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**The Image of Writing Women: the Comparative Aspect on Women's
Literature in English**

BACHELOR THESIS

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Šiauliai 2012

ŠIAULIŲ UNIVERSITETAS
HUMANITARINIS FAKULTETAS
LITERATŪROS ISTORIJOS IR TEORIJOS KATEDRA

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**Rašančių moterų įvaizdis: moterų literatūros anglų kalba lyginamasis
aspektas**

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Šiauliai 2012

Contents

I. INTRODUCTION.....	4
II. WOMEN’S HISTORY DURING THE TWENTIETH – EARLY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES	9
2.1 Feminist Theory: Woman’s Situation in the Early Twentieth Century	9
2.2 Postfeminist Approach: the Emergence of Chick-lit.....	14
2.3 Women’s Literature during the Early Twentieth – Early Twenty-first Centuries: the Comparative Aspect.....	18
III. THE IMAGE OF A WRITING WOMEN REFLECTED IN VIRGINIA WOOLF’S ESSAY <i>A ROOM OF ONE’S OWN</i> AND CHICK-LIT NOVELS.....	20
3.1 Revelation through Imagination in <i>Olivia Joules and the Overactive Imagination</i> by Helen Fielding.....	20
3.2 Revelation through the Diary Form in <i>Bridget Jones’s Diary</i> and <i>Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason</i> by Helen Fielding.....	23
3.3 Revelation through Acquaintances in <i>Sex and the City</i> by Candace Bushnell.....	26
3.4 Women Writers’ Priorities in <i>Four Blondes</i> by Candace Bushnell.....	28
3.5 <i>A Room of One’s Own</i> by Virginia Woolf as a Consciousness Raising Essay.....	31
3.6 The Images of Writing Women in English Literature: the Comparative Aspect.....	34
IV. CONCLUSIONS.....	36
V. SUMMARY.....	38
VI. SANTRAUKA.....	39
VII. REFERENCES.....	42
VIII. ANNOTATION.....	43
IX. ANOTACIJA.....	43

I. INTRODUCTION

Relevance and novelty of the theme. Candace Bushnell and Helen Fielding are the most influential female writers in the late twentieth – early twenty-first centuries who have gone one step ahead and popularised the chick-lit genre. Whilst Virginia Woolf is a key British prose writer of the modernism period who is best known for her essay *A Room of One's Own*.

The novels of these two talented authors were chosen in order to reveal the image of contemporary female writers, and the way they depict daily issues of twenty-first centuries' women. The novelty of the Bachelor's Thesis is that it will be based on a comparison between novels written by two contemporary chick-lit authors – Candace Bushnell, Helen Fielding and Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own*. Moreover, with this research we will try to investigate through the values of a contemporary writer, and the reason they choose to write such a genre. There are many debates about chick-lit genre, and critics such as Harzewski, Ferriss, Smith and many others tried to draw pros and cons on chick-lit genre, its significance in the literary world, and the impact that it has. On the whole, theoretical part will analyse women's situation in the early and the late twentieth century as well as the early twenty-first century when many factors were affecting women's literature and their abilities to write.

Toril Moi (*Lyties teksto politika*, 2001), Karla Gruodis (Feminizmo ekskursai. *Moters samprata nuo antikos iki postmodernizmo*, 1995), Jane Flax (*Thinking fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and Postmodernism in the Contemporary West*, 1990) and many of other critics have already researched on feminism, women's struggle to write, their social and cultural situation from the nineteenth century to the present. However, not many researchers have yet done comparison on the images of female writers of the early twentieth century and the writers of contemporary literature. Due to this reason, the Bachelor Thesis will have the aforementioned significant relevance. The theoretical part will show the outcomes of differences between the writers, the situation in which they were, and the traditions of two different periods, generations. Finally, the main body of the Thesis will present the research on the writing women's images within the novels written by contemporary authors Candace Bushnell, Helen Fielding as well as the modernist icon – Virginia Woolf.

However, there are not many research carried out on comparison of modernism and postmodernism periods' fictional images of writing women. The Bachelor Thesis' relevance is that the research lays in the unusual comparison of the phenomena of writing women in prose of the two periods.

Before starting further analysis, it is necessary to introduce the authors, whose books will be dealt with. First author that we would like to present is Candace Bushnell (born 1 December 1958), a famous American author and columnist based in New York City. Candace Bushnell is the winner of the 2006 Matrix Award for books and a recipient of the Albert Einstein Spirit of Achievement Award (Hagestadt, 2009). Besides, she is best known for writing a column that was anthologized in the novel, *Sex and the City*, which in turn became the basis for a popular television series and its subsequent film adaptations (Ibid., 2009). Other novels written by Candace Bushnell include *Four Blondes* (2000), the novel which will be included in our analysis, *Trading Up* (2003), *Lipstick Jungle* (2005), *The Carrie Diaries* (2010) and *One Fifth Avenue* (2008). Bushnell's column and novels were popular, but it was *Sex and the City* that boosted the status of open-talking women on television shows and in the fiction works. All of Bushnell's novels mark female characters that are significant to the late twentieth – early twenty-first century women and break the usual stereotypes of female heroines often found in popular literary works. Bushnell is changing the way female characters are seen in films, television, and books; these fictional characters are hilarious, smart and most important they are limitless of men pressure on them.

Helen Fielding (born in 1958) is the next author to be introduced; she is a British novelist known worldwide. "Helen Fielding has written an enormously popular novel – *Bridget Jones's Diary*, which has changed the English language and aroused an intense controversy over the needs and desires of modern women and the fate of feminism" (Helen Fielding archive). Fielding created the heroine - "Bridget Jones, a sarcastic, 30-something Londoner worried about her career, her tobacco and alcohol intake, her love life and the size of her behind" (Mazza, 2000). Additionally, after her first successful novel, Fielding continued to surprise her readers with the sequel *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* (1999), which again was at the top of the best-seller lists in Great Britain and United States of America and which with the lapse of time was translated into many other languages because of its success. And finally, the last novel written by the British novelist that we will analyse is *Olivia Joules and the Overactive Imagination* (2004). To summarise Fielding's writing, it could be said that the contemporary author has created a heroic twenty-first century's women's literature full of hilarious, imagery but also realistic topics in accordance to women trying to make their way in life in their twenties and thirties who with receive disposable income, are unable to find either a heterosexual man or anything in the fridge (Helen Fielding archive).

Finally, Virginia Woolf (1882 – 1941) is the last of our analysed authors; she is a well-known modernist writer, author of the significant essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929). Virginia Woolf is a key British novelist, essayist, and critic who was one of the leaders in the literary movement of modernism in Britain. Moreover, Woolf's works are popular for topics such as independence, issues that women writers encountered in the early twentieth century, and male hierarchy. For her works, Woolf used a technique called "stream of consciousness", unfolding the lives of the characters by revealing their thoughts and associations. Woolf's most famous novels include *Night and Day* (1919), *Monday or Tuesday* (1921), *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and the masterpiece entitled *A Room of One's Own* (1929). Finally, Woolf is also known for being a feminist, socialist, and pacifist who expressed her beliefs in many of her works but specifically in the essay *A Room of One's Own* (Pavilioniené, 1996).

On the whole, these women are the key female writers of the early twentieth and the late twentieth – early twenty-first centuries who changed the image of writing women presented in the literary world. Moreover, the female authors are taken as an example and inspiration by other women worldwide; bearing in mind that a few of the chick-lit novels and the modernist essay were based on real life elements and autobiographical facts, the fictional works leave even a more significant trace in the literary history involving women.

The object of the research is the image of writing women of the two periods which is revealed in novels written by Helen Fielding: *Olivia Joules and the Overactive Imagination*, *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* & Candace Bushnell: *Sex and the City* and *Four Blondes* and Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own*. The image of women writers will be analysed in three aspects – image which reveals through: imagination in the novel *Olivia Joules and the Overactive Imagination*, the aspect of consciousness raising in *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*, and the priorities chosen by the contemporary women writers in *Sex and the City* and *Four Blondes*.

The aim of the Bachelor's Thesis is to reveal the images of writing women in the novels written by Candace Bushnell: *Sex and the City* and *Four Blondes* and Helen Fielding: *Olivia Joules and the Overactive Imagination*, *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* and to compare them with the images of writing women in Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own*.

To achieve the aim, the following **objectives** have been set:

1. To review the situation of feminism in the early twentieth century;
2. To describe the emergence of chick-lit genre in the literary world;
3. To analyze chick-lit novels representing contemporary writing women;
4. To analyze the images of writing women in Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own*;
5. To carry out the comparative analysis of writing women's images in the essay *A Room of One's Own* and the images in chick-lit novels.

Research methods used in the analysis include:

- Comparison; the comparative method is of high significance to the Bachelor paper and it was applied in order to compare the images of the writing female characters in fiction of different periods.
- The postfeminist approach; it was used in order to characterize the situation of women writers in the twentieth century.
- Feminist theory was used in order to stress the importance of political activity for women writers, and to evaluate women's images in fiction of earlier periods.

The structure of the work: the Bachelor Thesis consists of an introduction, theoretical part, the main part of the research, conclusions, English and Lithuanian summaries, a list of references and annotations. The introduction presents writers whose books will be analysed, defines the relevance and novelty of the theme, the object, the aim, objectives, research methodology and structure of the paper. The main part of the research – “The Image of a Writing Woman Reflected in Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own* and Chick-lit Novels” – comprises six chapters. The first chapter is entitled “Revelation through Imagination in *Olivia Joules and the Overactive Imagination* by Helen Fielding”, the second – “Revelation through the Diary form in *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* by Helen Fielding”, the third – “Revelation through Acquaintances in *Sex and the City* by Candace Bushnell”, the fourth – “The Priorities of contemporary women writers in *Four Blondes* by Candace Bushnell”, the fifth chapter is under the title “*A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf as consciousness raising essay” and, finally, the last chapter is “Images of Writing Women: the Comparative Aspect”.

