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Ambiguous positionalities: Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague

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Abstract

In the context of post 9/11, Muslim migrant men in the Europe come under scrutiny where their masculinity is perceived as problematic. They are seen as patriarchal, traditional and conservative within their family, and as potential political/terrorist threat for the society. With this context in mind, this research wishes to understand how Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague, Netherlands, experience process of marginalisation resulting from the post 9/11 perceptions. I have argued that the process of marginalisation for Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague is embedded in the intersection of gender, race, colour, class, religion and ethnicity. However, these intersections are uneven, complex and dynamic. Power relations and identities that give them advantage is one context, make them vulnerable in another context. Their darker skin colour and South Asian facial features, for example, save them from direct Islamophobia. Their low-class position protects them from direct competition with white Dutch men. However, once their religious affiliations are disclosed, they are shunned by Dutch neighbours, and their socio-economic position brings them in competition with other migrants.

I have focused on three social spheres – the workplace, the family and the wider Dutch society – to understand positionality of Bangladeshi migrant men in relation to other migrant communities as well as white Dutch men. The results of my research show an ambiguous and complex scenario where Bangladeshi migrant men take part in some racist discourses of Dutch society while rejecting others, create negative stereotypes of other migrant communities while claiming some similarities with them, question family dedication of other Muslim communities while going to their mosque. Furthermore, Bangladeshi migrant men negotiate their marginalised masculinity by stressing their breadwinner role, good manners and family dedication, and judge themselves better family men than other migrant and white Dutch men.

At the same time, Bangladeshi migrant men live in a 'Bangladesh bubble' where their life is organised around links and relationships with people from Bangladesh, and with other Bangladeshi migrants. While this means a (self)isolation from Dutch society, this bubble allows them to ignore hegemonic notions and practices of white Dutch masculinity in Netherlands, and creates their own ideals of masculinity. Ultimately, they stood out as ideal men, better than white Dutch and other migrants.

This showed us that the process of marginalisation is context specific. Men from different position face and negotiate marginalisation differently.

Keywords

Bangladeshi migrant men, masculinity, Islamophobia, colonial racial discourse, intersectionality, other migrant communities, white Dutch.

Acronyms

CBS   Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek
NIHR   Netherlands Institute for Human Rights
PVV   Partij voor de Vrijheid
BBS   Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

Ambiguous positionalities [1]
Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague

1 Introduction: Contextualising Bangladeshi migrants in The Hague

1.1 Contextual background

In any social order, there are differences and similarities among men in terms of masculinity, sexuality, class, ethnicity, religion, citizenship and many other social relations of power. However, in the current context in Europe, not all of these differences have the same relevance. Post 9/11 discourses seem to have bundled up many of those differences in a single package where all Muslim migrant men, regardless of their ethnic, religious and class background, are perceived as problematic. Their masculinity is thought to be problematic not only for their family – where they are seen as patriarchal, traditional, conservative but also for the whole society – where they are seen as potential political/terrorist threat.

In The Hague, Dutch administrative capital, differences between ethnic Dutch citizens and migrants (*allochtonen*: persons who have at least one parent who was born outside the Netherlands), and the differences between western and non-western *allochtonen* shape the way masculinity is understood. Because of colonial legacies and racist notions and practices of racialized superiority, white and ethnic Dutch men are perceived superior to Muslim migrant men (Bracke 2012: 245). In post 9/11 context, these Muslim men are targeted on the basis of their cultural and religious practice. They are thought to be morally inferior and oppress their women by imposing special dress code (e.g. headscarf, veil) and bound them to work within the home. Much research (e.g. Bracke 2012, Clycq 2012, Yilmaz 2015, Abu-Lughod 2002 etc.) however show that these are far from true and this type of stereotyping is actually used to marginalise masculinity of those men.

