences are distinct from the moral crusaders, both socially and ideologically. "¹¹⁴

The enlightenment thinkers challenged the status quo and they influenced the beginning of many democratic republics. According to Immanuel Kant, German writer and philosopher of the age, the enlightenment had its share in a process of learning and discovering more about the world. He argued that human life could be improved through the use of education and reason. "Man can only become man by education."¹¹⁵ Kant believed that you need to know how to use your intelligence in order to improve your society. He emphasized that freedom of thought, the right to reason, is a universal privilege and that every human being represents *autonomous being* and that it should not be under the influence of another human being. "We are, for Kant, inevitably negatively free, our choices being 'underdetermined by the grounds or reasons' presented to the will of our inclinations or desires."¹¹⁶ But, on the other hand he said that in a marriage every woman has its master. As Kant claimed, each person must subject themselves to the other: "As culture advances, each party must be superior in his own particular way; the man must be superior to the woman by his physical strength and courage; the woman to the man, however, by her natural talent for gaining mastery over his desire for her."¹¹⁷ A lot of writers portrayed women in a negative manner. They also write bad things about other cultures and women in other cultures. They shared the idea that only their culture is superior, and that the world belongs to men. However, throughout history, the role of women has varied according to their social status and place where they lived. The life of women in rural areas consisted of hard work, their obligation was to take care of their home and their family needs. They didn't think much about their position in society and about education. While

¹¹⁴ Vincent, 2016, p.6

¹¹⁵ Kant, 2003, p.6

¹¹⁶ Cholbi, 2016, p.129

¹¹⁷Welter, 1988, p.2

women in urban places had different aspirations. They were interested in education and tried to assure their status in society. Their role were of great significance in the Enlightenment. One of the female philosophers, Mary Wollstonecraft, shared Fuller's feminine views, and had great influence during the enlightenment period, and successfully challenged some of the patriarchal prejudice of her time. She declares that both men and women should be treated as rational beings and that they deserve the same rights. She challenges the perception by men that women are inferior human beings, she asserts that women should lead their own lives in defiance of the prevailing restrictions of patriarchy. She argues for many social and political changes to improve that status of women, the right to education, political rights etc. Margaret Fuller argues that female oppression is responsible for degradation of both sexes, which she clearly states in her work *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*. "she based her claims for the equality of men and women on their equality of souls, not as citizens, and called for women's equal freedom to develop their God-given capacities..."¹¹⁸

6. Domesticity as the nucleus of the family

Domestic ideology, or the cult of domesticity characterized the family home as the particular domain of the woman. This ideology gave women a set place within society, an idealized place in the home, she represented the centre of spiritual and moral goodness of the nuclear family. Domestic ideology also emphasized the importance of a woman's resistance to sexual desires and insisted that women remain sexually pure. A woman having sexual desires was considered unnatural and woman expressing her libido was labeled as a sick person. Those two concerns, lack of desire and remaining pure, were of great importance. Groneman wrote: "both doctors and the patients who sought medical help believed that strong sexual desire in a woman was a symptom of disease."¹¹⁹

Fuller discussed the problems nineteenth century women confronted while fulfilling their marital duties. Woman had to save her chastity till wedding night for her future husband. She had to submit

¹¹⁸<https://hdl.handle.net/2114/1411>

¹¹⁹ movies2.nytimes.com/books/first/g/groneman-nymphomania.html

herself to her husbands sexual needs. Women mostly were ignorant when it came to sex, they entered into a marriage unprepared for the sexual obligations: "To contemplate the loss of one's purity brought tears and hysteria to young women. This made a little difficult, and certainly a bit confusing, to contemplate one's marriage, for in popular literature, the marriage night was advertised as the greatest night in a woman's life, the night when she bestowed upon her husband her greatest treasure, her virginity."¹²⁰ Women were the weaker and innocent creatures without sexual appetites, portrayed as frigid human beings, incapable of feeling pleasure in the sexual act, but still capable to please their lustful husbands. A woman's body served for her husband's pleasure and she obediently fulfilled her obligations. Many women were pushed into marriages without love, because they needed someone to provide for them. They served as an objects for their husbands' sexual desires and as incubators for their children. It was believed that absence of sexual energy in women happened for reason. Woman's libido needed to stay low or otherwise, she could, like a vampire, drain man of his life force. "The marriage night was the single great event of a woman's life, when she bestowed her greatest treasure upon her husband, and from that time on was completely dependent upon him,..."¹²¹ Women were encouraged by societal norms of the time to be satisfied with their status as wives because by getting married, they had secured the lifelong security. They were taught not to complain and to accept their role like something natural. What other purpose in this world would they have if they were not pleasing their superior halves? Women were obedient, because they were accustomed to be treated in a certain way and that seemed as a perfectly natural course of things. "Not forewarned by their mothers about 'woman's lot' but taught, instead, that marriage is the aim of their existence, excited girls use their sex appeal to win the affection of men who gaze at them not with love but lust."¹²² Woman's personality and intelligence had no value in her husband's eyes, she existed only to please her family and to give unconditional love. Even abusive husband was a good husband, because he was responsible for his wife's behaviour, she needed to be taught, to accept what was meant for her and not to think, because *the reason* would think for her. For what else reason God labeled him '

¹²⁰<http://csivc.cunmy.edu/history/files/lavender/386/newwoman.pdf>

¹²¹ Welter, 2012, p.2

¹²² Murray, 2012, p.218

the man'with'*masculinity*.'Women sees herself inferior to men. Fuller said: "A woman must first stop seeing her body as an object of female desire and see it instead as 'an organ of the soul'."¹²³

'Gender history' refers to the history of the roles of women and men, it is obvious that the society takes full responsibility for that belief. In Antebellum America, the widespread belief was that gender was 'natural and static' biologically determined state. Marriage was seen as site of gender inequality and that women do not benefit from being married as men do. The sexual division of labour in both public and private spheres needs to be altered in order for women to achieve equality. Women were bound by the preferable model of behaviour: "Antebellum domesticity emphasized the divergent roles of the two sexes in society assigning men to the competitive public sphere of politics and the market place, while consigning women to the nurturing private sphere of home and family. Popular gender code glorified marriage and motherhood."¹²⁴In the *Great Lawsuit*, Fuller stated that woman in marriage should be equal to her husband and to gain self-dependence. The relationship between family and society had undergone considerable changes by the nineteenth century. Women and men had different roles within the family unit, men emerged from their familial roles to world of social, political and economical world. Even though, family still performed many important social functions, it was no longer the main basis for the organization of the society. The concept of individual challenged that understanding. Public/private sphere had connotation of completely sexual characters, which was known as the nineteenth century doctrine of sexual spheres.

