# Arabo-Islamic Overtones In Fadia Faqir's Novel *My Name Is Salma:* A Socio-Stylistic Reading

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## Abstract

Fadia Faqir's debut novel, *My Name is Salma* (2007), teems with many implications. While the book could be viewed as a postcolonial text that mirrors two cultures in clash on the thematic level, it could be safely assumed as a piece of artistic expression that abounds in numerous Arabo-Islamic overtones that are the product of its heroine's social and verbal encounters. The study seeks to highlight the stylistic strategies adopted by the writer to transcribe her heroine's struggle against two contrasting cultural stances that forced her take a shelter in Exeter, Uk. The first hurdle Faqir had to face was that of deciding who the narrator of the novel is. Second, she, by force of the bi-cultural arena of her book, employed numerous stylistic techniques: interior monologue, various speech and thought presentation forms, cod-switching, in addition to peculiar images, words, and Quranic allusions, that all the same, uncovered the writer's talent and her unflinching dedication. The study departs from Norman Page's argument of 'Forms of Speech in Fiction' (1973) and Aschroft's 'Appropriation of Language' (1989).

**Key Words**: Arab-Islamic culture ,Interior monologue, code-switching, interlanguag

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It is through the wonderful amalgamation of the thematic and stylistic peculiarities in Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma* (2007) that the Arabo-Islamic overtones are found in full play. The interplay of their variegated aspects displays Salma's psychological make-up, uncovering, as thus, a marked preference of the author to remain in the buffer zone between two different cultures: one of them is deeply rooted in the eastern, conservative and religious traditions, while the other is estimated as a highly modernized and humanly–oriented. Unlike most immigrants, Salma was forced to leave her country owing to her illicit pregnancy. Thus, although it can be assumed that the utmost goal, for a girl in Salma's position, might be to survive the expected family penalty, she acts counter to all expectations by deciding to return home.

This argument might have courted the objection that Fadia Faqir made room in her novel for a typical Arab girl, whose

sense of alienation has been galvanized in spite of her safe stay in England to express a viewpoint that runs counter to reason. The rule, in this case, is assumed to go as that Salma would be quite lucky if she found the opportunity to survive the attempts against her life (through honour killing), and to wipe off her disgraceful memories of falling into the traps of her sexuality, but, unexpectedly, under the biting passion to see her daughter, she is made, through a twisted frame of thematic and structural improbability, to return headless of the inevitable risks awaiting her at home.

The aim of the study is to examine the interplay between social and thematic stimuli and their verbal descriptions. The method followed throughout the study depends on analyzing vast segments of the heroine's utterances and thoughts with an aim of highlighting the Arabo-Islamic overtones embedded in the structure of the novel. The analysis departs within the framework of Norman Page's "Forms of Fictional Speech"(1973) and Aschcroft's "The Appropriation of language" (1989).

Arabo-Islamic overtones in *My Name Is Salma* are the product of Salma's split, marginalized character which figures on a large and extensive scale in the novel. She is portrayed as a girl in dilemma whose internal and external feelings of alienation represent the authoress' peak of artistic manipulation. Through

In Exeter, where Salma has finally settled, she started to be overwhelmed by her sense of estrangement and alienation. Her past began to conquer her present through falling into chains of fearful dreams related to her brother's intentions to kill to her; in addition to her daughter's image that haunted her, igniting her desire to get back home.

All the subsequent events in the novel tend to bear out this result. Thus, when Salma's desire to see her daughter was so pressing, she spoke it out with her current husband, John, before she later decided to carry on regardless of her newly-born baby, Imran. Having returned home, events passed breathlessly: she met her mother who became blind, was briefed on her daughter's death after being thrown into a water well by her uncle, and she finally received a blow between her eyes that put an end to her life.

