

Identities Lost and Found? Transcultural Perspectives on Jamal Mahjoub's Road Novel *Travelling with Djinns*

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This article examines Jamal Mahjoub's 2003 novel *Travelling with Djinns* from a transcultural perspective. Drawing on Wolfgang Welsch's definition of transculturality, I argue that the road trip plays an integral role in how the novel maps 21st century Europe as a heterogeneous construct. While driving from Germany through France to Spain, the main character Yasin adopts a fluid understanding of identity, informed by his experience of being on the move. Simultaneously, the novel conceptualises the European continent as irrevocably shaped by its history of migration, relating the road trip to other historic experiences of travel, migration and exile, some – but not all – of which linked to Europe's colonial past. Extensive intertextual references also support the novel's central idea that cultural encounters have shaped Europe for centuries. Since transcultural exchanges tend to be an ever-growing phenomenon in the face of mass migration, globalisation and communication technology, *Travelling with Djinns* sets out to underscore the continent's transcultural condition as both historic and ongoing.

Keywords: road narrative, travel, transculturality, fluid identity, European memory