

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

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## **A tale of two Ummas: Queer Umma... Pious Umma. The Arab-American community, transnational media, and the struggle over representation**

In this paper I propose to investigate the transnational character of both the Islamist and the queer community through their presence and manifestation in North America. These Arab-American diasporic communities have been discursively shaped by and have influenced the proliferation of Arab transnational media forming two strands of transnational nationalisms: an Islamic one and a queer one.

My paper will look at how these communities are imagined in an American context and how they interact within a wider social-political landscape. A couple of months ago the New York Times magazine published an investigative piece on the Egyptian preacher who has become a transnational sensation and phenomena. The cover of the times magazine features a full-length photo of a pious Amr Khaled. The caption reads: "Amr Khaled is the World's most famous and influential Muslim televangelist. So what's his message, exactly?"

Around the same time the article hit the newsstand, the Arab gay community was getting ready to host its monthly Habibi party, which is the Arab gay belly dancing party. The party is partly sponsored by the Gay and Lesbian Arabic Society (GLAS), an international organization established in 1988 in the USA with worldwide chapters.

How can one make sense of these events and analyze them discursively? My paper will attempt to chart a framework to answer this question.