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ВЫПУСКНАЯ КВАЛИФИКАЦИОННАЯ РАБОТА

**на тему: The description of social problems in woman image in M.Mitchell's
“Gone with the wind”**

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CONTENT

INTRODUCTION.....	2-5
CHAPTER I. THE HISTORICAL ESSENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FEMALE NOVELISM IN THE 20TH CENTURY LITERATURE.....	6-19
1.1.The 20th century literary scene and female novelists of the English literature.....	6-11
1.2.Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell’s life and literary contribution to the English literature.....	12-19
CHAPTER II. SOCIAL PROBLEMS DEPICTED IN FEMALE CHARACTERS OF THE NOVEL “GONE WITH THE WIND” BY MARGARET MUNNERLYN MITCHELL.....	20-59
2.1.The image of Scarlett O’Hara in “Gone with the Wind” as a self-expression of the author, M.M. Mitchell.....	20-25
2.2.The description of the society, women’s social status and role in the novel “Gone with the Wind” by M.M. Mitchell.....	25-37
2.3.The portrayal of female images mirroring social bearings in “Gone with the Wind” by M.M. Mitchell.....	37-59
CONCLUSION.....	60-61
List of used literature.....	62-63

INTRODUCTION

According to the presidential decree No. 4947 "On Uzbekistan's Five-Area Development Strategy for 2017-2021" signed on February 7, 2017 by the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, which was developed following comprehensive study of topical issues, analysis of the current legislation, law enforcement practices, the best international practices, and following public discussion, it is noted that achieving major improvement of quality of general secondary education, facilitating in-depth study of foreign languages, computer science, and other important and popular disciplines account for the main points mentioned in 4.4. Development of education and science, IV. Priority areas of development of the social sphere.¹ Subsequently, teaching system, aimed at creating harmoniously developed, highly educated, modern thinking young generation, further integration of the country to the world community, has been restated as vital to be enforced into ubiquitous implementation². In order to show scientific, cultural and technological achievements of our country we, youth, should know foreign languages, especially the English language very well. As the government is paying much attention to the study of foreign languages it is essential to understand the meaning of the original works in English in order to learn it. Literature and its interpretation are the vast fields of investigation and are the matter of individual perception as for the amateur reader and so for the one with expertise and scientific background in literary science.

So, in this diploma paper the reflection of social facet in woman image is going to be exposed to close scrutiny with the aim to establish clear points about this subject. The subject matter of the diploma paper is to study and analyze the description of social problems in woman image in M. Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind".

¹Presidential Decree No. 4947 "On Uzbekistan's Five-Area Development Strategy for 2017-2021", February 7, 2017.

²The Decree 1875 "On measures to further improvement of foreign language learning system" December 10, 2012.

Actuality of the work. Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell was an American novelist and journalist of early 20th century. She wrote only one novel, published during her lifetime, the American Civil War-era novel “Gone with the Wind” for which she won the National Book Award for the Most Distinguished Novel of 1936 and the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1937. This novel made her famous all around the world being translated to more than 37 languages. While writing our research work we found out that although the actuality of the theme of woman images has been covered by the other researchers previously, the depiction of problems existing in society with relation to woman images were mainly laid out of the focus. As we had proceeded in investigating many items from this new angle, the actuality of the work on the theme mentioned demanded coverage of many literary issues.

In the meantime, the spiritual and ideological preparation of the students is markedly vital for the development of all spheres of social life in our country. And, in order to recognize the future perspectives of humankind exceptional attention should be paid to the past of any country and society so that we draw needed inference to make the world better place to live. Thereby, literature is one of the sources where we can gain the knowledge and experience of billions of people. In this regard, the study of woman characters in their surrounding and their ways of dealing with the problems of their epoch helps us to learn more about the American Society of 19th century and its influence on women’s role.

The novelty of the work. Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell’s biography, creative work such as “Gone with the Wind” were investigated and analyzed by many scientists and critics. So far, the treatment of woman characters, conditioned to certain mindsets and social standards, in her work “Gone with the Wind” has not been illuminated sufficiently and had multidimensional nature till today. After reading her only novel “Gone with the Wind” written in fiction, we investigated this subject by the comparison of the author’s own life experience, its reflection on the female characters’ depiction and the other women characters within the

storyline of her work in two volumes, confessedly, the role of women at that period is paid special attention to.

The degree of studiedness of the work. M.M. Mitchell's literary activity has been analyzed by several literary critics such as HerschellBrickell, Floyd C. Watkins, Finis Farr, Paul Pickrel, Jennifer Word Dickey, Bernard DeVoto, Glenwood Clark, L. D. Reddick, Edwin Phillips Granberry.

The aim of the work. The aim of my research work is to analyze and describe social problems in woman image in the novel via comparing the woman characters and depict the character of the main heroine, Scarlett O'Hara evidently. While analyzing it is important to observe the characters deeply and one should study them in a psychological way. Their role, conditions, rights, manners in their life at that period must be carefully investigated.

The tasks of the work:

- to investigate life and literary activity of Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell
- to read the novel "Gone with the Wind" and analyse both internal and external factors effecting the work's objectivity:
- to analyse and classify the social problems depicted in the novel with respect to female characters;
- to describe the social problems in the lives of woman characters psychologically by comparing one another;
- to analyze the women characters of the novel taking into consideration author's own life, description, other personages` opinions, feelings and actions of the characters;
- to express our own opinion after the analysis of each character.

Methodological basis of the work. While writing this research work we looked through a lot of critical works about Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell and reviews on description of characters. This work is based on the reviews written by well-known literary critics such as HerschellBrickell, Floyd C. Watkins, Finis Farr, Paul Pickrel, Jennifer Word Dickey, Bernard DeVoto, Glenwood Clark, L. D. Reddick, Edwin Phillips Granberry.

Theoretical value of the work. This work can serve as a theoretical source for teachers, graduate, under graduate students who are going to make research work on English literature and especially character descriptions in the works.

Practical value of the work. Practical value of the work lies on the fact that the results of the research can be used in the courses of lectures and seminars in English literature, psychology, cognitive linguistics, text interpretation and stylistics.

The object of the work. As we analyzed the social problems in woman images in the novel “Gone with the Wind”, the novel “Gone with the Wind” by Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell has turned the object of this paper.

According to the spheres of concern the work falls into an Introduction, two chapters, conclusion and the list of used literature, which altogether comprises of 63 pages.

Chapter I devoted to the historical essence and development of female novelism in the 20th century, which embraces the study of the 20th century literary scene and female novelists of the English literature, Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell’s life and literary contribution to the English literature.

Chapter II is concerned with the social problems depicted in female characters in the novel “Gone with the Wind” by Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell, which illuminates the entire goal of this research paper through the study of the image of Scarlett O’Hara in “Gone with the Wind” as a self-expression of the author, M. Mitchell, the description of the society, women’s social status and role in “Gone with the Wind” by M.M. Mitchell and the portrayal of female images mirroring social bearings in “Gone with the Wind”.

Most of the examples presented in order to prove the facts in this work of fiction are taken from the novel “Gone with the Wind” by M. Mitchell.

The theme of the final qualification work is “The description of social problems in woman image in M. Mitchell’s “Gone with the Wind””.

CHAPTER I. THE HISTORICAL ESSENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FEMALE NOVELISM IN THE 20TH CENTURY

1.1. The 20th century literary scene and female novelists of the English literature

The 20th century opened with great hope but also with some apprehension, for the new century marked the final approach to a new millennium. For many, humankind was entering upon an unprecedented era. In terms of the Euro-American tradition, the main periods are captured in the clear division, Modernist literature and Postmodern literature, flowering from roughly 1900 to 1940 and 1960 to 1990 respectively, divided, as a rule of thumb, by World War II³. Although these terms (modern and postmodern) are most applicable to Western literary history, the rise of the globalization has allowed European literary ideas to spread into non-Western cultures fairly rapidly, so that Asian and African literatures can be included into these divisions with only minor qualifications. And in some ways, such as in Postcolonial literature, writers from non-Western cultures were on the forefront of literary development.

Technological advances during the 20th century allowed cheaper production of books, resulting in a significant rise in production of popular literature and trivial literature, comparable to the similar developments in music. The division of "popular literature" and "high literature" in the 20th century⁴ is by no means absolute, and various genres such as detectives or science fiction fluctuate between the two. Largely ignored by mainstream literary criticism for the most of the century, these genres developed their own establishments.

For many, humankind was entering upon an unprecedented era. H.G. Wells's utopian studies, the aptly titled "Anticipations of the Reaction of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought" (1901) and "A Modern Utopia" (1905), both captured and qualified this optimistic mood and gave

³<http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/entertainment/english-literature-the-victorian-period.html>

⁴Watkins Floyd C. In time and Place. Some Origins of American Fiction. Athens. The University of Georgia Press, 1977, p. 48.

expression to a common conviction that science and technology would transform the world in the century ahead. To achieve such transformation, outmoded institutions and ideals had to be replaced by ones more suited to the growth and liberation of the human spirit. The death of Queen Victoria in 1901 and the accession of Edward VII seemed to confirm that a franker, less inhibited era had begun.

Many writers of the Edwardian period, drawing widely upon the realistic and naturalistic conventions of the 19th century (upon Ibsen in drama and Balzac, Turgenev, Flaubert, Zola, Eliot, and Dickens in fiction) and in tune with the anti-Aestheticism unleashed by the trial of the archetypal Aesthete, Oscar Wilde, saw their task in the new century to be an unashamedly didactic one. In a series of wittily iconoclastic plays, of which *Man and Superman* (performed 1905, published 1903) and *Major Barbara* (performed 1905, published 1907) are the most substantial, George Bernard Shaw turned the Edwardian theatre into an arena for debate upon the principal concerns of the day: the question of political organization, the morality of armaments and war, the function of class and of the professions, the validity of the family and of marriage, and the issue of female emancipation. Nor was he alone in this, even if he was alone in the brilliance of his comedy. John Galsworthy made use of the theatre in *Strife* (1909) to explore the conflict between capital and labour, and in *Justice* (1910) he lent his support to reform of the penal system, while Harley Granville-Barker, whose revolutionary approach to stage direction did much to change theatrical production in the period, dissected in *The Voysey Inheritance* (performed 1905, published 1909) and *Waste* (performed 1907, published 1909) the hypocrisies and deceit of upper-class and professional life⁵.

Many Edwardian novelists were similarly eager to explore the shortcomings of English social life. Wells—in “*Love and Mr. Lewisham*” (1900); “*Kipps*” (1905); “*Ann Veronica*” (1909), his pro-suffragist novel; and “*The History of Mr.*

⁵<http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/entertainment/english-literature-the-victorian-period.html>

Polly” (1910)—captured the frustrations of lower- and middle-class existence, even though he relieved his accounts with many comic touches. In “Anna of the Five Towns” (1902), Arnold Bennett detailed the constrictions of provincial life among the self-made business classes in the area of England known as the Potteries; in “The Man of Property” (1906), the first volume of “The Forsyte Saga”, Galsworthy described the destructive possessiveness of the professional bourgeoisie.

These novelists, however, wrote more memorably when they allowed themselves a larger perspective. In “The Old Wives’ Tale” (1908), Bennett showed the destructive effects of time on the lives of individuals and communities and evoked a quality of pathos that he never matched in his other fiction; in “Tono-Bungay” (1909), Wells showed the ominous consequences of the uncontrolled developments taking place within a British society still dependent upon the institutions of a long-defunct landed aristocracy; and in “Howards End” (1910), Forster showed how little the rootless and self-important world of contemporary commerce cared for the more rooted world of culture, although he acknowledged that commerce was a necessary evil. Nevertheless, even as they perceived the difficulties of the present, most Edwardian novelists, like their counterparts in the theatre, held firmly to the belief not only that constructive change was possible but also that this change could in some measure be advanced by their writing.⁶

In American literature, the modernist period stretches from the turn of the 20th century through the end of World War II. Particular focus is often placed on literature written and published in the 1920s and '30s, between the wars.

It is interesting to note that many prominent modernist writers, including some of the women on this list, were American expats living in Europe at the time. They formed their own communities, established literary salons and little magazines, and generally had a fabulously wealthy time. There were so many great books by modernist women writers that wind up overlooked in favour of their male-authored counterparts.

⁶Bakoeva M, Muratova E, Ochilova M. English literature. Tashkent, 2006. pp.51-57.

Modernist women writers explored gender and sexuality with much more freedom than some readers may expect, given the general attitude toward same-sex relationships at the time. In the years since they were written, many of the novels on this list have become mainstays of queer fiction.

The early twentieth-century literature reflects women's responses to national questions but also expresses their neglected concerns, revealing that women's identities transcended definition by a male-dominated state or by male writers.⁷ The educational and social advances that followed the economic reforms of the 1960s liberated women as well as men to imagine and create new possibilities and opportunities, which in turn resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of writers.

