

Pious Subjectivities? A Sociological Analysis of Muslim Discourses on Gender and Veiling on YouTube

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Topic

Project: Analysis of Muslim gender discourses on YouTube.

What do I mean by that?

- Conflicting and constantly re-negotiated forms of knowledge evolving within the field of Islam around issues of *gender relations* and *gendered practices*
- Categorizations and evaluations of these objects from a religious, moral or aesthetic perspective

YouTube is one arena in which these discourses are constantly actualized in performative events, especially significant among young people.

Research Questions

- *What exactly do I want to reconstruct?*
 - a. gendered subject positions – understood as normative templates for “proper” femininities and masculinities – in YouTube videos
 - b. affective “appeal structures” entrenching subject positions with emotions, rendering them attractive and appealing for a mostly young audience.

Aims

I want to trace how many of the videos try to attach specific *expectations of resonance* to the subject positions they construct, promising resonant self-world-relationships to viewers who align their behavior to models mediated in discourse.

Material

- 147 German language YouTube videos from 12 channels
- Released between June 2018 and June 2019
- Explicit focus on gender, gendered conduct and gendered interaction from a Muslim perspective

Methods

1. Tracing of discursive positions by applying strategies of cyber ethnography
2. Definition of a corpus of material with theoretical sampling
3. Fine grain analysis of selected videos with methods of qualitative text interpretation and tools of multimodal analysis

Preliminary Results: Three major discursive clusters

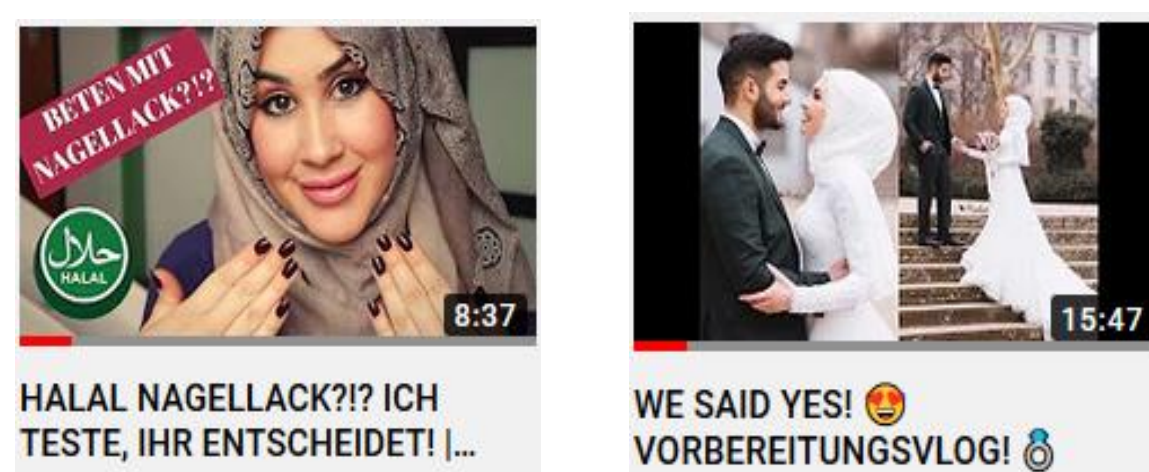
Exclusivist Moral Guidance

videos by speakers related to Sunni Islam who promote in their videos a rigid and exclusivist “God-willed” gender order with clear and indisputable rules for gendered conduct.



Pleasurable Muslim Lifestyle

Cluster of videos (primarily vlogs) by young Muslims in which they document their everyday life and religious practice in an idealized way, thus constructing (highly gendered) templates of a pleasurable life as a Muslim in German context (also commercial content).



Critical/satirical Assessment

Cluster of productions assessing problems and struggles related to Muslim performances of gender in a satirical way, critically engaging with different forms of dominance under which young Muslim people have to negotiate their identity.



Sources: <https://youtu.be/ZW0bZbTJZX8> [Die Frau im Islam] / <https://youtu.be/QAzg6enwgZA> [Schämt euch, ihr Hijabis!] / <https://youtu.be/UNS4ggjtos> [Halal Nagellack] / <https://youtu.be/pBpZF58tWbs> [We said yes!] / <https://youtu.be/i8Q0Ud7Tqtk> [Was Mütter nie sagen] / <https://youtu.be/UYK0H8Dzhuc> [Arten von Hijabis]

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