One of the important aspects of this representation is stereotyping and generalisation. In this process, differences between Muslims and between migrant communities are often overlooked. However, I start from an assumption that such stereotyping does not always work in the same way, and while Islam marks migrant communities, other social relations of power such

as race, gender, religion and class may work differently for different groups of Muslim migrant men. Therefore, understanding differences between Muslim migrants can be useful to deconstruct dominant discourses about them. Equally important is to understand how migrant men of Muslim background themselves perceive Dutch society and their position within it, especially in the post 9/11 context.

For that purpose, this research will concentrate on Bangladeshi diaspora community in The Hague and focus on their experiences of marginalisation in terms of religion, ethnicity, race and class. I will explore how the post 9/11 social and political context in the Netherlands has created the specific social construction of Bangladeshi community and especially of Bangladeshi-*allochtonen* men. My analytical perspective will be informed by intersections of race, colour, class, gender, religion and ethnicity, in order to understand whether Bangladeshi-*allochtonen* men are faced with the same social constructions as other Muslim migrants living in The Hague, Netherlands. Furthermore, I will try to understand how Bangladeshi-*allochtonen* men negotiate their position in Dutch society in their daily life. I would like to explore how these men perceive, change or challenge marginalised identity in their daily life in relation with white Dutch and other migrant Muslim men.

1.2   Research questions and objectives

In order to understand social location and experiences of Bangladeshi men in The Hague, this research will try to give answer the following question:

➢ How gender, race, colour, class and religion/Islam are implicated in social location and experiences of manhood among Bangladeshi migrants in The Hague, Netherlands?

To answer this question, I need to understand the current social and political context in the Netherlands and how this context is implicated in Bangladeshi *allochtonen* men's social location. By social location, I mean the material and discursive circumstances that feminists theorising standpoint epistemology have addressed[2]. In this aspect, person's social location is not static but fragmented and always changing and partial. A person who is privileged in the race can be marginalised for his ethnic or religious position and people from the different class of that marginalised group have experienced their social location differently. Those circumstances address not only their multiple identities regarding gender, race, colour and class, but also the specific context of social relations of power within Dutch society that mark

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[2] Feminist standpoint theorists argued that knowledge is socially situated and social location and identities like race, class, ethnicity and gender influence what can be known from reality. However, these identities are not fixed; it can be changed. So social location can be changed. For details see: Harding, S. (1993) 'Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is Strong Objectivity?' in L. Alcoff and E. Potter (eds) *Feminist Epistemologies*, pp. 49-82.

their oppression and marginalisation, and special social histories of the Netherlands through which those are produced.

Therefore, in order to answer my main research question, I pose three sub-questions. First two address the context needed to understand the position of Bangladeshi migrant men in the Netherlands, the third addresses their strategies dealing with those conditions.

1. *What is the specific post 9/11 socio-political context in the Netherlands that is implicated in the social location for Muslim, migrant men?*

In the aftermath of 9/11, Muslims are perceived as problematic and dangerous in the dominant social representation in the Netherlands. In this process, the masculinity of Muslim men comes under scrutiny. Their form of masculinity thought to as problematic for their own family as well as for the Dutch society as a whole, and they become a target not only of the right-wing anti-immigrant party but also of some liberal feminists and mainstream academics and politicians. Right wing party accuses them for 'destroying' so-called Dutch norms and values; Liberal feminists, on the other hand, accuse them for not giving equal opportunity and liberty to their wives and daughters. This type of stereotyping actually works to stereotype, generalise and marginalise Muslim communities and creates difference between white Dutch 'us' and immigrant, Muslim 'them'. However, while this stereotyping is a widespread general process, some differences seem to exist in how specific groups of migrants are perceived. Race and colour seem to make important difference, distinguishing between Middle Eastern and South Asian migrants. In this research, I want to explore these specific processes of generalisation as well as differentiation, and to understand how they position different migrant groups within Dutch society.