One of the most influential female writers of the period that contributed to the growth of English literature and can be considered to some extent feminist was Virginia Woolf. Virginia Woolf is one of the most widely read, and most famous female writers of the 20th century. She's most well-known for her "stream of consciousness" style of writing, as well as the fact that she regularly placed women at the forefront of her stories — a rarity at the time. Woolf was one of the first writers who brought a woman's inner life to the forefront and also was one of the only women who noted that misogyny and militarism tend to go together. Her works include "Mrs. Dalloway" and "A Room of One's Own" reflect the new approach to writing, the one which explored one's psychology, his inner thoughts, feelings and monologue. Also, she was one of the few women of her time to see gender as a fluid concept and one of the first to validate that.

"Mrs Dalloway" (1925) centres on the efforts of Clarissa Dalloway, a middle-aged society woman, to organise a party, even as her life is paralleled with that of Septimus Warren Smith, a working-class veteran who has returned from the First World War bearing deep psychological scars. "To the Lighthouse" (1927) is set on two days ten years apart. The plot centres on the Ramsay family's anticipation of and reflection upon a visit to a lighthouse and the connected

⁷Dixon Nicholas. "From Georgian to Victorian". History Review 2010 . pp. 34–38.

familial tensions. One of the primary themes of the novel is the struggle in the creative process that beset painter Lily Briscoe while she struggles to paint in the midst of the family drama. The novel is also a meditation upon the lives of a nation's inhabitants in the midst of war, and of the people left behind. It also explores the passage of time, and how women are forced by society to allow men to take emotional strength from them. "Orlando": A Biography (1928) is one of Virginia Woolf's lightest novels. A parodic biography of a young nobleman who lives for three centuries without ageing much past thirty (but who does abruptly turn into a woman), the book is in part a portrait of Woolf's lover Vita Sackville-West. It was meant to console Vita for the loss of her ancestral home, Knole House, though it is also a satirical treatment of Vita and her work.

Another renowned woman English writer was Dame Agatha Mary Clarissa Christie. She is known for her 66 detective novels and 14 short story collections, particularly those revolving around her fictional detectives "Hercule Poirot" and "Miss Marple". Agatha Christie also wrote the world's longest-running play, a murder mystery, "The Mousetrap", and, under the pen name Mary Westmacott, six romances. At the height of her career, she wrote two novels that she intended to be published after her death. They were the last cases of her two great detectives, Hercule Poirot in "Curtain" and Jane Marple in "Sleeping Murder". Agatha Christie has been called by the Guinness Book of World Records among others, the best-selling writer of fiction of all time. Her books are only outsold by the Bible and William Shakespeare. An estimated one billion copies of her novels have been sold in English, and another billion in 103 other languages. She was acknowledged as the Queen of the Golden Age of British Fiction, thus became one of the most famous woman writer of all times. ⁸

Another popular name in the list of 20th century female English writers is Dame Jean Iris Murdoch - British novelist and philosopher, noted for her psychological novels that contain philosophical and comic elements. Murdoch's first published work was a critical study, *Sartre, Romantic Rationalist* (1953). This

⁸"Literary life of America". Homepage.tinet.ie. Retrieved 10 August 2010.

was followed by two novels, *Under the Net* (1954) and *The Flight from the Enchanter* (1956), that were admired for their intelligence, wit, and high seriousness. These qualities, along with a rich comic sense and a gift for analyzing the tensions and complexities in sophisticated sexual relationships, continued to distinguish her work. With what is perhaps her finest book, *The Bell* (1958), Murdoch began to attain wide recognition as a novelist. She went on to a highly prolific career with such novels as *A Severed Head* (1961), *The Red and the Green* (1965), *The Nice and the Good* (1968), *The Black Prince* (1973), *Henry and Cato* (1976), *The Sea, the Sea* (1978, Booker Prize), *The Philosopher's Pupil* (1983), *The Good Apprentice* (1985), *The Book and the Brotherhood* (1987), *The Message to the Planet* (1989), and *The Green Knight* (1993).

Murdoch's novels typically have convoluted plots in which innumerable characters representing different philosophical positions undergo kaleidoscopic changes in their relations with each other. Realistic observations of 20th-century life among middle-class professionals are interwoven with extraordinary incidents that partake of the macabre, the grotesque, and the wildly comic. The novels illustrate Murdoch's conviction that although human beings think they are free to exercise rational control over their lives and behaviour, they are actually at the mercy of the unconscious mind, the determining effects of society at large, and other, more inhuman, forces. In addition to producing novels, Murdoch wrote plays, verse, and works of philosophy and literary criticism.⁹

Without these brilliant writers above, many women would have simply resigned themselves to being second-class citizens and many men wouldn't have realized what women actually hold in themselves and how they were able to manifest women's rights and social bearings females were conditioned to due to the set norms and beliefs of the 20th century.

⁹O'Neil W. *Feminism in America: a history*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1994.

1.2. Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell's life and literary contribution to the English literature

Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell was born on November 8, 1900, in Atlanta. Her great-great-great-grandfather Thomas Mitchell fought in the American Revolution (1775-83), and his son William Mitchell took part in the War of 1812. Her great-grandfather Isaac Green Mitchell was a circuit-riding Methodist minister who settled in Marthasville, which later was named Atlanta. Mitchell was thus a fourth-generation Atlantan. Her grandfather Russell Mitchell fought in the Civil War and suffered two bullet wounds to the head during the fighting at Antietam. Twice married, he had twelve children, the oldest of whom was Mitchell's father, Eugene.

Mitchell's mother's family was Irish Catholic. Her great-grandfather Phillip Fitzgerald came to America from Ireland and eventually settled on a plantation near Jonesboro in Fayette County. The Fitzgeralds had seven daughters. Annie Fitzgerald, Mitchell's grandmother, married John Stephens, who had emigrated from Ireland and settled in Atlanta. Stephens amassed large real-estate properties and helped found a trolley-car system in the city. The Stephenses had twelve children; Mary Isobel (May Belle), Mitchell's mother, was the seventh. May Belle married Eugene Muse Mitchell on November 8, 1892. Eugene was a noted Atlanta attorney, and May Belle was a staunch supporter of woman suffrage. They had a son, Stephens, followed four years later by a daughter, Margaret Munnerlyn.

Mitchell began making up stories before she could write, dictating them to her mother. Later she made her own books with cardboard covers and filled them with adventure stories using her friends, relatives, and herself as characters. As she grew older she switched to copybooks, which her mother stored in inexpensive enamel bread boxes. A few of the hundreds of tales that she wrote have survived, including two Civil War tales. When the family moved to Peachtree Street, the young Mitchell attended the Tenth Street School and later Woodberry School, a private school. She branched out to writing, directing, and starring in plays, coercing the neighbourhood children to take part.

From 1914 to 1918 Mitchell attended the Washington Seminary, a prestigious Atlanta finishing school, where she was a founding member and officer of the drama club. She was also the literary editor of *Facts and Fancies*, the high school yearbook, in which two of her stories were featured. She was president of the Washington Literary Society.

When America entered World War I (1917-18), the seminary girls were in demand at dances for the young servicemen stationed at Camp Gordon and Fort McPherson. At one such dance in the summer of 1918 Mitchell met twenty-two-year-old Clifford Henry, a wealthy and socially prominent New Yorker who was a bayonet instructor at Camp Gordon. The two fell in love and became engaged shortly before he was shipped overseas. He was killed in October 1918 while fighting in France.

In September 1918 Mitchell entered Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, where she began using the nickname "Peggy." Her freshman year at college was disrupted when an influenza epidemic forced the cancellation of classes. In January her mother contracted influenza and died the day before her daughter reached home. Mitchell completed her freshman year at Smith, then returned to Atlanta to take her place as mistress of the household and to enter the upcoming debutante season. During the last charity ball of the season, Mitchell created a scandal by performing a sensuous dance popular in the nightclubs of Paris, France.

Soon Mitchell met Berrien Kinnard Upshaw, who was from a prominent Raleigh, North Carolina, family. They were wed in 1922, but the marriage was brief. After four months Upshaw left Atlanta for the Midwest and never returned. The marriage was annulled two years later.

In the same year that she married, Mitchell landed a job with the *Atlanta Journal Sunday Magazine*. She used "Peggy Mitchell" as her byline¹⁰. Her interviews, profiles, and sketches of life in Georgia were well received. During her

¹⁰Myers R.M. *The Children of Pride. A true story of Georgia and the Civil War.* New York. Popular Library, 1972.

four years with the Sunday Magazine, Mitchell wrote 129 articles, worked as a proofreader, substituted for the advice columnist, reviewed books, and occasionally did hard news stories for the paper. Complications from a broken ankle led her to end her career as a journalist.

Mitchell's second marriage was to John Robert Marsh on July 4, 1925, and the couple set up housekeeping in a small apartment affectionately called "the Dump." They entertained the newspaper crowd and other friends on a regular basis. Marsh, originally from Maysville, Kentucky, worked for the Georgia Railway and Power Company (later Georgia Power Company) as director of the publicity department.

In 1926, to relieve the boredom of being cooped up with a broken ankle, Mitchell began to write "Gone with the Wind". Setting up her Remington typewriter on an old sewing table, she completed the majority of the book in three years. She wrote the last chapter first and the other chapters in no particular order. Stuffing the chapters into manila envelopes, she eventually accumulated almost seventy chapters. When visitors appeared, she covered her work with a towel, keeping her novel a secret. There has been much speculation on whether the characters were based on real people, but Mitchell claimed they were her own creations. She drew the basis of her novel from many sources. From her father's side, she was the fourth generation living in Atlanta and she spent her whole life in the area. The relatives who experienced the Civil War (her grandfather Russell Mitchell was injured when fighting at Antietam) and Confederate veterans told little Margaret stories about the American Civil War, which really fascinated her¹¹. Her father, Eugene, who was a prominent lawyer and a historian (the president of the Atlanta Historical Society), attracted her interest in the history of the South and he taught her to love the South. Margaret and Stephen, her younger brother, spent a lot of time in their childhood in Clayton County, the part of Georgia where their ancestors settled and were part of wealthy planter elite. These are very probably the

¹¹Watkins Floyd C. In *Time and Place. Some Origins of American Fiction*. Athens. The University of Georgia Press, 1977, p. 48.

reasons why she set the story of her only published novel, “Gone with the Wind”, in the town of Atlanta and rural Clayton County in Georgia, during the Civil War and Reconstruction and why the story is presented from the point of view of the South¹².

In April 1935 Harold Latham, an editor for the Macmillan publishing company in New York City, toured the South looking for new manuscripts. Latham heard that Mitchell had been working on a manuscript and asked her if he could see it, but she denied having one. When a friend commented that Mitchell was not serious enough to write a novel, Mitchell gathered up many of the envelopes and took them to Latham at his hotel. He had to purchase a suitcase to carry them. He read part of the manuscript on the train to New Orleans, Louisiana, and sent it straight to New York. By July Macmillan had offered her a contract. She received a \$500 advance and 10 percent of the royalties.

As she revised the manuscript, Mitchell cut and rearranged chapters, confirmed details, wrote the first chapter, changed the name of the main character (originally called Pansy), and struggled to think of a title that suited her. Titles considered included *Tomorrow Is Another Day*, *Another Day*, *Tote the Weary Load*, *Milestones*, *Ba! Ba! Blacksheep*, *Not in Our Stars*, and *Bugles Sang True*. Finally, she settled on a phrase from a favorite poem “I have forgot much, Cynara! Gone with the Wind, / Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng.” Published in 1936, *Gone with the Wind* was 1,037 pages long and sold for three dollars.

“Gone with the Wind” was a phenomenal success and received rave reviews. Overnight, Mitchell became a celebrity and remained very much in the public spotlight through the production and premiere of the film based on her novel in 1939. She was in constant demand for speaking engagements and interviews. At first she complied, but later, pleading poor health, she usually declined these requests and stopped autographing copies of her book. She said she wanted to remain simply Mrs. John Marsh.

¹²Waugh CH.G. and Greenberg M.H. *The Women’s War in the South: Recollections and Reflections of the American Civil War*. Nashville: Cumberland House, Inc., 1999.

Since the novel was published, critics have been ambivalent about its literary value. Some critics praise it for its historical accuracy, characterization of its protagonists and sense of dialogues. The book has often been compared to William Makepeace Thackeray's "Vanity Fair" and Leo Tolstoy's "War and Peace". Both the novels were written before "Gone with the Wind", therefore it is presumable that Mitchell, being fond of reading, was familiar with the books, but she denied reading any of them and being inspired by them. Paul Pickrel in his work "Vanity Fair in America: The House of Mirth and Gone with the Wind" analyses how the two novels, "Vanity Fair" and "Gone with the Wind", are similar. One of the people who was impressed with the novel "Gone with the Wind" and saw similarities with "War and Peace" by Tolstoy was Edwin Phillips Granberry. He worked as a reviewer for the New York Sun and was Mitchell's close friend. Another reviewer who considered the novel to be one of the best works about the Civil War and Reconstruction was Herschell Brickell of the New York Post. On the other hand, according to many critics, the novel has no literary merit being too romantic and banal and even misrepresenting the truth. Bernard DeVoto, Saturday Review of Literature, shares this opinion.

