

Migration, Islam and Masculinities: Transforming Emigration and Immigration Societies

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Spaces of Diasporic Masculinity. Gendering the Identity of Muslim Male Migrants in Germany

Re-thinking spatial aspects of identity structuring has been neglected in the academic research, especially with the rise of virtual spaces and the network society. The methodological and practical difficulties of exploring virtuality on one side, and the academic and public fascination with virtual aspects, on the other side, hindered the process of re-thinking the physical spaces or the hard spaces, as they called by Pile/Thrift (i) and by Flint (ii). A huge amount of work has been done on various aspects of identity and gender in virtual (soft) spaces; identity switching, gendering of language and images, gendering networks etc. The reflections of collective and individual virtual activities and constructions on/in hard spaces have been unfortunately less researched and outlined. The organic structural connection between the virtual and the physical is yet to be analyzed and profiled. Ella Shohat (iii) points out the importance of re-embedding the "practiced identity" into physical (hard) spaces of social practices.

The paper investigates from a gender perspective the process of identity's (re-) construction in the Diaspora and the (re-)interpretation of socio-cultural norms of the Muslim male migrants in Germany. It aims to explain the various levels of interaction between soft and hard spaces in the discourse of practicing identities. The paper delivers a typology of spaces of diasporic masculinity and explores the models of interaction between spaces and their impact on (re-) shaping and (re-)building masculine identities. The paper is based partially on empiric data (interviews) gained in the last three years in Frankfurt Metropolitan Area.

- i. Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift (1995), Mapping the Subject – Geographies of Cultural Transformation
- ii. Colin Flint (2003), Spaces of Hate
- iii. Ella Shohat (2006), Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices

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