

T.C.

İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE PROGRAMME



**UNSUNG HEROINES OF AMERICAN CIVIL WAR: REVERSAL OF GENDER
ROLES IN LOUISA MAY ALCOTT'S *LITTLE WOMEN* AND CHARLES
FRAZIER'S *COLD MOUNTAIN***

MA THESIS

Mina AL-RUBAYE

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İSTANBUL, MAY 2022

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PREFACE

I would like to thank my family for the support and encouragement they gave me through this hard journey, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my mother who was always there for me, she is the one who showed me the way in each step I take she is my true heroine.

I would dedicate this project to my late father who left this world 10 years ago, whom I am sure will be very proud of me. And special thanks to my two sisters, my two role models, who helped me a lot during my studying journey.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Javid, for the continuous support of my research, for his patience, and for immense knowledge to write and finalize this project within the limited time frame.

İSTANBUL, 2022

Mina AL-RUBAYE

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ÖZET

AMERİKA İÇ SAVAŞININ BAHSEDİLMİYEN KADIN KAHRAMANLARI :
LOUSİA MAY ALCOTT'UN *KÜÇÜK KADINLAR* I VE CHARLES FRAİZER'İN
SOĞUK DAĞ INDAKİ ROLLERİN BAŞ KALDIRIMI.

Bu tez, savaş edebiyatı çerçevesinde cinsiyetin terse çevrimi kuramını uygulamaya ve geliştirmeye, kuramın tipikleşmiş zayıf kadın karakterlere değişiklik sunmadaki etkisine, Amerikan İç Savaşı'nda kadınların rolünü incelemeye ve cinsiyet rollerine karşın kadınların duruşlarını ele almaya çabalamaktadır. Aynı zamanda bu çalışma on dokuzuncu yüzyılda kadınlara farklı rollerin biçildiği Luisa May Alcott'un *Little Women* ve Charles Frazier'ın *Cold Mountain eserlerinde* kahramanlara uygulanan cinsiyetin terse çevrimi kuramını tartışmakta, her iki eserde kahramanın Amerikan İç Savaşı esnasında kadının tanımına, ailedeki, eğitimdeki ve toplumsal çalışma alanlarındaki konumuyla ne denli uyuştuklarının analizini yapmaktadır. Kadının Amerikan İç Savaşı esnasında uygun görüldüğü role, ve Amerikan toplumunun belirlediği bu rolün iyileştirilmesinde kadınların katkılarına ışık tutmasıyla bu çalışma önem arz etmektedir.

Mina AL-RUBAYE, 2022

Anahtar kelimeler: Savaş Edebiyatı, İç Savaş, kalıp yargılar, kadının rolü, cinsiyet, terse çevrim

ABSTRACT

UNSUNG HEROINES OF AMERICAN CIVIL WAR: REVERSAL OF GENDER ROLES IN LOUISA MAY ALCOTT'S *LITTLE WOMEN* AND CHARLES FRAZIER'S *COLD MOUNTAIN*

This thesis aims to deploy and develop the use of reversing gender role theory in war literature and its implication for changing the typical use of weak female characters in war novels, to examine the role of women in the American Civil War, considering women's position against gender roles. This study will discuss the application of reversing gender role theory to the main characters in *Little Women* by Luisa May Alcott and *Cold Mountain* by Charles Frazier, both books that explore the different roles of women in the 19th century as well as the analysis of the main characters in both novels as they relate to the description of women during the American Civil War, their positions in the family, education, and the public work environment. The significance of this study is to draw attention to the lack of studies concerning women's role in the American Civil War and their contribution to the institution of rehabilitation of gender roles prescribed by American society.

Mina AL-RUBAYE, 2022

KeyWords: War Literature, Civil War, Stereotypes, Women's Role, Gender, Reversal

INTRODUCTION

Few researchers in recent years dared to consider women as central actors in wars, confirming that women's role in war crises has always been noticeable and important, in both conveying peace and relief and participating in the war grounds by holding weapons and fighting side by side with men. In particular, women in the American Civil War are essential contributors to preserving life during and after the war, in a patriarchal society where gender roles are fundamental, and households are traditionally considered to be the center of public communication, in addition to limited educational and professional opportunities for women.

Ladies keep the stores here now ... their husbands having joined the army. It looks funny in Dixie to see a lady behind the counter, but it would be natural if we were in Yankee-Dom as it has always been the custom there, a custom however I do not like. The idea of a lady having to face and transact business with any and everybody. It is alone suited to the Northern women of brazen faces. But I say if it is necessary, our ladies ought to shop keep and do everything else they can to aid in the great struggle for Liberty. (Faust, 1996, P.4)

The American Civil War is one of the most important events in the history of the United States of America because it was the most traumatic experience endured by any generation of American civilians, resulting in 2 percent of deaths in the 1860 American population. It is also a well-known fact that the American Civil War has made significant changes in American society, starting from unifying the political entity of the United States of America, which led to liberating more than four million enslaved Americans, empowering American women by proving their position in American society and step out of 19th-century stereotypes (Britannica, 2020).

The Southern states differed from the Northern states in the traits of honor and chivalry, as well as in working opportunities, but although the North and South had different interpretations of gender differences, they both valued a woman's external revelation in submitting to male authority, believing both that these behaviors are the principles of society. Nevertheless, the Southern women did not

have the same freedom as the Northern women, as they were not allowed to work, considering the significance of the Southern household as the basis of family life, which is considered to be the reason for the delay in the full development and capabilities of the Southern society.

All American women struggled during the Civil War, whether they were from the North or the South, whether they were poor or middle or upper class, and whether they were black or white, especially Southern women who had witnessed the war in their neighborhoods and knew nothing but being perfect housewives to the war-ravaged Southern states. Still, many women had the urge to overcome social restrictions and fight for equal opportunity, which was especially important to them. The Civil War opened up work opportunities for women outside of gender roles and households, but it did not change the way American women were viewed and treated in the 19th century (McCurry, 2010, p.88).

Scholarships and literary works have always presented war as a masculine act regardless of the participation of women in war, since they were presented as weak and useless factors. For this reason, there have always been conflicting views and a lack of documentation and reflection in considerations through the academic research about how significant and effective the role of women was in shaping American society as it is today. Both Northern and Southern American women have participated either directly or indirectly in the war in the absence of men, yet, in different ways depending on the traditional and social norms of their states. Instead, a large amount of the scholarships for war threw women's efforts to the edge, discussing them only as minor participants compared to the essential efforts done by men on battlefields as well as in political fields. Presenting women in most accounts the housewives who just stay at home and do nothing.

However, in the last decade, numerous studies have been conducted on the role of women in wars, concluding that war, although a horrific act, breaks gender restrictions and paves the way for women to participate and expand their position

in society. Feminist scholars have discussed that women are not always the victims of wars, but also agents of change and reform, they bring peace and regulate the system, wars can be a tool for women's recognition and independence as they are in the absence of men in the public sphere.

I shall never take on myself anything that a servant can do as well, and never do anything that a lady may not with perfect propriety do. I shall not talk familiarly with the patients. In fact, I shall maintain every particle of the dignity which belongs to my sex and position, and at the same time, I think I can be kind and useful. (Crutcher,1862, p.103)

Through war literature, some writers well-used their literary output to introduce women's role through reversed gender-stereotypical characters during the American Civil War to present women's hidden powerful abilities in compelled and strained societies during a conflicted situation, which worked in raising awareness over the freedom of gender roles and breaking the gender stereotypical characters of the nineteenth century's novels.

Given the deficiency of research on women's role in the American Civil War, this research aims to identify and evaluate literary developing approaches and strategies for women's role in the American Civil war, and their impact on improving the traditional norms of the society in which subject knowledge is evolving, from a gender-stereotyped society controlled by men and the struggles of women to break these stereotypes in different conditions, of the Southern and the Northern American women, besides that, presenting the reversed gender stereotypes during war literature through two literary texts written in two different periods by two different genders.

Little Women 1868 by Louisa May Alcott, who lived through the Civil War and participated as a practicing nurse, and *Cold Mountain* 1997 by Charles Frazier, who wrote his book inspired by his great-uncle's story, who had participated in the war, explored in their books the struggles of strong female protagonists (Jo March and Ada Monroe) who transformed themselves from traditional 19th-century women into strong, independent women, who were able to

achieve anything they desired; in particular, these characters represent the Southern woman who, unlike Northerners, are subject to strict rules, and two male characters (Laurie and Inman) who defy stereotypical male expectations, thus breaking typical traditional war stories and normalizing the different uses of gender roles. As much as these literary strategies helped to change the traditional mentality in American society, especially in post-war literary works, these new, changeable characters were criticized from many sides, claiming that they ruined and destroyed traditional American values.

This study will contribute to the body of knowledge by surfacing and evaluating developing studies of breaking gender roles in war literature, in which knowledge and researches are rapidly and constantly changing. This will help to address the existing research deficiency within this field while also offering value to studies operating in such rapid environments. This chapter provides an introduction to the study by first discussing the historical background and context, followed by the research problem, aims, objectives, and questions, and finally the significance. The first chapter discusses how literature has an important impact on developing the social and traditional mind in times of war, through war literature that changes ideas and free limited stereotyped norms. Introducing war literature as a genre explains how it affects readers generally in helping them get through war traumas and documenting real war events. Gradually the American Civil war historical background discusses the impact of changing American society forever. Chapter Two presents the theoretical framework, the gender role theory and its application to American society through gender stereotypical roles for males and females and the struggles Southern and Northern women had to go through to survive the war and gender restrictions. As well as the important role of women who reversed their gender roles during the war, their sacrifices, their reforming role, and the broader research design are discussed. Chapter Three studies the reversed gender-stereotypical strategy through the two novels *Little Women* and

Cold Mountain, it also analyzes and discusses the application of the strategy to the characters.