Of the aspects that refer to the Arabo-Islamic overtones, there emerges the time-old theme of unrequited love and unexpected betrayal, the itching desire to return home and the inexorable interceptive powers of fate, so cleverly interwoven that they must needs lead to the tragic death of the protagonist. Therefore, Salma , as an embodiment of this Arab culture, is delineated as more biased towards a reunion with her daughter than remaining safe away from her.

first-person narration and numerous flashbacks the story proceeds with its heroine Salma, the Bedouin girl from the village of Hima. Having become pregnant outside wedlock, she had to face her fate of being killed due to her shameful act. The fact is that, Salma was seduced by Hamdan, the villager with whom she fell in love. Instead of making up for his deed, Hamdan let her down and turned furious, aggressive and harsh. All attempts to abort the baby failed and thus Salma was taken into a protective custody by her teacher to save her life. In Islah prison, the fifteen-year-old Salma met other prisoners. One of them was Madam Lama who was arrested for walking naked in the street in a fit of madness after her husband's marriage of a second wife. The other was Noura, who was put to jail for charges of prostitution.

In prison, Salma gave birth to her daughter Layla who was hastily taken away from her by Lama to prevent Salma from falling in the weaknesses of motherhood. After eight years in prison, Salma was rescued by Mrs. Asher, the nun who took her to a convent in Lebanon. As a protégé, Mrs. Asher started to arrange papers of adoption to keep Salma under her protection, and she could finally take her to England. Repeatedly, in England, Salma had been caught and put into immigration detention before she was released by her protégé's efforts on claims of political asylum.

Thus constructed, the novel is replete with Arabo-Islamic overtones, part of which emanates from Salma's sense of alienation while the other is the product of her verbal encounters, which all the same, comprise the structure of the book. Hence, Faqir recreates her own bi-cultural world by "appropriating" the English language to her ends and through probing her heroine's "unspoken and unheard thoughts". In other words, these strategies occur singularly or overlap and intertwine to achieve a number of effects like: expressing the identity of the protagonist, transcribing the Arab ethnic identity, and highlighting the Arabo-Islamic traditions.

As an embodiment of the Arabo-Islamic overtones, Salma, Faqir's protagonist, is depicted in a dilemma that has thrown her into endless levels of alienation and estrangement. She declares at the opening paragraph that the "greenness of the hills, the whiteness of the sheep , the greyness of the skies carried [her] to [her] distant past" (7) of her village of Hima. Haunted by the objects of her home country, she would continue keeping her Arab and Islamic roots and traditions in full view .

Of those traditions that led Salma to flee to England is the price she had to pay for her unforgivable sin as she indulged in a passion that is not sanctioned by Islam. And because Arabs are famed to be as violent in their love as in their hate, she had to die

at the hands of her brother. Easterners, moreover, have always set too much store by questions of honour, tribal solidarity and moral values which are alien to European mode of thinking. This crisis has been the real cause of her self-alienation.

Arabo-Islamic overtones are transmitted through Fadia Faqir's excessive use of interior monologue, methods of speech and thought presentation side by side with making her heroine articulate her agonies through code switching and allusions to Qur'anic verses and teachings .

**Overtones Through Interior Monologue**

Norman page quotes Dujardin's definition of interior monologue as "unheard and unspoken speech, by means of which a character expresses his innermost thoughts, as closely as possible to the unconscious, and independently of any logical organization, that is by means of sentences reduced to the syntactic minimum" (Page 26). Page, however, contends that in addition to the existence of such monologues, which suggest a quality of thought different "in important respects from that of utterance" (26), there are many monologues in fiction which are "normal speeches of some length which do not happen to have an audience"(26).

The first example of Faqir's use of interior monologue, that conveys the Arabs' strong sense of homesick and alienation, occurs when Salma was recalling the memory of her mother:

I went back to my room and looked through the window again at the sea, where waves broke into each of the leaving streaks of foams behind. Where was I? How far was I from my mother? How far was I from her? (82)

The Arabian sense of alienation is always symbolized by missing people at home. Salma's mind is viewed so burdened with the image of her mother. In her perplexed state of mind, she seeks salvation into recalling her mother's image, which represents to her the natural source of safety and warmth. The example is a proper case of interior monologue by force of Salma's role as a narrator, in spite of the narrative opening sentence. The closing questions Salma poses represent her communing state that highlights her sense of loneliness and alienation.

