



Cultural Hybridity and Identity Negotiation in Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma*

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Abstract

This paper examines the theme of cultural hybridity and the struggle for identity in Fadia Fakir's novel *My Name is Salma* (also published as *The Cry of the Dove*). Through the lens of postcolonial theory, the paper explores how the protagonist, Salma, navigates the complexities of her identity as she transitions from her Bedouin community in the Middle East to a life in exile in England. The analysis highlights how Salma embodies hybridity, both culturally and psychologically, as she attempts to reconcile her traditional upbringing with the demands of a modern Western society. The novel is dissected to uncover the ways in which Fakir addresses the conflicts that arise from cultural collisions and the often-painful process of identity formation in a space that is neither wholly Eastern nor Western. Using a textual analysis and theoretical framework from Bhabha's notions of hybridity, the study argues that *My Name is Salma* serves as a poignant exploration of the challenges of living in-between cultures.

Keywords: Hybridity, Identity, Arab-American, Fadia Faqir, My Name is Salma.

Introduction

Since its inception in the 1950s, the term "identity" has not been limited to a certain context or origin. The concept has eluded precise classification, making it difficult to ascertain its true meaning. At that moment, it denoted "a term indicating the similarity between two objects or the persistence of certain qualities or aspects of an object over time." The Department of History of Science and Ideas was established in 1966. It has never been before utilized to determine one's identity. Meanwhile, the increase in European invasions, primarily driven by a desire to civilize, led to the destruction of the original populations' identities and instead created hybrid subjects who faced various challenges. This prompted numerous critics to reassess and develop novel modernist methodologies to challenge the impurity of their forebears and establish new identities devoid of any social, ethnic, or cultural classifications.

The term "identity" mostly encompasses individuals' perceptions of their own characteristics, the type of individuals they are, and their interactions with others (Hogg and Abrams 2). These key qualities determine an individual's distinctiveness from others and shape the nature of their social interactions. Furthermore,

delving deeper into the concept of identity exposes the researcher to a wide array of distinctions and intricacies concerning the multitude of its elements and connections. It is important to acknowledge that the concept of identity is currently employed in many situations, depending on the specific locations and perspectives from which it is observed. However, it is primarily associated with the extent to which an individual identifies themselves in relation to their group memberships and feels a sense of belonging, known as 'social identity'. The level at which a person differentiates themselves from others is referred to as 'personal identity'.

Scholars have consistently focused on the unique characteristics of the connection between oneself and another when discussing the identification process. Self-categorization theory establishes a clear distinction between the two and guarantees the autonomy of each category in this context. It asserts the presence of a shared subjective self, which is diametrically opposed to anything intrinsically individual or personal, which governs the behavior of the subject and influences their identity. In particular, it demonstrates that an individual can determine the category to which they belong through their own actions—whether "more as social groups or less as individual persons, in terms of social identity rather than personal identity" (Turner and Oakes). At the cultural level, there is ongoing debate among critics regarding the preservation of indigenous identity, with some attributing its purity and impurity to a variety of colonial mechanisms. Interaction, resettlement, and transculturation among individuals pose a challenge to the notion of identity, which consequently assumes new fashionable forms: in-betweenness, hybridity, and difference. Stuart Hall, the progenitor of contemporary cultural studies, focuses on the manner in which these distinctions emerge within contemporary societies and give rise to novel manifestations of identity that transcend the current boundaries of applicability. Hall examines cultural identity and diaspora in his essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." He argues that cultural identity reflects "shared historical experiences and cultural codes" (223), which elevates the similarities between a group of people and another related but distinct perspective, while affirming that "there are also critical points of profound and significant difference that define who we truly are" (22). Upon further examination of identification processes, it becomes evident that identities are perpetually fluid and precarious; as Bhabha put it, they are all "hybridized" and "blended."

The notion of hybridity has emerged and gained popularity in conjunction with the emergence of postcolonial theory. According to Edward Said (1993), "Culture conceived in this way can become a protective enclosure" (xiv). According to Roger Bromley:

hybridized discourses are writing much against the idea of melting pot or mosaic...and, if anything, are sites of cultural resistance and refusal...a tolerance for contradictions the result of being hyphenated identities, living hybrid realities which pose problems for classifications and control, as well as raising questions about notions of essential differences (4-5).

