



Feminist Writing in Contemporary Arabic Literature: A Problem in the Term and a Controversy on the Concept - A Critical Study

Dr. Hanan Bishara

The Academic Arab College for Education - Haifa

hanan-b10@bezeqint.net

Abstract

The woman's novel writing has turned into a literary phenomenon that has become the focus of readers' and critics' attention, mainly because of its controversial problems in the Arab cultural and literary circles.

One of the most important questions that formed the centerpiece of the narrative text in the Arab women's novel is the question of privacy and identity in its subjective and collective dimensions, from which the identity declares its distinguished and particular presence within the details of the female novelist writing. As a key question, the question of identity was imposed by the questioning about the Self and its resurrection as a part of the nation's resurrection, which is a question that is represented by the presence of the other.

We find that feminist identity is shaped in its literature by the distance of the narrative and cognitive tension between the ideology of masculinity, which seeks to dominate and own the woman on the one hand, and the utopia of the feminist narrative, which acts as an antithetical discourse to the male dominance and rises to dismantle its hidden and abusive patterns to the image of the woman in society, which results in creating a new image of the woman's subjectivity and her discourse on the other hand.

Keywords: *The woman's pen, the problematics of writing, narrative propositions, feminist narrative, dream language, dissipation, interior monologue.*

Introduction

The female literary creativity, mainly in the novel, is a noticeable phenomenon in contemporary Arabic literature, where women writers are attracted to the power of the enticement of the novel and are drawn to experience the pathways of its creation and openness, and its ability to deal with the problems of their individual existence, the concerns of their social reality in its various dimensions, and the various transformations of its stereotypes by the act of writing.¹

¹ The question is, does the entity's difference necessarily produce the difference in writing? Literary creativity, including narrative writing, rejects such a gender division because literature in all its gender manifestations is a human act that rises above such a gender classification. There is an attitude in between, namely, negation and proof of the difference in female literary



This act would be the way to free the female from the constraints of inheritance in all his compulsions and coercion resulting from the dominance of male power, which has consistently perpetuated its forms of influence in exchange for marginalizing the functionality of the female entity and deepening its dependence on the other/man in the multiplicity of his models and the diversity of his roles. Accordingly, the woman's literary creativity is transformed in its various types, including the novel, into a kind of punishment to the old masculine system in its various forms and manifestations, in which the female sees the source of all of her female being's injuries and her existential malfunction in the narrative, as a result of the fact that she could not retaliate against them in reality. This makes the contemporary female novelistic creativity abundant with signs that its writers celebrate the female entity in various forms of her practice of existence through moving her from the margin to the center position, from helplessness to the will, from absence to presence, from silence speech, from forgetting to remembering, from robbed and obscure identity to retrieved identity and declared identity through arts of the body writing.

Feminist literature closes the door on any non-women's requirement, whether in place, furniture, or sometimes language. Therefore, we will see the image of the modern Arab woman according to the ideology, content, and form on the one hand, and away from the historical studies that sometimes conduct searches about the author's origin in terms of where she grew up, where was she born, and where she studied, and when she died. It is therefore important to say that Arab women writers such as Nawal al-Sa'adawi, Kafa Al-Zu'bi, Ahlam Mustaghanmi, and others have great knowledge. They lived in the West and absorbed the ideologies that prevailed in that world. They have experience thanks to their migration and the cognitive and cultural achievement that most Arab women writers enjoy, in addition to the role played by scientific and technological development.

The features of the feminist narrative are almost common in all Arab feminist productions: camouflaged expression, dream language, deletion and fragmentation, interior dialogue, and free intellectual associations.

In the twentieth century, Arab women novelists broke down multiple intellectual barriers, and perhaps the most important support they provided was their attempt to eliminate their self-reliance without seeing the other, and their singlemindedness that sees things in one eye, namely, the man's eye, and on those inherited dualities that separate religion from politics, from morality,

creativity from what the man creates, while acknowledging that there are signs of such a difference. See, for example, Ben Bouza, Saida (2016). *al-Hawiya wa al-Ikhtilaf fi al-Riwaya al-Niswiya fi al-Maghreb al-'Arabi*. Algeria: Ninawa li al-Dirasat wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi', p. 29



from the economy, and from gender.² We began to read fiction writings that get out of the mainstream. It was imperative to break down all the prevailing constants, modes, and forms that tie that spirit and constrain the body.³

The problem of the woman's writing is considered a challenge on more than one level. Her fictional propositions are strict and immersed in her creative world, as we see in the writings of Nawal al-Saadawi, Aḥlam Mustaghanmi, Kafa al-Zu'bi, Sahar Khalifa, Hanan al-Sheikh, Samar al-Muqrin, and other Arab women writers. The woman writer presented advanced samples on the level of visions and technique, through a well-structured visionary artistic architecture, including her technical tools and her advanced awareness.

