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## Female Consciousness in Torday's Salmon Fishing in the Yemen By<sup>(\*)</sup>

**D. Baleid Taha Shamsan Saeid**  
Associate Professor Faculty  
of Arts, Education and Science  
at Alturbah Taiz University  
Mail: [btshamsan@yahoo.com](mailto:btshamsan@yahoo.com)

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## Certificate

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Bal-eid Taha Shamsan Saeed  
Associate Professor of English Literature  
Faculty of Arts, Education and Science at Alturbah  
Taiz University  
Yemen Republic

## Abstract

Salmon Fishing in the Yemen is a representative work by Paul Torday, a famous modern novelist who has greatly influenced readers with his ideas. This research investigates the female consciousness in Salmon Fishing in the Yemen and analyses the female qualities that strengthen the position of women in the male-dominated society.

The researcher aims at investigating the female consciousness traits which include independent thoughts, feminine ideality, essence of independence, essence of individuality, family affairs, maturity, intellectual thoughts, love and the pursuit of self-privacy. These traits are highlighted in detail together with other female features that accompany the female characters in the novel and how they help creating a modal feminine character who has engraved a strong image in the world of man.

Woman uses her independent thoughts to create an unequal image possessing qualities of self-reliance, strong spirit, strong persistence and certainty of success. It is the female consciousness that lets woman struggles to be an obstinate rival for man.

In the present study, Ms. Hester and Mrs. Mary have been chosen to be the representative of those woman who carry out the female consciousness in this novel and try to present a positive model of femininity. Ms. Hester, under her self-control and certainty epitomizes the power of patience, tolerance, optimism and success. Mrs. Mary, on the other hand, protests against the male weak-spirited attitude by leaving home for the sake of self-proving.

**Key words:** Female consciousness, privacy, individuality, essence of independence, independent thoughts, feminine ideality, full mature femininity, self-reliance

## ملخص البحث

تعتبر رواية **صيد السالمون في اليمين** للكاتب باول توردي الذي ذاع صيته بين المهتمين بالأدب الإنجليزي من أحدث الأعمال الفنية التي قدمت صورة واقعية لأحداث القرن العشرين وما تخللها من افكار وأحداث عدة مثل دور المرأة وماهي الصفات التي عززت وجودها بجانب الرجل، ويهدف هذا البحث إلى ابراز تلك الميزات التي صاحبت المرأة مثل استقلالية الافكار والمثالية والنضج السلوكي سواء كانت وحيدة أو منشغلة في أمور أسرية، فقد وضح البحث على أن المرأة تسعى دومًا لتكوين خصوصية ذاتية في شخصها من أجل البقاء كنموذجًا امثل في عالم الرجل وكذلك سعت المرأة إلى الاعتماد على تغذية ذاتها وروحها بالقوة من أجل الوصول إلى هدفها المنشود.

سلط البحث على شخصيتين من الرواية وهما السيدة هيوستر والسيدة ماري كنموذجين لإبراز الوعي الفكري والنموذج الانثوي الايجابي وما تحمله من صفات مثل قوة الصبر والتسامح وروح التقائل وحب اثبات الذات ولو كان ذلك على حساب حياتها مع الرجل أو الأسرة.

## Literature Review

Paul Torday, who was a businessman, started his writing career success in 2006 with his first novel, **Salmon fishing in the Yemen**. The novel has been translated into twenty eight languages and has led Paul into the world of imagination. This epistolary novel won the 2007 Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize and the 2008 Waverton GoodRead Award. The novel is acclaimed as Paul's masterpiece. It has had a great influence upon the society and particularly upon the Arabic society.

The independent( Thursday 19 December 2013) wrote, "**Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** remained his most famous selling half a million copies. The book gave hope to every aspiring author that they can produce a bestseller late in life".

Barry Wallop, a feature writer of the Daily Telegraph (20/12/2013), wrote:

*"Paul's **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** is his debut novel, published in 2007, became one of the best selling books of that year, was picked up as one of the first Richard and Judy book clubs recommendations and turned into a Hollywood film starring from Ewan McGregor and Emily Bunt"*

The novel carries out a very peculiar title which arises the readers' strange outlooks. In this respect, Roger Ebert(March, 7, 2012), an American film critic and historian and Journalist writes:

*"Salmon Fishing in the what? The title is no doubt intended to inspire incredulity. In a river on the deserts of Western Yemen, that's where Salmon Fishing in the Yemen, is based on Paul Torday's novel, a political satire that was a best-seller in the UK , and allows an opening into the worlds of British and Yemeni politics, the devotion of Salmon Fishermen, and the possibilities of romance among humans and Salmon, who in this story must both swim upstream."*

As far as the story of the novel is concerned, it is written in a review in **bbc.co.uk** (October, 7, 2012) that **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen**

*"follows government Scientist Dr. Alfred Jones as a fly fishing-obsessed Sheikh tasks him with the seemingly impossible-introducing Salmon to the wadis of the Yemen. With the British government desperate for a good news story in the area, the Prime Minister's fearsome spokesperson, Patricia Maxwell seizes on the idea and makes Fred responsible for the success of the project"*

John Walsh in the *Independent Culture*( Friday 09 February 2007) writes :

***Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** is "a book of considerable charm, an echo-chamber of a dozen different voices adroitly ventriloquized. It's also staggeringly old fashioned. Torday's imagination, though vivid, seems stuck in elderly movies.....But just when you're upbraiding Torday for his valetudinarian decency, he pulls off an ending both apocalyptic and wholly unexpected. His book turns out to be a moral tale about the importance of behaving in something, and the comparative unimportance of everything else."*

John.W. Potter, a journalist, essayist, author and poet, in a book review (May, 24, 2016) to Paul's **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** writes about the developing states of the characters:

*"The author's skill throughout this book is his ability to grow each of the characters and change them over time so the reader can get more familiar with them." Their hopes, dreams and emotions all develop, and the reader is allowed to journey alongside, growing attached to each of the characters in different ways."*