6.1. Woman's decadent sexuality

The term Victorian is often associated with the notion of sexual repression. Various handbooks served to inform the public about the ideal form of femininity and purity, promoting that a woman should be submissive and subordinate to her husband. Fuller wrote: "the moral double standard inevitably affects the moral nature of women as well. She describes how women are given in marriage to men with poor moral reputations whom they cannot trust or respect, which destroys

¹²³ Ibid., p.221

¹²⁴ Cohen, p.86

any possibility of a good marriage (152-53). Women in these marriages are also put on a double bind because they are expected to exert moral influence in the home and also expected to submit to their husband's rule (150) (...) she considers the problem of prostitution as resulting from exactly this double bind."¹²⁵

It was believed that women should be passionless because they didn't have animalistic desires like men: "their sexuality was assumed to be subdued and existing only in as much as marriage aroused it at the husband's stimulation. However, contrary reactions and the existence of female desire not connected to their husbands was observed as well, which gave rise to on the one hand medical treatises (...) and on the other hand a recognition of the existence of female sexual nature."¹²⁶ It is obvious that many people in nineteenth century knew that women had sexual urges just like men did. But, it was believed that a woman's sexual desire would be a danger to society, because insatiable woman had some kind of mental disorder. The state of woman's nature as a human being was suffocated with this kind of understandings: "Female sexual desire was believed to be particularly dangerous: women were easily overwhelmed by the power of their sexual passion because they were closer to nature and thus more volatile and irrational than men. According to one doctor, 'when they are touched and excited, a time arrived when, though not intending to sin, they lost all physical control over themselves.' (Heywood Smith in Routh 1887, 505) Women's potential for explosive sexuality jeopardized the self-discipline and control of desire that the Victorian middle class asserted were the mainstays of civilization."¹²⁷ But Carby's opinion is that white women were idealized by the cult of *True Womanhood*, and that white women had the privilege to control their sexuality and reproduction, which was denied to black women. He claims that with the concept of "the angel in the house" and "true womanhood", black women were demonized and labeled as a whores: "The effect of black female sexuality on the white male was represented in an entirely different form from that of the figurative power of white female sexuality. Confronted by the black woman, the white man behaved in a manner that was considered to be entirely, untempered by any virtuous qualities; the white male, in fact, was represented as being merely prey to rampant sexuality of

¹²⁵<https://www.raleighcharterhs.org/faculty>

¹²⁶https://docslide.net/documents/the-female-identity_and-sexuality-in-victorian-gent-faculties-letter-en-wijsbegeertl.html

¹²⁷ Terry & Urla, 1995, p.233

his female slaves."¹²⁸ White man had a benefit by the enslavement of Africans, and formed twofold notions of women according to colour of their skin by labeling them as "good white angels" and "evil black beasts". Carby argues that: "In order, to preserve the effectiveness of restrictive ideologies on white female sexuality: stereotypes only appear to exist in isolation while actually depending on a nexus of figuration which can be explained only in relation to each other."¹²⁹ Patriarchal culture managed to deprive women of power and therefore had complete power over social change. In order to achieve and maintain that power, it was important to divide women into competing and hostile groups, and then to cause conflicted feelings in every woman individually. That was the recipe for success.

The female antislavery societies that had formed during the nineteenth century America raised important questions considering black woman's private and public sphere, political role, governmental and non-governmental power.

7. The idea of "ideal woman"

According to Simone de Beauvoir all women were seen (as subject, Other) with relation to men who were considered (as the One, Absolute). This was the obstacle that stood on the way of women's emancipation. Men have further tried to impose the subordinate role to women through the means of philosophy, law, religion, literature and science. Upon their marriage, women, used to domination of their fathers, accepted the powerful authority of their husbands. The oppressed woman makes herself a thing, a possession, she doesn't act, and she seeks for salvation through her own passivity and a man. Women are viewed as being reliant on their fathers, lovers, husbands, and brothers. In striving for emancipation women refused the passivity

¹²⁸Henderson, 2002, p.72

¹²⁹Winter, 2010, p.52

men tries to impose on them, they became active, seeking for salvation out of the borders of masculine egoistic behaviour. For Fuller marriage was "an enslaving institution".¹³⁰

Fuller argued that women should be financially independent, or every aspect of their lives would be subordinated to their husbands. She advocated development of women's self-reliance. Rousseau, although much respected for his political, social and educational beliefs, fails in regards to the notions of female emancipation and independence. His explanation of '*ideal woman*' divided woman from her own humanity and suggested that women enslave themselves to their stronger halves. Women were taught to be superficial and obsessed over their personal appearance and expected to display their beauty rather than be intelligent. "The characteristic of true manhood and womanhood and the separate spheres of male and female activity were believed to have a biological basis. Female nurturance, intuitive morality, domesticity, passivity, and delicacy, and male rationality, aggressiveness, independence, and toughness were all due to their physical makeup."¹³¹ There were strict regulations regarding women's behaviour. Women stayed in a private, domestic sphere and were expected to play their roles as mother's and wives. The supremacy of the male was predetermined by cultural principles and law. Objectification of women took place in every aspects of their lives, primarily in family life where they were considered as property. They only need to worry how to preserve their chastity, to stay virginal and pure, and also to abstain from fulfilling their sexual fantasies in order to give birth to legitimate children. Women were responsible for maintaining family's lineage, they were expected to be virgins upon marrying and to produce heir for their husbands. The continuation of family name was of great importance. Unmarried women often lived with their relatives, and mostly depended on their own brothers, relying on them during financial emergencies. Often, they were employed as a private teachers or a governesses in unrelated families.