Hybridity is positioned as antidote to essentialism, or "the belief in invariable and fixed properties which define the 'whatness' of a given entity." (Fuss xi). Bhabha himself is aware of the dangers of fixity and fetishism of identities within binary colonial thinking arguing that "all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity." (Rutherford 211). For me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'Third Space', which enables other positions to emerge. (Rutherford 1990: 211)

In the past few decades, colonial territories served as a multifaceted space where colonized and colonizers coexisted and interacted on a regular basis, despite their distinct cultural backgrounds. In this colonial context, there was a continuous battle to prevent the detrimental impact of the blending of different social groups on identity and culture. However, both sides were unable to resist the subconscious impact they had on each other. In accordance with this framework, the colonial discourse encompassed ideological and stereotype measures aimed at implicitly depicting the underdevelopment of the indigenous culture and highlighting the superiority of Western civilization. Above all, it created a division between the two cultures that ensured the preservation of the colonial ideals while being under the control and domination of the Western powers. Discrimination is observed to take place specifically "between the original culture and its

illegitimate offspring, the individual and its exact replicas," and not between the individual and someone from a different culture, or between the original culture and a foreign culture (Bhabha 159). These techniques resulted in a significant gap, where the fading of identity extended beyond the colonizer.

Unintentionally, the meeting of these diverse cultural groups creates a sense of cross-cultural boundaries that shape their unified and distinct cultural identity, and build an intangible space where the differences become apparent. In the face of these recurring patterns, Bhabha challenges the notion of a completely unique culture and instead develops the idea of "cultural hybridity" (266). Hence, the purpose of referencing the dominance and integrity of Western culture in colonial discourse was solely to rationalize the economic exploitation of colonialism. Based on these premises, asserting the fundamental nature, coherence, and indivisibility of identity, within the context of this continual interdependence and movement, is evidently radical. At this juncture, the expression of the indigenous cultural identity is challenged and rendered nearly unattainable due to many manifestations of colonial violence, including discrimination, coercion, and racism. In other words, the indigenous people are facing difficulties in finding a different way to communicate and completely operate inside their own environment. However, they manage to create what Bhabha refers to as a "third space". In this virtual realm, devoid of any physical location, the inhabitants can effortlessly express and embody their cultural identity. However, the majority of the productive and valuable elements of this identity originated from both areas, resulting in the emergence of a hybrid culture.

Hybridity can be defined as the emergence of novel transcultural expressions that arise from the interaction between different cultures in the context of colonization. Hybridization manifests in several ways, including linguistic, cultural, political, racial, and so on. In postcolonial discourse, hybridity is often employed to refer to the process of cross-cultural contact (Ashcroft 135-136). Moreover, the essence of this latter is neither precisely situated in the middle or exhibits any indications of the extremes on either side of the colonial split. Instead, it assumes a more ambiguous stance, allowing individuals to position themselves without constraint. Put simply, it refers to the willingness to embrace cultural influence.

The process of colonization involves the adaptation of the colonized people to several cultures, revealing the colonizers' intention to create a person that closely like themselves. However, it is not exactly identical. This procedure results in a colonized individual experiencing ambivalence, as they both ambiguously conform to and reject the dominant culture. The phrase "complex mix of attraction and repulsion" refers to the intricate combination of both being drawn towards and being repelled by each other, which defines the connection between the colonizer and the colonized (Bhabha 13). Furthermore, with regards to the colonial context, the colonizers compel the indigenous population to mimic them in a somewhat incomplete manner, aiming to achieve similarity but not complete equivalence. This can be exemplified by the phrase "not white not quite" (128). The colonial objectives were to create a subordinate population that resembled and performed like white individuals, but did not necessarily possess the same rights and benefits as the Western man. Contrarily, Bhabha demonstrates how imitation transitions from being a simple strategy to disrupt the native's sense of self, to becoming a transformative characteristic that mocks and challenges established norms.

The imperial powers could not foresee the establishment of alternate ways to challenge the native's violation of colonial culture. The repercussions of ambivalence lead to the reinforcement of the resistant aspect of the indigenous people and create a significant void in the colonial system. Therefore, if colonization advanced and hindered the process of mimicry, it inherently deviated from its civilizing aim and demonstrated the threat posed by mimicry. Alternatively, if colonialism persisted in adhering to the same approach. The statement made by Rudyard Kipling, "East is east, and west is west, and never shall the twain meet," was proven to be false (Kipling 233-236). The dilemma of whether or not to adopt a specific stance becomes more complex when the colonial system experiences the improper and contradictory expression of its copied culture. In response, mimicry was employed in various satirical forms that posed a threat to their racial identity and power.