FIRST CHAPTER

1. WAR LITERATURE

The understanding of war concept has primarily centered on one definition, according to the theorist Carl Von Clausewitz: war is simply a battle between different forces, each one of them trying through their physical strength to oblige the other force to fulfill their demand, conducted by morality or political motives. As he states: “War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will (Clausewitz, 1976, p.75).

War has many deep effects that cannot be ignored, particularly, its impact on forming human development over history, as well as on social, geographical, political, and economic changes. Significantly, it brings a second thought to the fundamental purpose of human existence and its pursuit of living. War has created many nations and paved the way for them to grow and flourish, on the other hand, it shut down the future for other nations and tarnished them entirely. Throughout the centuries war has become enormously more deadly with massive effects, as described by the French poet Paul Valery: “War: a massacre of people who don’t know each other for the profit of people who know each other but don't massacre each other.” (Valery,2020)

The paradox of war, is that it has always been criticized by historians and portrayed as waste and cruel, however, it is had been described through the years as admirable for the courage of the army and the danger of it. It is certain that war affects language and expressions equally; new vocabularies develop and new expressions are adapted for particular situations. For instance, the British refer to someone as “French” to express how rude they are using the phrase “taking French leave” which means leaving rudely because Britain and France were once enemies; the same applies to expressions in French. Undoubtedly, war is one of the first literary subjects war narratives have been included in literature from the

beginning of creation, and there were times when war was the only literary subject. Consequently, literature's response to a crisis has continued to evolve alongside constant cultural change through to literary production today.

1.1 War Literature as a Genre

Writing about a violent act of war, along with its consequences, is as old as war itself. The subject of war alone has captivated writers to produce their best literary works; it nourishes language with new vocabulary to devise appropriate and credible methods of expression. Although, writing is considered to be civilization's finest gift to humankind and culture prevails over barbarism, war has come to prove that the brutality has survived to challenge culture. Theorists and historical thinkers have confirmed that war has the ability to limit language and at the same time the power to destroy human empathy and express the violence of war.

War literature is one of the oldest genres and has had a place in literature since the ancient Roman and Greek eras, when it was almost the only subject inspiring epic poems, sagas, and tragedies. It is still important in modern literature, particularly in times of crisis; writers exploit their abundant resources to contribute an authentic literary response to such an extraordinary event as war.

War literature was first utilized in ancient times in the form of epic poetry such as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, whose main subject was battles taken from Greek mythology. The war literature of Western civilization, similarly, continued to comprise works of various types and themes to portray conflict. Classical tragedies constituted a large body of early European literature in the 16th century, and William Shakespeare, as the creator of great tragedies and history plays, was one of the earliest dramatists to employ war themes in his literary works, for example *Richard III* and *Henry V*. His tragedies were influenced by war and paved the way for new dramatists to establish the concept of writing fictional accounts of historical events. Indeed, war literature is an enduring genre used by

writers and historians over the centuries; however, nineteenth-century war literature is quite different and comprises an extensive body of works, and twentieth-century literature is a witness to major world wars. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries mark the beginning of modern war literature and centered on depicting events of real-life wars, such as the American Civil War, World War I, and World War II, providing readers with insight into how war literature could shape their understanding of the world before and after a war.

“With the twelfth stroke of midnight, the darkness was complete. A turbulent welter of cloud covered the city. All was darkness; all was doubt; all was confusion. The eighteenth century was over; the nineteenth century had begun.”
(Woolf, 1928)

Modern war literature shifted from creating fictional wars to representing real-life war events; the genre of nonfiction portrayed actual incidents through dramatization, for example, in biographies, essays, and journals. In addition, there is the historical fictional novel, which narrates events that took place in the past but with fictionalized characters and stories. Nonetheless, some war writers do not necessarily treat the events in their stories as true; some authors had experienced war, and they began to fictionalize their stories to share their personal experiences.

As discussed by the British novelist Joseph Conrad regarding his literary works, one of the most difficult challenges is for a war novelist to use fiction while trying to capture real war events without exaggeration or omitting significant details. Conrad states:

dealing with matters outside the general run of everyday experience laid me under the obligation of a more scrupulous fidelity to the truth of my own sensations. The problem was to make unfamiliar things credible. To do that I had to create for them, reproduce for them, to envelop them in their proper atmosphere of actuality. (Conrad, 1925, p.8)

Conrad employs antiheroic strategies of interpreting war events interwoven with a moral argument to maintain realism in his story, characters, and philosophy of life to form a literary and honest expression that emphasizes the universe's indifference to the lives of those who are oppressed victims of political forces. However, war novelists who fictionalize their stories attempt to share soldiers' traumatic memories and psychological states through their writing. Writers such as Sebastian Faulks focus on actual war events, the wounded soldiers, the horrific conditions, and the impact of war on morality. For example, in *Bird song*, Faulks determines that soldiers' humanity continues to deteriorate during the war. He argues through his story that: "none of these men would admit that what they saw and what they did was beyond the boundaries of human behavior. Instead, they do what is expected of them." (Faulks, 1993)

Many other authors, such as Virginia Woolf in *Mrs. Dalloway*, focus on the aftermath of war and its consequences. It could be said that, postwar novels acted as therapy for those who suffered war traumas and could not adjust to society after the war was over. Moreover, these novels provided an opportunity for those who had heard about their ancestors' roles in historical wars to relive these journeys; war literature could be considered as a mean of documentation, as it is repeatedly used to chronicle events and the experiences of those who were not able to speak for themselves. Also, to let the next generation aware that such events and people once existed, As the American Tim O'Brien explains:

Partly catharsis, partly communication (telling stories) was a way of grabbing people by the shirt and explaining exactly what had happened to me, how I'd allowed myself to get dragged into a wrong war, all the terrible things I had seen and done. By telling stories, you objectify your own experience. You separate it from yourself. You pin down certain truths. You make up others. You start sometimes with an incident that truly happened. and you carry it forward by inventing incidents that did not in fact occur but that nonetheless help to clarify and explain. (O'Brien, 1990, p.157)

War poetry plays an important role in war literature, analyzing historical experience through poetic expression to portray the soldier's journey through the war. War was a very common genre in classical literature, in particular, in the epic poems of Greek and Roman mythology with different themes playing central roles in praising the heroes' deeds of courage; for example, the theme of heroism, sacrifice, warriors' immortality, and vengeance. (Saunders, Saux, Thomas, 2004) War in ancient literature was one of these central themes, along with religion, national independence, and gender. War themes have constantly evolved due to the changes in culture and traditions; for example, themes of nobility and idealism were described in Old English heroic poems, and religious poetry in particular employed the theme of the triumph of good over evil.

Wars of different times and places appear in all types of literature and tend to reflect the cultural and traditional changes of those times and places. However, the literature of the 20th-century saw the growth of modernism, a concept employed by authors to change traditional modes of literary expression into a creative and radical style of writing; for this reason, it is noticeable that many early 20th century styles of writing were entirely different from previous styles. In theory, modernism is the result of the production of authors and thinkers who lived through the conventions and traditions of the 19th-century and whose contributions continued into the modern industrial age; it is considered as one of the most widespread literary movements.

In general, modernism is defined as a radical shift from tradition to a new original mode of expression, thus, many late 19th and early 20th centuries literary works differ from those of the previous era. American modernism is characterized as being simultaneously a reaction to the illusions and religious views of 19th-century literature and a “stream of consciousness” writing style, which offers an opportunity to experience the inner thought process of the characters in the literary work and brings the reader closer to the story. Individualism is associated with modernist writers describing their adjustment to the new world and concentrating on the individual rather than society.

Modernism is often related to realism, as both styles emerged in the same era and aimed to challenge old traditional values. Realism is a philosophical movement that appeared in the late nineteenth-century, with emphasis on an accurate representation of real-life scenes in wartime and frequently interpreted as anti-tradition as well as a rejection of the imaginative. The mechanism of realism in war writing is appropriate due to its nature of documenting the crises of war, portraying them through psychological and social analysis, in addition to its responsibility to truthfully describe events and personal struggles. From a contemporary point of view, realism contrasts with heroism in depicting the battlefield as not a glorious scene but as a cruel nightmare of blood, fear, death, and savagery. In addition, represent soldiers as victims, not heroes; they are just ordinary imperfect human beings who are dangerously involved in a cruel environment, frequently frightened of death and spiteful at their leaders. Although these claims are profoundly true of every war, they are still misleading. Moreover, the realistic dreadful description of war highlights the strength of a soldier in fighting the enemy and their ability to endure the cruelty of war; as illustrated by Charles Carrington,

Victory depends on endurance, not on brutality, those who bear the greatest suffering survive, and it is this which supplies the heroic element even in modern war. In its moral aspect war resembles other great tragedies: the greater the horror, the nobler the triumph of the man who is not morally ruined by it. (Carrington, 1929, P.198)

The depiction of victory in modern war literature does not imply how great the war was or the great number of death, but the great endurance of men who survived the brutal war. Accordingly, it is a real challenge for realists comparing to traditional heroism, to depict struggles of the soldiers themselves instead of depicting the conditions they are surrounded by, basically, to bring an image of reality in war literature is a shared objective to both modernism and realism, it is a change in a literary work of understanding the truth congregate the two movements. As the understanding of truth was not expressed properly only reflected through psychological and theoretical approaches. In accordance with Leo Tolstoy, who is considered the master of realistic fictional writings;

Freethinkers are those who are willing to use their minds without prejudice and without fearing to understand things that clash with their own customs, privileges, or beliefs. This state of mind is not common, but it is essential for right thinking; Where it is absent, discussion is apt to become worse than useless. (Tolstoy, 1862)

The realism of true writings has also taken part in American war literature, particularly after the civil war of America; in late of the 19th and the beginning of 20th centuries, a literary revolution swept its way through the world of literature. Its starting point is marked as a reaction and a rejection of romanticism and imaginative writings in 1838, however, it reached its peak of productivity in the early 1900.