The selfsame image of the mother is repeatedly summoned in a manner that uncovers her Arab-Islamic conservative nature when reflecting on the concept of respectability both in England and at home:

My Bedouin mother would have smacked her lips and said, 'Tzu! You like a slut'. To convince Mother that respectable

women here wore clothes that made them look like sluts would be impossible. She used to cover even her toes with the end of her long black robe when sitting down ,'Don't let the men see your ankles'. (235)

The Arabo-Islamic traditional way of wearing is shown in full preservation in terms of the mother's view. Salma's strain of thoughts here is injected with her mother's exact words which are transmitted through the indirect form of presentation and interrupted by Salma's own remark before it was resumed again. The whole paragraph is a mixture of interior monologue and an interior dialogue in which the mother's words occur in the form of reminiscences voiced through the medium of Salma .

Likewise, the image of Salma's home country is one that never detach her mind, and it is that feeling of homesickness that finds frequent expression throughout the book. In the subsequent quote, Salma, while in Exeter, is made to remember the aspects of nature at home:

The sun was shining on the green hills that reminded me of Hima's . I used to fondle the soil every day , but now sealed in an air bubble I lived away from the land and the trees . I just looked at the postcard view and thought how distant the river was although it was only yards away. I had divorced my farmer side , but on mornings like this I felt the palm on my

hands itching for the scythe and to touch the mud and vines. (190)

The sense of alienation overwhelming Salma seems so pressing that home scenes are often brought into view. She is in a state of addressing herself. The opening sentence is a pure narrative that is followed by a free direct thought in which she estimates her current position. This kind of interior monologue and free direct mode of expression are mainly employed by the writer to fill in the gaps about her character's past and to uncover the intensity of her overflowing emotions. In the closing sentence, Salma found out that she had forgotten one major quality of herself at home; namely, being a farmer, but stubbornly enough, she regained it through her tactile sensation as her hand was 'itching' to touch the scythe, mud, and vines. The reference to the 'palm' is reminiscent of the Arab culture that used to take it as an iconic symbol.

In like manner, it was Salma's sense of smelling that brought her back home again, uncovering her unswerving enchantment by her land and its scent. Once, when she had to eat a lemon cake with Parvin, her companion, she immediately recalled the smell of home:

The smell of fresh lemon rind reminded me of lemon plantations on the outskirts of our village. In the spring when

the trees were in full bloom, when they looked like decorated brides, the wind carried a strong perfume that went straight to your heart. (254)

Like most Arabs, in hard times of alienation and estrangement, Salma's response to the call of her instinct and inclination is irresistible, even in the presence of others. Therefore, her senses are always in process to the effect of taking her back home. As she sinks in her thoughts, her impression of the scent of 'lemon' is transmitted through her self-searching interior monologue which reeks of the local image of the trees looking, in their bloom, like brides in full decoration. It is really this primitive image of nature and this incessant infatuation by its charms that only Arab culture appraises in its tradition.

Arabian race is apparently humiliated and demeaned when Salma's sense of inferiority is rendered through her inner thoughts in a form that uncovers her awareness of the dangers attendant upon this mixing of races on a foreign soil. It was through one of the much employed occasions of the interior monologue that Salma's thoughts found a proper expression:

He lowered his head until his big grey eyes were gazing at me directly, above his reading glasses, and said, 'Where do you come from?'
With a strained voice I said, 'I am English'

'I am English too', he said smiled, then walked away.
It was like a curse upon my head; it was my fate: my accent and the colour of my skin. I could hear it sung everywhere: in the cathedral, 'WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?'; in the farmers' market, 'Do you know where this vegetable comes from? 'Sometimes even the cow on the hills would line up, kick their legs in unison and sing, 'Where do you come from, you? Go home!' (191)

