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„Transatlantic observations by European minds: Social Institutions
and Gender Roles explored in Kemble's, Martineau's, and
Bremer's travelogues to the ante-bellum American South“

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1. Introduction

The following master thesis will concern non-fictional travel narratives from the 19th century written by the Swede Fredrika Bremer, and the Englishwomen Harriet Martineau, and Fanny Kemble. Each of the authors travelled to America sometime between 1832-1852. The motivation for analyzing them together is that they addressed similar topics such as slavery, women's position in society, and gender roles. Hence, a comparative analysis will illustrate that they rejected racial ideologies of the 19th century, and that they all contributed towards women's advancement in society. The purpose of this paper is to shed new light upon their texts. Consequently, I suggest that the texts analyzed are more than just travel narratives, in fact, their legacies aided the abolitionist cause during the American Civil War, and the persistent challenging of normative gender roles contributed toward improvements for women in society, as well as encouragement for future feminist scholars. Firstly, the paper will introduce some general characteristics of travel writing in the 19th century. Secondly, each author will be discussed separately within a separate chapter. Lastly, a comparative textual analysis will illustrate that the three authors drew similar conclusions although they did not collaborate, and that they shared various opinions concerning social institutions.

2. Travel writing in the 19th century

Collections of travels to far-away countries are an old genre that is still very relevant in today's society (Bradbury 5). A widely shared opinion is that the text type gained importance during the Renaissance, which is known to be an era of exploration (Bradbury 6). At that time, travel writing was an adventurous, mystical, and intriguing way of writing, since it could offer insights into unknown territories where most people could never have gone themselves (Seed 1). Significantly, at the time traveling was something that took a lot of time and effort, and many people were even too afraid to undertake longer journeys. Consequently, before the invention of airplanes, cars, and even trains for some part of the 19th century, traveling was not necessarily considered leisure. It was generally considered risky to travel, and therefore more men than women went on longer trips.

One can assume that travel writing gained importance, since people who did not travel themselves still wanted to know of foreign places. Some travelers kept diaries or wrote letters that they later published, whereas some people used their impressions of travels to write fictional works. Additionally, writers who had not traveled themselves also chose to write fictional travel narratives. For instance, as early as 1719 the first edition of *Robinson Crusoe* was published, and was followed by numerous similar narratives concerning travels, adventure, survival under extreme circumstances, and contact with indigenous people.

The guidebook emerged as a genre, which promoted traveling. As early as 1810 Wordsworth published a *Guide to the Lakes*, which was one of the first guidebooks of a particular region. Approximately some thirty years later guidebooks changed their intended audience. Wordsworth had written for an educated upper-class audience (Wordsworth 1). The later guidebooks attempted to include middle class readers, and therefore included sights that were not considered high culture (Seed 8).

David Seed (9) says that the guidebook that existed in the 19th century was already problematic, since it deprived the travellers of an open mind. Eager people who wanted to travel well prepared, could read guides at home to ensure that they would visit authentic sights, stay at the best hotels, and eat at the right restaurants. In other words, Seed (9) argues that a guidebook delivers strong impressions, which are usually transmitted and accepted by the reader as the truth.

The industrial revolution enabled more traveling. The most substantial invention of the 19th century is said to be the railway (Hobsbawm 60). The locomotive changed the aspects of traveling completely. Journeys could be made a great deal faster, and with more passengers traveling simultaneously. However, some say that it also changed the perception of traveling negatively (Youngs 10). Travelers described that they felt disconnected from the nature and the passing landscape. They would hardly notice what they saw and lost a part of the travel experience that had been inevitable before the railroad. Some scholars also claim that trains made traveling a passive activity, since the previous active traveler turned into a mere passenger, who did not need to undertake any actions to reach his goals. In other words, traveling went from being a physically demanding activity to being a passive process (Youngs 8). However,

viewed from an economic perspective, the trains ultimately enabled mass tourism, which is said to have originated in the 19th century (Youngs 9).

In the 19th century, travelling was something that not everyone could afford. Additionally, at least at the beginning of the century, travelling was combined with large health risks and great costs. This resulted in more men traveling than women. However, in the 19th century several women undertook longer journeys (Cox 103). John Cox writes in his book *Traveling South: travel narratives and the construction of American Identity* (2005) that he does not wish to narrow travel literature down to accounts by men. Cox writes that women at that time were strongly associated with the domestic sphere, and when they traveled they were given the opportunity to explore other domestic situations, which they undoubtedly compared to their own. Moreover, one could say that traveling became something of an emancipation act for women. It was a chance to explore and broaden knowledge (Cox 104). Cox (103) writes that

Many women travelers used their writings to investigate the domestic spaces of the society and region to which they traveled, which often offered them an alternative to their own model of the household. So while nineteenth-century American women left their domestic spaces when they traveled, they situated themselves both in relation to their original ideal of “home” and to their new, temporary domestic situations wherever they were traveling.

It is Cox’s opinion that women were able to observe scenes similar to their own but somewhere else. He also points out that the concept of home and its cultural connotations have crucial importance in travel writing and particularly in the collections of female writing. He says that ‘home’ did not necessarily have to be a house or a building, but could refer to a state, a region, a village, or something similar (Cox 104).

The question arises if women who traveled and narrated their journeys actually stepped out of stereotypical roles or mainly reinforced them elsewhere. Generally speaking, women would tend to write more of domestic matters than of political or geographical ones. However, some scholars even claim that their possible emancipation in other countries were at the cost of others. McEvan (11) wrote that “white women travellers during the nineteenth century were, in many and varying

ways, complicit in imperialism; their own liberation was facilitated by the oppression of others” (McEvans 11). Scholars seem to have varying opinions about to which extent a woman would set her own beliefs aside while observing. However, all scholars seem to agree that no writer could escape his or her own cultural heritage completely.

Women’s travel writing in the 19th century is an interesting source of information, since it offers insights into the everyday culture and habits of a society. Nonetheless, for a long time scholars were more interested in travel writing by men (Cox 111).

Women’s writing is frequently described as having historical value but not artistic value. Women’s texts are seen as worthy of study for the light they shed on a particular historical juncture rather than for the creative and artistic qualities they exemplify. That is while men’s texts are traditionally valued as crafted products of an individual genius, women’s narratives are seen as “merely” autobiographical or confessional, suggesting that their texts are simply products of the outpouring of emotion (Cox 109).

It is clear that Cox feels that women’s writing has been neglected simply because the texts were written by women. He further says that these opinions provoked people to read female contributions only in regard to the individual women and not to the contexts in which they were writing. However, over the last decade female travel writing has been rediscovered as containing various interesting features and facts. Furthermore, many scholars are beginning to value the paradoxical writing that comes from a sentimental writer. The narratives composed by men were often written from a patriarchal perspective and if one compares and contrasts the narratives from both sexes the picture that comes out in the end will be a lot richer (Cox 106).

The scholar Mary Louise Pratt suggests a division in 19th century travel writing. Her division is not based on gender, but it is suggested that women tended to belong to her second category (Cox 105). Her categories are based upon the type of narration, the topics of the text, and language use. Her first category is called *informational*, and usually includes texts that have an absent and impersonal narrator. The topics of the informational category were usually landscapes or cities. Her second category is called *sentimental* travel narrative. In the second category the narrator commonly describes his or her experience in a foreign place and does not so much offer dates

and numbers (Cox 105). In general, one can say that those authors who applied the informative category probably wanted to illustrate a narrative with several historical facts, whereas the ones who employed the sentimental approach attempted to describe their personal thoughts and ideas.

Sara Mills writes in her influential text *Discourses of difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (14) that travel writing produced by women usually directed its focus on individuals, whereas men tended to write more in general about classes of society, or groups of people. In addition, the *sentimental* writer, according to Pratt's typology, would also often include direct quotes from the people they were writing about, which made the texts more vivid, and allowed the people a voice of their own.

In the 19th century it was fashionable to publish travel writing that read like epistolary novels (Cox 106). Moreover, it is likely that several women chose to write according to this text type to avoid being tested as to how truthful their narratives were. Diaries and letters are text types that allow individual thoughts and conclusions. In addition, they were considered appropriate text types for women. However, it seems that several writers merely chose the genre to be able to publish their writing, and not because they wished to actually send the letters to someone. For instance, Harriet Jacobs, who narrated *Incidents in the life of a slave girl*, told her publisher that she had had no intentions of publishing while she was writing, and that she would rather not publish. On the other hand, whilst reading her text one can see that she had obvious intentions of publishing (Cox 108). In other words, the epistolary genre and diary form enabled a possibility for women to publish.

The historian Roy Bridges said that travel writing gained a lot of influence during the 19th century because of the transatlantic trade. In addition he claims that Europeans still sought conquests outside of Europe. Moreover, he meant that most travels undertaken were not for leisure but to secure more natural assets for their particular nation (Bridges 67). According to Bridges, individual travellers were also affected by the general idea of European superiority. Bridges identifies Britain as the most eager nation when it came to Atlantic trade and the maintaining of colonies.

Vast areas in Canada and Australasia with considerable bodies of settlers as well as the West Indian islands were under direct rule, while large parts of India had come under the control of a handful of East India Company officials. Just as significant was the opportunity Britain's merchants and investors now had to operate in former Spanish and Portuguese territories of the New World and that they were poised to gain access to 500 million possible consumers in China. In addition, West Africa had come to be seen as offering a potentially valuable market; the British government and other agencies were beginning to decide for Africans with whom they should trade and whether they should be permitted to sell slaves. (Bridges 55).

Bridges reports on England's exploitation to explain their reasons for further territorial expansions. Bridge's information gives European travel literature from the 19th century some relevant context. In other words, travel writing from the 19th often directly or indirectly has a colonial and imperial context that should be considered while reading.

Bradbury (3) claims that travel writing creates images of countries that are not necessarily correct. They are rather there to fulfill certain expectations that a traveller bears in mind while going somewhere. One might say that most assumptions and stereotypes that are widely spread today were created a very long time ago. Bradbury (3) says that these travel fantasies or mythologies work in all directions; on the one hand Europeans constructed a view of America as the country of possibilities, and on the other hand Americans viewed Europe as a continent of authentic history. Christopher Mulvey (47) seems to agree, since he wrote that people traveled to reinforce prejudices of other countries, as well as to strengthen their beliefs in their own culture.

Bradbury (4) further argues that many significant descriptions of countries were written by authors who had actually never visited the nations they were writing about. One example of this, according to Geraldine Forbes (13) would be James Mill's: *The history of British India (1817)*. Mill never visited India himself but composed his book on the basis of translations of the influential, however ancient Hindu text: *the code of Manu*. He concluded that India was an underdeveloped, savage, misogynist, and inferior country, crying out for foreign conquest. Mill's book was employed for educational purposes in schools all over Britain for over a century (Forbes 12). Although Mill's book was not supposed to be read as a travelogue, he did what

several people who write travelogues do, namely, take authority over the country they write about. Subconsciously or not, they compare what they see to what they are accustomed to. In his case, his perception of India came to influence the whole of Europe.

As travel writing developed, it was a very broad genre that would basically include all sorts of non-fictional observations of travels (Youngs 15). In later years, various scholars have attempted to define what travel literature is. Tim Young has written a book concerning travel literature from the 19th century called *Filling the blank Spaces* (2006). He has identified motivations behind travel writing.

A number of important characteristics of nineteenth-century travel writing. First, that there were still, in the last quarter of the century, large uncharted parts of the world. Second, that a motivation of travel was to fill those blanks (though they were not, of course, blanks to those who lived there). Third, that once ‘discovered’, many of those places would be exploited for their commercial potential. Fourth, that ideologies of race impacted on the representation of those places, as well as on dealings with those who inhabited them (Youngs 2)

This quote points out that travel narration was by no means objective. On the contrary, each author would consciously or subconsciously analyze his or her impressions based upon their own cultural experience. Young (3) even says that a writer who intends to be objective cannot escape his own heritage while observing. This is a topic that is widely discussed within postcolonial and tourism studies.

Recent criticism has questioned if travel literature should be considered a separate genre. Scholars have usually agreed that travel writing consists of non-fictional accounts of travels. However, the genre has been criticized of being based merely upon loose academic definitions. Hence, the question arose if travel writing is indeed a distinct genre or rather a style of writing (Cox 193). Hooper and Youngs (4) suggest in their article *Perspectives on Travel Writing* (2004) that it is not a genre, but should be employed as a “collective term” to describe fictional and non-fictional texts that focus upon traveling. In other words, they would like to extend the definition of travel writing considerably. The question whether travel literature is a genre or not, does not yet seem to have a final answer.

3. Fredrika Bremer biography

The life story of Fredrika Bremer begins on the 17th of March 1801 in Finland, which at the time belonged to Sweden. Fredrika was the second oldest child preceded by the one year older Charlotte. The family Bremer was wealthy and belonged to the Swedish upper class. In 1804, the family moved to the Swedish capital, since they were afraid that the Russians might attack Finland (Burman 18). Fredrika herself claimed to have no memories of the time in Finland, since she moved away at such a young age..

In 1805 the Bremer family bought Arsta castle outside Stockholm. Although the family was fairly wealthy and could afford a high standard of life, none of the Bremer children described their childhood as pleasant. Mrs. Bremer is said to have distanced herself from her children, leaving the mother role to a governess, who had to discipline the girls strictly. Additionally, Mrs. Bremer was a keen reader of novels, and her greatest wish was that her daughters would be just as well behaved and angelic like as the girls featuring in the narratives she read. Mr. Bremer suffered from depressions and weak health. The family was living on an inherited fortune, and did not achieve anything to benefit their economy; in fact they often spent money carelessly. This fact is often given as a reason for Mr. Bremer's depressions (Burman 20).

Mr. and Mrs. Bremer thought highly of their social standing and the keeping up of social hierarchies. After they moved to Arsta they hardly socialized, since there were hardly any people that would have been appropriate to socialize with in the countryside. As a consequence, the family became quite isolated from the outer world. Fredrika and Charlotte were brought up according to all trends and standards of their era. They were raised to become attractive on the marriage market. They were supposed to know a little bit about everything, focusing on aesthetic skills such as drawing, playing instruments, and dancing. They were also expected to speak several languages. Sadly, science was just found suitable for men. In retrospect, Fredrika often spoke of her frustration about being denied certain areas of education, since they were believed inappropriate for young women (Burman 21).

Until late adolescence Bremer felt misplaced and unhappy. She said at various times that she was not beautiful enough, or feminine enough to please her mother. She had a very distinctive nose that made her feel uneasy whenever she would appear in public. She even mentioned having considered suicide during puberty. Moreover, she often mentioned that her parents would let her and the other siblings starve, since they thought that it would make them more “intellectual”, which was a common thought within aristocracy at the time. Fredrika and her sisters and brother would sit at the dinner table being served water and crackers, while the parents would eat three courses. After dinner Mr. Bremer would read-aloud several hours from whatever book he would find enjoyable. However, novels were strictly forbidden for the children until they were sixteen years old. Consequently, the children often felt as prisoners in their own home surrounded by strict rules, schedules, secluded from society.

Fredrika’s life took a positive turn when she turned fifteen. According to her mother, fifteen was the age that was appropriate for a girl to become a woman. Bremer was allowed normal portions of food, more education, and she was allowed to read novels. Reaching womanhood also meant going through a lot of religious education taught by a protestant priest, who encouraged Fredrika and her sister not to question what he taught, but simply to accept it as the one and only truth. Bremer found consolation and security within the protestant church. She remained religious throughout her life and she described her strong faith as a way out of the darkness that had formerly ruled her life (Burman 39).

In 1821 Mr. Bremer took his family on a trip to Germany and then to France. It was a rare occasion that young Swedish ladies would be taken on grand tours before their real debut in society. Hence, several families showed open dislike and jealousy against Fredrika and her sister when they returned from their trip.

The journey in itself taught Fredrika a lot about the world. She was overwhelmed by her impressions after having spent most of her life on one single estate. In Germany they visited Göttingen and its famous University. In a letter, Bremer admitted to having been envious that she was not allowed to study there. She visited the library, but said that since she was not a man there was no sense in her reading those books

anyway (Burman 43). The family continued their journey to Paris over the winter where they stayed in a fashionable hotel before returning to Sweden.

As an unmarried woman, Bremer could not have her own residence, but she was able to visit and travel between relatives and friends. Her stays grew longer, and Bremer described this as her chance of getting away from home. There had been offers of marriage, however, all based upon convenience, and her father had agreed to none.

In 1831 Bremer began to exchange letters with a Mr. Böcklin, who was a protestant clergyman and intellectual. Their initial relationship was based upon philosophical interest and Bremer's need of a teacher. It is likely that he proposed to Bremer the first time in 1832 although this cannot be confirmed. Bremer rejected him several times although she did not seem indifferent to him. During her close friendship with Böcklin, Bremer also became very close to the Countess Hedda Wrangel. The Countess was known for her beauty and took Bremer under her wings because of her intelligent mind. Fredrika's sister Charlotte disapproved of their close friendship, which led to speculations if their acquaintance was also romantic. This, however, remains speculation (Burman 210).

Böcklin and Bremer continued with an on and off relationship until 1835. Böcklin turned out to be a persistent admirer who would not take no for an answer. According to letters, Bremer repeatedly changed her mind and led Böcklin on. Sometimes she would reject him and a couple of weeks later she would beg him to come visit her. In 1835 she turned him down for the last time. Böcklin thus resented this and from then onwards he distanced himself from Bremer. She learned from mutual acquaintances that he was engaged to someone else only a couple of months after their last quarrel. Böcklin married shortly after and named his first child Fredrika. (Burman 194).

The following years Bremer spent educating herself and planning journeys. After the rough end with her close friend Böcklin, Bremer devoted herself completely to education and writing. In 1828 she had published her first work *Sketches of Everyday Life*, and in 1834 she continued that work with more volumes. Between 1842 and 1849 Bremer wrote and published four novels. Most of them were also translated into English, and she grew quite famous in American literary circles (Burman 409). No

doubt, she was also cherished in her home country Sweden. However, her real breakthrough was the feminist novel *Hertha* from 1856. The ideas for that novel came from her journey to America, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

Bremer spent the remaining part of her life attempting to improve women's education and rights in Sweden. In 1855 Bremer's mother passed away and almost her whole family was gone. Bremer wrote that she felt very alone after the death of her mother, however, also very free. For the first time she could make her own decisions without having to consult her family first. One can assume that this was the reason why she began writing more controversial texts as of 1856. She wrote "Is this a burden or a relief? Who will now take pleasure in my achievements or grieve with me in my sorrows?" (Bremer 377). Two weeks after her mother's passing Bremer confided in friends that she would begin writing *Hertha*, a novel she had obviously already prepared in her mind.

