

Symbols in Torday's *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*

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Abstract: This research aims at examining the use of symbols in Paul Torday's *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*, and the message behind the use of certain symbols. *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* begins by pausing a question whether it is possible to fish salmon in Yemen, at least within the context of Al-Qaida terrorists. Paul Torday uses this question as a framework to explore the hidden shell of Al-Qaida presence in Yemen, through the relationship between Yemen and Britain, which is manifested by certain characters such as Sheikh Mohammed, Mr. Tariq Dr. Jones, Ms. Harriet and Mrs. Mary. The idea of fishing the salmon in Yemen seems unfeasible where the basic ingredients of life are not available. Yet Sheikh Mohammed with his tactics of speaking is able to convince others with the possibility of the project. The intuitive connection of Ms. Harriet and Dr. Jones with Sheikh Mohammed opens the possibility of introducing the salmon into Yemen. The research highlights on the division of the novel into two parts: the main plot narrates the universal story of Sheikh Mohammed and his desire of introducing the salmon into Yemen, and the sub-plot narrates the personal story of Dr. Jones, Mrs. Mary and Ms. Harriet. *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* is studied as a highly symbolic text and the novelist uses a large section of the novel to characterize different typical attitudes his characters hold towards each other. His satire is harsh toward those who are against spreading the idea of peace such as Mr. Tariq and Mrs. Mary. The end of the novel is also analyzed symbolically. Salmon is symbolically chosen for this mission which indicates the life circle of that sea creature where the old salmon generation dies, letting the new babies live.

Keywords: Symbolism, unfeasible, Transformation, Terrorism, Salmon, Liberal Humanism, Al-Qaida, dynamite fishing, anti-Islam

Literature Review: Paul Torday, author and businessman, born 1 August 1946; died 18 December 2013. His *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* (2007) is considered by many critics as the best achievements in the world of twentieth century politics. He wrote seven novels but *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* gave him a remarkable reputation for the book hits an important issue the whole world is suffering from, it is the world of terrorism. However his novels are still fresh and they have not been studied abundantly. It is hypothesized that *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* (2007) is written as a skeleton that presents a kind of uniqueness of both the characters and ideas. The novelist employs peculiar characters within peculiar events. Besides the Arabic character is presented from a new perspective and peculiar angle which goes against the Western view that Arabs are crumbled with the ideas of terrors. The following reviews attempt to demonstrate the above ideas. Torday examines his characters

morally and intellectually and he presents the development the characters have undergone after being transformed either by the journeys that have accompanied them or by the environment around them. These journeys help in creating a kind of miracle by smoothing the difficulties the characters face. The impossible becomes possible and this is why 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 as sudden and shocking as a barbed hook. (...) To write a novel lampooning the looking-glass world of Barite government must have given Torday as much gruesome fun as he gives his readers. But to take the victims of his satire and make them players in a parable about the mystery of belief and its transforming power -- this was in itself an act of faith. *Salmon Fishing* is extraordinary indeed, and a triumph.

Besides the reader does not expect the movements of the actions and does not anticipate such a wonderful ending. As John Walsh from *The Independent* (Friday 09 February 2007) says:

This is a book of considerable charm, an echo-chamber of a dozen different voices adroitly ventriloquist.....he pulls off an ending both apocalyptic and wholly unexpected. His book turns out to be a moral tale about the importance of believing in something, and the comparative unimportance of everything else. Fishermen will love it. Non-fishing readers will find it enjoyable, faintly moth-eaten and oddly thought-provoking.

Amanda Craig, a journalist in *The Telegraph*, (04 Feb 2007) writes:

(A) novel that captivates the grumpiest reader within moments. What begins as hare-brained becomes increasingly plausible, in all its details. Written by someone who has spent most of his life working in industry, it describes the maddening world of petty officialdom sent into riffs of lunacy by political will; if you imagine *The Office* crossed with *Yes, Minister*, you may get some inkling of how very funny it is. (...) (T)he intelligence, inventiveness and humanity of this novel in comparison to the usual run of literary fiction is as wild salmon to the farmed.

Amanda means compares the novel with "wild salmon to the farmed" to show how peculiar the novel is with its characters and the unfeasible idea. Matt Thorne, from *The Telegraph* describes the novel as an entertaining and successful debut, "but beneath the light humour are deeper currents that suggest Torday's next book will be more substantial. His skill with character is hindered slightly by his overly schematic structure, and the novel would have benefited from a tighter edit as several sections feel superfluous to the main action. But its considerable charm more than compensates for these small flaws, and it is warmly recommended to anyone searching for feel good comedy with surprising bite". He means that the novel is highly structured that cannot be easily solved out and such structure helps to create a character with a high complicated merits.

Introduction: Symbolism is the art of using certain images and words that stand for something else in certain works of literature such as stories and novels. Peter T. Struck (2004:80) says:

The symbol is put to use as a proof of something. It authenticates. Various social, commercial, and political spheres put to use the economy of man that it sets in motion. It is a means to secure the benefits of contracts, and it presupposes a set of conventions that make a society work. In this sense, the symbol materializes in a most concrete way social agreement and social commitment, in commercial, political, and personal spheres.

