

# Migration, Islam and Masculinities: Transforming Emigration and Immigration Societies

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## Representations of masculinity/ies, Islam and Migration

This paper investigates the concept of masculinity/ies in both its individualist and its pluralist dimensions. Interestingly, neither Moroccan Arabic nor standard Arabic have a plural form of masculinity; a linguistic/symbolic way of legitimating masculinity as a homogeneous category that resist unpacking. Theoretically, I will address the interplay of masculinity/ies, Islam and migration from the perspective of Jacques Derrida's theory of 'Differance' and Umberto Eco's "limits of interpretation". These analytical tools will help bring insight into the deferral (I) of what masculinities stand for within an Islamic Moroccan culture and particularly how masculinities have been constructed within the minds of four different Moroccan social categories: high school students, high school teachers, graduate office workers and illiterate people whose ages vary from 15 to 50 years old.

The paper equally aims at deconstructing how masculinity/ies are portrayed in the Qur'an, male and female conceptions, as well as in ancient Arab poetry, folk culture and Francophone media (through an analysis of two special issues in 'Courrier International' and 'Tel Quel' magazines entitled "Islam: le terroriste, le despote et le démocrate" and "Quel Islam Voulons Nous?"). Methodologically, I will rely on content analysis as well as critical discourse analysis particularly the one devised in Fairclough (1995) (II). I will also administer 60 questionnaires that target the four different socio-intellectual categories mentioned above. The rationale behind choosing various categories lies in the aim of highlighting the differences as well as the similarities of how masculinities, Islam and migration are self-represented by these target populations. Given the growing "concep-

tion" of migration as a golden opportunity to escape an undesirable economic situation among most Moroccan families, it is vital to investigate how masculinities within a Moroccan Muslim country promote an increasing tendency toward fleeing one's country. Attention will also be paid to underlying diversity in Islam (its conception as a personal faith, culture or a name/ label for justifying 'mysterious' (III) assumptions as well as deeds which can be conceived as a 'mythical Islam' developed out misconceptions of the religious text.

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I. 'The Theory of Differance' or 'infinite deferral' in proportion to Jacques Derrida means an unlimited semiosis expansion of meaning to an unmentioned degree. U. Eco Perceive this chain of signification as an infinite slippage from signifier to signifier

II. Norman Fairclough, (1995) Media Discourse, London: Arnold.

III. I use the word "mysterious" here to refer to the haughty attitudes of some Muslim practitioners who grant themselves the right to recommend and forbid subjectively certain religious behaviors under the name of Islam.