

# 1 The Images of American ‘Ladies aboard’ in the Novels by 2 J.F.Cooper 3

4 *The report sheds light on a number of features characteristic of Cooper’s*  
5 *depiction of his countrywomen travelling on board of ships. The analysis is*  
6 *primarily based on the novels “The Red Rover” (1827), “Homeward Bound, or*  
7 *the Chase” (1838), “The Pathfinder, or the Inland Sea” (1840) and “Afloat*  
8 *and Ashore” (1844). This article attempts to combine the study of women’s*  
9 *images with the theme of the sea novel. In Russian literary critical studies,*  
10 *special attention has been paid to the exploration of Cooper’s marine novels,*  
11 *while the image of a lady in his writings has been overlooked par*  
12 *excellence. There are articles on the issue of Cooper’s female characters in*  
13 *American literary studies that tend to harshly criticize the author’s heroines for*  
14 *them being hardly distinguishable. This proposition is seen as only partially*  
15 *true, as the author of the present paper claims that the uniqueness of the female*  
16 *images created by J.F. Cooper lies in their natural existence aboard a ship,*  
17 *which was quite uncommon in American literary tradition. The article attempts*  
18 *to explore the historical and cultural reasons why women were banned from*  
19 *ship travels in America and investigates how Cooper was able to cope with*  
20 *these controversies when depicting female protagonists on every ship he*  
21 *drew.*

22  
23 **Keywords:** *Female characters, American literature, J.F. Cooper, American*  
24 *lady, women on ships*  
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## 26 27 Introduction

28  
29 Being not only a prolific writer, but an extensive traveler and a father of six  
30 daughters, James Fenimore Cooper is best known for his male hero Natty Bumppo  
31 with his Indian friend Chingachgook from the Leatherstocking Tales. The image  
32 of the former is widely labeled as the one of ‘New Adam’ reflecting the core  
33 aspects of American national identity. Every Adam has his Eve, and, thus, Cooper  
34 creates female characters who successfully fulfil the image of a typical American  
35 lady of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The writer systematically chooses ships as settings of his  
36 narratives where the characters exist and develop. Though sea tales are one of the  
37 major trends of American literary tradition, female images can hardly be spotted in  
38 such environment in the vast majority of American fiction. The aim of the research  
39 is to shed light on the number of features characteristic of Cooper’s depiction of  
40 his countrywomen travelling on board of ships. The analysis is primarily based on  
41 the following novels by Cooper: “The Red Rover”, “Homeward Bound, or the  
42 Chase”, “The Pathfinder, or the Inland Sea” and “Afloat and Ashore”. The paper  
43 would present an overview of Russian and American critical tradition on Cooper’s  
44 writing, precisely the research works concerning female images created by the  
45 writer and discuss the specificity and the function the young ladies’ images the  
46 writer creates in his literature.  
47

## 1 Literature Review

2  
3 The image of American lady in Cooper’s writings has been overlooked par  
4 excellence in the Russian literary critical studies, which have primarily focused on  
5 the two aspects of the writer's creative work: his social criticism and the issue of  
6 the American frontier with his Adamic hero, Natty Bumppo. In 2004 the  
7 Effingham dilogy became the subject matter of the dissertation “The artistic  
8 features of Dilogy JF Cooper about Modernity “Homeward bound” and “Home as  
9 found”<sup>1</sup> by the Russian scholar E.E. Rosé. The research work analyses the irony  
10 the dilogy contains in relation to American society of the first half of the 19th  
11 century. It must be noted that Cooper's satire in the abovementioned novels refers  
12 to the male characters solely, whereas it does not apply to female images as they  
13 are considered to have been idealized by the author. In recent times, the vector of  
14 Russian studies on Cooper has shifted towards the writer's marine novels  
15 (“Linguoculturological Potential of the “Ocean” Concept (by the Material of the  
16 Works of J.F.Cooper “The Red Rover” “Around the World on the Korshun” by  
17 K.M.Stanyukovich”)<sup>2</sup> by Istomina S.S., “Representation of the Concept “Body of  
18 Water” in the artistic space of Fenimore Cooper”<sup>3</sup> by Egoshina N.G. and  
19 Lashmanov A.K.), while the attention to female images created by the author is  
20 still hardly noticeable.