Regarding the theme of the novel, Tim Mackintosh Smith in the **Guardian** (Saturday 24 February 2007) writes:

*"It is also about belief in the impossible, and belief itself. And the remarkable thing is that a book about so deeply serious a matter can make you laugh, all the way to a last twist that's a sudden and shocking as a barbed hook...Salmon Fishing in the Yemen is extraordinary indeed, and a triumph."*

Ann Smith, Empire Magazine, in another review (February, 13, 2012) writes on how the novel casts on how politics can be incarnated in morals and romances:

*"Salmon Fishing in the Yemen is bit more complicated than that. Mixing political satire with broad humour, unlikely romance and even an assassination plot, it casts its net wide and gets a mixed, if lively shawl."*

Paul Webster, a film producer who has been in the business of making films for thirty years has adopted Paul's novel for his new romantic comedy film (April, 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012), says:

*"I enjoyed the novel Salmon Fishing in the Yemen quirky Englishness and its mix of romance, and almost fantasy, and hardcore political satire. I also enjoyed the boldness of the writing."*

With the same respect, Simon Beaufoy, the writer of the movie screenplay of the film (12,10,2016) based on Salmon Fishing in the Yemen writes:

*"I just love adapting material that allows room for creativity and allows room for me to be very present in the process, I suppose. Sometimes when you're adapting something classic and famous you have to adopt a different attitude, to something like Salmon Fishing in the Yemen where it had such an unusual narrative such as unusual structure that you got quite a free reign to do interesting things with it"*

Finally Amazon ( Bookclub Review- August 2012) writes:

*With a wickedly wonderful cast of characters - including a visionary Sheikh, a wisely spin doctor, Fred's devilish wife and a few thousand transplanted salmon - SALMON FISHING IN THE YEMEN is a novel about hypocrisy and bureaucracy, dreams and deniability, and the transforming power of faith and love.*

Paul Torday is very hopeful as he ends his novel with an optimistic view although the whole project has been destroyed. The last salmon which is saved indicates the success of love and faith as they are united together; they can achieve peace and dreams.

## Introduction

**Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** depicts the two previous images regarding woman. The novelist tries to show how woman can be stronger than man by offering them a good place and occupation. Therefore, the women become obstinate and they stand clearly against man.

The novel tells the story of a fisheries expert called Dr. Jones who is hired by a company to follow a project of bringing salmon from Scotland to Yemen. Dr.

Jones refuses this task in the beginning claiming that the project is "unfeasible" because the environment in Yemen cannot provide the necessary wants for the salmon to live. The project is financially supported by a Yemeni Sheikh called Muhammad. Dr. Jones is then convinced by the company consultant, Ms. Harriet, who is the first female character in the novel. She is a well-balanced, and thoughtful character. She has a very positive personality that is able to convince Dr. Jones of the possibility of the project, and therefore Dr. Jones accepts the job of fulfilling the project. However, he is still unsure of its success.

The second female character is Dr. Jones' wife, Mrs. Mary, who is also obstinate and strong particularly when she is compared to her husband. Mrs. Mary is an economist and she loves her work and believes in what she is doing. She is always seen as the driver of Dr. Jones' thoughts for he is usually presented as henpecked. She manifests her financial situation that she gets more money than he does and she usually confronts him with this. In fact, the female characters in the novel have reached a new position that man should be aware of.

### **The New Female Image:**

Torday's **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** creates a new female image in which woman is different from all the traditional stereotypes. She is totally a different character who loves freedom and desire of risk. She fights using her independent thoughts, creating a new female image possessing qualities of self-reliance, strong spirit, strong persistence and certainty of success. She has now a free-angelic wing which can fly to wherever she likes, doing exactly what man can do. She dares to defy power and fights tenaciously the unfair rules of the society that look at her from a lower station. It is the feminist consciousness that drives woman to do things a man cannot, and this feminist consciousness forces others to honour females and let them worthier more than some other men.

Torday's **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** is a post feminist novel in the sense that all the inequalities between man and woman are cleared out. It ignores all the traditional female ideas of the past. The female characters such as Ms. Harriet and Mrs. Mary are beautifully described. Ms. Harriet in the beginning of the novel is described in order to show how elegant she is. Such description includes not only the female behavior but also their manners of thinking.

Another aspect of the development of feminism in this novel, is that Mrs. Mary is pictured as stronger than her husband. He is presented as a weak and hesitant husband, particularly when he is compared with his wife, who is pictured as a strong, decisive and definite. Thereofre, the novel is considered as a victory of the feminist defenders in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Furthermore, the development of woman's independence, individuality, intellectuality and ideality of behavior and thought becomes central in Torday's **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen**. This is clear as Mrs. Mary asks her husband to think of his status either at home or in the company. She wants him to be independent at least financially:

*Don't be ridiculous,' she replied. 'We both know that until either I am earning more than £100,000 a year or you are earning more than 70000-which seems unlikely in view of your present relations with your department-then our after-*

*tax income simply will not be sufficient to compensate for the additional cost of a child. Besides, I am not ready to interrupt my career for three months, or even a month. Pregnancy might affect my chances of promotion, which right now I think are rather better than yours. You know all that. Why bring it up again?" P:31*

Torday's female characters are a few but they depict two broad realms of society presented by the world of Ms. Harriet and the world of Mrs. Mary. The first world presents courage, independence and devotion while the second stands for freedom and self-control. However, the characters of the two worlds are enjoying themselves and they like to meet new people in their world of business. Although Ms. Harriet focuses on both her business and her love, Mrs. Mary is only aware of her business neglecting her house duties. Mrs. Mary is obsessed with getting money even when she talks to Dr. Jones, her advice for him revolves around how much she gets.

**Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** is a clear evidence for the postmodernist feminism as the female characters are confident that they can change their social destiny. Traditionally, women know that they cannot change their destiny: it is either a housewife or a mother. On the other hand, **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** has proved that there is a great demand on woman. Therefore, she does not only struggle to prove her identity and existence but her female identity proves her social strength to be a clear independent creature. In addition, men are portrayed as weak and indecisive and their work cannot be completed unless women are present. As a result, the demand on woman is very clear and it is taken into consideration when the novelist portrays a post feminist character such as Ms. Harriet.

In the course of reading, it is noticed that the novel's society has changed a lot as it does not have any inferior outlook at woman. Although, there is a political and terrorist attitude in the novel, the woman is not considered an inferior race at all. As a result, Paul Torday has become an outstanding novelist in the feminist convention as he reflects how woman is superior to man. His style is simple but new as he uses the epistolary mood which proves that his ideas are profound and superficial. He becomes a different novelist in the world of modern novels as he echoes the new state of woman in a new critical scenario. At this point, his themes are understood in an atmosphere of politics and terrorism which are the most obvious traits of the twentieth first century.

#### **The novelist's tools of success:**

It is clear that Torday uses a new style to convey the female consciousness by using the art of correspondence, memos, reports and meetings. This is also achieved through using some brilliant schemes such as humour and satire. They become very important tools to criticize the characters' behaviour, manners of thoughts, social, religious and political beliefs. **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** is an original satirical book where the nature of man especially his rigid thoughts, is attacked. The characters are satirically chosen to depict this role of showing the ugly faces of their belonging.

**Salmon Fishing in the Yemen**, is considered as one of the best satirical novels, in which its goals is to show the ugliness of some radical groups whose ideas are totally full of terrorism. For Torday, terrorism should not only be political but it can be a wrong or misconception of family or social view.

Therefore, the use of irony controls the characters' mood by escaping the world of reality into the world of imagination. For example, Sheikh Muhammad tries to establish the project of salmon in a place which is free from the basic elements of life regarding the salmon. Dr. Jones says that the project of bringing salmon into Yemen is impossible since there are many problems regarding the project such as the degree of temperature, oxygen and water shortage. Ironically enough, Sheikh Muhammad insists that the project should be achieved whatever it costs.

In addition, Dr. Jones is also surrounded with the idea of satire. He is advised by his wife not to run after such an impossible project but he does not listen to her and continues his journey. In general, all the characters' lives have some particular achieving dreams. The characters, therefore, suffer from an excessive imagination, which makes them think that they are right in their views of life. At this point, if you scrutinize the characters' life, you will notice that they always think that they are right:

*"Salmon Fishing in the Yemen is bit more complicated than that. Mixing political satire with broad humour, unlikely romance and even an assassination plot, it casts its net wide and gets a mixed, if lively shawl."*  
(Hornaday:2012)

In an interview, Paul Torday describes **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** as: "Parts of it were great fun, like mimicking Hansard. But it had its drawback."

Generally, Torday employs satire as a weapon against beliefs, or radical thoughts where woman or females such as Ms. Harriet is used as a tool to reveal the voice of woman. The novel contains a satirical state of social and political criticism of the twentieth century and twentieth first century in which woman becomes the central pivot. Ms. Harriet and Mrs. Mary stand for both the social and political criticism of the new age especially Ms. Harriet who represents the voice of the woman and the author's view himself. Torday has chosen Ms. Harriet for the purpose of ridiculing the world of man which seems absent from the ladder of the universe. That is to say, the man looks humble in front of the social and political problems of the age. Thus, he has to leave his role for the woman.

### **The Females' Conscious Performance:**

The females' performance is the true spirit of female consciousness. Female consciousness exhibits how woman identifies and performs herself in the society, how she interacts with others without losing any part of her identity. It also refers to how woman proves herself as an important individual. It can be observed by examining the self-consciousness of the female character against the radical systems of society. This can also be demonstrated by constructing the females' unconventional qualities they have in their journey of establishing their identity such as the essence of individuality, the intellectual thought development, the essence of maturity..... etc.

In this regard, Tama Kaplan describes the female consciousness as:



*"recognition of what a particular class, culture and historical recognition of what a particular period expects from woman, creates a sense of rights and obligation that provides motive force for actions different from those Marxist or Feminist theory generally try to explain."*

**Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** contains both the problems of man and woman, but in both cases, the woman becomes the key to sort out all the complexities. Ms. Harriet is the most important character in the novel. She is manifested as a kind of bridge to all the characters, and without her, everything comes to ruin. All the characters are fascinated with the presentation of Ms. Harriet with her memorable features. As a result Paul Torday is considered as feminist author in which his philosophy about the position of woman is highlighted.

Torday presents woman as capable of performing independently against not only the patriarchal ordinary man but against the radical thoughts of the society around. However, the reaction of the female characters in **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** is not direct rather than it is understood from the wonderful characteristics of the females. They are presented as lively in a fascinating image especially in the case of Ms. Harriet. She is portrayed as a wonderful creature who changes the lives of other characters. Moreover, the female character such as Ms. Harriet reacts against the radical society by proving her importance and significance as an active member of the global community through her champion heroines.

Female consciousness in **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** has brought up a new image of woman which goes beyond the anticipation of the readers. The females are forced to fight against the coolness of the males, and this is clear in the story of Mrs. Mary and Ms. Harriet. Mrs. Mary is always in an oral battle with her husband as she is always trying to stand against his ideas regarding his project and salary. She is provided with sharp and unconventional capacities that turn her husband into a weak creature. Therefore, he decides to follow the crazy project of bringing the salmon which seems unfeasible to him. There he meets Ms. Harriet whom he thinks that she might be better replacement for his wife. However, Mr. Harriet is found as a more difficult woman to deal with than his wife.

To sum up, Paul Torday in this novel has campaigned for woman's rights to be more dominant than man. The woman in this novel has gained her rights of property, travel, salary, and other forms of liberty. They do not only practice what rights they have but they also prove that they are more dominant than men. The female characters have successfully provided an unquestionable degree of equality between man and woman and not only this but they have shown that man is weaker than woman.