1.2 War Literature in American Civil War.

The American Civil War is noted as a major factor responsible for defining and characterizing the United States as it is today. Although it does not embody an extensive period of American history, it is largely accountable for changing the economic and social order of the country; moreover, it is the turning point of the settlement between the Southern and Northern States and the emancipation of the slaves. Undoubtedly, in the history of the United States of America, no event was more influential in the growth of the country than the Civil War itself. There are many arguments over the origins of the American Civil War, and thus, many literary works bear witness to the various events and dynamics, for example, the disagreement over free labor and a slavery-based economy, the Southerners' concern about how the geographical containment of slaves affected devastating changes on their livelihoods, and the Northerners' growing aversion to slavery. The two sides of America were in constant conflict until Abraham Lincoln won the election in 1860, this, in turn, led to the foundation of the Confederate States of America, organized by the certain Southern States that rebelled against the government, which led to the beginning of the American Civil War.

The internal conflict over Southern slavery depicts the most tragically violent era the citizens witnessed in the history of the United States. There is debate over whether this was a constitutional conflict over the United States' federal control or over civil rights and racial freedom; however, as the country expanded geographically, a fundamental factor was the uncertain future of an economy based on slavery. According to American historian Edward L. Ayers:

The war came through misunderstanding, confusion, miscalculation. Both sides underestimated the location of fundamental loyalty in the other. Both received incorrect images of the other in the partisan press. Political belief distorted each side's view of the other's economy and class relations. By the time people made up their minds to fight, slavery itself had become obscured. Southern white men did not fight for slavery; they fought for a new nation built on slavery. White Northerners did not fight to end slavery; they fought to defend the integrity of

their nation. Yet slavery, as Abraham Lincoln later put it, somehow drove everything. (Ayers, 2005, P.134)

Abraham Lincoln mentioned in his speech after the Civil War that none of the Southerners or Northerners had thought of how massively devastating the war evolved to be:

Neither party expected for the war, the magnitude, or the duration, which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with; or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. (Lincoln, 1865)

It astonishingly altered the nation into a new one with a cost that the mind finds hard to discern and a force that is hard to imagine. It is evident in the literature of the civil war which was produced during the war describing the horrible situation people had to go through. Many contradictory terms were used to describe the American civil war such as “the War of the Northern Aggression”, or “the War of the Rebellions”; which proves the inconsistency in interpreting the whole situation, also it is not surprising that the fiction of American war literature is soaked with this conflict and long-lasting as well. As the scholar, Jennifer James states:

The Civil War was nothing if not a conflict rife with conflicts, a war that was and was not about slavery, that freed some slaves but not others, it was a war whose end seemed to promise total liberation, but that brought about a freedom so limited that many blacks were left to wonder whether emancipation had taken place at all. (James, 2007, p.37)

In the course of post-war interpretation, it can be clearly acknowledged that the impact of the Civil War is not the same as that of a conflict between two different countries, which have different languages, cultures, and traditions. By contrast, in a civil war, soldiers who share the same cultural backgrounds, mother tongue, and territory, fight each other, it is a conflict of paradoxes of the same identity. In fact, postwar writers from the Southern and Northern States adopted the same subjects to portray war themes and stories, such as the death of Abraham

Lincoln and the expansion of the country's borders, even though readers were more open to the unconventional and were more attentive, and provided a range of reactions and feedback to works published through different outlets and genres, the same topics were covered by writers from both the Northern and Southern States.

In the decades that followed, the Civil War inspired a variety of literary responses, the topic of the war was unavoidable and so became an essential subject for nineteenth-century writers. Postwar authors focused on describing the horror of the war they felt that the truth was the best way to represent such an event with realistic stories of battles and the consequences. On the other hand, some authors romanticized it in their novels depicting it as a reunion between the South and the North, they also tried to reemploy the Southern golden age of illusions and fancies.

In short, many postwar writers were able to analyze war sociologically, and some addressed its aftermath, not the war as a whole. Undeniably, it has been concluded that the Civil War is the subject of more than a hundred thousand literary works that have dealt with the Civil War a subject in literature since there is no single event in American history that has achieved such a plethora of literary output as the Civil War. Such an enormous quantity of writings is fundamental for understanding the issue that later appeared surrounding the cause and location of the war, until this moment, no one had been able to agree on the reason behind the outbreak of the Civil War, it was specifically described by the American novelist Shelby Foote as "the crossroads of our nation". (Foote, 1990)

War writing serves as a method to improve and sustain literature from traditional writing of describing war, since literature is the mechanism of social and psychological reinforcement, according to the American author James Dawes: "The increasingly violent conflicts that immediately preceded the war, no less than

the war itself, challenged the communicative and deliberative procedures of the republic.” (Dawes, 2002, P.4)

Dawes also adds:

The struggle to talk during and after violence is language’s struggle to regain mastery over violence, whether manifest in the individual’s attempt to speak her trauma or a culture’s attempt to produce a literary record. The language that has been destroyed by war reasserts its primacy by wrapping words around the past experience of violence. (Dawes, 2002, P.11)

The challenge for authors who experienced war directly is a real literary struggle, such as Oliver Wendell Holmes or Ambrose Bierce, to be able to express their battle and the horrible experiences they had to endure through their literary works is a healing method from war wounds. During the postwar period, writing about the war was a means of interpreting the principal cause of the Civil War; enabling analysis of how accurately events were treated and the impact that the war left on the country and its citizens. Postwar literature acts as a measure of the emotional and philosophical equilibrium of those who struggled through the war: however, this does not mean that postwar writing was merely a means of self-healing or recovering faith in traditional American public opinion. It also served along with the military as another foreground in which new wars were to be fought and old disagreements to be settled through literature.

The American culture in the late nineteenth century was dominated by “realism” specifically in developing Civil War literature, the realistic writings were involved more in reflecting the public’s material struggles, the details of their lives, their reactions, and how they are interacting with each other. Since realism of the nineteenth century tends to represent facts of the war other than dealing with the heroic qualities of an individual. In its early years of the making, realism maintained the faith in worldly ethics which restored a bit of humanity that was broken due to brutal, social, and economic systems; through the realism development phase; it developed into naturalism; as it dealt with conveying the dilemma of the ordinary man’s concerns. In its varieties of color and region. It

focused on the lives of the unfamiliar individuals in forgotten places, and also on the common cultures that hold these nations together.

Realism, is generally, a movement made by social and natural scientists to understand the functioning rules of the world and its complexity which is being proved every living day. The origins of realism reportedly can be seen in the anti-slavery literary works of the 1850s, and more literary works in their attempts to disclose the harsh life of civilians, however, the need to absorb reality from the war in American literary realism evolved in many controversial times to be determined until 1880 and 1890. A whole generation after the Civil War appeared when guidance was found in novels by European authors such as Charles Dickens, Leo Tolstoy, and Gustave Flaubert. New subjects were involved in literary works discussing the generation's cultural issues like racism, urbanization, gender roles, immigration, class differences, and geographical expansion. At this point, the realism of the Civil War supported and facilitated the process of developing a progressing form of literature.

1.3 Writers of The American Civil War

Certainly, interpretations of the American Civil War became an obsession for both writers and readers during the postwar period, however, some writers participated directly and shared their personal experiences in their literary works. Walt Whitman and Mark Twain are considered to be the embodiment of American Civil War literature in presenting the image of the American man who struggled through the bloodshed and destruction of war, and they were able to survive their past through their writing. Indeed, both share an originally uneducated background and both began their literary contribution as journalists; however, their participation in the Civil War differs to an extent. It is necessary to detail the

journey of each and how they contended with the mental weight of their war experiences in their literature.

In American culture, Whitman embodies the symbolic heritage of Civil War literature; he evolved from obscurity into the country's national poet, witnessed bloody battles and deaths, and tended the wounded in hospitals in both the North and South at the age of 42. He created war prose and poetry of war literature in an extremely significant order, in addition to making it possible for generations of writers after him to experience the war through their writings, for example, Stephen Crane, who had never seen a battlefield yet was able to write his masterpiece *The Red Badge of Courage* in 1895 at only 24 years of age. Crane was capable of effectively persuading his readers that his novel was a true story based on Civil War memories, even though philosophers and scholars have discussed Crane's novel as a documented imagery representing the urbanism of industrial life as a battlefield.

Whitman's involvement in warfare and his effective interpretation of it is, in comparison, somewhat different from Mark Twain's experience. Twain became involved at the outbreak of the Civil War when he enlisted in the Confederate army; however, he left after only a short time, while Whitman volunteered to aid the wounded in hospital and did not take sides in the political clash. Twain's war was more emotional and hectic than historical and honorable; his indirect attempt to contain the Civil War by creating a perception of the past for the people eventually cost him to end up with anarchy and a disordered war that could not be settled with humor or oversight; the anarchy to which he returned after he tried to escape the Civil War was the climax of a long period of built-up aggravation. However, he succeeded in creating a past, as he was the American author who illustrated the rebuilding of the new South in his novels and opposed Southern prejudice and discrimination.

Twain denounced the feudalism and class differences of the South, he asserted the blame lay in the diffusion and popularity of romanticism and chivalry throughout Southern literary works before the war. He blamed Walter Scott in Particular, by stating: “he had so large a hand in making Southern character, as it existed before the war, that he is in great measure responsible for the war” (Fishkin, 1996, P.469).

