

The Relationship between Male and Female Intellectuals:  
The Novel (Fox Eyes) as a Model

- 1       The concept of feminism has become popular which is distinguished by its thought, that rebels and rejects women's inferiority in comparison to men in the new communities today, which is eventually an economical cultural and philosophical vision. A woman, until recently, was not able to get the most basic rights because of the man's control and influence on her capabilities. As a result of this perspective, men became giants in comparison to weak women. The man has the right to think, to be cultivated whereas the woman is a fragile creature who is connected to emotions and feelings. Thus, the man became the one with the ability to initiate and take decisions while the submissive woman has to obey and execute.
- 2       We are representing here a brief reading for the novel (Fox Eyes) for the author (Layla Al-Ohaideb) in which we demonstrate the relationship between male and female intellectuals or educators in the most comprehensive cultural and social context addressed by the phase of the novel. This phase represents the tide of modernization at all levels in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia through characters modeling a slice of intellectuals and educated members belonging to this trend in the eighties. This reading will try to answer the following question: Has the modernist thought been able to raise the relationship of men and women or has it been not different from any relationship between a man and a woman; a sex-centered one? Answering this question will be through studying the language of dialogue, narrative sentences and descriptive parts.
- 3       In many narrative paragraphs of the novel, the intellectual woman exposes the intellectual man and reveals the falsity of his attitudes and the nature of their relationship. She was wishing for a relationship that ignores the body and instincts, a relationship that is based on appreciation and recognition of the woman as a partner in cultural affairs. However, the man could not abandon his old views although of his intellectual status, he thus confined his view to the biological dimension of the female, "So his opinion of what I write concerns me more than his opinion of what I wear or how I look, I want our relationship to raise me to a new horizon, that is how I will be more creative, different and distinctive. But he looks at me in the same way (Meshaal) does, just a female!"
- 4       In one of the dialogues, the retailer talks loudly about the multiple identities of the intellectual in one of her sarcastic dialogues with the hero, "You know Maryam, we don't always choose consciously, sometimes we don't have the choice in the first place!" Her reply comes directly "Intellectuals generally have double identities, one that is introduced to people as an enlightened intellectual, and the other is a behavioral identity that shows his reality which is only clear to those who approach him enough to be burned by the fire of his contradictions." Sarcastically Ali replies while clapping his hands "Bravo Maryam, continue speaking".

- 5 When the intellectual man and woman speak about Western music, the hero says "Unfortunately, my culture is not that western but I don't deny that I totally enjoy its mad tones with you. The heroine says to him, "What do these (Begees) have? The hero's answer reveals what is hidden under the cultural claim when he reverses the meaning of the song (More than a Woman) and interprets it in favor of his pointless, multiple view. This view is interpreted by the implications of cunning, deception and variegation that can be deduced from the title of the novel which is applied to the human males provided by the text. Such interpretation is confirmed when we complete the rest of the dialogue as the heroine asks him, "And you what do you think?" His answer reveals plainly his inferior view, "To a man, a woman is just a woman even if she is an intellectual!"
- 6 We can see the intellectual man's vision and his own philosophy towards his female educated colleague through the following dialogue, which also reveals the contradictions experienced by the intellectual man when having a conversation with an intellectual woman. In such dialogue, he becomes submitted to a masculine, dominant context that prevents him from having a relationship with a woman under the limits of culture and thought. A relationship that is based on dynamic discussions and a humanized relationship that considers the other party a partner in the cultural act and not a prey to be hunted. "All of you imagine that a woman is always a female, so you deceive or adore her but you never be her friend ". Say "you" not "all of you", but you are a city to me that is full of details! "Try to be my priceless friend and in return, I promise you not to think about the cage. Talking to you is like empty corridors that lead to nothing but the door ". The door that I want? Or the one that you don't want? This is me, I put the world in my hand like a ball of clay, a beautiful orange that I shape in the form of a woman then I kill her. I desire such an access!"
- 7 The dialogue is between the heroine and her friend (Nada), the intellectual, as she talks about her intellectual boyfriend (Saeed) who offers her a critical reading of certain texts, taking advantage of this cultural act to reach his physical goals. While he is approaching her, he forgets such cultural act "And turns his wolf face to her while mimicking the grandmother's voice". Nada says to her friend in a general way, condemning the phase that the events of the novel are dealing with "All the intellectuals are poor and consuming texts that are full of holes. An intellectual remains a respectable one till he snatches the female inside you, he then turns into a male who steals your soul with pride ".
- 8 The relationship between the male and female intellectuals may get worse even if it is a marital relationship. He deprives the intellectual woman from what he allows for himself, which is a determined result of his psychological and intellectual contradictions. He may exceed the limits in the act of exclusion and domination. The hero (Ali), after marrying the heroine (Maryam), was once invited to attend a literary seminar with a group of his male and female friends. When Maryam, who is an author and intellectual, wants to participate and attend the seminar, Ali refuses that and when she

asks him why, he replies in an inferior way while he is busy in arranging his papers; "There is no reason ". When he leaves her, she becomes astonished and amazed and starts asking herself a series of questions such as, " Why does he enjoy humiliating me? Why doesn't he see me as an intellectual partner who has the right to be with? Why does he treat me like this? Why do I let him do this to me? Such questions reveal the extent of contradictions that male intellectuals have in their relationships with female intellectuals. However, intellectual women will not accept this distorted relationship and will not be subject to this contradiction. Here the narration starts to introduce the character of the active intellectual woman who is working on achieving her rebellious project that we saw its seeds at the beginning of the novel. The woman who will control the events and move the relationship as she wishes starting a new phase in which intellectual women get their rights which represent the phase of feminist thought.

- 9        The novel concludes when the heroine rebels against the hero in a celebration with some friends who symbolize the society. She announces her pregnancy and was pleased when Ali's anger reaches the peak .She wants that moment and she screams in his face and against his unwillingness to have that child which indicates, as we said earlier, a new reality planned by the intellectual woman 's will and not by the will of the contradicted intellectual man," It's time for you to realize that I became a different woman and I no longer care about your desire. Do you think you are the only person in charge here? " However, the intellectual woman still has the thoughts of the traditional woman with traditional goals and methods and could not raise to the level of the free independent intellectual with a special vision.
- 10      The novel, according to this reading, reflects the nature of the relationship between the intellectual man and the intellectual woman, and it is as we have seen through the dialogue, a relationship that is full of tense, domination and exclusion by the stronger party. It has been invoked to the desires of instincts more than to the logic of mind .The modernist cultural thought failed to raise this relationship to the level of cultural participation. This novel is marked by the depth in the analysis of the aspects of such relationship .The author succeeded in listening to her inside and the main reason that pushes her to go inside of her soul in the first place might be her long suffering as a woman from a state of oppression in the outside. She had to start with this solution that gave her the honor of the pursuit of change, and thus her novel differed from most novels that became common in her local society which in general carried an emotional tone.

When we read the definition of "feminist literature" through what the critic (Mary Eggleton) has reported in her book "Feminist Literary Theory" when she said," literature is considered to be feminist if the literary text expresses a special experience of a woman and the reality of her life in an honest way that is contrary to the patterns that portrayed the woman for a long time. This text has provided a detailed specific testimony about the experience of the Saudi student girl today and violated the patterns that

portrayed women and girls in previous phases. The author succeeded in showing the extent to which the new woman has reached in her new mentality that made her able to resist the masculine oppression in Arab societies which was dominant for many ages.