During her last ten years Bremer spent five years travelling in Europe and then returned to Sweden to concentrate on her writing and further social improvements. She was still very active in political and philosophical discussions even when she was aging. She compared her feeling of aging with that of a ripening fruit, preparing to leave its branch. She still corresponded frequently with Böcklin, who, although he never became her husband, seems to have been the love of her life. (Burman 602).

In 1865, around Christmas, Bremer caught a cold that developed into pneumonia. She did not want to call a doctor or be kept in bed. For several days she tried to keep up her routines before the fever worsened to the extent that she could not but lie down. She passed away in the night of New Year's Eve. Her sister Charlotte and her husband were at her side when she died. She was mourned in Sweden as an intellectual figure and as an influential writer. Traces of her memory can still be found today through her literature, but also in hospitals and schools that bear her name (Burman 610).

3.1 Homes in the New World

This chapter will deal exclusively with Bremer's travel narrative *Homes in the New World* published in 1853. Bremer arrived in America in 1850. Her journey, which lasted two years, was put together and paid for by herself. The 49-year-old Bremer was at the time already a published author and therefore welcomed with open arms by several American writers and scholars (Salenius 113). In her letters to her sister Charlotte, she provided detailed descriptions of the cities, people, and transatlantic experiences she had made. She chose to publish these 62 letters in the book *the homes in the new world* that appeared in two volumes. At the beginning of the book she made her purpose of traveling to America clear.

To breathe a new and fresher atmosphere of life; to observe popular life, institutions, and circumstances of a new country; to become clearer in my own mind on certain questions connected with the development of nations and people; and, in particular, to study the women and the homes of the new world. (Bremer quoted in Salenius 115).

Bremer went to America with a clear purpose and not simply to experience a new place or to have a holiday. She lived in the North of Europe, which means that she had different customs and cultural values than most people she was about to be acquainted with. One can assume that she wanted to educate herself on this journey, since she strongly believed that education was the main key to personal development, and throughout her life she had felt held back from learning and experiencing. Furthermore, Bremer can be considered a courageous woman of her time, who was willing to travel on her own to a destination where she knew no one except through correspondence.

At that time, women usually traveled in the company of men (Dusinberre 37). The fact that Bremer journeyed from Sweden to America on her own demonstrates that she differed from stereotypical women of her time. Pearson (226) stated that

Fredrika Bremer, an upper-class single woman from a country estate outside Stockholm, undertook this trip at the age of fifty, traveling alone, making use of steamboats, railroads, horse and carriage. Her ability and willingness to adapt was truly remarkable.

Concluding this statement Pearson further says the he considers Bremer an early feminist and an original of her time, based upon the characteristics of adaptability he listed.

One of her main aims was to study the situation of her own sex. Several scholars have said that Bremer's idea of women in America was idealized (Salenius 115). She frequently claimed that their situation was superior to that of Swedish women. She based this claim on the fact that American women were allowed more advanced education and had possibilities outside of the domestic sphere. Furthermore, she felt that the American women were more emancipated and were allowed more freedom. This claim is likely to be based upon the issue of Swedish women not being able to own property (Burman 307). Bremer, for instance, never married. Her brother lawfully controlled her wealth, and had she married, her husband would have controlled her money (Salenius 116). Bremer openly addressed and criticized this dilemma in her novel *Hertha* published in 1856.

When Bremer arrived in New York she stayed with Andrew Jackson Downing and his wife. Downing was a horticulturalist and what Bremer called a "self-made-man". He helped her organize her further journey through the US, and he and Bremer became close friends. Bremer said that she and Downing understood each other without speaking, since both of them connected on an intellectual level. She described the Downing residence as "heavenly" in her letters. As a matter of fact, Downing's wife objected to their close relationship, and wrote to Bremer asking her to distance herself from Mr. Downing. However, the problem solved itself when Bremer returned to Europe two years later. (Burman 240).

Bremer attended several meetings concerning women's rights in New York. Through her letters it becomes evident that one of her favorite activities was to visit political meetings. During these gatherings she encountered women who were able to perform labors that usually only men performed. Bremer was fascinated that these women could practice significant professions in the fields of medicine and science, and still keep their feminine side (Salenius 117). Bremer had not before met female doctors. She made the following comment in a letter

Twelve years as a physician of women and children, acquiring the public confidence, and laying up property (as, for instance, the house in which she lives, a frugally furnished, but excellent house, is her own), and aiding, as I heard from many, great numbers of ladies in sickness, and in diseases peculiar to their sex (...) I was really delighted with her, and now for the first time fully saw the importance of women devoting themselves to the medical profession (Bremer 142).

The woman referred to was Ms. Hunt, who stemmed from a family of doctors. She and her younger sister decided to take private lessons in science by an experienced doctor. Ms. Hunt specialized in gynecology, and the treating of sick children (Bremer 141). This quote clearly illustrates that Bremer gained new insights during her stay in New York. She met people that in their ways were exotic to her. They gave her ideas that she would later on employ in her own country. For instance, Bremer promoted and funded female education within the field of medicine (Burman 550). One could say that Bremer went to America with an open mind and high expectations. She already knew that she wanted to contribute towards a better situation for women in Sweden, but she did not know how. Her journey provided her with tools to transform her aspirations into actions.

Bremer believed in emancipating women, however, she also wanted to preserve traditional female traits. As one can read in the above quote, Bremer seemed to have believed in innate female characteristics. On the other hand, she believed that women could do a lot more than raising children and taking care of a household. However, she did not want to reform women completely. On the contrary, she also sought to strengthen women's domestic role, and pointed out that it was in a woman's nature to nourish her family and children (Salenius 119).

The way Bremer described "perfect" women from America in her letters points in a somewhat stereotypical feminine direction. To women that she admired the most were always attributed traits such as "kindness, wisdom, altruism, and honesty" (Salenius 119). These characteristics that Bremer obviously considered important are probably based upon her own cultural knowledge and background. She was brought up in a strict Lutheran environment with Christian beliefs that promoted normative gender roles. She had grown up with the belief that a successful woman was beautiful, kind, and bright. Because of these opinions, some scholars regard Bremer as somewhat

contradictory in her beliefs. On the one hand she encouraged women to step out of traditional patterns, but on the other they should not completely do so.

It is an ambiguous matter to determine how much of a feminist Bremer was. She argued that a woman that pursued a serious profession had the possibility of employing her total capacity. She was actively working for the rights of women and for their education. One of her goals was to enable Swedish women of all social classes to get the same education as men. However, she also noted that women who were active in serious professions were often single and childless, which she did not approve of. Bremer thought that a combination of public and domestic life would be the ultimate solution of this matter (Salenius 119). Interestingly, Bremer never married herself, which could imply that she believed that a woman would have to sacrifice either her public purpose or her domestic instincts, and that her idea of a combination was merely utopia.

In the USA, Bremer was able to travel to Charleston, since she had received an invitation from a Mrs. Howland, whom she had never met in person. Based upon their brief correspondence, Bremer had expressed some doubts about staying with Mrs. Howland and her family. However, already after their first meeting she concluded that she harmonized with Mrs. Howland. They were approximately the same age, and Mrs. Howland was also of Scandinavian descent. Bremer later described her friend as someone who had a deep understanding of society. They became true friends and continued to write each other letters until Mrs. Howland died during the Civil War (Pearson 216).

The following passage is a first description that Bremer gave of Charleston in one of her letters. Naturally, she was confronted with the “peculiar institution” of the South, which she was generally against.

Negroes swarm in the streets. Two thirds of the people whom one sees out in the town are negroes or mulattos. They appear for the most time cheerful and well fed. In particular, one sees fat negro and mulatto women, and their bright colored handkerchiefs, often wound very tastefully around the head, produces a picturesque appearance, a thousand times preferable to the bonnets and caps which they wear in the free states, and which are unbecoming to them (Bremer 91)

From this passage it is clear that Bremer attempts to describe colored people to her sister, who had presumably never met one. She seems to consider the colored people somewhat inferior to the white people, since she makes the overgeneralization of calling them all ugly without referring to anyone in particular. However, Bremer was openly against the institution of slavery for moral reasons. She did not believe it was reasonable to own another person.

Secondly, Bremer seems astonished that hardly any slaves looked underfed. She commented that some of them looked very well nourished or were even overweight. These observations were probably made from her own cultural experience of Swedish workers that at the time of the 1850's had a difficult time because of unsuccessful harvests, leaving them hardly anything to eat (Burman 150). A further aspect to take into consideration is that Bremer herself was put on diets that would starve her throughout childhood, which means that her tolerance limit towards what would be unacceptable was possibly higher than for other highborn ladies. On a later occasion Bremer joined some slaves on a cotton field and tasted their food, which she concluded had a lot higher standard than the food Swedish workers were served. Moreover, Bremer did not generally regard the slaves as being poorly treated; she was simply against the owning of a human being.

Thirdly, Bremer was able to make a comparison between the slaves in Charleston and the colored people she had encountered in the Northern states. She noticed that the colored people she had seen in the North wore the same sort of clothes that white people wore, whereas the slaves in the South wore traditional African clothing, or slave costumes. She wrote that she thought that the traditional clothing was more flattering for them to wear. However, she may have failed to consider the possibility that the colored people in the North wore other clothes to demonstrate their emancipation in the eyes of others. They probably wanted to make as clear as possible that they were free people. Their choice of clothing seems to be one way of stating this.

Bremer made an utterance about slaves and their devotion towards the families they served. She had been invited to a wedding and observed a black woman near the altar.

A large Negro woman who sat like a horrid specter, black and silent by the altar. This was the nurse and foster mother of the bride, who would be parted from the bride only for the duration of the wedding journey. (...) These black nurses are cared for with great tenderness as long as they live in the white families, and generally speaking, they deserve it, from their affection and fidelity (Bremer 93).

Bremer made a habit out of observing people. She often stated that she much rather observed social gatherings than actively participated in them. It is written in a way that makes her opinion sound like a general one, since she employs the term generally speaking. This is often the case in her travel narrative, and it almost gives her reflections a didactic tone for which she has received criticism (Burman 505). Firstly, it is not clear how many black nurses she actually knew, and therefore it is not possible to determine if the term generally speaking is appropriate in this context. One just knows that she spent a couple of months in the south. Secondly, it is not known if she knew the black nurse of whom she writes in this extract. In other words, some of Bremer's observations of Southern society seem somewhat overgeneralized. It seems she often picked one example and let that single event suffice to make a general statement. Bearing this in mind, Bremer's texts are still valuable cultural manifests.

Although Bremer stated in a letter when she arrived in Charleston that she would not write very much about slavery she included it on several occasions. However, often when she mentioned it she would keep a neutral tone and merely retell what she experienced. It was quite rare that she took a stand against slavery or slave owners. Pearson wrote

She noted that many seemed uncomfortable about the institution and were active in ameliorating conditions that were sometimes harsh. People who taught their slaves how to read and who welcomed missionaries that preached the gospel were signs, she thought, that the end of slavery was in sight. (...) Bremer's attitude towards slavery was negative but not obsessively so. In principle, she was totally against the idea of one person owning another as property (Pearson 219).

Pearson (218) devoted a whole article to discuss Bremer's stay in Charleston, which provides various insights into her thoughts. In general, as Pearson writes, Bremer was against slavery, but during her stay in the south she mainly wrote of positive

experiences with slavery. She thought that the plantations she visited took good care of their slaves. She strongly believed that the best thing that could happen to the slaves was if they were to be Christianized, educated, and sent back to their home countries (Pearson 220). These opinions can naturally be considered as typical ones of people who believed in white superiority. At the time several people believed that it was the duty of Christian white people to educate the inferior black population. Bremer seems to partly have shared these opinions, since she sincerely wanted black people to be Christianized and educated. However, one can assume that she did not consider this a burden but as a humane gesture, since she fought for more education in general.

Overall, Bremer grew very fond of Charleston. It was according to her the city that resembled a European one the most (Pearson 221). Slavery was the only thing that she thought made the South somewhat less appealing.

I see a feeble Southern beauty reposing upon a luxurious bed of flowers in a nectarine grove, surrounded by willing slaves, who at her nod bring her the most precious fruits and ornaments in the world. But all her beauty, the splendor of her eyes, the delicate crimson of her cheek, the pomp which surrounds her couch, cannot conceal the want of health and vigor, the worm which devotes her vitals. This weak, luxurious beauty is North Carolina (Bremer 98).

This vivid metaphor describes Bremer's emotions towards North Carolina spot on. She admired the cities, she enjoyed the people, she cherished nature, but she could not identify with slavery. She knew from her own experience that the difference of being a paid laborer and a slave was often not great, however, this was a matter of principle. She felt that people who were supposed to be fellow Christians should not close their eyes to the wretchedness of the "peculiar institution".

Bremer visited a slave auction in New Orleans to experience how the business of slavery actually worked. The slave market merely turned Bremer more against slavery. She recollected the following episode

On the 31st of December I went with my kind and estimable physician to witness a slave-auction, which took place not far from my abode. (...) Dr. D. and I entered a large and somewhat cold and dirty hall, on the basement story

of a house (...) On each side, by the wall, stood a number of black men and women, silent and serious. (...) What was to be their fate? How bitterly, if they fell into the hands of the wicked, would they feel the difference between then and now – how horrible would be their lot. (...) No sermon, no anti-slavery oration could speak so powerfully against the institution of slavery as this slave auction itself (Bremer 10-11).

This extract reveals Bremer's true feelings towards slavery that she did not often openly share while in the South. Before she travelled south she had attended several abolitionist meetings in New York, to which she referred in this passage. Her companion had brought her to the auction to soften her feelings towards slavery. However, it had the opposite effect on Bremer.

Bremer traveled from Charleston to Georgetown in April after having received yet another invitation to the home and plantation of a Joel Roberts Poinsett. Bremer described his home as aristocratic and refined, decorated with noble antique furniture. She spent her time there exploring the plantation and the slave villages.

Bremer was a curious person, and having heard much of slavery, and especially anti-slavery propaganda in the north, she wanted to see for herself what it was like. Now for the first time she was living on a plantation. She decided to visit the slave village, which she had expected to be wild and overfilled with people. However, when she went there she hardly saw anyone, but she spoke with one slave about his living conditions. He claimed that they were just fed once a day. Bremer asked the young man if this was truly so, since she thought he looked well nourished. The young man responded that this was nothing but the truth. Bremer wrote

I bid him goodnight and departed, suspiciously thinking that not all of what he had told me was true. All the same, it could be true; it was true, maybe not on this plantation but on other ones. It could always be true within an institution that provides so much power to single individuals. All these potential and real sufferings wore me down (Bremer 201).

This passage is one of the few where Bremer expresses real emotions concerning slavery. Generally speaking, in her letters she often claimed to be against it for moral reasons, but she never spoke of individual slaves that she pitied. In this passage she expresses compassion for slaves in general, who might be suffering under an uncaring

owner. Furthermore, this passage illustrated that Bremer was a woman with a developed understanding of worldly matters. She understood how society worked and how power could become destructive. The story that the slave had told her troubled her mind. Therefore she spoke to Mr Poinsett about it. He contradicted the claims, and said that the slaves were given enough food. Still unconvinced, Bremer continued to walk around the plantation in search for answers. One day she observed some slaves working in a field. She saw that they were going to have lunch, and immediately wanted to see what they were given.

I removed some lids and saw that the cups contained hot, steaming food, which smelled very appetizing. There were some cups with cooked brown beans, in others there were pancakes made out of corn. (...) I asked them for permission to try their food; and I have to say that I had rarely tasted anything better. (...) The slaves seemed content with their food, but remained very quiet. I told them that laborers from my home country seldom received such good food. (...) But I did not say that I would rather live with poor nutrition than as a slave (Bremer 202).

Bremer was happy to taste the food that the slaves were given in order to understand more about their living conditions. The experience convinced her that Mr Poinsett's plantation was one of the according to her good ones. Once again she compared Sweden and the American South, and reached the conclusion that the slaves were actually given better food at the plantation. As already mentioned earlier, Sweden was suffering from bad harvests at this time and many people did not have enough to eat. But it is difficult to determine if it was valid to compare the conditions of Swedish workers with the slaves, since the countries did not have the same possibilities. For instance, if a Swedish worker was not fed enough, it could be the case that there was simply no food to give him. However, if a slave was not fed, it could be the result of a punishment or a way of making more profit on the plantation. Hence, this might be an interpretation that could ease Bremer's conscience; that the plantations, although they were a shameful institution, were not that bad after all.

The people she lived with in the South probably influenced Bremer's opinions. She often wrote that Mr. Poinsett was a very nice man, which means that she would not easily believe him capable of cruelty. Although she did have an open mind, she did

seem to sympathize with people she regarded intellectual. For example, if she truly was against slavery, would she have told the slaves that they received better food than Swedish workers? Even if it were true, would she not rather have encouraged them to express their opinions, or stand up for their rights? This was of course not possible, since she was the guest of the plantation owner. She could hardly live at his expense and when out of sight conspire against him. In other words, Bremer seems to have faced a dilemma, an ironic, paradoxical situation, where her hands were tied. On the one hand, she seems to have been in this situation because she was a woman. She could not travel without the help of men. Taking this into consideration, she must have felt dependent on men, and she would have known that it would not contribute to her advantage to openly reject the dealings of men in the South. In summary, some modern readers might feel disappointed when they read her texts, since Bremer did not speak her mind as freely as might have been desirable. However, considering her situation she seems to have found suitable compromises.

After having left Mr. Poinsett's plantation, Bremer traveled to Augusta, to yet another plantation. She wrote that this plantation seemed to possess the same standard as the former. She again visited the slave village and spoke to more slaves, but did not seem to discover anything out of the ordinary. One day she wandered deep into the forest and reached a village with poor white people generally referred to as clay-eaters. The correct term would be people suffering from geophagia, a desire to eat soil, clay, or chalk (Ziegler 609). She described her encounter with them

They live in the forests without school, without church, without stoves, and partly without houses. (...) They have a sickly need to eat a kind of fat soil until this becomes their only burning desire. (...) I visited a Mr. Green and his family. They lived deep inside the forests with no roads or paths. (...) Here lived husband and wife and six children. They had a roof above their head but that was it. Mr. Green however seemed very content with his situation, himself, his children, and his wife, whom he described as the most wonderful woman in the world. (Bremer 22-23)

Bremer disliked the fact that the people living in the woods rejected Christianity and education although they were theoretically allowed to send their children to school. She drew the comparison that slaves were forced to live in darkness whereas the clay-eaters chose to do so. Since Bremer was a very religious person, one can also detect

her dislike towards the clay-people by her use of the word desire. According to the bible, man should have no strong desires. By referring to the clay-eaters as a people who had a burning desire for soil, she indirectly wrote that they were immoral. It is interesting that she still went into the woods to meet the clay-eaters although she knew of their beliefs or rather lack thereof. She showed some courage wandering so far into the woods to meet lawless people. She presumably went alone, since no one else desired to socialize with the clay-eaters. This illustrates that she stayed true to her purpose throughout her journey, since she originally came to America to observe the way of life, and especially the situation of women.