The passage is meant to highlight the inferiority of the Arabian race in a manner that implies the white man's prejudice while Salma, the Arab woman, seems unable to resist his superior physique and other eye-catching qualities. After the opening narrative sentence that is juxtaposed by a case of free direct speech, the interior monologue sets in. The sense of addressing herself is overwhelming Salma in a highly revealing manner in which the qualities of a proper interior monologue could occur glaringly clear: the use of the absolute 'it' and 'you' and the use of the question mark. In addition, the self-searching aspect of the utterances adds much to the bitterness of the protagonist who feels that her Arab identity is downtrodden, even by animals. Such thoughts, recorded as they fall upon her mind, dispel the "distance"(Currie 19) the reader might feel towards her, and determine a "positionality" (19) of a participant rather than an observer. Despite deeply felt by Salma to be a case

of foreignness, her alienation is retrospectively manipulated to be reminiscent of her original culture and its overtones.

Similarly, Salma's disgraceful act of getting pregnant outside wedlock is repeatedly recalled in the form of interior monologue. It is, out of shame that she fled, through Mrs. Asher's help, to Exeter to survive her brother's attempts against her life in revenge of her sin. Overtones of Arab culture emanate from Salma's sense of repentance and regret. Through her interior monologue, Salma recalls her experience with Hamdan, her ravisher, with whose physical charms she was deeply infatuated:

> I looked at the wardrobe and saw the familiar face of Hamdan, the twin of my soul. He was tall , strong and dark. I stretched my arms out to him. He walked towards me and said, 'How is my little slut, my courtesan, my whore?' My body welcomed his weight, his rough hands, his urgency. I filled my nostrils with the scent of his musk-covered face, his oiled hair, his waxed moustache ... (187)

Faqir's treatment of Salma's character has proved so far to be the product not so much of close interaction between herself and her heroine, but rather of casual acquaintance, or passing familiarity with, and most possibly of mere hearsay about ,the ways and beliefs of Arabs. Otherwise, Faqir would have known

better than to have made a girl of a Moslem family like Salma relinquish all notions of honour, shame and sin for the sake of Hamdan. Nor is it feasible that Arabs like Salma's father and brother, could have let Hamdan's philandering, much more Salma's sin, go unpunished. The passage is a typical Faqir's one in which she allows Salma, her first person narrator, to blend her own narration with a variety of variegated styles, ranging from interior monologue proper to free indirect speech as we read in her account of what Hamdan has already done to her:

> I closed my eyes, bit my lower lip and held my breath. He ran his fingers through my hair, tightened his fist and walked away to come back later and claim what was his already, releasing me and imprisoning me for the rest of my life. (25)

The free indirect speech has the advantage of merging narration, creating an element of variety in the methods of speech presentation in the book. The utterance given here can be nothing but the indirect representation of Salma's thoughts at that time. In addition, Faqir avoids any explicit mention of the heroine's name; and this gives the passage a briskness quite its own, and allows the novelist to move from one mode of presentation to the

other with perfect ease. A good case of 'slipping' from one speech to the other is when Salma recalls her mother's warning words against falling in sinful acts, a fact that represents a loud Arabian overtone of a deeply-rooted culture:

> I looked up, his silhouette was squatting right in front of me. I held my breasts with both hands. An intake of breath was followed by a brisk kiss on my lip. The cool dusk air was whirling in my pantaloons , reminding me of the code of honour in our village. No . 'Have you gone mad? Do not be impulsive!' I could hear my mother shout in my ears. No. No. No. I pushed him away. 'You will be full of regret later, oh beautiful,' he said, pulled a hair from his dark moustache and walked away. (28)

The passage involves a variety of styles starting with the two opening narrative sentences which are followed by the self-revealing 'no' which conveys Salma's marked realization of the eminent risk of her act. This 'no' of rejection uncovers her endangered sense of obligation, which is strengthened by recalling her mother's exact words transmitted through a proper case of free direct thought, by which she is empowered to repeatedly cry out 'No. No. No'. This represents a proper case of self-addressing interior monologue. Then, the passage closes at

the direct speech utterance by Hamdan before it ends with the narrative hint of his 'pull[ing] a hair from his moustache and walked away'. Thus constructed, the passage seeks to record the atoms of a given character's experience as they fall on the tabula rasa of her inner consciousness on the one hand, and to highlight the essence of the Arabian sense of the word 'honour' that weighs heavily upon Salma at one of the weakest moments of any human experience on the other. The confession she later makes that she is "pregnant and unmarried" (105) assures her sense of guilt and deepens her worries lest her family might know where she is, and hence they would come to "cleanse their shame" (106). Even worse, she denies that she speaks English when a man at the night club asks her where she comes from, an idea that runs into her inner thoughts is voiced through the inquiry :