At the same time, Whitman formed a future containing a divided nation; he translated the brutality and death of war that he had observed into literary terms, which he used in his poems to create a realistic image of war atrocity. He was able to face the unpredictable experience of war that he anticipated through his poetry and was determined to be patient, while enduring the wait to hear from his imprisoned brother. Whitman’s poetry reflects the life that he had created for himself by helping the victims of war and sharing his poems. It should be mentioned that most American Civil War literature written during the Civil War itself (1862-1865) was short-lived, though, of course with significant exceptions. This is perfectly credible as the emotions and historical outcomes of the war would become more apparent after it had ended. It came to attention in the early twentieth century, contributing an outstanding body of Civil War literary and social records literature, which led authors from the South and North to investigate the cause and effect of the Civil War.

Certainly, female attitude to Civil War literature is a remarkable achievement in developing females’ literary experience since the beginning of the war, undoubtedly, Luisa May Alcott is one of the most effective female figures of American Civil War literature for volunteering in hospitals as a practicing nurse. Alcott’s participation was an eye-opening journey as a single woman who was sending letters on behalf of the sick and wounded, in addition to helping the ones who were unable to support themselves, she writes:

Though often home sick, heart sick & worn out, I like it – find real pleasure in comforting tending & cheering these poor souls who seem to love me, to feel my sympathy though unspoken, & acknowledge my hearty good will in spite of the ignorance, awkwardness, & bashfulness which I cannot help showing in so new & trying a situation. (Alcott, 1863).

Alcott wrote *Hospital Sketches* (1863), a collection of fictionalized sketches of her time spent as a nurse during the Civil War, inspired by Louisa's handwritten letters to her family (Young, 1996). Her war experience was not only an adventure for a single woman who committed a devotion to participate in war, but it was an unequal opportunity for Louisa to collect material for her growing writing career. She acquired important and tough real-life experiences and memories during the Civil War and built up her literary reputation, it was a direct influence to her popular novel, *Little Women* (1868).

SECOND CHAPTER

2. REVERSING GENDER ROLES IN CIVIL WAR LITERATURE

“A reformed system of women's schooling should be based upon the idea that woman is woman, and not man-nor a butterfly, neither man's plaything nor his rival.” (Faust, 1996)

Until the past few decades, few scholars and historians have included women as significant participants in the American Civil War; notable ones include George Rable and Drew Faust. Most research and studies of the Civil War have considered women's participation in war minor and insignificant, focusing on men in warfare and their main role in starting and ending the war. Only a few nurses have been appreciated for their roles in the war; however, they have been mostly ignored, as in most justifications, women stay at home while men fight on the battlefields. Recent studies have examined women's experiences in war as well as the issue of gender, focusing on the cultural and theoretical structure of gender that has formed the behaviors and actions of males and females, particularly the relationship between gender roles and the Civil War (Clinton, Silber, 2006, p.3).

2.1 Gender Roles in The American Civil War

The investigation of gender issues and the Civil War started to attract the interest of scholars in the late 20th century; they focused on the contribution of female participants at home as well as on war grounds. The American Civil War represents a fundamental juncture for transforming the lives of American women. The histories of women's Civil War service are filled with different stories of women from the North and South who ended up changing the gender norms of American society by spreading the social influences of humanitarian efforts that had already been undertaken before the war.

During the 20th century, the Civil War history appeared very limited to military stories; however, this was altered by female historians who proved that war was shaped by soldiers as well as by civilians. Certainly, most of the influential written contributions were by women historians from the Southern states, where the war initially occurred. Before the Civil War, the industrialized areas of Northern states worked on developing ideal, growing middle-class families. Women provided stability and a good home for their families to protect them from increasing violence in the outside world of politics and working environments.

The political division of gender in the Northern states led to the involvement of women in the economy, in accordance with women's assignment as superior morally responsible members of the Northern middle class, which encouraged them to leave their households and limited duties and persevere in works of reform and care. They had fulfilled their gender assumptions, where women's rights took part in diminishing the stereotypical roles of men and women (Whites,2000,p.280). On the other side of the country, by contrast, Southern women did not hold any roles of freedom like Northern women or any gender division between home and work. Southern society preserved the significance of Southern households, which kept the South from social development. For the South, race and national culture continued to be the principal interests of society, regardless of gender roles.

In such a patriarchal society, women accepted their inferior status not because they were sensitive and weak, but for the sake of social consistency and family reputation. Although gender distinction was interpreted differently between the North and South, both sides agreed that women's public presentation should be under the supervision of men; they also believed that such views were unquestionable. The main feature of Southern culture was the household, which was considered the central place of communication between public and private

spheres. The Southerners followed a complicated system of social structures that contained class, gender, and race.

According to the South, this social structure was necessary for organizing families and job positions; patriarchy was at the top of the social structure, and fathers and husbands led the family inside the home and outside in the world of politics and economy. Besides examining the Civil War's impact on racism in the South, the traditional Southern notions of womanhood have been re-evaluated in general with the outbreak of the Civil War. The South used war to engage women with more responsibilities to support their families. At first, the Civil War seemed to enhance gender roles and distinctions between females and males by describing war as the glorious realm of men. "gender roles, as well as gender relations played a critical role in the initial outbreak of the war, as well as in its course, its conduct, and its eventual outcome in the reconstruction of the South" (Whites,2000,p.3). However, later these distinctions created doubts about gender identities: women realized they were doing men's work in the absence of their husbands by managing the house duties and workers or slaves. The new responsibilities and war fears imposed new considerations of womanhood. The sudden war-created disorder of women's identity impacted the South, as described "like a force of the earthquake, the whirlwind and the storm"(Faust,1996,p.6).

People had to adjust to the devastation of the war, as the Civil War tore apart the Southern old notions of traditions, class, and racism, and the lives of Southern women changed entirely. Being at home was not safe for them, they lost their houses and their families to war. The American Civil War had a severe impact on the home front as well as on battlefields, especially in the South, where the war was primarily fought. Women had to witness war in their backyards and streets, which eventually made them part of the conflict, just like soldiers. From the outset of the war, many Southern women, enthusiastically served as spies, soldiers, nurses, caregivers, and cooks. They even opened their own houses to create hospitals for injured soldiers and offer as much assistance as they could. On the

other side of the country, Northern women who stayed in their homes gained new experience in confronting high-positioned men and learned to have opinions and positions on how to organize fund raisers for war assistance. According to historians, Northern women's war participation resulted in incorporating the women's movement in the North with the South.

Many scholars of Northern women's studies repeatedly wonder whether there has been no interest in Northerners of the Civil War. Thus, this issue has shaped women's studies of the North and the South, especially concerning how the war influenced women's positions, as well as how the Civil War worked to liberate them from the 19th-century restrictions. However, many Northern women experienced poverty, widowhood, and low-paying jobs, showing that their experiences were somewhat far from being liberated. In fact, despite the stereotypical view of Northerner nurses being privileged and well-paid, recent studies argue that many nurses were treated badly, often due to race and were paid poorly. As observed by the historian Elizabeth Leonard:

some women-nurses and relief workers, in particular, managed to bend the prevailing gender system to make inroads for women in employment and public health. Yet, as she argues, if that antebellum gender system might bend to accommodate women who still upheld essential gender differences, the system showed little flexibility when it came to women who more openly defied the notion of gender difference (Silber,2006,p.13).

Leonard explains how the gender system was inflexible for Northern women who challenged the system and showed a determination to fight for female struggles which resulted in learning important lessons in self-assertion and professionalism. Even though, Northern women's wartime experiences brought them out of their traditional roles as mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters, making them ready to take on responsibilities considered unfeminine, they never crossed the boundaries of being inappropriate women. Studying post-war culture and gender has permanently altered the understanding of the gender-affected political speech of the Civil War period. Although women were not involved directly in the political world, they were able to influence leaders and politicians

during and after the Civil War, as well as achieve significant duties in politics, such as managing petitions and political debates, and writing speeches for candidates.

During the Civil War, many women, regardless of their positions, wrote diary entries and stories about their wartime experiences, to present the war from a feminine point of view and to illuminate the false interpretations and understandings of the Civil War that treated war as men's work by neglecting women's roles. Furthermore, through literature, women expressed war experiences by documenting both men's and women's stories. The Civil War inspired many female authors from the North and South, as a result of participating in the Civil War on the home front, female authors revealed in their literary works the choices they faced during the war in changing their stereotypical behaviors and the results they attained in the war's aftermath.

2.2 The Role of Women in Civil War Literature

“Women are the real architects of society.” Harriet Beecher Stowe

Women's roles in the American Civil War are perhaps as important as the roles of men, even though the war is often depicted as a “brother's war”, as noted by a British journalist “had any war seemed so much a woman's war as the Civil War” (Silber,1993,p.11). Women's participation in the Civil War is characterized by a continuous struggle affected by the traditional notions of gender stereotypes, and suddenly new roles were introduced to them, as they tried to understand their responsibilities according to Victorian age perceptions, along with Northern and Southern literature, which followed the 19th-century ideals of gender stereotypes.

Gendered stereotypical wartime literature complies with the idea that ideal war literature is written by males who have participated in the war and read by females who have stayed at home, believing that women are consumers, not producers, which resulted in a one-sided picture of Civil War literature, even though many women found themselves on or near the battlefield witnessing every single detail, whether by working as nurses or by joining the front lines disguised as soldiers. Many of them wrote their personal wartime experiences in journals and diaries that have been published recently.

The constant suppression and restraint of Civil War stories by female eyewitnesses are enhanced not only by their portrayal of Civil War gender codes but also by their revelation that what supports gender codes is literacy, as Elizabeth D. Leonard asserts “the realities of wartime gender interaction, flexibility, and conflict at the same time that it clearly reflected a conscious prescription for postwar society’s revitalization of the prewar status quo” (Leonard,1994,p.169). Strict gender literacy was reflected in stereotypical assumptions that normalized women’s literacy. Gender norms revolved around two main ideas: the assumption that women were too busy to learn to write by being ideal house wives and that the war incidents could never be written. This endured until even later when women were able to participate in writing and publish literary wartime experiences, they rejected the traditional gender roles their writings were being conducted by males to be qualified for conventional prewar writings.