¹³⁰<https://tampub.uta.fi/gradu03263>

¹³¹<https://www.library.csi.cunny.edu/dept/history/lavender/368/truewoman.html>

8. The cult of True womanhood

The cult of *True womanhood* represented prevalent attitudes towards women in America during the nineteenth century, and laid the groundwork for the later development of feminism. "A new ideal of womanhood and a new ideology about the home arose out of the new attitudes about work and the family."¹³² True Woman represented the pillar of moral strength and purity, but at the same time she was portrayed as gentle and weak, and needed protection from too much physical and emotional exertion. In order to protect her emotional and physical frailty, woman needed the protection of a male family member. All these attitudes were promoted by women's magazines, gift annuals, pamphlets and primarily religious literature. One of these magazines was *Godey's Lady's Book* published in 1830s: "*Godey's* was according to Gerda Lerner, the 'epitome of sentimental literature'; in its pages, the conception of 'lady' was elevated to the (...) ideal of femininity toward which all women could strive but which only the wealthy could truly afford."¹³³ An upper class woman's primary function was to "display (...) her husband's wealth...".¹³⁴ The women of nineteenth century had to cope with this ideal of perfect woman, but many real women felt that they couldn't live up to this ideal. Social and economical changes, westward migration, and industrialization impelled woman to change. According to Welter, particular set of demands were based upon certain tenets: purity, piety, domesticity and submissiveness. These characteristics were crucial in promoting a woman's proper role. Domesticity, or woman's sphere, was central to True Womanhood. "representations of female sexuality were extremely curtailed in the era. The logic behind this censure was the view of women as passionless, devoid of sexual identity, a construction of female sexuality supported by the "True Womanhood" ethos, which emphasized female purity, chastity, and woman's crucial function as the icon of domesticity."¹³⁵

Woman was considered *The Angel of the house* and her duty was to preserve the stable order of family and society. "Women were expected to uphold the values of stability, morality and democracy by making home a special place (...)"¹³⁶ The phrase *Angel of the house* is a title of

¹³²<http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/dept/history/lavender/368/truewoman.html>

¹³³http://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/gsw_pub

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Greven, 2014, p.47

¹³⁶ <https://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/history/lavender/368/truewoman.html>

the famous poem by Coventry Patmore, in which he idealised his wife. Coventry believed that his wife was the perfect Victorian woman and she served as a model for other women in nineteenth century America. This ideology was imposed on girls at a very young age, they were taught to preserve their virginity, and to cultivate domestic skills in order to grow up to be proper wives and mothers. Religion was considered to be the central core of woman's virtue. They were warned to maintain their values by suppressing their literary and intellectual pursuits, because there is a chance that learning would take distance them from God and religion. Submission was the most feminine virtue that any woman could possess, so women played the role of submissive responders. "Men were to be movers, and doers, --the actors in life. Women were to be passive bystanders, submitting to fate, to duty, to God, and to men."¹³⁷ Their passivity was expected, they were mainly observers, because the doers and human beings of action were men. Motherhood gave woman higher calling in her existence. A true woman naturally should love her children, to act otherwise was monstrous. "After the American Revolution, the traditional role of women as mothers was central to the educational goals of the new nation, as mothers were the first and primary educators of young children."¹³⁸ True woman also had a very important role as a comforter or as a care-taker. Many families had *little sufferers*, sickly children giving the nineteenth century women nursing experience. That role of a nurse increased women's influence and importance. It was taught that accomplishing all her duties, i.e. virtue, beauty and usefulness, would satisfy and fulfill every woman.

The *Real Womanhood* emerged as an alternative to *True Womanhood*. "Instead of viewing women as 'nervous, hysterical, and biologically weak specimens (...) easily subdued and dominated by male force, strong emotion, and male rationality, Real Womanhood offered women "a vision of themselves as biologically equal to men (rationally as well emotionally) and in many cases markedly superior.' (Cogan 4-5)"¹³⁹ Margaret Fuller in her book *Women in the nineteenth century* denied essential gender differences and called for equality in marriage. Since women were socially and economically discriminated, and their "freedom" were in their husband's hands, Fuller encouraged women to free themselves from prescribed social boundaries. "Refusing the social assumption that woman's nature suits her naturally for domestic life, Fuller argued that nothing

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Wayne, 2007, p.71

¹³⁹ Wayne, 2007, p.161

intrinsic in woman's nature makes this her innate sphere. Like any other, Fuller stated, domestic world should be chosen freely..."¹⁴⁰ Fuller encouraged development of women's intellectual self-reliance through education. Real Womanhood saw education as beneficial for all women, an educated woman was an independent woman, who could support herself. Real Womanhood saw marriage as a potentially risky unless woman finds a suitable husband, who would be a compassionate and hardworking man. Woman needed to work, but also to perform her domestic duties, for that reason career was not seen as something positive. Every woman needed to be engaged in some kind of charitable work, domestic work, or any other work which would provide her a salary, not only to prevent her from marrying an unsuitable man, but also to gain self-reliance. Although Real Womanhood gave women opportunity to work, it was usually a work of a domestic nature. But other types of employment soon began to take middle-class woman into the public areas of society. Women got access into political, legal and cultural worlds. They began to develop occupations for themselves outside the home, managed to gain respect and to be treated equally. In addition to finding employment outside of the home, another way that nineteenth century women sought public access was through religious activity. As Matthews argued The Second Great Awakening led to a democratizing explosion of religious enthusiasm that also brought more reform in its wake and increased the number of women involved in public activity more than any other prior movement. "Women benefited from religious empowerment, primarily through the power they gained in their own homes due to their clerically endorsed moral superiority."¹⁴¹ Their cultural contributions were due to their voices or perspectives being expressed in novels by women writers. Through novels these authors explored the popular concerns of nineteenth century women, promoted social change and altered women's positions in society. The novel represented a genre that provided a connection between private and the public world. Catharine Beecher, Emma Willard, Elizabeth Peabody, and Margaret Fuller made an effort in promoting women's education as an important step into public space. Through their works women's voices could be heard outside the domestic sphere. With the pen as a powerful tool they made an important step in women's fight for equality. Real Womanhood and Public womanhood liberated women

¹⁴⁰<https://htp.handle.net/2114/1411>

¹⁴¹<https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/cgi>

by creating changes regarding views on gender equality and protecting those changes from being controlled by the patriarchal society.

9. Crisis of sexual identity

In 1844, Fuller published her critical observations of the American westward migration in *Summer on the lakes*. With this literary piece she stepped outside the women's sphere of private life and got her reputation. Using her travel accounts she created liberating role models for the oppressed female population. *Summer on the lakes* is very important among Fuller's works, because it represents her progress as a writer, as a Transcendentalist, as a feminist, and as a social activist. It also examines the positive and negative aspects of country's development. Fuller was worried about capitalist expansion and ecological damage of the country: "*Summer on the lakes* details the social destruction the settlers left in their wake, displacing and impoverishing whole native tribes."¹⁴² She wrote about the process of culturing the self and its association with others. "In *Summer on the Lakes* Fuller was testing the limits of solitude and self-reliance and coming to a firmer conviction that meaningful social progress must be generated and sustained by organization, cooperation, and the formation of benevolent social institution."¹⁴³ She wrote about interaction between Native Americans and settlers who were moving onto their land, and her own interactions with Native Americans that she encountered on her trip. Pointing out the oppression of Indians, Fuller compared the way of life of Native American women with those of white women. She argued that perhaps Indian women were happier in their ignorance compared with white women, who had more aspirations than them. Fuller was faced with the absence and deconstruction of self-culture, and argued how white women as well as Native Americans weren't allowed to act independently. The beauty and Fuller's enchantment with this country was ruined by the behaviour of the settlers. "American men and women are inexcusable if they do not bring up children so as to be fit for vicissitudes; that is the meaning of our star, that here all men being free