They are used as important tools in literature where the novelist or the story writer employ in order to create special kind of interest in one's work. In addition, the symbols achieve another level of meaning. Because of these two levels, interest and meaning, symbols are highly used in literary works and they have also penetrated everyday language. It is a writing method for all the novelists and short story writers that create an allowance of subtlety which enables them to go deep within the text in order to give the piece of writing feeling and mood and that allows the writers to manage his text, too. It also gives the reader a clear insight to discover the writer's point of thinking. The *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* focuses on the use of symbols through nature and behavior of the characters in such a way that the readers must reread the novel in order to describe the hidden meaning of using the symbols. The story of the novel is twisted as the reader goes deeply to discover the hidden crust of the symbols. The hidden symbols can be seen from the very beginning of the novel and particularly from the title of the novel. For example, the word "salmon" in the title is used as a significant symbol which meant to attract the attention of not only the characters but even the reader himself. We all lured by the word "Salmon" and how it attracts the attention of the characters. And even Al-Qaida become suspicious and afraid of introducing such kind of creature into Yemen although the salmon is a symbol of peace and innocence.

Torday's mission: British-born Paul Torday becomes one of the most outstanding English writers of the twenty-first century. His *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* is a new dramatic, honest and direct prose work in which its episodes are colourful and vivid. It is rich in visual symbols and imagery which shows how artistic the novelist is. There have been so many writers in the field of literary symbols such as E.M Forster who is called the father of modern symbolism. However, Paul with *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* has incomparably become the greatest modern symbolist to write such a novel. He has created an atmosphere that only great painters can, which is very clear, direct and hidden as well. Paul's aim is not only to depict the physical world, he uses his craft as a novelist to show how beautiful this world is and this is done in a very successful way as he creates both fear and optimism at the same time inside his readers. He has shown an important era of the twentieth and twenty-first life with its form, its dream through its movements. His aim is to make the truth of life visible and should be accepted. Comprehending this world is an essential part of Paul's mission. Yemen becomes the center of this world, and his sphere of this world connects the differences, similarities, positives and negatives. It reflects the essential truths that lie within people's lives from different places of the world. However, this mission cannot be easily achieved. It faces some difficulties and obstacles that do not help the

others to fully grasp their mission. Therefore, the choices may become limited for others to understand so that obstacles are erased. Paul has shown the hidden cortex of earth, that are so subtle and they are hard to learn even if they are surrounded with the proper attitude. And he suggests that understanding that hidden shell should not be necessarily obvious as he sometimes displays in the system of life. The use of symbols is prominent in *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*. It presents the importance of this mission to Yemen, and how the characters such as Dr. Jones and Ms. Harriet will suffer. Their suffering is reflected as it is common with all humanity. Paul says that humanity should suffer if they want to live peacefully. Characters such as Tareq and his friends from Al-Qaeda are rarely remembered as if they are not a part of Paul's humanity. They reject the burden of this mission to Yemen, and they live spiritually sick and depraved. The use of symbols becomes the most appropriate method to conduct such style. The novel shows how Paul Torday employs the use of symbols to communicate his vision of the modern world to universalize it by discovering and then describing various kinds of episodes and characters. This message is clearly viewed by the use of symbols which dominates the whole novel from the beginning to the end. Symbols become a part of the author's mission in proving that the whole world is full of inherent disorder and an inevitable decline of the society; however, people have to be hopeful. They are also brilliantly used to shape the events and the reaction of the characters as they realize that their destiny lies in their new waiting-fate and nature which becomes chaotic.

The Plot Structure of the Novel: The plot of *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* has a particular importance for the readers today who are always afraid of either family problems or Al-Qaida threat. These two aspects become the main pivot of the chaos that attacks the world of human in which the novelist connects them to show how people are afraid that their future is threatened. The novelist presents a crowning artistic achievement in the novel, as he links two plots together within one main story. The two plots are brilliantly woven to such a degree that when the story progresses, you may hardly notice that kind of construction. As a result, the readers are also left to wonder whether there is any message to the physical and moral massacre at the end of the novel. The two plots function in almost exact-manner as they have similar messages in the way the writer wishes. The novelist links the two plots intentionally in order to show how the two plots carry two important stories. For instance, the story of the main plot involves around Al-Qaida as an anti-peace movement which is a political aspect. The author tries to present this group of people as barbarian for they are ready to destroy whatever they come in their way to practice their strange belief. On the other hand, the story of Jones with Mary, which presents the sub-plot, demonstrates husband-wife relationship a social phenomenon. The author tries to display the main reasons behind blocking husband-wife relationship. However, both plots carry a universal aspect but it is noticed that each plot has a different horizon.