II. WOMEN'S HISTORY DURING THE TWENTIETH – EARLY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES

Firstly, the information will be rendered on topics that will be discussed in the theoretical part of the research paper. To begin with, the first chapter will refer to feminism as a political activity because it is an essential aspect of the nineteenth, twentieth century and because it is a core stone while talking about the chick-lit appearance in the literary world. Furthermore, the research paper will deal with the topic on women and men relationship, the research will disclose woman's situation in social, cultural and family levels in the late nineteenth century – early twentieth century and we will finalise the first chapter with the feminist theory as the method of the research itself. In the second chapter of the research the information will be presented about chick-lit – a new literary genre, chick-lit's features and finally differences between the romance and chick-lit. And to sum up the theoretical part the comparison on the women literature during the two periods: modernism and postmodernism will be provided in the last chapter.

2.1 Feminist Theory: Woman's Situation in the Early Twentieth Century

First of all, it is essential to explain the terms that will be used in the research paper and which are of high importance. While talking about Virginia Woolf and her literary work *A Room of One's Own*, it is relevant to define the 'essay' genre. Up to the late twentieth century 'essay' was described as everything devouring form which mingles features of other genres and creates confusion (Borchmeyer, Zmegac, 2000) According to Richard Nordquist: (2010:5) "Essay is a short work of autobiographical nonfiction characterized by a sense of intimacy and a conversational manner" But bearing in mind Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own* definition provided by Dave Hood (2010:2) is more suitable:

"A personal essay can also be an opinion piece, an opinion that is based on a particular political or social concern or topic of interest <...> the writer frequently seeks to explain the truth or reality as he/she views it." Ibid., 1

It is clear that, the 'essay' genre distinguishes the authors' point of view of the prevailing social, cultural, and political situation and hence renders the author's personal evaluations on certain notions. Furthermore, a definition is also needed for the term 'image' because it is the main criteria according to which we will analyse female writers. According to Polly Bird, (1994) who states:

“Image is – “me” from the others point of view. Image is an overall picture, which we deliver about ourselves: the way we look, talk, dress, and work; it is our individuality, posture, abilities, attitude, body language, and accessories, environment in which we live and even people we interact with” Ibid., 3 ¹

The above definition on term ‘image’ will be helpful for the research, in order to analyse women writers’ images from different angles such as female writers’ personality, emotional and psychological experiences, individuality, friends, family, environment, etcetera.

To begin with, it is worth to mention that feminism had started as a political activity in the late nineteenth century which caused plenty of chaos from the Government, writers, critics and the entire audience of demur men. Feminism activity was a ‘new wind’ that gathered women together to expose their thoughts, beliefs, feelings and hidden emotions against the world in which the dominating sex was a man (Pavilionienė, 1996). Up to the twentieth century, man’s hierarchy was highly felt in literal, social and daily lives. Women had started to ask for their rights in a discrete way, revealing their thoughts in small writing pieces bearing in mind Christine de Pizan. The intense desire to write and educate other women got into its peak in the early twentieth century starting with Virginia Woolf who pointed out the necessity to give lessons to other women about freedom and the need to write (Elshtain, 2002). During the feminism period, women gained a better understanding of how important it is to change the image of women characters portrayed in literary works, the way they were treated at home as well as in public; women finally acknowledged being oppressed in literal, social, and cultural areas for many centuries. This oppression was evidenced across cultures in different continents and over many years. Rosemarie Putnam Tong in her book *Feminist Thought* (1998) presents oppression in the other light claiming:

1. “That women were, historically, the first oppressed group.
2. That women’s oppression is the most widespread, existing in virtually every known society.
<...>
3. That women’s oppression causes the most suffering to its victims, qualitatively as well as quantitatively, although the suffering may often go unrecognized because of the sexist prejudices of both the oppressor and the victims. (Tong, 1998:46–47)

It is certainly true that woman’s role at home and in public is one of the topics that reveal female oppression as well. In many cases women had to live with the husband’s intolerance and

¹ Translated from Lithuanian into English by the author of the Bachelor’s Thesis, E. Ž.

ill-mannered behaviour. Furthermore, women were left outside the male routine, daily works, or interest, they were left inside the home to clean, prepare food, or take care of the children whilst men took care of the outer matters (Gruodis, 1995). In addition, it was:

“As never before in the history, ‘real woman’s role’ was aggressively propagated through massive information devices: television, radio, journals, books and movies, which showed a strict woman’s model. It was thought that the ideal woman is the one who enjoys housewife role and discovers self – fulfilment in accomplishing her children’s and husband’s needs” (Ibid.,24)

It was a trial to effect and control women’s brain, to change their way of thinking, to manipulate them. Men thought that women’s place is at home because they were dependant on men; it was social insecurity – money absence that tied women to men. In the society man was seen as an intelligent outstanding person, well treated in public and bringing a solid impress while women were taken for granted. In general, there were no boundaries for male behaviour with a woman, she entirely depended on him. Conceivably, the most significant sphere from which women were excluded was a social life; throughout history, society was always more favourable to men. For a long period women could not enter universities, publish their works or occupy job places that required physical strength, or intelligence. But in the early twentieth century, doors had opened and women started to work for very low earnings, but this situation totally changed during the Second World War when men were taken to the Army and women replaced their places (Gilbert, 1996) It was a turning point in women’s life, from which they started to engage themselves in the public life: asked for divorce, dressed more feminine and most importantly women were allowed to write openly about social and political issues (Elshtain, 2002). Furthermore, women began to think differently, they suddenly realized having equal rights as men; also they tried to emphasize their individuality and express intelligence in the literary works.

Besides, postfeminism created the biggest stimulus for the rest of women who were of different class, culture, sex or race, etcetera (Smith, 2008) to step into the day light and trample the standards about women; individuality became the essential feature of postfeminism. Before that, feminists were concerned about differences between man and woman and it was the ‘third wave’ feminists who realized that women have many differences between themselves and it was the right time to analyse their individuality and oneself (Moi, 2001). The ‘third wave’ feminists believed in further changes and they were the ones who focused the importance to express women’s words in a written form, they emphasized analysis on self-identity and started to point out women’s role in society in a positive way (Ferriss, 2002). Women have always been writing but their works appeared in press only in the twentieth century. In general:

“<...> feminists have emphasized the unity and continuity of women’s creative work and have tended to confuse feminist art with, simply, women’s art.” (Eagleton,2010:204)

The big part of women’s development and recovery are achievements in literary area, the change of women’s image in literary works. Through the men’s literary works it was tried to separate feminism as a political project from women’s experience (Gruodis, 1995) but, indeed, it was of high importance to emphasize women’s history and challenges they have encountered throughout the centuries.

Feminism has started as a cultural, political activity and evolved into a ‘Feminist Theory’ – a theoretical discourse (Mazza, 2000). Feminist theory is one of the methods taught in universities and is also known as a study which unfolds women’s experience, social role, feminist literary works and the general idea about feminism itself. Notably, feminist theory points out the gender inequity and women’s rights (Tong, 1998). According to Rosemarie P. Tong in *Feminist Thought* (1998):

“Some of postmodern feminism’s roots are found in the works of Simone de Beauvoir, who phrased the essential question of feminist theory as, “Why is woman the *second* sex?” <...> “Why is the woman the other?” Ibid., 195

It is difficult to define the main objective of the feminist theory, but one of the essential objectives is to analyse the relation between man and woman, sexuality, power relations, woman’s role in social life and why the male is the prevailing sex. In general, feminist theory concentrates on works written by women and men, to analyse the female images carried out in male works, and consider the reasons female characters are shown in a negative way.

Not only the feminist theory studies were intrigued by women and men relationship but also many scholars and literary critics were engaged in differences between the male and female. Up to the late twentieth century, there was sexual inequality worldwide; universally there was a hierarchical way of thinking and living. An explicit version of man’s domination over woman was proposed by Karla Gruodis in her book *Moters samprata nuo antikos iki postmodernizmo* (1995) was that “<...> father’s authority rises from God’s permission for Adam to control Eve and their children.” (Ibid., 39). It means that father had a right on his wife and children even though he was an ordinary human being. Due to the patriarchal separation, women could not develop as individuals in any life sphere but in their daily lives as well; women felt dependant on men materially, emotionally and psychically. Moreover, woman’s image in society was diminished and wrongly presented; she was associated with insignificance. Gruodis states:

“<...> woman is identified as somebody or if you want to say, she is a symbol of something, what every culture devalues, what every culture defines as a being in a lower existential layer than the culture itself”. (Ibid, 313)

While discussing women's image, we can find such symbols as cleaning, cooking, loving and caring; opposite to strength, violence and higher tone associated with men. Those symbols have become stereotypes that have created a bigger gap between the two sexes. In addition, women had spent a long time in male dominated society without an opportunity to reveal their individualities and with their wit and abilities to write deeply buried until they decided to make changes in literal, social, individual and cultural life.

Summing up the first sub-chapter, it is clear that feminism has had a huge impact on women's lives, which also caused serious changes in relationships between genders and laid the ground for further analysis on women's historical, social and cultural development. Moreover, from the previous paragraphs, we can draw a conclusion that women faced hard work at home, aiding their husbands but social insecurity left them outside the literal and cultural improvement. Till the end of the twentieth century women's image in literature was predominantly conveyed from men's point of view emphasizing female weaknesses, lack of intelligence and dependence on male. Additionally, up to the twentieth century women did not have their own disposable income and the private space which is compulsory for a writer. Hence we may conclude, women have always been writing, even though they had to face many obstacles until their literary pieces appeared in press and became appreciable.

2.2 Postfeminist Approach: the Emergence of Chick-lit

In the previous chapter, information was given about the first feminist works dating back from the seventeenth till the early twentieth century's. In the second chapter, information will be rendered on chick-lit genre – contemporary literature which focuses on female writers, and contemporary topics. Firstly, it is important to note that chick-lit is the fiction about and for the “new woman”, the modern reader of postfeminist culture, a popular literature mainly written by women for a women audience (Ferriss, 2006). Chick-lit has succeeded in making contemporary women aware of the continuing difficulties that nevertheless exists in their everyday lives (Harzewski, 2006). Chick-lit is one of the new genres that is open to fresh novelists and has presented incredible opportunities for young women to make an impact within a male-dominated publishing industry.