American Civil War internal splits continuously brought arguments over what defines the literacy of both males and females, and the proper duties to men and women during the conflict, which challenges the prewar gender norms. According to Margaret R. Higonnet, “The internal splits that define civil war reproduce themselves in the representation of gender relations and in the process of representation itself” (Higonnet,1989,p.94). By aiding wounded soldiers in writing

letters during their recovery and through their own writings, women were able to invade literacy and occupy careers formerly occupied only by men.

Literacy, thus, is a paramount factor in women's wartime writings; in particular, female nurses for whom literacy was a duty and a requirement were able to develop their wartime writing from passive to active literacy. During and after the Civil War, the expansion of job opportunities for women in the North was mostly notable in educational institutions, where women were able to fill positions as teachers and students. They not only grew in numbers concerning educational positions, but they also became the foundation of teaching institutions and motivation for a better educational system, and they opened the opportunity for free public schools. The contribution of women in educational organizations promoted the feminization and proficiency of teaching. In the South the situation was different; only until the antebellum period did women's efforts pay off, as they were widely responsible for the foundation of a burgeoning educational system and a professional position for females in teaching

Northern female authors during the Civil War wrote many political comments or criticisms of war and people's concerns indirectly through their poems, novels, and short stories. They also piqued the public's interest in written news and entertaining literary forms, unlike male authors; however, Northern female authors were not able to express their political and independent thoughts in their writings, as they were confined by society and expected to balance their content according to conventional gender norms.

As a result, the literary writings produced by Northern women during the war were mostly patriotic works of literature marked by domestic fiction, approving the traditional gender norms. Such discrimination against female literary independent accounts and efforts to share their public opinions caused women to produce literature by using men's names or anonymously. The Civil War brought an opportunity for female writers in North and the South to move beyond the 19th century notion of domestic storylines to employ more subjects.

In addition, Southern authors shaped the modern depiction of the Civil War and formed Southern literary culture; they were not only narrating a story, but, also establishing a foundation for Southern literature. However, not all Civil War literature interpreted women's wartime experiences as a tool for male patriotism; many stories represented women's urge to sacrifice their men by encouraging them to fight for the nation, focusing on women's emotional struggles as a central subject of the war. Many women's stories have been written to convey that women's war struggles were as hard, if not harder, than those of men. According to author Louise Chandler Moulton, who alleged that the domestic struggles women faced were connected to their passive wartime roles and worse than men's war struggles,

Honor to the brave who fight and conquer, or fight and fall! But is theirs the hardest fate? Do not those suffer more who cannot lose in action their fear and anguish? who must count slow hours, shudder at tidings of onward movements, live on fragments of newspapers? (Moulton,1863,p.120)

In the postwar period, Northern women's wartime experiences were portrayed in the literature. Louisa May Alcott was one of the first female writers to write novels and stories of women's war experiences on the home front, their emotional struggles of domesticity, and the need to endure the responsibility of managing homes. She did this in her novel *Little Women* (1868), which contradicts another of her novels about the same period, *A Story of Experience* (1873), which depicts women who have lost their husbands in war and have devoted themselves to work and making a community.

2.3 Reversing Gender Roles in War Literature

Gender role reversal in literary texts is a method used to examine the struggles of both males and females, and it was used as a literary device before gender became an identified sociological theory in the 20th century. Within the discourse of American fiction, the focus on gender role reversal is used by a notable number of American writers in their narratives, either for a positive purpose, to encourage different female characters, or for a negative purpose to reject such encouragement. The use of reversing gender strategy in stories in which the female character changes her socially given feminine role into a masculine role works as a factor to reveal the causes and effects of such strict gender roles on people and societies, and it asserts one's quest for self-realization as well. It is arguable, that some authors use this strategy implicitly through their text as a tool of social analysis, liberating the writer from traditional Victorian writing styles forming new and untraditional female characters, and triggering other characters and readers to employ different roles for females.

In her article "The Blank Page and Issues of Female Creativity," Susan Gubar points out that male authors usually use women characters as blank pages through their narratives to create them the way they want them to be, regardless of how women want to be seen or the social issues from which they suffer.

This model of the pen-penis writing on the virgin page participates in a long tradition identifying the author as a male who is primary and the female as his passive creation—a secondary object lacking autonomy, endowed with often contradictory meaning but denied intentionality. Clearly this tradition excludes woman from the creation of culture, even as it reifies her as an artifact within culture. It is therefore particularly problematic for those women who want to appropriate the pen by becoming writers. (Gubar, 1980, p. 247)

Similarly, writing fiction from a female viewpoint allows male authors to re-identify female characters in their stories, especially when contemporary female and male authors have opposed patriarchal control over women displayed in literature, which has blocked women's growth and progress in writing, Annis Pratt notes: "Women's fiction reflects an experience radically different from men's because their drive towards growth as persons is thwarted by their society's prescriptions concerning gender"(Pratt,1981,p.6). Following the womanhood and feminism movement, by breaking culture's patriarchal domination, many writers, through their literature, have assured that a society cannot be patriarchal or matriarchal; but must be a balanced and shared society that includes both men and women, who usually complement each other. "A society cannot, therefore, be either "strictly matriarchal" or "strictly patriarchal"; rather, a society can have matriarchal and patriarchal subsystems, and these usually complement each other" (Chinweizu,1990,p.112).

Some postwar literature has focused on women's social struggles and their need to face the hardships of war to survive. In particular, female writers conveyed in their literary works that compared to men, women on the frontlines struggled not only from the cruelty of war but also from the social restrictions that made it more difficult for them to bear bloody war. War novels employed women characters playing masculine roles and taking on the responsibilities of getting a job and protecting their families in the absence of the men in the family fighting in the war.

Few Postwar authors and scholars were determined that they should speak out about the injustice placed on women and encourage society to end oppression, as well as to experience females' struggles through the main characters' perspectives by breaking stereotypes of cultures and social roles that expect women to have gender performances appropriate for 19th-century conventions. When women were forced to break their gender roles during the war to fill the places of men, they learned new roles and behaviors were needed to accomplish their responsibilities, not the principles and norms they previously had to follow. According to Judith Butler's idea for gender roles in the same term: "Gender is not something you acquire once and for all at an early stage, but an ongoing accomplishment produced by your repeated actions"(Butler,1990,p.13).

The Civil War had a powerful effect on Southern women. In particular, many changes occurred in the Southern domestic household, as each woman had been struggling individually with the war's burdens. The absence of men presented a challenge to women who were forced to react to and reverse traditional gender roles by leaving households and joining the forbidden masculine domain of professional work. Furthermore, the geographical relocation of Southern families caused the basics of women's domestic lives to change permanently. Gradually, with the departure of men, women found themselves independent and not necessarily reliant on men. During the Civil War in one of the Southern women's diaries, a young woman from South Carolina Susan Middleton wrote:

The realities of my life and the situations in which I have been placed have been so strangely different from what my character and the early promise of my life would have led one to expect. Anxiety, responsibility, and independence of thought or action are what are peculiarly abhorrent to my nature, and what has been so often required of me. (Middleton,1862,p.98)

Overall, war is generally seen as a patriarchal work that does not include women's contributions; however, some scholars and historians argue that women's roles were vital and influential during the American Civil War in many fields that determined life essentials, such as nursing, management positions, teaching, as well as writing literature that portrayed the vital role of women's domestic war experiences. Women's war literature revealed wartime gender dimensions that were mostly unfamiliar to scholars and authors who focused only on recognized war literature in Northern cultural history. The importance of women's roles and contributions to the war has been increasingly argued in recent history, and it has been evaluated as being equal to or more than men's contributions to the war.

THIRD CHAPTER

3. REVERSING GENDER ROLES IN *LITTLE WOMEN* AND *COLD MOUNTAIN*

Women, they have minds, and they have souls, as well as just hearts. And they've got ambition, and they've got talent, as well as just beauty. I'm so sick of people saying that love is all a woman is fit for...Girls have to go out into the world and make up their own minds about things. (Alcott, 1868)

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott has proven an exceptionally everlasting book that was and is still being read. The first part of the book tells the story of four sisters and their mother, since their father is serving the Union Army during the American Civil War, which leaves the girls and their mother alone with no men in their lives except for Mr. Laurence and his grandson, their neighbors. Throughout the novel's second half, most of the sisters get married and obtain their happy endings by achieving their personal goals, with Jo's success in writing during her trip to New York and Amy's stay in Europe pursuing her dream of drawing. However, Beth's tragic death interrupts the happy ending. The novel was a financial success, allowing Alcott to support her family and gain the social and economic advantages of a prosperous writing career (Alcott, 2018).

Little Women is a war book, since the first half was written during the Civil War. Although some critics do not mark it as such, Alcott portrays war through the image of suffering Civil War soldiers. The book features at least three wounded soldiers, starting with the patriarch of the March family, a Union Army chaplain who becomes seriously sick and recovers in a Washington hospital. Mr. March and his war service, on the other hand, are portrayed in consideration of being far from the rest of the family. Then there is Beth, from her early battle with scarlet fever to her death many years later. Beth's disease is connected to female

domesticity, but it is portrayed with the same plot of the story Alcott previously invests in soldiers' wounds.

When *Little Women* was published, it exceeded much of the gender stereotypes of the 19th century, since Alcott questioned society's understandings of gender roles and challenged the limits of society's standards of both men and women. However, readers could not have noticed the limits that Alcott was challenging when the novel was written. Whether Alcott intended to address gender roles, such a challenge is obvious in the book, and it appears that Alcott's primary goal was to write a meaningful and successful work of literature.