The Story of the Main Plot: The main plot narrates the story of a mysterious Yemeni businessman called sheik Mohammed, Ibn Zaidi bani Tihami, and his wish to "sponsor a project to introduce Salmon, and the

sport of Salmon Fishing in Yemen". Sheik Mohammed is a mysterious Yemeni citizen who loves Scotland and he is very passionate and obsessed in fishing salmon. He offers the project of introducing salmon into Yemen to a company called, Fitzharris & Price in London, after it has been supported by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office as a symbol of Anglo-Yemeni Cooperation. Dr. Jones from the National Centre for Fisheries Excellence is the responsible Scientist for taking into account the idea of introducing the salmon into Yemen," how much a project could be initiated and resourced" (P:2). He is a weak husband who cannot balance neither himself nor his decision. He is a faintly self-important scientist at the National Centre for Fisheries Excellence in London. At first, Dr Jones is hesitant about the project regarding the geographical location in Yemen which is completely different from the North Atlantic. He does not accept to involve into this project although his is too much pressed and pushed forward by his boss, David Sugden, the director of the National Centre for Fisheries Excellence Office. The project is also supported by the Minister himself through his spokesman, Peter Maxwell, the director of communication at the Prime Minister's office. They look at this project from an advantageous point of view that it well link Britain to a Middle Eastern country bringing improvements to an Islamic State. Patricia Maxwell advocates himself to the idea of the salmon and he makes Jones responsible for the success of the project.

The British politicians are attracted to this project although it looks absurd and they depend upon Ms. Harriet Chetwode-Talbot, a polite businesswoman "courteous, elegant tall and slender" (P:21) from Fitzharris & Price who is the representative of Sheikh Mohammed. She meets Dr. Jones to discuss the project. Ms. Harriet wants Dr. Jones' advice on how to start the project of bringing Salmon to Yemen. Jones says in describing Ms. Harriet that "she is dressed as if she is about to go out to lunch at a smart restaurant rather than for a day's hard work in the office" (P:21) She is a practical punctual and sensuous woman who believes in the value of time and work. She is totally convinced that the project is going to be successfully achieved, especially when sheik Mohammed has put an open budget to support it. On the contrary, Al-Qaida terrorists oppose the project of bringing the salmon into Yemen claiming that Sheikh Mohammed will import corrupt Western culture into Yemen. Ms. Harriet slightly convinces Jones of the probability of the project and she presents some logical ideas that water, for example, can be available from mountains. Moreover, Harriet' character which is opposite to Jones' wife, Mrs. Mary, helps Jones to rethink of the project. There are some certain difficulties that arise against the idea of the project. Ms. Harriet is with the idea of the project and the reader has a negative impression about Ms Harriet's attitude towards the project. And accordingly we assume that even the novel will be about something else rather than the Salmon. In other words, Dr. Jones' letter to Ms. Harriet has caused a kind of hopelessness:

We conclude that conditions in the Yemen and its geographical locations relatively remote from the North Atlantic make the project your client has proposed unfeasible, on a number of fundamental grounds. We therefore regret we will be unable to help you any further in this matter. (P:3)

The reader is scientifically convinced that such project will fail and therefore when David Sugeden takes the matter from an economic and personal point of view, the reader is faced with a negative attitude.

The Story of the Sub-plot: The sub-plot focuses on the story of Ms. Harriet, John and Mary, and in this part of the story Ms. Harriet stands as the most important character as she is used as a bridge for John to communicate with his wife. Ms. Harriet is also used as the main symbol that presents universality in the novel and her story with her fiancé is highlighted in the sup-plot. The sub-plot tells the story of Dr. Jones as a husband to Mrs. Marry, an economist, and how Dr. Jones is overwhelmed with his busy-bee wife Mrs. Mary. Jones's meeting with Ms. Harriet is an important event in the novel which is used as a strong link to the sub-plot, especially in the second half of the novel. He discovered how Ms. Harriet is more beautiful and kind than his wife and he is therefore very attracted to her. Jones finds in Ms. Harriet some qualities that are not available in Mary as a wife. And this is why it seems to be quite strange hope in convincing Jones to take up this project. Mary, on the other hand, asks Jones to resign his job, "Resign your job, and don't be a prat" (P:7) She tells him in her 4June letter that he is wasting his time and such project will not do anything regarding his life outcome. However, Jones is satisfied with Harriet' idea although the project seems crazy. The relationship between these characters is the most important concern of the sup-plot. Ms Harriet is considered as the bridge for Dr. Jones to recommunicate with his wife. She is used as a symbol of universality. The story of Ms. Harriet with her fiancé is highlighted, too. There is a tendency to see Ms. Harriet as a figure of clear innocence and intelligence in her way of dealing with all the characters