Secondly, the term ‘chick-lit’ appeared in print as early as 1988 when Cris Mazza and Jeffrey DeShell used a slang for a course titled “female literary tradition” (Mazza, DeShell, 2000). With the chick-lit term, the two authors wanted:

“<...> ironically refer to postfeminist attitudes;<...>not to embrace an old frivolous or coquettish image of women, but to take responsibility for our part in the damaging, lingering stereotype” (Ferriss, Woods, 2002:9)

It is clear from the quote above that the new genre was taken in a negative, futile way, however, the two authors emphasized chick-lit's seriousness and the need to evaluate its importance in the literary industry. Moreover, chick-lit genre is treated as type of postfeminist or second-wave feminism that goes beyond female-as-victim, to include literature that covers the vast of female experiences, including love and cajolement (Harzewski, 2006). This type of literature focuses attention on experimental work, including violent, perverse and sexual themes. Chick lit was propagated by the U.S. news media and embraced by readers at the turn of the twenty-first century. Additionally, chick-lit novels tell intellectual, fast-paced stories about young, predominantly white women's messy journeys through personal and professional experiences, and how they gain self-knowledge and self-acceptance, and are thus empowered to take control of their intimate relationships and professional lives (Smith, 2008).

Chick-lit genre caused different evaluations from critics worldwide. On one hand, critical analyst of Vytautas Magnus University, Irena Ragaišienė, claims that chick lit is often dismissed in literary criticism despite its appeal to contemporary female readership. It is obvious that chick lit has definitely won the status of a feminist bestseller as literature “for the ‘new

woman', the contemporary reader of our post feminist culture, and a 'new woman's fiction,' a form of popular literature mostly written by women for a female audience" (Ragaišienė, 2008:5) On the other hand, chick lit novels were easily accepted to literary critics, because chick-lit was a broad genre that could be critically analysed. However, for the academic community, the new genre was insignificant for further analysis. Chick-lit is labelled as "the new woman's fiction" due to consumerism affected and self-conscious era where women writers cover daily life topics and simultaneously desire for better personal life matters. Thus, this is an obvious allusion to the New Woman's phenomenon that emerged between the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century: "Considerable changes were witnessed during the period in developing sexual and gender identities along with other social norms conditioned by rapid industrialization." (Smith, 2008:108). Finally, it is of high importance to note that chick-lit departs from its predecessors in several ways; the contemporary women characters are with no stigma of sexual adventures (Ferriss, Young, 2006), they do not feel ashamed to fail in family life and be successful business women, and they have the desire to cherish their appearance and be true fashionistas in a consumerist world.

Chick-lit genre started as a British and American phenomenon bearing in mind Candace Bushnell's *Sex and the City* and Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (Ibid., 2006). During the late twentieth century when chick-lit first appeared, critics claimed that chick-lit fails to offer more diversity in genre itself and multiplicity in plot compared to the present days when the genre has been on a wave of popularity (Harzewski, 2006). Chick-lit has made a noticeable improvement; many sub-genres have developed from genuine chick-lit works: Mommy lit, Mystery lit, Lad lit, Marriage lit, Christian lit, Ethnic lit, Black lit, Nanny lit, Shopping lit and many others (Eagleton, 2010). Additionally, chick-lit books hit the highest sales ratings amongst all the other genres in the United States of America and Great Britain. Additionally, the amusing, vital and frilly novels written by women have fascinated the women audience. The chick-lit genre thus became progressive because it reflects on the casual life of any woman, and includes topics that would be of significance to the contemporary female. It is obvious that the chick-lit genre is at a stage of its "childhood" due to its appearance in the late twentieth century, but surely gaining a strong interest from publishers, critics and female readers.

Furthermore, it is of high importance to distinguish features between romance and chick-lit due to chick-lit's development from the traditional romance genre. The two literary genres have some features in common but at the same time have some aspects that make them different. Janice A. Radway in her book *Reading the Romance* (1991) states:

“<...> the story told by all romances can be considered a myth because every book is dominated by the same set of events resolved in an identical way<...>”. (Ibid., 204)

From the quote above, we can conclude that there is no diversity in romance as is in chick-lit novels; more or less each romance theme, plot and further events can be decoded from within the first pages while chick-lit novels remain unpredictable. The traditional romance heroines are the desperate housewives who fall in love with a handsome man and face various challenges to get to the happy ever after life: “Its main plot must involve a man and a woman falling in love and its conflict centred on the pair struggling to make the relationship work.” (Smith, 2008:122). On the contrary, chick-lit characters are educated, business success type women with a disposable income with their own choice and in search for: “The quest for self-definition and the balancing of work with social interaction<...>.” (Smith, 2008:122). Besides, chick-lit aims for a humorous effect; nearly every chick-lit book has some humour which cannot be said about romance. Furthermore, “the main difference between the romance and chick lit novels appears in the status of money and the marriage contract. Romance has traditionally apposed love and monetary gain, as the gold digger or social climber functions as a foil to the less worldly heroin” (Radway, 1991:11). Chick-lit offers revenge of the husband hunter, typically united with a man she does love but who is conveniently well appointed, whereas popular romance novels must be careful to show that the heroin never machinates for a man and his estate. (Ferriss, Young, 2006). Furthermore, chick-lit female characters are busy with their career, inner emotions, while the plot in the usual romance novel focuses on women who are an attachment for a husband, creating intrigues and overemphasizing their feelings. And finally, what really separates chick-lit from usual romance – is the manner of telling the story. Chick-lit is told in a more confiding, personal tone frequently using the *I* pronoun; it is like having a best friend tell you about their life. In addition, chick-lit has monumentally changed the representation of single women in literature by portraying not figures of pity, illness, or derision, but a cast of funny, usually capable women not looking to settle (Harzewski, 2006).

It could be said that romance and chick-lit novels are very similar literary genres, but few features such as the tone of telling it, plot of the novel, themes, use of language, humour aspect, as well as heroine character features separate traditional novels from the contemporary women novels.

Furthermore, chick-lit is a literary genre, which addresses issues of modern womanhood, often humorously and light-heartedly (Gilbert, 1996). There were many changes in chick-lit

novels since it appeared first and is published nowadays. “The Fifties and Sixties were a heyday for classy feminine commercial fiction because they portrayed women pre-liberation, full of promise” (Ibid.,3). Those women were about the discovery of intimate life matters, the new world of business life, the emergence of female individual uniqueness. Yet the new women’s generation fetched in the concern of appearance, desire of life fulfilment. Additionally, protagonists vary widely in ethnicity, age, social status, marital status, career, and religion. Chick-lit brings into focus many of the issues that a contemporary woman faces in a contemporary culture – issues of race and class, identity, femininity and feminism, of self-image and consumerism. (Ibid.,). Accordingly, we will analyse the contemporary women images in the practical part of this research paper.

Notably, heroines deploy self – deprecating humour that not only entertains but also leads readers to believe they are fallible like them:

“The heroine of these books can be shallow, overly compulsive, neurotic, rude, insecure, bold, ambitious, and witty or surprisingly all of the above – but readers love them anyway.” (Harzewski, 2006:4)

People are also fond of reading about characters that are imperfect and approachable, that when observing imaginary characters, the reader could compare herself with fictional characters and know that the fictional heroines are with vulnerabilities, imperfections and looking for self-fulfilment through work, relationships and self-help guidance.

To sum up, there were many discussions and disagreements by publishers, scholars and literary critics that led chick-lit to the present situation. However, many obstacles were created not to allow postfeminist novels to emerge into literary world. Nevertheless, for the bigger part of society, in this case women audience who were fond of the new genre – chick-lit; it was interesting, amusing and gripping to read. The use of the diary form, fictional character imperfections, friends’ assistance, heroine’s maturation throughout the novel, silly situations and the choice between the career and the partner made the novels even more gripping. On the whole, it could be said that chick-lit has become one of the most interesting, popular, and profitable genre’s of the twenty-first century literature.

2.3 Women's Literature during the Early Twentieth – Early Twenty-first Centuries: the Comparative Aspect

In this chapter it will be discussed the values writing brought and the purpose of writing in the two different periods. Furthermore, it is important to describe the challenges women encountered in order to write and publish their literary works.

Firstly, after discussing women's oppression in various life areas, it also could be seen that women faced a range of obstructions in order to write. As it was mentioned earlier in the sub-chapter of male hierarchy, it is clear that women did not feel equal to men and it was the main reason why it was so hard for women to start writing their own works. Hence, Christine de Pisan stepped into the day light in order to change the image of women characters portrayed in literary works written by men. Besides, women were under oppression for a long period and it was time to unfold themselves as individuals, but women were too afraid to show their voices and Carol Gilligan, in her book *In a Different Voice* (2003), shows it ideally by saying:

“The difficulty women experience in finding or speaking publicly in their own voices emerges repeatedly in the form of qualification and self – doubt, but also in intimations of a divided judgment, a public assessment and private assessment which are fundamentally at odds.” (Gilligan, 2003:16)

From the quote above it is clear that women were afraid of judgement from society, the same as the judgement from friends and family. Virginia Woolf can be called one of the most extraordinary writers of the twentieth century who brought a valuable contribution in the literary industry and new ideas about men and women relationship. She also emphasised the necessity for women to write and educate other women. Virginia Woolf is also considered to be a very important figure in the feminist literary criticism, as she pointed that women should seek intellectual as well as physical freedom. All these ideas can be felt in her essay *A Room of One's Own*.