3.1. Reversing Gender Roles in *Little Women* (1868)

For Alcott, stereotypical gender definitions vary from one country to another, and feminization involves a range of creative possibilities. Feminization requires a progressive reworking of the male and female relationship in which men fall not just under the impact of women but also adopt the female psyche's disciplinary style of self-mastery, because women are the core of society. Furthermore, women play increasingly important roles in politics, but their social influence is derived more from the deliberate use of traditionally feminine roles, such as mothering, than from essential femininity. Feminization became feminism in the largest context, figuratively updated with the Civil War over suffrage. Feminization turned the country into a body rescued from slavery and a household recovered from the chaos of war by making boys and girls into little men and women. Alcott reconstructs the national body politic in the form of a woman in a continuous contribution to the political and literary culture of postwar America. Through the characters of *Little Women*, the causal mechanism of gender typing becomes gender stereotyping.

Moreover, Alcott's characters' attitudes do not properly reflect the social environment, especially the difficulties that American women experienced in the 19th century and during the American Civil War. Here, Alcott tried to prove how parents can have a major impact on the education of their daughters and sons to create a type of mentality that can change society's norms and principles. The March girls, Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy, were strongly affected by their parents' ideals during the gender stereotyping process, especially Marmee (Mrs. March).

I want my daughters to be beautiful, accomplished, and good; to be admired, loved, and respected; to have a happy youth, to be well and wisely married, and to lead useful, pleasant lives, with as little care and sorrow to try them as God sees fit to send (Alcott,2008,p.97).

Alcott was one of the few 19th-century writers who dared to reverse gender stereotyping roles in their writings, which can be explored by her protagonists, Jo and Laurie. Since their friendship is amusing and honest, it allows Alcott to break certain gender roles. To begin with, their names contrast with gender stereotypes and are both oddly associated with the opposite sex. As a result, Alcott provides Jo with masculine characteristics and Laurie with feminine characteristics. Laurie is attracted to feminine-coded hobbies, such as creating music and playing the piano, while Jo is attracted to more masculine pursuits, such as serving with the army. It would be easy to believe that Jo is a man and Laurie is a woman based only on their names; neither of them appears to be confined by society's gender norms, and the characters' given names are accurate. The fact that people are so obsessed with reversal name uses shows that names are important and make a first impression of the characters onto the readers (Bender,2017,p.141).

Furthermore, the roles and behaviors of both characters challenge gender norms. Laurie, for instance, portrays the typical 19th-century American woman as often being kept inside his mansion and attracted to female-coded hobbies at that time. Laurie acts like one of many women who had to sit at home while their husbands worked or traveled. Laurie feels somewhat awkward communicating with the girls, just as many young girls would feel uncomfortable communicating with someone of the opposite sex. Alcott affirms the fact that female gender roles are not only for females, and they may be seen in men, by emphasizing Laurie's irritation around women, his normal shyness around women, and his piano playing. On the other hand, Jo is a fearless, adventurous, daring, trustworthy, grumpy, courageous, and genuine woman. She is a dreamer who finds herself writing stories; she wishes she were a boy, as she wants her opinion to be heard. She loves to run and go wherever, and explore whatever she wants; in other words, she wants to be alive. Jo is also dedicated to her family, which shows how much Jo resembles Alcott in having a wise and good mother, a caring father, and four sisters who follow 19th-century gender roles. The resemblance is clear, especially in the Christmas morning scene in the book, for example, which is based on a real event of Alcott's life with her family, in which the girls give their breakfast to the needy Hummels. Alcott writes to her friend: "Once we carried our breakfast to a starving family; once lent our whole dinner to a neighbor suddenly taken unprepared by distinguished guests." (Cheney,2011,p.55)

However, the difference is that Jo March eventually marries and Alcott chooses to be self-sufficient.

I want to do something splendid before I go into my castle, something heroic, or wonderful--that won't be forgotten after I'm dead. I don't know what, but I'm on the watch for it, and mean to astonish you all, some day. I think I shall write books, and get rich and famous; that would suit me, so that is my favorite dream. (Alcott, 2008,p.151)

The roles that Jo and Laurie should perform are reversed based on their gender identities. As Elizabeth Keyser states in *Whispers in the Dark*, the fiction of Alcott in which Jo played the part that she is having “appropriating male power” and “freeing a part of her own nature,” since she was able to liberate Laurie from his controlling grandfather. The Laurence mansion and the March house, according to Keyser, reflect masculine and feminine realms. As seen in Jo and Laurie’s friendship, the tension between men’s and women’s gender-stereotypical identities is ignored by joining their two universes together. Each gender category is no longer bound by social expectations; rather, they communicate with one another within those boundaries. The two realms connect and widen as Jo and Laurie’s friendship grow. Keyser describes them as if they have become “a whole, androgynous person”(Keyser,1993,p.66).

Amy, Jo’s little sister, is portrayed as the exact opposite of Jo in terms of gender roles. Amy is the type of spoiled girl who needs attention and care, which is the perfect symbol of a typical 19th-century woman. However, Amy reaches her goals and ambitions, according to the gender roles given to her. Alcott uses Amy’s character to show the clear differences between her and the boyish, independent, and stubborn Jo. Amy follows her gender roles accordingly. She loved fashion and takes care of her beauty, unlike Jo, who does not care about the way she looks, as she is strongly against the gender roles given to her.

The gender identity of the 19th century is a frustrating matter to Jo, since it is the one thing that prevents her from joining the Union Army and helping her father, along with the restrictions of gender stereotypes imposed on her and her own appearance as a girl. Beth, on the other hand, is the most perfect example of the class and gender norms of 19th-century society, as is Meg, who has always dreamed of marriage and children. At a very young age, Alcott wanted to be an author, just like Jo. “Jo March resembles her creator most in the fertility of her imagination,” “Like Jo, the young Louisa May Alcott burned with genius, spinning tales of murder and treachery one minute, fairy tales and sentimental

poetry the next.” (Reisen,2009,p.4) Alcott mentioned in her own childhood journals that she wished to be “rich, popular, and happy before I die,” Alcott was successful, and this is where her connection with Jo starts to slip. Unlike Jo, who marries and keeps in her family chain, Alcott left her family did not marry, and led a fully independent life (Reisen,2009).

The reversal of traditional gender roles in *Little Women* may be effectively interpreted as the reversal of the traditional, emotional versions of home and the social roles of the outside world. It is worth mentioning the scene when Mr. and Mrs. March divide household labor. Mrs. March is mostly spending her time out of the house working, battling against her frustration and disapproval of her dreamy husband’s constant poverty; she is responsible for keeping her family safe, fed, and in good health. Mr. March, however, stays at home to instruct and mentor his daughters. Here, he acts like a caring mother who can endure the stresses of the world. Alcott energizes female discipline and education with the freedom and ego of male authority. Plumfield (Jo’s school for misbehaved boys) defines the result of feminine discipline, as a utopian society in which the masculine nation is redefined into a disciplined feminine identity. (Foote,2005,p.83)

In Alcott’s own life, there were good examples of when and how a woman could behave when she rages, for example, Alcott’s mother used to suppress her rage so that she could be an “ideal woman,” as Martha Saxton claims in her book *A Modern Biography of Louisa May Alcott* 1977, The hardship put on Alcott’s mother must have been obvious to Alcott. Even though her mother did much of the washing and maintenance at home, she was informed that she could not participate in conversations on topics other than household matters due to her gender, which is when she had to suppress her rage (Elbert,1997,p.18).

According to Judith Fetterley in her book *"Little Women": Alcott's Civil War*, the only one who plays the real traditional "perfect little woman" in the story is Beth. She is very obedient and never refuses a request from her mother or sisters, which leads to her sickness and death. Fetterley says, "In Beth one sees the exhaustion of vitality in the effort to live as a little woman." Alcott questioned the notion that such a consequence is the result of appropriate female behavior, which is the death of the perfect woman (Fetterley,1979,p.380).

Alcott would not want her readers to disregard gender, but to see through the stereotypes that have kept the genders apart because gender is important, and it does play a major role in defining an individual; however, social norms and traditions in a culture, not "biological sex," are what restrict an individual's actions. Laurie loves hobbies that are associated with women, but he is still a man. Such hobbies are not exclusively for girls. Both men and women should be able to engage in these activities and doing so should not be considered inappropriate. Stereotypes appear as society has set gendered standards on specific behaviors and on how a man or woman should behave. Finally, throughout *Little Women*, Alcott opposes gender roles, urging readers not to categorize themselves or others solely based on gender. While trying to show her female readers through the character Jo how to consider themselves as equals in rights by breaking the gender roles of that time, Alcott also highlights the dangers of becoming a traditional woman through the character Beth.

Furthermore, Alcott's views on equality are reasonably well exemplified by Jo. She portrays a woman who can be both feminine and strong. Readers are drawn to and enjoy Alcott's timeless novel because of the imagery of a powerful, independent woman. At the novel's conclusion, Jo's character undergoes a transformation. In Alcott's unexpected development of Jo's character, she becomes more feminine and less tomboyish, proving that women can be married and feminine while still becoming comfortably independent and self-sufficient.

3.2 Female Characters Transformation after Civil War.

Jo March is not a stereotypical woman of the 19th century; she is a rebellious, ambitious, enthusiastic young girl. Her goal is to see the world and obtain more experience, not to be an ordinary housewife; she does not care about having a husband and a house. She expresses all this through her writings: she never settles for the ordinary and always tries to achieve the extraordinary. Later, when the war starts and her father Mr. March is away participating in the war, Jo finds herself responsible for her family. Although she is not the eldest, her sense of responsibility makes her work hard to solve the financial problems of her family in the absence of her father. Jo is never one to stay quiet, and she uses her writing to help her family as they deal with Mr. March's absence and hardship. Her stories delight others and provide money. Jo makes a significant sacrifice to assist Mrs. March in financing the trip by cutting her hair, an essential source of beauty. This shows how Jo is transformed from a stubborn young girl into a mature, responsible woman.

