

The In Tangerine Scarf Mohja Kahf

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Syrian immigrant Khadra Shamy is growing up in a devout, tightly knit Muslim family in 1970s Indiana, at the crossroads of bad polyester and Islamic dress codes. Along with her brother Eyad and her African-American friends, Hakim and Hanifa, she bikes the Indianapolis streets exploring the fault-lines between "Muslim" and "American." When her picture-perfect marriage goes sour, Khadra flees to Syria and learns how to pray again. On returning to America she works in an eastern state -- taking care to stay away from Indiana, where the murder of her friend Tayiba's sister by Klan violence years before still haunts her. But when her job sends her to cover a national Islamic conference in Indianapolis, she's back on familiar ground: Attending a concert by her brother's interfaith band The Clash of Civilizations, dodging questions from the "aunties" and "uncles," and running into the recently divorced Hakim everywhere. Beautifully written and featuring an exuberant cast of characters, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* charts the spiritual and social landscape of Muslims in middle America, from five daily prayers to the Indy 500 car race. It is a riveting debut from an important new voice.

"Mohja Kahf 's Hagar Poems is brilliantly original in its conception, thrillingly artful in its execution. Its range is immense, its spiritual depth is profound, it negotiates its shifts between archaic and the contemporary with utmost skill. There's lyricism, there's satire, there's comedy, there's theology of a high order in this book." —Alicia Ostriker, author of *For the Love of God: The Bible as an Open Book* "Hagar/ Hajar the immigrant/exile/outcast/refugee mother of a people is given multiple voices and significance in Mohja Kahf's new book of dramatic monologues, which also reinvents Pharaoh's daughter, Zuleika, Aïsha, and Mary in poems that are at once lively and learned, agnostic and devout. The sequence on an American mosque, and the poet's ambivalent love for what it represents, is unique in American poetry." —Marilyn Hacker, author of *A Stranger's Mirror* "'Where have all the goddesses gone,' writes Mohja Kahf, 'I tracked down Isis / incognito on Cyprus. /She told me Ishtar / lived under the radar / in southern Iraq. . . .' In *Hagar Poems*, Mohja Kahf's hallmark qualities—irreverence, imagination, wit, poignancy—are all exuberantly in evidence. A wonderful read." —Leila Ahmed, author of *A Quiet Revolution: The Veil's Resurgence, from the Middle East to America* "This brilliant collection captures all the 'patient threading of relationship' between Hagar and Sarah as between women, and then between women and men, between human and God. . . . At every turn of the page [Kahf] refuses complacency and circumstance but opts instead for exposing the tenuousness of threads that tie and bind and then come loose before our eyes." —From the foreword by Amina Wadud The central matter of this daring new collection is the story of Hagar, Abraham, and Sarah—the ancestral feuding family of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These poems delve into the Hajar story in Islam. They explore other figures from the Near Eastern heritage, such as Mary and Moses, and touch on figures from early Islam, such as Fatima and Aisha. Throughout, there is artful reconfiguring. Readers will find sequels and prequels to the traditional narratives, along with modernized figures claimed for contemporary conflicts. *Hagar Poems* is a compelling shakeup of not only Hagar's story but also of current roles of all kinds of women in all kinds of relationships.

"Redefines dominant perceptions of Arab Americans via an aesthetic analysis of Arab American novels, such as Diana Abu-Jaber's *Arabian Jazz* and

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Crescent, Rabih Alameddine's Koolaid's: The Art of War, Laila Halaby's Once in a Promised Land, and Mohja Kahf's The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf, thereby launching transcultural possibilities by initiating visibility through poetics"--Provided by publisher"--

Abstract: This thesis adopts a transnational and postcolonial feminist approach in exploring Arab American women's literature. In particular, I focus on the Jordanian-Palestinian American novel, *West of the Jordan* by Laila Halaby, and the Syrian American novel, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* by Mohja Kahf. In each chapter I examine the hyphenated identities of these novels' protagonists, Hala, Soraya, Khadija, and Khadra. In so doing, I argue that each character grapples with her identity mainly as a result of her Arab relatives' and American peers' fixed notions of cultural, national, and religious identities. Ultimately, my analysis traces the protagonists' various forms of resistance to the overly narrow definitions of "Arabness" and "Americanness" each must confront. Moreover, by contesting essentialist notions of "Arabness," I argue that both authors shed light on the diversity of Arabs and Muslims - two terms that, more often than not, have been conflated and reduced to a singular monolithic group in Eurocentric discourses. I locate my analysis within current geopolitical struggles such as the Palestinian Israeli conflict and the 9/11 attacks. Further, I place these novels within the genealogy of literature written by immigrants of Arab descent in the US.