What really separates feminism and postfeminism is the function of female works. Modernist writers such as Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson, and others wrote in order to enlighten female readers, to encourage them to write their own works and to stress their intellectual abilities because all these were diminished by male gender:

“Therefore I would ask you to write all kinds of books, hesitating at no subject however trivial or however vast. By hook or by crook, I hope that you will possess yourselves of money enough to travel and to idle <...> and let the line to thought dip deep into the stream.” (Woolf, 1991:119)

The quote above is an inspiration and hope for other women to write any kind of literature no matter what topic it covers, the most important thing is to express their thoughts, their life experiences. Moreover, Virginia Woolf highlights the significance of money; this was felt in the entire essay *A Room of One's Own*. According to the author, there were two necessities in order for women to fulfil their creative and intellectual interests (Moi, 2001): money and private space.

“Yet what is a remarkable, unmarried woman were more legally independent than the married ones. Single women could own property; pay taxes to the state, and vote in the local parish, none of which married women were allowed to do”. (Women in the Middle Class in the 19th century, 1996: 4)

Money allowed women to gain self-assurance, and most importantly – independency from men as well as privacy from others created a prolific space for creativity. Furthermore, literature of the late twentieth century is based on true facts than imaginary details that are usually a feature of chick-lit. Virginia Woolf states: “Fiction here is likely to contain more truth than fact” (Ibid., 2). Women wrote about events and the environment in which they were living. Their works are highly important from the historical point of view as they reflect the reality of that period. Furthermore, modernist writers had to face struggles to publish their works; many presses had refused to print them. In contrast to purpose of modernist/feminist works which was to educate other women is chick-lit genre which seeks commercial interest, entertaining and benefits. Contemporary women authors write novels that would be entertaining, gripping, interesting and witty in order to sell more copies and receive better money. For modernist writers, money was needed to feel independent and to cover their living costs, whilst contemporary writers have the money but want to be famous worldwide. Not all contemporary female authors write for a commercial purpose, others do it for pleasure and amusement; the contemporary authors render self-representation through the writing.

In conclusion, modernist female writers intended to spread enlightenment among women and educate them through the literary works, whereas chick-lit is the entertainment literature genre which brings pleasure and benefits to the author and the gripping, interesting novels for the reader. In addition, from our theoretical part it is clear that male hierarchy put the background for further disagreements between the two sexes which led to another issue – a strain on women's and men's relationships. Subsequent to all the struggles female writers faced in the past, women authors now can freely express their personal views in fiction.

III. The Image of a Writing Women Reflected in Virginia Woolf's Essay *A Room of One's Own* and Chick-lit Novels

3.1 Revelation Through Imagination in *Olivia Joules and the Overactive Imagination* by Helen Fielding

First of all, it is important to outline the plot of the novel in short, in order to make the reader familiar with the story. The novel is about the thirty four years old journalist Olivia (even though her real name is Rachel Pixley). Olivia is a style journalist for *Elan* and *Sunday Times* who was sent to Miami to write a column on a beauty story. The adventure starts when Olivia gets acquainted to Pierre Ferramo, whom she suspects of terrorism because he is a lookalike of Osama Bin Laden. The rest of the novel is based on Olivia's trial to reveal Pierre's real identity and to prove that her suspicious thoughts about him are not only the fruits of her overactive imagination.

As a journalist Olivia can be characterized as self-confident, always thinking one step ahead and often calculating possible outcomes from existing situations. One of the reasons for her strong and assured personality, that is needed for writing as well as wide imagination might be the fact that she witnessed her parents being run over on a zebra crossing when she was a child. For some years, Olivia had to live with her aunt and support herself financially. After a complicated childhood she got use to be alone and depend on herself; throughout the novel Olivia demonstrates how comfortable she feels being alone: "Olivia loved travelling alone <...> responsible only for herself." (Fielding, 2004:130). As the years past, Olivia got used to work on her own; she never let her emotions overtake an intellectual thinking. Because of her imagination and precarious situations she usually gets into, Olivia knows that there is no one to help her so she takes the initiative part and dips into the depth of investigation so she could cover new stories.

Besides, as a journalist Olivia Joules has a few strong character features such as fighting for her opinion, acting with men like unachievable woman but apart all that like any other woman, Olivia wishes: "She felt deranged, exhausted, scared and lonely <...> She wanted someone to hold." (Fielding, 2004:67) she wished someone to be next to her, but this necessity itself was not as important in her life whilst there were adventures to deal with. From time to time, Olivia reminds herself that she is complete inside and she does not need a man beside her. This is a typical way of thinking by an evolved woman, or to be precise, by a chick-lit genre heroine. Moreover, Olivia did not like her body shape but contrary to Bridget, who did not

manage to fix this issue, Olivia got into the melting-pot and became a new person. This metamorphosis brought a new understanding into Olivia's life; she started using her body as a weapon to manipulate men and reach her aims. In addition, the twenty-first century women are the masters of the appearance representation in the show and beauty industry, in order to seek career heights using the outer beauty.

Since Olivia witnessed her family run over the zebra crossing, the world is no longer a safe place for her and thus she knows how to take care of herself. Like an agent Olivia carries a spy kit (pepper-spray pen, spyglass, hat pin) with her in case somebody might attack her, and she also keeps weapons in her wonderbra: "She had plenty of weaponry in the Wonderbra." (Fielding, 2004:297). In addition, after her parents death she set high dreams of journalists' profession and she works hard to reach them. Moreover, the reason of Olivia's false name might be chosen as a pseudonym or it could be the sense of insecurity; it seems that Olivia is trying to hide under the fictitious personality so that her real identity – Rachel Pixley, would be safe. Besides, Olivia never cries in front of others, and if she does cry she makes sure to do that in the loo; Olivia has a strong opinion of certain principles and she behaves like a lady in order not to diminish her beliefs. Still, one of the essential beliefs that Olivia carries around is that nobody is interested in her: "*No one is thinking about you; they're thinking about themselves, just like you.*"(Fielding, 2004:39). People of the twenty-first century are strongly affected with self-centredness by the cosmopolitan society and Olivia uses it as a pattern to feel invisible.

Likewise Bridget Jones, Olivia had a list of rules to live by. Every time she got into a hazardous and stressful situation, these rules served her to keep cool: "*1) Never panic. Stop, breathe, think. <...> 9) Be honest and kind. <...>*" (Fielding, 2004:93-94). At first glance, she seems lost and confused on how to act in different circumstances, but when the reader starts to lose hope in her, Olivia gets a brilliant idea to turn the situation upside down. Furthermore, the female character is very determined on her life vision, journalists' future the overall image of herself: "*I'm going to be complete <...> I'm going to work out my own good and bad. I'm going to be a top journalist or an explorer and do something that matters.*"(Fielding, 2004:14). Indeed, Olivia managed to implement her ambitions with her tactical and brave actions; there were times when Olivia played a key role in giving orders to others and was a surefooted figure even though under the tough persons' mask there is a very vulnerable woman scared to trust others.

Moreover, Olivia has a set of characteristic traits needed for a professional writer; she is always curious about the events that are happening around her and is keen to explore new places, to cover various topics: "She was a self-made woman, travelling the world in search of meaning

and adventure.” (Fielding, 2004:48). Olivia’s imagination creates new possible theories about certain things, and she does everything to investigate on them deeper. As a writer, Olivia fails to meet the deadlines; finds wickedness behind the scenes of each fashion story she covers, also she dismisses others’ opinions and instead follows her own intuition which turns out to be right. Furthermore, as a skilled journalist, Olivia has understanding in languages such as French, Spanish and German; this indicates Olivia’s educational knowledge and respect to other languages and most importantly it had helped her in various complicated situations.

In addition, the idea that the author of the novel – Fielding, wanted to render was that a woman is capable of doing the impossible. At the beginning of the story, Olivia Joules - is presented as a woman affected by her imagination in a negative way; she is always worried that something suspicious is going on around her, also that people who surround her are not trust worthy and this makes her neurotic. All this changes as the story evolves and Olivia’s imagination becomes the inspiration aspect to climb the social ladder, work as an international publisher and encourages her to undertake brave actions and control the developing events. Finally, we can claim that the author’s attitude towards her heroine is highly supportive; the woman, in this case Olivia, after facing huge challenges during the childhood, is able to gain enough strength to live on her own, earn money and inspire other women with her courageous and brave decisions while listening to her intuition.

In conclusion, it is clear that Olivia Joules is a strong willed and self-assured female writer affected by hurtful past experiences which made her distrustful of others. However, she was able to proof her suspicious thoughts on Pierre Ferramo’s identity, play the spy role in the investigation by believing in her overactive imagination which turned out not to be so much overactive. Imagination and journalism was the main factor which led her to adventures and prompted her to fight with injustice. After all the unflattering incidents Olivia encountered, she became smarter, wiser and gained more control whilst facing the unexpected situations. Furthermore, writing is the attribute of Olivia’s personality; she is a fearless journalist who finds evil traces in every beauty topic she covers. Even though she fails to meet deadlines and gets distracted from work, she still has the passion and stimulus to search for hazardous situations; she is a true journalist/investigator who writes in a realistic way on the life issues. Finally, it is clearly seen that Olivia chose journalism as a profession because she has big journalistic dreams and so that she could deal with unfairness in her life by writing about them. Olivia looks for adventures and being a journalist shows her being in a right position as she can write and fulfil her life with ventures.

3.2 Revelation Through the Diary Form in *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* by Helen Fielding

The two novels, *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones: the Edge of Reason* written by the British author Helen Fielding, impersonate a heroine already known worldwide – Miss. Bridget Jones. The female reader accepted the fictional character with ease because Bridget Jones represented a very down to earth, all in a fluster and outgoing personality which instantly attained fellow-feeling from the reader.

Firstly, it is noteworthy that the novels are written in a diary form. The narrator – Bridget Jones, talks in the first voice about her personal life events and daily concerns whilst dialoguing with the reader and presenting the real depiction of how miserably, imperfect and insecure women sometimes are. Each day of Bridget's life starts with the consolidated return on the units she has used: cigarettes, alcohol, calories and other unessential dramatic events: "Saturday 18 February. 9st, alcohol units 4, cigarettes 6, calories 2746, correct lottery numbers 2(v.g.)" (Fielding, 1996:53). While reading the novel, any woman can identify herself with writer – Bridget Jones because of the current contemporary concerns they have in common.