## Analysis

### 1) Harriet's confidentiality

Ms. Harriet appears for the first time in the novel through her letter to Dr. Jones on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May. The novelist opens his novel by this letter and we know that Ms. Harriet works in a company called Fitzharis and Price and Agents & Consultants, in London. Ms. Harriet asks Dr. Jones for meeting to identify how the project of bringing salmon into Yemen *"could be initiated and resourced"* P:2

The reader knows from this letter that Sheikh Muhammad is the company client, and Ms. Harriet tries to convince Dr. Jones for the meeting and at the same time she does not lessens the "*challenging nature of such as project*" P:2

Ms. Harriet's letter introduces the general atmosphere of the novel as businesslike, economic and political. We do not expect that human relationship is another sphere that will interest the novelist. Ms. Harriet is offered a highly substantial role from the beginning of the novel and this infringes the normal function of the female characters which is related to house-affairs and husband-wife relationship. The woman is infatuated with the image of being, confidential, responsible and is able to follow up whatever the work given to her whether it is simple or difficult. And then this image is followed up by the reasons why she is trusted by the author to be his envoy of feminism.

## 2) Ms. Harriet: an independent character

Female characters in **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** are uniquely provided with strong characteristics. Mrs. Mary, for example, is portrayed as a self-opportunist who loves her husband only for the sake of self-support. She is adherent to her job and she is ready to scarify anything but not to lose her job. On the other hand, Ms. Harriet takes the risk of the salmon project because she likes that idea but not because she is forced to, and at the same time she keeps corresponding with her fiancé; the idea that creates respect with the readers to Ms. Harriet. She does both jobs at the same time: following the idea of the project and sending message to her fiancé.

It is clear that Ms. Harriet uses her independent thoughts, personal freedom and private love to create her feminist consciousness. When her fiancé stops replying, she never leaves him but continues sending her messages again and again, and that creates a new position for Ms. Harriet in the mind of the readers. She never hesitates to reject Dr. Jones's proposal of marriage. Clearly she becomes a self-controlled person who devotes her life to love which is always a symbol of femaleness.

## 2) Ms. Harriet: the feminist

Ms. Harriet has a fortitude and mental power that other characters such as Dr. Jones or Mrs. Mary in the novel do not. She is marked with dignity and strength, and her behavior and way of thinking provide her with good traits of beauty. She is a dominant character who can express her opinion honestly. As a result, she has earned the respect of others. She tries to convince Dr. Jones of the project saying:

*"Indeed, Dr Jones, I think you are aware there is a political dimension to all of this.'....."I know you will have had some pressure brought to bear on you from within government. Believe me, it was not of our doing and I very much regret it. We would rather you took on this job, impossible as it may seem at the moment, of your all. And that will certainly be the view of our client."* P: 24

Besides, she is not disobedient or rebellious with others although their belief is the opposite of her thoughts. On the contrary, her feminine ideality encourages her to accomplish a practical role in the society. Although she suffers the absence of her

fiancé, she keeps being a valuable member in her society. Moreover, she is always punctual as she never lets her personal affairs involve in her work. Trying to convince him of the reliability of the project; she uses a serious manner that carries words of fun with Dr. Jones:

*"Well, if you take this project on I'm sure my client will ask you to fish with him at his place in Scotland." Then she added with a smile, 'And perhaps one day you'll fish on the Wadi Aleya, in the Yemen.'" P: 25*

Dr. Jones suggests that the project will face some problems and this is why he is afraid of failing. However, Ms. Harriet practically explains to him how easy to find an answer for any problem:

*"Water, Parts of the Yemen have up to 250 millimeters of rainfall a month in the wet summer season. It is brushed by the monsoon, like parts of the Dhofar region in the south of Oman. On top of surface water run-off the summer storms...The wadis become rivers, and pools and lakes form in the summer."P: 25-26*

She embodies a different contrast to Mrs. Mary by establishing a strong disposition and a certain dignity while carrying her job and at the same time keeping her love for her fiancé. Consequently, with these characteristics we can assume that Ms. Harriet catches the ladder of the greatest heroines in English literature. She deserves to be a great heroine as she subdues radical thoughts, passions and selfish-desires. She enthusiastically devotes herself to help others. In fact, the strong-minded Ms. Harriet offers the reader an illustration of persistence to society's demands while she subdues her selfish desires and intentions.

Ms. Harriet's thoughts are progressive too and they remain unuttered. This is clearly seen when she and Dr. Jones are offered some water from the Yemeni country girl. One can notice the possibility of transferring Harriet's thoughts from one stage into another with just few words. She just says:

*"That was charity• Giving water to strangers in the desert, where water is so scarce. That was true charity, the charity of poor people giving to the rich." (219)*

In fact, Ms. Harriet formulates her thoughts beyond this philosophy of womanhood and transcends the thoughts of "man" to prove that she is more than being an ordinary woman. After the girl offers the water to her and Dr. Jones, Ms. Harriet adds: *"That was so ....biblical," P:219* Therefore, she moves farther away from her feminist thinking and creates a model of a worldly heroine out of her economic and social role.

#### **4) The essence of independence and maturity**

Ms. Harriet possesses extraordinary qualities of intelligence, independence and education. The novelist provides Ms. Harriet with unconventional characteristics to prove that woman is marginalized not only in some societies such as Yemen even in her presentation by some writers. Ms. Harriet, an intelligent female character who stands side-by-side with the man and she finally controls his world of decision makers. She demonstrates herself as reliable, trustworthy and responsible not only in her work but also in her world of family. She maintains a good place in her company and keeps her own role of establishing her family as

she always tries to keep in contact with her fiancé. Her carefulness is the evidence in her caution of the danger that may fall upon her fiancé. She keeps writing her letters and when she does not get any reply, she decides to go searching for him. She reflects her ideality in love as she stops Dr. Jones from any farther emotional development with her. Even when she finds that her fiancé was dead, she does not respond to Dr. Jones:

*'I can't see you again, Fred, ' .....and whatever happened, or didn't happen, at al-shisr was just a dream you had. I only remember a dream. And now we're in walking life and the reality is you are married to Mary. You are fifteen or twenty years older than me, and we come from completely different worlds. I am still grieving for Robert, and I have to rebuild my life without him. And I have to do it without you or anyone else. It just isn't possible there could ever be more between us. We've been friends- you've been the best friend I could have ever wanted-but I can't give you any hope that there would ever be anything more.'*P:278

It is clearly understood that Ms. Harriet does not want to destroy Dr. Jones' life and marriage with Mrs. Mary even when she knows that Dr. Jones and Mrs. Mary are not strongly connected. Therefore, she chooses to continue her own life, and consequently she becomes a symbol of respect and ideality.