The last couple of decades have witnessed a flourishing of Arab-American literature across multiple genres. Yet, increased interest in this literature is ironically paralleled by a prevalent bias against Arabs and Muslims that portrays their long presence in the US as a recent and unwelcome phenomenon. Spanning the 1990s to the present, Carol Fadda-Conrey takes in the sweep of literary and cultural texts by Arab-American writers in order to understand the ways in which their depictions of Arab homelands, whether actual or imagined, play a crucial role in shaping cultural articulations of US citizenship and belonging. By asserting themselves within a US framework while maintaining connections to their homelands, Arab-Americans contest the blanket representations of themselves as dictated by the US nation-state. Deploying a multidisciplinary framework at the intersection of Middle-Eastern studies, US ethnic studies, and diaspora studies, Fadda-Conrey argues for a transnational discourse that overturns the often rigid affiliations embedded in ethnic labels. Tracing the shifts in transnational perspectives, from the founders of Arab-American literature, like Gibran Kahlil Gibran and Ameen Rihani, to modern writers such as Naomi Shihab Nye, Joseph Geha, Randa Jarrar, and Suheir Hammad, Fadda-Conrey finds that contemporary Arab-American writers depict strong yet complex attachments to the US landscape. She explores how the idea of home is negotiated between immigrant parents and subsequent generations, alongside analyses of texts that work toward fostering more nuanced understandings of Arab and Muslim identities in the wake of post-9/11 anti-Arab sentiments.

Eine Geschichte von Verblendung, Schuld und der Hoffnung auf Versöhnung Milwaukee, Ende der siebziger Jahre: Hayat ist zehn Jahre alt, als Mina, die Jugendfreundin seiner Mutter, aus Pakistan nach Amerika kommt. Zwischen der schönen wie klugen Frau und dem verschlossenen Jungen entsteht eine innige Beziehung. Mina ist ihrem neuen Leben gegenüber aufgeschlossen, fühlt sich ihrer Kultur und ihrem Glauben aber weiter eng verbunden. So ist sie es auch, die Hayat mit dem Koran vertraut macht. Doch niemand, am allerwenigsten Mina selbst, ahnt, welcher tiefgreifenden Einfluss dies auf den Teenager hat. Als Mina sich in Nathan Wolfsohn verliebt, sieht Hayat seine Welt und alles, was ihm wichtig scheint, bedroht. Aus Eifersucht und Angst begeht er einen ungeheuerlichen Verrat. Zu spät begreift er, welche Katastrophe er damit über diejenigen heraufbeschwört, die er am meisten liebt. Mit diesem bewegenden Familiendrama ist Ayad Akhtar ein überaus beeindruckender Debütroman gelungen. Klar und einfühlsam zeichnet er seine Figuren, ihre innere Zerrissenheit, ihre Sehnsüchte und Enttäuschungen. Er erzählt von Verblendung und Schuld, ohne zu verurteilen - und von der Hoffnung, dass Versöhnung möglich ist.

Abrahamic scriptures serve as cultural pharmakon, prescribing what can act as both poison and remedy. This collection shows that their sometimes veiled but eternally powerful polemics can both destroy and build, exclude and include, and serve as the ultimate justification for cruelty or compassion. Here, scholars not only excavate these works for their formative and continuing cultural impact on communities, identities, and belief systems, they select some of the most troubling topics that global communities continue to navigate. Their analysis of both texts and their reception help explain how these texts promote norms and build collective identities. Rejecting the notion of the sacred realm as separate from the mundane realm and beyond critical challenge, this collection argues—both implicitly and sometimes transparently—for the presence of the sacred within everyday life and open to challenge. The very rituals, prayers, and traditions that are deemed sacred interweave into our cultural systems in infinite ways. Together, these authors explore the dynamic nature of everyday life and the often-brutal power of these texts over everyday meaning.

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The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf Hagar Poems Poetics of Visibility in the Contemporary Arab American Novel Arab American Women's Identity Crises in Mohja Kahf's "The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf" and Laila Halaby's "West of the Jordan" Muslimsein in Europa Contemporary Arab-American Literature International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature (IJALEL: Vol. 3, No.1), 2014 Himmelssucher Troubling Topics, Sacred Texts Eis essen mit Che Und meine Welt steht Kopf In-Between Identities: Signs of Islam in Contemporary American Writing Interrogating Secularism Die Übersetzerin Kakerlake Der Fundamentalist, der keiner sein wollte Die Girls von Riad Edinburgh Companion to the Arab Novel in English The Cambridge Companion to Transnational American Literature Im Land der Männer
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