Bremer commented extensively upon women's position in society, which was her main purpose of going to America. In general, she thought that America was a lot further developed than Europe. However, she disapproved of several indigenous tribes because of the way they treated their women, or to be more correct, how she perceived that they had treated their women. She made several drawings of people during her journey to be able to recollect her numerous encounters. She made one sketch of a famous Indian called Osceola, who had led a rebellion against white settlers. She seemed amazed by the story of Osceola and his people. She said that she wanted to draw him because of his good-looking appearance and his interesting story.

Notwithstanding their stern virtues and beautiful characters, and the splendor with which novelists have loved to surround them (...) they are extremely cruel in their wars between different tribes, and they are usually severe to the women, whom they treat as beasts of burden and not as equals (Bremer 284-85)

From this extract one can see that Bremer was not afraid to criticize what she did not like. She expressed herself freely in her writing although not always in conversation, since she wanted to avoid hostility. She was already known as an abolitionist before she traveled south. This confirms the impression that she was a modern woman who had the courage to speak her mind. However, in the present case she seems to overgeneralize slightly. It is not likely that Bremer came to know the cultural ways of many tribes apart from retellings or as read in literature. She was not a racist, on the contrary, she often expressed that she wished that the education system would also include colored people (Salenius 120). Nevertheless, in this passage she is clearly

“Othering” the natives without having seen them in wars or in their maltreatment of women herself.

Apart from commenting on social institutions, Bremer also included exotic experiences and cultural differences in her letters. She had never before tasted a banana. From the following passage it seems like Bremer would not like to consume further bananas. However, later on she described bananas as one of the things she would miss the most about the South.

My friends brought oranges and bananas for me, and I now for the first time tasted this tropical fruit, which people here are so fond of. It has a delicate, sweet, somewhat insipid flavor; in form it resembles our large seed-cucumbers; in color and in flesh it is like a melon but less juicy. I could have fancied I was biting into soap. I have a notion that we shall not become friends, the banana and I (Bremer 90).

Although Bremer belonged to the upper class in Sweden she had not seen or tasted a banana, which was probably because there were no way of importing fruits from America to Sweden. Bremer wrote that even the Southerners had to import their bananas from Cuba. It was obviously a very exotic taste to her at first but after continuous consumption she noticed that it made her feel better. Bremer had been suffering from stomach pains and light fevers. The bananas helped her recover (Burman 512).

Bremer was not enthusiastic about social gatherings. She had spent most of her childhood isolated with her family. She only enjoyed smaller gatherings where the people could engage in fruitful intellectual discussions. Bremer took every chance of conversing with the people she dined with or visited about politics, philosophy, or religion. Unfortunately, she experienced some difficulties to do this because of how the mealtimes were organized in America. She contrasted the Swedish way of dining with the American one

At our table one can engage in conversation (...) The food is served silently, and the guests receive their courses in due time (...) Here, on the contrary, there are constant questions, offerings, and answers, to the extent that you cannot enjoy your meal, yet less a conversation. Also, one may not serve oneself, but the hostess, aunt, uncle, another polite person, or servant - in the South always a negro – will serve you. One seldom receives the amount that

one wants, and it is not placed where you would want it on your plate. (...) “Would you like some pickles?” “Not for me thank you” (peace and quiet for two minutes), Someone to my left notices that that I do not have any pickles. “May I serve you some pickles?”, “No thank you, not for me”, Someone on my right observes that I do not have any pickles. “Can I interest you in some pickles?” (Bremer 203).

Bremer describes the dining customs of the Americans quite humorously, making the point that their way of dining was contra productive to anyone who wished to converse.

4. Harriet Martineau biography

The woman who was about to become one of the first female sociologists in England was born in Norwich in 1802. Harriet was the sixth child out of eight siblings. Her father was a manufacturer and her mother the daughter of a sugar-refiner (Fenwick-Miller 13). The family seem to have enjoyed a comfortable life, although not too luxurious.

Harriet wrote in her own biography that she was a sickly child. She traces this back to her wet-nurse, who apparently ran out of milk, however, failed to inform anyone. As a consequence, Harriet did not receive enough nourishment, yet this was not discovered until three months later, when she was practically dying. As a result, she lost some of her senses. It is widely known that Harriet was partly deaf, however, she was also unable to smell and taste properly. She said, “When three senses out of five are deficient (...) the difficulty of cheerful living is great, and the terms of life are truly hard” (Quoted in Fenwick-Miller 16).

Already as a child Martineau observed domestic relationships, foremost her own. She often felt misunderstood and repressed by her family. Perhaps her situation at home became a motivation later in life to analyze the domestic sphere of other people. Her own autobiography provides detailed descriptions of her adolescence. Generally speaking, Martineau does not say that she had been treated with direct cruelty during childhood. She narrates that she was always well fed, allowed good education, and seaside holidays. However, she says that she did not have the feeling that she was given enough emotional affection.

Her father did not consider her a very bright child, and paid little interest to her education. However, when Harriet was eleven, she discovered a copy of *Paradise Lost* by Milton that she began studying independently. Her interest in literary classics grew and she continued to read a lot on her own after school. Although her father did not go out of his way to educate Harriet, the early education she received was comparable to that of a boy's.

Religion played a central role in Martineau's life. Already as a child Martineau described how her Christian Unitarian faith helped her through everyday life. Some scholars say that Martineau was later in life someone who idealized the "civilizing mission" (Fenwick-Miller 78). Some scholars comment, however, that her stern religious and didactic tone is tiring (Scholl 819).

Martineau began publishing articles and columns in her early twenties. Some of her texts she wrote under a pseudonym, since she thought she would gain more success if the readers would think that she was male. Her early work often concerned itself with religion, but also at times politics.

When Harriet was twenty-five, she published a text called *Addresses, Prayers, and Hymns*. At the time, her family was going through an economic crisis caused by the inflation that had seized England in its grip. Mr. Martineau had fallen ill and was much concerned that he would not be able to provide for his family anymore. The situation did not improve, and before he died he was forced to alter his last will and testimony; leaving only a modest amount for his wife and daughters. Mr. Martineau ultimately died in 1825, leaving the family in a complicated situation. However, his death made Harriet's writing valuable. Hence, although she did not yet earn a lot of money with her texts, any economic contribution to the family was of consequence.

Harriet was engaged to one of her brother's friends, Mr. Worthington, who was studying to become a clergyman. He is described as Harriet's only love throughout her life. After her father's death, her fiancée wanted to arrange their marriage as soon as possible. However, he fell ill with brain fever and had to be taken to his family's residence to be cared for. His family wrote Harriet, urging her to come and nurse him

as well, since the doctor had said that this might help him to recover. Harriet was eager to go, but her mother did not give her permission. Harriet had to obey her mother's wishes, and never saw her fiancée again. He passed away shortly afterwards. Harriet was throughout her lifetime an advocate of marriages entered as a result of mutual affection. She often described love as something sweet and precious. It seems, however, that she decided to give up on love the day that her fiancée died.

In 1827 Martineau published several successful short stories that led to her first novel entitled *principle and practice*. The novel is said to be a mixture of her own experiences and fiction. The novel won her recognition as a writer. However, Martineau longed to write about politics and society. Until 1832, she searched for publishers who would consider letting her write columns or articles containing her social and moral contemplations. She was physically and mentally at an end when she at length, in 1832 had a breakthrough in London (Vetter 430). She was given the opportunity to write her own column, which was called *Illustrations of political economy*.

In 1834 Martineau went to America for two years, which the following chapter will be devoted to. After having returned from America as a writer and abolitionist, she continued writing; mainly political, moral, and didactic texts.

Martineau fell severely ill in 1839. She had planned to go on a trip through Europe with a physically impaired relative; however, due to illness she had to cancel all further plans when she arrived in Venice. Her condition was serious, and upon her return to England she stayed in the same two rooms for five whole years. It was unclear if she would ever recover from the sickness that had taken her. During this time, since she thought that she was dying, she composed her own autobiography with the help of her friend Mrs. Chapman (Fenwick Miller 6).

Against all odds, in 1843, Martineau slowly regained her strength. Unfortunately, she was poor at this point, and naturally still weak from her long illness. She published a volume of essays called *Life in the sick room* under the pseudonym an invalid. However, it was soon common knowledge that Martineau was the author (Fenwick Miller 179).

In 1844 Martineau had a home of her own again, since her mother had passed away, and she felt free and reborn. Since she had not thought to outlive her sickness, the following ten years of good health came as a surprise to Harriet. However, she changed her lifestyle and withdrew from society. She tried to stay well informed of the world from her home. She published and wrote as much as she could, but still partly lived on the charity of wealthier acquaintances. (Fenwick Miller 215).

In the early 1870's Martineau's health was once again deteriorating. The doctors said that she was suffering from a heart condition. They told her that her remaining days were counted. Martineau wrote a new will where she, for instance, said that she wanted that her skull and brain would be given to science. Furthermore, she wrote that her own funeral should be as plain and quiet as possible. Her house and belongings were to be given to her siblings. Martineau died of bronchitis in June 1876. She passed away at home and was buried beside her mother in Birmingham.

4.1 Retrospect of Western Travel & Society in America

Martineau began her American journey in New York in 1834, and then traveled down to the Southern states. From the South she went north again over Cincinnati and Chicago, and completed her America tour in approximately two years. The outcome of her stay in America were two different books; *Society in America* (1837), which is a political and didactic manifestation of how she perceived American society. Secondly, she published *Retrospect of American travel* (1838), which reads more like a diary with personal reflections and detailed descriptions of how she traveled and lived. The two books focusing on her trip to the new world resulted in a third book called *How to observe Morals and Manners* (1838). The following chapter will mainly consider *Retrospect of Western travel*, and some parts of *Society in America*.

While in America, Martineau was encouraged to compare American and English society. This occurred at a time where both nations were in a state of fragility, which made her work all the more controversial. According to Scholl (820), Martineau was not a common travel writer. She could be seen as a cultural mediator, since she wanted to enhance understanding between America and Britain. Furthermore, Scholl

(821) suggests that Martineau's real target audience was the English people although she clearly wrote for Americans as well. She writes

Martineau used both the flaws and the advancements she saw in America's political and social systems to open the eyes of the English culture to what she saw as their own problems, both implicitly and explicitly mediating between the two cultures (Scholl 821).

Scholl stresses the point that Martineau had a great understanding of both cultures. She says that Martineau placed herself in between both cultures, but she still feels that Martineau's task was a difficult one, since she could not escape her own cultural heritage while writing about American society. For example, Scholl (822) says that the English general opinion of America was an "ideal classless society", and Martineau employed this idea as her starting point while writing her social analysis. Martineau commented herself upon drawing comparisons between Europe and America. She wrote that

(It) had become a practice so completely established to treat of America in a mode of comparison with Europe, that I had little hope of being at first understood by more than a few. The Americans themselves had been so accustomed to be held up in contrast with Europeans by travellers that they could not get rid of the prepossession even while reading my book (Martineau retrospect103).

In other words, Martineau seems to have been very much aware of the idealism that circulated around American society. However, based on this quote, it seems that Europe would be to blame for these idealistic beliefs and not Americans themselves. It is also clear that she wanted to stay true to her opinions while writing, and not merely write something that would be held in high esteem. In general, Martineau seems to have always written as honestly as possible, without consideration if she would vex someone by doing so. One could say that that is one of the reasons that Martineau stood out in her time and left a literary legacy.

In letters to her editor William Johnson Fox, one sees that Martineau genuinely thought that she could change the position of women through *Society in America*

I hope you will hear of results from the chapters on Woman in my book, far beyond what common readers will see at first. A fine organization is being arranged that will be put in motion when my book has had some circulation. We hope to obtain a revision of parliament of all laws regarding Woman (Sanders 45).

Apart from observing women's role in society, Martineau was eager to criticize their role in society, which resulted in various annoyed responses to her books. Reviewers called her an "indiscreet lady (who) is constantly bringing under our notice some outrageous breach of decency" (Scholl 823) Another reviewer wrote that "she surveys the weakness and dependence of her sex with the asperity of one who had been only a spectator, and by no means an understanding spectator, far less a sharer in the joys of that dependence" (823). The reviewers seem to ultimately agree that Martineau belongs to a group of "petulant disappointed spinsters" (Scholl 823).

Apart from the critique of women's place in society, Martineau held no feelings back when it came to the institution of slavery. She was already a known abolitionist before she visited the South. Several people discouraged her from traveling south, since they were concerned for her safety. The reason for their concern had started when Martineau began speaking publicly at abolitionist meetings in New York and in Boston. She went from being praised to being shunned by parts of society. In *Retrospect of Western travel*, Martineau remembers.

There was no end to the kind cautions given me against traveling through the southern states, not only on account of my opinions of slavery, but because of the badness of roads and the poverty of the wayside accommodations (...) The traveller (if he be not an abolitionist) is perfectly secure of good treatment, and fatigue and indifferent fare are the only evils which need to be anticipated (Martineau retrospect 203-204).

Consequently, Martineau and her traveling companion discussed if they would travel south despite the discouragement from others. They reached the conclusion that they would not change their plans. Martineau seems to have taken the hostile responses towards her with good humor. Unlike many other Europeans, Martineau said that it would have been against her principles not to openly condemn slavery. She even continued to write articles in England for the American abolitionist newspaper *the Standard* (Logan 47). Nevertheless, Martineau was surprised that she was treated with

such hospitality in the South although she was an abolitionist. Paradoxically, she wrote that she sometimes felt better treated in the South than in the North. Apparently the northerners did not approve of criticism from foreigners.

Martineau expressed some uneasiness about encountering slaves for the first time. She wrote that Maryland Baltimore was the first slave state that she entered. However, the colored people that she met there were free. Ironically, Martineau's first meeting with a slave happened without her knowledge. She recollects

A lady from New England, staying in Baltimore, was one day talking over slavery with me, her detestation of it being great, when I told her I dreaded seeing a slave. "You have seen one" said she. "You were waited on by a slave yesterday evening" She told me of a gentleman who let out and lent out his slaves to wait at gentleman's houses, and that the tall handsome mulatto who handed the tea at a party the evening before was one of these. I was glad it was over for once, but I never lost the painful feeling caused to a stranger by intercourse with slaves (Martineau retrospect 8).

Martineau seems to have felt some relief after having met a slave, but at the same time each encounter with slaves seemed to cause her pain. In this quote, she writes about the slaves in a way that they were often seen by their masters; like mere tools. She employs the verb to let a slave. She would probably not use this phrase if she were talking about her own servants to whom she enjoyed very close relationships. One can suggest that she attempts to illustrate with her language how inhumanely the slaves were treated, and how their worth was equal to that of machines or other tools. Additionally, she seems to cast a positive light on the slave, describing him as tall and handsome. Furthermore, she points out that he was a mulatto, which naturally touches upon the problematic topic of interracial relationships. Martineau wrote that the hostility and disgust toward interracial relations were extremely strong in the South. Just days before she had had a conversation with a lady that was openly against mixed colored relationships. The lady asked Martineau

Whether I would not prevent, if I could, the marriage of a white person with a person of color (...) I replied that I would never, under any circumstances, try to separate persons who really loved (Martineau retrospect 8).

Martineau, as usual, replied very honestly to the question. She could not understand why the Southerners were so against these relationships. The irony originates in the fact that interracial relationships were forbidden in the South. However, Martineau reports of mulattos on each plantation she visited. In other words, it was illegal for a white man to marry a black woman or vice versa, however, it is evident that interracial sexual intercourse took place frequently. Publicly, this was swept under the carpet, and several southerners, like the lady that spoke to Martineau, would strongly criticize dealings that were obviously taking place at their own doorstep. Martineau was not blind towards the hypocrisy of this, in fact, she often wrote of the South sarcastically when she discussed matters that did not make sense to her. However, while conversing she would always try to stay calm to avoid quarrels.

In Washington Martineau encountered the second slave she ever met, which caused her a lot of pain. A little colored girl had come into her room at their boarding house, and Martineau observed the child while reading a newspaper.

I took up a newspaper. She sat at my feet, and began amusing herself with my shoestrings. Finding herself not discouraged, she presently begged play by peeping at me above and on each side the newspaper. She was a bright-eyed, merry-hearted child; confiding, like other children, and dreading no evil, but doomed, hopelessly doomed, to ignorance, privation, and moral degradation. When I looked at her, and thought of the fearful disobedience to the first of moral laws, the cowardly treachery, the cruel abuse of power involved in thus dooming to blight a being so helpless, so confiding, and so full of promise, a horror came over me which sickened my very soul. To see slaves is not to be reconciled to slavery (Martineau retrospect 8).

This quote might be the most personal condemnation that Martineau provides of slavery. In *Society in America* she repeatedly attempts to provide arguments pro slavery, and then tries to, in a logical way, explain why these arguments are unconvincing. However, in this passage she shows a more personal and emotional aspect of herself. One can detect a feeling of frustration and helplessness in her words. Clearly, she did not think that colored people should be treated differently than white people. The fact that it was out of her hands to change this left her no peace. Her Unitarian standpoint and political understanding shines through the lines. At the end, she concludes that witnessing slavery, or living alongside it, does not make a person adjust to it or approve of it.

Martineau devotes several chapters in *Retrospect of Western Travel* to discuss her experiences of the South's countryside and another chapter for its town life. She seemed impressed by the landscapes she saw, however, less impressed by the people she met. She said, "Our stationary life in the rural South was various and pleasant enough; all shaded with the presence of slavery, but without any other drawback" (Martineau 208). One can detect a certain sarcasm in her tone, since she did not consider the peculiar institution something to be taken lightly. Her sarcasm continues while she describes how the days were spent in the countryside. After having narrated that meals were served either too early or too late, and that there seemed to be no order whatsoever in the household where she lived. She portrayed a typical day in the rural South

A drunken white has shot one of his Negroes, and he fears no punishment can be obtained, because there were no witnesses of the deed but blacks. A consultation is held whether the affair shall go into court; and before the farmer departs he is offered cake and liqueur (Martineau retrospect 208-209).

This quote contains various implicit criticisms, since although Martineau is not expressing direct disapproval of that what she describes, it is clear that she is appalled. Firstly, she makes the dichotomy between white and black very clear. She does not merely write that a man shot another man, but a white person shot a colored person. She illustrates that the slaves had no rights and were not taken seriously. Through the sarcastic tone of her language she criticizes their everyday life. The easiness that is conveyed by the description tells the reader that this kind of incident was not out of the ordinary. Additionally, she seems to mock the police officers in the rural South by implying that instead of prosecuting a murderer they simply sit down and eat and drink with the accused. Consequently, one can also detect Martineau's opinion of alcohol in this quote; she seems to connect the consumption of alcohol with irresponsibility. Hence, the man who shot his slave was drunk, and the police officers, who did not care for justice, were drinking liqueur while on duty. In other words, although Martineau wrote that she had a pleasant time in the rural South, she was evidently not satisfied with what she encountered.