21 Conversely, there is a number of articles on the issue of Cooper’s female  
22 characters in American literary studies of the 19-20 centuries which tend to  
23 harshly criticize Cooper's heroines. One of the reviewers, the American poet and  
24 essayist James Lowell, writes in “A Fable for Critics”: “the Women he draws from  
25 one model don't vary, all sappy as maples and flat as a prairie.”<sup>4</sup> Accordant, is the  
26 opinion of the American literary critic Leslie Fiedler, who characterized Cooper's  
27 female images as “the scarcely distinguishable.”<sup>5</sup> The former opinion as well as  
28 the latter has the right to exist due to the fact that a lot of Cooper’s females are  
29 highly comparable. The major part of feminine figures from the Cooper’s novels  
30 can be nominally divided into two types, namely: an image of a religious and  
31 pious mother (Ruth Harding Heathcote from “The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish: a  
32 Tale” (1829), Wilhelmina Willoughby from “The Wyandotte, or the Hutted  
33 Knoll” (1843); a character of a young outrageous young lady (Judith Hutter from  
34 “The Deerslayer, or the First Warpath” (1841), Mabel Dunham from “The  
35 Pathfinder, or the Inland Sea” (1840). However, it is claimed that the uniqueness  
36 of the female characters created by Cooper lies in their natural existence aboard of  
37 a ship, which is quite uncommon: in the novels by H. Melville and M. Twain, a

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<sup>1</sup>Elena Evgenievna Rose, *The Artistic Features of the Dilogy about the Contemporary World Homeward Bound and Home as Found*, (2004)

<sup>2</sup>SS Istomina, *Linguoculturological Potential of the ‘Ocean’ Concept (by the Material of the Works of J.F.Cooper The Red Rover and Around the World on the Korshun”by K.M.Stanyukovich)* (2023)

<sup>3</sup>NG Egoshina, AK Lashmanov, *Representation of the Concept “Body of Water” in the Artistic Space of Fenimore Cooper* (2021)

<sup>4</sup>James Lowell, *A Fable for Critics*

<sup>5</sup>Leslie Fiedler, *Love and Death of American Novel*

1 ship was exclusively the men's world. Interestingly, both types of women  
2 characters mentioned above are undertaking voyages in Cooper's novels.

3 In 1971 on the pages of *American Quarterly* in the article "The Women of  
4 Cooper's Leatherstocking Tales" American literary scholar Nina Baym compares  
5 women characters from Cooper's best-known series of novels the Leatherstocking  
6 Tales. The researcher attempts to introduce a classification of Coopers' female  
7 characters, which she does by dividing them in two groups such as marriageable  
8 and unmarrigeable, still admitting that "to organize Cooper's woman according to  
9 types, or stereotypes, is more confusing than clarifying."<sup>6</sup>In 1981 in the journal  
10 "Studies in the Novel" the article named "Towards Daisy Miller: Cooper's Idea of  
11 the American Girl"<sup>7</sup> by Susan Hopkins comes out, in which the author  
12 convincingly proves the fact that the national image of American lady was created  
13 not by the generation of realist writers, but by the romantic writer J.F. Cooper in  
14 his novels "Afloat and Ashore", "Miles Wallingford" and the Effingham dilogy.

15 In contemporary American literary criticism, there are multiple articles  
16 devoted to the study of female images of the writer. For instance, Chuck  
17 Zeitvogel's thesis "Gender Power and Social Class: The Role of Women in James  
18 Fenimore Cooper's "The Pathfinder", "Homeward Bound", "Home as Found",  
19 and "The Ways of the Hour"<sup>8</sup> (2004) compares the images of the four young  
20 American women from the above-mentioned novel and concludes that Cooper,  
21 being a proponent of a patriarchal society, endows his female images with limited  
22 power. Moreover, the scholar names Eve from the Effingham dilogy the "ideal  
23 lady"<sup>9</sup> – the opinion the author of the present paper totally agrees to. Another  
24 relevant example is the article "A Brave New World: Wilderness Dreams and  
25 Female Empowerment from Vineland to the Pacific" (2018) by a contemporary  
26 American researcher Signe O. Wegener who analyses the characteristics of a  
27 number of female images by Cooper and hypothesizes that an American young  
28 female is "a very different type of woman than the one expected in the "old  
29 world."<sup>10</sup>