The primary aim of colonialism was to generate a distinct and exaggerated subjectivity through imitation, or to establish a group of individuals who were Indian by blood and appearance, but possessed English preferences, beliefs, and intellectual capacities (Macaulay 49). This suggests that they should not possess a critical awareness as thinking individuals, but instead function as intermediaries between the dominant group and the colonial population. Meanwhile, Bhabha views mimicry as a precise replication that possesses a strong disruptive power to undermine the fundamental principles of colonialism, rather than being a mere depiction. This work is defined by its ability to rearticulate moments of presence and expose the colonial urge that constitutes a challenge to colonialism. In other words, the colonizer perceives mimicry as a sign of advancement and civilization in the colonized people, when compared to their original culture. However, in reality, mimicry actually represents a kind of disruption and resistance against the assumptions made by the colonizers. The objective of these investigations was to gain a thorough comprehension of the plight and oppression faced by women in both Arab and Western communities, as well as to examine the complex process of constructing or reconstructing one's identity in today's multicultural societies. This study has demonstrated that women experience moral, verbal, and physical violence. They are oppressed, enslaved, and subjected to domination. Consequently, feminist movements and philosophies emerged to guarantee the rights of women and their inclusion in society and public sphere. However, it aims to demonstrate that an individual's identity has undergone numerous challenges before it encompasses two distinct cultures. The investigations elicit a sense of perplexity, raising the fundamental inquiry of one's identity to a higher degree of contemplation: is there a duality within myself? Thus far, there has been limited discourse regarding the "diasporized Muslim Arab women" and their process of forging their identity in the middle of a complicated interplay of patriarchal control, cultural clash, and Western portrayal. Based on the aforementioned inquiries, we will analyze the protagonist's shift from her initial identity to a postcolonial multicultural one, as well as the elements that influenced this metamorphosis in Fadia Fair's novel, *The Cry of the Dove*.

Discussion

The story being examined vividly portrays the protagonist's struggle to reconcile her attachment to the past with her growing adoption of Western ideas and actions, as symbolized by her presence on a bridge. Salma's unique identity emerges as a result of her ability to navigate between her traditional beginnings and the new and amazing aspects of life that are not inherent to her racial background. The story is marked by a sense of foreboding, as the protagonist's painful past has instilled a sense of hopelessness within her. The future is shrouded in mystery and uncertainty, making it impossible to fully anticipate what lies ahead. In her quest to defy these distressing disruptions and seek greater freedom, the shepherdess Salma delves deeper into her sense of identity, which she could not discover in either Hima or London.

Salma's involuntary participation in several experiences on a single travel creates a continuous conflict between her cultural traditionalism and her radical ideas, leading to the potential for a transformation that could shape her original identity into a new one. To ensure her safety and secure the birth of her illegitimate daughter, Salma courageously chooses to subtly hint to and bid farewell to the village of Hima, along with all its challenging and sentimental recollections. The initial step prompts Salma to reflect over the extent of oppression and brutality she has endured at the hands of her patriarchal father, brother, and the exploitative Hamadan. Her complete hostility is evident towards the threat of death resulting from the violation of religious and cultural rules. Salma's quest for self-discovery fluctuates during her lifetime trip from the East Levant to the West England, where she is constantly confronted with diverse religious and cultural constraints. Salma's exile compels her to reevaluate her existential condition. Ensures her personal safety. She challenges her society, which is governed by male domination, and raises doubts about it. The location of her newly discovered street is contrasted in Lamming's phrase, "to be in exile is to be alive" (12). The work explicitly establishes this fact to the reader in the initial chapters, as Salma starts experiencing a level of complete liberation that she had never before experienced in Hima, She says, "Now I stood shaking my head and rubbing the big fake yellow stone on my ring with my smooth hands, which were always covered with cocoa butter, and sighed" (Faqir 7).