Martineau visited various plantations while in the South. Friends discouraged her from going to plantations, since they thought it might be disturbing for her to see the cruelties of slavery with her own eyes. However, like before, Martineau did not want to miss the chance of experiencing something for herself. However, the sight of the working slaves did not leave her cold.

There is something inexpressibly disgusting in the sight of a slave woman in the field. I do not share in the horror of the Americans at the idea of women being employed in outdoor labor. It did not particularly gratify me to see the cows always milked by men (where there were no slaves); and the hay and harvest fields would have looked brighter in my eyes if women had been there to share the wholesome and cheerful toil. But a Negro woman behind the plough presents a very different object from the English mother with her children in the turnip-field, or the scotch lassie among the reapers (Martineau retrospect 210).

In this passage Martineau attempts to distinguish between hard working free laborers, and slaves. She states that she is not generally against women who perform manual labor. However, the sight of the slave toiling in the field is to her incomparable to the women she has seen working fields in England. This quote is interesting, since it offers a direct comparison between England and the American South. Martineau employs her own experience and contrasts it to what she experienced at the plantation. One could suggest that this is an example of what Scholl (819) criticized Martineau for. Namely, that she was biased or culturally strongly influenced by her background. Whether Martineau drew these comparisons to point out that England's ways were superior or simply to display the contrast of her emotional reaction remains speculation. However, personally, I do not believe that she intended to praise England in this recollection. On the contrary, she seems to criticize both nations.

Martineau seemed shocked at the sight of the mental state and living conditions of the slaves. She describes what she saw when she entered the infirmary at the same plantation.

The crib against the wall, the walls themselves, and the floor, all look one yellow. More children are crouched round the wood fire, lying almost in the embers. You see a woman pressing up against the wall like an idiot, with her shoulder turned towards you, and her apron held up to her face. You ask what is the matter with her, and are told that she is shy. You see a woman rolling

herself about in a crib, with her head tied up. You ask if she is ill, and are told that she has not a good temper; that she struck at a girl she was jealous of with an axe, and the weapon being taken from her, she threw herself into the well, and was nearly drowned before she was taken out, with her head much hurt (Martineau retrospect 213).

Martineau's vivid description conveys a feeling of southern gothic, mental institutions, and female hysteria. Hence, the women she described all seem to act in a questionable manner; as if mentally impaired. Specifically, the description of the woman who is rolling around in her bed seems to apply to the symptoms of female hysteria, a diagnosis frequently employed during the 19th century. Furthermore, the woman who covers her face with an apron does not seem violent, however, still she seems to lack manners and the intellect of an adult. Martineau even refers to her as an idiot. Consequently, it seems that Martineau attempts to convince the reader that slaves remained children-like or even degenerate, without education and moral guidance. One can imagine that anyone reading this passage, who lacked a personal knowledge of a plantation, would be intimidated. It is likely that Martineau wanted to convey a hostile and tragic image of the plantations, since she wished to convince people of the cruelties of the peculiar institution.

After having spent some time in the countryside, Martineau continued her journey through the South to Charleston; to experience city life. Martineau's reputation as an abolitionist preceded her

I had not been in the city for twenty-four hours before we were amused by ridiculous reports of my championship on behalf of the blacks; and, long after I had left the place, reported speeches of mine were in circulation, which were remarkably striking to me when I at length heard them. This circumstance shows how irritable the minds of the people are upon this topic (Martineau retrospect 219).

Martineau seems once more amused by the prejudices towards her and her opinions. In this case she even seems pleased to hear of their reactions, since it helped her to prove a point. According to her, the reason why the southerners were hostile and protective of their "peculiar institution", was that they deep down knew that they were wrong. As a kind of defense mechanism they felt the need to defend slavery even more.

Martineau had decided before she traveled south, that she would always express her opinions honestly while conversing. Unsurprisingly, due to her reputation as an abolitionist, everyone she met wished to discuss slavery with her. She had soon developed a tactic of how to co-exist with the people around her, who were very much against abolitionists.

I made it a rule to allow others to introduce the subject of slavery, knowing that they would not fail to do so, and that I might learn as much from their method of approaching the topic as from anything they could say upon it. Before half an hour had passed, every man, woman, or child I might be conversing with had entered upon the question. As it was likewise a rule with me never to conceal or soften my own opinions, and never to allow myself to be irritated by what I heard (for it is too serious a subject to indulge frailties with), the best understanding existed between slaveholders and myself. We never quarreled, while, I believe, we never failed to perceive the extent of the difference of feeling and opinion between us (Martineau retrospect 221).

While reading this quote, one becomes aware of how much thought Martineau put into her everyday life. Although she repeatedly stated that she did not feel intimidated by traveling to the South, it seems that she tried to act in ways that would not unnecessarily provoke the Southerners. She emphasizes that everyone wanted to talk about slavery, although she did not mention it on her own accord. Furthermore, one can see from this passage how interested Martineau was in hearing the opinion of others. She wanted to hear their arguments and ideas, and not simply preach her own standpoint. However, it seems that she also had to consciously think about how she was acting not to raise her voice or become emotional. In the end, she and the Southerner would part without having convinced the other about anything, which must have been frustrating at times.

While in Charleston, Martineau also observed the social system, and the differences in occupation between colored and white inhabitants. She once visited an orphanage where she could establish some fruitful conclusions.

The Orphan-house has been established about 40 years, and it contained, at the time of my visit, two hundred children. (...) None but whites are admitted. (...) The children in this establishment are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the girls sewing; but the prejudice against work appears as

much here as anywhere. No active labor goes on: the boys do not even garden. No employment is attempted that bears any resemblance to what is done by slaves (Martineau retrospect 234).

In this quote, Martineau seems displeased with the curriculum that the orphans were given. She seems to indirectly say that the Southerners were not hard-workers; a thought not uncommon. In fact, it was considered refined in the South not to perform manual labor on ones own, since they had slaves to perform such tasks. However, not many Southerners could afford such luxury (Stamp 37). Based on Martineau's observations, it seems that a Southerner who wished to appear respectable would try to avoid hard work. Naturally, this contradicts what Martineau would see as respectable; herself coming from a hard-working upper middle class family. In addition, she did not approve of the girls merely learning sewing instead of a real profession, but she also confessed that women in Charleston could hardly find employment in other areas of work.

The experience of a slave market in Charleston caused Martineau a lot of pain. Martineau wrote that she had planned to visit a slave market, since she wanted to see as much as possible of the peculiar institution in order to understand it. She remembered

I went into a slave market, a place which the traveler ought not to avoid to spare his feelings. (...) The sale of a man was just concluding as we were entered the market. A woman with two children, one at the breast, and another holding by her apron, composed the next lot. The restless, jocular zeal of the auctioneer who counted the bids was the most infernal sight I ever beheld. (...) I should have thought that her agony of shame and dread would have silenced the tongue of every spectator; but it was not so. (...) It seemed like an outrage to be among the stagers from whom they shrunk, and we went away. (Martineau retrospect 235-236).

The scene at the slave market disrupted Martineau's peace of mind heavily, and the other positive experiences she had made vanished in her mind. She could not comprehend how Southerners could have so little compassion for the colored people. Furthermore, her greatest issue concerning slavery, and the treatment of the colored people seems to have been a religious dilemma. She perceived the Southerners as hypocrites. She often mentioned how they would state to be humble Christians; and

how they would preach values that they did not care for. The visit to the slave market echoed on in Martineau's mind

To me every laugh had lost its gayety, every courtesy had lost its grace, all intercourse had lost its innocence. (...) If there be a scene which might stagger the might of the spirit of Christianity itself; if there be an experience that might overthrow its serenity, it is the transition from the slave market to the abodes of the slave masters, bright with sunshine, and gay with flowers, with courtesies, and mirth (...) At the same hour when the customary sins of the slave market were being perpetrated, hundreds of the little people of Charleston were preparing for their childish pleasures. (Martineau retrospect 236).

Martineau felt torn between two parts of society, and she could not bear to see the luxury of some, since it was made possible by slavery. She refers to the moral ignorance of the slaveholders. She questions how they can be cheerful and civil while so many people have nothing due to their way of life. It seems that Martineau thought the people in Charleston to be vain, superficial, ungodly, and materialistic.

The impressions of the slave market and the contrast to other parts of society further strengthened Martineau's devotion to the abolitionist cause. However, she feared for the abolitionists, that new laws or other governmental corrections might hinder their actions. She wrote

If persecution is the means which God has ordained for the accomplishment of this great end, emancipation, then, in dependence upon him for strength to bear it, I feel as if I could say, "Let it come"; for it is my deep, solemn, deliberate conviction, that this is a cause worth dying for (Martineau retrospect 238).

It is clear that Martineau, although she tried to stay calm, felt very strongly about slavery. From this passage one can also see how deeply religious she was. Her Unitarian faith was obviously a cause that she was prepared to die for, which explains her reaction towards the slaveholders, who were officially Christians, however, to her, morally wrong. Interestingly, Martineau mentions an end and emancipation, which can be interpreted as a foreshadowing of the later civil war. Finally, this passage illustrates an example of Martineau's frequent didactic and religious arguments that have been described as annoying by some scholars (Lehrer 573).

In *Retrospect of Western travel*, Martineau devoted one chapter to the retelling of stories she had heard concerning slaves. Hence, one cannot know if these stories were authentic or not, but she retold them to draw attention to certain issues concerning slavery. For instance, she wrote about a slave who served a doctor, and had taught himself to read

He (...) thus learned to read and write, without any further help whatever. Having once discovered his own power of doing and learning, he went on in the only direction which seemed open to him. He turned his attention to mechanism, and makes miniature violins and pianos of surprising completeness, but no use. Here he will most likely stop; for there is no probability of him ever ceasing to be a slave, or having opportunity to turn to practical account a degree of energy, patience, and skill which, in happier circumstances, might have been the instruments of great deeds (Martineau retrospect 249-250).

In this quote, Martineau attempts to illustrate that slaves were capable of learning skills and taking their own initiatives. She wishes to reject the myth that slaves were too primitive to be educated. Furthermore, she wants to demonstrate that slaves generally would need education to further their development. However, she also writes that since this slave will most definitely remain thus, his acquired skills will never do him any good. This could be interpreted as slightly contradicting her own ideas, since a humanist learns for his own benefit and not necessarily for an economic advantage. However, maybe she simply meant that the slave's personal profit of literacy was less than he deserved. This quote signals Martineau's standpoint that slavery as an institution made progress impossible. According to her, it hindered the colored people from leading purposeful lives, and it damaged the moral of the slaveholders. In other words, Martineau saw no room for compromise; either slavery had to be abolished, or the inhabitants of the South would be forever doomed.

Martineau realized that some slaves wanted to remain in this state. She mentioned on several occasions that she read in newspapers about slaves who were offered freedom but rejected it. She concluded that such stories were published to promote slavery, since it made slaveholders look like they were doing something honorable by keeping slaves. However, she argued that it was very rare for a slave to reject an offer of

freedom. To strengthen this argument she said that, on the contrary, several slaves committed suicide as they could not endure enslavement.

The traveler finds, as he proceeds, that suicides are very frequent among slaves; and that there is a race of Africans who will not endure bondage at all, and who, when smuggled from Africa into Louisiana, are avoided in the market by purchasers, though they have great bodily strength and comeliness. When one of this race is accidentally purchased and taken home, he is generally missed before twenty-four hours are over, and found hanging on a door or drowned in the nearest pond. The Cuba-slaveholders have volumes of stories to tell of this race, proving their incapacity for slavery (Martineau retrospect 242).

This extract shows how Martineau tried to contradict claims with concrete examples that she had in storage. One can find structure in the ways she lists arguments pro-slavery and then retells a story to reject the same claims. This particular extract is interesting, since it brings up the issue of race. Martineau claims that there is a race, or some tribe of Africans who cannot endure slavery. Evidently, she tells this story to prove that slavery was cruel, and that it drove Africans to commit suicide. However, this assumption seems to be an overgeneralization. Firstly, it is unclear how many Africans stemming from the same area committed suicide. Secondly, how would the slaveholders know the exact origin of the slaves, considering that they had nothing like birth certificates or passports. Although it is interesting to read about, the authenticity of the story seems questionable. In general, Martineau seems to have stressed the individuality of the slaves, but in this case she decides to treat this tribe as one apparently suicidal unit. Although her intentions were in the interest of the slaves, this story deprives them of individuality.

Apart from writing about slavery, Martineau was also interested in observing other social institutions in the South. After Charleston, Martineau travelled to New Orleans. She described the city as quite nice, although the mosquitos were a plague. She narrated that the people in New Orleans were gracious and generally showed a lot of hospitality towards visitors. She came to this conclusion after a visit to their hospital, where she saw that they treated more foreigners than Americans. She wrote a lot about their cathedral where white and colored people would sit without separation.

Then there is the cathedral to be attended, a place which the European gladly visits, as the only one in the United States where all men meet together as brethren. (...) There are groups about the cathedral gates, the whites and the blacks parting company as if they had not been worshipping side by side. Within the edifice there is no separation (Martineau retrospect 259).

At the time, there were not many churches that let white and colored people sit together. Nonetheless, she writes that outside the church the people would willingly separate themselves again according to skin color. Clearly, this observation illustrates that it was not merely laws that divided people. Martineau described that inside the church everyone was worshipping together; a thought, which seems to have pleased her after her experiences in Charleston.

During her two years in America, Martineau witnessed four weddings and a proposal. She enjoyed attending weddings, since she thought that they depicted society and religion well. She recalled an unusual proposal in the South.

The offer of marriage ought hardly to be so called, however. It was a petition from a slave to be allowed to wed (as slaves wed) the nursemaid of a lady in whose house I was staying. The young man could either write a little, or had employed someone who could to prepare his epistle for him. It ran from corner to corner from the paper, which was daubed with diluted wafer, like certain love-letters nearer home than Georgia (Martineau retrospect 64).

Martineau then recited the epistle with all its grammatical errors and misspellings, and said that the offer of marriage was accepted. The passage shows that, like in all other matters of slavery, Martineau did not feel that the slaves were given the possibility of a proper married life. By citing his epistle and the faulty writing she is indirectly criticizing the lack of education of the slaves. The simile between the slave's epistle and a childish love letter creates the idea that the slaves were like children, denied all further progress. She seems pessimistic that the couple would have a happy life.

In her book *Society in America*, Martineau attempts to approach various social institutions from a more impersonal perspective. Hence, instead of narrating about her journeys and experiences, she draws on politics and laws to support her arguments. Besides slavery, Martineau heavily criticized the position of women in American society. She entitled a chapter: political non-existence of women. In this chapter she

questions how women can be at all touched by the American laws, since women never consented to being governed.

Governments in the United States have power to tax women who hold property; to divorce them from their husbands; to fine, imprison, and execute them for certain offenses. Whence do these governments derive their powers? They are not “just” as they are not derived from the consent of the governed (Martineau society125).

Generally speaking, Martineau is criticizing that women must as any man answer to the laws, but they do not have any rights in comparison with men. She further argues that excluding women thus, does not correspond to the democratic principle. Furthermore, she draws attention to the fact that women can hardly have their own property, a fact, that Martineau sees as highly offensive.

Not only was Martineau appalled by the laws concerning the rights of women, she was also disappointed by their standing in society and their education. She wrote

The Americans have, in the treatment of women, fallen below, not only their own democratic principles, but the practice of some parts of the Old World. (...) While woman’s intellect is confined, her morals crushed, her health ruined, her weaknesses encouraged, and her strength punished, she is told that her lot is cast in the paradise of women: and there is no country in the world where there is so much boasting of the “chivalrous” treatment she enjoys (Martineu society 291).

Martineau argues that women are severely restricted but simultaneously told that they lead wonderful lives. However, these lives are not spectacular to Martineau, but rather old fashioned or even humiliating. She writes that women are treated like delicate things. They fulfill a submissive role in the home and in society, where they may only occupy themselves with certain generally approved tasks. If they were to leave the normative zone of interests they would either be ridiculed or punished by their husbands. She concludes that the only thing that seems sensible to an American woman is to marry, and once she has done so, she may devote herself to religion, selected books, or the domestic sphere. Martineau even goes so far as to compare American women to slaves.

Her case differs to that of the slave, as to the principle, just so far as this; that the indulgence is large and universal, instead of petty and capricious. In both cases, justice is denied on no better plea than the right of the strongest. In both cases, the acquiescence of the many, and the burning discontent of the few, of the oppressed, testify, the one to the actual degradation of the class, and the other to its fitness for the enjoyment of human rights (Martineau society 292)

This passage conveys a strong statement that received a lot of criticism as the book was published. Martineau feels that women as well as slaves were treated unfairly in society. Martineau saw women as a different type of slave, since they were unequal under the law, and subordinated to patriarchy and its norms. In other words, they were also deprived of freedom, and were at times merely seen as the property of men.

Martineau interpreted that the education that women received was thus developed to make the women suitable companions to their husbands. Moreover, the education they received would not necessarily correspond to their needs, but those of a future husband. However, she did not consider this a problem as being restricted to American society.

Female education in America is much what it is in England. There is a profession of some things being taught which are supposed necessary because everybody learns them. They serve to fill up time, to occupy attention harmlessly, to improve conversation, and to make women something like companions to their husbands, and able to teach their children somewhat (...) There is rarely or never a careful ordering of influences for the promotion of clear intellectual activity. Such activity, when it exceeds that which is necessary to make the work of the teacher easy, is feared and repressed (Martineau society 292).

This extract contains several noteworthy points. Firstly, One can conclude that Martineau has spent some time deliberating on the position of women in England as well, which means that this is not merely a critique against American society but also of the English. Secondly, she criticizes the motivations behind teaching certain subjects that might be taught because of tradition or lack of better ideas. In any case, the education provided focused too little on the needs and development of women, and did not encourage or allow them to expand their intellectual abilities.

The claim concerning the fact that a woman's education seems to be tailored to a man's needs became an important insight for future feminist theorizing. However, not

merely in terms of education but as a means of explaining how society generally perceived women; namely as defined beneath men. Martineau's claim, or at least the meaning and thought behind it, reoccurs as a substantial part of Simone de Beauvoir's influential book *The second Sex* (1949). In this feminist manifesto Beauvoir (16) argues that

This humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being (...) She is defined and differentiated with reference to men and not he with reference to her; she is the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – She is the Other.