Even though Bridget is a middle aged woman who lives alone, has a job in a publishing industry and is responsible for herself, she still seems to be confused and lost inside; throughout the first novel and its' sequel Bridget tries to reach an inner poise: "Remembering the Party Objectives, though, I breathed in deeply through my nose, murmured, 'inner poise' and pushed through the doors back into the party." (Fielding, 1996:99). Indeed, in the diary Bridget emphasizes how hardly she tries to use 'inner poise' as a pattern to calm down and not to get into the drama too promptly. Furthermore, from the others' viewpoint, small incidents such as applying make-up wrongly, making inappropriate comments, being ham-fisted, etcetera makes Bridget look like an awkward and unwise person. Furthermore, because of the boyfriends' absence in her life, witnessing conflicts between her parents and taking care of them and the work dissatisfaction makes her feel depressed and confused amongst the inner emotions. Before-mentioned factors Bridget starts writing a personal diary so she could reflect on herself and her life. Besides, Bridget is in a desperate search for a boyfriend. She easily follows others' influence and even if she does not need a boyfriend so urgently, the advices and instigations she receives from her mother makes her feel petty of herself because she is incapable to find a man: "Bridget, <...> if you'd had something a bit more bright and cheerful on at the turkey curry buffet Mark Darcy might have shown a bit more interest. Nobody wants a girlfriend who

wanders round looking like someone from Auschwitz, darling” (Fielding, 1996:130-131). At some point, it seems that the missing part of her life is a man’s absence, or else her existence would be fulfilled; Bridget is domestic type of a woman and family is more important to her than a career. Finally writing a diary gives her opportunity to review on essential things in her life and also to consider on her decisions and their outcomes.

Bridget attempts to improve her life by trying to quit smoking, setting up New Year’s resolutions and going to an athletic club, however, she fails them all. Simultaneously, she also relies on self-help books thinking that it will help to gain self-assurance, will provide answers to her failing relationships and gain an emotional strength, but after all the failing attempt she has to admit that self-help books do not help and the needed lesson is gained through the life experience. Furthermore, Bridget relies on her friends as a help tool as well: “Very black day. Jude, Shaz and I went emergency shopping and have all come back here to get ready for night on town, designed by the girls to keep my mind off things. By 8 p.m. things were already getting squiffy. ‘Mark Darcy’s gay,’ Jude was declaring.” (Fielding, 1999:132). whenever something dramatic happens they all gather and share emotional breakdowns, simmering emotions into food and alcohol. Likewise other chick-lit characters Bridget Jones makes her days brighter with the company of close friends. Indeed, Bridget is the kind of person who cannot keep everything to herself and needs someone to talk to whether a person or her. On the whole, by writing a diary and reading self-help books Olivia tries to gain willpower and find answers how to be in a control of oneself.

Furthermore, Bridger Jones like any self-conscious woman has insecurities about herself but her biggest insecurity is her body. Throughout the novel, Bridget has a lack of confidence of her body shape and the importance of presenting her outer beauty to others: “So by a week today will be almost down to target weight so then, with body-bulk thus adjusted, all will need to do is alter texture and arrangement of fat through exercise” (Fielding, 1999:278). Moreover, people around Bridget, especially her mother make various comments about Bridget’s appearance and makes her feel even more pitiful of herself and feel a need to change. Even though Bridget is dependent on various unhealthy habits, she is money and work independent, which is important to woman’s life in the late twentieth century. In general, Bridget Jones is portrayed in a very realistic way pointing out the imperfections of the appearance and everyday failings of a nonfictional person.

In the sequel *Bridget Jones: the Edge of Reason*, Bridget is even more dramatic and chaotic than in the first part of the novel; the diary continues to surprise the reader with Bridget’s

emotional breakdowns, neurotic thoughts and inconsiderate behaviour. Bridget visits Bangkok with Shazzer and their apartment was robbed, and then Bridget was arrested at the police custody for possessing drugs. But for a bright personality as Bridget, even that is not the biggest problem because one of the essential character features is Bridget's optimism: "Good things about being in jail: 1. Not spending any money. 2. Thighs have really gone down <...> 3. Will be good for hair to leave it without washing <...>" (Fielding, 1999:309). In some way everything turns out to be positive and work out to Bridget's benefit. Each time Bridget gets into the danger there are her close friends to help her and get her out of the problem.

Additionally, it could be said that Helen Fielding by creating the heroine – Bridget Jones, managed to portray the typical every girl's life and concerns they face in a present-day world. The author emphasized the relevant contemporary topics such as body insecurity, longing for a boyfriend and love, getting into countless unflattering situations. In general, it could be said that Helen Fielding represented an existent imperfect woman searching for the essence of life and ways to be happy. Moreover, the author presented Bridget Jones in an entertaining and humorous way pointing out the self-deprecating humour; the intention was to demonstrate that laughing from oneself is usual and positive while being conscious of self imperfection.

To sum up, Miss Bridget Jones is a very original fictional character that stepped into the literary world with a big blast and is famous up to nowadays. Bridget's life is as billowy and dramatic just the way her personality is: full of drama, disappointment of self-appearance and unflattering events with other people, searching for equilibrium in her private life as well as in the work area. Throughout the first part of the novel – *Bridget Jones's Diary* and its sequel – *Bridget Jones: the Edge of Reason*, the main heroine keeps surprising the reader with her open-minded and straight forward talking manner which sometimes shocks the reader. The two novels were compelling because of the diary form and the Bridget Jones's indirect dialogue with the reader through which Bridget revealed her bubbly and awkward personality. Besides, the imperfections, pettiness and self-criticism of herself led Bridget to write the personal diary where she could openly reveal her disappointments without fear of being criticised or evaluated negatively and hence to gain willpower. Due to the sincere and open diary genre Bridget was a reliable and recognizable fictional character to the reader.

3.3 Revelation through Acquaintances in *Sex and the City* by Candace Bushnell

Firstly, we would like to start with a few comments about the book itself. *Sex and the City* is the novel, which led to various gossips and caused an unexpected evaluation by the critics and readers. For the first time in the literary world, the novel openly refers to sexual topics. Due to this, the novel became immensely popular and hit the best-seller lists for a few decades in the early twenty-first century. Finally, the novel is based on Candace Bushnell's autobiographical facts and experiences that reflect through the main heroine – Carrie Bradshaw.

To begin with, Carrie Bradshaw (thirty-four years old) is an English journalist from Connecticut who moved to New York to make career in the huge, glamorous literary and fashion world. The novel starts with Carrie's research on sexual matters which was requested from one of the friends. Indeed, Carrie took an observer's position for half the novel because of the investigation on the intimate life matters; as a journalist Carrie was an attentive enquirer whilst participating in conversations with friends and other acquaintances from whom she collected the data.

Additionally, Carrie can be described as an evolving character of the novel because not much is said about her, only a few details about her personal life are revealed. However, once the novel develops, Carrie starts to engage herself more. Carrie's interactive side is displayed through numerous meetings with various friends and other acquaintances, with whom she discusses the intimate and private life aspects. Additionally, writing on the intimate topics makes her ponder on man and woman relationship, to review woman's status in family and search for patterns that make the contemporary woman happy.

Indeed, in Carrie's life friends mean a lot; all the parties she attends, dinners at the restaurants, holidays she goes to – everywhere, her friends accompany her. While in a relationship with Mr. Big, Carrie diminished her friends so she could commit herself to the man she loved. Carrie stopped writing, gave up drinking, parties, and meeting friends and instead stayed at home, prepared dinner and was a loving woman to her man, trying to be the best by all means: "I told Mr. Big I might make him dinner. He's out now, at a cocktail party...<...> It's my new look. Early Stepford wife. <...> I'm trying not to drink." (Bushnell, 2001:215-215) "I promise I'll be sweet. Aren't I being sweet now? See? No more bad mood" (Bushnell, 2001:219).

Throughout the novel, it was emphasized that none of the couples are happily married and that Carrie's relationship with Mr. Big only brought a temporal satisfaction and emotional

fulfilment to her life distracting Carrie from writing. Mr. Big was a supportive man economically but it was not enough for Carrie. Moreover, he helped Carrie to pay for her rent, but never promised her hope for their future, whilst Carrie all the time was waiting for a hope or a promise that one day they will get married and live a happily life.

In addition, it is obvious that whilst being committed to a man, Carrie started to lose her independence; she did not rebel for being controlled by Mr. Big. Besides, for a person with an artistic spirit, it was necessary to realize oneself through writing; it did not take long till Carrie became too confused inside and had to change the way of living, at some point she even asked Mr. Big: "I want to go to an insane asylum" (Bushnell, 2010:242). It is clearly seen that a woman who is self-confident, is able to earn money in order to support her and having such an interactive personality, is more comfortable being single and realization through writing would bring her bigger satisfaction than being in a relationship.

Furthermore, it is also interesting that the main idea that Candace Bushnell wanted to render through the novel *Sex and the City*, is that marriage is not an obligatory thing in contemporary woman's life; woman should enjoy being single, take interest in different things, realize herself as an artist and take an opportunity to explore her sexuality and follow the intrigue that comes along the path. The advising message of being single is perfectly revealed by the last sentence of the story: "Mr. Big is happily married. Carrie is happily single." (Bushnell, 2010:245).

Finally, it could be said that with the novel *Sex and the City*, Candace Bushnell wanted to encourage women to open up and share their experiences in relationship, or private life details, to seek fulfilment through writing. It was an appeal to the female audience that talking about intimate matters is not amoral.

