
Margaret Fuller and Her Publics in Russia – in the 19th Century and the 21st

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Abstract

I intend to compare the ways Margaret Fuller's work was received by the public in Russia in the middle of the 19th century and is being received now, in the second decade of the 21st. The analysis of the situation in the 19th century is based on the first publications on Fuller in Russia, particularly the reviews of one book: R. W. Emerson, W. H. Channing, and J. F. Clarke, eds., *Memoirs Of Margaret Fuller Ossoli* (1852); for the situation in the 21st I use my teaching experience at the School of Journalism of Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO – University). The comparative analysis shows that there are important similarities and differences in the attitudes of the public, and these two tendencies go hand in hand. The differences often reflect the cultural changes. Some of them are quite positive: in the 19th century the magazines, working under censorship, did not describe Fuller's revolutionary views and her work during the revolution in Rome; nowadays this aspect of her life draws the greatest attention and helps characterize Fuller as an important figure in both American and European history. Others are less positive: the readers of the 19th century were well versed in German philosophy, American Transcendentalism was considered in the context of European thought and discussed at length; in the 21st century the public is less receptive to the philosophical aspects of Fuller's heritage. The similarities, on the other hand, show that Fuller's person is no less attractive for the public now than she was in the middle of the 19th century. Moreover, the attraction has become much deeper, as Fuller's romantic life has acquired heroic qualities and an important public dimension.

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