Moreover, because of Mitchell's way of portraying Afro-Americans and her sentimental view on plantation life, the novel is thought to be rather controversial and even racist. "It romanticises the slave-owning class, and, except perhaps for D.W. Griffith's classic Birth of a Nation, no work has done more to misrepresent Reconstruction as a cruelty visited upon an innocent white South"¹³—whereas today historians generally agree that it was an honest, if flawed, attempt to bring real democracy to a region that had never known it. It is also claimed that —Racist it unquestionably is—almost inevitably so, given the time and place of its composition. Beyond that, it gives powerful support to damaging stereo-types that for long helped sustain racial segregation.

¹³Moss Joyce and Wilson George. Overview: Gone with the Wind. Literature and Its Times: Profiles of 300 Notable Literary Works and the Historical Events that Influenced Them. Vol. 2: Civil Wars to Frontier Societies (1800-1880s). Detroit: Gale, 1997.

According to Jennifer Word Dickey, opinions of the novel “Gone with the Wind” are directly related to how the Southern history is viewed. In 1936, when the book was published, white historians and critics assumed it to be —the greatest historical novel ever written by an American¹⁴. Glenwood Clark claims that Mitchell's portrait of the South is based on historical facts. On the contrary, Afro-American scholars such as L. D. Reddick had opposite opinion. Civil Rights Movement in 1950's and 1960's brought more criticism¹⁵. Mitchell herself resolutely refused being a racist referring to her charity and pointing out that using the terms —Nigger and —darkey had a historical basis.

According to contemporary moral rules, “Gone with the Wind” can be considered racist. Racism in the novel is connected not only with Afro-Americans, but also with negative attitudes and prejudices against people from the North and poor people. Melanie is very happy when Scarlett offers Ashley to work for her in Atlanta. In this case, they do not have to move to the North and —live with Yankees! If they went to the North, they—couldn't let their son go to school and associate with Yankee children and have pickaninnies in his class!¹⁶. However, the novel is considered racist mainly because of how Afro-Americans are portrayed. Firstly, it is the usage of words referring to them, such as niggers or darkies. Using them nowadays is unacceptable. One of the Tarleton twins says: —I swear, darkies are more trouble¹⁷. Another example is Scarlett's thought: —How stupid negroes were! They never thought of anything unless they were told. Especially Prissy, Scarlett's servant and Wade's nanny, is described as very incapable and Scarlett often shouts at her and threatens her with whipping and she sometimes even uses corporal punishment such as pinching. We can also find some racial references in the text: —Mammy's victories over Scarlett were hard-won and represented guile

¹⁴Dickey Jennifer W. A Tough Little Patch of History: Atlanta's Marketplace for Gone with the Wind Memory. Diss. Georgia State University. 2007. p. 8

¹⁵Dickey Jennifer W. A Tough Little Patch of History: Atlanta's Marketplace for Gone with the Wind Memory. Diss. Georgia State University. 2007. pp. 9-11.

¹⁶Mitchell M.M. Gone with the Wind. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 712.

¹⁷Mitchell M.M. Gone with the Wind. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 23.

unknown to the white mind¹⁸. The most controversial part is that dealing with the era of Reconstruction, when former slaves are given freedom and the right to vote for them is under discussion.

Although Margaret claimed that characters in her novel "Gone with the Wind" were fictitious, it has been proved that the main male characters share similarities with real people from her life. Rhett Butler is supposed to be based on her first husband Berrien Kinnard Upshaw. This good-looking and romantic ex-football player had problems with alcohol and was fierce-tempered. Their marriage lasted only 3 months because he physically and sexually abused his wife; they divorced in 1924. It is also claimed that George Trenholm, a prominent politician in the Confederate States of America, may have served as a prototype of Rhett Butler (Rosen). Apparently, real as well as historical people served Mitchell to portray not only Rhett Butler but also other characters in the novel.

Another male character, Ashley Wilkes, is probably based on a real person too. Before Margaret started studying at Smith College, she fell in love with Clifford Henry, a rich and important man from New York, a man similar to Ashley Wilkes. They were engaged but Clifford was killed during World War I in 1918.

The book became soon very popular and it has not lost anything from its popularity until today. Jane Thomas in her article claims that "Approximately 250,000 copies are still sold each year". Mitchell was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in May 1937. Very soon after its publication, the novel was made into a very successful film starring Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable. Mitchell, however, refused to cooperate on the film script. The film, which won ten Academy Awards in 1940, had its premiere in Atlanta on 15 December 1939. Mitchell used the money she earned from the book and film to support medical scholarship for Afro-American students at Morehouse College and social service organizations in Atlanta during World War II. She also helped to obtain money to rebuild the U.S.S. Atlanta, which sank during the battle in Guadalcanal.

¹⁸Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 78.

“Gone with the Wind” was Mitchell’s only published novel. At her request, the original manuscript (except for a few pages retained to validate her authorship) and all other writings were destroyed. These included a novella in the Gothic style, a ghost story set in an old plantation home left vacant after the Civil War. According to the recollections of Lois Cole, a friend of Mitchell’s and a Macmillan employee, three people had read this tale (written before “Gone with the Wind”) and thought it was worth publishing by one of the bigger publishing houses. Cole suggested that Mitchell enter it in the Little, Brown novelette contest.

Possibly one of the reasons that Mitchell never wrote another novel was that she spent so much time working with her brother and her husband to protect the copyright of her book abroad. Up until the publication of *Gone with the Wind*, international copyright laws were ambiguous and varied from country to country. Correspondence also took much of her time. During the years following publication, she personally answered every letter she received about her book. With the outbreak of World War II (1941-45), she worked tirelessly for the American Red Cross, even outfitting a hospital ship. She also set up scholarships for black medical students.

August 11, 1949, Mitchell and her husband decided to go to a movie, *A Canterbury Tale*, at the Peachtree Art Theatre. Just as they started to cross Peachtree Street, near 13th Street, a speeding taxi crested the hill. Mitchell stepped back; Marsh stepped forward. The driver applied the brakes, skidded, and hit Mitchell. She was rushed to Grady Hospital but never regained consciousness. During the five days before she died, crowds waited outside for news. U.S. president Harry Truman, Georgia governor Herman Talmadge, and Atlanta mayor William B. Hartsfield all asked to be kept informed of her condition. Special phone lines were installed at Grady Hospital, and friends manned the lines in four-hour shifts. Mitchell died on August 16, 1949, and was buried in Oakland Cemetery in Atlanta. Mitchell was inducted into Georgia Women of Achievement in 1994 and into the Georgia Writers Hall of Fame in 2000.

**CHAPTER II. SOCIAL PROBLEMS DEPICTED IN FEMALE
CHARACTERS OF THE NOVEL “GONE WITH THE WIND” BY
MARGARET MUNNERLYN MITCHELL**

2.1. The image of Scarlett O’Hara in “Gone with the Wind” as a self-expression of the author, M. Mitchell.

Any literature, regardless of its national essence, type and genre, is apt to pursue resembling ambitions, specifically reflection of the epoch, people, life experiences, values as well as author’s inherent empiristic approach to the delivery of fare-the-well to the imagination and perception of readership. In this place, bringing into focus the image of central heroine, Scarlett O’Hara in “Gone with the Wind” with respect to the bio of M. Mitchell, there is no doubt, the admirers of this work, even those, literally posturizing, who have never had a chance to “take off their hats to such a masterpiece and its creator” yet, might hopefully find this analytical insight to the mentioned theme quite piquant and intriguing.

Mitchell drew inspiration not only from the stories, told her by people who remembered the Civil War and Reconstruction, stories which enraptured her as a child, but also from historical books, newspapers and other sources, from which she obtained encyclopaedic knowledge of the Civil War. Her own life was also her source of inspiration. Firstly, it is the setting of the novel - Atlanta, a town she really loved, and Clayton County, where she spent her childhood. Furthermore, Margaret Mitchell was employed as a feature writer for the Atlanta Journal for four years using a pseudonym Peggy Mitchell, a nickname from the college. She is regarded as the first female columnist working for the newspaper. She wrote articles, interviews, sketches and book reviews. It was a great experience for her acquiring more writing skills and learning about her hometown Atlanta and its history. She worked on a series of articles about eminent women in Georgia history and another series was devoted to portraits of Confederate generals. When working on the article about General Henry Benning¹⁹, she became interested in the

¹⁹Confederate general during the American Civil War

life of his wife, who had to run the family plantation during the war and look after her family, and later Mitchell used the acquired knowledge in her novel.

Whilst analysing the characters in the novel and the biography of the author, one can easily get a sense of self-reflection, since in many ways the writer transferred her aesthetical perception of reality through her heroes, in this regard, Scarlett O'Hara. M. Mitchell's genealogy is similar to the story of the family of her heroine - Scarlett O'Hara²⁰. The ancestors of the writer on the paternal line - come from Ireland, on the maternal - from France. Both of her grandfathers fought in the Civil war between the North and the South, against the background of which the events of the novel "Gone with the Wind" unfold. The dark-haired green-eyed heroine of the novel was largely a replica of Mitchell herself, but she displayed modesty, starting the book with the words: "Scarlett O'Hara was not beautiful," because she herself was always distinguished by beauty, which, like a magnet, attracted men.

A charming, educated, witty, rich girl was offered dozens of fans, but her choice fell on Berrien Kinnard (Red) Upshaw, famous for her love affairs. Very soon, Mitchell realized that marriage with a broad-shouldered red-haired handsome turned out to be a mistake. In just 10 months after the wedding, she divorced - for the secular ladies in those days, the procedure was extremely humiliating, which few people decided on.

In the character of Mitchell, there were many similarities with Scarlett which cannot be ignored: coquetry, stubbornness, strength of mind, adventurousness, waywardness and independence. "My main character", writes Mitchell to a friend, "does everything that the lady of the old school should not do"²¹. Her unfeminine behaviour began to emerge as a child: "Scarlett is a "true child of Gerald", and Mitchell throughout the novel ascribes her "the Irishness and "masculine character to his influence". Scarlett inherits a lot from his father, for example, love for Tara, their land. This pride and personal attachment to the land makes a man strong.

²⁰Farr Finis. Margaret Mitchell of Atlanta. New York. Avon Books, 1974. p. 49

²¹Evans, Elizabeth. "Chapter 2: A Young Woman, Alone and Ambivalent." Margaret Mitchell. Elizabeth I. Hanson. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990.

Although both her mother and Mammy are trying to make a real lady out of Scarlett, she remains the absolute opposite of this title. This is quite nostalgic, considering the resemblance between heroine and the creator.

In fact, Mitchell wrote in her diary that as a young lady, she even wanted to serve in a military school, but to the great disappointment of the representatives of female sex at the beginning of the 20th century, women were not yet accepted to the army. However, in the choice of profession Mitchell still outstood. She was determined to build her career in the field of journalism, which at that time was considered exclusively a masculine craft.

“In the portrait of Scarlett we can see the author herself”²². Scarlett as well as Margaret had to sacrifice her dreams and had to look after her father and the whole family. Mitchell left Smith College after a few months of studying medicine there (started in autumn 1918 and left in 1919) because her mother died of influenza in January 1919 and Mitchell went back to Atlanta to care of her father and older brother, Stephens.

Like Scarlett, Mitchell was free-spirited, provoked, and shocked the society in Atlanta, which she officially entered when she returned from Smith College in Massachusetts and spent the following year as a debutante without her mother's help, support, sensible guidance and careful control. “Much like her heroine Scarlett O'Hara, Mitchell enjoyed social events and being the center of attention. She was a lively and spirited girl with a great sense of humor. She was flirtatious and charming and always had a long string of beaux”²³. Likewise, Scarlett she was not approved by the society. The reasons for her alienation were very probably “jealousy over Mitchell's prettiness and popularity among young men, her sharp evaluation of everything around her, her unwillingness to be controlled by others”²⁴. Another thing was that Mitchell made no secrets of her smoking and drinking. After

²²Evans Elizabeth. "Chapter 1: A Child of Atlanta." *Margaret Mitchell*. Elizabeth I. Hanson. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990.

²³Kumar, Rachel. "Margaret Mitchell: Overview." *Twentieth-Century Romance & Historical Writers*. Ed. Aruna Vasudevan. 3rd ed. New York: St. James Press, 1994.

²⁴Evans, Elizabeth. "Chapter 2: A Young Woman, Alone and Ambivalent." *Margaret Mitchell*. Elizabeth I. Hanson. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990.

she got married, she chose to keep her maiden name, for supposedly business reasons, an uncommon act for the time.

When she came to the “Atlanta Journal” newspaper as a reporter, the editor-in-chief even stated: “How can a lady from a good family afford to write about the inhabitants of the city and talk with various tatters?”. But very soon he changed his attitude towards an ambitious girl. The young writer has shown that she deserves this place, having earned the recognition of readers and the position of lead reporter. In total, for Atlanta Journal, Mitchell has written over two hundred articles, essays and reviews. Having proved that not only men can easily cope with the profession of a journalist, Mitchell decided to devote herself to her family and left her job. But, she did not manage to become an ordinary housewife and enjoy the quiet happiness of family life. During these years she wrote a novel, which was destined to change her whole life.

From 1926 to 1933, Mitchell worked on a book that, apart from her husband, had not shown to anyone for a long time. Only in 1935 a representative of the largest American publishing house Macmillan, who travelled around the country in search of new literary talents, got acquainted with the manuscript.