The Use of Symbols in Salmon Fishing in the Yemen: Although it is a poor country, Yemen can be economically or politically independent if it rejected all the noxious vestiges of terrorism. The writer tries to manifest eagerness in presenting the salmon, which seems strange, into a country, where basic needs for life are not available. The British have a simultaneous impulse to rework and rediscover the history of both Salmon and Yemen as a country and nation. It is wonderful if we look into the matter in details and wonder why the British insist upon this project. The country will not get any economically or politically benefit. It is very symbolic why the British have a strong desire to start up this project; only then it becomes clear when we rethink of the matter again, and therefore, we find that the project becomes a symbol of peace as it is presented in a country where the basic ingredients of peace is invalid. Yemen in the twentieth and twenty-first century is full of many terrorists groups such as Al-Qaida and other Jehadi movements. Such groups desire to retain the country to a pre-historical zone. The writer does not give them a big space in his novel which symbolically means those people should not be taken as a hindrance of spreading peace. Therefore, Sheikh Mohammed and other Britishers are used as symbols that refer to those people who seek to repair and build while terrorists seek to exploit and reject.

The Symbols:

1-The Symbolism of the Title: The title suggests the continuous "fishing" which makes the novel progressive and this stands for the

unfinished journey that will locate its destination in Yemen. The title proposes an attempt that should be carried by the characters to achieve the novelist's purpose which is to understand, unify and connect people despite their problems and differences. In the title *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*, the article "the" is added to have a symbolical meaning which may have different explanations: it may be used as an emphatic article to mean "only Yemen", and this is weak if we think of the writer's international message, or it may mean any place in the world like Yemen. The title is an unusual mystery which seems queer as we don't think that such project will cause all that chaos. The word "fishing" means the occupation of catching fish for a living. As we may have suspected, "fishing" also have a literal meaning means "killing". This becomes important since what happened at the end is "killing" or "destruction". Therefore, instead of saying "salmon fishing", the writer ought to write "dynamite fishing", and the symbol of "salmon" has been changed from "peace" into "destruction". The title is therefore is symbolic which relates right in with the theme and the plot of the story. Paul Torday uses this title as a symbol which relates into the story. Throughout the story, we begin to learn a lot of how difficult to achieve peace either in the land of family or society.

2- The symbolism of the "Salmon": "Salmon" is rare, expensive and precious and this is why the novelist has focused on it. Sheikh Mohammed has proved that Al-Qaida will reject any kind of peace. They claim that Sheikh Mohammed is anti-islam but they do not find any kind of evidence that he is as they claim. Alqaeda people are pictured by their destroying of the salmon project at the end of the novel as murderous and anti-peace creatures. However, if we trace the life of the salmon, we will notice as the scientists have proved that the salmon died when its eggs hatched letting its young survive. At the end of the novel, the project of the "salmon" in Yemen is destroyed, but its begets will not: it will continue to live for the coming generation. The novelist has successfully built the project, and although it is destroyed, but at least the core of the project will stay there. The Salmon is used as a symbol to attract Dr. Jones in order to illustrate how lonely he is. He is lured to live in the vast world of Harriet, a world that will later change his life and even his way of thinking. Dr. Jones does not care about the salmon which is a small creature but he does not realize that his character will be completely transformed. It also lets him reconsider everything in his life including his marriage and work. Moreover, the salmon is used by the novelist to provide his character with many positive characteristics as to achieve his aim successfully. The title of the project is chosen as "fishing the salmon" which does not merely mean "fishing" but it is read as a union between people of different thoughts. The "Salmon" is a symbol of a rare creature with powerful energy and it is used to refer to the active participant in the creation of unity and friendship. The relationship between Harriet, John and Sheikh Mohammed reflects this type of unity. Sheik Mohammed is used here as a typical example of salmon to enhance the novelist's view of the universe unity. His role serves as a vehicle for the success of their project and their permanent friendship. And, it encourages understanding between people's views, as well. Sheikh Mohammed considers "salmon" as a symbol of freedom, cooperation, pleasure and engagement. He is willing to spend a fortune to establish the project in Yemen, and will properly do

just about anything for this project. At the end, Sheikh Mohammed has gained not only the establishment of the project, but the pleasure and the enjoyment as he is looking at the salmon in the river, although Sheikh Mohammed is being fished as he is killed at the end during the explosion of the water container. For Al-Qaida, "Salmon" means something completely different. Instead of being mystified by the salmon, Al-Qaida use it to kill people and spread murder in a peaceful country such as Yemen. However, this view of Al-Qaida at salmon is strange and unique like the salmon itself. To sum up, the "salmon" is a symbolical creature which stands for peace and the novelist chooses this creature to disapprove the negative presence of some characters such as Mary, Tareq and Essad. They earn the resentment of the readers and the novelist considers these characters as "alien" and "handicap" and they are more responsible than others for the chaotic disorder in Yemen or in any other place of the world. Throughout the novel, they are always blamed especially in the case of Mrs. Mary who always stands as a hinder for her husband.