¹⁴² <https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/ron/2005-n38-39-ron988/011668ar>

¹⁴³ Bailey, Viens & Wright, p.90

and equal, all should be fitted for freedom and an independence by his own resources wherever the changeful wave of our mighty stream may take him."¹⁴⁴

In Kolodny's *The land Before Her (1984)*, Kolodny demonstrates the feminist connection of the digressions in Fuller's book. She compares Fuller's life in Groton with the life of women that moved westward. Only few of them embraced their new habitate, because that hadn't been their own choice to move. They followed their men, because it was expected of them. Fuller argued: "Beside it frequently not being a choice or conviction of their own minds that it is the best to be here, their part is the hardest, and they are least fitted for it".¹⁴⁵ While women were bound with domestic duties with no "resources for pleasure", men had assistance in field work and time to leisure. They went hunting or fishing, while women didn't possess those skills, and they couldn't find any kind of enjoyment. Fuller said: "the adult woman repossessed the maternal garden of childhood refugee and, in that process, healed the trauma of the rural nightmares imposed by her father's retirement to Groton"¹⁴⁶ This garden in Groton served to heal Fuller's psychiatric condition. Actually, it served to heal Fuller's scars from early childhood engraved by her father. There she felt secure and sheltered by vivid memories of her mother

Fuller daydreamed in that garden and retreated in the happiest moments of her life "our little garden, (...) which was my mother's delight."¹⁴⁷ She knew that every woman had to have her own sanctuary, her own garden, where she can escape from the harsh reality. In some sections of the book Fuller shows her concern about women and Indians. One of these digressions 'Mariana' deals with themes of oppression and self-culture. It is obvious that the story is largely fictional, but in it Fuller highlights themes that were important to her as a child. The episode of "Mariana" actually expresses Fuller's protest against the social and emotional situation of women in nineteenth century America. Sexual themes in antebellum period generally were the same-sex desire themes, which imposed in many aspects of every life. Fuller also writes about the unforgettable memory of being laughed at as a child, and how in that moment, she, more than anything needed her mother's love. Her affection for women, embodied in Elen Kinshaw and Susan Prescott represents her continuing search for maternal love. The figure of caring teacher in the "Mariana" episode

¹⁴⁴ Fuller, s.a., p.124

¹⁴⁵ Fuller & Chevigny, 1976, p.322

¹⁴⁶ Colodny, 1984, p.120

¹⁴⁷ Fuller & Chevigny, 1976, p.97

represents both erotic desire and motherly feelings. The pedagogical setting of the story is an exploration of the theme of female same-sex desire and goes beyond the normal standard of student-teacher relations. "*Summer on the lakes* is a crucial text in both the Fuller oeuvre, one in which she explored implications, causes, and conflicts in her gender identity and desire for other women..."¹⁴⁵The first half of the story about Marianna represents a quasi-autobiographical account of Margaret's experience in the Prescott's school, while the second part is about Mariana's marriage and death. Primarily, 'Mariana' is meant to voice Fuller's ideas on marriage and the obstacles it presented women, but over the half of the story is concentrated on the narrator's relationship with Mariana. Fuller embodies herself in the character of Mariana and through her figure she explores her narcissistic desire and female sexuality. "the fictional Mariana, the rebellious boarding-school student whom Fuller modeled on herself. Into the narcissistic Mariana, Fuller projected the "me" that desired a godlike embrace from some sufficient love (...) In a June letter to Channing she confesses, that though friend could see her as Miranda in (...), none dreamed that Mariana was also like me."¹⁴⁸This framed story tells us how a young woman's passion, creativity and independence are destroyed by the oppressions of conventional marriage. There is a tension in Fuller's representation of the reasons of Mariana's marital dissatisfaction. Mariana needed a life companion, but she could not find an understanding of her great intellect nor the passion that she wanted in her shallow husband. Mariana worships Sylvian but he does not share her intellectual interests. She is neglected by her husband, and the partners fall into familiar pattern of marriage existence. "Though not a cruel husband in the typical sense, he can conceive a place for her only in the social, in which Mariana finds it impossible to heed the inner law of her growth and expression."¹⁴⁹ She becomes more socially acceptable, and loses her self-reliance transforming into long-suffering woman abandoned by her other half. "Mariana's escape from her domestic imprisonment comes through death..."¹⁵⁰

This frame story represents only a background information for her tragic marriage. The real treat to Mariana's marriage actually is "*too much harmony*: the false comfort and the corpse-cold stasis that comes from marriage to a conventional male like Mariana's Sylvian, or from life

¹⁴⁸McGavran, 2012, p.207

¹⁴⁹ Bailey, Viens & Wright, 2013, p.40

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p.41

in lonely, culturally desiccated hamlet of Prevost."¹⁵¹ Fuller thinks that woman mustn't be satisfied only with stability in marriage but she needs to rise her soul and to achieve "a spiritual, transcendent ideal of womanhood."¹⁵²

Simon de Beauvoir says that the absence or failure of heterosexual relations can provoke homosexual desire. She argues that a woman can devote herself to a woman because man has disappointed her, but sometimes woman seeks a womanly characteristics in her partner, which also lead to disappointment. So, there is no clear distinction between homosexual and heterosexual. As Simone de Beauvoir claims: "The absence or failure of heterosexual relations will destinee them to inversion. It is difficult to determine the boundary between resignation and predilection: a woman ca devoteherself to a man has dissappointed her, but sometimes he dissapoints her because she was looking for a woman in him. For all these reasons it is wrong to establish a radical distinction between heterosexual and homosexual."¹⁵³ Mariana felt like a prisoner in her own world, her feelings and thoughts made alienated her from others: "Mariana's narcissism registers several distinct emotional aspects of what Mab Segrest has described as the "deep loneliness of being queer", in a specific reference to queer childhood."¹⁵⁴

Summer on the lakes as a crucial text on same-sex desires, actually reflects Fuller's personal struggle, conflicted feelings and the way she tries to make sense of them. In this book she displayed her awareness of same sex-desire and her relationship to antebellum gender politics. Early in the century, homosexual activity was compared with the sin and crime. The first use of the term "homosexual", which expressed the medical notion of sexual desire between the persons of the same gender was used in 1869 by the Swiss doctor Karoly Bankert. Later in the century this term homosexual considered the image of gay and lesbian identity. Romantic friendship between women were compatible with Victorian understanding of female homosexuality. It is ambiguous to which extent these friendships were platonic considering that they often lasted for a lifetime and that partners often shared home. Lesbian relationship mostly occurred within