The conclusion could be made that friends and countless meetings with other people is an important part of Carries' life; her emotional fulfilment appears from interacting with a bigger circle of people. Moreover, attending many parties and gathering for a quick lunch is Carries' life - this is what a typical cosmopolitan woman does. Carrie Bradshaw represents a contemporary writer who understands that independence is an essential part of her life and proves that men can be an advantage and not an obligatory detail of a woman's life. Finally, writing is an essential part of Carrie's life; she obtains self-realization through covering on existing issues of contemporary women's life, men and women relationships, contemplating on her personal life matters and trying to find ways on the completeness of woman's existence.

3.4 Women writers' priorities in *Four Blondes* by Candace Bushnell

The novel *Four Blondes* is about four prominent women in New York City making their way to a career eminence. For our research, we will analyse the two female characters: Winnie Dieke and Minkey. Both women are journalists based in America working in the literary industry. The analysis will be carried out on the aspect of priorities made by the two female writers.

Firstly, Winnie Dieke and her husband James Dieke are both well respected in the journalism industry; Winnie graduated from Smith and now covers on the political/style column while James is a Harvard graduate who has had work published in *Sunday Times Magazine*, *The New Republic*, and *The New Yorker*. Winnie is not only a self-obsessed and work-obsessed person who has a bigger passion in her work than her husband; all the marital troubles arise due to Winnie's priorities on work issues and no attention to her spouse.

Furthermore, James and Winnie seem to have similarities such as: "They hate trendy people, television; big – budget movies; commercial <...>." (Bushnell, 2000:100). They are afraid to be different and stand out from the crowd; their marriage is dead but they will not admit it. As the novel develops, Winnie becomes more and more competitive with her husband in the work area: "She often thinks that she is actually better than he (in every way, not just journalism), but he (being a man) has gotten more breaks." (Bushnell, 2000:102). In addition, Winnie is the kind of person who always puts the blame on others denying that there might be an issue with her. It is obvious that Winnie is a person who wants everything to be perfect and in the right place. Since childhood, she always achieved her goals and has had her life in total control. Winnie seeks perfectionism not only in her own life but in James and their relationship.

Winnie often pretends to be too busy at work writing style/political columns so she does not have to listen to his complaints about his failures at work and lack of inspiration to write. Winnie's negative attitude and thoughts toward her husband, competitiveness in the journalism industry could be based on her father's treatment of Winnie when she was younger. Her father made her feel like she was not good enough, he did not understand her and Winnie could not understand why everything she did was wrong. Her notion about men is revealed with these words of hers: "Especially men. What a useless gender <...> she believes they should be eliminated. Aborted. Okay, a few could be allowed to live. But only for their sperm. And they'd have to be excellent specimens." (Bushnell, 2000:155). To sum up, Winnie seeks to be the best as a journalist and compete with her husband because she wants to be treated differently.

On the whole, it is clear that Winnie Dieke is an emotional strong-willed woman who raises her career to the top simultaneously diminishing her role as mother and wife within the family. In addition, the novel represents an unflinching woman who no one wants to be like; the career seeking professional journalist – Winnie is represented in a negative way as though to show the reader that work is not as equally important as family.

Another heroine from the novel *Four Blondes* is Minky – a forty year old journalist from New York City. Throughout almost the whole novel, her name stays unrevealed, and it is just in the last paragraph that the reader gets acquainted with her. Surprisingly, there are no descriptions about Minky's appearance or detailed information about her family, hobbies or previous life.

Minky works as a writer for an American newspaper and gets an assignment to fly to London and research on relationship matters. Moreover, this offer was very appealing to her as she got interested in the new topic to write about and already realized there are no eligible men in Manhattan anymore and it is impossible to get a decent relationship in New York City: "Men in London-Englishmen-well, they're better than American men.<...> They're interested in relationships. They like them. Englishmen are...cozy." (Bushnell, 2000:280). Besides, the main heroine is also disappointed with American society, because it is the cause or in other words a disease of a modern cosmopolitan city that it became difficult to find an honest man in a big city; Manhattan men are aware of temporal relationship benefits, lack of responsibility and indulgence of being single. More to the point, Minky's hopes to find a dream man in England were too exaggerated and she became disappointed after a few relationships with the Englishmen which led her to understand that men from the other continent are no better than the Manhattan men. On the whole, it is a good opportunity for Minky not only to accomplish journalists' assignment but also to compare on male from two continents for her own benefit.

The reader could notice a significant role of feminism in the chapter "Single Process". One of the minor characters – Peter, states, "Englishwomen suffer from this half-baked feminism. They think they're really open about sex, but then – aha – they find out they have the same hang-ups their mothers did" (Bushnell 2000:286). Englishmen have a stereotype of American and English women; Americans care only about the career, once they get into a better position, they become work-obsessed figures alienated from other life spheres and Englishwomen are contrary – they are busy being single, enjoying their lives, care about sexual matters and men.

When the research is done and it is time for Minkey to go back to New York City, she meets a perfect man on the plane whom she has been looking for. He is a successful businessman

who wears Prada trousers and reads *Forbes* magazine, he could be a potential guy to make her fantasies come true. Unfortunately, the reader does not get an opportunity to know what awaits Minky in the future as the story ends when their relationship is successfully developing and the two are getting more acknowledged to each other. In addition, Minky is a woman who seems to maintain her life in a perfect way though she is not completely happy.

There are a few things that connect the two female writers: materialism, relationship issues, and longing for love. The two women writers: Winnie and Minky, are fashionistas who care about their own and others look: “He was tall and dark-haired and slim, and he was wearing Prada trousers <...> Now that’s my type, I thought” (Bushnell, 2000:306) they way they present themselves, also the two women want to be loved even though they act harsh to the people surrounding them. Additionally, not much has been said about the writers’ work itself but the main events are concentrated towards the personal and family life issues. Indeed, emotional and private matters are at the forefront of the novel.

The author of the novel – Candace Bushnell, wanted to portray women characters influenced by the cosmopolitan society and the way they deal with the prevailing issues. New York City is not only a glamorous city but a place of survival for a single, vulnerable women looking for love and career; these two women writers have to work hard to compass their ambitions and work even harder to keep their private lives apart from work area. The main idea of the novel was to emphasize difficulties that women writers face in order to work on their private and career lives. Winnie fails to maintain both spheres: work and family. She finds journalism more important than her private life because she can unfold her personality through work, reveal her competitive side and her wish to be evaluated, as well as render her diversification as she covers political and fashion topics. For Winnie, writing is indeed the sphere of great importance where she can seek acknowledgement through her articles, whilst Minky writes without a desire for accomplishments but in order to earn money and have a good time.

3.5 *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf as a Consciousness Raising Essay

Firstly, we should point out that it is considerably important to emphasize the uniqueness of the essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929). The essay was published in the early twentieth century by Virginia Woolf which disclosed the essential missing element for women lives – freedom. The way Virginia Woolf presented her ideas in the essay had broken the typical way of thinking and created a discontentment among men. In the early twentieth century women audience already started to behave differently and roughly, occupy men work places and demand their political as well as social rights and V. Woolf through the essay spread encouragement and support for those women.

One of the key points that the author wanted to emphasize in her work is that for a woman to access to education was almost impossible. Up to the late twenties, Universities were mainly open for men. The upper class women had an opportunity to gain the education at home with the private tutors but for the poor women education was almost impossible. Besides, the opposite sex thought of women as the incapable and unwise creatures: “Are they capable of education or incapable? Napoleon thought them incapable.” (Woolf, 1991:31). Through the centuries women were highly diminished and there was no support for them to demand for education. Because of the lack of knowledge in certain areas, women were not able to neither occupy well-paid positions nor write literary pieces of their own. This was the fundamental cause which delayed women’s improvement to their social and intellectual lives.

Bearing in mind the importance of this essay in the fiction world, it would be right to say that up to the end of the twentieth century, the literary world was conquered by men, and women were not let in this area whatsoever, traditionally men were the writers. According to the author, it is obvious that there were two major criteria necessary for writing – money and a room. Poverty was highly felt throughout the essay; it is obvious if a woman did not have money – she could not pay for publishing her works, support herself or live separately from her husband. A woman without money does not have the freedom of choice and is not independent. Moreover, private space for a woman writer was an essential thing but up to the end of the twentieth century a woman was not given that advantage: “If a woman wrote, she would have to write in the common sitting-room.<...>”women never have an half hour ...that they can call their own” – she was always interrupted.” (Woolf, 1991:72). According to Virginia Woolf, a woman had to hide

her writings because she did not have her own room and could be caught in the process of writing.

In addition, it is noticeable that there are many differences between male and female fiction works which V. Woolf discussed in her essay. It was not only lack of tradition or lack of credit on oneself that did not let women to write high quality fiction but it was the manner, the structure of the sentence that differed from male way of writing: “Indeed, since freedom and fullness of expression are of the essence of the art, such a lack of tradition, such a scarcity and inadequacy of tools, must have told enormously upon the writing of women.” (Woolf, 1991:83). In general women did not have the example of how a woman should write; there was an absence of female works in the literary area. Furthermore, V. Woolf claims that even a form of the epic or of the poetic play suits a man and not a woman; it could be said that the sentence structure, form of the writing, style, and etcetera was created by men and women had to write following the already existing patterns. Finally, women mainly wrote novels because comparatively it was a new literary genre: “The novel alone was young enough to be soft in her hands – another reason, perhaps, why she wrote novels.” (Woolf, 1991:83). and the fresh genre was not yet attributed to men so women felt free and right to explore it and hence it settled amongst the female writers.