3-The Characters and their Journeys: The characters in the novel are symbolically divided either in the main or the minor plots into two parts: the first part is presented by most of the British characters especially Ms.Harriet and Dr.Jones who are the representative of peace, and the second part is illustrated by characters such as Mrs.Mary and Tareq who convey chaos and disorder. The two types of characters are set together by using journeys for the purpose of confrontation as if the writer uses the breach to open up a space for characters to use their weapons and practices their bullets. This journey confrontation turns to be a very necessary step to manifest the identification of the group, and the novelist emphasizes the simultaneous necessity for the threat of this second side presented either from Al-Qaida members or from the family problems adopted by such as Mrs. Mary. Paul Torday symbolically suggests the rebirth of peace supporters which is manifested through most of his characters in the novel. Many of these characters travel from Britain to Yemen to spread and look for the idea of peace and to search for the possibility of establishing it. Yemen becomes the pivot of destruction and these characters are symbolically used as the novelist's messengers to save this country. The characters are involved around the idea of peace which is symbolically presented by "salmon" and they struggle to understand the possibility of the project. The main idea for establishing the project is reflected by the complex John-Ms.Harriet relationship. Through these journeys, the characters are provided with openness of mind and the possibility of accepting others. They are also associated with the idea of optimism and this is clear as the novel crammed from the early beginning with a number of emails; each correspondent tries to convince the other of his opinion about the project. The reader feels that he is dealing with characters of educational tolerance. For example, the meeting between John and Ms.Harriet leads to their visit to Scotland to meet sheik Mohammed in order to talk about the project of the salmon while the focus of the events is on the immediate intimacy of John and Harriet. This journey is symbolically manifested by the novelist to prepare John, Ms.Harriet and Sheikh Mohammed for other journeys. Generally, most of the characters are symbolically forced to have journeys in order to be

transformed. These journeys lead them to build relationship with each other. The novel encourages this type of relationship: people should know each other. It is a modern book which anticipates post-structuralism in many ways, for it is about knowing, understanding and unifying. This idea is clearly presented from the mutual understanding and feeling arises between John, Ms. Harriet and Sheikh Mohammed.

4- The Symbolism of Mary: Mary symbolically presents an obstacle to the idea of the establishment of peace. Not less than the threat of Al-Qaida, Mary is a tropical western heroine who stands against the project of peace. She neither encourages her husband to go on nor she performs her role as a wife. Thus, her role in life is not free of some kinds of violence. She wants to live in peace but she rejects it as a result of her inability to understand the people around her including her husband. Therefore she is participating with others in creating terrorism as she puts her marriage and her life at risk by seeking adventures when she keeps travelling forgetting her duty towards her husband. However, there is a positive realm in Mary's character especially at the end of the novel which is the desire of exploration that leads her to realize her basic role in life as a wife. Mary's journey to Switzerland and the long time John being absent from her is clearly used as a symbolical inner journey which helps her to reunite and this creates out a glimpse of hope in the world of man-woman relationship.

5- The symbolism of John and Ms. Harriet: John and Ms. Harriet have also important symbolical influence and their relationship becomes the symbolical message of the novelist which is considered as the main reason behind fishing the salmon. Their relationship is reflected by the struggle and their inability to understand each other and how they are influenced by life injustice and human ignorance. In the beginning of their journey, both, Mary and John come in terms with each other. The novelist suggests the term "inclusion" to combine with the idea of introducing the salmon. Both are inspired either by their level of relationship or by the agreement of John to work with Harriet. They both have some considerable journeys to Scotland, London and Yemen and these journeys are symbolically manifested by the novelist to transform his characters. Ms. Harriet and John are mentally and socially changed as both become aware of each other and of their second partner. As a result of these journeys, Ms. Harriet is reflected as a mature woman who always thinks over her progressive relationship with John and tries not to lose her fiancé who has been absent and does not reply her. Harriet, at the end, realizes the futility of her relationship with John as a lover. Consequently, she has become the main symbol of unity and this is why she indirectly promotes John not to lose his wife. She becomes a spirit of goodness as she motivates connection, peace, and goodness and therefore she has a positive development in the story of the novel. On the other hand, John exceeds his relationship with Ms. Harriet which reflects the passive attitude of his wife. He is presented as a stable character with an unstable identity especially in the beginning of the novel. His changing opinion and his shakable attitude with his wife as well as with his boss at work proves John's instability. He becomes a victim of being a husband and a doctor. He is forced against his wish to accept the idea of the project. Symbolically enough, he is trapped in Harriet's embrace to be transformed. He repels

against his inner side as he falls in love with Ms.Harriet and this is a revolution against his passive past, and then he is symbolically used as a force behind the success of the salmon.