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p.38

¹⁵² Ibid., p.38

¹⁵³ De Beauvoir, 1949, p.499

¹⁵⁴ Greven, 2014, p.114

private, domestic spaces, reflecting the gender politics of separate spheres. "Women's past appeared different in light of Freudian ideas and the "scientific eroticism" of the 1920s. But whereas male modernists tended to blame women as the agents of Victorian sexual repression, feminist Victorians used pro-sex ideas to retrieve rather than condemn the women's rights. Susan Anthony was a pioneer of women's rights, and also admirer of Fuller. In the case of Margaret Fuller, she used Freudian tools to explore and defend Fuller's intimate bonds with other women, the implicit eroticism of which she regarded as healthy and vital."¹⁵⁵ Homosexual desire is rare within popular fiction and poetry and finds its way in literature and in culture through socially acceptable but at the same time disguised forms. The work of recent literary criticism, for instance in Foucault's "The history of sexuality" or Cohen's "Sex Scandal: the Private Parts of Victorian Fiction", points out that the same-sex desire is evident in much Victorian literature. In Mariana's narrative Fuller links her critique of constrictive gender roles to the experience and implications of same sex- desire. Between 1839 and 1840. Fuller underwent a crisis of her sexual identity. She describes herself as a sickly and gentle girl, the character important for lesbian desire. Fuller sees Mariana as mixture of masculinity and femininity. She identifies with the character of Mariana, and through her mixed feelings tries to explore her inner homoerotic desire. "Claudia Card discusses the lesbian significance of Fuller's work as one that lies in its thematic and textual diversity, and Jeffrey Steel argues, as well, that Fuller explored homoerotic feelings in her work."¹⁵⁶ Fuller also explores the theme of female narcissism, her theme of Mariana's queer narcissism represents a threat because it has its roots in the female world: "In creating female Narcissus, Fuller opens up space in which to explore sexuality- crucially one in which female femininity is not dependant on masculinity for its self-understanding Mariana's femininity does not reflect the hierarchically superior male..."¹⁵⁷ She argues how someone's narcissistic desire can provoke desire in both the opposite or the same sex. Mariana's narcissism emerges as some kind of erotic field that succeeds in generating homoerotic feelings in others. Fuller explores the homoerotic dimensions of narcissistic

¹⁵⁵ DuBois, 1998, p.218

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.questia.com>library>journal>

¹⁵⁷ Greven, 2014, p.144

desire. It also represents a threatening energy, because Fuller becomes estranged from her own gendered identity. Through the characters of Mariana and the New Girl, Fuller explores her own desires for other women, examining difficult aspects of her own personality.

Fuller tries to show how women don't want to and can't change in order to conform to societal norms: "the narcissistic Mariana expects the social world to accommodate itself to her own needs, whatever they may happen to be. It is precisely Fuller's depiction of Mariana as narcissistic that makes her such an intriguing character for a consideration of same-sex desire in antebellum literature."¹⁵⁸

9.1. Phallic nature of Mariana's desire

"From a psychoanalytic perspective, the penis is no more the 'phallus' than the eye is the gaze. While the biological male sexual organ has a certain relation to the phallus, it does so only in abstracted and symbolic form. In the productively and suggestively counter-intuitive manner of psychoanalytic theory, the phallus is, at once, a symbol of power and desire, loss and lack."¹⁵⁹ Freud's sexist belief labeled women as deficient by nothing their lack of penis and explained that every rebellious action taken against oppression was '*penis envy*'.

It is clear that an obsession with the biological and symbolic aspects of biological "phallus" of male sexuality occupied antebellum discourses about gender and sexual difference and morality. De Beauvoir claims that phallogocentric system tricks women to occupy a place in the binary opposition. "Simone de Beauvoir does not suggest the possibility of other genders besides 'man' and 'woman', yet her insistence that these are historical constructs which must in every case be appropriated by individuals suggests that a binary gender system has no ontological necessity. One can respond that there are merely various ways of being a 'man' or a 'woman'..."¹⁶⁰ But the truth is that man created a world for them, and binary system only serves the interest of

¹⁵⁸ Greven, 2014, p.105

¹⁵⁹ Greven, 2014, p.43

¹⁶⁰ Fallaized, 1998, p.40

patriarchal system. Since gender is abstract notion created by men in order to impose their dominance over women, (gender) binary system serves "to justify the subordination of women by positioning our oppression by men as a natural state of affairs..."¹⁶¹

Fuller used phallic imagery in order to critique gender norms and restrictions of the culture and society in which she lived. The nineteenth century antebellum social order was rocked by sexual anxieties, conflicts, and sexual desires that are symbolically represented by Fuller and other writers with the phallic imagery. Coded and stylized language allowed writers to write about sex and sexual objects. Sexual reality and same-sex desire, although suppressed by the social standards of the era, found its way out and manifested itself in many aspects of society: "phallic imagery was often deployed as an expression of conservative reaction, but could also be deployed as a form of critique. It provided an available means of registering and exploring same-sex desire, especially as its evocation was connected to (...) the larger question of gender identity and norms."¹⁶²

For de Beauvoir and Irigaray, "the phallogocentric world relegates women to passivity, receptivity and submissiveness."¹⁶³ De Beauvoir is aware that women must find their identity through transcendence which existed outside the boundaries of their patriarchal immanence. "Fuller is offering a critique here of the social order the (Lacanian big Other), which organizes itself around the utter unquestionability of the phallus as the sovereign emblem of social and cultural power(...)" Fuller discovers the seeds of her culture's self-destruction within its phallogocentrism. For her, the phallic power of the masculinist social order is, in fact, the very sign of its fragility and failure, its limitations of imagination, empathy, insightfulness, and the resulting phobia, misogyny, racism, and I will argue homophobia (...)¹⁶⁴ In *Woman in the nineteenth century*, Margaret Fuller writes about gender possibilities and critiques phallic monoism. She claims that men are victims of the same social order and misogynistic acculturation that oppresses women. "Fuller's Marianna anticipates the Freudian narcissistic woman as well as feminist rereading of the figure through her (...) self-dramatizing performance of femininity."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ <https://google.bs/amp/s/sisteroutrider.wordpress.com/2017/09/05/binary-or-spectrum-gender-is-a-hierarchy/amp>