As a writer, the Arab woman achieved a distinct presence and was able to record clear fingerprints on the map of the novel, which was dominated by the man/writer, as in the man/male's view, the woman became a mere secondary decor or pleasure that he soon gets bored of, and looks for another puppet.

The woman writer, therefore, sought to express herself with a deep sense and honesty, and through a creative text with a special flavor. For example, the woman writer has come to give her heroines the opportunity to leave their diaries and live moments of emancipation and freedom.

The woman writer was able to rebel against the authoritarian reality by entering the world of writing, but at the same time was not able to depart from the man's world. Therefore, she resorted in her creativity to the folds of the narrative and the speech to frame, through her own characters, what arose beneath the surface of her text and world to change the patterns of behavior of her own characters while she is hiding behind the world of art. So she was able to rebel against this unjust reality in her pursuit of freedom and equality and got first-class citizenship, so to speak. In doing so, she messed with the taboos and tried to get rid of the powers of the reverse forces that are represented in the male authority.

In the face of a long history of taboo, the feminist writer goes to the text in order to exercise her lost freedom in society as it is her haven, but many of those attempts failed, but with "Sisyphus" she soon rises again, as he did with his rocks, which were falling down the mountain constantly. Perhaps the witness to this is what, Fairūz al-Tamimi says: "It's my attempt, again and again, to say what I want and fail. Or I need a few white pages that history scribes have not contaminated

² al-Soyuf, Nabila (2002). *Qadhaya al-Mar'ah bayn al-Ṣamt wa al-Kalam fi al-Riwaya al-Niswiya 'Arabiya*. Amman: The Jordanian University. An M.A. Thesis, p. 69

³ Raḥal, Gusoun. (1999). *Mosaic*. Amman: Dar al-Shoruq, p. 7.



with fictitious glories of victories that no one has won, to rewrite as should be written... I shall write until I am exhausted."⁴

The Study

Questions Posed by the study

The Arab woman started exposing her society, which she sees as full of falsity and misfortune and we, as readers, have started looking at her pen and her embodiment of her thought from another point of view. Therefore, when we read one of her works, we introduce a set of questions before reading her work:

1. Is the writer skilled in the techniques that are specific to the architecture of the novel structure or is her writing merely a revelation of feelings?
2. Is the critic skilled in the techniques that are necessary to study the work and deal with all its characteristics?
3. How does the writer/ novelist recognize these issues?
4. What are the limits of this existence that the writer and critic deal with?
5. How did the novelist interact with all these issues and with which awareness and perception?

Along with the process of reading the work or on our completion of reading it, a major question arises:

1. What are the irregularities that are contingent on her awareness and her technical and social boundaries? What are the boundaries that stand in the way of her self-awareness and their relationship to her subject matter and the manner that makes it a narrative type that has its own position in conscience and existence, without limitations?

Béatrice Didier (1999)⁵ says about the difficulty of feminist writing: "The specificity of feminist writing does not eliminate its analogy with men's writing". In this paradox, Béatrice Didier shows that there is difficulty in differentiating between the two writings and vice versa.⁶ If we

⁴ al-Tamimi, Fairūz (1999). *Thalathūn*. Al-Sharjah: Ministry of Education, p. 11.

⁵ Béatrice Didier, born on December 21, 1935 in La Tronche (Isère), is a French literary critic. Béatrice Didier is a professor of literature and director of collections in publishing. Doctor of Letters (1965) , professor emeritus at the École Normale Supérieure (formerly Sèvres), of which she was the acting deputy director and where she directs a seminar on the relationship between literature and music.

⁶ Béatrice, Didier (1999). *The Writing-Woman*, PUF, "Writing", p. 98



return to life reality, the same questions will be imposed: to what extent does this saying apply to the Arab woman's discourse? Has the Arab woman writer been able to systematize her discourse and invoke her own language regardless of her gender and collective history?

The Dialectic of the Concept of Feminist Writing

Much arbitrariness, in my view, has occurred to the concept of feminist writing, not to mention that it is inimical to epistemological logic because feminist literature, based on writing that is subject to the authority of sex/man, as opposed to women, created a misconception created by the dominant Eastern masculine culture, and the result is highlighting female inferiority and the creativity of the Arab woman.