The Civil War puts the family's finances in trouble, and Jo, despite her boyish attitude and temper, gradually learns not to be rude in the absence of her father. Because Jo is a tomboy, she behaves as if she is the father at home. With Jo, Alcott introduces a new type of heroine: one who is imperfect, and somewhat more loved because of these imperfections. The expression "little women," was widely known during the Victorian era, and it is employed as a term of affection throughout the novel. In a letter from the war, Mr. March refers to his daughters as "little women." It refers to the transitional period between being a girl and becoming a woman, which is shown in the lives of the March sisters in the novel. Jo, however, has enormous aspirations beyond her physical dimensions, and she is the sister with the most unique creative potential throughout the book. In *Little Women*, the Civil War is never referenced by name; all we know about Mr. March at the start of the story is that he is fighting far away.

At the beginning of the story, Jo complains that she is unable to join the war; only males, such as Mr. March, are permitted to do so, except when Mr. March is ill. We do not hear much about the war after that, instead, Alcott places a strong emphasis on the March sisters' household and their personal life. This contrasts with what is represented in many men's books of the time, in which the war takes center stage and ordinary life is neglected. Alcott's work depicts women and their domestic lives, demonstrating that they are just as significant and worthy of consideration as men and their interests.

The struggles based on gender stereotypes that women had to endure during the 19th-century do not exactly fit the experiences of the characters of *Little Women*. The real suffering was worse; however, the March daughters had different circumstances due to the instruction and education they were given by their parents. To summarize, the war had an important effect on women, Jo is a strong example of how she became to become an influential character for young girls, emphasizing that the struggles that American women had to endure during the Civil War had a direct impact on fighting the gender-stereotypical norms they had to follow before the war.

3.3 Reversing Gender Roles in *Cold Mountain* (1997)

“The story seemed like an American odyssey and it also seemed to offer itself as a form of elegy for that lost world I had been thinking about.”
(Miller,2006)

During his thorough investigation of the culture and history of the state of his ancestors, Charles Frazier wrote his best-selling novel *Cold Mountain*, a fictional representation of North Carolina and its history. Published in 1997, *Cold Mountain* was an instant hit with critics and readers and had great success, winning the National Book Award and other awards. Many have wondered if *Cold Mountain* is based on a true story. The truth is that the main character is real but

the rest of the story is fictional and inspired by Frazier's father's story of his great-great-uncle W. P. Inman, a Confederate general during the Civil War. Inman escaped the war, trying to return home to the cold mountains of North Carolina. Frazier created the fictional love story of Inman struggling in his bittersweet return to his lover Ada, who is waiting for him impatiently, to draw readers' compassion toward Inman and to give Inman a reason to try to survive and return home. The narrative alternates between Inman's tough journey, which challenges both his physical and emotional endurance, along with the story of Ada and her efforts to live alone in a cruel world.

The book was influenced by the stories of Frazier's forefathers as well as those of the people of North Carolina who lived in the mountains and were caught up in the wartimes. It is also a touching dedication to those who died in the war and those who survived it, as well as a celebration of an everlasting sense of optimism. Tom Wicker, in his essay "A War Like All Wars," mentions that he does not consider *Cold Mountain* to be entirely a Civil War story; he thinks that Frazier's story is about society's struggles during "any war in any time, and what it does to men and society." He also mentions that he does not think that Inman is a traitor who flees the battlefield; instead, he compares him to the main character in *A Very Short Story* by Ernest Hemingway, a peaceful war story. He also says:

with a world nearing the end of a calamitous war, with a society in devastation, and with the people who seem mostly to want the battle to be over so that their men can come back and rebuilding can begin.(Wicker,2001,p.302)

The real Inman joined the army in Virginia when the Civil War began, and he witnessed some of the bloodiest battles there. Inman fled and walked back to the North Carolinian mountains after receiving a terrible injury. Following that, he was shot and died toward the end of the war. Frazier did not know much about his relative and what he went through during his tough journey home. For this reason, he began to imagine what he went through based on research, which led to the creation of the fictional Inman. (Piacentino,2001,p.104)

Frazier did not want to write about the Civil War and its bloody details, but about the struggles of the people of the Appalachian Mountains, which is considered the most bio-diverse place in the United States of America due to the presence of numerous classes and communities. In particular, Inman's journey and suffering upon realizing that many men died for nothing bring him closer to the perspective of doing things correctly concerning living and surviving in the wilderness. Instead of glorifying the bravery of soldiers who fought in the war, Frazier takes a different approach: he concentrates on describing how awful the war is, as well as on a soldier's physical and emotional struggles as he longs for peace and home. Furthermore, although Ada is not fighting in the Civil War like Inman, she is engaged in her own war back home, shocked by a new life that she is forced to face and try to survive.

The story analysis finds several findings, the use of reversed gender roles is clear in the story: Inman's fear, his unwillingness to fight in the war, and his desire to find a home are presented in the first scene of the story, when Inman is isolated in the military hospital, injured and lonely, dreaming of returning to see Ada. Meanwhile, Ada is left alone after her father dies to look after and create a new home on her farm ignoring the outside world as she escapes the reality that she has lost her father.

The constant struggles of Inman and Ada show the equality of male and female behaviors during wartime; however, this does not mean that gender-stereotypical roles in Appalachian society did not exist during the Civil War. Gender roles were strongly rooted in society, and they revolved around male power and female acceptance of their part in the home. The masculine role and ideals were vital factors in the American Civil War and men's role in protecting women and children, and the soldier's role during the war frames the manhood, making war a masculine work.

However, in *Cold Mountain*, the soldier Inman, resembles the vulnerable protagonist character in Stephen Crane's story *The Red Badge of Courage*. Instead of having the familiar brave and courageous qualities of soldiers, he is horrified by the unnecessary slaughter of young souls in the conflict and is divided between the typical conflicts of bravery and cowardice.

Inman has never been interested in fighting bloody wars, unlike other men who have fought with him. According to him, men have gone to the North of his state to protect the region from invaders, but he has been forced to join and is arrested for trying to flee the war and captured by the home guards. They try to kill him with the rest of the escapees but luckily, he is missed, and the rest die. Inman is still healing from a severe neck injury; he leaves the hospital to return to Cold Mountain, where he has had an unofficial engagement with Ada Munroe, the priest's daughter. Despite her father's reputation as a preacher in town, no one offers to support her after his death until another fatherless girl, Ruby appears.

They work together to rebuild Ada's farm, selling and bartering for the products and services they require. The emotional relationship between these two strong souls, as well as their remarkable growth, elevates this story beyond the typical historical fiction fare. The reversal of gender stereotyping is also found clearly in Ada's journey and her parallel battle for survival following her father's death. He had "kept her a child," she eventually realizes, by teaching her only artistic talents and obliging her to learn the most basic practical abilities for living alone on a small farm. She nearly starves to death until Ruby comes, through whom she begins to learn how to survive off her land (Gifford,2001p.92).

Based on Ada's personality and how she lived before the war and her father's loss, she does not know anything about facing a life in the outside world. Because she is a woman, her education has been limited to art and how to behave like a fine, high-class woman. She is shocked after her father's death that all her education has taught her nothing she can use in a challenging time like this;

however, she is later able to break the gender stereotype and learn how to be stronger and independent woman: she transforms into a mountain woman. On the other hand, Ruby is uneducated, from a lower class, but she is strong enough to live without a mother and to hold a responsibility alone.

Ada has been corrupted by growing up as someone who was supposedly constantly being served, and now, she must learn how to manage her property properly through Ruby's skills. For both, the landscape is populated by humans who live in either damaging or productive ways. Frazier focuses on the role of women in war, and Ada and Ruby are two different examples of courageous women who struggle to find peace and survival. Frazier states,

when you grow up in the South, you get this concept of the war as this noble, tragic thing, and when I think of my own family's experience, it doesn't seem so noble in any direction. To go off and fight for a cause they had not much relation to: that's the part I see as tragic. (Gussow,1997)

3.4 War's Impact on Female Characters

Ada, the story's major female character, has grown up in Charleston and gone to Cold Mountain with her father and lived on a farm. Ada is from a single-parent household, since her mother died before Ada was born, and she is responsible for the entire farm following her father's death. During and after the Civil War, Ada is indeed responsible for the entire farm; as a result, Ada is unfamiliar with the concept of marriage(Svobodova,2013,p.28).

Frazier illustrates Ada's lack of interest in marriage when she is young, which the Southern culture to which she belongs finds strange. Ada is regarded as a fool for passing up opportunities, and before the war, she becomes the center of gossip in Charleston because she refuses to marry. Ada loses several friends because they cannot stand her behavior and attitude. People judged Ada for two reasons according to Frazier: "Before the war, Ada refuses two marriage proposals, which makes her too bristly and eccentric, her father had shaped her into a type of monster, a creature not entirely fit for the society of men and women" (Frazier, 1997, P.50).

Like all Southern women, Ada has been educated, which includes being able to discuss and share knowledge about art, literature, and speaking in multiple languages or playing the piano. Although it was common to send young girls of high class to boarding schools to acquire etiquette and become educated, she feels no use for all that education after her father's death, when she is left alone with a farm and a home to care for, and she has no idea how to do so.

She was filled with opinions on art and politics and literature, and ready to argue the merits of her positions. But what actual talents could she claim? What gifts? A fair command of French and Latin. A hint of Greek. A passable hand at fine needlework. A competency at the piano, though no brilliance. The ability to render landscape and still life with accuracy in either pencil or watercolor. And she was well read. All her life, though, her father had kept her back from the hardness of work. As long as she could remember he had hired adequate help, sometimes freed blacks, sometimes un landed whites of good character, sometimes slaves. (Frazier,1997, pp.22.23)

Ada's experience was like being a child who learns to walk all over again. She no longer finds herself belonging to the farm or the city. She realizes that all she has learned is useless compared to real-world problems until she meets Ruby, who rescues her with her independence and endurance in the wilderness. Later, Ada starts to envy Ruby for her knowledge of farming, as she learns from Ruby how to be self-sufficient. Ada is shocked by both the war and her father's death due to the approaching winter and her insufficient experience. Ada does not seem to be able to stay on the farm for very long. It appears that she must sell her house and return to the city due to the war. However, Ada chooses to remain on the farm in honor of her beloved father. With the support of Ruby, who teaches Ada how to work on the farm, Ada matures.