In addition, Ms. Harriet practices the essence of independence in her behaviour and thoughts as she keeps faithful to her fiancé, nevertheless he stops replying. Dr. Jones shows Ms. Harriet that he is not happy with his wife and he is ready to leave his wife if Ms. Harriet accepts his proposal of marriage. He tells her that he is ready to wait for her but she does not respond to him.

Moreover, Ms. Harriet shows a very strong desire of independence and maturity as she advises Dr. Jones to come back to his wife. Although she suffers emotional vacuum by the absence of her fiancé, she never lets others observe her personal problems. Ms. Harriet wants to take the step herself but not to be forced by others. She is able to take a positive movement to affect her own life and therefore, she is intelligent, independent, thoughtful and practical.

### **The essence of individuality**

Ms. Harriet and Mrs. Mary are both a good example of a relatively free-spirited individuals. Both represent the sense of individuality the novelist seeks in his novel, although their attitudes of doing so is different. For example, Mrs. Mary's individuality is sharp enough to exclude others while Ms. Harriet's attitude is different. Ms. Harriet encourages others to work with and her situation is beneficial not only for her but it may help the whole society, while Mrs. Mary does not try to involve others in the benefit she gets.

Both, Ms. Harriet and Mrs. Mary seek to prove their rational being and to go beyond the typical thoughts of the societies especially in the East about the situation of women. Both characters do not feel submissive and they try not to do so especially in the case of Mrs. Mary who tries to prove more than this by showing how her husband is dominated. When he consults her about his job with David Sugden, Mrs. Mary's reply is very offensive as she focuses on the point of salary by showing how she earns more than what he does. :

*"My annual salary is £75,000 gross and yours IS 45;56 our combined net of tax monthly income is £7333 out of which our mortgage takes £3111, rates, food and other household expenses a further £1200, and that's before we think about car costs, holidays, and you're fishing extravagances.*

*Resign your job? Don't be a prat" P: 7*

Ms. Harriet's sense of individuality stands for the revolt against the radical social views and even against the literary men who write about women by offering them low jobs. Ms. Harriet' job as an economist and consultant that is involved into politics has proved this view of individuality. She feels free from the imprisoning views of others. She demonstrates strength and cleverness that women need to step out from the stereotypical image offered to her by either society or even the literary men.

The novelist in **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** uses men, journeys, travels, and distant places, such as Hadramot in Yemen to support Ms. Harriet's sense of individuality. She visits Yemen which is considered a remote and dangerous place as it is connected with terrorism and full of obscure thoughts especially for the Westerners and that creates a new sense of individuality that even the English female character lacks. That fabulous character role does not only encourage the Eastern woman but it establishes a new link for the western female character with the risky roles.

Consequently, Ms. Harriet does not need to be protected even in dangerous places such as Wadi AL-Ayenn. She is not afraid that she may be killed especially after the threat of AL-Qaids to Sheikh Muhammad who becomes her companion in that journey. She is very ambitious to be involved in such role and it becomes apparent that woman needs some freedom to be stronger than man.

In addition, Ms. Harriet is an unusual character as she has her own individuality which is reflected in her distinctiveness of manners and behaviour in the novel. She portrays the Yemeni girl struggling to express her individuality in a society that demands a strict social balance. Ms. Harriet has a deep strong strength that enables her to appreciate people and thoughts according to her own values. At this point, she describes Sheikh Muhammad:

*"He is a man we hold in great respect in this firm. He is an excellent steward and landlord of the properties he has bought in this country, an employer everyone would want to work for, but people like working for him because of his personal qualities, and not because he is enormously wealthy. Moreover, he is an Anglophone, which is perhaps less usual in the Yemen than in his own country means he is viewed as a key potential ally in Yemeni councils by the Foreign Office here." P:24*

Again in a letter to her fiancé, Ms. Harriet depicts Sheikh Muhammad as: *"obsessive about his fishing, much more so than his shooting or stalking. I've seen him at it, and he seems to know what he is doing."*

She continues:

*"He is a very impressive character, He is quite small, but stands very upright and communicates a sense of power which you cannot ignore. I don't mean I*

*fancy him, and he certainly doesn't fancy me- tall, thin European women are not his type. He is happily married."P:76*

On the whole, Ms. Harriet has some natural spontaneous social skills and capacities that are not constrained by any artificial social formalities. She has a strong inner will to resist any passive pressure that may affect her own balanced thoughts. This is clear from her conversation with Dr. Jones regarding the issue of bringing the salmon into Yemen. She says to Dr. Jones:

*"Catch them all, then start again? ..."Dr. Jones ....." I know how outlandish it is. But please don't dismiss it here and now. Take a couple of days to think about it, and then I'll call you again, if I may. Remember, all you have to commit to at this stage is a feasibility study. You're not going to be putting your reputation on the line. And remember too, if you will, that my client can commit very large financial resources to this project, should they be needed." P:27*

In conclusion, Ms. Harriet has the ability to express her own intelligence and strong character without compromising her femininity. She defends her opinions regarding the idea of the project freely. She strives only to express her own unique feminine individuality. Ms. Harriet with her carefulness and good-will, becomes a real representative of femininity and individuality.