Here, it is worth noting that some of the many concepts and terms, which, according to Adamov's saying: "now and here", have come to be reviewed and ascertained to what extent they are consistent with the Arab cultural and literary system, such as the concept of feminist writing, for example. The act of writing is not subject to the logic of its owner's gender. Then, would it change something if the writer was a man or a woman? The act of writing does not require extracting the content of birth in order to talk about a male creator or a female creator. For example, the poetic genius of Nazik al-Mala'ika, in our view, was not born out of her being a female, but because she wrote texts that occupied readers and critics for so long.

It is enough to mention the text of her poem "Cholera", which constituted a turning point in the path of Arabic literature, shook the constants of poetry at that time, and made her a pioneer of modern Arabic poetry and an innovator in it. What the Arab women such as Nazik al-Mala'ika, Fadwa Tuqan, Ghada al-Samman, Nawal al-Saadawi, and others have done, and what Bathina Khader, Dabiah Khamis, Nebal Qundus, and Fatima bin Mahmoud and others have done well, is mainly due to their creative accomplishments in the artistic and linguistic structure, its beauty, its uniqueness, and its compliance with the rules of genuine writing and not with the author's gender. Therefore, this division between feminist writing and male writing by the logic of writing itself is a mined division that is surrounded by many flaws.

On the other hand, behind the concept of research into the issue of feminist writing, there is an indicative context that is loaded with contradictions. On the one hand, we face the term "writing" and on the other, there is the term "feminism", and the combination of the two terms creates a literary context that is intractable and refuses to open up to other experiences because of its dominant sexual complex. So we stand in front of specific writing for women and another specific writing for men, which introduces a serious problem in the critical formalism, where the act of writing by women is portrayed as having some privacy from the act of writing by men!



This gender parallel between what is masculine and what is feminine will deplete all the principles that define the words and images within the community fabric that live on the principle of respect for the woman within the popular memory of males since the evolution of the first forms of spatial and temporal grouping. The historical books on the woman's contributions as a prominent engine of creative production in general and writing, in particular, are undeniable.

Working on producing and consuming the concept of feminist writing as a literary pillar of the archived memory of creativity, in Paul Rico's words⁷, prompts both the critic, the researcher, and the reader to engage in a free confrontation with an intellectual paradox about what the woman writes about the man, and this can restore that abhorrent struggle between the man's preference to the woman, as the eastern man does not accept criticism from a female, as he is "Mr. Master". In contrast, we notice that what the man writes about the woman has crossed the numerical barrier and become so self-evident that the features and details of this writing have been almost definitively crystallized from a male literary stereotype whose pillar is well known.

Modern Arab criticism continues to suffer from interference and terminological disorder for several reasons. Moḥammad 'Anani says that the woman's literary criticism is one of the most complex areas of literary criticism because of the difficulty of translating its terms in a way that conveys the meanings intended to the Arab reader.

He also defines the term "womanly" and the "feminist" doctrine as the doctrine of the triumph of life, despite the difference between the purposes of the term "womanly" and "feminist" and the term of the "triumph of life" as a general expression as it is unable to define the terminology that is specific to literary criticism, as it is likely to refer to connotations that spread across many areas of life that are not exclusively related to literature or criticism.⁸

These terms include terms that have been used in literature and arts that are produced or created by the woman. Literature is once "woman's literature", and then "feminist literature," or "womanly literature", "female literature," or "feminine literature" or everything that the woman writes about feminist creativity. It can also come up from a different or special consciousness that has its own advantages.⁹ One such feature is that it is a critique that overflows the female energy and therefore cannot be written by men even when they get along with the feminist movement.¹⁰

⁷ al-Warfali, Hatem (2009). *Paul Ricco: al-Hawiya wa al-Sard*. Algeria: Dar al-Tanwir li al-Tiba' a wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi', p.

⁸ 'Anani, Moḥammad (2003). *al-Mustalahat al-Adabiya al-Haditha*. 3rd ed. Cairo: al-Sharika al-Misriya al-Alamiya li al-Nashr.

⁹ al-Musawi, Muḥsen Jasim (2005). *al-Nazariya wa al-Naqd al-Thaqafi: al-Kitaba al-'Arabiya fi 'Alam Mutaghayyer*. 1st.ed. Beirut: al- Mu'asasa al-'Arabiya li al-Dirasat wa al-Nashr, p. 77.