It is interesting to see that Martineau shared this strain of thought approximately a hundred years before Beauvoir put it on paper in a more explicit way. However, one cannot deny that Martineau had noticed the same pattern in society, not only in educational matters, but also within other social institutions. As a result, it is clear that Martineau was an early feminist. Not only since she shared some views of later feminists, but also because of her burning devotion for women in society. She dedicated a substantial part of her life trying to improve women's situation, disregarding the criticism and opposition she received from society. She concluded that if women wanted change they would have to fight for it everyday, which she certainly did.

After having written her America books, Martineau was aware that she would not only meet with positive responses. In her own autobiography she wrote

I have never regretted its boldness of speech. I felt a relief in having opened my mind, which I would at no time have exchanged for any gain of reputation or fortune. The time had come when, having experienced what might be called the extremes of obscurity and difficulty first, and influence and success afterwards, I could pronounce that there was nothing for which it was worth sacrificing freedom of thought and speech (Quoted in Scholl 819).

This passage not only states Martineau's feelings towards the documentation of her American journey, but also reveals the purpose of writing these books. She wanted to give her honest opinion of American society, presumably to encourage change, and to open minds towards new ideas. Interestingly, before she traveled to America she said

that she was going to “obtain rest and relaxation” abroad (Scholl 819). However, once in America, she must have changed her mind. Her texts concerning America remain significant contributions to 19th century travel writing, and valuable descriptions of slavery and other social institutions.

5. Fanny Kemble biography

This chapter will concern itself with letters and diary entrances written by Fanny Kemble, who was a famous English actress and writer, who lived in the 19th century. Kemble was born in London in 1809, and became well known before she reached adulthood. She remained in the public spotlight throughout her life. She published various personal records and texts concerning drama, yet, she is usually most praised for her sharp insights concerning slavery in her *Journal of a residence on a Georgian plantation* (1863). She is often described as

an extraordinary woman who fought to maintain her independence and individuality despite the prescribed norms of her day. But despite her strong will, forceful personality, and notorious temper, she was also a kind and generous person. Nearly everyone who met her mentioned her intellectual and theatrical gifts (Schweninger 1).

This definition summarizes a generally shared opinion of Fanny Kemble as a very independent and outgoing person. Various sources describe her as a fascinating and caring person, who was unafraid of stepping out of normative positions.

Kemble was born in London into a family consisting of various actors. The Kembles were so significant in their theatrical contribution that the London-stage called the turn of the 19th century “the Kemble era of the London stage” (Clinton 1). Moreover, we can assume that Fanny Kemble enjoyed a vivid childhood surrounded by strong personalities. She went to school in Bath, Boulogne, and Paris, which suggests that she encountered various people and ways of life throughout her adolescence. One might confidently say that her education and family turned her into the self-assured woman that she indeed became (Clinton 2).

Kemble made her debut as an actress when she was merely nineteen years old. She became an instant favorite of the London stage and was praised by many important critics (Clinton 2). Additionally, Kemble made the acquaintance of influential people because of her career as an actress, but also because of the social standing of her family.

In 1832 Kemble made her first transatlantic crossing with her father Charles Kemble and her aunt Dall de camp to go on a theatrical tour. Her father had made some unfortunate investments and hoped that the tour would secure the family financially for some time (Schweninger 1). Later in life, Kemble always returned to the stage when she was in need of money, however, stated herself that acting was only a temporary occupation to her. She always wished to become a writer (Ashby 62).

The journey to America would come to change Kemble's life entirely. Kemble arrived with her father and aunt in New York on the third of September that same year. She arrived as a famous actress, although not rich at the time, and received much attention wherever she made an appearance (Clinton 10). In October they traveled to Philadelphia where she met her future husband: Pierce Butler. Butler was a desired bachelor, and an extremely rich man. Butler became so infatuated with Kemble that he followed her touring party and attended almost all of her performances. In addition, he advised and partly organized their tour through America (Schweninger 1).

According to Dusiherre (218) Butler had various extraordinary and charming personal qualities that he used to his advantage. For example, he played the flute so well that he received a spot in the orchestra where Kemble played theatre. Butler was an eager and energetic admirer, and after two years he had persuaded Kemble to accept his hand in marriage (Schweninger 1). Dusiherre (218) described Kemble's choice to marry him as her greatest mistake. However charming he seemed at first, Butler had problems holding on to his money, and he was not a trustworthy man. According to Charles Greville, who was a famous English diarist, Butler was "a weak, dawdling, ignorant, violent tempered man" (Dusiherre 217).

The union between Kemble and Butler was unfortunately not a successful one. Butler's riches all came from slave plantations in Georgia. However, Kemble detested slavery and claimed not to have known about the origins of her husband's wealth before entering into the marriage, which seems unlikely after two years of courting (Clinton 2). Kemble's family and friends had discouraged her to accept Butler as a husband, since they thought that they were very unlike each other. Moreover, they had foreseen that the marriage might not be agreeable to either part. However, Kemble and Butler went against the wishes of their families, since they felt a strong bond to one another (Clinton 3).

Kemble seems to have expected more from the married life in America. In 1835 she published her journal known as *Life in America* where she openly criticized several aspects of American culture (Clinton 6). Butler was against her publishing the journal and urged her to edit the journal before publishing it.

The editing of the 1835 *Journal* was the subject of fierce battles between Pierce and Fanny. The resulting text—on which Pierce had the last word—was scarred with asterisks denoting his excisions when it was finally published in May 1835. Wiley and Long, the New York bookstore, nonetheless sold 800 copies on the first day (Hiller 307).

Even after heavy editing the journal received harsh criticism, and was even called vulgar (Ashby 64). At the time, it was mainly Kemble's friends of higher standing who complimented her on her journal (Hiller 307). Butler's family, who did not think it appropriate for a woman of her standing to write such texts, also criticized Kemble. However, the negative responses she received were not only related to her opinions about American society and culture as a whole. As a matter of fact, Kemble had ridiculed several people of high standing that had invited her and her father into their homes. Although all names had been removed, people had recognized themselves and the situations described (Ashby 63). As a result, she was shunned by certain people, and did not publish any private texts again until after her final separation from Butler in 1847.

In October 1843 Kemble found several letters that confirmed her husband's various infidelities and she asked for a separation. The couple went through several legal

proceedings. In fact, Butler used the couple's two daughters to keep Kemble by his side. Kemble had to remain with Butler to keep the right to see her daughters (Clinton 25). The divorce was not finalized until 1849. Butler was educated in law and sued Kemble for desertion. She did not dispute these accusations, since she desperately wanted continued permission to see her daughters (Dusinberre 224). The following years Kemble had to travel back and forth from England to Georgia to be able to visit her children.

In 1863 Kemble published her journal from the Georgian plantation. Initially she did not want to publish the journal out of respect for her family, and after the divorce she feared that Butler would forbid her seeing their daughters if she was to publish it (Dusinberre 224). However, during the Civil War she wanted to convince England that slavery was a ghastly business. The abolitionists praised her text and used it for their propagandistic purposes. However, Kemble's daughter Fan was very upset at the publication, and did not speak to her mother for a long time. She even wrote a response to her mother's book; describing her experiences on the plantation. Her book did however not receive much attention (Clinton 32).

The following diary was kept in the winter and spring of 1838-9, on an estate consisting of rice and cotton plantations, in the islands at the entrance of the Altamaha, on the coast of Georgia. The slaves in whom I then had an unfortunate interest were sold some years ago. The islands themselves are at present in the power of the Northern troops. The record contained in the following pages is a picture of conditions of human existence which I hope and believe have passed away (Kemble Plantation 1).

Clearly, Kemble wanted to support the abolitionists with her eyewitness experience of slavery. She emphasizes that the journal should give an impression of how the slaves were treated, and how the plantation life marginalized the lives of the colored people. Notwithstanding that, Kemble provided what the preface promised; the journal additionally discussed several other matters and personal experiences, which probably caused her family to react negatively.

In 1867 Kemble's ex-husband died of a fever in Georgia, and Kemble soon met a man called James Leigh. They were married in London in 1871. After some time Kemble managed to persuade her daughters to move to England. For the rest of her life

Kemble maintained her interest in drama and she published more letters, journals, and articles from her own life. For example, *Records of a Girlhood* in 1878, and her memoirs called *Further Records*. Kemble ended her days at her daughter's residence in London on the 15th of January in 1893. She was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery. Her most valuable legacy remains the journal from Butler's Island, since it offers a unique insight into plantation life. Visitors often wrote about their experiences of slavery, however, Kemble's documentations remain one of the few observations from someone who opposed slavery but still lived on a plantation.

5.1 Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation 1838-1839

As was mentioned earlier, Kemble claimed not to have known about her husband's plantations before their marriage (Clinton 3). Significantly, she was openly against slavery. In the next extract Kemble tells Anna Jameson about the plantations in Georgia. She wrote

The family into which I have married are large slaveholders; our present and future fortune depend greatly upon extensive plantations in Georgia. (...) As for me, though the toilsome earning of my daily bread were to be my lot again to-morrow, I should rejoice with unspeakable thankfulness that we had not to answer for what I consider so grievous a sin against humanity. I believe many years will not pass before this cry ceases to go up from earth to heaven. The power of opinion is working silently and strongly in the hearts of men; the majority of people in the North of this country are opposed to the theory of slavery (...) (Kemble Miscellany 25).

This quote contains some interesting aspects. Firstly, one can notice Kemble's abolitionist views. She detests slavery since England had outlawed slavery in 1833, and anyone still practicing it probably appeared questionable. According to Dessens (98), who wrote a book about slavery and plantation society, abolitionist views originated after the creation of colonial empires and were strengthened after the French Revolution and the period of enlightenment. However, the problematic that arises from reading Kemble was that she mentioned the Enlightenment several times in association with slavery, but never said anything about the British Empire as being unjust. Although slavery on its own had been abolished, England was still claiming rights over huge numbers of people to propagate and secure their own well-being.

Kemble did not address this matter at any point, which suggests that she may have been eager to criticize the South but perhaps did not look with equal attention towards Britain's dealings. Dessen (98) even claims that a real difference between the American South and the British West Indies did not exist until after the American Civil War, which suggests that Kemble might have seen obvious parallels. Naturally it could be the case that she did not want to openly criticize her own country in texts that would be published. However, since she expressed herself so openly on all other matters that would appear equally problematical.

Secondly, she mentioned that the Northerners did not appreciate what went on in the South. In other words, she is foreshadowing the upcoming war when she wrote that not many more years would pass until something might happen. She also addresses the influence of opinion, which one may interpret as the power of conflicting ideologies, and as a result of the enlightenment.

Kemble's main argument against slavery was ethical (Hiller 313). Kemble wrote that she saw the body as a gift from God that should be filled with pleasure; not pain (Hiller 311) One can say that she was ahead of her time in various ways. For example, she valued hygiene and physical exercise highly, which was not necessarily common in the 19th century. She wrote in a letter to her friend Sarah that she was shocked by how enslavement would affect the health of the slaves:

some of her strongest arguments against slavery would derive from firsthand accounts of the irreversible injuries wrought on the bodies of female slaves by the combination of heavy field work and continuous pregnancies. (Hiller 313).

As like Hiller reports, Kemble was deeply troubled by the hygienic and health conditions at her husband's plantations. She eventually attempted to create change at the plantation with mixed results.

Not only did Kemble disapprove of her husband's source of income, but she also disliked the South as a whole. While traveling to the South in 1838, she wrote her friend Sarah Cleveland whom she refers to as Saadi. These letters were published in *A Winter's Journey to Georgia, US*. Kemble thought that the journey was tiring

we are at length near our journey's end, for which as you may suppose I am not a little thankful for dragging two young children from rail road to steam boat, & from steam boat to rail road at this season of year over eight hundred miles & more of wearying journey is no sinecure - owing to our deferring our departure so long the steam navigation was given up for the winter a matter which I did not much regret - as the coasting that North American shore in the conveniences for blowing up chiefly used for that purpose did not offer any particular attractions to my imagination. We have come the greater part of our way by a yet unfinished rail road which will accomplish the distance between Baltimore and Charleston as quickly & more safely than the boats & I should think be preferred by every body (Kemble Miscellany 112).

This extract clearly depicts the inconvenience of traveling in the 19th century. As mentioned, most people would travel by boat, but Kemble says that they journeyed mainly by train. The railroad she describes was being built at the moment, which also makes this passage a comment upon the industrial development of the area in which she was traveling. Additionally, one could say that this passage reads like a typical travel narrative that seeks to inform the reader of how the narrator traveled.

Kemble thought that Charleston was the most picturesque city that she had seen in the South, but it was not agreeable enough to satisfy her demands completely. She wrote her friend Sarah once more

I cannot say that I am particularly charmed with what I have seen of the south or its ways & manners hitherto. Charleston itself was agreeable to me from its resemblance to an old European town & the small item of bituminous coal being the combustible chiefly used there added greatly to its english appearance - it has however a melancholy & ruinous look - the largest and finest houses being miserably out of repair & appearing as tho' they were abandoned to decay and neglect (Kemble Miscellany 113).

This quote illustrates how displeased Kemble was with the South. Although she admitted that Charleston was the most beautiful city in the South, she was not satisfied with it. She describes it as melancholic and ruinous. In other words, the appeal of Charleston merely seems to have existed because of its remote likeness to a European city. However, she seems to consider it merely as a failed copy. The society of Charleston did most certainly not live up to her European standards, and probably contributed towards the melancholy feeling she sensed in the city. She also commented upon the curfew that ruled in Charleston, the curfew would be announced by bell ringing every night at nine o'clock, which she thought was unnecessary.

In Charleston, Kemble was obviously also confronted with slavery. Although she was at the time journeying to one of the biggest plantations in Georgia, which belonged to her husband, she still commented very negatively on the peculiar institution in her letter to Sarah

They talk of the luxurious mode of living in the south, because if you please you may have a slave to tie each of your shoes, but when all's said & done, you would have dressed yourself from head to foot before your shoes were tied & I should go mad if I were so well "waited upon." (Kemble: Miscellany 115)

Kemble obviously did not see how having a slave could be considered a luxury. Generally, she did not think that the slaves were very effective or accomplished. Therefore, she concluded that it would always be more efficient to do whatever you needed to be done on your own, instead of waiting for the slaves to do it for you. She did not share the cultural ideology that ruled in the South, where it was considered refined to do as little as possible of manual labor. On the contrary, she seems to have taken pride in herself and other people who did not shun physical activity.

Kemble also concluded that the women in the South lacked education and common sense. She did not understand why they would not add daily exercise to their everyday life. She saw their troubles as a direct consequence of their ignorance towards nourishing their bodies

I hardly know *one* young married woman who has not had a miscarriage - I do *not* know *one* who enjoys what we should call general good health, or possesses the degree of activity & strength common to our women. (Kemble Miscellany 112).

Kemble makes a direct comparison between the women in the South and English women. The question arises if she meant English women in general, or if she was referring to people she knew. To say that every woman in England performed more physical exercise than women in the South was a bold claim to make. However, one can imagine that she made this overgeneralization simply to emphasize how inactive the women were in the South. This extract depicts that Kemble was quite ahead of her

time. Although she claims that women in England were generally very active, her own amount of physical activity would rather correspond to that of a man, considering the fact that she liked mountain climbing, horse riding, and rowing. Furthermore, her insights seem to be based on people of higher standing. The poorer farmers in the South would have had to work on their farms, and their wives would have had to at least actively take care of the household.

The journey to Butler's Island lasted nine days. Kemble did not write any letters until three weeks after her arrival, which implies that she needed some time to adjust herself to her new home (Clinton 13). She disliked wild nature, and the humid climate. She wrote to her friend Sarah

I proceed to inform you of our safe descent upon Butler's Island which is quite the most amphibious piece of creation that I have yet had the happiness of beholding. It would be difficult to define it truly by either the name of land or water for 'tis neither liquid nor solid but a kind of mud sponge floating on the bosom of the Altamaha of whose sandy sediment it is chiefly formed & into whose turbid brimming waters it looks as if it was again about to dissolve (...)The produce of this delectable spot is rice - oranges negroes fleas mosquitoes various beautiful evergreens sundry sorts of snakes - Alligators, & bull rushes (Kemble Miscellany 116).

Kemble was unimpressed by the southern vegetation. Naturally, the climate was foreign to her, and it seems that Kemble disliked several things that did not seem familiar to her. The change of society must have been difficult to deal with, since she was used to living in big cities. All of a sudden she was in the Deep South with hardly anything to do, and a very limited number of people to socialize with. She mentions mosquitoes, snakes, bull rushes, and alligators, which informs the reader that her surroundings are dangerous. Interestingly, she mentions colored people as a product of "the spot". It is unclear if she means that the slaves should be seen as a product of Butler's Island or of the climate. The tone she employs is sarcastic, which was often the case in her letters, and by doing so the overall tone of her criticism seems less aggressive and more comical, although she actually does not convey any positive message.

Kemble thought that the people around Butler's Island were unrefined. They were unable to discuss theatre or other matters that she herself found intriguing (Clinton 13). Additionally, she was disappointed that her house was plain and that most women were not more independent. She wrote a letter to her friend Harriet St. Leger from Butler's island wherein she complained about these matters.

How impossible it would be for you to conceive, even if I could describe, the careless desolation which pervaded the whole place; the shaggy unkempt ground we passed through to approach the house itself; the untidy, slatternly, all but beggarly appearance of the mistress of the mansion herself. The smallest Yankee farmer has a tidier estate, a tidier house, and a tidier wife than this member of the proud Southern chivalry (Kemble quoted in Cox 116).

From this passage we can see how Kemble completely rejected the lifestyle of the southerners. She seemed to see a clear juxtaposition between the South and the North of America. The North represented a more civilized group of people whereas the Southerners were a primitive lot. One can assume that England served as the role model in her thoughts. The North was still appealing enough but the South became the worst-case scenario that she could imagine. As was mentioned earlier, Kemble had traveled extensively for a woman of her time. She had been educated in different parts of Europe and she had been on a tour in the US with her father and aunt. Furthermore, she was a celebrity and was used to a luxurious lifestyle. She must have seen herself as a person with experience and knowledge as to how a wealthy family should live. The people that she described were her neighbors, they had most likely not traveled far in their lives, and she felt that they were primitive in their ways. Accordingly, she compared them with the Northerners, since the latter were at least more sophisticated. The scholars Urry and Larsen (2) said in an article about tourism that "Just like language, one's eyes are socio-culturally framed (...). We never look just at one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves". Moreover, this conclusion suits applies to Kemble and her close observations. However, she did not even attempt to compare the southerners with the English. Presumably because she saw England as being very superior to America in general and that it would be absurd to even attempt to compare them.