#### **Ms. Harriet's sense of honesty and good will**

Ms. Harriet has no family in the story and that is done intentionally by the novelist in order to let her stand by herself to complete her ideality. It is mentioned that her fiancé is in the war in Iraq. Ms. Harriet is working in the company called Fitzharris & Price, and she is a consultant. She is hired as the company representative to follow the project of bringing the salmon into Yemen.

Moreover, Ms. Harriet's fiancé goes to war in Iraq and they keep corresponding for sometimes until he suddenly stops writing back. She never gives up and she keeps searching for any news about him. She shows an honest truth of love as she keeps stopping Dr. Jones from any romantic affairs. This is Ms. Harriet's family: honesty and devotion. She proves both honesty for her fiancé and good will for Dr. Jones' life with his wife. She believes that Dr. Jones may be able to correct his life with his wife. Thus, she does not want to devastate his marital life. In fact, Ms. Harriet's behavior and words define the meaning of family.

She says to Dr. Jones expressing her own refusal of his proposal of marriage:

*"And now we're in waking life and the reality is you are married to Mary. You are fifteen or twenty years older than me, and we come from completely different worlds. I am still grieving for Robert, and I have to rebuild my life without him. And I have to do it without you or anyone else. It just isn't possible there could ever be more between us. We've been friends –you've been the best friend I could have ever wanted-but I can't give you any hope that there would ever be anything more." P:278*

Furthermore, Ms. Harriet has got a full-growing and developed mind, good values and powerful characters that are the source of her strength. She is flexible as she

lets her inner voice come out and she does not mind talking about what she feels. She writes to her fiancé:

*"Don't leave the marines just because your girlfriend whines at you every time you have to go away. If that's really what you want to do, then of course it's right. But don't do it for me if it's a sacrifice, because then you'd blame me when you got bored and restless and then we'd end up divorced five minutes later. I don't want to divorce you; I want to marry you. Anyway, what would you do instead?" P:74*

As a result, Ms. Harriet tries to build her own ideal family using her intellects, individuality, honesty and devotion. Her pioneering manners enforce femininity and strengthens her beautiful and meaningful personality. Ms. Harriet defines family characteristics to prove her beauty, strength and values from within, and then looking carefully after them while using them to accomplish a complementary relationship with the men and women. And this is exactly what Ms. Harriet has been doing throughout the whole novel.

### **Ms. Harriet's full mature femininity**

Ms. Harriet is a clear example of twentieth centuries mature feminine. She shows how woman in the twentieth centuries are full mature as they can do all whatever men can and cannot. Traditionally, when woman is mentioned, heavy housework and beautiful appearance are engaged. This stereotyped image is still there in Yemen, and continues even in the twenty first century. It becomes a truth of women and if women do the opposite, they are accused of twisting the truth. Moreover, women are supposed to be silent and if they are not, they are blamed of being talkative.

Women should accept this stereotyped image for centuries because of their dependence on men, especially in societies like Yemen. In **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen**, Ms. Harriet resolves to let her female character struggle not only for her interest but for the whole community. She forces women to remember her own worth and advises them to pursuit their important roles.

It is clear that Ms. Harriet's role in the novel establishes the essence of female maturity as she always learns to think about the problems she meets. She is progressive as she tries to learn from everything others do. She always tries to solve the problems she faces. She validates that women are able to think even better than men, and this is clear as she is always together with Dr. Jones who seems in most cases incapable to solve his problems.

When Dr. Jones goes to meet her at the company, the novelist describes Dr. Jones feeling about Ms. Harriet's appearance as she is charming saying:

*"she was courteous, elegant, tall and slender. She appeared to me to be dressed as if she was about to go out to lunch at a smart restaurant rather than for a day's hard work in the office" P: 21-22*

He also used words to describe Ms. Harriet such as:

*"a faint smile, ...she did not attempt to call me Alfred....she adds with a smile, ...she has impressed me by the intelligent and professional way she has conducted herself.....Her people skills are in a different league to those of David Sugden." P:42*

*"She is really quite attractive-looking when she smiles" P:42*

*" a well-ordered mind" P:61*

In another occasion, Dr. Jones also describes her saying:

*"I have to admit she looked surprisingly glamorous" P:50*

He adds:

*"Harriet was wearing a perfume which, although faint, reminded .me of the smell in a garden on .a summer evening after rain. I found myself inhaling it as I walked down the stairs behind her."P:50*

It is obvious that Dr. Jones is employed as the novelist's eye-witness to report how Ms. Harriet conducts. However, other characters such as David Sugden also used positive remarks to describe Ms. Harriet such as *"Bright girl, attractive girl, a chartered surveyor of profession." P:62*

Comparing her to his wife, Dr. Jones describes Ms. Harriet aggressively in a tone of sadness that his wife does not have such capabilities:

*"But Mary wasn't like Harriet; she would never have ordered a glass of white wine at lunch, much less persuaded me to have one." P:62*

Mrs. Mary's attitude of life is scientific which deprives her of her own female beauty and maturity. As far as the wine is concerned, Mrs. Mary thinks that the white wine cannot be drunk in a working meeting. At this point, Dr. Jones says:

*"Alcohol is all very well in its places, Mary used to say," and as far as I am concerned, during weekdays its place is in a bottle and nowhere else." P:62*

Regarding Harriet's dress Dr. Jones says:

*" Mary didn't dress like Harriet or frankly smell like Harriet. Mary didn't believe in smart feminine clothes or perfume. Mary wore baggy brown linen work suits at home and grey ones at the office. She smelled clean, of rather antiseptic soap. She was always neat and tidy... To my dismay I found I was comparing the two women and the comparison was unfavourable to Mary. What was so wrong with wearing an elegant calf-length dress, rather than a suit that looked as if it had been designed by a junior member of the Chinese communist party? What was wrong with smelling faintly of peaches ripening in a greenhouse, instead of something that recalled a mild industrial disinfectant?" P: 62-63*