Additionally, V. Woolf presented the issue of sexual equality in a very comprehensible way by raising the questions: “Why did men drink wine and women water? Why was one sex so prosperous and the other so poor?” (Woolf, 1991:26). Throughout the essay the author emphasized the sexual inequality, that men treat women with inequality. Furthermore, V. Woolf introduced a non-existing fictional character – Shakespeare’s sister. The idea was that it does not matter if a woman – in this case even if she would be Shakespeare’s sister - had the gift to write poetry but still would have been unappreciated and her writings would had been censored because they were written by a female. Indeed, it was believed that any woman could be as clever as Shakespeare was: “<...> it is unthinkable that any woman in Shakespeare’s day should have had Shakespeare’s genius. For genius like Shakespeare’s is not born among labouring, uneducated, servile people.” (Woolf, 1991:52). According to the modernist author, for a man woman served the same function as a mirror; men felt powerful, having rights to do what they want whilst a poor creature – woman - was always at the same intellectual and emotional level without a need to change the situation: “The looking-glass vision is of supreme importance because it changes the vitality; it stimulates the nervous system. Take it away and man may die, like the drug fiend deprived of his cocaine” (Woolf, 1991:38-39). Male hierarchy oppressed

women from any possible decision making. They 'eased the life' for themselves so women did not have to worry about any other matter except domestic chores and caring about children. After diminishing woman and giving her lectures about her insignificant existence, men were in a safer position. Woman's devaluation because she is female was highly emphasized so that men could feel powerful and meaningful in women's life.

However, whilst analysing other chick-lit novels, we talked about the author's attitude towards the female heroines they created - it is difficult to apply the same model to this essay bearing in mind that Virginia Woolf renames herself as Mary Beton/Seton or Carmichael and is presenting her own thoughts, beliefs and experiences. Still, it is possible to disclose some important moments from the author – character perspective. From the straightforward and courageous manner of writing, Virginia Woolf through the essay's heroine presents her own anger of the situation that women were in, she motivated women to go to universities, to travel and get acknowledged with other countries, traditions and cultures and then write about it. However, it is clearly seen that the author as well as the heroine are representatives of the feminist thought and support the feminist movement itself. It is necessary to turn attention to the main idea and purpose of the essay. The aim was to spread enlightenment amongst the female audience in the early twentieth century. In general, we can claim that feminist movement influenced women to seek higher matters for their lives, determine goals and make themselves emotionally self-assured. Even though women were severely dependant on men, they still tried to increase the moral and emotional values.

On the whole, V. Woolf created a masterpiece of the modernist period by emphasizing on the essential moments of women's life, and giving them support to change the situation to their benefit. V. Woolf was an immense encouragement to those women who wanted to write fiction but were constricted by traditionally dominating male works; after reading the essay women of the twentieth century gained more self-assurance to make changes in their lives. Until the twentieth century writing was not accepted as a tradition and women did not have the ability to write and publish their works. In addition, the essay *A Room of One's Own* surveys through women writers' history emphasizing consciousness rising of the prevailing situation, it also observes the obstacle women writers encountered in order to write, and it represents women writers' images from different centuries and encourages them to change the situation because it is socially not appropriate that women's image in the literary works was portrayed negatively and for many centuries women writers were constricted from writing.

3.6 The Images of Writing Women in English Literature: the Comparative Aspect

We can start the comparison from the authors' purpose of writing such literary pieces. The main idea rendered by Candace Bushnell and Helen Fielding was that women are no longer dependent on men, can write novels for entertainment and pleasure, they are the masters of their own lives and the decisions they make, women seek career and look for the life fulfilment through different pattern. Indeed, women of the postmodernism have a freedom of choice and the freedom to write and publish their works. Moreover, contemporary authors wanted to show that women are stronger emotionally, self-conscious and self-assured, and most importantly they are independent. Whilst, Virginia Woolf through her essay *A Room of One's Own* wanted to indicate that the female gender was affected by a psychological oppression and devaluation of men hence it affected their intellectual improvement. Moreover, with the essay, the modernist author motivated women to leave behind all the sorrow and anger and start writing, enter the universities, travel, explore new cultures and traditions. The three authors we are talking about inspired and encouraged women in their own unique way spreading a certain message to the reader. Up to the end of the twentieth century, women were discouraged to be artists; the modernist essayist Virginia Woolf opposed this idea by writing her own work through which she motivated women to write.

Furthermore, Virginia Woolf while living in the late nineteenth – early twentieth century was able to contemplate on the future woman's status and describe it in a perfect way: "Moreover, in a hundred years, I thought, reaching my own doorstep, women will have ceased to be the protected sex. Logically they will take part in all the activities and exertions that were once denied them."(Woolf, 1991:43). It could be said that, everything Virginia Woolf had said a hundred years ago has happened. The emancipation of women has reached its peak; finally women have reached recognition of sexual equality, the freedom of choice and the ability to write and to reach the career eminence. The heroines of contemporary novels present female writers who are outgoing, making money and enjoying their lives but at the same time facing difficulties to work on the private matters and career because it is difficult to be in a control of the two different areas.

Indeed, the situation in which women writers of two periods were in is very different. Women writers of the previous centuries had to face various obstacles starting with already mentioned lack of money, lack of private space but also with the lack of freedom of the mind as well. The contemporary authors have no previously mentioned obstacles in order to live and

write; but nowadays writers find difficulties in lack of inspiration, lack of moral values and alienation from mankind. The most common topics contemporary authors discuss in their novels are the prevailing woman's issues of a daily life, thoughts on the man and woman relationship, and emotional breakdowns. Since women writers are not constricted from writing they do it for the sake of entertainment, their novels are amusing and gripping hence people read it for pleasure.

Additionally, male writers of the early previous century believed that women cannot write serious literary genres, especially poetry, but only romance or novels; women did not have tradition behind them and it took a long time till they started to write other literary genres without fear of being negatively evaluated by family, friends and society as a whole. There were too many differences between the male and female way of writing: sentence structure, form and ideas the two genders carried out. At first, women writers thought that they should follow the prevailing patterns, but as the time passed they started writing poetry as well. Nowadays, the writing style, the manner and expression is more lively and free and the authors are not squeezed in the frames of how to write – it depends on their own choice.

To sum up the final sub-chapter, there are numerous differences between the fictional characters reflected by Candace Bushnell and Helen Fielding in chick-lit novels and Virginia Woolf's characters in the essay, even though they all are writers on female topics. Furthermore, most importantly there is a big distance in values between the two periods. It can be said that women writers in the early twentieth century wrote literary pieces in order to spread education among women and earn money; they created unique literary works containing worth nothing and deep ideas, whilst contemporary writers write novels for entertainment and pleasure and most importantly to solve contemporary problems of women's self-identity. On the whole, due to the great distance in the thought and values conveyed through chick-lit novels and the modernist essay, the images of women writers can be seen in a different light.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Each of Candace Bushnell's and Helen Fielding's novels marks female characters that are significant to the late twentieth – early twenty-first century women. Bushnell and Fielding are changing the way female characters are seen in films, television, and books. Contrary to the contemporary heroines are those reflected by Virginia Woolf; those women were of a high demand for education, equal sexual rights, freedom of choice and possibility to write fiction.

Following the research, we can draw the following conclusions:

1. Feminist approach is of high importance for the Bachelor Thesis as it reviews women's status in the previous centuries emphasizing male hierarchy, female writers' images portrayed in the male literary works and women's constriction from literature, whereas postfeminist approach investigates the third wave feminists' ideas, the obstacles such as predominance of male works in fiction, difficulties to write new genres except romance that female writers encountered during the postfeminism period. Finally, due to the postfeminist approach we observed the emergence of chick-lit genre and its' features in the literary world in the late twentieth century.
2. In the novels written by the chosen contemporary writers, the image of women writers is exposed in three ways – image which reveals through: imagination in the novel *Olivia Joules and the Overactive Imagination*, consciousness raising in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*, and *A Room of One's Own* as well as relations with family/friends/boyfriend in *Sex and the City* and *Four Blondes*.
3. Olivia Joules is a self-assured female writer affected by a number of hurting past experiences. However, she is able to achieve her goals by believing in her overactive imagination which turned out to be not so much overactive. Imagination and journalist's profession are the main factors which lead Olivia to adventures and prompt her to fight with injustice. Olivia is a fearless journalist who finds evil traces in every beauty topic that she covers. Moreover, writing is the essential matter for travelling and facing hazardous situations. Finally, being a journalist shows her being in a right position because at the same time she can write and fulfil her life with ventures.
4. The form of a personal diary which is applied in the novels *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* by Helen Fielding openly reveals the main heroines' relationship ups and downs, significance on the family, reliance on friends and concerns of her appearance. The main idea rendered by Fielding through the fictional character Bridget Jones, is that imperfection exists in real life as well as in literary world, and the search for balance takes

various approaches. In addition, Bridget chooses to write not in a public genre but in an introspective, personal one, a diary, in order to portray herself and openly reveal her disappointments without fear of being criticised or evaluated negatively, and hence to gain willpower. Due to the sincere and open diary form, Bridget was a reliable and recognizable fictional character to the reader.

5. Friends, parties and countless meetings with other people is an important part of a typical cosmopolitan woman's life, in this case – Carrie Bradshaw's life. Carrie Bradshaw represents a contemporary writer driven by an inner stimulus, who covers feminine topics such as fashion and private life moments. In addition, the writing process is an indispensable mean of Carrie's life. Carrie obtains self-realization through covering on existing issues of contemporary women's life, men's and women's relationships, contemplating on her personal life matters and trying to find answers on the completeness of woman's existence.
6. The two women journalists Winnie and Minkey from the novel *Four Blondes* have different priorities in their lives. The novel represents the contemporary cosmopolitan women with the choice between career and personal lives. The two spheres always overlap each other and the novel unfolds how Winnie and Minky manage to work on them. For Winnie, writing is indeed the sphere of great importance where she can actualize herself, seek acknowledgement, to reveal competitiveness and diversification of her personality, whilst Minky writes without desire for accomplishments but in order to earn money and to have a good time.
7. Virginia Woolf created a masterpiece of the modernism period, *A Room of One's Own*, by emphasizing the essential moments of women's history, and giving them support to change the situation to their benefit. The personality of Woolf was a big encouragement to those women who wanted to write fiction but were constricted by dominating male works. The female writers in the essay are represented facing difficulties to write and deprived of the social life.
8. There are many differences between the heroines reflected by Woolf and contemporary chick-lit heroines even though they all are writers on female topics. It can be said that women writers in the early twentieth century wrote literary pieces in order to enlighten female readers and earn money; they created unique literary works containing worth noting and deep ideas, whilst contemporary writers write novels for entertainment, pleasure and most importantly to review on contemporary problems of women's self-identity. On the whole, due to the great time and social distance in the thought and values conveyed through chick-lit novels and the modernistic essay, the images of women writers can be seen in a different light.