Ms.Harriet is also used as a symbol of Paul's weapons to spread his philosophy of liberalism. She teaches the readers the possibility of liberalism as she cooperates with Sheikh Mohammed in his project and she remains faithful to her fiancé although she has been very close to John who is suffering from his wife's carelessness and absence. She never shows any limitations in her pursuing to achieve the success of the project. She does her best to convince Dr.John joining her and then she shows her utmost cooperation with Sheikh Mohammed. She also demonstrates the best in her trying to connect with her fiancé and she does not lose hope as she keeps sending messages although some of these messages do not reach her fiancé or her fiancé does not usually reply. It is symbolically important that Ms.Harriet does not talk about Al-Qaida people. When the accident happens in Scotland, Ms.Harriet does not comment or show any respond. She travels to Yemen without even mentioning Al-Qaida or their threat. She knows that she will face danger when she is in the company of Sheikh Moahmmed. This is clear as Sheikh Mohammed says to her after the incident, "We should thank God for his escape. But they will try again, Ms.Harriet. They will keep trying up until I am dead." (P:162) Ms.Harriet is introduced as a pilgrimage that supports the notion of universality: the Yemeni people have the right to enjoy living in peace not less or more than the Britishers. She presents the symbolical theme of the whole novel as she becomes the novelist's messenger of peace and serenity. Ms.Harriet keeps balancing her relationship with Dr. Jones and she also keeps waiting for her fiancé to prove how honest she is. The Yemeni Sheikh and the Britishers trust her to become their intermediary agent. She introduces a real character that even time and place need her. She is a stereotype character that the novelist tries to manifest and force in a world where peace becomes an impossible demanding factor for life. Her character presentation echoes the social, family and political consciousness of this period, its humdrum lived reality. Through Ms.Harriet the novelist records an impression of reality that is psychologically drawn up in the creation of a work of art in order to communicate to the audience of the nature of a particular time. Ms.Harriet has chosen a dangerous rule for her in this mission. The readers always anticipate the danger of Al-Qaida after reading Tareq' emails and after the incident in London. However, Ms.Harriet is becoming increasingly confident that she will soon succeed in her mission.

6-The image of Mary and Tareq: Mary is also symbolically used as an anti-peace character for she does not help her husband to settle down. However, she is sometimes referred as a channel to provide the opportunity for John to meet Ms.Harriet and be socialized with her. It is because he hates Mary as a wife, John appreciates Harriet's way of presenting the value of the project and he decides to continue. As far as Tareq is concerned, he indirectly encourages Sheikh Mohammed to continue in his work. From Tareq's emails it is noticed that Al-Qaida members are expressing their willingness to kill thousands in order to stop

Sheikh Mohammed's project. Similarly, Mary's dialogue with John seems irritable not only to John but also to the reader who is far sometimes sympathetic with John as a husband that he needs some peace at home. Therefore both Mary and Tareq become the symbols that may cause all the troubles and chaos in the novel, and especially in the case of Tareq who has achieved what he has been planning from the beginning. On the other hand, the novelist reflects an important symbolical image of Tareq and Mary. They are hidden even in their jobs and consequently the reader does not know what Mary exactly does. Similarly the novelist does not also inform his readers about the nature of Tareq's job. Al-Qaida is reflected as a well-hidden power that has a secret affiliated network with a strong capability to conduct future attacks. They have strong potential capability which works secretly. This is exactly shown in Tareq's strategy as it is not shown, and we just heard the explosion at the end. As far as John is concerned, he is in need of this journey more than Ms. Harriet because he should be loaded with some more positive features than Ms. Harriet and Sheikh Mohammed have. The later both encourage John to pursue his life and to have more experience in life, and not to lose hope. John learns from Ms. Harriet that he can be useful and this is clear as he falls in love with her and considers her a wife.

7- The symbolism of Sheikh Mohammed : Sheikh Mohammed is a mysterious figure with a mysterious whim. He is presented in the beginning of the novel with quite shallow ideas about the project of introducing the "salmon". However, the readers look at him with respect as he convinces each characters by the possibility of his project. Dr. Jones goes to Scotland to meet Sheikh Mohammed with the belief of the impossibility of the project. However, he changes his opinion as soon as he listens to why Sheikh Mohammed needs to set up that project in Yemen. Sheikh Mohammed says:

I have formed the view that the creation of a salmon river in the Yemen would in every way be a blessing for my country, and my countrymen. It would be a miracle of God if it happened. I know it. My money and your science, Dr Alfred, would not alone achieve any such thing. But just as Moses found water in the wilderness, if God wills it, we will enable salmon to swim in the waters of Wadi Aleyn. If God wills it, the summer rains will find the wadis, and we will pump out water from the aquifer, and the salmon will run the river. (P:54)

It is clear that Sheikh Mohammed is presented as a symbol of Paul Torday himself. In other words, part of what Paul wants to deliver in his novel is carried out by Sheikh Mohammed. Sheikh Mohammed is symbolically used to spread Pauls' liberal thought "Sheikh Mohammed's voice was gentle and quiet, but he had the gift of compelling attention and respect with every word he spoke." (P:54) Dr. Jones says that Sheikh Mohammed is "mad, but it is a gentle even a noble form of madness, and one that cannot be resisted." (P:55) The idea of nationalism is also clearly reflected through the character of Sheikh Mohammed. Sheikh Mohammed is a national intelligent educational figure who likes to travel and makes use of his business not only for personal matters but also to help his own country. He is very proud when he speaks about his nation. He is very proud of his people unlike others such as Tareq Anwar who

shows jealousy for his country but proves the opposite. Sheikh Mohammed wants to show to the whole world that his country exists and his people have also their interests such as fishing. Paul Torday brings up a kind of intensive struggle of his new liberalism that he feels it will succeed in a place such as Yemen. Paul's liberalism is fighting with confusion and chaos that accompany the characters. Nothing is left in the novel without being guided by chaos. Many different images are presented in the novel such as romantic, social, religious and political incidents and all are crammed with the idea of chaos. And that is only done to serve Paul's theme of maintaining liberalism to connect people with different beliefs together. Therefore, Sheikh Mohammed has been uploaded with different characteristics of most of the characters.