30 Subsequently, American critics' contribution to the analysis of Copper's  
31 female images is substantial, though their characters have been analyzed  
32 independent of the setting of the story. The present paper does not attempt to  
33 classify female images in Cooper's artistic work but rather highlight the specificity  
34 of their natural existence in a particular setting, namely, aboard of a ship.

### 37 **Methodology**

38  
39 The research applies biographical method to trace the connection between the  
40 author's life circumstances and the characters he creates. To draw a conclusion

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<sup>6</sup>Nina Baym, *The Women of Cooper's Leatherstocking Tales* (*American Quarterly*, 1971)

<sup>7</sup>Susan Hopkins *Towards Daisy Miller: Cooper's Idea of the American Girl* (1981)

<sup>8</sup>Chuck Zeitvogel, *Gender Power and Social Class: The Role of Women in James Fenimore Cooper's The Pathfinder, Homeward Bound, Home as Found, and The Ways of the Hour* (2004)

<sup>9</sup>Ibid

<sup>10</sup>Signe Wegener, *A Brave New World: Wilderness Dreams and Female Empowerment from Vineland to the Pacific* (2018)

1 about the images of young American ladies created by Cooper, the methods of  
 2 discourse analysis have been employed, particularly narrative analysis and critical  
 3 analysis. The method of comparative analysis has been utilized to define the  
 4 commonalities and differences in the corresponding images of young American  
 5 females in Cooper's novels under study.

## 6 7 **Discussion**

8  
 9 For Cooper, father-daughter relationship is truly special. The mages of young  
 10 ladies were depicted with great love in Cooper's novels, presumably their  
 11 prototypes were the author's daughters. For instance, in the Effingham dilogy  
 12 which is considered autobiographical, the prototype of Eve's father is James  
 13 Fenimore Cooper himself, and therefore the author describes the heroine with such  
 14 love as if describing one of own daughters. The author eloquently calls this  
 15 heroine of the novel "Homeward Bound" Eve. This name was also initially chosen  
 16 by the writer for the heroine of the novel "Pathfinder, or the Inland Sea", but then  
 17 it was changed to Mabel. Presumably for the author it was more important in this  
 18 novel to call his best-known character Natty Bumppo 'Adam before the Fall' than  
 19 to name Eve the girl who refused the love of the angelic protagonist.

20 This article attempts to combine the study of women's images with the theme  
 21 of the sea novel. Interestingly, as soon as Cooper describes a ship in his novels,  
 22 surely there is a lady aboard. The organic existence of the main female character  
 23 aboard the ship is distinctly traceable in "Homeward Bound", "Pathfinder, or the  
 24 Inland Sea", "Afloat and Ashore, or the Chase" and "The Red Rover". So, in the  
 25 four aforementioned novels, one of the central characters is an American girl, 18-  
 26 20 years old, either belonging to an upper-class society, or being a daughter of a  
 27 military man, often accompanied by a maid, a governess and a father, in the novel  
 28 "On Land and at Sea", she travels with her elder brother, in the other – three girls  
 29 travel with their fathers. Heroines-travelers in Cooper's novels are brave, patriotic,  
 30 good-looking and sure to fall in love with one of the central characters of the work  
 31 – often a so-called Cooper's New Adam – a young American male who realizes  
 32 this ideal in accordance with the characteristics given to him by Benjamin  
 33 Franklin, namely, chosenness, providence, usefulness, industriousness, etc.