Kemble communicates a similar opinion about the house where she herself lived with her husband. She wrote at least two letters where she described their house. The first letter was to her friend Sarah

Now for our abode it is as luxurious as its site (upon the edge of a ditch) is desirable. We have a white washed apartment fifteen feet by sixteen which serves us for dining room drawing room & library. Next to this a rather smaller room where Pierce & I sleep, beyond this a small place where he dresses & transacts business with the negroes & above our parlour & under the roof a room where Margery & the two children are stowed - our furniture is scanty in quantity & most primitive in quality some of our wash hand stands & wardrobes being made of unpainted wood - then we have exceedingly dirty negroes in abundance to wait upon us whose want of cleanliness & profound ignorance make it infinitely less troublesome to wait upon oneself (Kemble Miscellany 116)

This description begins with a sarcastic tone but then progresses to be merely informative. Evidently, Kemble was accustomed to more luxury. The home, which she describes seem to have been equipped to provide necessities but nothing more. She seems to think that the hygiene of the slaves was a reason for not having painted furniture, since they could spoil it by their touch. Furthermore, she does not seem to think that the slaves were educated enough to perform their duties well. In another letter she describes her house once more, however, quite differently.

(The house) is certainly rather more devoid of the conveniences and adornments of modern existence than anything I ever took up my abode before. It consists of three small rooms, and three still smaller, which would be more appropriately designated as closets, a wooden recess by way of pantry, and a kitchen detached from the dwelling (...) Of our three apartments, one is our sitting, eating, and living room, and is sixteen feet by fifteen. The walls are plastered indeed, but neither painted nor papered; it is divided from our bedroom (a similarly elegant and comfortable chamber) by a dingy wooden partition covered all over with hooks, pegs, and nails, to which caps, keys etc etc are suspended in graceful irregularity. The doors open by wooden latches, raised by means of small packthread – I imagine the same primitive order of fastening celebrated in the touching chronicle of Red Riding Hood; how they shut I will not attempt to describe, as the shutting of a door is a process of extremely rare occurrence throughout the whole Southern country (Kemble quoted in Cox 117).

In this extract we encounter very sarcastic and ironic criticism whereas the previous passage contained straightforward open criticism. There is a strong tone of disappointment echoing through the passage. The house did not live up to her expectations. The house was not nicely decorated, and it was too small for her taste. She comments that their rooms had to be used for several purposes. In England at the time no noble family would combine a dining and a living room. She employed ironic remarks such as “similarly elegant” and “graceful irregularity” to describe her home. She also wrote that the doors were so ancient that the same systems were probably used to open doors in the fairytale *Red-Riding Hood*. This remark is particularly interesting since it implies that the way the Southerners lived was so absurd to her that she would actually compare it to a fairytale, basically something that could not exist in reality. However, since she was writing in a sarcastic tone, it seems as if she tried to describe her house and the South as a sort of surreal nightmare. In addition, Kemble seemed to dislike the transparency of her house. She feels that she had no privacy, since the slaves were always in some way present. There were no special rooms provided for the slaves. In England servants had their own dwellings in a separate part of the house. Kemble did not seem to come to terms with that difference.

The part that gave Kemble the hardest time was the peculiar institution of the South, or in other words: slavery. She had been fairly skeptical towards the plantations that her husband owned, however, she was also curious and begged that he would let her join him on his next trip to Butler’s Island. Butler was hesitant at first, but not long afterwards they received news of the death of Kemble’s father. Butler then decided that he could not leave his wife behind. He hoped that she would change her radical abolitionist views if she visited a real plantation. However, the visit was to have the opposite effect on Kemble (Clinton 20). In the following passage Kemble describes a slave cabin in a letter:

Such of these dwellings as I visited today were filthy and wretched in the extreme, and exhibited that most deplorable consequence of ignorance and an abject condition, the inability of the inhabitants to secure and improve even such pitiful comfort as might yet be achieved by them. Instead of the order, neatness, and ingenuity which might convert even these miserable hovels into tolerable residences, there was the careless, reckless, filthy indolence which even the brutes do not exhibit in their lairs and nests, and which seemed

incapable of applying to the uses of existence the few miserable means of comfort yet within their reach (Kemble 170).

This passage contains further open criticism and disgust concerning the slave cabins. Kemble thought that the filthiness in the dwellings was both the responsibility of the slaves but also that of the owners. She tried to educate the slaves in cleanliness and she encouraged them to tidy their houses as soon as they had time. One can clearly notice that Kemble's way of seeing a home plays an important role here. She associated a home with cleanliness and a nice atmosphere. What she encountered at the plantation deeply shocked her, since she had never known a home to be so horrid. She felt compelled as the wife of the slave-owner and as an Englishwoman to try to help the poor people. The problematic that occurred was probably that she could not identify with the slaves, their background, or their everyday life. Although she was an active woman who took extensive walks and went horse riding, she most likely did not know how it was to work in a field for a whole day. This fact suggests that her priorities and perspectives were completely different from that of a slave. The slaves probably did not care at all if their dwelling was filthy, or if hygiene was wanting. They were going out to work again first thing in the morning. After all, they had maybe never seen a tidy home. As a result, one can observe a total cultural clash between an upper class, famous Englishwoman and uneducated slaves. It followed that Kemble wanted to help the slaves but felt helpless since the slaves lacked the very basic knowledge of manners. Furthermore, in the beginning Kemble also felt very superior to the slaves, since she felt the need to educate them. She pitied them and she wanted to improve their living standards but it is important to point out that Kemble never asked the slaves what kind of help they needed. As most stories of colonizers, she decided what needed to be changed and acted accordingly.

As soon as Kemble had seen the poor conditions in which the slaves lived, she attempted to teach them about cleanliness. She describes that this was an unthankful task but she saw it as her duty to do it all the same. She wrote

To these hardly human being I addressed my remonstrances about the filth, cold and unnecessary wretchedness of their room, bidding the elder boys and girls kindle up the fire, sweep the floor, and expel the poultry. For a long time my very words seemed unintelligible to them, till, when I began to sweep and

make up the fire, etc, they first fell into laughing, and then imitating me. The object of attack, and the stupid negro practice (by-the-by, but a short time since nearly universal in enlightened Europe) of keeping the babies with their feet bare, and their heads, already well by nature with their woolly hair wrapped in half a dozen hot, filthy coverings. (...) (Kemble Plantation 26).

In this extract one can see clear juxtapositions between enlightened Europe and the primitive American South. Secondly, she juxtaposed white people and slaves. Kemble refers to the slaves as hardly human beings and Negroes, which implied that she saw the slaves as a race of their own; otherwise she might have referred to them differently. One can suggest that Kemble takes on the white man's burden. She who had much more knowledge of the world tried to spread that knowledge to the slaves, who according to her opinion, were in desperate need of guidance. The result of her lesson becomes mimicry; the slaves tried to imitate her behavior. This was not at all uncommon on plantations.

The very influential post-colonial scholar Homi Bhabha (3) has coined the term mimicry, which refers to a slave or colonized person attempting to copy his or her master. The imitation could be seen in ways of speaking, acting, or dressing. Bhabha further says that mimicry could be naturalized and become a natural behavior of the colonized over time (Bhabha). Yet, it is not clear if Kemble's attempts were that successful, but she wrote that the slaves did continue to do some cleaning after her visit.

The lack of cleanliness of her house and of the slaves who worked in it was equally disturbing to Kemble. She did not feel comfortable to be waited upon by the slaves when they were visibly dirty. She made no secret of her feelings towards filth.

(Those) who wait upon us in the capacity of footmen. As, however, the latter are perfectly filthy in their persons and clothes—their faces, hands, and naked feet being literally encrusted with dirt—their attendance at our meals is not, as you may suppose, particularly agreeable to me, and I dispense with it as often as possible (Kemble Plantation 36).

Kemble did not have to be on the plantation for a long time before she saw that many things needed improvement (Cox 119). She saw the plantation as very inefficient,

since the slaves did not really provide good labor; in fact, she claims that they were merely pretending to work. Once again, they imitated the white men and as long as it looked as if they were working, no harm would come to them. She wrote

Slaves perform only as much labor as they must, and they generally only pretend to work. The problem is that their basic needs will be met regardless of the labors performed, as long as they look as if they're working (...) The laziness seems to me the necessary result of their primary wants being supplied, and all progress denied them (Kemble quoted in Cox 119).

In other words, Kemble saw no logic in slavery; since the slaves did not receive money for their labor they did not make an effort. They imitated their masters, who according to Kemble did not perform any real work either. As a result, Kemble concluded that life on a plantation involved performing roles rather than accomplishing something meaningful (Cox 120). To try out her theory she offered some slaves wages if they performed a light labor for her. Accordingly, she wrote that they had carried out their duty with much more enthusiasm and care when they were rewarded afterwards. Given these points, it would seem that slaveholders did not perform any task at all, which was in this case most likely true. However, Kemble was convinced that all plantations worked in the same fashion and commented that she found the southern population lazy. Yet, it is important to point out that many farmers only kept five slaves or fewer, and they mostly had to perform just as much work themselves as the slaves (Stampp 36).

Kemble was generally displeased with the treatment of the slaves and the condition under which they lived, but her foremost priority became the improvement of their hospital (Cox 123). She wrote

The infirmary is a large two-story building (...) But how shall I describe to you the spectacle which was presented to me on entering the first of these? But half the casements, of which there were six, were glazed, and these were obscured with dirt, almost as much as the other windowless ones were darkened by the dingy shutters, which the shivering inmates had fastened to in order to protect themselves from the cold (...) These last poor wretches lay prostrate on the floor, without bed, mattress, or pillow, buried in tattered and filthy blankets, which, huddled round them as they lay strewn about, left hardly space to move upon the floor (Kemble 157).

From this passage one can observe how shocked Kemble was to see such scenes as the infirmary. If one looks at the language she used, it becomes clear that she sympathizes a lot with the slaves. For example, when she called the slaves “shivering inmates” or “poor wretches”. Once again the question of cleanliness upset her. The windows were so dirty that one could not see through them and the building as such seems to have been in a bad condition. Kemble felt ashamed that the people who made sure that she could live a comfortable life were treated in such a fashion. She said that “ here lay the brute beasts, absorbed in physical suffering; unvisited by any of those divine influences which may ennoble the dispensations of pain and illness” (Kemble 158). The tone, which she used, appears helpless. No matter how badly she felt about what was happening on the plantations, she could not change anything. Furthermore, she was compelled to hear that her husband’s plantation was supposed to be one of the better ones where the slaves were treated in a humane fashion.

One aspect that becomes problematic when looking at Kemble’s texts is to decide if she believed in white superiority or not, or if she held an opinion in between. On the one hand she showed a lot of compassion towards the slaves; she wanted to improve their lives and she listened to their problems. On the other side, she made several statements where it is clear that she saw black people as a distinct race of their own. To illustrate this we will look at a passage where Kemble described a black man called Morris. Morris had visited Kemble to ask permission to be baptized. She wrote

His figure was tall and straight, and his face, which was of a perfect oval, rejoiced in the grace, very usual among his people, of a fine forehead, and the much more frequent one of a remarkably gentle and sweet expression. He was, however, jet-black, and certainly did not owe these personal advantages to any mixture in his blood. There is a certain African tribe from which the West Indian slave market is chiefly recruited, who have these same characteristic features, and do not at all represent the ignoble and ugly negro type, so much more commonly seen here (Kemble Plantation 185-186).

In this passage Kemble is more distanced than when she wrote about how the slaves were treated. Here she simply described the looks of Morris, who according to her was unusually good looking for being black. She also implied that his color was so black that his nice features could not possibly have anything to do with him being a hybrid. This statement on its own would suggest that Kemble did indeed see white

people as superior in looks to black people. At the end of the quote she also clearly said that she found most Negroes on their plantation ugly. However, that need not mean that she also thought that they were less worth as human beings, but one must admit that she saw a clear division between white and colored people.

In another passage she depicted a black slave woman very negatively and compared her to an ape. She wrote:

A creature which was a woman, but looked like a crooked, ill-built figure set up in a field to scare crows, with a face infinitely more like a mere animal's than any human countenance I ever beheld, and with that peculiar, wild, restless look of indefinite and, at the same time, intense sadness that is so remarkable in the countenance of some monkeys (Kemble quoted in Dusiinberre 230).

Kemble detested the plantation and the institution of slavery. Therefore, she thought a lot about the institution itself. She was appalled that the slaves were merely seen as tools and not as human beings. She also concluded that the slave owners would only help a sick slave if there was a chance that he or she would work again. She said "Slaves: they are tools, to be mended only if they can be made available again; if not, to be flung by as useless, without further expense of money, time, or trouble" (Reader 28). Kemble touched upon the fact that there was a total separation between slaves and their owners. One can imagine that the slaveholders distanced themselves emotionally from the slaves in order to justify the treatment that they used. The slaves were seen as mere laborers or even as animals that should carry out their duty, and when they could no longer work they became a liability (Cox 120). A concrete example of this assumption is when Butler said to Kemble that "don't you know that the niggers are all damned liars?" (quoted in Dusiinberre 222). He obviously did not consider the slaves as consisting of different entities but simply viewed them all as treacherous folk. Kemble, on the other hand saw individuality and personality in the slaves, and she did not understand why no one else tried to prevent their maltreatment.

6. Comparative analysis

After having treated the three authors separately, the following chapter will offer a comparative analysis of Bremer, Martineau, and Kemble. The topics chosen for comparison will concern their observations of social institutions and society, but will, however, mainly focus upon the time they spent in the American South. This will illustrate that all three women shared opinions of fundamental concerns such as human rights and ethics. Nevertheless, the comparisons will also reveal that their points of view differed in various senses as well. In the end, what ultimately united them were their abolitionist assumptions, and a strong wish for women's advancement in society.

Firstly, it is important to take into consideration when the ladies visited America and if they had any connection to each other. Kemble and Martineau travelled to America several years before Bremer. Martineau and Kemble were approximately simultaneously in America. Martineau arrived in 1834 and stayed two years, whereas Kemble remained longer. Bremer did not travel until 1849, however also stayed two years. Martineau and Kemble met during their travels in Philadelphia in 1834. However, they do not seem to have known each other very well. As a matter of fact, Martineau was one of the people that Kemble mentioned in one of her published letters.

Miss Martineau is just now in Philadelphia: I have seen and conversed with her, and I think, were her stay long enough to admit of so agreeable a conclusion, we might become good friends. It is not presumptuous for me to say that, dear H, because, you know, a very close degree of friendship may exist where there is great disparity of intellect. Her deafness is a serious bar to her enjoyment of society, and some drawback to the pleasure of conversing with her, for, as a man observed to me last night, "One feels so like a fool, saying, 'how do you do' through a speaking trumpet in the middle of a drawing room;" and unshoutable commonplaces from the staple of drawing-room conversation (Kemble Miscellany 24).

Clearly, Kemble seems to have respected Martineau if one compares the way she described Martineau with the way she sometimes described other people. She also indicates that Martineau was intellectually her superior. However, her remark on Martineau's impairment seems somewhat insensitive. On a later occasion, in her

journal from the plantation, she mentions a factual error in Martineau's America book, concerning how plantations dealt with rice. In other words, the two ladies do not seem to have been in regular contact with one another, but they surely knew of each other, and shared many cultural perceptions since both of them grew up in England.

Bremer admired Martineau for her ideas concerning women and their advancement in society. Bremer and Martineau were born with only one year between them, which make them equals in terms of zeitgeist. Although there are no circumstances suggesting that they were in contact with one another, it is known through Bremer's biography that she held Martineau in high esteem.

She read Alexis de Tocqueville's *De la Démocratie en Amérique* (1835) and Harriet Martineau's *Society in America* (1837). The latter belonged to one of Bremer's favorite authors, and the America book could have been a contributing factor towards Bremer's new feminist orientation in the beginning of the 1840's. Martineau propagated the political rights of women at a time where Bremer was still quite inconclusive on the same issues. However, women's rights were to become one of her main motivations for visiting America (Burman 471).

Since it is widely known that Bremer read and admired Martineau's opinions, it seems equally probable that she, at least to a certain extent, followed in her footsteps during her journey. For instance, Bremer also visited several plantations and tried to engage in intellectual conversations with slaveholders, in order to understand them, but also to try to display alternative opinions. In addition, like Martineau, she participated in several abolitionist meetings while in the North. Even their routes through the country were very similar, with the exception that Bremer also traveled to Cuba.

Kemble and Martineau both criticized American society whereas Bremer idealized it. Kemble's criticism was generally directed either against superficial parts of society or particular individuals before she went to the South. For example, she criticized people of being boring or uncultivated. Martineau mainly criticized society as a whole and less particular individuals. She employed her individual experience and America's

own laws to prove her points. Yet, she also praised various institutions of the North and the hospitality in the South. For example, she was positively surprised by the service in the Unitarian church in New York.

We were most deeply impressed by the devotional part of his service, delivered in a voice which I have certainly never heard equalled for music and volume. (...) I am now of the same opinion that I was this first day; that it is the most true, simple, and solemn that I ever listened to. The moment the service was over the minister came down from the pulpit, addressed me as an old friend, and requested me to accept the hospitality of his house when I should visit Philadelphia (Martineau Retrospect 38).

Martineau seems to have felt welcome in America, and found various things that she approved of although she also criticized a lot. Since religion was very important to Martineau, one can assume that she had high expectations before going to church. The fact that she found the service superb implies that she at least thought that the Unitarian church was up to date in the North. Bremer on the other hand, was enthusiastic while arriving in New York and hardly made any complaints, but her opinion of the city changed

New York is a very noisy business-city without beauty. There are calm areas with agreeable streets and apartments, but there the streets are dead. In Broadway there is endless ruckus and discomfort, and in the actual city one is crowded with the expensive life. The air here is bad as pest. New York is the last city in the world I would ever wish to live in. The whole city seems more like a giant hotel to me (Bremer 68-69).

Coming from a highly rural country and surroundings, Bremer seems to have felt claustrophobic in the crowded streets of New York. She was probably not used to breathing in polluted air. Not even the capital of Sweden would have contained so many people in one place as New York did. However, Bremer did not criticize the people of New York, she restricted herself to the city. Lastly, Kemble appears to have been the hardest critic in regards to the people of the North. She was disappointed with the social life as well as her surroundings.

The absolute absence of all taste in matters of ornamental cultivation is lamentably evident in the country dwellings of rich and poor alike, as far as I have yet seen in this neighborhood. No natural beauty seems to be perceived and taken advantage of, no defect hidden or adorned; proximity to the road for

obvious purposes of mere convenience seems to have been the one idea in the selection of building sites (...) (Kemble Plantation 25).

Kemble's criticism is open and direct. One can also detect that she has been longer in the environment that she criticizes than Martineau and Kemble. It seems like she has deliberated on these remarks for some time, which provides a contrast to Bremer's and Martineau's opinions that seem to be more like first impressions. Nevertheless, Martineau and Kemble generally seemed to perceive American society as being behind Europe in terms of gender equality and science, whereas Bremer thought the opposite.