¹⁰Ibid., p.78.



However, the checker of these terms finds that each term deals with a special feature as the woman's literature refers to all that the woman generally writes, whether progressive or implicit under the male umbrella and its characteristics, which perpetuate subordination, weakness, and inferiority, and believe in the dominance of the patriarchal institution with all its historical authority.

The term 'feminist literature' today is one of the terms that are most present with women's deep awareness of their personal and public rights in all spheres and their growing struggle to demolish all obstacles that have prevented women from attaining the status that they deserve as the woman enjoys abilities and talents that are not lower than the man's abilities and talents.

Characteristics of Feminist Writing

Femininity, in my view, is a passing bridge from tragedy to self-establishment in the text. The woman's writing is an act that is positioned within society. If the interpretation is what makes the entity of the text through interaction between Self and the feelings and emotional defects that it perceives, women, then, make their world without the need to reproduce their imagined or alternative images.

Writing, in my opinion, is a reconfiguration of the facts in line with the nature of the narrative. It is not documentation, even if it so suggests. Writing does not ignore the oppression that the woman is exposed to within society, in parallel with the fragmentation of the experience of psychological arrest and the review of its repercussions, by depicting an occupying male discourse without falling into emotional weeping, the woman's writing rises to a broader horizon that sees the detainee as a female or a male at the level of full gender equality because he is doing an act that brings him closer to being iconic.

It was not easy for women, in a human society dominated by patriarchal masculine thought from before the Aristotle era with its masculine propositions that tarnished the image of the woman, to sweep through new ways of refuting dominance in writing to define a female's true identity based on justice, equality and equal rights due to: *first*, the entrenchment of patriarchal thought throughout history and belief in male dominance as a man's right; *second*, persuading the woman to accept this reality because she is a subordinate, fostering and marginal creature is dependent on him; and *thirdly*, The perpetuation by the human community of all its cultural, social, economic, and political systems of this traditional and distorted legacy, which has made its nudge an issue that needs great energy, particularly in the field of literature because language and art forms constitute the most circulating and influential tools in all segments of societies.



The feminist identity¹¹ has been searching for the determinants of the "I/We/They," and their components in order to distinguish them in an essential way that places the Self within an ethical normative format that is generally translated into a one-dimensional ideological template and under the sum of adjacent ideals and symbols that turn the neighboring component into a maneuverer who threatens me and works on excluding me, and accordingly, entering the circle of conflict, differently or admittedly¹².

The identity has been defined as distinct from any other identity, the most important of which is the homeland, language, and common destiny, but this orbit soon opened onto what constitutes the essence of the human being and preserves his privacy together.

The notion of heterogeneity according to Paul Rico deals with the human being as a time dimension in the sense that is open on time with narrative effectiveness, and formulated according to possible paths and waiting areas, through keys with which the active Self is realized through language, action, and narration. So, 'identity' according to Paul Rico, is a formative path that is coined by narrative art and an interactive motion between the I and the Other to establish existence.¹³

It was the male intellectual eagerness to imprison the woman in the circle that the man planned for her throughout the ages. The man also made her identity a prisoner of his biological division on the one hand, and the embracement of his intellectual propositions and the normative aesthetic features that he put for her, but the situation changed when the woman became aware of her Self and discovered the weakness and subordination that she suffered from.

¹¹ In modern philosophies and intellectual currents, attention has been paid to the concept of identity and its features. The question of identity focuses on affirming the principles of unity versus multiplicity, abundance, and persistence, as opposed to change and transformation while ensuring self-conformity and the continuity of the individual. In the age of enlightenment, the Center has become the person's identity. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, collective identity meant the person's affiliation with the community within the principles of unity and cohesion in a harmonious historical and cultural entity and a common essence. Identities are crucial links and the existence of a person who is self-cohesive and possesses an identity that is the product of a certain historical process, is the process of forming the modern nation's State. But modernity and beyond came with more sophisticated ideas and attitudes than consistency and coherence, attitudes that are against essence because identity from their perspective is established in specific social and historical contexts and responds to changing situations in an ever-evolving and changing world. It has become certain that this term is not a constant behavior that precedes behavior and practice, but rather a datum that is governed by a process and formation through activities of the Self and their practice in many fields that are not limited only to the biological aspect. Considering identity a constant and silent cosmic concept disrupts its development because it makes it a prisoner of the past, while the kinetic Self constantly creates its Self and its identity between the Constant and Transformative, which makes its identity an open horizon onto the future, and if the discovery of the Self is the first way to determining one's identity, this discovery cannot be done in isolation from the group, as we discover ourselves more through our interaction with the Other and its openness in front of us. The more the Other manifests himself through his behaviors with us and his accomplishment in full view, the more clearly we recognize him and ourselves. See, for example: Bennett, Tony, et al. (2010). *Mu'jam Mustalahat al-Thaqafa wa al-Mujtama'*. *Mafatih Istilahiya Jadida*, 1st ed. Translated by Said al-Ganemi. Al-Munazama al-Arabiya li al-Tarjama, p.701-705; Foucault, Michael (1990). *Iradat al-Ma'rafa*. Translated by Mutawi 'Safadi and George Abu Saleh. Beirut: Markaz al-Inmā' al-Qawmi, p.14.