Ms. Harriet becomes one of the most respected female characters in the new trends of the literary history. She is passionate and concerned enough to think about others' opinions. She tries to persuade others of what she believes in. She is not quick as she tries again and again to discuss things before taken any decision. In a letter to her fiancé, she expresses Sheikh Muhammad's views about bringing the salmon into Yemen with Dr. Jones:

*"My client is, I think, more than a little mad, but it is a charming form of madness, almost a divine form of madness. He believes that the salmon and its long journey through endless oceans back to its home river is, in some strange way, a symbol of his own journey to become closer to his God. You know, a few hundred years ago, the Sheikh might have been called a saint, if there are saints in Islam?" P:83*

In addition, she describes Sheikh Muhammad as:



*"endlessly polite, and also managed to deflect Fred from saying something he might have regretted afterwards. I could almost see steam coming out of Fred's nostrils at one point in the evening. The Sheikh is a very subtle, intelligent man. He won't be manipulated by people like Peter Maxwell. He just lets them make fools of themselves" P:154*

At this point, Ms. Harriet with all the qualities such as independence, female views, courage and mentality given to her becomes a full-mature female character for women. She demonstrates her mentality by acknowledging both the importance of her duty at work and her duty towards her fiancé. It is in fact a big step in a society which is under the threat of terrorism. She decides to continue working with Sheikh Muhammad nevertheless he is threatened to be killed.

At the same time she never stops dreaming of her fiancé as she keeps writing to him. She is not worried at all about the success of both projects: bringing the salmon and hearing from her fiancé. She shows incredible amounts of independence, trust and strong character. She stands up for herself in a manner that commands respect and praise. Her words left no doubt in others' minds of herself.

In this respect the English teacher Karen Harrison says:

*"One of the most potent aspects of feminist criticism is to uncover the latent dynamics in a novel relevant to woman's inferior role in society. In conjunction with that, it is equally important to discuss how the author asserts an antithetical position to the latent power imbalance." P:225*

The latent dynamics related to Ms. Harriet's character are uncovered and they show how powerful woman can be. These reflect their strange will which becomes strange to the world of man.

### **8) Sense of intellectual developing thoughts**

Ms. Harriet's role in the novel is a kind of fuel for the novel as it holds the responsibility of the novel project. Her success means the success of the whole project, and her failure leads to a trauma in the world of universe. She is intelligent and intellectually independent, and this is why she is holding the idea of the whole project in her hands. Her sense of intellect is fabulous as she tries to work with man but under her guidance. She becomes the pivot of the whole work as she always encourages Dr. Jones to experience his knowledge within her power of feminism. She embraces him as she finds all the solutions for all the problems of the project:

*"I don't mean to be telling you your business, Dr. Jones" P:26*

In fact, Ms. Harriet sometimes interferes in Dr. Jones' business but she does that very smoothly without hurting him. She tells Dr. Jones that *"There are plenty of flies in Yemen, at any rate. English ones might adapt if the local fly life didn't taste good" P:26* which is one of the solutions she provides.

She adds:

*"Well, that's one of the problems and of course I'm a completely non-technical person, I'd think along the lines of constructing holding ponds at the bottom of the wadis seeded with salmon, keeping the water cool, injecting it with oxygen if necessary, and confining the salmon there for three or four years. I read*

*somewhere that in Canada salmon stay in the lake systems for that amount of time."* P:27

By and large, Ms. Harriet's intellect impresses not only Dr. Jones but even the readers. She knows almost everything about what she does. We see that she is awake to all the problems the project may face. Her intellectuality develops with the passing of time in the novel and it involves open-mindedness and easiness at the same time.

Besides, Ms. Harriet demonstrates herself as an unconventional lady as she travels to Scotland and then to a remote place such as Yemen. Her short moments in the house of sheik Muhammad confirm her intellectual development of thought through her intelligence, quickness of thought to argue with Dr. Jones and Sheikh Muhammad. She shows an amazing skill of analysis as she thinks of Sheikh Muhammad's words about the project of bringing salmon into Yemen:

*"I think you are aware there is a political dimension to all of this. 'She did not attempt to call me Alfred. I know you will have had some pressure brought to bear on you from within government. Believe me, it was not of our doing and I very much regret it. We would rather you took on this job, impossible as it may seem at the moment, of your own free will, or else not at all. And that will certainly be the view of our client.'"* P:24

Her intellectuality can be understood from her way of analyzing other characters. In a letter to her fiancé, Ms. Harriet analyses Sheikh Muhammad's character:

*"He is a very impressive character. He is quite small, but stands very upright and communicates a sense of power which you cannot ignore. I don't mean. I fancy him, and he certainly doesn't fancy me - tan, thin European women are not his type. He is happily married, anyway, with wife number four being the current favourite."* P:76

In another letter, she also comments in a brilliant way on Sheikh Muhammad's plans:

*"My client, I think, more than a little mad, but it is a charming form of madness, almost a divine form of madness. He believes that the salmon and its long journey through endless oceans back to its home river is, in some strange way, a symbol of his own journey to become closer to his God. You know, a few hundred years ago, the Sheikh might have been called a saint, if there are saints in Islam?"* P:83

She painfully analyses Peter Maxwell's behavior with Sheikh Muhammad and how the latter has been polite not to be impressed:

*"Peter Maxwell was either pompous provocative. I don't know which I found the most awful. He dominated the conversation, such as it was, and kept trying to goad the Sheikh into saying things about the Middle East. He wanted the Sheikh to say something unmeasured, incautious. Then Peter would have something on him. He wouldn't use it. He'd file it and keep it as ammunition for some other day."* P:153-154

She adds:

*"Of course the Sheikh took no notice of him. He was endlessly polite, and also managed to deflect Fred from saying something he might have regretted*

*afterwards. I could almost see steam coming out of Fred's nostrils at one point in the evening. The Sheikh is a very subtle intelligent man. He won't be manipulated by people like Peter Maxwell. He just lets them make fools of themselves." P:154*