¹⁶² Greven, 2014, p.43

¹⁶³ <http://concepts.journals.villanova.edu/article/view/318281>

¹⁶⁴ Greven, 2014, p.61

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.114

10. Coded language of flowers

In America in the 1840s, language of flowers was a modern way of communication, and a major cultural phenomenon. This coded system of meanings has its roots in seventeenth century France, and in classical and medieval times. The meaning of flowers usually has its own system of symbolism according to cultural beliefs, but also according to the physical characteristics of the flowers. The language of flowers served as a vehicle for transforming certain styles of description and ornamentation into an agencied and purposeful mode. This kind of writing emerges as a substitute for something that could not be said without consequences. Such style allowed women writers to express alternative ways of gendered self and autonomous desires. With the usage of floral language women writers challenged conventional domestic roles for women. "The brief digest of reviews already demonstrate the complex ways in which style was gendered. Language that was not transparent, that did not grant immediate access to the text or to the author, was inappropriate for a woman writer. Language that seemed to evidence labor worked against expression as both spontaneous and generic, as without reflection or ambition, without art."¹⁶⁶ Fuller's feminism depended upon literary style and imagination. When using floral language she retains a tradition popular within female readers and writers, which seems as unusual choice for Fuller. She uses this kind of language in a number of her essays, letters, and journals. That way she makes a distinction between male and female language. The traditionally feminine language of flowers helped in inspiring women's independence and development. She composed flower sketches for the Dial, "The Magnolia of the Lake Pontchartrain" and "Yuca Filamentosa". She hesitated before publishing these sketches because she didn't want her

writing to be considered as traditionally feminine. Fuller depicted Magnolia as a symbol of womanhood, beauty and independence because of classical mythology and autobiographical influences. Her "Magnolia" begins with the words "the stars tell their secrets to flowers." Fuller writes about unexplored spaces of universe, about the secrets that remained unrevealed and above

¹⁶⁶ Beam, 2014, p.4

human possibilities. But, we need to look around us and connect to a world on the earth. This, actually, is a typical transcendental characteristic of epiphany through the connection with the immediate world in our surroundings. Fuller writes about a traveler's attempts to find the source of the intoxicating scent. Finally he manages to find that mysterious magnolia, who was radiating that empowering smell, "singing to herself". That was the way in which magnolia successfully finds the audience for her untold tale. She says to him that once she was happy as an orange tree but years of reproduction wore her out, and she didn't have time to take care of her own being. The cold wind came upon her and her life as orange tree was over and she woke up as magnolia flower. She reveals to him that she chose to live as an orange blossom, before she was transformed by magical power. By that transformation of orange tree into magnolia Fuller gives magnolia characteristics of purity and True Womanhood. In this sketch we can see the complex use of language of flowers. Here her language serves to protect female sexuality, and sexual expression is obvious but it is wrapped or disguised by lush language. The idea of women's body is veiled as something radiant like the sweet fragrance of flowers. Fuller also assigned the fragrance of flowers to women's feelings. As Paula Bennet claims: "A flower has 'self-contained sexuality' its power like its pleasure is located finally within itself."²³ Thus flowers were a vehicle through which women could imagine an alternative sexual economy...¹⁶⁷ Fuller also assigns the fragrance of flowers to woman's feelings. Here she displays her division between domestic and transcendental style of writing. She also expresses her feminist viewpoints, and with the language of flowers she urges women to seek for independence and education. She intentionally writes about magnolia, and puts it in a setting of wilderness. That way she creates an alternative space for women to explore gender roles unaffected by the expectations of nineteenth century society. In the passage where

magnolia describes the flower queen it's obvious that she writes about female dependence on male reasoning. She expresses her path of self-discovery, and searches for a new language and a new logic. While the orange tree is an emblem of purity and also a symbol of True womanhood, the magnolia symbolizes beauty and independence. The only way for the main character to avoid

¹⁶⁷Beam, 2014, p.46

male/ female roles is to withdraw from the society. Magnolia actually represents a transitional woman on her way to greater enlightenment, and the scent of an orange blossom that magnolia radiates is a way to convey woman's virtue. The fragrance of flowers carries a deep message, its a way of communication, and expressing of emotions. As we can see in the sketch, the traveler is drawn to magnolia by her smell. Magnolia's scent carries a deep message which she wants to share with the rest of the world. "A fragrance beyond anything had ever known came suddenly upon the air and interrupted my meditation. I looked around me, but saw no flower from which it could proceed."¹⁶⁸ Fuller's trying to say that male language loses its strength and it is replaced by feminine language, fragrance. Seaton writes that a flower's scent represents a standard emblem of the human soul. Magnolia abandons all the things that are typical for women, which is represented with her past life as an orange tree, and searching for the new unknown self. Employing the language of flowers Fuller expresses deep human emotions, spiritual and physical. So, its obvious that Fuller's flowers also signal sexual pleasure: "Sexual expression is not silent or absent in these works, but it is not laid bare either; it is clothed, even covered, in lush language."¹⁶⁹ Fuller used language of flowers for her direct feminist writing. "When Fuller connects the world of flowers to a world of other feminine entities, she maintains the sensuality of relation between feminine bodies-moon and earth, moon and flowers, flowers and women, perhaps women and women."¹⁷⁰ Fuller advocates that women should restrain from searching their other half until they achieve their independence "emphasized by Fuller's note that the tree proudly bears no fruit, grows beautiful, and exists for the sake of her own enrichment. One point Fuller advocated for the independence of women was for them to refrain from bearing children until they had developed their intellectual freedom."¹⁷¹

Fuller wrote several love letters to both Ward and Barker. In those letters she expressed her fear of loneliness and unreturned love. She loved them both but one of them occupied the larger piece of her heart : "It is unclear which member of the couple she loved and fearing losing the most, though the "Magnolia" sketch implies it was Barker. The link to Barker is emphasized by placing

¹⁶⁸ Emerson, Fuller & Ripley, 1841, p.299

¹⁶⁹ Beam, 2014, p.47

¹⁷⁰ Beam, 2010, p.52

¹⁷¹ Rhyner, 2012, p.39

the site of the mythical encounter in which a Magnolia explains her transformation from a domesticated orange tree.."172

"Yuca Filamentosa" represents allegory of another kind of floral form "the living hieroglyphic". "In the Yuca sketch, Fuller seeks the language of the conversation between the feminine moon and (also feminine earth), which is fundamentally different from that between the sun and the moon."¹⁷³ Here a female narrator calls for male companion, Alcemon. She wants to show him her flowers. Alcemon tries to see what is so special about yuca blossom but he can't. With this sketch Fuller explores the social roles of men and women, and the lack of understanding between them. She also writes about women's virginity by conversing directly with the reader asking him which flower would be suitable as an emblem of the Roman virgin goddess Dianna. She connects the flower emblem to a virginal goddess to give strength and protection to women. She connects Diana to the moon. Fuller uses flower emblems "as a new and empowering symbol for women's strength."¹⁷⁴ The use of flower emblems functions as empowering language in fight for women's liberation. "For Margaret Fuller, the language of flowers provides a conventional, rhetorically safe, and socially acceptable communication to embed in her writing a type of early feminist discourse."¹⁷⁵

11. Fuller's love poetry

Fuller's poetry articulates a sense of anguish, love, sexual anxieties, and desires. She used androgynous themes in her poetry as well as in her prose work. Androgynous themes helped Fuller to express her forward-thinking ideas about the nature of all men and women. That way she wanted to support her belief about the law of nature that two halves sought a whole.