34 It is worth mentioning that the period described by Cooper in his books  
 35 coincides with the time when the transatlantic travel hit the peak. The narrative of  
 36 "The Red Rover" together with "The Pathfinder, or the Inland Sea" is set around  
 37 1759, while the action of "Afloat and Ashore, or the Chase" takes place in 1797.  
 38 The latest period is described in "Homeward Bound" focusing on 1815. Still  
 39 throughout the period between 1750 and 1810 "men and woman traveled in almost  
 40 equal numbers."<sup>11</sup> In contemporary to Cooper reality, there was often the case that  
 41 women followed their husbands to the ship because of need. At the same time, in  
 42 Cooper's novels, not wives follow their husbands: but daughters join their fathers.  
 43 And mainly, not because the fathers are on military service, but because the family  
 44 travels together. The reason why girls take voyages with their fathers solely lies in

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<sup>11</sup>Sarah Crabtree, *Navigating Mobility: Gender, Class and Space at Sea, 1760-1810* (2014), 92

1 the fact that they are deprived of their mother from an early age. One-parent family  
2 is described in numerous novels by Cooper, including all four novels under study.

3 The ladies' images Cooper creates share several common features which, to a  
4 certain extent, contradict the generally known superstition that a woman on a ship  
5 brings bad luck. In other words as it termed in "Legends a Superstitions of the Sea  
6 and of Sailors in All Lands and in All Times" by the lieutenant of U.S. Navy  
7 Fletcher S. Basset "women were thought unlucky at sea."<sup>12</sup> Literature corpus on  
8 the issue of this superstition primarily elaborates on three different reasons  
9 explaining why women on a ship were a taboo.

10  
11 (1)The first version justifies the ban by harsh living conditions on the ship not  
12 at all suitable for women.

13 (2)The second version is based on possible disagreements that a woman on a  
14 ship could bring into a cohesive male team.

15 (3)The third version states that a ship has a soul, and it is certainly of female  
16 gender, and in case there is a woman on board, the ship can become  
17 jealous and not obey the captain in a critical situation.

18  
19 Three described above reasons of negative perception of women on ships will  
20 be considered below with regard to James Fenimore Cooper's texts. The  
21 hypothesis is that the writer tends to disregard two out of the three mentioned  
22 causes by creating female characters who feel safe and comfortable aboard,  
23 contribute to peaceful environment of a ship's microcosm, but still is a specific  
24 way compete with the ships they travel on in gaining the most of attention from  
25 the ship's master.

26 (1) J.F. Cooper does not emphasize the difficult life on the ship, and every  
27 non-military ship described in his works, accommodates women. The latter being  
28 not just inconsiderable passengers, but carefully described protagonists of the plot.

29 The theory that it would be physically difficult for women as weaker  
30 creatures to survive on board of a ship is refuted in Cooper's novels: contemporary  
31 to Cooper American women feel great on water. This can be illustrated by the  
32 episode from the novel "Pathfinder, or the Inland Sea" (1840), narrating about the  
33 1750s, where it is noted that the young American woman Mabel does not suffer  
34 from seasickness at all and behaves, as the other passengers liked to say, like a  
35 "real sailor."<sup>13</sup>

36 Moreover, the girls on the ship have a positive attitude towards their sea  
37 voyages, they are able to admire not only the landscapes, but also the ships: "She  
38 seems very beautiful to me, uncle... "I daresay you can find faults in his  
39 appearance, and in the way she is managed; but to my ignorance, both are  
40 perfect."<sup>14</sup> In this romantic manner a young traveler describes the ship she travels  
41 on.

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<sup>12</sup>Fletcher S. Basset, *Legends a Superstitions of the Sea and of Sailors in All Lands and in All Times* (1885), 110

<sup>13</sup>James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pathfinder, or the Inland Sea*

<sup>14</sup>Ibid

1 Even in the moment of a mortal danger on the ship, a young woman named  
 2 Gertrude, a passenger ship from the novel “The Red Rover” (1827) makes a  
 3 remark about the ship: “She is certainly beautiful!”<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the writer  
 4 shows that the American women are inclined to experience happiness on board of  
 5 the ship. In “Afloat and Ashore” the heroine remarks: “Fortunately, everything  
 6 else was soothing to my sister’s spirits; and, so long as she could sit on the deck,  
 7 holding Lucy’s hand, and enjoy the changing landscape, with her brother within  
 8 call, it was not possible she would be altogether without happiness.”<sup>16</sup> The  
 9 calming effect of being aboard is given mostly to the fact that a person locates in  
 10 the middle of nature, and this idea of natural world producing a positive and even a  
 11 divine effect on the heroes of the narratives is typical of all Cooper’s writings.