Bremer, Martineau, and Kemble were all in their own ways early feminists. Bremer and Martineau both contributed to the development of women's rights in their home countries, whereas Kemble can also be seen as a feminist, since she stepped out of normative gender roles and spoke out for women. Through their narratives, which often dealt with women or their conditions, it is clear that they all took a sincere interest in their advancement in society.

Bremer and Martineau both devoted chapters to describe the situation of women in the new world. Kemble and Martineau observed that many American women seemed unhealthy. Martineau concluded in her first impressions

It was now the end of a very hot summer, and every lady we met looked as if she were emerging from the yellow fever; and the languid and unsteady step betokened the reverse of health (Martineau Retrospect 38).

Martineau seems to trace the unhealthy appearances to the weather, which was apparently very hot, at least in comparison to the climate of England. Kemble, on the other hand, was convinced that the lack of physical exercise was the consequence of women's health issues in the American South.

The ladies that I have seen since I crossed the southern line, have all seemed to me extremely sickly in their appearance—delicate in the refined term, but unfortunately sickly in the truer one. They are languid in their deportment and speech, and seem to give themselves up, without an effort to counteract it, to the enervating effect of their warm climate. It is undoubtedly a most relaxing and unhealthy one, and therefore requires the more imperatively to be met by

energetic and invigorating habits both of body and mind (Kemble Plantation 115-116).

As already discussed, Kemble valued cleanliness, exercise, and an active life above most things. She and Martineau both employed the term 'languid' to describe some women they encountered. It seems that they both experienced the climate as exhausting and therefore concluded that the women who looked unhealthy probably suffered under too high temperatures.

Bremer seems to have noticed no signs of illness or malfunction of the American women. According to her, women enjoyed such freedom of choice in America, which in this case might reveal more of the Swedish conditions than those of America. Bremer developed her idealistic views while attending meetings in Boston. She made the acquaintance of one female physician called Ms. Hunt and a Mrs. Pauline Davis from Providence, whom she described as everything but languid

I saw various emancipated ladies, who gave public lectures at abolitionist meetings. One of them amazed me by her picturesque beauty of body and mind, and with her pale noble face and golden hair, but also through her gentle manners and language. This was combined with a masculine knowledge of science. It was Mrs. Pauline Davis. She had successfully given lectures to the working class on physiology for several years. She and my dear doctor (Ms. Hunt) are the dearest of friends (Bremer 78).

Evidently, this passage provides a very contrasted point of view to that of Martineau and Kemble. Instead of commenting on the lack of health, Bremer seems to praise the looks and vigor of the women she was acquainted with so far. She seems positively overwhelmed by the fact that women could give lectures, and that they could be physicians. To her, the women in the North were accomplished. The way she described Mrs. Davis, however, seems idealized. She employs adjectives that seem stereotypically feminine. Bremer has been criticized for having idealized the American society (Salenius 34). However, perhaps her euphoric impression of American society was very strong only at first, considering that Boston was one of the first cities she visited. Nevertheless, the question arises if Bremer was not too hasty to make the assumption that American society was very progressive concerning gender

equality. Notwithstanding that emancipated women existed, but it seems questionable to consider them a majority.

The standing of women in American society did not impress Martineau. She saw very limited opportunities for women to advance career-wise. She concluded that the only sensible thing to do for an American woman was to marry. She argued that women in America were in fact suppressed by patriarchy

How fearfully the morals of women are crushed, appears from the prevalent persuasion that there are virtues which are peculiarly masculine, and others which are peculiarly feminine. (...) Women are as might be anticipated, weak, ignorant, and subservient, in as far as they exchange self-reliance for reliance on anything out of themselves. Those who will not submit to such a suspension of their moral functions have to suffer for their allegiance to duty (Martineau Society 294-295).

Interestingly, she did not limit this observation to American society, but also admitted that English education for women was similar. Thus, both Martineau and Bremer criticized their native countries. Bremer even found more flaws with her own country than in the new world. Kemble hardly mentioned England or Europe in a negative manner. To her, Europe was far more advanced. Furthermore, she never expressed criticism that can be compared to Martineau's when it comes to women's position in society. One could say that Kemble's opinions were generally kept on a personal level, whereas Martineau attempted to be politically correct and more impersonal.

Bremer wrote that she thought that women who were truly successful in their careers would have less happiness in their private lives. She did not think it was possible for a woman to have a blossoming career at the same time as a good marriage. In other words, she thought that a woman would have to sacrifice one or the other. For instance, Bremer herself never married, and neither did Martineau. Kemble's marriage was unsuccessful and resulted in divorce. Bremer and Martineau seem to have devoted their lives to social improvements, and Kemble fulfilled her wish of becoming a writer after she had divorced. In other words, none of the three successfully combined a career and married life, although Martineau and Bremer also never tried. Ultimately, this suggests that they might have viewed this dilemma similarly and all decided for public life.

All of the three authors attempted to better the situation of women in their own ways. Bremer and Martineau spent their lives trying to achieve positive changes in society through their writing. Martineau published several political texts and repeatedly supported women in her immediate surroundings. Bremer, apart from writing controversial texts had the economic means to establish some charitable organizations in Sweden for women. One can still encounter her legacy in Sweden, since some schools and hospitals for women carry her name. Finally, Kemble, although she did not publicly admit to strive for the improvement of women, proved during her stay at her husband's plantation that she was willing to stand against the maltreatment of women. Furthermore, she repeatedly attempted to better their situation by talking to overseers, her husband, or even other plantation owners.

A further aspect that unites the three authors is their observations from the *ante bellum* South. Martineau and Bremer traveled to the South since they wished to experience slavery and southern culture. Kemble however, went south since her husband had his estate there. As a result, Kemble had more time to observe life in the South including plantation life, whereas Bremer and Martineau only spent time as visitors on plantations. Consequently, Kemble is the only author who described her personal relationships to slaves. Bremer and Martineau only wrote of slavery in general, and the short glimpses that they saw while visiting. All three seem to agree that slaveholding led to the curse of slavery. Bremer wrote

The curse of slavery, as it is usually referred to, does not merely disadvantage the blacks but even more the white population, since it manipulates their better judgment of right and wrong and pollutes their morals. The treatment and position of the slaves is yearly improving. However, the white people do not seem to progress (Bremer 97).

Bremer and Martineau were against slavery because of moral reasons and of their Christian beliefs. Bremer however, was the only one of the three who did not consider the slaves maltreated. She seemed more concerned about what slavery did to the citizens of the South than about how it affected the slaves. Bremer wrote on several occasions that the slaves of the South enjoyed better conditions than the workers in Sweden.

The house-slaves generally seem to be treated well here, and I have seen houses where the slaves were allowed rooms far better equipped than the rooms of the free servants in our country. The relationship between master and servant also usually seems to be good and heartily (...) (Bremer 95).

Clearly, Bremer was a lot more positive about the treatment of slaves than Martineau and Kemble, who could see absolutely nothing agreeable about it. This observation suggests that the living conditions in Sweden were worse than the ones in England, if we assume that each author compared the situation of the slaves to a standard they knew of. Interestingly, Bremer was an upper-class woman, whereas Kemble and Martineau came from upper-middle-class backgrounds. Nonetheless, Bremer still seemed to know more of how poor people and servants lived, which also indicates that the gap between social classes might have been narrower in Sweden than in England.

Kemble felt that slavery was a direct cruelty towards the colored people, and discussed how slavery destroyed the lives of several individuals. She criticized various individual aspects of slavery and not as much the whole institution. Possibly this was the case since she was living on a plantation and experienced the daily affairs of slavery. In any case, she felt that slavery had made the white people of the South lazy, since they did not want to perform manual labor themselves. She also noticed that white people of very low social standing would rather be immensely poor and unemployed than performing duties similar to those of slaves.

Labour being here the especial portion of slaves, it is thenceforth degraded, and considered unworthy of all but slaves. No white man, therefore, of any class puts hand to work of any kind soever. This is an exceedingly dignified way of proving their gentility, for the lazy planters who prefer an idle life of semi-starvation and barbarism to the degradation of doing anything themselves; but the effect on the poorer whites of the country is terrible (Kemble Plantation 131).

Evidently, Kemble could not sympathize with the life choices of the pine-landers. She identified slavery as the source of their reluctance towards manual labor. Kemble's description of pine-landers seems very similar to the depiction of clay-people that Bremer provided. However, Bremer did not openly criticize as much but merely

observed. Kemble clearly had no respect or interest in the pine-people, who according to her had been made lazy by the unfortunate institution of slavery. However, she equally criticized other southerners of being lazy and not merely the poor ones.

The Northern farmer, however, thinks it no shame to work, the Southern planter does; and there begins and ends the difference. Industry, man's crown of honour elsewhere, is here his badge of utter degradation; and so comes all by which I am here surrounded—pride, profligacy, idleness, cruelty, cowardice, ignorance, squalor, dirt, and ineffable abasement (Kemble Plantation 438).

Kemble could not understand the southerners reluctance to hard work. She saw it as one of the reasons that they did not develop with time as other people and countries would.

Bremer was aware that it was said that southerners did not like physical work, however, she described that she had also experienced the opposite.

You are already familiarized with Mrs. Howland, however, one cannot know or honor her before you see her performing her everyday duties at home. She appeals to me more as a Swedish woman than any other I met here so far, since she embodies calmness, and a caring motherly nature. She always finds something to do, and does not avoid hard manual work. (In the slave-states manual labor is usually considered shameful, and they give such labors to the slaves.) (Bremer 97).

This quote illustrates that Bremer was aware of the general ideas circulating concerning the southerners. However, it also shows that she was prepared to challenge such prejudices and drew her own individual conclusions. It seems that she understood that a general idea always permits exceptions, which makes her observations seem less biased than Martineau's and Kemble's, who seem to have had more of an agenda while writing about the laziness of the South.

Martineau also noticed that southerners did not find manual labor appealing. Moreover, when she visited the orphanage as discussed in an earlier chapter she wrote that even the boys did not have to perform any physical labor. She seems to have thought that it was a loss for the children not to learn more of practical and physical work, especially since they were all poor and without connections.

Importantly, although various southern farmers probably avoided physical labor whenever they could, Stamp (30) clearly states that this was a luxury that not everyone could afford. In fact, most farmers would have to work alongside their slaves in the fields. In addition, in *Letters from an American farmer* (1782) by Crèvecoeur, one can find evidence of farmers in the South who did not shun manual labor. Furthermore, the adventurer Frederick Law Olmsted, who rode through substantial parts of the South in the 1850's, clearly reports that most farms he visited did not have slaves.

All three authors expressed negative opinions of the southerners, but they all seemed to criticize different aspects. Kemble complained of the lack of order, cleanliness, cultivation, and intellectuality. Martineau was mainly displeased with the lack of morals and the hypocrisy of the southern Christian community. Bremer, although she liked several southerners, said that they were often reluctant to accept new ideas and change.

All three authors experienced a very different way of life while visiting the South. Bremer seems to have had no greater problems to adapt; however, Kemble and Martineau disapproved of several aspects of southern life. Kemble, for instance, was never satisfied with her home while she was in the South. She and her husband moved several times between his plantations, but everywhere they went Kemble reached similar conclusions about her accommodation

I have never inhabited any apartment so perfectly devoid of what we should consider the common decencies of life; but to them my rude chintz-covered sofa and common pine-wood table, with its green baize cloth, seem the adornings of a palace; and often in the evening, when my bairns are asleep, and M—— up-stairs keeping watch over them, and I sit writing this daily history for your edification,—the door of the great barn-like room is opened stealthily, and one after another, men and women come trooping silently in, their naked feet (Kemble Plantation 76).

Each abode seems worse than the last described. She had great problems with the interior of the rooms in which she lived. Secondly, she thought that their houses were not spacious enough. Thirdly, she did not approve that the slaves walked barefoot, and constantly entered the rooms. She mentions their filthy appearance in almost

every description of them or their vicinities. Martineau and Bremer, on the other hand, never directly wrote of hygienic issues. This could either indicate that Kemble cared much more about hygiene, or that only someone who spent a lot of time on a plantation was really confronted with these issues.

Martineau offered a general opinion of the South as disorganized. Although she criticized the morals of the people the most, she also questioned the southerner's way of life and peculiar daily routines.

The waking in the morning is accomplished by two or three black women staring at you from the bed posts. Then it is five minutes' work to get them out of the room. Perhaps, before you are half dressed, you are summoned to breakfast. You look at your watch, and listen whether it has stopped, for it seems not to be seven o'clock yet. You hasten, however, and find your hostess making the coffee. The young people drop in when the meal is half done, and then it is discovered that breakfast has been served an hour too early, because the clock has stopped, and the cook has ordered affairs according to her own conjectures. Everybody laughs, and nothing ensues (Martineau Retrospect 235).

It seems that Martineau shared Kemble's opinion that the house slaves were incompetent and questionable, since she implies that they would wake her up too early and act as if they did not know what they were doing. The whole passage is written with a sarcastic touch, slightly similar to Kemble's occasional humorous entries. The message seems clear; the South knows no order. Both Kemble and Martineau often seem to write under the motto: the ways of England are the ways of the world. Although at least Martineau often took a step back from her personal opinions and tried to view situations objectively, it is still transparent that both Martineau and Kemble felt superior to the citizens of the South. Bremer was more of an observer and did not convey such harsh opinions. She described a similar procedure of waking up to a new day in the South, but with a different tone:

Early in the morning Lettis comes, the black-brown servant, and brings me a cup of coffee. One hour later the small Willie knocks on my door to announce breakfast. Leaning on the shoulder of my small cavalier, and at times another small companion, I go to the bottom floor where the dining room is situated. There the family awaits me. The good Mrs. Howland offers, apart from coffee

and tea, lots of other tasty beverages, since here like in Sweden breakfast is treated like a real feast (Bremer 98).

Bremer draws clear comparisons between the South and Sweden, and often does so while describing what she encountered. In contrast to Martineau's quite similar description of a morning routine, Bremer does not seem to mind being awakened by the slaves, to whom she refers to as servants. She does not express any sarcasm towards the way of life that her host family leads, and seems content with their household. As a traveller, Bremer seems to have been the one who was most open toward new experiences and cultures. Although she always drew comparisons between what she experienced and what she was accustomed to, she was careful not to criticize too much.

The experiences of slave plantations played an important part in each travel narrative. Kemble was the only one who wrote exclusively about her encounters at one plantation, whereas Martineau and Bremer wrote of a few visits. Both Kemble and Martineau seemed to compare the infirmaries at the plantations to mental institutions, since they both described the slaves within the hospitals as if they were mentally impaired. One could suggest that their descriptions seem to fit the symptoms of the invented female sickness hysteria that gained new importance during the 19th century. Kemble wrote:

In the next room I found a woman lying on the floor in a fit of epilepsy, barking most violently. She seemed to excite no particular attention or compassion; the women said she was subject to these fits, and took little or no notice of her, as she lay barking like some enraged animal on the ground (Kemble Plantation 110-111).

Some typical features of severe hysteria were uncontrollable behavior that would cause women to behave like wild animals. The way Kemble described the slave in the hospital indeed corresponds to such a description. Martineau recalled a similar observation from one of her visits to a hospital for slaves:

You see a woman rolling herself about in a crib, with her head tied up. You ask if she is ill, and are told that she has not a good temper; that she struck at a girl she was jealous of with an axe, and the weapon being taken from her, she threw herself into the well, and was nearly drowned before she was taken out, with her head much hurt (Martineau Retrospect 213).

One can see clear parallels to hysteria in Martineau's description as well, since another symptom of the disease was aggressive and unpredictable behavior. Naturally, one cannot know if the circumstances in the infirmaries were indeed as bad as Kemble and Martineau described, since part of their purposes of publishing was to illustrate the cruelties of slavery. They might have exaggerated in their recollections to appear more convincing. However, in any case, one can detect a clear influence of the science of the 19th century in their writing.

Bremer on the other hand, did not find any hidden cruelties or maltreatment at the plantations she visited. She described quite the opposite regarding cleanliness in comparison to Kemble. She wrote:

I asked permission to look around in the slave village near the mansion. She coldly granted me permission and came with me. The hands (the working negroes of the South are referred to as hands) were out in the fields working, and their houses were locked. However, some of them were open, and these I visited. In one of them I met an old negroe man with a wounded foot. Himself and his abode appeared very well taken care of (Bremer 110-111).

Bremer's description does not convey the feeling of being in a mental institution, although this description is not of an infirmary but simply of a wounded slave in his hut. Nevertheless, one can notice clear differences to the descriptions that Kemble provided concerning the hygiene and order of the slave cabins. Notwithstanding that the cleanliness and order would vary depending on plantation, it still seems as if Bremer had a different opinion of what cleanliness was. The following quote suggests the same:

Yesterday I went alone to explore the woods and the fields. I arrived at a pretty cottage in the middle of a forest, and at the door was a fat mulatto, who looked like she would be the owner of the abode. (...) The mulatto was talkative and showed me the whole house that had been bought for her and her husband for life by their massa. The house, the interior, and the garden looked neat and orderly just like the couple themselves (Bremer 124-125).

Bremer, once again, wrote that the slaves and their house looked well kept. She also mentions that their slaveholder gave them the house as a gift, which shows that there were slaveholders who were willing to treat their workers with some kindness.

Consequently, Bremer's descriptions seems to be less emotional, and written rather to inform than influence the reader. Furthermore, the quote clearly shows that Bremer had no problem associating with people of lower standing, whereas the quote from Martineau seems quite impersonal and distancing by the use of a third person narration.

None of the authors had to be in the South for a long time before they saw that interracial relationships were a very problematic issue. Kemble spent quite some time observing and thinking about the matter. She thought that the slaveholders took advantage of the female slaves, and ridiculed the fact that a white man could not marry a black woman, but that there was no law forbidding him to have intercourse with a slave. When she moved with her husband from their rice plantation to the cotton plantation, she noted:

I observed, among the numerous groups that we passed or met, a much larger proportion of mulattoes than at the rice-island; upon asking Mr. ——— why this was so, he said that there no white person could land without his or the overseer's permission, whereas on St. Simon's, which is a large island containing several plantations belonging to different owners, of course the number of whites, both residing on and visiting the place, was much greater, and the opportunity for intercourse between the blacks and whites much more frequent. While we were still on this subject, a horrid-looking filthy woman met us with a little child in her arms, a very light mulatto, whose extraordinary resemblance to Driver Bran (one of the officials, who had been duly presented to me on my arrival, and who was himself a mulatto) struck me directly. I pointed it out to Mr. ———, who merely answered, 'Very likely his child' (Kemble Plantation 281-282).

