

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

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## Migration, citizenship and the 'lesser male': Constructions of a Muslim masculinity in Sudan

In this paper I will analyze the relation between Islam, masculinity and migration from the perspective of the construction of citizenship. I will argue that in post-colonial nation-states constructions of masculinity are inextricably linked to constructions of citizenship: a relation which is at stake when large numbers of people from diverse backgrounds migrate to towns where national elites reside. In analyzing the dynamics between migration, citizenship and constructions of masculinity in relation to Islam, I will point out that a dominant masculinity is constructed in relation to significant 'Others': women (dominant femininity) and 'lesser males'. Attempts at defining the 'content' or core dominant masculinity are therefore superfluous, since these constructions are continuously shifting. I will concentrate on the relation between dominant masculinity and these lesser males in constructions of exclusive (and exclusionary) notions of citizenship in contemporary Sudan, whereby Islam forms the basis for allocating autochthonous and allochthonous identities.

I base my argument on anthropological research conducted in the 1990s and Darfur, west-Sudan, and early 2000 and 2006 in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan. Long before the current war in Darfur started in 2003, people from Darfur migrated to Khartoum, where they are generally considered as 'displaced'. In the process Darfur men have become the 'lesser male' par excellence and are instrumental in constructing a 'Sudanese' national identity. In analyzing this shifting position of Darfur men I will refer to the operation of tribal and shari'a courts both in Darfur and in Khartoum, and relate these diverse law speaking-practices

to discourses on the current war in Darfur. This will lead to an insight into the ways in which constructions of a dominant masculinity and citizenship are intersected with other identities, such as ethnicity, class, location etc.