The tale exhibits a non-linear progression of events, alternating between several time periods. This ultimately leads Salma to travel to England aboard the ship named Hellena. Throughout her journey, Salma holds steadfast to her deeply conservative Islamic views and her great attachment to Levant culture. While on the ship, Mrs. Asher, who assisted Salma in her journey abroad, begins instructing her in the English language. Additionally, she extends an invitation to Salma to partake in consuming beer and pork. Nevertheless, Salma adamantly refuses to possess them and further interprets their illegality in Islam by stating "It is forbidden in Islam. You lose control and make all kinds of sins" (129). Initially, Salma demonstrates a strong sense of discernment when it comes to the allure of Western influences and a steadfast commitment to adhere to the rules and restrictions of her religion. The rejection she experienced indirectly exposes the conflict between two separate civilizations as they want to maintain their own identities. Salma's identity is gradually challenged by her surroundings, ultimately succumbing to the influence of Western lifestyles out of a sense of obligation and coercion. By stating this, there are inevitably instances of vacillation and longing for the native culture. In addition, when Mrs. Asher legally adopts Salma and changes her name to Sally Asher instead of Salma Ibrahim Mousa, Salma's identity becomes evident as it undergoes a transformation from one culture to another, fitting into what Bhabha classified as a "Hybrid identity" (37).

Following the changing of her name, a series of significant and inflexible changes commence in every aspect of her life. These changes include her relocation and her explicit display of the inclination to conform to Western lifestyle norms. Salma vehemently rejects her racial heritage, emphasizing the significance and joy that her given name holds. When David inquires about her origin, she replies, "If I told him that I am a Muslim Bedouin Arab woman from the desert on the run he would spit out his tea. I am originally Spanish, I lied" (Faqr 20). Renaming and guiding individuals only based on various orientations can potentially strip them of their established identity. Salma exhibits a strong fixation on her Arab name and the symbolic significance it represents as being 'safe'. However, upon closer examination of the text, the name given to her by Mrs. Asher signifies her inclusion, employment, and improved living conditions in England. Salma appears to dismantle her existing cultural borders in order to adopt newly manufactured ones, enabling her to coexist harmoniously with the group. It is empirically true that the quality of names we adopt reflects our affiliation with the community. Salma's alternative name plays a vital role in shaping her sense of belonging and is an integral element of her Arab identity. In my understanding, Mrs. Asher's assistance, which possessed both ideological and personal characteristics, resembled the colonial discourse's civilizing aim by internalizing its thought patterns and eradicating those of the native people.

In essence, identity encompasses not just your present state, but also your ultimate purpose and calling. Here, the stream progresses towards Salma's struggle to merge and integrate two distinct universes. This method portrays Salma as a symbol of peace and compassion, lamenting in a world that lacks compassion and fairness. In England, the protagonist is motivated by the new name and the changed lifestyle to openly build a new identity and methods of assimilation. Consequently, she readily accepts the employment offer at the bar and manages to acquire some knowledge of English table etiquette and techniques for initiating talks with customers without offending their sensitivities. She states "I would wear my classiest dress, keep my mouth shut, put little make-up on, tie my frizzy hair tight, and if I spoke I would speak slowly and carefully in order to sound as English as possible" (106). This exemplifies Salma's imperative to assimilate as an English woman and hence repress her Arab expressions. Therefore, her conflict with these individuals and their peculiar gazes towards her result in her sense of detachment and evoke feelings of isolation in her mind. These gazes indicate the level of bigotry and ethnocentric sentiments towards individuals, namely those originating from "somewhere in the Middle East. Fucking A-rabic! She rode a camel all the way from Arabia to this dump in Exter" (10).

The veil remains a symbol of discomfort, vulnerability, and a sense of lacking in Salma's life until she ultimately chooses to remove it. It demonstrates the profound origins of her mother's cultural and religious traditionalism. Salma, a Muslim migrant, firmly upholds her right to wear a veil as it symbolizes her religious beliefs, cultural identity, and provides privacy for her hair from the gaze of others. When Sister Asher inquires