Because of Kemble's disposition, she did not only theoretically deliberate on interracial relationships as problematic, but also experienced the direct consequences of them. While on the cotton plantation, she recognized the descent of various mulatto children, since she knew their fathers. This caused some trouble when she confronted certain people with it. The quote illustrates that some southerners did not seem to think it awkward that the slaveholders and staff frequently had sexual relationships with the slaves, whereas Kemble seemed quite taken aback at first. Furthermore, after some time, Kemble noticed that some slaves seemed to welcome interracial relations with their masters:

the continuance of the family keeps the estate and slaves from the hammer, and the poor wretches, besides seeing in every new child born to their owners a security against their own banishment from the only home they know, and separation from all ties of kindred and habit, and dispersion to distant plantations, not unnaturally look for a milder rule from masters who are the children of their fathers' masters. (Kemble Plantation 289).

Accordingly, Kemble could see that some slaves saw an advantage in having a sexual relationship with a white person of higher social standing, although this may have meant that they were violated. This was according to her yet another tragic consequence of slavery that deprived the colored people of basic human rights and polluted the morals of the white population. This type of insight into plantation life is exclusive to Kemble's writing. Neither Martineau nor Bremer had the possibility to get to know overseers or slaveholders as closely as Kemble, and when they visited plantations they were merely guests, whereas Kemble was family. Additionally, she was married to the owner of the plantation, which suggests that the people working for her husband would, at least to a certain degree have to answer her questions.

Martineau commented upon interracial relationships by saying that she had nothing against them. She also criticized the law that forbade interracial marriages, since she thought that mutual affection ought to be the only criterion for entering a marriage. While visiting a plantation she noticed "An old man, blacker than the rest, is indicated to you as a native African; and you point out a child so light as to make you doubt whether he be a slave" (Martineau Retrospect 217). In other words, Martineau understood fully that slaveholders at times had intimate contact with slaves. In *Society in America* she addressed the morals of slavery and commented on mixed colored relationships.

The very general connexion of white gentlemen with their female slaves introduced a mulatto race whose numbers would become dangerous, if the affections of their white parents were permitted to render them free. The liberty of emancipating them was therefore abolished, while that of selling them remained (Martineau Society 226).

Martineau evidently sees a dilemma in the relationships that occurred on the plantations. Just like Kemble she seems to understand that some slaves might

welcome such a relationship since they might gain some advantage from it. However, to Martineau it was and remained morally wrong. She observed that the benefits that a slave could gain from such a connection were not significant. They could not legally be liberated but simply treated with a more gentle touch.

Bremer did not write about interracial relationships directly, but she mentioned 'mulattos' on several occasions. "Two thirds of the people whom one sees out in the town are negroes or mulattos" (Bremer 115). This observation naturally suggests that she was aware of these incidents. However, Bremer wrote already at the beginning of her narrative that she did not wish to write a lot about slavery out of respect for her hosts.

While in the South, all three authors were confronted with arguments from southerners that were supposed to convince them of slavery as an institution. One of the main arguments was that the slaves wished to remain in captivity. This was an idea that none of the ladies could fully accept as true, but they were all confronted by it. Martineau retold a conversation that she had had while on a tour through Charleston

I was informed that the church had once before been on fire, but had been saved by the exertions of a slave, who "had his liberty given him for a reward."

"A reward!" said I. "What! when the slaves are convinced that their true happiness lies in slavery?"

The conversation had come to an awkward pass. A lady advanced to the rescue, saying that some few, too many, were haunted by a pernicious fancy, put into their heads by others, about liberty; a mere fancy, which, however, made them like the idea of freedom.

"So the benefactor of the city was rewarded by being indulged, to his own hurt, in a pernicious fancy?"

"Why yes." (Martineau Retrospect 240).

This entertaining anecdote is intended to illustrate that most slaves did not want to remain slaves, but that the slaveholders wanted it to appear so. This conversation shows the hypocrisy of the ideology of the southerners, who, on the one side claimed that the slaves did not want liberty, however, on the other considered it a reward to

free a slave. Martineau interpreted the rumors of slaves rejecting freedom accordingly:

Slaves are more or less degraded by slavery in proportion to their original strength of character or educational discipline of mind. The most degraded are satisfied, the least degraded are dissatisfied with slavery. The lowest order prefer release from duties and cares to the enjoyment of rights and the possession of themselves; and the highest order have a directly opposite taste. The mistake lies in not perceiving that slavery is emphatically condemned by the conduct of both. The stories on the one side of the question are all alike. The master offers freedom—of course, to the worst of his slaves—to those who are more plague than profit. Perhaps he sends the fellow he wants to get rid of on some errand into a free state, hoping that he will not return. The man comes back; and, if questioned as to why he did not stay where he might have been free, he replies that he knows better than to work hard for a precarious living when he can be fed by his master without anxiety of his own as long as he lives (Martineau Retrospect 242-243).

Clearly, Martineau observed that the slave community consisted of various personalities. She understood that one could not simply say that everyone wished for liberation. However, she argues that since the lack of education ultimately led to their ignorance, one could not expect a different outcome. She seems to assume that the slaves who did not desire liberty were afraid of having to take responsibility for themselves, which is understandable since they had known nothing else. Importantly, she despised the fact that the southerners would take advantage of the slave's ignorance to convince them that they were better off as their property.

Bremer concluded that slaves who did not want liberty were usually afraid of economic insecurity. In other words, she was of a similar opinion to Martineau. However, she did not seem to necessarily think that the slaves who wanted to remain enslaved were simple-minded. She had met a woman who was already quite old and had bought her children liberty, but she herself did not wish to become free.

It is true that she feels content with her situation, and she does not wish for liberty, since, at her age, would not prove advantageous to her. She would simply trade a life of no worries to one with uncertainty. "When I grow old and cannot work anymore" she said "my master will take care of me". And that is how many slaves think on it and therefore do not spend any time worrying about freedom. That seems to be fine when the masters are honest

and do not pass away before the old slaves. However, if they die before their slaves, the destiny of the slaves is very uncertain, and they might end up with new masters and live under far worse circumstances than domestic animals (Bremer 110).

Evidently, Bremer saw two sides of the story, and realized that a slave who felt well taken care of and knew of no other life, would prefer to stay with his master.

However, she also concluded that if the slave would outlive his master, there was no certainty for him. This shows that she was very aware of the fact that there were kind slaveholders who took care of their slaves, but that the opposite existed as well. To reach this conclusion, it seems that Bremer relied on stories told her, since she only had positive experiences on plantations. In any case, she raised awareness of the fact that slaves, as long as they remained thus, could never be assured of a safe future.

Kemble, although she almost exclusively wrote of slavery, did not often discuss emancipation. However, she had formed a sort of friendship with the slave Jack, who upon her arrival at the plantation, had been assigned to her as her personal servant. At first, she did not approve that Jack accompanied her everywhere she went. However, after some time, she grew to like him. One time she entered a quite personal conversation with him concerning emancipation.

I suddenly asked him if he would like to be free. A gleam of light absolutely shot over his whole countenance, like the vivid and instantaneous lightning—he stammered, hesitated, became excessively confused, and at length replied—'Free, missis? what for me wish to be free? Oh! no, missis, me no wish to be free, if massa only let we keep pig.' The fear of offending, by uttering that forbidden wish—the dread of admitting, by its expression, the slightest discontent with his present situation—the desire to conciliate my favour, even at the expense of strangling the intense natural longing that absolutely glowed in his every feature—it was a sad spectacle, and I repented my question (Kemble Plantation 82).

Kemble realized that although they had a sort of friendship, she was still a white superior person to him. He would not speak openly with her, since he might have feared punishment. Instead of confessing that he might desire liberty, he makes a more humble request to keep a pig, and assures repeatedly how lucky he is to be in the care of her family. Naturally, she could understand his predicament and regretted

having asked him. However, she suspected that he wished to be free, and even described it as a natural longing. In other words, she believed that each individual would innately desire freedom. This idea can also be traced back to several enlightenment thinkers such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Locke.

Bremer, Martineau, and Kemble all seem to have rejected the racial ideologies of the 19th century. Although it is possible to find descriptions and opinions that would correspond to the idea of white superiority, the majority of their retellings and actions illustrated the opposite. Kemble, for instance, did not think that there should be segregation in the church, and would not go to sermons in her local church

this man is known to be a hard master; his negro houses are sheds, not fit to stable beasts in, his slaves are ragged, half-naked and miserable—yet he is urgent for their religious comforts, and writes to Mr. —— about 'their souls, their precious souls.' He was over here a few days ago, and pressed me very much to attend his church. I told him I would not go to a church where the people who worked for us were parted off from us, as if they had the pest, and we should catch it of them. (...) Oh, what a shocking mockery! (Kemble Plantation 126).

From this passage, one can clearly see that Kemble stood above common racial ideologies that would not question the inferior position of colored people. Additionally, it shows that she would openly defend the slaves, which was quite uncommon in the South, and unusual for someone who indirectly owned slaves. Furthermore, the conversation shows that Kemble spoke very directly with others about her own opinions. Bremer and Martineau always tried to keep very polite and civil and would not even openly contradict opinions, but write them down on a later occasion. However, the strongest proof of Kemble's empathy for the slaves and her distinction from other people of the same era, were her reoccurring personal recollections of their sufferings

His appearance was that of utter exhaustion from age and feebleness; he had nothing under him but a mere handful of straw that did not cover the earth he was stretched on; and under his head, by way of pillow for his dying agony, two or three rough sticks just raising his skull a few inches from the ground. The flies were all gathering around his mouth, and not a creature was near him. There he lay,—the worn-out slave, whose life had been spent in unrequited labour for me and mine (Kemble Plantation 433).

Although Kemble often wrote about the slaves in ways that discredited them, these kinds of entries show that she actually cared for the slaves a lot. Although she might have felt morally and intellectually superior to the slaves, she still perceived of them as human beings with the same ability to feel, learn, and live as anyone else. To her, they were all unique individuals, which explains why she always referred to them with names, if she knew them.

Martineau believed that humans all had equal value. She did often say that she found the slaves ignorant or even stupid. However, she knew that this was because they were not allowed any education, and not because they were innately inferior to the white population. She wrote:

The personal oppression of the negroes is the grossest vice which strikes a stranger in the country. It can never be otherwise when human beings are wholly subjected to the will of other human beings, who are under no other external control than the law which forbids killing and maiming- a law which is difficult to enforce in individual cases (Martineau Society 223).

She refers both to the slaves, and the slaveholders as simply human beings, which illustrates her personal opinion that humans, no matter which skin color, were equals. She concluded that in a situation, like the one in the South, no progression could be made, since one part of the population was completely dependent upon the mercy of the other half.

Bremer, although she belonged to the upper class was very understanding in her manners, and did not feel above the slaves or other people of lower social standing. While she was in Savannah, she visited several plantations and recalled that there were some people that she admired for their ideas.

I also made the acquaintance of several outstanding people, men and women, who were true Christians and authentic citizens of the new world. They have slowly and wisely started the emancipation of the slaves. They are giving the slaves the possibility to earn money so that they can buy their own freedom. They also encourage the slaves to be purposeful so that they can have earned

their liberty within a couple of years. How remarkable these people appear to me! (Bremer 109).

Although Bremer did not write of any bad experiences with slavery during her journey through the South, she still wished for emancipation. She believed that it was the natural right of the colored people to become free. Furthermore, she traveled to America, since she wanted to encounter new ways of seeing and extraordinary individuals. Evidently, the people who tried peacefully to help the slaves made a strong impression on her.

In retrospect, while reading and analyzing these texts, the motivations for publishing are a significant aspect to consider. Generally speaking, all three authors wanted to influence society with their writings. Although it was fashionable at the time to imply that a travel narrative had originally not been written with any thoughts of publication, the analyzed texts surely seem written in a way intended to be published. Kemble's primary aim was to provide a text that would utterly condemn the institution of slavery. Despite her journal consisting of letters, none of the letters were ever sent.

Bremer and Martineau thought that they could challenge the political situation of women by publishing their narratives. They were concerned with women's advancement in society although they were also abolitionists. Their texts do not only treat the institution of slavery although they repeatedly condemn it. Their motive seems to have been to create an awareness of the superstitions in society that denied women, and people in inferior positions, progress. Bremer also seems to have wanted to provide descriptions of her journey, which is characteristic of a more traditional travel narrative. Moreover, Martineau criticized American and English society, whereas Bremer did not openly criticize, but wanted to see progress in Sweden. Their opinions were often very similar, which may not be surprising, since Bremer had read Martineau's books before traveling herself (Burman 471). For example, they both criticized that women could hardly own property. In addition, they wanted greater variety and scope in women's education, and they wished for women to be able to have careers outside the domestic sphere.

As a result of her books on America, Martineau gained even more of a reputation as a writer, although many responses were negative. Bremer applied many ideas that she had collected while in America to Swedish society. For example, she helped opening the first Swedish University for women. Kemble seems to have remained very independent and outgoing after her stay in America, but did not attempt to change society in her own country, as Bremer and Martineau did. Her goal seems to have been emancipation for the slaves and herself.

Their shared opinions concerning human rights and the position of women in society placed all three authors ahead of their time. During the 19th century women still had a very confined place in society that was more or less limited to the domestic sphere (Cox 103). The initiative of traveling around in a foreign country for two years is alone evidence of the independency and determination of the three women, since traveling at the time was time-consuming and sometimes dangerous. Although some railways existed, much of their journeys were still undertaken with horse and carriage.

They all published their texts, which to a reader today might not seem controversial, although they knew that they would meet with many negative responses, since they addressed matters that appeared unsuitable to be discussed by women at the time. However, since they chose to address these controversial topics they contributed to the advancement of women in society, and made significant contributions to human rights and equality simply by raising awareness.

To me, Bremer, Martineau, and Kemble represent authors who were influenced by the Enlightenment and its advocacy of egalitarian values. They were aware that their literary contributions would not change the world at once; however, they believed in the power of unique individuals, and that each contribution was important. In other words, they dared stepping out of normative and stereotypical feminine patterns of behavior in order to encourage change in a society that they perceived of as unjust. They did not hesitate to criticize people and society, which also had consequences for them. Consequently, these three women, although they did not collaborate, wrote and made efforts for a united cause, at approximately the same time.

Their texts provide reliable insights into social institutions that, without these kinds of narrations, would long be forgotten. Although their texts may have been regarded as scandalous and shameful at the time of their release, they have in recent years earned recognition, and by so doing, have fulfilled the purpose of the authors. One can suggest that their texts encouraged other women to strive for more independence, and inspired future feminists. Finally, their legacy seems to gain importance as the years go by, undoubtedly since upon renewed readings scholars have been able to see how these three women embodied modern values that were dismissed at the time.

7. Conclusion

This paper has discussed travel narratives by Bremer, Martineau, and Kemble. The analysis has illustrated that all three authors were passionate about changing social institutions of their time by challenging dominant ideologies and norms. Through their writing, they genuinely attempted to change society, disregarding the strong opposition they encountered. Although none of them referred to themselves as feminists, the analysis has clearly shown that they all actively contributed to the development of individual women, as well as women's standing in society. Furthermore, their insights into the ante-bellum American South are valuable historical evidence of a time that without documentation would be long forgotten. Foremost, their descriptions of slavery and the exploitation of slaves in the South should be considered as unique observations of cultural difference. Finally, their decision to observe and write about society, morals, and manners ultimately challenged society and individuals to rethink ethical and moral questions.

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9. Appendix

English Abstract

This Master thesis examines non-fictional travel narratives of the ante-bellum American South by Fredrika Bremer, Harriet Martineau, and Fanny Kemble. By applying a close reading of their texts I suggest that the three authors were early feminists and rejected normative racial ideologies of their time. Importantly, in the 19th century, the American South was no longer considered a cultural and political capital. In fact, the South was steadily declining in significance, and decreased transatlantic bonds with Europe to maintain their way of life, foremost the social institution of slavery, which was ultimately abolished with their defeat in the Civil War in 1865. Consequently, the historical context helps to understand the importance of the observations made by the authors, since they traveled and experienced while the South underwent critical changes. To begin, a separate analysis of each author provides substantial examples of these women's observations concerning society, slavery, and gender roles, whereas the concluding comparative analysis seeks to illustrate how their opinions and observations often overlapped. The results clearly show that the three authors went to great lengths to change society through their writing, which at the time was met with strong opposition. However, today their opinions correspond to modern ethical and moral conventions, which indicates their timeless value. From a larger perspective, this thesis raises awareness of the social position of women and slaves in 19th century American society, and it offers insights into the gradually changing American South and its inhabitants.

Key Words: ante-bellum, transatlantic, feminism, slavery, travel-narration, close reading, 19th century, Civil War, gender roles

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Masterarbeit beschäftigt sich mit Reiseberichten von Bremer, Martineau und Kemble über den amerikanischen Süden vor dem Bürgerkrieg. Eine eingehende Analyse der Texte deutet darauf hin, dass die drei Autorinnen frühe Feministinnen waren und dass sie normative Rasseideologien ablehnten. Wichtig dabei ist, dass der amerikanische Süden im 19. Jahrhundert nicht mehr als kulturelles und politisches Zentrum betrachtet wurde. Der Süden verlor zusehends an Bedeutung, und transatlantische Beziehungen wurden schwächer, da der Süden vor allem danach strebte, seine Traditionen zu erhalten - vor allem die Sklaverei, die nach der Niederlage im Bürgerkrieg 1865 schlussendlich abgeschafft wurde. Dieser historische Kontext verleiht den Beobachtungen der Autorinnen besondere Bedeutung, da sie den Süden in Zeiten einschneidender Veränderungen bereisten. Im ersten Teil der Arbeit werden die Reiseberichte der einzelnen Autorinnen analysiert, und es werden anschauliche grundlegende Beispiele für ihre Beobachtungen zu Gesellschaft, Sklaverei und Gender-Rollen gegeben. Die abschließende vergleichende Analyse zeigt Übereinstimmungen zwischen den Meinungen und Beobachtungen der drei Autorinnen. Aus den Ergebnissen geht deutlich hervor, dass sie große Anstrengungen unternommen haben, um mit ihren Texten gesellschaftliche Veränderungen herbeizuführen - was damals großen Widerstand hervorrief. Heute würden die Meinungen der drei Autorinnen modernen ethischen und moralischen Konventionen entsprechen, was ihre Berichte besonders wertvoll macht. Ein weiterer Mehrwert der Arbeit liegt darin, dass sie neue Einsichten in die soziale Stellung von Frauen und Sklaven in der amerikanischen Gesellschaft bietet und illustriert, wie sich der amerikanische Süden und dessen Einwohner allmählich verändert haben.

Schlagworte: Ante-bellum, Transatlantische Beziehungen, Feminismus, Sklaverei, Reiseberichte, 19te Jahrhundert, Bürger Krieg, Gender-Rollen