¹² al-Warfali, Hatem (2009), p. 5.

¹³ Ibid., p. 5-6.



The feminist critique that stemmed mainly from the Movement for the Liberation of Women intended, first: to diagnose its functions, to which attention must be paid, and at the forefront, to be able to form a trustworthy platform for women through its proposals. Second, to help achieve cultural uniformity, and third, to provide attractive and highly efficient leadership models in both revealing and persuading. Fourth, to strengthen women's brotherhood in order to achieve the advancement of women, especially those groups that are still unable to secure their basic needs, and then to stimulate the process of their growing awareness¹⁴.

The specificity of women's writings stems in its self-narrative from the existence of the interrelation in the self-feminist discourse, which constitutes the gender power relations and reflects the woman's interest in developing her own awareness, with the post-colonial discourse that is engaged in power relations between the colonizer and colonized. It raises issues of identity and relations based on the Western dual centrality and marginalization of others, where issues of women's struggle against colonialism, racism, class, and racial classification based on color, religion, or nationalism have become the most important manifestations of the woman's self-writing, as well as her struggle against male dominance and patriarchal power.

Feminist discourse no longer merely reflects the oppressive conditions that impede the woman's emancipation within patriarchal societies biased toward male culture but has become essentially preoccupied with the need to represent the woman's awareness and to prove her effectiveness in society in order to break out of the male guardianship framework and gradually disappear from the so-called dual man/center and woman/margin which would give the feminist text a departure from the stereotypical image that describes the woman as a broken, defeated woman and the man as oppressive and authoritative, in order to capture the woman's self-awareness and her active role in her home country and to enhance her confidence in her ability to triumph over her multidimensional identity as the nucleus for her liberation.

This feminist awareness has thus produced a literary discourse in which the woman controls the construction of its descriptions and representations of the Self and the Other. She started expressing it in the narrative on her Self and represents her experience in her own voice. Therefore, we find her to be the dominant voice of the text and she's the one who mostly gets the narrator's job. She is the pivotal character who plays an active role in the text and controls the course of its events, the essence and the content of the message she wishes to convey to the recipient, thus determining her writing role as an act of confronting the dominance of the Other in all his forms, and as a means of emancipation from the dominance of male patriarchal power,

¹⁴ Nady, Paul Her (1989). *Ma Howa al-Naqd*. Translated by Sulafa Hijjawi. Baghdad: Dar al-Shu'ūn al-Thaqafiya al-Ammah, p. 78.



without abandoning aesthetic concepts in conjuring time, forming the place, and forming the characters and other constructive narrative elements.

This will inevitably lead to the vision of the world from the woman's perspective, where the values of society will be discussed in light of what the author recounts in her voice. This is what women's feminist studies have recently aimed to establish, with a view to finding other images of Ego/Self that are far from male centrality and that are used to stereotype the role of the woman both in society and in writing, and that are also accustomed to controlling the essentials of the cultural activities and the concepts of the literary discourse.

Thus, what the woman writes and reveals in her own experiences has become very specific, constituting a narrative confrontation that she makes, as a means of questioning the things that we keep silent about such as her oppressed desires or feelings, on the one hand, and as a means of challenging the male institution that excludes her to the margins while seeking to occupy the center, on the other.

Feminist writing is linked to several characteristics that are related to the woman as a female, in expressing the women's concerns in a particular historical context and a specific social format, and in her seeking to reveal the oppression systems in general, where the traditional gender conflict, men and women, intersects with relationships of many other forces, primarily ethnic affiliation, political orientation, religious belief and other forms of exclusionary distinctions between human beings.