12 Akin to this description presented above is the episode from the novel  
 13 “Homeward Bound”: it can be noted that the appearance young American Eve,  
 14 who is afloat at the time, is harmonious with her inner state: “Indeed, so long did  
 15 Eve, in the buoyancy of her young spirits, and her keen perception of the  
 16 ludicrous, indulge herself, that fair hair fell about her rosy cheeks, and her bright  
 17 eyes fairly danced with delight.”<sup>17</sup> The portrait of the girl is taken aboard of the  
 18 ship and this location seems to be having a positive impact on her mood reflecting  
 19 in the ways she looks.

20 The corpus of citations analyzed above convincingly demonstrates that the  
 21 first assumption about the severe aboard conditions threatening to women’s well-  
 22 being can be debunked judging by numerous Cooper’s female characters who feel  
 23 comfortable and happy when afloat.

24 (2) Speaking of prejudice that a woman can provoke a conflict among the  
 25 crew of the ship is also not justified in Cooper’s novels. It was believed that for the  
 26 crew, as for the captain there should be only one “woman” in the voyage — the  
 27 ship.

28 The vessels in the novels of Cooper directly represent the highest value for  
 29 the captains and are traditionally referred to as ‘she’. There are even two types of  
 30 attitude to ships based on their being considered of female gender: the one the  
 31 guards the sailors, the image of “the all-powerful mother who nurtures and offers  
 32 womb-like protection”<sup>18</sup>, and the other that stands for a metaphorical romantic  
 33 partner for sailors. In Cooper’s novel “Homeward Bound” captain Truck of the  
 34 ship “Montauk” from the novel under study explains to the crew: “Sticks,  
 35 gentlemen, are to a ship what limbs are to a man. Without them she rolls and  
 36 tumbles about as winds, currents, and seas will; while with them she walks, and  
 37 dances, and jumps Jim Crow; ay, almost talks. The standing rigging are the bones  
 38 and gristle; the running gear the veins in which her life circulates; and the blocks  
 39 the joints.

40  
 41 • And which is the heart? Asked sir George.

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<sup>15</sup>James Fenimore Cooper, *The Red Rover*

<sup>16</sup>James Fenimore Cooper, *Afloat and Ashore*

<sup>17</sup>James Fenimore Cooper, *Homeward Bound, or the Chase*

<sup>18</sup>Silvia Rodgers, *Feminine Power at Sea* (The Best of Anthropology Today, 2002), 22

- 1       • Her heart is her master. With a sufficient commander no stout ship is ever  
2 lost, so long as she has a foot of water beneath her false keel, or a rope  
3 yarn left to turn to account.”<sup>19</sup> The fact that arouses is that the commander  
4 of the vessel considers the heart of the ship its captain, that is, himself and  
5 they together make a happy couple.  
6

7       Still on the pages of the same novels we spot how organically the young lady  
8 aboard exists within the male crew. Exemplifying is the episode a sailor’s funeral  
9 attributed by signing some prayers which the girl joined in. “Most of the  
10 gentlemen joined in the responses, and the silvery voice of Eve sounded sweet and  
11 holy amid the breathings of the ocean.”<sup>20</sup> – The captain’s response to this prayer is  
12 described by the author as: “Captain Truck had never before been so deeply  
13 impressed with any religious ceremony.”<sup>21</sup> This depiction of a chorus is a  
14 metaphorical one as it symbolizes the organic way of Eve’s integration in the  
15 ship’s crew.