> Had I told him I was Arab he probably would have run faster. A Bedouin from a village called Hima, whose blood was split by her tribe for any vagabond to drink it. I straightened my back, pulled my tummy in and shut my mouth. Like a key witness in a mafia crime case I changed my name, address, past and even changed countries to erase my footsteps. (249)

Salma here expresses her inner thoughts by means of Dujardin's "unheard and unspoken speech"( qtd in Page. 26 ),

reducing, by so doing, her sentences into a "syntactic minimum" (26).The passage uncovers an overtone of the Arab culture that stipulates the death of any girl who commits adultery regardless of the legal procedures. For this reason, Salma wiped off all her personal data that might be traced by her tribe starting from her name, which was changed into Sally, to her hair-cut, address and her own country.

Another occasion, in which Arabo-Islamic overtones highly reverberate, offers when Salma drinks Champagne for the first time. The first overtone is heard when her father's voice invades her senses:

> 'Damned is the carrier, buyer and drinker of alcohol'. My hand trembled carrying the forbidden drink to my lips. It had been almost sixteen years since I last saw them. It was only me, the dark haunting trees, the vast moonless sky and the pipe. I blew a tune so nostalgic it would fracture your heart. The made-up woman with the meek voice dressed in satin and georgette was not me. I had nothing to do with that nineteenth-century mansion, the thick even lawns, the wide stone stairs, the naked statues, the old trees. I was a shepherdess, who under a shameless sky guided

her sheep to the scare meadows, who cried whenever she felt like crying, who kicked off her shoes whenever she felt like taking them off, and who weeded and made love like a whirlwind. (265-66)

This method of speech presentation is skillfully manipulated by Faqir in her recording of Salma's inner thoughts in one of her self-searching meditations of her Arab culture. The fact is that Salma's sense of guilt is felt through voicing her father's words that highlight an Islamic stipulation that forbids alcohol through the power of the word 'Damn'. Feeling so stained by the act, she recalls her pure status at home, in the arms of nature and under the 'moonless sky', playing a tune with her pipe, which is an iconic Arab tool symbolizing Arabs in their purest and most transparent moments of satisfaction. She values her tune highly in a manner that breaks 'your' heart, employing the absolute 'you' as a major trait of interior monologue proper. She, moreover, denies her connection with the new environment and its aspects, and repeatedly assures her status as a humble innocent shepherdess who used to act freely at home. The first part of the kernel sentence: 'I was a shepherdess' is followed by the adverbial clause: 'who under the shameless sky … 'which helps specify the place of the action before it was completed by its second part: 'who cried whenever ... who kicked off … whenever

... who weeded and made love like a whirlwind' with its brisk repetitive pattern of the time adverbial 'whenever' that transmits a sense of gratification. In addition, Salma strengthens her sense of Arab culture when she continues blowing her pipe and recalling an Arabian song before the burden of her bitter experience weighs heavily upon her and leaves her falling upon her face "as if an invisible jinni had come out of his bottle" (266). In this particular extended piece of meditation, her grandmother's advice is recalled :"Put the jinni of tears back in the lamp, my flower. Your tears are gems" (266). Then, this interior monologue closes at the hint of Salma's recalling of the image of daughter at home as she addresses herself:

> 'Where is my daughter? Is she alive or dead? My eyes are hungry for her face! My ears are tuned to one call, "Mama", my nose sniffing for her scent. Bring me a blanket she had wrapped herself in, shoes she had worn, a lock of her hair! 'I chanted. (266)

Here the immediacy of experience transpires in the way the utterance is made to lack the coherence of ordinary speech. The falling of the atoms of experience on her inner consciousness is represented by the recurrence of disorganized phrases and clauses like: "where is my daughter? Is she alive or dead?", the effects of which are so tragic. Repeatedly, Salma employs her

different senses to speak her experience out in a manner that makes it so tangible and easy to conceive. In fact, this is typical of the famed excessiveness of emotion Arabs are known for,which Salma lively represents.