Although various researchers agree on the difficulty of addressing characteristics in women's writing, we see the specificity of this writing and its difference from that of men. We can summarize the main characteristics of what we found in many Arab women novelists and their focus on, sex, body perception, life experience, and employed language, the features of which are reflected in the following: *First*, female writing relies on communication and blowing up the liberated word into silence. *Second*, spontaneity, directness, and spontaneous use of the word. *Third*, the intimate dimension and the practice of confession and revelation. *Fourth*, the internal nature of the woman is reflected. Therefore, we find that the text and the main character/heroine and female are sometimes a narcissistic extension of the author.

Women writing is based on the adoption of most women writers of an implicit idea that is related to the motivations that generate such writing, such as the elimination of cultural molds, stereotypical representation, male power, patriarchal system, and other motivations that require a clear presence of the Self against the Other. Therefore, the woman's writings are described as 'subjective' and transcend the boundaries of the feminist "Ego" and proceed to the horizon of



'collectivity' where different patterns of women converge in their resistance to patriarchal oppression and the attempt to empower the woman and thus, these writings bear a mixture of intersecting rhetorical possibilities.

This change in the perception of Subjectivity/Self/Ego stemmed from the realization by women writers that the feminist Self would not be shaped in isolation from the formation of other egos of all kinds. Their texts raised issues of identity and difference and presented the issue of undermining societal divisions and racial differences as a first and pressing step towards the woman's liberation and improvement of her conditions. The demand to modify social conditions, as a key part of the oppression faced by the woman in the face of the patriarchal system and its oppressive practices within the same text appeared later. Therefore, the feminist narrative often crossed from subjectivity to collectively. Thus, the feminist text began to call for combating patriarchal guardianship and its hierarchical structures or for modifying stereotypes that were established by the male mentality about the woman in order to place her in traditional roles that qualify her for subordination and obedience, as well as for redefining the feminist Self as a multifaceted one whose composition intersects with gender, besides other elements such as class, race and national origin.

Therefore, writing in some of the feminist narratives was coupled with the idea of the need to represent the complex experiences of women, the composition of which includes not only their being women but also the affiliations and identities that they acquire because of their different positions in society. Therefore, gender justice issues intersected with issues of struggle against racism within the text. Those are issues that women face because of their combined identity as female and black, as female and Muslim, as female and poor, or as female and with different sexual orientations, and other types of racist classifications that impose on her marginalization and exclusion, as Hala Kamal says in the introduction to the book *Feminist Literary Criticism*. She also says that the feminist discourse has paid attention to the importance of the woman's self-writing as a source of knowledge of the women's roles and experiences, as well as to reflect societal conflicts in all their forms in a specific historical period.

This intertwining between the private and the public is one of the most important features of writing for many women writers, as in their discourse the movement of society is connected to the suffering of the Self, and interpret each other in a way that symbolizes the woman's fate that is inseparable from the fate of her homeland.¹⁵

Thus, we have come to read writings that in their entirety depict suffering, oppression, and various aspects of marginalization and exclusion. Here, the feminist Ego/Self in its texts has

¹⁵ Kamal, Hala (2015). *al-Naqd al-Adabi al-Niswi. Silsilat Tarjamat Niswiya*. Cairo: Mu'asasat al-Mar'ah wa al-Dakera, p. 75.



moved from subjectivity to the horizon of collectively, where feelings and experiences of many types and patterns of women meet in their resistance to patriarchal oppression and attempt to empower the woman and communicate her voice. In this context, many women writers have resorted to self-writing in its various forms of memoirs, diaries, personal records, biographies, and testimonies, as an artistic speech that embodies their rights. Women's choice of self-writing as a literary genre to which they resort to showcase their personal experiences reformulates the prevailing social structures and represents a challenge to male dominance. In this context, Barbara Harlow says in her book "Literature of Resistance"¹⁶ that subjective texts, especially those written by women in the third world, rewrite the social system in order to include a vision of the new interrelationship possibilities that impose racial and class divisions as well as family ties so that the writing of self-concerns interrelate within the writing of the homeland issues¹⁷.

If we go back to the most prominent and popular novels in modern Arab literature, we find that the woman has not written against the male/man/human in her narrative/creative product when talking about the relationship of femininity with masculinity. Rather, she writes against the masculine power that is reinforced by societal identity in an ideology that there is based on the notion that there is an oppressed weak being and another authoritarian powerful being.