about the reason for Salma wearing the scarf, Salma responds by firmly stating, "I cannot take off veil, Sister. My country, my language, my daughter. No piece of cloth. Feel naked, me" (130). For Salma, revealing her 'aura' entails the automatic eradication of her own identity and the transformation into a morally corrupt being. However, this adherence to traditional customs is short-lived after Salma leaves her country. In order to conform to modernity, she not only reveals her hair but also exposes other areas of her body. Parvin, Salma's roommate, urges her to abandon the veil in order to increase her chances of finding employment in the new Western English Society. However, the process of revealing Salma was not a simple one, but rather a distressing effort that intensified her sense of guilt. She describes removing her white veil, folding it, and placing it on the bed. This action caused her head to feel as if it were covered in painful wounds, and she had removed the bandages. "...white veil, I slid it off, folded it and placed it on the bed. ... It felt as if my head was covered with raw sores and I had taken off the bandages. I felt dirty as a whore...a sinner who would never see paradise and drink from its rivers of milk and honey" (88). The veil in the novel is clearly an integral aspect of the Muslim mindset that permeates the story. Meanwhile, Salma must adopt a demeanor of confidently stylish women in public, which ensures that the changes occurring within Salma are both physical and mental. According to psychiatrist Fanon, wearing a veil might be seen as a way for women to resist colonial attempts to make them abandon their cultural traditions and adopt contemporary and liberal values (55).

Salma's battle with her hybrid identity is mostly driven by her desire to avoid the Western discrimination she frequently encounters and the harsh attitudes towards her English proficiency. While Salma may adopt the outward appearance of an English woman, she never truly experiences a sense of belonging, but rather just feels alienated. She is experiencing emotional alienation and loneliness in two distinct cultural contexts. Firstly, in a traditional patriarchal society, where concealing one's body is seen as more socially acceptable. Secondly, in a racist society that values individuals based on the amount of skin they expose. Salma's persistent efforts demonstrate her aspirations to emulate the ideals of Western thought in order to integrate into the community. However, she consistently remains an outsider to them, as she lacks the same rights, color, and sense of superiority that are associated with being English. Her status as an immigrant aligns perfectly with Miriam Cook's characterization of emigration as a state in which an individual, rather than being confined to a single location, finds themselves caught between two places, both of which are considered home yet do not fully feel like home. Emigration is characterized by a constant want to be in a different area, regardless of one's current location (Faqr 24). Salma investigates the enduring influences of the Western tradition in constructing a 'mimetic subject' that differs somewhat from English individuals. Said, in his book "Culture and Imperialism," highlights the Western bias against the East, exemplified by the notion of "they are not like us" (xii). This reveals the Western perception of Easterners as inferior individuals who want Western assistance to achieve superiority.

In addition, Salma's dark complexion creates a series of barriers between her and Europeans, resulting in her being perceived as a foreign outsider, regardless of her efforts to gain their approval. Salma articulates her desire to lighten the pigmentation of her skin as a means to alleviate her psychological distress and feelings of frustration. She states, "Now Salma the dark black iris of Hima must try to turn into Sally, an English Rose, white, confident, with an elegant English accent, and a pony" (8). Salma acknowledges that having a lighter skin color would grant her a higher social status, as in England, physical appearance holds more significance in shaping one's identity than their true essence. Salma's skin hue still indicates her non-English heritage. She can be easily recognized as an "alien." As Salma struggles to hide her identity, she wonders whether "Was it possible to walk out of my skin, my past, my name?" (28).

Upon her recent arrival in England, Salma, who lacks proficiency in the language, finds it to be a central factor contributing to her persistent feelings of estrangement and alienation since her first day in the foreign country. Salma understands that in order to thrive in an English-speaking environment, she must learn to align her communication patterns to effectively express herself and articulate coherent ideas. The protagonist's claim of identity has now progressed to the point where Salma undergoes a rapid transition in

language from Arabic to English. Initially, Salma's lack of sophistication and limited command of the English language exasperate English individuals and test their patience. The short chat between Salma and the English officer explicitly states the information regarding her name, 'Is this your maiden or Christian name? .. 'Muslim no Christian'. 'Named ?Name ? Izmak?', He said. 'Ismi, Ismi? Saally Ashiir.' "Christ, he said (Faqr 30). Upon realizing that her inadequate proficiency in English is causing her to feel ashamed and inferior, Salma quickly recognizes the importance of acquiring the language in order to have a voice and seamlessly assimilate into European culture, marking the initial stages of integration. Consequently, she develops strong and intense aspirations for the English language and makes the decision to pursue the study of literature in order to emulate the refined qualities of an English woman. She asserts, "No, stories good. Teach you language and how to act like English miss" (126). Having experienced various traumatic experiences, Faqr aims to depict the challenges faced by an Arab Bedouin woman as she strives to establish a limited presence among the overlapping realms of two dominant communities. Nevertheless, her recently embraced residence will perpetually regard her as an undesirable alien who lacks a sense of belonging. In this work, Faqr provides a platform for an Eastern woman to express the ethnic and racist divide that exists between the West and East, driven by notions of dominance and biases.