**Overtones Through The Appropriation of Language**

In their book, *The Empire Writes Back*, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin) highlight the 'appropriation of language' as a marked characteristic of post-colonial writing and believe that "language is adopted as a tool and utilized in various ways to express widely differing cultural experiences"(39).The first channel through which language is appropriated is that of the use of non-standard English in texts. They, additionally, argue that "Creole continuum" is a means that reminds us of language as a "behavior " (46) and that it consists in "what people do rather than in theoretical models" (46).

Depending on this assumption, writers of post-colonial texts, began to challenge the authority of English language and its cultural hegemony as a literary discourse, asserting, at the same time, the status of non-standard English. Furthermore, "writers contend that code-switching serves a metonymic role where a part stands for the absent language in its entirety. The insertion of Arabic words, brings the absent Arabic language to the foreground." (Shalaby 301)

Believing in the fact that "worlds exist by means of language ... therefore the English language becomes a tool with which a world' can be constructed" (Ashcroft 44), Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin further emphasize that it is through the linguistic features that the text becomes a means of not only expressing a cultural difference but also of "recreating" the writer's culture, a feature that finds full expression through not only flavouring texts with words of Arabic origin but also with symbols and allusions to the Arab culture as a whole.

**Code-switching**

Code switching in *My Name Is Salma* falls in four categories: loan words, untranslated words, address forms, and reference to religion. Through these stylistic peculiarities, Arabo-Islamic overtones found the fertile soil that set them in motion. Loan words are those that were borrowed from Arabic and established themselves into the body of English language. They, through the effect of their connotations, remind the reader of the innate culture of the character in question. *My name is Salma* abounds in such words that uncover the cultural background of the heroine and bring forth its overtones quite audible. The following group of examples is quite telling:

Kohl ( eyeliner)(24), kufiyya (kaffieh)(141),
Ghoul ( ghost)(152 ), Sheikh (chieftain) ( 58 ),

Imam (leader) (44), abaya (black gown) (106), falafel (popular meal ) (215 ), and (Jinni) (demons) ( 214) .

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin argue that "The technique of selective lexical fidelity which leaves some words untranslated in the text is a more widely used device for conveying the sense of cultural distinctiveness". (Ashcroft 64). 'Untranslated words' represent the second category of expression that alludes to the identity of the speaker in such a way as to underline the 'otherness' of his/her experience. Having words unglossed "not only registers a sense of cultural distinctiveness but forces the reader into an active engagement with the horizons of the culture in which these terms have meaning" (65), but also stimulates the reader into guessing their meanings, approaching the other culture through the overtones of those untranslated utterances. In the novel in question, a lot of such words represent the case:

Loafah (141) ( luffa-arum ), sin il ya's (menopause (181), aura (genitals) (189 ), zakat (almsgiving)(197), haya bina ( lets go) (199), manifhamsh (we do not understand) (215), salaams (regards ) (211 ), Tzz (shit) (235), bint (girl ) (231).

Similarly, 'address forms' play no less important a part in constituting the frame of Arabo–Islamic overtones that deepen

our understanding of the position of Salma as an immigrant on the one hand and as an Arabian hound on the other. Each of these forms formulates a referential, rather than a relational relationship in the sense that each utterance reflects the background information necessary to bridge the shortage of knowledge felt by a foreign reader. The list contains, but is not limited to, these respectful forms that are reflective of social, polite relationships :

> Judu (grandpa) (35), habibti ( dear) (97), Hajjeh (an old woman ) (320), Sheikh (a veteran preacher)(58), Imâm (main Prayer performer) (44), Yumma (Mam) (10)

In a different context, Salma is addressed by Hamdan, her ravisher, as "my courtesan ... my slave"(50), while she responds calling him "master ... my love" (50-51) in which the Arab culture is viewed through the status of the girl when her honour is lost, and the bitterness she is being ladled as a consequence. On the other hand, it was John, the western man she married, who addresses her as "little chick" (205) at a time she calls herself an "alien"(98) sometimes and a "sinner" (56) at other times. All in all, these variegated address forms represent the various phases Salma's life passed through and highlight the inseparable cultural prerequisites that overshadow her Arab identity.