Thus, the woman embodied this relationship in writing, and her pen went beyond society's injustice to her, to larger and more human themes. If we contemplate some contemporary fiction texts, we will get to what Yuma Eid meant in her statement that "the counter-discourse is a conflicting discourse that was historically achieved between masculinity and femininity,"¹⁸ The woman does not write about her opposite as much as about the prevailing dominance that embodied tradition and renewal, stagnation and development, deprivation and satisfaction in order to dismantle the dominant power of society as a collection of a dominant and enduring set of cultural values, as well as its revolt against every destruction to her humanity and her right to freedom and life .

We say that it is possible to consider what the Arab woman author writes a document to understand her literature in its various manifestations and to understand her insides. The phenomenon of the Arab woman author's adventure of taking up novel writing and developing it deserves giving special attention and study because it clearly points out the readiness of her pen

¹⁶ Resistance literature is a subset of literary output that is a sociopolitical activity engaged in a struggle against prevailing ideologies. Resistance literature shows us the writer's struggle, whether it's gender-based repression, liberation struggles, or exile. Resistance literature is a global phenomenon, and it aims to challenge the norm, challenge cultural practices and thus give hope. While armed resistance can cause a governmental or civil change, only through literary elements can the battle against cultural sovereignty prevail, as Barbara Harlow explained in her book *Resistance Literature*, first published in 1987. See, Barbara, Harlow (1987). *Resistance Literature*. New York: Methuen. Resistance can also be in the form of ridicule, irony, or satire. See, Ghali, Sukri (1970). *Adab al-Muqawama*. Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif bi Misr, p. 111.

¹⁷ Barbara, Harlow (1987). *Resistance Literature*. New York: Methuen Press.

¹⁸ al-'Eid, Yumna (1999). *Fi Ma' refat al-Nass- Dirasat fi al-Naqd al-Adabi*. Beirut: Dar al-Adab, p. 67.



and its development, especially that critical pen which is growing and growing in number in various fields of literary genres, specifically in the fictional genre. Jalila al-Tariter says: "If the woman's voice in expressing herself in her writing represents a clear difference from the voice of the man's voice in expressing himself writing, this is due to historical and social factors according to gender classifications. It is therefore not arbitrary to preface her book with a statement taken from the text by the Tunisian author 'Arwusiya al-Naluti: "We write so that our souls take rest, and thus, we exist".¹⁹

When Simon de Beauvoir says: "The female is not born a woman, but she becomes one." This is considered a key pillar for research into the women's relationship with writing as the text is considered a body/space through which their concerns can be freely expressed.²⁰

If we go deep into Beauvoir's saying, we will note that gender inequality is socially built and is not by nature. Whoever produces ideology is the power-holder, and then, it is necessary to use the didactic to understand the relationship of the master with the follower as Hegel goes in his book "Phenomenology of the Spirit"²¹. The woman is a producer of life and her function is not only biological, because writing is also an act of fertility.

The Arab woman novelist has moved towards a new literary direction in order to create a literary genre that is capable of translating her concerns and those of her era. She has been able to impose her existence strongly and firmly, due to her well-known outrage, the anger that implies a single positive indication of the woman's consciousness²².

She was also able to possess artistic tools and find her place on the map of the Arab novel, not in terms of quantity but in terms of quality. Probably, the woman's entry into this creative world is the best testimony to this, though the man writer continues to receive primary attention in this area. The Arab woman writer boldly jumped, introducing the Arab female Ego in its form, language, and space into her society, and started clashing with it in fiction spaces that constituted a new artistic state, and thus, supported the power and centralization of feminist discourse. She also tried to outsmart the other/man, and by that, she released advanced artistic content after the Arab masculine discourse excluded her and kept her absent.

¹⁹ al-Tariter, Jalila (2021). *Mara'i al-Nisā' . Tunis*: al-Dar al-Tunisiya li al-Kitab, p. 66.

²⁰ De Beauvoir, Simon (1972). *The Second Sex*. Tr. H.M. Parshley Harmondsworth, Penguin., p. 95.

²¹ Hegel, Georg (2006). *Phenomenologia al-Rouh/ Phenomenology of the Soul*. Translated by Naji al-Onaliy, 1st ed. Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wihda al-'Arabiya, p. 111.

²²al-Daher, Rida (2001). *Ghurfat Virginia Wolf: Dirasa fi Kitabat al-Nisā' . Damascus*: Dar Mada-Al li al-Thaqafa wa al-Nashr, p. 157.