The book "Gone with the Wind" was released in 1936 and made a real sensation among the readers, although the author herself never knew such success. She spoke rather modestly about her work: “... it is, in essence, a simple story about absolutely simple people. There is no sophisticated style, no philosophy, a minimum of description, no grandiose thoughts, no hidden meanings, no symbolism, nothing sensational — in a word, nothing that made other novels bestsellers.”

Immediately after the release of the book, hundreds of interview proposals showered Mitchell, in which she was asked about her attitude to her heroine. Over and over again, the writer patiently explained to journalists: “I tried to describe a far from amazing woman, about whom one can say little good ... I find it ridiculous and funny that Miss O'Hara has become something of a national heroine, I think

that is very bad for the moral and mental state of the nation - if the nation is able to applaud and get involved in a woman who behaved in this way."

As a matter of fact, Mitchell herself viewed Melanie Wilkes as a more central character, who was "adorable and a real southern lady", whereas disdained "demurity" in Scarlett, however, the whole life events and critical circumstances that Scarlett had to withstand make it impossible not to respect her for the great tenacity.

If to approach the idea of the novel from the author's outlook, we may assume that the relationship between main heroines Melanie and Scarlet is the relationship between the "ideal self" and the "shadow", that is, the image of the ideal woman, the "real lady" who has been inculcated since childhood, and the image of the most negative qualities that need to be hidden and destroyed - selfishness, ambition, thirst for money, love for someone else's husband. With all the rest, Scarlett is selfish, but commits noble deeds contrary to her desires and instincts: rescues her rival Melanie and her new-born son during the defeat of Atlanta, cares about her sisters and households, helps the whole family survive after the war.

Likewise, when Mitchell was 18 years old, her fiancé died in the war, and Mitchell's mother became ill when taking care of her diseased husband and did not want her daughter to come back home to prevent her from catching the influenza. Margaret therefore came home after her death. We can find the parallel in the novel where during the war Scarlett desires to go back home, to see her mother. She needs her help and support, but when she finally manages to get home, it is too late. Her mother has become infected with typhoid and has died before Scarlett's arrival, after which her father fell ill with a nervous breakdown. Mitchell took control of the house in her hands - just as Scarlett did. Like Scarlett, she had a male character and a male business acumen.²⁵ But when the Mitchell's family was in a difficult financial situation, she began to look for not a profitable party, but a good job. Here, their paths detach.

²⁵Edwards Ann. Road to Tara. The life of Margaret Mitchell. New York. Ticknor a Fields, 1983. p. 22.

Through the novel, Mitchel also illustrates the formation of goals²⁶. Scarlett is able to achieve what she wants, but it does not bring her happiness. She aspires to the fact that she absolutely does not need, not realizing that happiness is near her, and not somewhere far away. When the goal is reached, Melanie died, and Ashley is free, she realizes that she does not need him. But it is too late, Rhett leaves, without waiting for the response to his feelings. “And happiness was so possible, so close...”²⁷ Here comes out the life logic and tragedy, humankind never appreciates what he owns until it is lost!

Having made the investigation of the tangible relation between Margaret Mitchell and Scarlett O’Hara, hidden personal motifs of the work were enforced to surface. Therefore, despite the author’s ambition and psychological message for all humanity, namely female gender, to see through all vices and immoral attributes that exist in each of us and reflect on our own deeds, just to be candid with our conscience, and scorn the character of Scarlett for all of her evils, perhaps, exactly this factor motivated most readers, largely women, to sympathize her, since every woman could observe their inner sensations put inside out, analyse their own actions, and endurance as well as will-power of Scarlett against all obstacles in her way called forth public admiration and applause, giving the work a sense of immortality!

2.2. The description of the society, women’s social status and role in the novel “Gone with the Wind” by M.M. Mitchell

Society of the Antebellum South differentiated from the rest of the UnitedStates very much. In 1861, about 9 million people lived there from which about 40% wereslaves. In comparison, the population of the North was 22 million. After the Revolution,not many immigrants, with the exception of those from Ireland, settled in the South; partlybecause the main shipping routes ended in ports

²⁶Moss Joyce and Wilson George. Overview: Gone with the Wind. Literature and Its Times: Profiles of 300 Notable Literary Works and the Historical Events that Influenced Them. Vol. 2: Civil Wars to Frontier Societies (1800-1880s). Detroit: Gale, 1997.

²⁷Kumar Rachel. Margaret Mitchell: Overview. Twentieth-Century Romance & Historical Writers. Ed. ArunaVasudevan. 3rd ed. New York: St. James Press, 1994.

in the North and partly because there were not many possibilities to find paid work. Another and very important reason was that original residents did not trust people from elsewhere. The above-mentioned small number of immigrants also caused slower growth of population in the South comparing to the North and the proportion of native population was very high.²⁸

Margaret Mitchell's novel is set in the county of Clayton, in the north of Georgia, and focuses on a particular social class, the planter society, and the members of the same class living in Atlanta. Mitchell describes the residents of the County as different types of people coming from various parts not only of the States, other parts of Georgia, Southern and Northern Carolinas or Virginia, but also from Europe, especially from Ireland. People's reasons for settling there were various. Some of them wanted to become rich, some were members of old families and came to Georgia seeking new places and some came without any particular reasons. The migration of people from other parts of the States was caused by development of plantations and moving the "Cotton Kingdom" to south-western regions of America as cotton became a highly profitable farming product at the beginning of the 19th century. The residents' background gave life in Clayton County its originality. The region was very rich thanks to cotton boom, so people there had time and money to entertain themselves. They really liked meeting their neighbours, therefore they organized balls, barbecues, hunting, or horseracing, and their relationships were based on respect. It is necessary to emphasise that only people from the same social class were treated with respect.

Gerald O'Hara came to America from Ireland at the age of 21 and without proper education. He had to leave his country, because he killed a British tax collector. He was not the first member of his family who had to start new life in America. His two brothers had settled in Savannah before and ran a shop there. They employed Gerald and helped their younger brother even when he was looking for a wife. Gerald liked the South and people there and very soon became a

²⁸ Tindall, George B. and David E. Shi. *America: A Narrative History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1989. pp. 355.

Southerner, but only in his opinion. “There was much about the South—and Southerners—that he would never comprehend: but, with the whole-heartedness that was his nature, he adopted its ideas and customs, as he understood them, for his own—poker and horse racing, red-hot politics and the code duello, States’ Rights and damnation to all Yankees, slavery and King Cotton, contempt for white trash and exaggerated courtesy to women. He even learned to chew tobacco. There was no need for him to acquire a good head for whisky, he had been born with one”²⁹. Mitchell provides an accurate description of the society highlighting the most distinct features, such as aversion to people from the North and poor white people as well as chivalry. But Gerald did not realise that it took him ten years since he bought the plantation Tara until people started to trust him. On the other hand, he was aware of not being a good match for his neighbours’ daughters. He considered himself a Southerner, and he was conscious that people liked him. Still, when he was looking for a wife he knew that his neighbours would not consent to marry one of their daughters. He was “new” for them, nobody knew his family and it was unlikely to marry off their daughters to someone who had not lived in the South for more than twenty-two years. People were distrustful to foreigners, but most of all Southerners hated people from the North, Yankees, because of their negative attitude to slavery and their business spirit.

Scarlett very often undergoes inner struggle between lady-like behaviour influenced by her mother and Mammy and her true self, which is the strong will inherited from her father. Scarlett wants to be a real lady like her mother, who was “the best-loved neighbour in the County. She was a thrifty and kind mistress, a good mother and a devoted wife”³⁰. Scarlett realises that Ellen is fair-minded, truthful, kind and unselfish. Nevertheless, being like mother would deprive her of “most of the joys of life, and certainly many beaux”³¹. Therefore, selfish Scarlett decides to postpone becoming a lady until some day when she gets everything she wants, when she has time for being a lady. The more she suppresses what she has

²⁹Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p.46

³⁰Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 58.

³¹Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 62.

learned from her mother, the more her father's qualities present in her childish tantrums or rejection of the bonds of the patriarchal society. These qualities help her during the Civil War and Reconstruction to adapt to new conditions and save Tara as well as members of her family.

On the other hand, there are the members of the Wilkes who tend to marry within the family:

“Our people and the Wilkes are different,” Gerald went on slowly, fumbling for words. “The Wilkes are different from any of our neighbours--different from any family I ever knew. They are queer folk, and it's best that they marry their cousins and keep their queerness to themselves...”

The whole family is that way, and they've always been that way. And probably always will. I tell you they're born queer. Look at the way they go tearing up to New York and Boston to hear operas and see oil paintings. And ordering French and German books by the crate from the Yankees! And there they sit reading and dreaming the dear God knows what, when they'd be better spending their time hunting and playing poker as proper men should.”³²

Scarlett's father, pointing out how different the Wilkes are, claims that Scarlett would not be happy if married Ashley and that he would not approve such a marriage. He explains that by Ashley's queerness and Scarlett's inability to understand him. He suggests Scarlett to marry someone similar to her, like Ashley who will marry his cousin Melanie, a girl much alike him. Such a marriage would bring happiness. On the contrary, Mrs. Tarleton on the journey to a barbecue at the Wilkes plantation talks to Gerald about Ashley and his engagement to Melanie:

Cousins shouldn't marry, even second cousins. It weakens the strain. It isn't like horses. You can breed a mare to a brother or a sire to a daughter and get good results if you know your blood strains, but in people it just doesn't work. You get good lines, perhaps, but no stamina.³³

³²Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. pp. 36-37.

³³Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 90.

Instead of marrying his cousin, she suggests to marry someone like Scarlett or one of her daughters, which would bring new blood into their family. Her opinion is very probably right, because during the War and Reconstruction, Melanie and Ashley are weak and notable to adjust and survive, which is confirmed by Melanie having problems with reproducing and at last her death. Also Scarlett's marriage with Rhett, who is like her, is not happy. In their case, due to their strong personalities they are able to survive, but not to live together. We can agree with the claim that incorporating new blood into traditional southern families is very important for Mitchell. The author refers to Scarlett's father's origin very often and she highlights its importance for Scarlett's survival. In the description of the two unhappy marriages, Mitchell disagrees with Gerald's idea of marrying like people.

The above stated facts and excerpts from the novel confirm that Margaret Mitchell is quite well-acquainted with the structure of the antebellum southern society and with the exception of the yeoman class manages to portray it accurately and vividly. Her novel deals mainly with the planter class, which she succeeds to depict precisely emphasising the distinctiveness of the region, and refinement as well as distrustfulness of its wealthy residents. In her novel dealing with the theme of survival, she highlights the necessity of strong characters and she explains that the "old" South can survive only if mixing with newcomers.

Rich planters led life similar to that of English rural noblemen. Women were closely tied to household, because agricultural production was bound to homes. Clinton compares women to islands:

"Every woman was an island. Very often a plantation mistress was the only white woman on the estate".³⁴

There were fewer opportunities for socializing with other women, not only because of the distance but also because the amount of work. Mitchell criticises that in her novel too. When Gerald O'Hara and their daughters go to the Twelve

³⁴Clinton C. *The Plantation Mistress*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982. p. 164.

Oaks barbecue, Ellen has to stay at home to go over the accounts, because Gerald has just dismissed their overseer.

“Gerald had shoved the responsibility onto Ellen, and her disappointment at missing the barbecue and the gathering of her friends did not enter his mind”³⁵. There were fewer opportunities for independent careers and paid jobs than in the North. Women in the South usually married earlier and had more children. Moreover, it was especially slaveholding that influenced the status of women as well as their lives.

“Slavery is a social system, and not merely as one institution among many, left an indelible mark on the lives, the relations, roles, and identities of both slaveholding and slave women. Ownership of slaves relieved slaveholding women of many forms of domestic labor while it imposed upon them the responsibility of slave management”³⁶. On the other hand, white women did not complain about hard work and isolation very often and only a few of them actively participated in antislavery movement. Women mostly enjoyed special respect and their role in the society, which was strongly given.

Margaret Mitchell quite ironically refers to women's delicacy. First of all, it is her character of Miss Pittypat, a sixty-year-old spinster living in Atlanta with Melanie Wilkes and later also with Scarlett, because Pitty was an aunt of Scarlett's first husband, Charles Hamilton.

“Aunt Pitty had a heart which fluttered at any excitement and she pampered it shamelessly, fainting at any provocation. Everyone knew that her swoons were generally mere ladylike pretences but they loved her enough to refrain from saying so”³⁷.

Aunt Pitty uses her pretended delicacy to overcome every difficult situation, such as when Gerald O'Hara comes to Atlanta to talk to his daughter about her unbecoming behaviour at the bazaar and the ball, where she danced with Rhett

³⁵Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 82.

³⁶Fox-Genovese E. *Within the Plantation Household*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988. pp. 29-30.

³⁷Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 154.

Butler in spite of being a widow and widows are not allowed to amuse themselves. Therefore, Aunt Pitty pretends an illness to avoid meeting Gerald and admitting responsibility for Scarlett's behaviour. Scarlett considers Aunt Pitty very stupid and finds her outpourings irritating. Pitty's behaviour is compared to that of a child.

Scarlett, on the contrary, is not delicate and she hates pretending delicacy; she never lapses into unconsciousness even Mammy advises her:

“Well, 'twouldn' do no hahmef you wuzter faint now an' den”³⁸.