## Reference To Islamic Tradition

It has been an integral strategy, to Faqir, to refer to Islamic tradition to assure the identity of her heroine. Being a Bedouin, Muslim girl, Salma could predict the course of her life if she stays at home. In other words, her family is supposed to slay her as a result of her shameful act by force of the Islamic stipulation of stoning the adulteress. Having become an outcast, she was accompanied by Mrs. Asher to Exeter for purposes of protection. There , in England , Salma started to reconsider her life story in the light of her Islamic tradition. In her retrospective stream of thoughts, she recalls her father's story of having a dry season at Hima for which he , and other villagers , were gathered for "rain prayers" (19). When their supplication was replied as rain started to pour, they, thankfully, kneeled to Allah for His mercy and chanted: "There is no God but Allah, and no Prophet but Muhammad" (19), which is the basic prerequisite of any anyone who wants to adopt Islam.

The second pillar of Islam is referred to in Salma's inner thoughts while addressing herself:

> The mosque's blue dome and minaret, where the imam stood to call for prayer, could be seen at the top of the arid hill. The call for worshipping God and obedience came five times a day. 'Allahu akbar'! Allah is greatest. Get up and

pray!' Old men woke up at sunrise, did their ablution and walked with reluctant, half-asleep young men to the mosque. The imam stood there on his high platform urging them to go in and ask Allah for his forgiveness. (45)

Islamic overtones clearly emanate from the visual image Salma draws in her thoughts quite meticulously, showing the rituals of prayer in full process. For Salma, as it is for any Muslim, words like 'mosque', 'dome', 'minaret', worshipping', Allah akbar', 'ablution' represent a source of repose and quietism. As a hound protagonist, Salma never meant to emerge victorious from her uneven battles with the inscrutable fates, but rather she is made to suffer her tragic end out of which she used to "seek refuge in Allah" (35) and to remind herself of her being a "Muslim" (30,148,188).

Other forms of Islamic overtone manifest themselves through the direct allusion to the Qura'nic story of Solomon by Noura, Salma's friend, in her argument for the fact that "souls were soldiers of our master Solomon" (192). She adds that Solomon begged God to grant him a kingdom, a wish which was soon replied. Moreover, Allah bestowed him the ability to command the wind and to understand the language of birds and ants:

Noura said that ... Allah instructed him to

> teach both men and jinn to mine the earth and extract its minerals to make tools and weapons. He also favoured him with a mine of copper, which was a rare metal in those days. Prophet Solomon even understood the ant when she cried, "Run to your homes and hide, otherwise, unaware, Solomon and his army will crush you" ... Then Noura stopped talking ... (192).

Noura's talk here is delivered through the indirect method of speech presentation as we get one verb of saying besides a transposition of verbs and pronouns(Page 27), yet there emerged a case of "slipping" (28) into direct speech when dramatic urgency is needed with the reference to a Qura'nic verse. It is in this sort of communion that Salma finds relief out of her agony for being apart from her daughter. Noura, through her story of Solomon and souls' communication, wanted to retort Salma's ambiguous "gentle touch of her nipples" while simultaneously anticipating her daughter "crying for her" (191-92). For this reason, Islamic overtones represent, to Arabs, the eternal source of convenience in cases of unrest and turmoil.