Furthermore, she honestly describes her relationship with Dr. Jones as a normal being that anything might happen, and in this she offers herself a very good state of freedom:

*"When I first met Fred and we were still at the stage of calling each other Dr Jones and Ms Harriet I'm-not-quite-sure-how-to-pronounce-your-surname-so-I'll-just-mumble-it, I think I would rather have kissed a salmon than Fred. Now, I was not so sure. I went to bed wondering what would have happened if I had kissed him properly, on the lips." P:155*

### **Ms. Harrite's love**

Ms. Harriet is presented as a full matured woman and she is courageous enough to express her thoughts of love and marriage. She is very confident and sure of her opinions. She is not afraid to convey anything related to love or marriage. In her letter to her fiancé, she does not hesitate to tell him everything about Sheikh Muhammad:

*"He is a very impressive character. He is quite small, but stands very upright and communicates a sense of power which you cannot ignore. I don't mean. I fancy him, and he certainly doesn't fancy me - tan, thin European women are not his type. He is happily married, anyway, with wife number four being the current favourite." P:76*

And about Dr. Jones she writes:

*"Dr Jones called me Harriet tonight. He never looks me in the eye. I think he fancies me, but he is a married man and so feels guilty. Don't worry, darling. As far as lam concerned, there is only you." P:83*

She is also emotional and very straightforward in expressing her love:

*'You can imagine my first reaction when I picked up your message on my voicemail. I went in a rage to my desk and pulled out the file with all the copies of the hotel and car hire reservations and tore them up. Then I burst into tears." P:74*

Moreover, she is practical enough when things get over marriage. Love is a matter of understanding for Ms. Harriet. She writes to Robert:

*"Don't leave the marines just because your girlfriend whines at you every time you have go away. that's really what you want to do, then of course it's right. But don't do it for me if it's a sacrifice, because then you'd blame me when you got bored and restless and then we'd end up divorced five minutes later. I don't want to divorce you; I want to marry you."P:74*

The reader respects Ms. Harriet for this kind of unconventionality, which shows how determined she is. She thinks of marriage as an endless type of relationship which decides people's happiness. Therefore, she places herself beyond the conventional thought of society about woman. By choosing the man she loves, she is seeking independence and power. She writes to Robert as how she thinks of Dr. Jones:

*"I hope you never look henpecked when we get married. I will try not to peck too hard." P:80*

She shows a high degree of professional love. And this is clear from her way of writing:

*"I don't go to church; I haven't done so since I left school except for friends' weddings and the funerals of my parents' friends. But now I find myself muttering prayers for you. I am praying to a God I don't believe exists, but I am praying to him all the same.*

*And both from God and from you there is a deafening silence." P:184*

That kind of proficiency is not inserted in the pages only after some letters Ms. Harriet writes to Robert. It shows how true and honest she is.

## Conclusion

Paul Torday's depiction of women in **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** is varied and expansive. A woman can be gentle in spirit, such as in Ms. Harriet, or excessively independent, such as Mrs. Mary. Intelligence becomes a common feature among them and their insistence on getting privacy and independence within the world of man. Such independence shows that woman must find their human consciousness through their traits such as intelligence. While reading the novel one can understand that female consciousness must be obtained to secure privacy in order to remain beautiful and free individual and independent thinkers. Torday has successfully presented a new form of woman who challenges all the social handicaps that may stop her from claiming the ladder of independence. Her self-reliance and persistence are some of the important traits that let her fly into the realm of success. She has therefore reached a strong degree of consciousness which has helped her to engrave a strong position in the world of man.

The female characters in **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** have been carefully chosen to exemplify the modern traits for women to reach a certain degree of consciousness. Both Ms. Harriet and Mrs. Mary have preserved a degree of independence and they want sometimes to share their sense of independence with the male characters. For example, Mrs. Mary wants her husband to be free and capable to decide what to do. Moreover, Ms. Harriet's traits of consciousness allow her to create her own comfortable environment in a world that seems to be ugly, while other characters suffer the world of limitations. The female determination of getting their consciousness is clear as they do whatever they can to secure their independence and privacy.

For Torday, the female characters should obtain all the female traits to be conscious enough, and this becomes essential to the development of the female consciousness. Because of the female conscious traits, Ms. Harriet grows independent and secured at the end of the novel. The female minds in the novel are fully strong and cannot be easily invaded. The characters are fully equipped with certain strong traits in order to show the ugliness of the world around them: it is how to contact with others without being influenced negatively, however they should influence the world positively to convey the message of their being there. The women are used as strong weapons against the radicalism of the others by proving their unconventional traits.

The female character such as in the case of Ms. Hester and Mrs. Mary has been loaded with strong penetrative social weapons such as thoughts independency , feminine ideality, essence of independence and individuality, maturity, intellectual thoughts, love and the pursuit of self-privacy. Consequently they have proved that they are the best messengers who have effectively carried the novelist's main mission.

The woman in the novel becomes the center of proving identity, collapsing the ugliness of the world, establishing the harmony between man and woman, and changing the others' lives positively. Generally, woman becomes the focus and the only hope in the world community to re-establish the losing peace after being disturbed by the unagitatedness of the males. She has become an overriding power than man and because of his coolness, the man is mostly absent in the elevator of constituting peace.

**Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** is unlike other novels in the genre of English literature as a whole. It stands outside the literary techniques such as using letters, letters analysis inside the text or memos. The novel has inherited common characteristics for centuries. However, **Salmon Fishing in the Yemen** has its outstanding proficiency, and strong literary techniques that deal explicitly with the position of woman from variable side. Mrs. Mary and Ms. Harriet's persistence, daring struggle for the true success of their belief in their ability to prove what they have to do rebels against the slow and enthusiastic behavior of the males. They speak out the 20<sup>th</sup> century woman's voice - a voice which longs for independence, truth and freedom.

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