Scarlett supposes that even without fainting she would be able to find a husband. Mummy also reproaches Scarlett for having no problems when being pregnant and giving birth to her first son Wade. “Mammy told her privately it was downright common—ladies should suffer more”³⁹. We can assume it Mitchell's criticism of women's roles. Scarlett's strong character is the object of disapproval. But when dealing with difficulties during the war and the following years, it proves to be crucial to be able to save her life, lives of their relatives and Tara. Everybody depends on Scarlett and believes that she will resolve their problems.

Secondly, Mitchell also finds ladylike behaviour rather unhealthy. Scarlett is forced by Mummy to eat at home before going to the barbecue at Twelve Oaks, because a real young lady before marriage does not eat in public. The clothes ladies wore were uncomfortable even dangerous; bustles, hoops, corsets, long and trailing skirts were very heavy and difficult to wear. Aunt Pitty is always too tightly laced so she has difficulties to breathe. Mummy using a whalebone girdle has to lace Scarlett to be able to wear a dress with seventeen inches about the waist. All the above-mentioned means that women were considered weak and delicate and sometimes even had to pretend weakness to comply with the cult of delicacy, but in reality plantation mistresses had to work very hard within their household and they had suppress their nature to respect moral principles.

Comparing *Gone with the Wind* with the works dealing with slaveholding society of the Antebellum South, such as *The Plantation Mistress* by Catherine

³⁸Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 79.

³⁹Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 133.

Clinton or within the Plantation Household written by E. Fox-Genovese, it can be claimed that Margaret Mitchell was well informed about the position and roles of women of the period.

In her novel, she colourfully depicts everyday life of plantation mistresses and according to how she does that, it is evident that she explicitly criticises the women's position in society:

“Ellen's life was not easy, nor was it happy, but she did not expect life to be easy, and, if it was not happy, that was woman's lot. It was a man's world, and she accepted it as such. The man owned the property, and the woman managed it. The man took the credit for the management, and the woman praised his cleverness. The man roared like a bull when a splinter was in his finger, and the woman muffled the moans of childbirth, lest she disturb him. Men were rough of speech and often drunk. Women ignored the lapses of speech and put the drunkards to bed without bitter words. Men were rude and outspoken, women were always kind, gracious and forgiving.”⁴⁰

From the extract, it is obvious that Mitchell does not consider life of the most privileged white women to be as romantic and happy as presented in the plantation legend. Women were subordinate to men and were expected to behave according to given rules. They had to obey their husbands, provide them with heirs and manage their households. The criticism is mainly expressed via Scarlett. She often rebels against the prescribed role –wearing unsuitable dress at the barbecue, having fun and dancing when in mourning, drinking alcohol secretly, running business and being successful, expressing her opinions openly, even refusing to be a mother. She finds the moral bonds too tight that they even prevent her from saving Tara and her family; therefore, she considers it more practical to ignore them. Because of such behaviour, she is alienated from the society. Since they were born, girls in the South were raised to be able to hold their position and role in the society and cope with their duties. At the end of the 18th century, a family was very important and the role of motherhood was uplifted.

⁴⁰Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. pp. 59-60.

Mothers were responsible for their children's raising, education as well as morality. Although fathers represented the authority, a mother usually punished the children. In "Gone with the Wind", we learn that Mrs. Tarleton even beats her sons, which was relatively usual:

"She was hot-tempered and easily plagued by the frequent scrapes of her four sons, and while no one was permitted to whip a horse or a slave, she felt that a lick now and then didn't do the boys any harm."⁴¹ Clinton claims that in the South, where the hierarchy and determination of roles were crucial, it was really important to prepare the children for their roles in the society.⁴² Ellen with the help of Mummy tries hard to form Scarlett into a proper lady.

In rich families, usually an Afro-American Mummy helped the mistress with her children. Wet nurses were also engaged, so as a mistress had enough time and energy to look after the household. According to Clinton, it was not as usual, as we might learn from the Southern folklore because planters were worried about the influence the slaves could have on their children. "The mistress presumably maintained house slaves to mitigate the burdens of child supervision, but most mothers still fretted about trusting even older children to the care of black servants. Mothers on plantations considered themselves doubly plagued by the 'slave problem.' Not only were planter wives worried about the negligence of slave servants, but their children's slave playmates, they believed, set poor examples. Warned from an early age about their contact with slaves, white children were indoctrinated with a sense of suspicion toward blacks and a demeanour of superiority"⁴³ According to the above-mentioned, it is possible to claim that Margaret Mitchell describes the relationship between Scarlett and her Mummy, and between Aunt Pittypat and her servant Uncle Peter, or how Scarlett leaves her son Wade in care of Prissy from a rather romantic point of view. Mummy always supervises Scarlett and is very strict with her when concerning her behaviour, for example wearing suitable clothes, avoid tanning, eating at home before a party

⁴¹Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 9.

⁴²Clinton C. *The Plantation Mistress*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982. p. 48.

⁴³Clinton C. *The Plantation Mistress*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982. pp. 48-49.

because a real lady never eats in public. Scarlet must make use of all her cunning to achieve what she wants. Mummy also oversees Ellen. It is explained by her love and devotion to the whole family. Uncle Peter, who is Aunt Pittypat's coach driver, also watchfully supervises observation of moral rules. Their behaviour could lead to assumption that they are not slaves, servants, but rather equal members of the family.

Mothers were responsible for their children's early education. Because women were occupied with the work within the household they found it difficult to educate their children properly at home, they hired governesses. They were usually girls who were young, not married, educated and born in the North. As mentioned in the sub-chapter dealing with education, after the Revolution there was a shift in attitudes towards education, especially female education. Nevertheless, unlike the North, southern women after marriage did not have opportunities to continue in their personal development for which the time in a college was devoted. Alongside the obtained education, there was another important aspect for southern women and it was meeting other girls and making friends during their studies. Such friendships usually lasted the whole life and played important roles in women's lives though after marriage they were very often isolated on their plantations. Exchanging letters kept women in touch with the outside world and bound friends together. In "Gone with the Wind", Mitchell does not focus on such a friendship among women. Scarlett, the main character, despite studying at the Fayetteville Female Academy, has never had a girlfriend, she does not lack one, and she claims that she does not look like other women. First, she considers many of them not very clever owing to their behaviour that is exactly in accord with southern traditions and moral rules. Secondly, she regards them as her rivals, enemies, in pursuit of a suitable man. She does not trust women and finds them boring. Another and even more important reason is that Scarlett does not understand other women. —If she knew little about men's minds, she knew even less about the minds of women, for they interested her less. She had never had a girl friend, and she never felt any lack on that account. To her, all women, including her two sisters, were natural enemies in pursuit of the

same prey—man. All women with the one exception of her mother. The only woman Scarlett respects and admires is her mother. Scarlett wishes to be like her but there is one big problem and it is Scarlett's nature, her desire for life. Being like her mother means to be kind, fair-minded and not selfish and to abnegate most of the enjoyment of life and also admirers.

On the other hand, Melanie Wilkes, another female character from the novel, has a lot of girlfriends because she differs considerably from Scarlett:

Melanie was like her aunt in many ways. She had her shyness, her sudden blushes, her modesty, but she did have common sense—"Of a sort, I'll admit that," Scarlett thought grudgingly.

"Like Aunt Pitty, Melanie had the face of a sheltered child who had never known anything but simplicity and kindness, truth and love, a child who had never looked upon harshness or evil and would not recognize them if she saw them. Because she had always been happy, she wanted everyone about her to be happy or, at least, pleased with themselves.

To this end, she always saw the best in everyone and remarked kindly upon it. There was no servant so stupid that she did not find some redeeming trait of loyalty and kind-heartedness, no girl so ugly and disagreeable that she could not discover grace of form or nobility of character in her, and no man so worthless or so boring that she did not view him in the light of his possibilities rather than his actualities.

Because of these qualities that came sincerely and spontaneously from a generous heart, everyone flocked about her, for who can resist the charm of one who discovers in others admirable qualities undreamed of even by himself? She had more girl friends than anyone in town and more men friends too, though she had few beaux for she lacked the wilfulness and selfishness that go far toward trapping men's hearts.

What Melanie did was no more than all Southern girls were taught to do—to make those about them feel at ease and pleased with themselves. It was this happy feminine conspiracy which made Southern society so pleasant. Women knew that a

land where men were contented, uncontradicted and safe in possession of unpunctured vanity was likely to be a very pleasant place for women to live. So, from the cradle to the grave, women strove to make men pleased with themselves, and the satisfied men repaid lavishly with gallantry and adoration. In fact, men willingly gave the ladies everything in the world except credit for having intelligence. Scarlett exercised the same charms as Melanie but with a studied artistry and consummate skill. The difference between the two girls lay in the fact that Melanie spoke kind and flattering words from a desire to make people happy, if only temporarily, and Scarlett never did it except to further her own aims.⁴⁴

The above-quoted excerpt from the novel serves not only to compare the two girls, Melanie and Scarlett, pointing out the crucial differences between them, but also to demonstrate how women had to suppress their personalities to fulfil their roles in the society. Besides, they did it intentionally to secure their privileged position.

Becoming a wife and a mother meant fulfilling a woman's destiny. Comparing to the North, marriage did not differ a lot concerning upper class women. However, girls in the South married considerably earlier than in the North, possession of a girl's family played a crucial role when courting and mainly due to property marriages between cousins were very frequent. In the novel, Mitchell also mentioned the above-stated. Ellen was only fifteen when she married Gerald and everybody pities India Wilkes for being twenty and a spinster. The habit of marrying cousins is applied in case of the Wilkes and Hamilton families. In this case the marriage is not only because of the property but also because the people understand each other.⁴⁵

In this part, we have attempted to analyse life in the South focusing on a typical antebellum plantation mistress with all her duties and opportunities she had during her life. Comparing the region with the North, we can claim that it differentiated in many aspects, such as politics, economy, education and culture.

⁴⁴Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. pp. 154-155.

⁴⁵Kumar Rachel. *Margaret Mitchell: Overview*. *Twentieth-Century Romance & Historical Writers*. Ed. Aruna Vasudevan. 3rd ed. New York: St. James Press, 1994.

The feature that mostly affected the whole society was the institution of chattel slavery. Life of rich planters' wives varied from that portrayed in the plantation legend. Even though they were relieved of hard work in fields, there was still a lot of work they had to cope with and therefore their life was not easy. Margaret Mitchell in *Gone with the Wind* portrays privileged white women truthfully, which are proved by comparing her novel with historical facts⁴⁶. She criticises the patriarchal society, especially the subordinate position of women and tight social bonds. Scarlett, who very often rebels against the prescribed women's role, presents her criticism. Mitchell claims that the theme of her novel is survival and she determines it by strong personality that Scarlett inherits from her father.

2.3. The portrayal of female images mirroring social bearings in “Gone with the Wind” by Margaret Mitchell

Like in any literary work, in “Gone with the Wind” the writer explicitly draws our attention to woes existent in the eras, in particular, to the American Civil War and Reconstruction. In this regard, addressing the main target of this research paper, social problems in female images of the novel have been elaborately investigated so that varied viewpoints are cited and readers can rely on the objectivity of the analysis.

As a matter of fact, due to the imagination of the writer, her work can be dubbed as multidimensional and thought-provoking. Nonetheless, we have worked out presumptive classification of social problems issued in the book in order to correlate them with respect to their “essence” in creation and characterization of women figures. Hereby,

1. “Gender politics” of the plantation-era and the roots of “Feministic movement”;
2. The harsh discrimination according to the status of female characters:

⁴⁶Moss Joyce and Wilson George. Overview: *Gone with the Wind*. Literature and Its Times: Profiles of 300 Notable Literary Works and the Historical Events that Influenced Them. Vol. 2: Civil Wars to Frontier Societies (1800-1880s). Detroit: Gale, 1997.

- a) “Unmarried girls”, “married woman”, “widow”
- b) “Lady” and “Southern Belle” (Confederate)
- c) “Bad woman”;

3. Class division and Racism

4. Regionalism.

In her work, she manifests a fine line that existed to define the roles of man and woman in the society of the second half of the XIX century. The lines:

“.....It was a man’s world, and she accepted it as such. The man owned the property, and the woman managed it. The man took the credit for the management, and the woman praised his cleverness. The man roared like a bull when a splinter was in his finger, and the woman muffled the moans of childbirth, lest she disturb him. Men were rough of speech and often drunk. Women ignored the lapses of speech and put the drunkards to bed without bitter words. Men were rude and outspoken, women were always kind, gracious and forgiving.”

Obviously this extract portrays the position both genders held subconsciously. Nevertheless, Mitchell also wrote a distinctly feminist novel. She sounds the note early with the narrator's comment that "at no time, before or since, had so low a premium been placed on feminine naturalness," and she mercilessly exposes a southern patriarchy that requires that women be flatteringly subservient to males, no matter how much less intelligent and capable.

In the 19th century, the society in the whole United States was patriarchal and women were subordinate to men and according to the American law, a wife had no legal identity from her husband. After all, lives of southern women differentiated from that of women in the North. The South was rural, big towns were not built – rather isolated farms or plantations could be found there.