V. SUMMARY

The Image of Writing Women: the Comparative Aspect on Women's Literature in English

Key words: writing women, image, modernism, feminism, postfeminism, chick-lit, Helen Fielding, Candace Bushnell, Virginia Woolf, *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *Sex and the City*, *A Room of One's Own*.

The object of the research is the image of writing women of the two periods which is revealed in novels written by Helen Fielding and Candace Bushnell as well as Virginia Woolf's essay. In the novels written by the contemporary writers, the image of women writers is revealed in three ways – image which reveals through: imagination in the novel *Olivia Joules and the Overactive Imagination* by Helen Fielding, consciousness raising in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* by Helen Fielding, and Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own* as well as issues with family/friends/boyfriend's in *Sex and the City* and *Four Blondes* by Candace Bushnell.

The aim of the research is to reveal the images of writing women in the novels written by Candace Bushnell and Helen Fielding and compare them with the writing women's images in Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own*.

The objectives of the research:

1. To review the situation of feminism in the early twentieth century;
2. To describe the emergence of chick-lit genre in the literary world;
3. To analyze chick-lit novels representing contemporary writing women;
4. To analyze the images of writing women in Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own*;
5. To carry out the comparative analysis of writing women's images in the essay *A Room of One's Own* and the images in chick-lit novels.

Research methods: the comparative method is of high significance to the Bachelor Thesis and it was applied in order to compare the images of the writing female characters in fiction of different periods; the postfeminist approach was used in order to characterize the situation of women writers in the twentieth century; the feminist theory was used in order to stress the importance of feminism as a political activity for women writers, and to evaluate women's images in fiction of earlier periods.

The novels written by Candace Bushnell and Helen Fielding reveal the contemporary cosmopolitan female writers. Each of the novels emphasizes sexual equality, freedom of choice

and woman's emancipation. Olivia is a fearless journalist who finds evil traces in every beauty topic that she covers. Moreover, writing is the essential matter for travelling and facing hazardous situations. The other fictional character – Bridget Jones chooses to write not in a public genre but in an introspective, personal one, a diary, in order to reflect on herself, openly reveal her disappointments without a fear to be criticised or evaluated negatively and, hence, to gain willpower. One more chick-lit character – Carrie Bradshaw – represents a contemporary writer driven by an inner stimulus, who covers feminine topics such as fashion and private life moments. For Carrie, the writing process is an indispensable mean – the essential part of Carrie's life. Carrie obtains self-realization through covering on existing issues of contemporary women's life, men and women relationships, contemplating on her personal life matters and trying to find ways to completeness of woman's existence. Furthermore, for the next heroine, Winnie, writing is the greatly important sphere where she can actualize herself, seek acknowledgement through her articles, also to reveal her competitiveness and diversification, whilst Minky writes without desire for accomplishments but in order to earn money and to have a good time. Whereas Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own* distinguishes the substantial moments of women's complicated period in the social sphere, living conditions and lack of support for female writers in different centuries. The personality of Woolf was a big encouragement to those women who wanted to write fiction but were constricted by dominating and acknowledged male works. The female writers in the essay are represented facing difficulties to write and deprived of the social life.

Women writers in the early twentieth century wrote literary pieces in order to enlighten female readers and earn money; they created unique literary works containing worth noting and deep ideas, whilst contemporary writers write novels for entertainment, pleasure and, most importantly, to survey contemporary problems of women's self-identity. On the whole, due to the great time and social distance in the thought and values conveyed through chick-lit novels and the modernistic essay, the images of women writers can be seen in a different light.

VI. SANTRAUKA

Rašančių moterų įvaizdis: moterų literatūros anglų kalba lyginamasis aspektas

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: rašančios moterys, įvaizdis, modernizmas, feminizmas, postfeminizmas, *chick-lit*, Helena Fielding, Candace Bushnell, Virginija Woolf, *Bridžitos Džones dienoraštis*, *Seksas ir miestas*, *Savas kambarys*.

Tyrimo objektas – dviejų laikotarpių rašančių moterų įvaizdis, kuris pateiktas Helenos Fielding ir Candacės Bushnell romanuose bei Virginijos Woolf esė *Savas kambarys*. Šiuolaikinių autorių romanuose rašytojų moterų įvaizdis atskleistas trim aspektais: įvaizdis atsiskleidžia per vaizduotę romane *Olivija Džoules ir aktyvi vaizduotė*, sąmonėjimas *Bridžitos Džouns dienoraštyje* bei *Bridžitos Džouns dienoraštis: Ties proto riba*, taip pat Virginijos Woolf esė *Savas kambarys* ir galiausiai – per santykius su šeima, draugais, vaikinų romanuose *Seksas ir miestas* ir *Keturios blondinės*.

Tyrimo tikslas yra atskleisti rašytojų moterų įvaizdį Candacės Bushnell ir Helenos Fielding romanuose ir palyginti jį su Virginijos Woolf pateiktu rašytojų moterų įvaizdžiu esė *Savas Kambarys*.

Tyrimo uždaviniai:

1. Apžvelgti feminizmo situaciją dvidešimtajame amžiuje;
2. Aprašyti *chick-lit* žanro pasirodymą literatūroje;
3. Išanalizuoti *chick-lit* romanus reprezentuojančius šiuolaikines rašytojas;
4. Išanalizuoti moterų rašytojų įvaizdžius Virginijos Woolf esė *Savas kambarys*;
5. Palyginti rašančių moterų įvaizdžius Virginijos Woolf esė *Savas kambarys* su rašytojų moterų įvaizdžiais *chick-lit* romanuose.

Tyrimo metodai: lyginamasis metodas buvo taikomas siekiant palyginti moterų rašytojų įvaizdžius skirtingais laikotarpiais. Postfeministinė literatūros kritika taikyta siekiant apibūdinti moterų rašytojų situaciją dvidešimto amžiaus pradžioje. Feminizmo teorija naudota pabrėžti feminizmo kaip politinio judėjimo svarbą rašytojoms ir įvertinti moterų rašytojų įvaizdžius literatūros kūriniuose.

Candacės Bushnell ir Helenos Fielding romanai vaizduoja šiuolaikines kosmopolitiškas moteris rašytojas. Kiekvienas romanas pabrėžia lyčių lygybės, pasirinkimo laisvės bei moters emancipacijos svarbą. Pirmiausia, Olivija yra bebaimė žurnalistė, kuri rašydama straipsnius pajunta blogio pėdsakus kiekvienoje aprašomoje grožio temoje. Be to, rašymas yra esminis Olivijos kelionių bei rizikingų nuotykių pretekstas. Kita personažė Bridžita Džouns nusprendžia

rašyti ne viešo žanro tekstą, bet savistabos dienoraščio žanrą, kad galėtų į save pažvelgti kritiškai, atvirai atskleisti nusivylimus be baimės būti sukritikuotai ar nepalankiai įvertintai, taip pat įgauti valios stiprybės. Dar viena veikėja – Kerė Bradšo – atspindi šiuolaikinę rašytoją, vedamą vidinio akstino kūrybai, kuri rašo apie tokias moteriškas temas kaip mada bei intymusis gyvenimas. Rašymas yra svarbi bei nepakeičiama Kerės gyvenimo dalis; veikėja save realizuoja rašydama apie iškilusias problemas šiuolaikinės moters gyvenime, moterų ir vyrų santykius, pergaltvodama savo išgyvenimus bei ieškodama atsakymo į moters egzistencijos pilnatvės klausimą. Dar kitai veikėjai Winnie rašymas yra svarbi gyvenimo sritis, kurioje ji gali realizuoti save siekdama savęs rašytojos pripažinimo, taip pat norėdama pademonstruoti konkurencingumą bei įvairumą, kai tuo tarpu Minky dirba rašytoja dėl malonumo ir tam, kad praturtėtų, o ne siektų laimėjimų. Priešingai, Virginijos Woolf esė *Savas kambarys* pabrėžiami esminiai momentai iš moterų socialiai sudėtingo laikotarpio, jų gyvenimo sąlygos bei kliūtys moterims rašyti. Woolf kūryba buvo didelis paskatinimas toms moterims, kurios norėjo rašyti grožinę literatūrą, bet buvo suvaržytos vyraujančių vyriškosios lyties kūrinių dominavimo ir vertinimo. Esė moterys rašytojos pavaizduotos susiduriančios su kliūtimis rašyti bei atskirtos nuo socialinio gyvenimo.

Galima teigti, kad dvidešimtojo amžiaus pradžioje moterys rašytojos rašė literatūrinius kūrinius norėdamos skleisti švietimą tarp skaitytojų bei tuo pačiu praturtėti. Jos sukūrė nepaprastus literatūrinius kūrinius pasižyminčius giliomis idėjomis vertomis dėmesio, kai tuo tarpu šiuolaikinės rašytojos rašo romanus dėl pramogos, malonumo ir svarbiausia, norėdamos apžvelgti šiuolaikinės moters identiteto problemas. Apibendrinant galima teigti, kad dėl didelio laiko ir socialinio atstumo tarp aktualios minties raiškos bei vertybių sistemų *chick-lit* romanų bei modernistinės esė atvejais rašytojų moterų įvaizdis atsiskleidžia skirtingais aspektais.

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VIII. ANNOTATION

Erika Žemaitytė, The Image of Writing Women: the Comparative Aspect on Women's Literature in English. *Bachelor's Thesis*, academic adviser Assist. Monika Gruslytė, Šiauliai University, Department of History and Theory of Literature, 2012, 45 p.

IX. ANOTACIJA

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