

MOVING BEYOND HEART & HEARTH: FINDING WOMEN IN IRISH LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT:

This paper argues that the first involvement of Irish women in war was 'accidental' and came as an extension to their roles in the private sphere. Ireland depended on women in the 'typical' role of 'keeping the home fires burning' when men were absent at the front. The paper discusses how the stereotypical image of femininity, deemed less dangerous, was further exploited to enable women to take on more substantial roles in the public war sphere.

The paper presents the opinions of two disputing parties regarding the place of Irish women in war history and literature. The first claims that although women were present and active at all fronts, men managed to write them out of the war story assigning them with traditional or peripheral roles at best. The second opinion believes that Ireland has always been mirrored in relation to women, female sacredness, and female agency. The paper aims to show that the position of Irish women has never been minor or superficial and that Irish women have never been absent from the scene, but their presence oscillated between reality and myth, static and dynamic roles, self immolation and self emulation.

Keywords : neoliberalism, interlocutors, entrepreneurial masculinity, hegemonic masculinity, 'new India'