In 1830s women suddenly started to protest against the Victorian, patriarchal, society but again mainly in the North. In northern colonies, which were not dependent on slave labour, the theories about freedom resulted in anti-slavery movement and women's rights movement. Unfortunately, the changes brought by the Revolution were not significant. Women still remained bound to domestic

sphere, only a few of them reached formal education, they did not have any political and economical power and control over their possessions. It was nearly impossible to get divorced. Men even did not suppose that women could be interested in something else than household. Thus, when Scarlett talks to Stuart and Brent and they mention the forthcoming war she is bored and refuses to listen to such things. She is not bored because of the political issue the boys discuss, but because she prefers being in the centre of attention. However, her refusal to talk about politics awakens the boys' interest:

“The boys were enchanted, as she had intended them to be, they hastened to apologize for boring her. They thought none the less of her for her lack of interest. Indeed, they thought more. War was men's business, not ladies', and they took her attitude as evidence of her femininity”⁴⁷.

The above passage is not only the evidence that women were highly valued for their womanliness which, besides being delicate, meant lack of interest in men's issues and very often pretended ignorance. It shows Scarlett's ability to manipulate people to get her way. She uses her charms and ladylike manners to attract attention and benefit from that, which proves to be very important when adapting to new conditions brought by the war and helps her to survive.

Another issue appearing in “Gone with the Wind” alongside the positive view of the South is feminism. It has been praised as the first novel to tell the story of the Civil War from a Southern woman's point of view. Mitchell's mother, Maybelle, who was of Irish Catholic origin and supported women's suffrage (she was the president of the South's militant suffrage groups), influenced her significantly. “Margaret's mother was a devout Catholic with proud Irish roots and she instilled that pride in her children. Mrs. Mitchell was one of the founders of the League of Women Voters in Georgia; she was very outspoken about women's rights and would often take Margaret to suffragette rallies. Her argument for women's rights was based on economic justice. Mrs. Stephens had inherited some property and she objected to paying taxes if she was not given the right to vote on

⁴⁷Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 13.

how the money should be spent". Nevertheless, it is important to realise that when talking about women in connection with "Gone with the Wind" we mean white women from the planter society. The novel is written from their point of view and portrays primarily how the Civil War and Reconstruction project in their lives.

It is very often assumed that the rise of women's movement was caused by the Industrial revolution and development of capitalism. Causes are also seen in French and American revolutions, which brought new feelings into people's lives such as demands for equal rights or importance of individuals. The above-mentioned events cannot fully explain the beginnings of women's rights movement. And, it was the Victorian conception of a family, which emerged quite recently, that caused the protests. The conjugal family system with its great demands upon women was a fairly recent development and became general only in the nineteenth century, then the feminists' response becomes explicable. In completing the transformation of the family from a loosely organized, if indispensable, adjunct of Western society into a strictly defined nuclear unit at the very center of social life, the Victorians laid a burden on women which many of them could or would not bear. Men set women's positions at home and justified that by their higher position in society, delicacy and therefore a necessity of permanent protection against the outside world, which actually meant isolation. Feminism is then a reaction to such a pressure put on women.

Woman, it was believed, was morally and spiritually superior to man because of her highly developed intuition, refined sensibilities, and especially because of her life-giving maternal powers which defied man's comprehension. But woman was also physically weaker than man, inferior to him in cognitive ability, and wholly unsuited to the rough world outside the home.

Thus, the pre-war South is a place of strict gender division. Women were trained to attract a rich man, provide children and run a home. Scarlett at this time thinks of little other than flirting and trying to appear to be a lady, when her true nature is ruthless, self-interested and distinctly unladylike. The seeds of her future success in business are present, however, in her talent for calculating figures.

When she goes into business for herself, this skill proves useful and enables her to defeat the competition. In a broader sense, too, she is calculating, always quick to seize an opportunity and to pursue her ambition, no matter what the human cost.

But even more telling than its overtly repeated feminist message, it is a novel dominated by strong women—Scarlett, Melanie, Ellen O'Hara, Mrs. Tarleton, Grandma Fontaine, Mrs. Meade, and Mammy. Mitchell takes pains to show the spine of a southern matriarchy secretly underlying a patriarchy. For instance, the main heroine Scarlet O'Hara adhered to a way more feministic outlook, deviating from a path appointed to women, especially married ones, whilst endeavouring to start off her own business with sawmill, which resulted in a spectrum of mass indignation, including her husband, Frank Kennedy:

“Frank, in common with all men he knew, felt that a wife should be guided by her husband’s superior knowledge, should accept his opinions in full and have none of her own. He would have given most women their own way. Women were such funny little creatures and it never hurt to humor their small whims. Mild and gentle by nature, it was not in him to deny a wife much. He would have enjoyed gratifying the foolish notions of some soft little person and scolding her lovingly for her stupidity and extravagance. But the things Scarlet set her mind on were unthinkable.”

Such an action by Scarlett definitely had its mirroring on the reputation of her husband, since pupil judged him “for permitting her to behave in so unwomanly a fashion”. Nonetheless, he was incapable of changing this situation due to the reversed roles in the new society.

Perhaps, those, who have at least once read the novel and experienced the world every other woman witnessed how unfair was the social norms they had to obey, irrespective of their interests or wills, can easily find themselves sympathetic towards Scarlett’s, probably, “egoistic behaviour” or deviation. Since, there existed clear-cut discrepancy among the “unmarried”, “married” and the “widow”:

These few years between puberty and marriage were closest that most women came to freedom. The great decision of their lives – the choice of when and

who to marry – lay ahead, and their time to choose was filled with fun and frivolity. This period – when women were most carefree, most hopeful – was therefore cherished by planter-class females. Young girls anticipated being a belle. Belle themselves conveyed a sense of exhilaration. Flirtation and amorous intrigues were common, although girls were supervised by not only their parents but also by the rest of the society during social contacts with men.

“Before marriage, young girls must be, above all other things, sweet, gentle, beautiful and ornamental, but, after marriage, they were expected to manage households that numbered a hundred people or more, white and black, and they were trained with that in view.”⁴⁸

If these were some criteria for girls to behave in the society they lived in, the attitudes of people for each category of mentioned women were a way stricter, being reflected even in the so-called “usual social gatherings”:

“Most of the young ladies were seated with partners on the long benches that faced the tables. Under the arbor sat the married women, their dark dresses decorous notes in the surrounding color and gaiety. Matrons, regardless of their ages, always grouped together apart from the bright-eyed girls, beaux and laughter, for there were no married belles in the South. Casting contemptuous glances at them, Scarlet thought they looked like a clump of fat crows. Married women never had any fun.”⁴⁹

Marriage entailed an absolute change in a woman's life. After a few years of dancing, flirting, having beaux and wearing nice dresses without real duties unless behaving lady-like, a married woman had to cope with a lot of work because she was responsible for running the whole plantation. As mentioned above, Margaret Mitchell when writing her novel was thoroughly acquainted with the scope of women's everyday tasks. Therefore, we can illustrate life of a common plantation mistress using the example of Ellen O'Hara.

⁴⁸Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 52.

⁴⁹Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 93.

Since her childhood, Ellen had been prepared to be able to run the whole household consisting of not only members of the family but also a great number of slaves. In the sub-chapter dealing with education, we learn that girls in the South were not taught enough skills to be able to keep a house. Therefore, for a newly married lady keeping a house could be a problem. When Ellen was fifteen, she married Gerald who was desperately looking for a wife because he needed a lady of the house at his plantation Tara. Although slaves undertake all the hard labour, she is responsible for the whole range of domestic actions whose extent depends on the size of a plantation. Gerald, like most other men, has no idea that his wife is occupied since the early morning to late night because of all the things she has to supervise. He only sees the result - always clean and neat lady, not showing exhaustion or strain, and a well-functioning plantation. Ellen keeps the keys to the whole household, supervises the supplies in the pantry and smokehouse, and distributes them. She also has to ensure cooking, housecleaning, production of cloth and clothes supply. She keeps detailed records of the plantation as well as account books.

Nursing and treatment of sick members of a family and slaves is another of her duties. Plantation mistresses were also responsible for growing food in their gardens, preserving food, candle making and soap making, or furnishing and maintaining their homes.

Here, the question arises! If the life of married women was so much dull and colourless with so many routines and responsibilities, then what widows had to go through? Definitely, their lives were as bitter as gall. This finds clear illustration in the considerations of Scarlett:

“A widow had to wear hideous black dresses without even a touch of braid to enliven them, no flower or ribbon or lace or even jewellery, except onyx mourning brooches or necklaces made from the deceased’s hair. And the black crepe veil on her bonnet had to reach to her knees, and only after three years of widowhood could it be shortened to shoulder length. Widows could never chatter vivaciously or laugh aloud. Even when they smiled, it must be a sad, tragic smile.

And, most dreadful of all, they could in no way indicate an interest in the company of gentlemen. Marriage was bad enough, but to be widowed –oh, then life was over forever!”⁵⁰

Scarlett O'Hara is very talented in flirtation and she knows perfectly how to enchant a man. After becoming a widow, she finds it unjust that she learned all the trick girls use to attract a man but was allowed to utilize them for a very short time. Mitchell criticises the position of widows not only via Scarlett and her attempt to break free from the moral bonds. She is not allowed to wear clothes she would like to or enjoy herself and make decisions concerning her life. On the other hand, being a widow enables her to take care of wounded soldiers in hospital, which is not suitable for unmarried girls of the same age. It is only her status of a widow that is decisive. Mitchell employs the character of Rhett Butler to express her disapproval with the conditions of widows and it is Rhett who helps Scarlett to break free from her widowhood.

Besides, some other categories as “lady” are given special emphasis on the social surrounding of the heroes. However, only a few heroines truly represent this type of women. Melanie Wilkes and Ellen O'Hara are viewed as closely matching to the notion we give deep consideration.

“Melanie Hamilton Wilkes – a lady in the conventional sense. In particular, it fully embodies the traditional image of “beauty from the South”, which appeared in American society in the late 1800s.”⁵¹

Traditionally, a woman of that time is described as “ready for marriage ... restrained intellectually and emotionally ... possessing, above all, spiritual beauty and preferring to marry for love, not for money”. In addition, the model southerner “is respectful, sacrificial, devoted, modest, but unquestionably intelligent, chaste, beautiful, cultured, religious, true to her homeland and herself. In short, this is Melanie Wilkes”. Such a woman for many decades occupied a prominent place in history. Her place is in the house, and her job is to be a loving wife and mother.

⁵⁰Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 124.

⁵¹Barkova I. A. The images of lady and gentleman in the novel of M. Mitchell “Gone with the Wind”// *Molodoyuchoniy*. 2016. Art. 990-993

She does not complain about her fate and is always content with the place allocated to her in society.

Melanie is always portrayed as an innocent, restrained and affectionate woman, a “tiny fragile creature” with an “almost frightened expression of huge brown eyes”, a “fluffy mass of curly dark hair” and a face in the shape of a “heart” that “no one would call beautiful”. Throughout the novel, she does not commit a single bad deed, in fact, she, of all the characters, the only cause sympathy. "Melanie," as Mitchell points out, "says kind and flattering people out of a desire to make them happy." Melanie is childishly naive and cannot understand that some people are inherently evil. She, as defined by Rhett Butler, - "the real lady." This woman is very similar to Scarlett's mother, Ellen O'Hara, “helpless and in need of protection, as a lady should be [...] kind and gentle [...] cares about others and thinks about respecting decency [...] finds time to play with children and check how they respond to the lessons [...] that are kind to all the unfortunate”.⁵²

So, Melanie Wilkes and Ellen O'Hara embody the exemplary lady in the novel in the era of the Civil War.

The southern belle is an archetype for a young woman of the antebellum American South upper class. The southern belle was believed to be physically attractive but, more importantly, personally charming with sophisticated social skills. She is subject to the correct code of female behavior. The novel's heroine, Scarlett O'Hara, charming though not beautiful, is a classic southern belle.

For young Scarlett, the ideal southern belle is represented by her mother, Ellen O'Hara. The Southern belle was bred to conform to a subspecies of the nineteenth-century "lady"... For Scarlett, the ideal is embodied in her adored mother, the saintly Ellen, whose back is never seen to rest against the back of any chair on which she sits, whose broken spirit everywhere is mistaken for righteous calm ...⁵³

However, Scarlett is not always willing to conform:

⁵²Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 153.

⁵³Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 55.

... part of her does try to rebel against the restraints of a code of behavior that relentlessly attempts to mold her into a form to which she is not naturally suited.

The figure of a pampered southern belle, Scarlett lives through an extreme reversal of fortune and wealth, and survives to rebuild Tara and her self-esteem. Her bad belle traits (Scarlett's deceitfulness, shrewdness, manipulation, and superficiality), in contrast to Melanie's good belle traits (trust, self-sacrifice, and loyalty), enable her to survive in the post-war South and pursue her main interest, which is to make enough money to survive and prosper. Although Scarlett was "born" around 1845, she is portrayed to appeal to modern-day readers for her passionate and independent spirit, determination and obstinate refusal to feel defeated.

