

Migration, Islam and Masculinities: Transforming Emigration and Immigration Societies

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Bekir, the “Other” Man – A Single Case Study of Adolescent Masculinity

This paper is focussed on the balancing act between masculine ideology and the reality of male adolescents marked or classified as Turkish. On the basis of a key case study, the main points involved in the process of “becoming a man” will be discussed, in relation to factors such as existing collective representation, as well as dominant structures located in society. Central to this analysis is the ambivalent nature of “self-location” in marking effected by the media, as well as, on one hand, institutional attribution, and, on the other hand, private motives.

The negotiation of multi-dimensional masculinities is based on gendered experiences (their modification and rejection), and the ultimate re-construction of masculinity. This negotiation is facilitated by, and dependent on, not only the recognition of subjective and individual experiences, but also of the discourses present and at work within society and the media. In addition, the various dimensions of social background, including language, migration, sexual orientation and religion, amongst others, need to be included in this negotiation in an attempt to establish their social valence. Therefore it is necessary to consider both subjective and individual, as well as social conditions and meanings, and their respective influences in the process of negotiating masculinity.

Through the mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion inherent in adolescent peer groups, the negotiation process effectively becomes one which is also exhibited or displayed. In light of this, the specific social meanings and structural conditions, as well as individual interpretations of

masculine representation are critical points. With reference to theories of social representation, and critical studies in masculinity, as well as the perspectives of intersectionality, exemplary analytical findings of interviews conducted with “successful” educated, adolescent male youths with Turkish background, will be discussed.

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