16       This way the author describes a story contradicting the stereotype about the  
17 separation of the crew of sailors as a result of the woman’s presence on the sloop.  
18 Ladies on board do not bring any confusion to the crew of the ship, and only  
19 contribute to rallying the men’s team: they discipline, mobilize sailors and, one  
20 might say, guarantee the success of the undertaking. Due to women aboard,  
21 everything is done correctly, harmoniously and accurately — so that the valuable  
22 “cargo” would not suffer and arrive at the destination point safely and timely.  
23 However, ladies travelling by ship are not just precious goods to be delivered, as  
24 from the text of the novel it can be seen that the females’ opinion is repeatedly  
25 requested and taken into account by males. Of interest is an episode from the novel  
26 “The Red Rover”, in which the captain of the vessel Wilder sincerely names the  
27 lady present on the ship, subsequently the protagonist’s governess, a skilled sailor:  
28 “Have you a disposition to look at the night? So skillful and so stout a sailor  
29 courageous sailor, should not seek her birth, without passing an opinion on the  
30 weather.”<sup>22</sup> After the observations and remarks made by the lady about the present  
31 state of the ship, the captain, having listened to her advice, gives the order to  
32 remove one of the ship’s gears. This confidence of the captain toward the female  
33 passenger is unusual and proves the special position of the ladies on Cooper’s  
34 ships.

35       In each of the four novels by Cooper mentioned above, it is observed that the  
36 women on the ships have a special kind relationship with the captain. In the novel  
37 “The Pathfinder, or the Inland Sea” there are two captains, one of whom is the  
38 uncle of a young American lady Mabel placed aboard, and the second one is her  
39 beloved. In the novel “The Red Rover” Captain Wilder is also the beloved of the  
40 young American woman Gertrude. The story of “Afloat and Ashore, or the Chase”  
41 depicts the captain as the brother of one of the heroines and the lover of the other.  
42 In the maritime novel “Homeward Bound”, Captain Truck has a deep sympathy

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<sup>19</sup>James Fenimore Cooper, *Homeward Bound, or the Chase*

<sup>20</sup>Ibid

<sup>21</sup>Ibid

<sup>22</sup>James Fenimore Cooper, *The Red Rover*

1 for young Eve travelling on his ship and their relationship can be called friendly.  
 2 As a proof of the exceptional attitude of Captain Truck to Eve the following  
 3 episode from the novel “Homeward Bound” can be cited: “...he felt a touch upon  
 4 his arm. It was the little hand of Eve, between whom and the old seaman there  
 5 existed a good deal of trifling, blended with the most entire good will.”<sup>23</sup>  
 6 The closeness of the captain to the girl also proves the fact that he is the first to  
 7 address her as the ship is approaching her homeland. As soon as the land becomes  
 8 visible from the board, the captain exclaims: “Here we are, my dear young lady, he  
 9 cried, within five leagues of Sandy Hook, which lies hereaway, under our lee bow;  
 10 as pretty a position as heart could wish.”<sup>24</sup> The captain was extremely happy to  
 11 deliver the girl home safe and sound.

12 Having considered the plots of the discussed novels it becomes clear that  
 13 women on ships created on the pages of Cooper's novels do not distort the  
 14 atmosphere in the crew in any way, and at the same time receive special attention  
 15 from the vessels' captains, becoming almost the member of the crew.

16 (3) Regarding the third prejudice that the ship has a female soul capable of  
 17 jealousy, the following peculiarity can be noticed: if the ship with a woman aboard  
 18 is called by a male name in Cooper's novel, it makes a successful trip. Ships with  
 19 male names seem not to create any rivalry with the women they carry, them being  
 20 the captains' partners. It happens in the novels “The Pathfinder, or the Inland Sea”,  
 21 “Afloat and Ashore, or the Chase”, “Homeward Bound” with the ships “The  
 22 Scud”, “The Wallingford of Clawbonny”, “Montauk”, respectively.

23 On the contrary, in the case from the novel “The Red Rover” in which the  
 24 ship named “The Royal Caroline”, it sinks and on the threshold of this event, the  
 25 author highlights that the captain of the ship divides his attention between the  
 26 women on board and the ship: “the only immediate effect of the measure, was, to  
 27 draw the whole of his attention, which had before been so much divided between  
 28 his passengers and the ship, to the care of the latter.”<sup>25</sup> The protagonists of the  
 29 story successfully continued their trip on the ship that picked them up with the  
 30 male name “The Dolphin”.