Her poetry is full of symbolism, archetypal energy and mythical "self-fashioning" as a statement of her psychological fight: "Thus, Jeffrey Steele observes that Fuller's 1844 poetry articulated a

¹⁷²Rhyner, 2012, p.41

¹⁷³Beam, 2010, p.51

¹⁷⁴https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/english_diss/88/

¹⁷⁵https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/english_diss/88/

mythological realm in which she transformed the self into a powerful goddess."¹⁷⁶ Fuller manifested the idea of woman in the ancient mythologies: the Egyptian Isis and Sphynx, the Greek Ceres and Proserpine, and embodied their existence in the Diana, Minerva and Vesta. Those "great goddesses" possessed unsurpassed purity, and divine wisdom. Furthermore, Steele points out that as "her poetry developed, real people tended to be replaced by mythological figures"¹⁷⁷; in 1834 "she addresses the moon, Diana, Apollo, and Virgin Mary"¹⁷⁸, but in 1845 had corresponded with Anna Barker. Fuller explored middle-class heterosexuality and in doing so she found herself faced with mythical figures: "As she acknowledged homoerotic attachments to other women, she began exploring the repressed domain of Goddess, a psychic excavation that helped her to symbolize maternal feelings deeply buried within herself."¹⁷⁹ In order to examine the poetry that Fuller wrote to Anna Barker, we have to keep in mind a few facts that influenced her writing about Barker. After her father's death, Fuller developed a relationship with Samuel Ward. Their relationship was based mostly on intellectual passion. She harbored hopes that Samuel Ward's platonic attachment to her would develop into romantic love. At the same time she was developing homoerotic feelings for Anna Barker, and her father's death strengthened those feelings. When Fuller heard that Ward and Anna had feelings for each other and that they planned to marry she experienced an emotional crisis. After Fuller had lost Ward's love, and overcome the turmoil in her heart she accepted the fact that he was in love with Barker: "Looking at her (Barker), a woman without particular talent, without great dignity of manner or expanse of intellect, Margaret felt that none the less she had a complete beauty (...) It was not remarkable that Samuel Ward had been captivated (...) Margaret understood that she would always love Samuel Ward, for his nature had become a part of hers."¹⁸⁰ After that, she developed feelings for Caroline Strugis and platonic intellectual friendship with Ralph Waldo Emerson. The marriage between Samuel and Anna actually represented the symbol of the marital and domestic ideals imposed on the nineteenth-century women. Barker was a woman with nature completely opposite than Fuller's, and her spirit

¹⁷⁶ Gatta, 1997, p.35

¹⁷⁷ Steele, 2001, p.64

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p.64

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p.64

¹⁸⁰ Stern, 1968, p.179

was everything that Fuller needed. "In Fuller's own mythology, an idealized image of "feminine influence" elevated her from a bloody realm of pain, grief, and physical suffering to a region of transcendence."¹⁸¹ Fuller saw Anna as some kind of guardian angel, and for Fuller, Anna embodied everything beautiful and innocent in life. Poems that Fuller dedicated to her lover, actually, were the poems about her love for Anna. "That Fuller's attraction for Anna Barker was largely erotic seems difficult to deny."¹⁸² She referred to Anna Barker as "The Beautiful" and expressed her love towards Anna in written correspondence, the surviving evidence about their relationship. Fuller wrote that love between two persons of the same sex is possible as that of love between woman and man: "only it is purely intellectual and spiritual, unprofaned by any mixture of lower instincts, undisturbed by any need of consulting temporal interests"¹⁸³ Mary Wood argues that her sexual energy and attraction for other women expresses the social codes that prohibit that attraction while disclosing the ways in which white middle-class heterosexuality struggled to maintain its hegemony in mid nineteenth-century American discourse.

In the nineteenth-century it was inappropriate to display emotions between two men of the opposite sex. But a relationship between women, or girl's "friendship", like that between Fuller and Barker was considered as perfectly normal and acceptable. Lesbian desire emerged in literary work through socially acceptable forms of romantic friendship. "A passage in Fuller's 1839 journal suggests the way in which the image of Anna Barker functioned as a nucleus for her mythical imagination of female agency. In one of her dreams, she was rescued from a debilitating headache by "a sweet female form" a moment she associated with her poem to Anna."¹⁸⁴

Fuller wrote numerous poems to female friends, including a series of seven poems to Barker. I am going to analyse few of them in order to explain her uncertainty about stereotyped roles assigned to men and women. These poems will provide us an outlook into emotional relationship between Anna and Fuller.

¹⁸¹ Steele, 2001, p.37

¹⁸² Ibid., p.35

¹⁸³ Capper, 2001, p.37

¹⁸⁴ Steele, 2001, p.37

In 1835, Fuller had begun to write an imperfect sonnet about woman who represents her saviour, and it was addressed to Anna Barker:

" After a day of wearing, wasting pain ,
At last my aching eyes I think to close
Hoping to win some moments of repose
Though I must wake to suffering again.
But what delirious horrors haunt my brain!
I see thy face Anna far above"¹⁸⁵

Later in her 1842. journal she reflected her strong passion for Anna: "Her face was always gleaming before me, her voice was echoing in my ear, all poetic thoughts clustered round the clear image."¹⁸⁶

In the poem "To the same. A feverish vision." Fuller writes to Anna displaying affection and tender feelings towards her. Giving the circumstances that Fuller went through some kind of psychological crisis while she was writing this poem, it was evident that she sees Anna as her saviour. She hopes that Anna's love will save her from herself. Actually, Anna is the representation of an angel who will save Fuller from everlasting nightmare. Fuller needed Anna in order to survive crises such as her father's death. It is evident that Anna's love provides some kind of hope for Margaret, the hope that one day everything would be all right, and that life has some meaning after all.

