

## **BORDER-CROSSING VS EXILIC CONTAINMENT IN LEILA AHMAD'S MEMOIR: A *BORDER PASSAGE***

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### **ABSTRACT**

Grown up in a world of incessant transformations, Leila Ahmad decided to begin her journey of self-definition. As an Islamist feminist, born in Egypt and now living in the United States of America, she had to carve herself a niche amid those streaming waves of cultural notions. In her memoir, *A Border Passage*, she shifts back and forth to narrate how she overcame all hindering walls for a better positioning. In her desperate attempts to do so, Ahmad had to cross vast distances of differences and disputes in fields like education, religion, gender, and politics. The study aims at determining the strategies she adopted to overcome those mounting walls in the light of the concept of 'borders' and the idea of 'exile', that is presumed by Said to "cross borders, break barriers of thought and experience". The study also observes Leila Ahmad's journey from patriarchal oppression, state repression, intellectual colonization, liminality and injustice to personal salvation, survival, freedom, balance, centeredness, and outspokenness.

**KEYWORDS:** Borders, Exile, Crossing, Nepantla, Mestiza, Feminism