Furthermore, more Islamic overtones are gained trough scattered sets of phrases and sentences as follows:

'In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful' (41)

I eat halal meat only. Slaughtered the Islamic way.' (188)

'I seek refuge in Allah' (35)

'Do you have to wear this veil' (189)

'I had a sip of my milk and honey and it tasted like Islamic paradise'. (174)

**Interlanguage**

'Interlanguage' is a term coined by Nemser (1971) and Selinker (1972) to "characterize the genuine and discrete linguistic system employed by learners of a second language". In addition, "The concept of interlanguage reveals that the utterances of a second-language learner are not deviant forms or mistakes, but they are rather part of a separate but genuine linguistic system (Ashcroft 67). In the light of this definition, Salma's utterances could be grouped under this systematic formula of verbal description. Thus, hers are not to be considered mistakes or deviations from standard English, but rather a part of this linguistic arena. Besides, her foreign pronunciation, queer way of speaking, and incomplete phrases produce a strange

overtone quite her own. The novel is replete with numerous examples, some of which could read as follows:

"It forbidden in Islam..." (188)

'No, but I different. I Muslim.." (188)

I making salad and lost control of the knife" (212)

'I spend most of my time the shop working" (73)

"Lits goo" (100)

'People look at me all time as if disease' (123)

"Hinglish" (131) Search the room when me out. (136)

'No, but good worker me' (147)

'Me help' (157)

'I ill...no sleep.(114)

I no stupid. (136)

Me Muslim. (148)

Me no mad. (160)

I no coconut. (161)

Such examples represent a telling case of 'otherness' which echoes a deep essence of overtones that refer to another culture. This otherness is expressed by repetitive deviations from the standard English both syntactically and phonetically: the missing copula, absence of indefinite articles, mispronouncing /i/ for /e/, misplaced object, and misused object pronoun. These features help uncover the alienated nature of the speaker and determine a

foreign overtone of a non-achiever, all falling within the frame of language appropriation in form and language allusion in content.

On the basis of the foregoing analysis one can safely conclude that Faqir's treatment of her heroine, Salma, is characterized by: neutrality of the vision, with an implicit, tilted stance towards her original culture, a marked preference for 'interior monologue', and code-switching as methods of speech and thought presentation. In a similar solicitude, Faqir assigned her theme in harmony with those stylistic peculiarities with the aim of releasing overtones of her Arab culture. On the other hand, Faqir's obsession with her original Arab culture took precedence over everything else in the sense that she has been propagating her cultural and religious beliefs on the one hand, and toying with a dream of authenticating their competence on the other. For one thing, Faqir's stylistic method has been a success as it could trumpet the Arabo-Islamic overtones while it has not been similarly prosperous on the level of thematic structure owing to its artificial, twisted end and its clear improbabilities. This improbability is explicit in the episode of Salma, being picked out, of all the girls in prison, by Mrs. Asher who changes the course of her life. The simple reason of such drawbacks is the predominance in the novelist's mind of the propagating mission of her novel. However, The fact that

remains could be one that accentuates Fadia Faqir's faculty of
incing the Arabo-Islamic background of her heroine.

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# الأصداء العربية الاسلاميه فى رواية "اسمي سلمى لفاديه فقير: قراءة اجتماعيه أسلوبيه

حسام محمود الأشقر- آداب بور سعيد

تتميز رواية "اسمي سلمى"للروائيه الأردنيه فاديه فقير بملامح اجتماعية وأسلوبيه وثقافيه بارزه حيث تكشف وتقارن بوضوح بين الثقافة العربية الاسلاميه بكل تحفظاتها والتزامها بأصول وقواعد الدين الاسلامى والثقافه الغربية بكل مافيها من انفتاح وحرية. وتكمن قضية سلمى فى ارتكابها خطيئة فى وطنها ثم بحثها عن الأمن فى وطن آخر. ومابين هذا وذاك تمثل ألفاظها وكلماتها وتعبيراتها وطريقة التعبير عنها ملمحا أساسيا يميز الرواية ويبرز إتقان الكاتبه وتمكنها من أدواتها الاسلوبيه. تعتمد الدراسة الحالية على نظريات نورمان بيج فيما يتعلق بالمونولوج الداخلى والأساليب غير المباشره فى التعبير ونظرية أشكروفت وجريفيث وتيفين فيما يخص تطويع اللغة لخدمة أغراض بعينها.