Salma's daughter is the person to whom she owes the greatest affection and support throughout their entire journey, second only to her mother. The woman deeply desires her daughter, whom she mentally refers to as Layla, and is tormented by the traumatic experiences she endured in her native country to the extent that she experiences hallucinations of a guy who intends to harm her. The echoes of her baby daughter's cries still resonate within the depths of her heart. Consequently, when she reaches her limit of endurance, she experiences an inexplicable compulsion to reunite with her daughter and resolves to return to her village in order to locate her. In Hima, Salma discovers that her brother Mahmoud had murdered her daughter, as he did not want the girl to become like her mother. Salma displays a nostalgic longing for bygone days and irretrievable moments that appears to be simultaneously very human and oddly foreign. Salma's journey is characterized by a profound sense of longing for the people who had a significant role in shaping her life. As a result, her indelible Bedouin identity resurfaces with renewed strength.

By examining Salma's identity closely, my goal is to explore how her hybrid identity develops in a world that is hostile towards women, and to follow the journey of an Arab lady who escapes from what is considered a traditional society to what is considered a modern and civilized one. The protagonist finds themselves trapped in a world characterized by hypocrisy, where people outwardly embrace humanity and coexistence, but in reality, it is a patriarchal culture where women are subjected to the supervision and monitoring of men. It is located somewhere in the middle. Salma experiences a dual state of being marginalized, which arises from both her native society's treatment of Arab or Muslim women and the prejudice she encounters in Western societies. These factors not only silence her but also shape her development of a mixed or blended identity. Therefore, she experiences the burden of existing in two separate locations, resulting in a fractured and painful sense of self. She finds herself caught in the middle, feeling conflicted and not really belonging to either place. The novel depicts Salma as a character who lacks a stable identity and whose background is characterized by international influences, resulting in a dynamic rather than static sense of self. This is closely related to Stuart Hall's assertion regarding identity. Hall contends that instead of perceiving identity as a pre-existing state that is reflected by new cultural practices, we should view it as a continuous process of construction that is never fully formed and is always shaped from within, rather than from external sources of representation (Hall 222). Hall asserts that an individual's identity is ever evolving and influenced by their physical and cultural surroundings. This is exemplified in Salma's situation in the novel.

Conclusion

The exploration of cultural hybridity and identity negotiation in Fadia Faqr's *My Name is Salma* offers a profound insight into the complexities of cross-cultural existence and the personal odyssey of reconciling conflicting cultural identities. The novel's protagonist, Salma, embodies the struggles of an

individual caught between the traditional mores of her Middle Eastern heritage and the more liberal, often perplexing cultural landscape of the West. Throughout her journey, Salma's experiences illustrate the multifaceted nature of hybrid identities and the challenges that come with attempting to navigate and harmonize disparate cultural expectations.

The thematic core of the novel rests on the concept of hybridity, which transcends the simple binary oppositions of East and West, instead presenting a third space where identities are constantly being formed and reformed. Bhabha's notion of cultural hybridity provides a lens through which we can understand Salma's internal and external conflicts as she negotiates her sense of self. Her hybrid identity does not merely represent a middle ground but is an active process of selecting, rejecting, and blending elements from both cultures. This process is neither smooth nor predictable, reflecting the real-life intricacies of individuals living at the crossroads of cultures.

Salma's journey is marked by moments of both empowerment and vulnerability, suggesting that identity negotiation is an ongoing process rather than a definitive state of being. Her story highlights the pressure to conform to cultural norms and the personal cost of transgressing societal boundaries. Yet, it also reveals the resilience of the human spirit and the possibility of forging a unique identity amidst the interstices of culture. By chronicling Salma's endeavor to find her voice and place within these interlocking worlds, Faqir provides a nuanced portrayal of the immigrant experience, one that resonates with anyone who has ever grappled with the question of belonging.

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