Ruby is a woman from the Appalachian Mountains in the South. She is not from a wealthy family, in fact, she is poor. As a result, her life is distinctive in comparison to Ada's before the war. Ruby never had an education, but she retains the common sense and survival skills she needs because she has been self-sufficient all her life. Ruby and Ada are great matches for each other. Ruby teaches Ada the principles of survival, natural cycles, and hard labor, and Ada exposes Ruby to educational matters, literature, and art.

In *Cold Mountain*, Frazier effectively depicts the senselessness of war and how it tarnishes the body, mind, and soul. There is nothing great or glorifying about it; however, it engenders chaos, hatred, and hostility and is put into action. It affects everyone who is indirectly involved with it. Frazier also states that to figure out how to conclude the book, he had to return to the place where his ancestor lived and where Inman's narrative begins, where he was shot in the last days of the war. "Part of writing the book was trying to understand why people like my ancestors, who were subsistence farmers, went off and fought that war and what it did to them to fight a bad war for a bad cause" (Frazier,2000).

In addition, Ruby describes war,

the North was a godless nation, or rather a land of just one deity, and that was money, the people of Cold Mountain, however, soon discover that they are fighting someone else's war those who want to protect a system that requires the subjugation of an entire race to another. Men had been fighting battles for such men, slaves owning makes the rich man proud and ugly and it makes the poor man mean. It's a curse laid on the land. We've lit a fire and now it's burning us down (Frazier,1997,p.142).

Ada is very proud of what she accomplishes. She has never felt she belonged to the high-class community she came from, but here on her farm, she feels like she belongs and has finally found herself. She is strong and capable of taking care of herself and the farm. She writes to Inman about all the changes she has gone through and that the class differences between them no longer matter, and she waits for him impatiently. The main characters' principles all change post-war. Ada's acquired humility in living with the processes of "burying and healing" eventually leads to her inner nature leaning straight from her outer nature, with Ruby, they are ultimately survivors based on the combination of culture and nature. Doing things correctly in this condition of living is acquired through reading the country like a traveler or farmer, such that people's oppression in conflict becomes a symbol of an unsustainable manner of life on the land. Frazier's fascination with people, land, and their ability to live together is reflected in the narrative technique of shifting between traveling and farming.

Ada and Ruby are helplessly dragged into the guerilla warfare around them. They are compelled to support and provide for their own menfolk, who in this situation, are Ruby's careless father and his unfortunate friends, who have left the Confederate Army and become outliers. Ada and Ruby are forced to flee their home comforts and farm, where shelter, food, and safety have been provided incredibly easily. However, leaving home has made them far more helpless and exposed to harassment by the Home Guard and to the center of the mountain wilds, where they learn that their men have been attacked and require their immediate attention.

In order to complete this rescue mission, Ada and Ruby arm themselves, disguised as men, and “assume all the duties of the sterner sex,” moreover blurring the gender roles imposed on them due to warfare, as they involve in a shooting that represents as the story's climax(Arnold,2004,p.31). For Ada, the time of war is full of reminders of how strange and distant the time before the war seems. During the war, Ada’s life alters dramatically, and she believes that the world as a whole has altered. The war’s impact on people’s beliefs has been significant. Before the war, Ada considered the world of Southern rules, practices, and customs as unreal, since there were no genuine problems to cope with, but now, Ada must learn new rules to survive.

Ada is a self-reflective person considering the effects of manual labor on her new life. She is well aware that the war and the necessity of labor have altered her personality. She is a new person with different goals, and she no longer resembles a vulnerable Southern beauty but rather a field worker, since she spends most of her time outside. Southern women’s physical looks, as well as their attitudes, changed dramatically throughout the war. When Ruby and Ada rest on the rail in the barn, a few proprieties fade away. Ruby, who was never a lady, notes that Ada is no longer a lady, given the circumstances; therefore; there is no need for Ada to sit like a lady.

In summary, Ruby has a positive impact on Ada. Ruby uses her common sense to figure out what is vital and what is not in order to live, and she passes on her skills to Ada, since behaving like a lady serves no purpose and has no place now. Ada is used to a specific type of conduct because of her schooling, but she quickly sees that Ruby is correct. Ada is no longer a Southern woman. “Marrying a woman for her beauty makes no more sense than eating a bird for its singing. But it's a common mistake nonetheless”(Frazier,1997, p.279).

Before the Civil War, high-class Southern ladies were interested in dresses, parties, and amusement in general. Life becomes simplified during and after the war. Simplicity does not imply an easier way of living. The situation is reversed: it is mostly concerned with daily survival. All that matters is work; however, since Ada and Ruby have been the only ones who can look after the huge farm, there is little time for fun, so Ada stops caring about her skin and smooth hands. Simply living has never put Ada in such a tiresome business (Girardin,2000,p.761).

Many novels described the horror of war and the devastated losses of souls and resources, however, very few novels have been written to dramatize the struggles of Southern women in the Civil War. *Gone with the Wind* (1936) by Margaret Mitchell, is a well-known example in American literature dealing with the transformation of beautiful Southern women after the Civil War. Scarlett O'Hara finds herself responsible for taking care of her entire family, relatives, and the land following the start of the Civil War and the fall of the South. Scarlett's character transforms from a selfish teenager who always has fun into a mature and self-reliant young woman after the many struggles she has had to face during the war. Scarlett quickly learns the hard way that she cannot apply what her mother told her in the newly formed society. All of Scarlett's good manners, generosity, charity, and guidance on how a Southern lady must act are useless during and after the Civil War. Scarlett also does not have time to be worried about her appearance, and neither does Ada; they both have different priorities now; they have both reached a new prospect and principle in life; they now have a strong impact on society and they can contribute directly to offering great assistance to it.

Overall, the results indicate that both Alcott and Frazier used social dimensions in their novels, suggesting that different reactions occur to those who follow gender roles and who does not. The ones who follow these roles are socially accepted and receive favorable opportunities and positive responses than those who act against them, they do not only receive negative reactions but also get rejected in all social fields. However, in difficult times like war, gender roles, behaviors, and appearances do not matter, the only thing matters are survival. The survival of women in a patriarchal society which treats women as weak and useless showed women's capacity and power. Both Ada and Jo experienced a gender-stereotyped society, they had to oppose these roles to survive a savage war, both earned good education and manners of how to be appropriate women, yet, both did not benefit from these manners to survive, they changed their behaviors and roles entirely, and learned to be independent and strong.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the history of the American Civil War and its impact on America, as one of the most effective incidents in the history of the United States of America. The role of American Northern and Southern women during the war and their struggle to survive was also discussed. Also, the study of the role of women is an important factor in changing American society as they struggle against the social restrictions placed upon them in a patriarchal society. The theory of gender stereotypes in 19th century American society was also explored and its impact on limiting women's freedom, making their lives even harder than they already were. The study of the role of women during the American Civil War is very important to establish that they had the power to shape the principles of their society and prove themselves by paving the way for their liberation rights. The question arises, do gender norms still exist in American society, or have they completely disappeared? If so, why is there not enough research and studies that focus on the history of the role of American women during the Civil War?

However, few studies focus on the impact of women on American society during and after the Civil War. They emphasize that their contribution was as important as men's, or even more so, as they filled both male and female positions, they also reformed and rehabilitated institutions previously run by men. Moreover, these studies denounced the public perception that war is masculine, leaving women's roles invalid and passive.

This study aimed to identify an effective literary strategy to apply the technique of gender role reversal in war literature, based on the analysis of the characters in *Little Women* 1868 and *Cold Mountain* 1997 and their transformation through the war crises. It can be concluded that the application of the gender role reversal strategy in war novels slightly changed the traditional 19th-century thinking of stereotypical gender roles and introduced the new strong female character in the literary world.

Many factors may have contributed to the success of the two novels. First, in terms of presenting the reversal of gender roles as a strategy in *Little Women*, Alcott indirectly used this method to avoid readers' rejection of such an idea. After all, they did not accept the new roles for women, and the comparison between the female characters in the story who are labeled as such by the stereotypes and others who have opposite characteristics because they do not conform to their gender stereotypes. Second, although Frazier wrote his book in 1997, he was able to portray the importance of the role of the American woman during the war and her struggle to survive the war and the new roles that were imposed on her. Third, the challenges that the female characters of both books had to face to realize that all the stereotypical roles they had to learn before as women were useless, which made them stand up and change their roles to survive, which was due to the wrong principles and traditions of the 19th century.

Before the war, women were forcibly and voluntarily confined because they have not experienced any other situation where they are free from all traditional restrictions and think that these restrictions are the right place for their gender. This shows how patriarchal American society used to be, that women were satisfied if they accepted their inferior position to men. War was the breaking point where women crossed all the forbidden boundaries and reversed their stereotypical gender roles by assuming all the management responsibilities in the absence of men. As a result, they realized that they do not settle for the inferior

gender role imposed on them and began to demand their rights to equality with men.

Based on this conclusion, several propositions can be made. First, since the beginning of humanity, women, and men have been created without assigning a gender role to each of them. Gender diversity should not be a measure of roles and behaviors or whether one gender is superior or inferior to the other. Second, the role of women in the American Civil War is vital in determining the status and rights of women today. No discrimination based on gender should be considered when defining the impact of women on America in historical studies and scholarship.

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