

Abstract

This thesis is focused on the representation and characterization of female characters in the novel *The Deerslayer* from The Leatherstocking Tales pentalogy from James Fenimore Cooper in contrast to the concept of female characters in the book from Louisa May Alcott *Little Women*. There is analyzed images of female fictional heroines living in the American wilderness in the years 1740–1805, and these findings are compared with the representation of women in the 19th century domestic novel *Little Women*.

The way of creating female characters is analyzed in relation to the other characters, the space in which they live, the storyline and contemporary values. This analysis should in a literary historical aspect reveal how much the role of a woman becomes a mere fulfillment of a simplified scheme and how it also has many meanings of full-fledged components in literary work. The author of this thesis also focuses on the influence of the environment on the formation of female characters and tracks their role not only in American novels but also in the society.

Key words

woman, gender, novel, cult of True Womenhood, James Fenimore Cooper, Louise May Alcott, topoi of the forest, home, american wildernes