Marriage was supposed to be the goal of all southern belles, as women's status was largely determined by that of their husbands. All social and educational pursuits were directed towards it. Despite the Civil War and loss of a generation of eligible men, young ladies were still expected to marry. By law and Southern social convention, household heads were adult, white propertied males, and all white women and all African Americans were thought to require protection and guidance because they lacked the capacity for reason and self-control.

However, Scarlett's attempts to proceed as an autonomous individual only caused social disguise and isolation, further leading to clashes in her previous circles, making her unable to integrate into the society.

Another category of women to discriminate in the circles of that society was "a bad woman".

Rarely anyone from a presentable social background dared even to talk about such type of women. When Scarlett moved to Miss Pittypat's house in Atlanta, she first had the experience of encountering one of such women. And, when she asked about her from Uncle Peter, her curiosity was rejected by him referring to the inappropriateness of such theme to be discussed by high-standing layers of society:

- "Miss Scarlett," said Peter darkly, laying the whip on the startled horse, "Miss Pittyain' gwineterlak it you astin' questions datain' none of yo' bizness. Dey's a passel of nocount folks in dis town now dat it ain' no use talkin' about."

- "Good Heavens!" thought Scarlett, reprovved into silence. "That must be a bad woman!"

She had never seen a bad woman before and she twisted her head and stared after her until she was lost in the crowd.⁵⁴

And even an inch of proximity to bad women could easily spoil the reputation of any educated and well-bred ones. Such an incident nearly threatened Melanie, when she was proposed a good amount of money for the needs of hospital by Belle Watling, one of the well-known prostitutes of Atlanta:

"Belle Watling was the red-haired woman she had seen on the street the first day she came to Atlanta and by now, she was easily the most notorious woman in town. Many prostitutes had flocked into Atlanta, following the soldiers, but Belle stood out above the rest, due to her flaming hair and the gaudy, overly fashionable dresses she wore. She was seldom seen on Peachtree Street or in any nice neighborhood, but when she did appear respectable women made haste to cross the street to remove themselves from her vicinity. And Melanie had been talking with her. No wonder Uncle Peter was outraged.

"I shall die if Aunt Pitty finds out! You know she'll cry and tell everybody in town and I'll be disgraced," sobbed Melanie. "And it wasn't my fault. I--I couldn't run away from her. It would have been so rude. Scarlett, I--I felt sorry for her. Do you think I'm bad for feeling that way?"⁵⁵

Vividly, the entire community alienated this sort of women and any relation to them would instigate unwanted consequences.

Society of the Antebellum South, excluding slaves, can be divided into three basic classes. The first social class, the most powerful although the least numerous, is represented by big planters, those who owned more than 20 slaves.

⁵⁴Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 278.

⁵⁵Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 391.

They belonged to the wealthiest Americans. Being a rich planter was a southern social ideal and even small farmers wished to be one of them and therefore supported them. Wealthy planters often led life as described at the beginning of the novel, "Gone with the Wind", when they had enough money and free time to be able to "cultivate the arts of hospitality, good manners, learning, and politics"⁵⁶. Men were cavaliers preoccupied with honour, very nationalistic and indifferent to money. It is important to explain that life of big planters and their wives was not only entertainment, whereas in fact running such big plantations required a lot of work from both men and women. This is where the plantation legend differs from the reality. Plantation mistresses did not only sit on a porch being attended by their slaves but had to work hard. Although "Gone with the Wind" is very often considered to be an "encyclopaedia of the plantation legend"⁵⁷, Mitchell does not portray lives of southern women as easy and full of entertainment. On the contrary, she criticises the patriarchal society and depicts all the duties the plantation mistresses have to carry out.

Poor white families owning no land and little other possession represented another part of the population. They lived in hills, caves and were considered descendants of dismissed servants or convicts. For an outside observer it was sometimes quite difficult to distinguish between small farmers, yeomen, and the true "poor whites". Mitchell uses the Slattery family as an example of "white trash", even though in the novel, they own some land and therefore they should be regarded as self-working farmers. They are "characterized by a pronounced lankness and sallowness":

"The Slatterys were another affair. Being poor white, they were not even accorded the grudging respect that Angus MacIntosh's dour independence wrung from neighbouring families. Old Slattery, who clung persistently to his few acres, in spite of repeated offers from Gerald and John

⁵⁶Tindall, George B. and David E. Shi. *America: A Narrative History*. New York: W.W.Norton & Company, Inc. 1989. pp. 358.

⁵⁷Adams A. Painfully Southern: *Gone with the Wind*, The Agrarians, and the Battle for the New South. *Southern Literary Journal*. Vol. XI. - №1. Fall 2007. p. 59.

Wilkes, was shiftless and whining. His wife was a snarly-haired woman, sickly and washed-out of appearance, the mother of a brood of sullen and rabbit-like children-- a brood which was increased regularly every year. Tom Slattery owned no slaves, and he and his two oldest boys spasmodically worked their few acres of cotton, while the wife and younger children tended what was supposed to be a vegetable garden. But, somehow, the cotton always failed, and the garden, due to Mrs. Slattery's constant childbearing, seldom furnished enough to feed her flock.

The sight of Tom Slattery dawdling on his neighbours' porches, begging cottonseed for planting or a side of bacon to 'tide him over', was a familiar one. Slattery hated his neighbours with what little energy he possessed, sensing their contempt beneath their courtesy, and especially did he hate 'rich folks' and 'uppity niggers'. The house negroes of the County considered themselves superior to white trash, and their unconcealed scorn stung him, while their more secure position in life stirred his envy. By contrast with his own miserable existence, they were well-fed, well-clothed and looked after in sickness and old age. They were proud of the good names of their owners and, for the most part, proud to belong to people who were quality, while he was despised by all.

Tom Slattery could have sold his farm for three times its value to any of the planters in the County. They would have considered it money well spent to rid the community of an eyesore, but he was well satisfied to remain and to subsist miserably on the proceeds of a bale of cotton a year and the charity of his neighbours.”⁵⁸

The above excerpt shows that very poor white people were treated without any respect and were regarded to be a stain on the society living only on the generosity of rich planters. Even house slaves led more comfortable lives, therefore considered poor whites more inferior than slaves. The Slattery family plays an important role in the novel. We first meet them when Scarlett desperately needs to talk to her mother about her love for Ashley, but she is not at home because of helping Emmie Slattery to baptise her new-born baby that is dying. During the war,

⁵⁸Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. pp. 50-51.

Ellen O'Hara becomes infected with typhoid when looking after sick Emmie. Scarlett tries hard to get home longing to meet her mother from whom she hopes to get help and support, but it is too late. Ellen has died before Scarlett's return to Tara. Before the war, the Slattery's are "white trash" and every planter would pay anything to purchase their land and get rid of them. However, after the war, we meet Emmie again. Her social status has changed. She is married to the former overseer at Tara, Jonas Wilkerson, Yankee, and even tries to buy Tara when Scarlett has difficulties to pay taxes. Wilkerson is in charge of the Freedmen's Bureau and therefore he has the power and money. Scarlett does anything to prevent "the lousy, trashy poor whites"⁵⁹ from buying Tara. She offers herself to Rhett in order to get money from him and being refused marries Frank, her sister's fiancé. The above stated proves how radical changes the war brought to the southern society and that the former aristocracy retained their pride despite their poverty, as well as Scarlett's desire to maintain Tara at all costs.

The most numerous class was that of small farmers, yeomen, who possessed land and a few or none slaves. The farmers usually worked in fields together with their slaves. They mainly grew food crops and very little cotton or tobacco to earn some money. These farmers are those who were appreciated by Jefferson and Jackson. A very good example of a member of the class is Able Wynder in "Gone with the Wind". He is described as a very big, illiterate small farmer with good manners. Men respect him for his qualities and therefore elect him second lieutenant of the troop of cavalry. "But the planters' ladies and the planters' slaves could not overlook the fact that he was not born a gentleman, even if their men folks could"⁶⁰. Stuart Tarleton defends Able when his servant Jeems calls him "white trash":

"Don't you call Abel Wynder 'po' white.' Sure he's poor, but he ain't trash; and I'm damned if I'll have any man, darky or white, throwing off on him.

⁵⁹Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 525.

⁶⁰Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 20.

Thereain't a better man in this County, or why else did the Troop elect him lieutenant?".

Do you mean to compare him with real white trash like the Slatterys? Able just ain't rich. He's a small farmer, not a big planter, and if the boys thought enough of him to elect him lieutenant, then it's not for any ducky to talk impudent about him. The Troop knows what it's doing."⁶¹

As stated above, sometimes it was quite difficult to distinguish between “white trash” and yeomen. The only difference between them was the ownership of land. Therefore, it can be claimed that Mitchell's portrait of small farmers and poor whites is not completely correct. On the other hand, in her novel, she focuses on the planter class and she manages to describe it accurately.

Besides the distinction among social classes, Mitchell in her novel also highlights the distinction between the quite young county of Clayton and old coastal towns, such as Savannah and Charleston. The distinction is not only in natural conditions, but also in people's characterization that helps the author to depict views on various issues. Older coastal Georgia, represented by Savannah and Charleston, symbolises traditional values, peaceful life bound by moral rules. Scarlett when visiting her relatives living in the towns finds life there boring. She does not like the people either, due to their behaviour, traditions and emphasis on family. On the contrary, Clayton County is described as a “savagely redland”⁶², country of contrasts where we can find cultivated land on plantations, as well as deep forests, where even furrows are not long and straight like in coastal areas due to the hilly country. It is a region where people are new, hard-working, a little crude, sharp, ready to change and obstinate. Ellen O'Hara coming to Clayton County from Savannah — found herself in a world that was as strange and different as if she had crossed a continent.⁶³

Relations between people having different backgrounds and their comparison when dealing with the circumstances brought by the Civil War and

⁶¹Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 19.

⁶²Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 10.

⁶³Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 56

Reconstruction, especially their abilities to adjust to new conditions is the main subject of the novel. "The marriage between Gerald O'Hara and Ellen Robillard represents a significant element in "Gone with the Wind". Firstly, the marriage itself helped Gerald to enhance his social status, to become a member of the southern aristocracy. When he comes from Ireland, he recognises⁶⁴ that "Coastal Georgia was too firmly held by an entrenched aristocracy for him ever to hope to win the place he intended to have"⁶⁵. He is very lucky to win Tara, a plantation in the northern Georgia. Nevertheless, owning a prosperous plantation does not secure him the desired position. Only a marriage enables him to blend into the southern planter class and he knows that:

"His wife must be alady and a lady of blood, with as many airs and graces as Mrs. Wilkes and the ability to manage Tara as well as Mrs. Wilkes ordered her own domain"⁶⁶. The Robillard family do not approve the marriage and they do not comprehend how Ellen, a delicate woman, a daughter of the noble family of Robillard, could marry Gerald, a stubborn Irishman without proper education.

Besides enhancing Gerald's social status, the marriage brought birth of Scarlett. The Robillards consider Ellen and Gerald's daughter Scarlett to be "a child of amésalliance"⁶⁷. And this aspect of incorporating new blood into southern society is, "necessary for Americans to survive the modern world"⁶⁸.

Scarlett O'Hara is the main character of the novel, from whose perspective all the events are viewed. She is the representative of the "new" South, she bears the ability to survive and it is owing to his father's origin. Her full name is Katie Scarlett O'Hara Hamilton Kennedy Butler and at the beginning of the novel, she is only sixteen years old and lives with her parents and two younger sisters, Susan Elinor (Suellen) and Caroline Irene (Carreen) at the plantation Tara, in Clayton

⁶⁴Cardon Lauren S. Good Breeding: Margaret Mitchell's Multi-Ethnic South. Southern Quarterly. Hattiesburg. Vol. 44. 2007. p. 61.

⁶⁵Mitchell M.M. Gone with the Wind. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 47.

⁶⁶Mitchell M.M. Gone with the Wind. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 53.

⁶⁷Mitchell M.M. Gone with the Wind. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 136.

⁶⁸Cardon Lauren S. Good Breeding: Margaret Mitchell's Multi-Ethnic South. Southern Quarterly. Hattiesburg. Vol. 44. 2007. p. 61.

County. From the first line of the novel, it is obvious that Scarlett O'Hara differs from an ordinary southern belle, an archetype for a young woman of the American Old South's upper class.

According to the plantation legend, every southern woman was beautiful and decorated the plantation. However, "Scarlett O'Hara was not beautiful, but men seldom realised it when caught by her charms the Tarleton twins were. In her face were too sharply blended the delicate features of her mother, a Coast aristocrat of French descent, and the heavy ones of her florid Irish father"⁶⁹. Not only in her appearance, but primarily in her character and behaviour the features of her father and her mother's influence reflect. Margaret Mitchell emphasizes that frequently throughout the novel. "But for all the modesty of her spreading skirts, the demureness of hair netted smoothly into a chignon and the quietness of small white hands folded in her lap, her true self was poorly concealed. The green eyes in the carefully sweet face were turbulent, wilful, lusty with life, distinctly at variance with her decorous demeanour. Her manners had been imposed upon her by her mother's gentle admonitions and the sterner discipline of her mammy; her eyes were her own".