*"When with soft eyes, beaming the tenderest love,
I see thy face, Anna! Far above,*

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. p.3

¹⁸⁶ Palumbo-DeSimone, 2000, p.75

*By magnet drawn up to thee I saw,
And for some moments was dispelled the fever's frightful dream."¹⁸⁷*

With the poem "To the same. Glen- Anna", Fuller also expresses her affection for Anna. Fuller felt psychological pain because of her unrequited love for Anna.

*"Less bright the scene, than when my saddened eye
Last saw these graceful trees and gentle slopes,
Leaving them, with but half-encouraged hopes
That e'er again, in the sweet company
Of the bright being I held so dear..."¹⁸⁸*

The oppressive feelings of guilt and anguish constantly grew inside her soul and mind. She compared her love for Sam and Anna with a cold wave which represents her tragic destiny. She felt like she would suffocate in that turmoil of mixed feelings toward three of them: "The images in Fuller's dream of drowning are likewise fraught with pain: the psychological pain that comes with the rejection of us by those we love; the physical pain that accompanies unsatiated sensual yearnings."¹⁸⁹ Through her poetry, Fuller displayed the independence of her personality, and with her revolutionary ideas she managed to transcend social barriers of the nineteenth century America, that way she left her signature on the history of her time.

¹⁸⁷ Steele, 1999, p.2

¹⁸⁸ <https://dc.etsu.edu/cgi/viewscontent.cgi>

¹⁸⁹ Murray, 2012, p.176

12. Conclusion

Women's role in society was defined by their narrow participation in a wider-social spheres. Antebellum domesticity emphasized different roles between men and women consigning women to the private sphere while men had privilege to participate in all public areas of nineteenth century society. Through this paper, I show how Margaret Fuller's fight for woman's liberation contributed woman's self development and changed the relations of domination between two sexes. In Fuller's hands literature served as a tool for launching extremely radical views concerning woman's inferior position in Antebellum America. Fuller's efforts to involve women in the liberation process included her series of *Conversations* (1839-1842). Through interpretation of Fuller's literary works I tried to demonstrate in which way social and psychological factors of one society caused the degradation of women, and how women began to struggle to attain their individual and collective freedom. Through androgynous themes especially in her poetry she expressed her forward-thinking ideas about the nature of all people ignoring their differences. Fuller astonished her contemporaries by her reexamination of the social system which had been considered to be perfectly normal and natural.

Her literary piece *Woman in the nineteenth century* proclaimed her attitude that the main handicap that leads to women's degradation is her absence from public sphere, and that American society violates natural order by using only one half of *radical dualism*. Radical changes in past American society ensure intellectual development of female personality and initiate important changes in treating other marginalized groups. For Fuller, American women had every right to develop self-reliance and new self-image, and education was the key to achieving those goals. Fuller's literary works are a call for the freedom and dignity of all people, no matter their sex, ethnicity, race, and social status.

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БИОГРАФИЈА

Име и презиме: Радмила Пријевић

Датум и мјесто рођења: 16.02. 1979, Славонски Брод, Реп. Хрватска

Занимање: Професор енглеског језика и књижевности

Адреса становања: Краља Петра I, Дервента

Моб. Тел: 065/447-545

СТЕЧЕНО ОБРАЗОВАЊЕ:

- 1997 завршила средњу школу „Гимназија са техничким школама"
- 1998 студент на Филолошком факултету у Бањој Луци, гдје сам одслушала четири године студија
- 2009 пребацила се на Филолошки факултет Слобомир П. Универзитет, гдје сам уписала четврту годину студија и дипломирала
- 2012 положила стручни испит на Филолошком факултету у Бањој Луци
- 2013-данас студент другог циклуса студија (МАСТЕР) на одсјеку за енглески језик и књижевност; Филолошки факултет у Бањој Луци

РАДНО ИСКУСТВО:

- 2016-данас књижничар у ОШ „никола Тесла"
- 2016-данас предавач енглеског језика на Оксфорду
- 2000-2001 наставник енглеског језика у Заводу за слијепе и слабовиде особе „Будућност"

2000-2001	наставник енглеског језика у ОШ „ Никола Тесла", Дервента
2007-2008	професор енглеског језика у „Средњој стручној школи за радничка занимања"
2011-2012	наставник енглеског језика у ОШ „Тодор Докић", Календеровци
2012-2013	наставник енглеског језика у ОШ „Никола Тесла", Дервента
2015	књижничар у ОШ „Никола Тесла", Дервента
2015-2016	наставник у ОШ „Никола Тесла", Дервента
2015-2016	волонтер у Градској библиотеци „Бранко Радичевић", Дервента

ИЗЈАВА О АУТОРСТВУ

**Изјављујем да
је
мастер/магиста
рски рад**

Наслов рада _____

Наслов рада на енглеском језику _____

- резултат сопственог истраживачког рада,
- да мастер/магистарски рад, у цјелини или у дијеловима, није био предложен за добијање било које дипломе према студијским програмима других високошколских установа,
- да су резултати коректно наведени и
- да нисам кршио/ла ауторска права и користио интелектуалну својину других лица.

У Бањој Луци _____

Потпис кандидата

Изјава 2

**Изјава којом се овлашћује _____ факултет/ Академија умјетности
Универзитета у Бањој Луци да мастер/магистарски рад учини јавно доступним**

Овлашћујем _____ факултет/ Академију умјетности Универзитета у Бањој
Луци да мој мастер/магистарски рад, под насловом

који је моје ауторско дјело, учини јавно доступним.

Мастер/магистарски рад са свим прилозима предао/ла сам у електронском формату,
погодном за трајно архивирање.

Мој мастер/магистарски рад, похрањен у д и г и т а л н и р е п о з и т о р и ј у м Универзитета у
Бањој Луци, могу да користе сви који поштују одредбе садржане у одабраном типу лиценце
Креативне заједнице (*Creative Commons*), за коју сам се одлучио/ла.

1. Ауторство
2. Ауторство - некомерцијално
3. Ауторство - некомерцијално - без прераде
4. Ауторство - некомерцијално - дијелити под истим условима
5. Ауторство - без прераде
6. Ауторство - дијелити под истим условима

(Молимо да заокружите само једну од шест понуђених лиценци, кратак опис лиценци дат је
на полеђини листа).

У Бањој Луци _____

Потпис кандидата

Изјава 3

**Изјава о идентичности штампане и
електронске верзије
мастер/магистарског рада**

Име и презиме аутора _____

Наслов рада _____

Ментор _____

Изјављујем да је штампана верзија мог мастер/магистарског рада идентична електронској верзији коју сам предао/ла за дигитални репозиторијум Универзитета у Бањој Луци.

У Бањој Луци _____

Потпис кандидата