In fact, Sheikh Mohammed becomes the most important clue to most of the characters and incidents in the novel. The whole novel is meaningless if Sheikh Mohammed is not there. And that is why he connects two different worlds: Yemen and England. He becomes a symbol of unity between the different worlds of the novel. He symbolically desires unity at least among his people, "And then my countrymen-syyid, nuqqa and Jazar and all classes and manners of men-will stand on the banks side by side and fish for the salmon", (P:54) Sheikh Mohammed said. The possibility of reconnecting John and Mary happens because of Sheikh Mohammed's project. Thus, the possibility of connection extends to include many characters through Sheikh Mohammed. His liberalism is universal and can embrace others' beliefs. Because of his project, all the characters realize a number of things about themselves and each other, especially in the case of Harriet, John and Mary. For example, at the end of the novel the readers expect some hope in achieving this unity particularly when Ms. Harriet and John are about to get married, yet, the explosion takes place to replace all that hope. Each character knows his reality, and therefore, Mary is ready to take care of her husband. It is clear that Paul's liberalism means people should understand each other mutually, and then unity occurs. If Tareq and Sheikh Mohammed understand each other, the explosion might be avoided and this is what Paul wants to achieve.

Together with Ms. Harriet and John, Sheikh Mohammed is presented as the main power behind the success or the failure of the project. In this journey "Fishing the salmon" one should forget his privilege upon others and one should make a great effort to socialize with others despite their differences. This notion is clearly revealed through Sheikh's words "a Muslim may fish as well as a Jew or a Christian," (P:94) People need each other to live together and to prove that human cannot live alone but only in a group; Cooperation is also important among people to share needs because it creates a good relationship between human beings. On the other hand, the project emphasizes the natural unity among people from the same race –syyid, nugqa and jazar– or the universal unity as Sheikh Mohammed says: "that a Muslim may fish as well as a Jew or a Christian, without any offence to God." (P:56) And this is of course cannot be understood by Tareq or his friends. These people think that this project will let the crusaders occupy the whole Muslim nation in Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Palestine. Sheikh Mohammed becomes the messenger

of hope and faith as he keeps advising other characters to have faith and without faith they will fail: "without faith there is no hope and no love. Faith comes before hope, and before love" (P:139) He changes the other characters' life positively such as in the case of John as he says: "everything about my life is strange now" (P:139) Sheikh Mohammed's words echo in their' minds. They are transferred deeply by the presentation of sheik Mohammed. By and large, he is the most positive character of Paul's novel and he thus becomes Paul's messenger who holds the promise of a better way to unify and connect, and this can be achieved with the secret understanding of life which fascinates the others despite the spreading danger of terrorism.

8-Al-Qaida First Attack: The incident in Scotland that might kill Sheikh Mohammed is symbolical, too. It is shown as another symbolical obstacle that prepares the characters to face later. Although John is weak, he does not change his opinion after what happened. Yet he is now armed with optimism and emotion. In fact, the three characters John, Harriet and Sheikh Mohammed have now a sense of responsibility. Ms. Harriet and John are fully convinced that this project should be established in Yemen, whatever the cost is. Al-Qaida troops misread Sheikh Mohammed's intention and this therefore causes a great deal of trouble not only to Sheikh Mohammed but also to every citizen in Yemen. They look as ignorant of what the people need in Yemen and they have no idea of what the project may bring to Yemen as if it is being established. It is an investment that may develop the country economically. However, the writer pictures Al-Qaida people as ignorant of their country and they look as animals who think only of food. Their outlook is shown to be limited about what is going on around them. On the other hand, Sheikh Mohammed and other characters are not also shown to be eager to understand Al-Qaida. They keep themselves aloof from them, and they do not even have the interest to debate with them. In fact, it is symbolically important why the novelist does not establish any kind of bridge with Al-Qaida. It can be interpreted that they are hidden and dangerous, and they are an unseen power and this adds to the mystery of their presentation. The novel has proved how alien these people are. One of Pual's objectives is to show how Al-Qaida people are confused by culture, and how they are limited in their manners of life. In an email from Tareq Anwar to one of his friends from Al-Qaida, it is noticed how absurd these people are in thinking in an awful manner:

We have heard that the Sheikh Muhammad ibn Zaidi bani Tihami is now consorting with the English crusader prime minister and spending many millions of dollars on absurd and dangerous projects to bring salmon fish to the Yemen, and to persuade our brothers in the Yemen to fish for sport and not simply to feed the mouths of their families as is their duty. Moreover since all people in the Yemen must work from dawn until dusk, for six days of the week, just to keep the bread in their mouths and the mouths of their children, it follows that the Sheikh be expecting them to fish on the sabbath, which is expressly forbidden in the Koran. (P:93)

Therefore, they consider any allegation with the West is a kind of betraying. Paul in this email has succeeded to demonstrate an ugly picture for them. Tareq adds" it follows that the Sheik Mohammed will be

expecting them to fish on the Sabbath which is expressly forbidden in the Koran" (P:94) However, Sheikh Mohammed does not mention the "Sabbath" in his desire of launching the project of fishing the salmon. In his meeting with Ms. Harriet and John, Sheikh Mohammed expresses his desire behind establishing the project in Yemen.

9-The Hard Environment: Paul associates Al-Qaida presence in Yemen with the hard environment such as the mountains, desert, people and life that are all described neatly as if they are a part of Al-Qaida's life, "the Beduin let us approach their tents and Ms. Harriet and I breathed more easily". He adds: "At the same time there is a sense that the friendliness could turn loose gravel, always with a precipitous slope on one side, lurching up steep winding roads...." (P:203-204) Though it seems unbearable, Paul admits that such environment helps to consolidate Al-Qaida's threat over the country. Therefore, anything goes to modify the weather or change is considered a threat against Al-Qaida's defense. Al-Qaida members are taught that their faith is a part of such weather including risky mountains, hot weather and shortage of services and this is why they prefer places such as Afghanistan or Yemen or Pakistan. Paul has strengthened that such environment will hardened its people. It has also helped to conspire any kind of friendship that might be between Al-Qaida and other Yemeni people. And as a result, many readers start justifying Tareq's emails and his reasons behind the rejection of Sheikh's project. Moreover, this hard environment has also created innocence among some other people and this is utilized by Al-Qaida. Therefore, it is not only their faith, but also the hard environment has made Al-Qaida ignorant of what the Yemenis need. Al-Qaida can only acknowledge Yemenis on the level of master-servant relationship. They want all Yemenis with their different beliefs and thoughts to be suppressed within one restricted faith. Moreover, it is not just that Al-Qaida do not matter to the Yemenis' needs but they accelerate to corrupt the innocence of the village girl and stop any new beauty that might be spread in Wadi Aleyn.

10-The Explosion of the Gate in Wadi Aleyn: The end of the novel suggests the novelist's abandoned attempt to reform the country and then terrorists such as Al-Qaida might be changed. However, Paul's bitterness and cynicism is clearly directed towards Al-Qaida people, who have presented themselves appallingly and this can be understood from their emails. Not only this, but the whole novel has been saturated by a kind of disgust that controls the characters' life from the beginning to the end. Paul's pessimism continues to be launched at every character in the novel. The explosion suggests a normal ending either as a result of the family resentment of Paul and Mary or the social terrorism of Al-Qaida. Both Mary and Tareq remain indifferent and are considered a threat to what others need. A possibility of avoiding the explosion is reduced when the first partner who is the main cause of this problem remains careless to the other. As a result most of the characters' lives are dominated by pessimism, and then failure seems to be the only way the characters have. Finally, Paul's *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* is an attractive novel which is full of symbols. Paul has well constructed the use of symbols variably

from the beginning to the end to serve his aim. The use of symbols has supported and enhanced the characters and themes intensely. Paul's knowledge of cities, mountains and people's customs enhance the existing symbols in the novel. He exploits his selected images such as mountains, dresses, water, cities ...etc very carefully to support his theme. Through the use of symbolism Paul argues a hidden point and wants to communicate his view of the modern world under the threat of terrorism. The research has focused upon how Paul employs these symbols to show that hidden global threat to the whole world, and to universalize a particular picture of reality by describing various kinds of symbols. *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* is a new change in the world of the twenty-second century novel. Paul Torday has renewed the eighteenth century novel: the epistolary types of novels and has used a new modern type of letters: emails. Paul's use of symbols is so inextricably interwoven with the period in which his book is written. The reader, therefore, needs a great care to differentiate the surface and the undercurrent implications of the novel. Finally The novel begins and ends with the question whether it is possible to bring the salmon into Yemen or not. Paul has used that question which helps him to distribute the symbols throughout the whole section of the novel. He uses the symbols judiciously to explore the framework of peace aliens and whether it is possible to live with them. It is clearly understood that the man becomes the most important part of Paul's work. Man can determine the type of nature he needs, otherwise, he is considered as an alien creature that others do not need. Man does not need the help of the universe; nevertheless, the universe is formed in the form the man needs. In other words, nature can be hostile if the man misbehaves his life. Therefore the distribution of symbols serve this thematic purpose of the novel.

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