Summary

The Arab author tries to emancipate herself and rebel by writing, by putting her name above the titles of her articles and the covers of her books. This enabled her to form a writing identity and artistic paintings that would help her to remove the injustice that had followed her for years. Everything that the woman liberates through a close relationship between Self and her being remains an expression of a female writer. This enables us to clarify and reveal the position of masculinity in the literature that is written by the woman on the one hand, and the position of emancipated femininity in a self-possessed narrative to obtain her freedom, without the need for a male position to restore the woman's status. Hence, an important question arises: Does the woman write when she wants to probe her existential self, and triumph over her social issues about her parallel opposite or about her equal rival?

We can say that the Arab woman novelist, moved towards a new writing direction, and resorted to the hybridization of the novel form by its fusion with the literary and non-literary genres, whereby the narrative fused with the theatrical, the poetic, the cinematic, and the historical, and this novelistic openness generated different genres, a hybrid and new form, which led to artistic maturity during a short period.

We conclude that while various researchers are unanimous in their opinions about the difficulty of addressing the characteristics of women's writing, we see specificity in the woman's writing and its difference from the man's writing.

References:

- 'Anani, Moḥammad (2003). *Al-Mustalahat al-Adabiya al-Haditha*. 3rd ed. Cairo: al-Sharika al-Misriya al-Alamiya li al-Nashr.
- Ben Bouza, Saida (2016). *Al-Hawiya wa al-Ikhtilaf fi al-Riwaya al-Niswiya fi al-Maghreb al-'Arabi*. Algeria: Ninawa li al-Dirasat wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'.
- Bennett, Tony, et al. (2010). *Mu'jam Mustalahat al-Thaqafa wa al-Mujtama'*. *Mafatih Istilahiya Jadida*, 1st ed. Translated by Said al-Ganemi. Al-Munazama al-'Arabiya li al-Tarjama.
- al-Daher, Rida (2001). *Ghurfat Virginia Wolf: Dirasa fi Kitabat al-Nisā'*. Damascus: Dar Mada-Al li al-Thaqafa wa al-Nashr.
- De Beauvoir, Simon. *The Second Sex*. Tr. H.M. Parshley Harmondsworth, Penguin.1972.
- Didier, Béatrice (1999). *The Writing-Woman*. PUF, "Writing".
- al-'Eid, Yumna (1999). *Fi Ma'refat al-Nass- Dirasat fi al-Naqd al-Adabi*. Beirut: Dar al-Adab.



- Foucault, Michael (1990). *Iradat al-Ma'rafa*. Translated by Mutawi ' Safadi and George Abu Saleh. Beirut: Markaz al-Inma al-Qawmi.
- Harlow, Barbara (1987). *Resistance Literature*. New York: Methuen Press. 1987
- Hegel, Georg (2006). *Phenomenologia al-Rouh/ Phenomenology of the Soul*. Translated by Naji al-'Onaliy, 1st ed. Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wiḥda al-'Arabiya.
- Kamal, Hala (2015). *al-Naqd al-Adabi al-Niswi. Silsilat Tarjamat Niswiya*. Cairo: Mu 'asasat al-Mar 'ah wa al-Dakera.
- al-Musawi, Muḥsen Jasim (2005). *al-Nazariya wa al-Naqd al-Thaqafi: al-Kitaba al-'Arabiya fi 'Alam Mutaghayyer*. 1st.ed. Bewirut: al- Mu 'asasa al- 'Arabiya li al-Dirasat wa al-Nashr.
- Nady, Paul Her (1989). *Ma Howa al-Naqd*. Translated by Sulafa Ḥijjawi. Baghdad: Dar al-Shu'ūn al-Thaqafiya al-Ammah.
- Raḥal, Gusoun. (1999). *Mosaic*. Amman: Dar al-Shoruq.
- Shukri, Ghali (1970). *Adab al-Muqawama*. Cairo: Dar al-Maaref bi Misr.
- al-Soyuf, Nabila (2002). *Qadhaya al-Mar'ah bayn al-Ṣamt wa al-Kalam fi al-Riwaya al-Niswiya 'Arabiya*. Amman: The Jordanian University. An M.A. Thesis.
- al-Tamimi, Fairūz (1999). *Thalathūn*. Al-Sharjah: Ministry of Education.
- al-Tariter, Jalila (2021). *Mara 'i al-Nisā'*. Tunis: al-Dar al-Tunisiya li al-Kitab.
- al-Warfali, Ḥatem (2009). *Paul Ricco: al-Hawiya wa al-Sard*. Algeria: Dar al-Tanwir li al-Tiba' a wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'.