Apart from the characters in the novel being organized into two basic groups along class lines: the white planter class, such as Scarlett and Melanie, and the black house servant class, the latter is treated with special clarity. The slaves depicted in "Gone with the Wind" are primarily loyal house servants, such as Mammy, Pork, Prissy, and Uncle Peter. House servants are the highest "caste" of slaves in Mitchell's class system. They choose to stay with their masters after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 and subsequent Thirteenth Amendment of 1865 sets them free. Of the servants who stayed at Tara, Scarlett thinks, "There were qualities of loyalty and tirelessness and love in them that no strain could break, no money could buy."⁷⁰

⁶⁹Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 5.

⁷⁰Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 53.

The field slaves make up the lower class in Mitchell's caste system.⁷¹ The field slaves from the Tara plantation and the foreman, Big Sam, are taken away by Confederate soldiers to dig ditches and never return to the plantation. Mitchell wrote that other field slaves were "loyal" and "refused to avail themselves of the new freedom", but the novel has no field slaves who stay on the plantation to work after they have been emancipated.

Although the novel is more than 1,000 pages long, the character of Mammy never considers what her life might be like away from Tara.⁷² She recognizes her freedom to come and go as she pleases, saying, "Ah is free, Miss Scarlett. You kainsen' me nowhar Ah doanwanter go," but Mammy remains duty-bound to "Miss Ellen's child."⁷³

Here, we may see how the servants were bound to their tenants despite the war breaking the necessity to stay with them. The novel also shows the variety of choices different characters make and according to the choice of Mammy and Prissy we may easily assume that social destruction of previous roles did not change their devotion, but tied their relationships further. Generally, class division was a huge problems finding its echo in the roles of women, yet the loyalty of the lower class remained unchanged to a certain extent.

The war destroys the plantations and with them, the traditional economic and social systems. Old Southerners are not fitted for anything but running a plantation, and cannot deal with the cut and thrust of the new climate of entrepreneurship. It is left to the strongest, bravest and most adaptable to become the new generators of income, and sometimes, these are women, such as Scarlett. Though Scarlett is disapproved of by the Old Atlanta society for her "unwomanly" behavior in running her own businesses, the war has at least made it possible for a woman to break out of her traditional gender role - such a thing would have been unthinkable previously. Scarlett begins to talk and act like a man, takes charge at Tara, supports Ashley and his family, and employs Ashley at her mill, all activities that are

⁷¹Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. pp. 49, 52.

⁷²Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 47.

⁷³Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 26.

traditionally the preserve of the male. Scarlett's disinclination to have children would have been viewed in both her own and Mitchell's time as extremely unnatural in a woman, and underlines her rejection of the traditional female role.

Rhett is the only Atlantan who consistently supports Scarlett in her business activities. He also expresses feminist ideas. For example, he does not see the point in widows being expected to refrain from enjoying themselves, or in pregnant women hiding themselves away from view. More practically, he helps three women (Scarlett, Belle Watling, and Mrs. Merriwether) set up or expand their businesses by providing or arranging loans.

Mrs. Merriwether, who runs a pie-making business after the war, is not socially disapproved of as much as Scarlett. Rhett thinks that this is because she has the good grace not to be too successful and not to appear to enjoy working. Other factors may be that the men of her family help her in the business and the business itself revolves around the traditional feminine activity of baking.

The war, in which plantations are ruined and slaves freed, subverts this hierarchy. Those who were high are brought low, and those who were low but have some useful skills are able to rise in the newly fluid society. Formerly powerful gentlemen from grand plantation families like Ashley are no longer valued if they lack practical skills such as farming or an entrepreneurial spirit that will allow them to succeed in trade. A poor white, Will Benteen, is able to become master of Tara because of his farming skills and general competence.

As well as breaking down class structure, the war also begins to dismantle social conventions that had previously been unbreakable. Young men and women ignore the usual rules of courtship and marry in haste, before the men are called away to fight. People ignore class divisions in choosing a marriage partner, paying more attention to practical matters of survival: the aristocratic Cathleen Calvert marries her family's former overseer, Mr. Hilton, so that her sick brother can be taken care of; and Will Benteen is able to marry Suellen O'Hara, a woman who before the war would have been out of his reach, because he is a capable farmer. In the most shocking (for the time) breaking of social boundaries, many 'respectable'

Atlanta gentlemen find themselves indebted for their lives to the prostitute Belle Watling, who provides them with an alibi for murder after a Ku Klux Klan raid.

If to investigate the novel from racist point of view, we may easily discern that aided by the unscrupulous adventurers who operated the Freedmen's Bureau and urged on by an intensity of Northern hatred almost religious in its fanaticism, the former field hands found themselves suddenly elevated to the seats of the mighty. There they conducted themselves as creatures of small intelligence might naturally be expected to do. "Like monkeys or small children turned loose among treasured objects whose value is beyond their comprehension, they ran wild--either from perverse pleasure in destruction or simply because of their ignorance."⁷⁴

Afro-Americans are very often likened to animals, such as monkeys. They are considered stupid and lazy; they need to be supervised all the time.

Foundation of the Ku Klux Klan and defence of its activity is also very controversial. The Ku Klux Klan is nowadays regarded to be one of the most racist organizations and is still active. In the novel, Mitchell justifies its existence by the necessity to defend white women against acts of violence committed by former slaves who were protected by the government in those days:

It was the large number of outrages on women and the ever-present fear for the safety of their wives and daughters that drove Southern men to cold and trembling fury and caused the Ku Klux Klan to spring up overnight. And it was against this nocturnal organization that the newspapers of the North cried out most loudly, never realizing the tragic necessity that brought it into being.⁷⁵

The members of this secret organization were noble men including Ashley Wilkes and Frank Kennedy, Scarlett's second husband.

On the contrary, the relationship between masters and slaves is described as very friendly. Scarlett has a very nice relationship with Mummy and Dilcey, she appreciates their loyalty and help when working at destroyed Tara. When

⁷⁴Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 638.

⁷⁵Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 640.

meeting slaves from Tara on their way to strengthen the fortifications of Atlanta, Scarlett recognises them, speaks to them politely and offers help:

“Oh, Captain Randall, don't scold them! They are our people. This is Big Samour foreman, and Elijah and Apostle and Prophet from Tara. Of course, they had to speak to me. How are you, boys?”

“Good-by, boys. Now, if you get sick or hurt or in trouble, let me know. I live right down Peachtree Street, down there in almost the last house at the end of town. Wait a minute— She fumbled in her reticule. —Oh, dear, I haven't a cent. Rhett, give me a few shinplasters. Here, Big Sam, buy some tobacco for yourself and the boys.⁷⁶

Mitchell emphasises loyalty of slaves to their masters very often. Mummy is “devoted to her last drop of blood to the O'Haras”⁷⁷. Another example is Uncle Peter, who is aunt Pittypat's coach driver. He is considered a member of the family.

White southerners during the Civil War and Reconstruction very often saw Afro-Americans as intellectually inferior, subordinate and not capable to make decisions on their own. Even Mary Boykin Chesnut, an intelligent woman regarding slavery as a great evil, did not appreciate Negroes very much:

Of Negroes in general, Mary had a very low opinion. In March 1862, she wrote: “The best way to take Negroes to your heart is to get as far away from them as possible. People can't love things dirty, ugly, repulsive simply because they ought.” More than once she referred to the blacks as animals; in August 1864, she wrote: “It takes but one moment for these creatures to go back to their naked savage, animal nature.”

Taking into consideration that Mitchell did vast research about life in the South and used information obtained from people living through the era, and if we assume that the author did not present her views on Afro-Americans and just wanted to portray the history as it was, the novel then does not provoke racism. Therefore, we can agree with the abovementioned claim on Margaret Mitchell that

⁷⁶Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. pp. 299, 231

⁷⁷Mitchell M.M. *Gone with the Wind*. Vol 2. – M.: Eksmo, 2013. p. 24.

it is important to take into consideration the period when the novel was written and historical facts. In spite of the controversy, the novel is still very popular all around the world and we suppose that it is mainly because of the strongly defined personality of the heroine, Scarlett O'Hara.

While researching regionalism in the novel, we came across several discriminated challenges that made opportunities given for Southern and Northern women different.

When settled in the New World people established a way of living very similar to that they knew from home. The colonists also brought with them a traditional view on women, treated as subordinate. Women were considered naturally weak and therefore supposed to be submissive. Their role was to obey their husbands, give birth to children and take care of households. A true woman was satisfied with the role and regarded it as her freedom. The law and social habits supported the subordinated role of women. Women did not have the right to vote, preach, hold office, attend public schools and colleges, bring legal actions, make contracts and own a property. "In the time of early settlement, women, better said the right to marry them, were even sold like other commodities and therefore they were brought to the New World like stock. However, their position in the society was better than in Europe due to the lack of women at the beginning of colonization as well as the free spirited environment of the New World. Moreover, despite their dependent status, —females in early America were highly valued by the male authorities"⁷⁸.

The Enlightenment together with Great Awakening brought to American society a spirit and encouragement of individualism, toleration and aversion to authorities, which later led to the War of Independence (1775-1782). During the war women had to adopt new male jobs, they also followed their husbands to army camps, took care of injured soldiers, cooked and when needed actively participated in fights. The Revolution brought changes both social and economical, which led to partial improvements in women's lives. Even though women did not gain any

⁷⁸Clinton C. *The Plantation Mistress*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982. pp.3-4.

political power, the revolution offered women new possibilities like access to higher education. First women colleges were established and some other offered education for both men and women. There were also more job opportunities particularly in the North. Women were employed as teachers, mill girls, novelists, or editors. Increased willingness to question women's social status and their rights was the most important contribution of the Revolution.

Social problems are versatile in their nature. Specifically, while analysing them from the angle of female perception of events and such problems impacted their lives, one can feel how the time and setting to which women are conditioned to plays an exclusive role in determining their position and destinations in life. The issue of war, reconstruction and abolition of all previously followed ways of life is already a tremendous problem that affect all layers of society, regardless of their gender. Nonetheless, such issues are usually followed by further complication as a change is already a challenge and if this challenge is considered from women's point of view it brings more sensitivity to the vision of the social problems existent in the era.

CONCLUSION

Having studied the novel written by Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell and the woman characters in it, and the critical works written by Herschell Brickell, Floyd C. Watkins, Finis Farr, Paul Pickrel, Jennifer Word Dickey, Bernard DeVoto, Glenwood Clark, L. D. Reddick, Edwin Phillips Granberry and others, we came to the following conclusions:

1. It is evidently seen that the women's role in the 19th century society was quite complicated. This emphasis on female purity or "ladyness" was allied to the stress on the homemaking role of women, who helped to create an environment free from the post-revolutionary consequences. In this respect, women's bad behaviour came to have symbolic significance as the embodiment of the violation from social norms which is instigated by the society.

2. We revealed that Margaret Munnerlyn Mitchell was an extremely talented and prominent writer who had very wide outlook. While studying her life and literary activity in the second point of the first chapter, we found out that her novels somewhat reflected her own life experiences apart from having their base on carefully investigated the historical facts and objective arguments.

3. In the first paragraph of the second chapter we have produced a comparative analysis of the biography of the author and the plot as well as characters in the novel "Gone with the Wind" with an objective to illuminate the writer's influence in the objectiveness of events developed alongside the theme of American Revolution and Reconstruction period. Although this novel became the only novel published during the lifetime of M.M. Mitchell, it captivated hearts of billions, turning into eternal masterpiece.

4. In her work she tried to open characters of heroes and heroines of her imagination, both factious and fictitious, and showed the thoughts, feelings and emotions, hopes and despair of the people undergoing the conflicts revolving around the subject of the War.

5. While analysing the main heroines Scarlett O'Hara and Melanie Wilkes, we took into consideration their life experiences, inner thoughts and feelings, the

author's point of view, their attitudes and actions towards the events happening in their lives. We came into conclusion that the author aimed at showing a perfect illustration of presentable woman with all her pleasant aristocratic traits and manner, but physically disadvantaged nature against the ill-mannered though ambitious and strong woman. Scarlett's bad belle traits like deceitfulness, shrewdness, manipulation, and superficiality, in contrast to Melanie's good belle traits such as trust, self-sacrifice, and loyalty, enable the former to survive in the post-war South and pursue her main interest, which is to make enough money to survive and prosper. Although Scarlett was born around 1845, she is portrayed to appeal to modern-day readers for her passionate and independent spirit, determination and obstinate refusal to feel defeated.

We revealed a subject through vivid, carefully arranged details. In describing characters, we looked for details that not only show what an individual looks like but also provide clues to her personality.

In the process of writing of our final qualification work we became aware of the fact that it is very difficult to show the writer's world outlook, her tastes or her philosophy without making close investigation of the period she lived in and her personal life. Comparative analysis of female characters played an enormous role in expressing the author's thoughts and attitude to different phenomena and may thus help the reader to define the author's style and understand her messages.

The language writer takes advantage of, is emotive, but clear and gives the opportunity to understand her work clearly. She is notable for her depth of knowledge, wit and experience.

In her novel writing style and stylistic devices are used very skilfully and artistically to depict the social problems in woman images of the novel, the psychological state of human beings conditioned to brutal trials of destiny and the effects of War on cultural, ideological beliefs of the folk.

In the process of writing our graduation paper we revealed that the life of women at that period is notable forever-lasting and powerful life lessons which manifest true life stories.

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