31 Thus, it can be said that there is every likelihood that Cooper preserved the  
 32 idea of existing rivalry between the woman on board and the feminine spirit of the  
 33 vessel, which, in Cooper's novels, is reflected in the names of the ships.

34 All mentioned above convincingly proves that ladies on board are an  
 35 important and unique part of Cooper's heritage. The intention of Cooper to place  
 36 his female characters in the middle of the ocean seems to be an attempt to create  
 37 an image of an ideal American girl. From the novels' context it becomes crystal  
 38 clear that time spent aboard produces a certain impact on the lives of the ladies  
 39 described. The most illustrative example is the novel “Homeward Bound” where  
 40 the ship represents a microcosm in which the protagonist Eve feels harmoniously,  
 41 while being at the physically located between Europe and America: she is on her  
 42 way to home after receiving her education in the Old World. Interestingly, the  
 43 dilogy was written on Cooper's return to his homeland after a seven-year tour

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<sup>23</sup>James Fenimore Cooper, *Homeward Bound, or the Chase*

<sup>24</sup>Ibid

<sup>25</sup>James Fenimore Cooper, *The Red Rover*

1 around Europe he made accompanied by his family, which makes it possible to  
2 refer the novel to the set of autobiographic ones. Afloat the protagonist leads lively  
3 conversations about the differences, similarities and relationships between  
4 England and America. They are in various aspects, such as nature, architecture,  
5 features of society. These discussions do not only serve the author to outline the  
6 contrasts and commonalities between the Old and the New World, but to display  
7 the positive influence which the European rich heritage could have on a female  
8 representative of the young American culture. Obviously, a voyage plays a special  
9 part in Cooper's female images' lives: through their travel they grow up and  
10 become young women and real ladies. At the very end of the novel on arrival  
11 home we see an idealized image of a girl dressed in a black elegant dress. The  
12 author emphasizes her femininity and elegance; however, it is noted that the dress  
13 on Eve was French and only a French assistant could so professionally lace his  
14 corset. This description gives a certain completeness — Eve is a true American,  
15 but Europe has left its mark on her image, and now she is also a true lady.  
16 According to Cooper: “provincialism which has got to be so general in America.”<sup>26</sup>

17 The crux of the matter is that young American women of the first half of the  
18 19th century were a little provincial without a raid of European manners and  
19 exquisite dresses. A travel to Europe becomes a way to eradicate this  
20 provincialism. It was typical of Cooper himself to place not provinciality, but  
21 rather female simplicity, not the sophistication of tastes in the category of  
22 advantages, rather than disadvantages. The author admires the taste and style of  
23 the young Eve in the novel “Home as Found”: precisely this harmonious  
24 combination of American and European. Suchwise, the Cooper's ship is a so-  
25 called bridge between the mother and the daughter countries and the way along  
26 this bridge — a travel on this ship — is the way that shapes an ideal American  
27 lady.

## 30 Conclusions

31  
32 Thus, the prevailing opinion that a woman on a ship brings unhappiness is not  
33 relevant for the marine writer Fenimore Cooper. The images created by the author  
34 demonstrate that the ladies' presence on the ship was not something unusual. The  
35 severe conditions of afloat life do not confuse young American females from the  
36 novels. Instead of creating problems for the crew, women on ships give sailors  
37 vitality and motivation. Furthermore, the females do not interfere with the male  
38 worlds of the ships they travel on, oppositely, a special connection has been  
39 revealed between the female protagonists and the captains of the vessels.  
40 Traditionally, ships were called female names, in order to make a happy couple  
41 with a captain, but in Cooper's novels, only the ships with male names are able to  
42 survive, and the ones with female names sink, thus, the competition between a  
43 lady aboard and the ship she travels on is true for the writer. Another specificity is  
44 the role of the travel for young American women described by Cooper. By taking  
45 a trip to Europe young ladies obtain completeness and perfection. The existence of

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<sup>26</sup>James Fenimore Cooper, *The Red Rover*

1 these images gives us the right to consider them as carriers of that part of the Old-  
2 World culture that deserves to be borrowed.

### 5 **References**

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