2. *How this context impacts Bangladeshi community, especially Bangladeshi allochtonen men's social location vis-à-vis other migrants in Dutch society?*

Discourses about migrant Muslim men also affect the location and perception of Bangladeshi men in The Hague, Netherlands. The situation of Bangladeshi men seems to be different from Muslim migrant men from the Middle East in the Netherlands. Bangladeshi population has darker skin colour than Turkish or Moroccan, so the intersection of gender/masculinity, migration and race and colour is important to analyse. In addition, their number is very small and most of them work in lower paid jobs, and thus belong to lower social-economic strata of Dutch society. I will explore how all these differences impact on the dominant Dutch discourses on migrant Bangladeshi Muslim men in The Hague. Furthermore, I also want to know how are these discourses different comparing with other migrant Muslim communities.

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3. What are the experiences and life strategies of Bangladeshi men in dealing with their marginalised social position, and how they address it within their family, in the Bangladeshi community, in relation to other Muslim migrants and in relation to white Dutch men?

It is very important to understand that individual is not always the victim or object of dominant social representation; individual also has the ability to challenge and change that representation by his/her strategy, negotiation, and action. In the context where manhood becomes marginalised, Bangladeshi men have to negotiate their positions in their family and in their community, as well as in Dutch society. In this research, I will try to examine how Bangladeshi men deal with their marginalised position especially paying attention to the intersection of multiple marginalisations and gender relations of power, i.e. masculinity of the migrant Bangladeshi men.

1.3   Original contribution and justification of the study

This research offers two innovative aspects in studying Bangladeshi migrant men in the Netherlands. First, I choose to work on Bangladeshi men and their experiences of marginalisation and perceptions of masculinity, which is rarely studied in academia. Secondly, I took the intersectional approach to analyse how class, gender, race, religion, and ethnicity shape the lives of Dutch Bangladeshi migrant men.

This research starts from the assumption that the situation of Bangladeshi *allochtonen* is different from other Muslim communities in the Netherlands and especially Turkish or Moroccan. Bangladeshi community is small in numbers. Their physical appearance, dress and food habit are different from what Dutch society perceives as Muslim. Class is important here too, as Bangladeshi men work in relatively low paid jobs. Most of the Bangladeshi men in the Netherlands work in the restaurants or the food shops. Their competition in labour market is more with the other non-western *allochtonen* than with the Dutch or Western *allochtonen*. For that reason, they seem not to pose a threat to the white Dutch who are more concentrated in the higher paid jobs. Their dress code is also different from what is perceived as Islamic dress code as few Bangladeshi women wear headscarf. Their physical outlook is closer to South Asian than to Middle Eastern (which is a dominant perception about Muslims) communities.

I suggest that these differences have an important effect on the social location and construction of Bangladeshi men and women as migrants in the Netherlands. The process, which marginalises Turkish or Moroccan men, works differently for Bangladeshi men. Here, it seems, the main reference of manhood for Bangladeshi men is not ethnic Dutch men, but rather other Muslim migrant communities. Thus, processes of othering and marginalisation work differently for the Bangladeshi men. This means that hierarchies also work within migrant communities, between not only migrants and dominant nationals. Bangladeshi men can be marginalised compared to Turkish or Moroccan because they have darker skin and work in lower paid jobs than

they, while Turkish and Moroccan men have been primarily marginalised because of Islamophobic and racists understanding of religion and 'Islamic culture'. In this regard, this research has the potentiality to enrich the discussion of Islamophobia as well as the critical understanding of the process of marginalisation.

1.4   Methodological journey

Feminist intersectional theory: Adjusting my lens

Kimberlé Crenshaw introduced feminist intersection theory, which she explained as a tool, which can be used to understand the reality of marginalisation through different axis of power, such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation etc. (Crenshaw 1997: 178). Her idea helps us to shift away from an additive model, which focuses on independent identities and emphasises overlapping and intersection of identities (Choo and Ferree 2010, Shields 2008; as cited in Hillsburg 2013: 3). However, translating those ideas into methodology is not simple as there is no single standard methodology for intersectional research. Challenge for the researcher is, as Hillsburg (2013: 4) noted, not only to find a methodology which will explore various marginal identity indicators but also go deeper into the fluidity of those markers.

I used unstructured qualitative interview method while talking with my informants in different places at a number of times about their life in the Netherlands. My ethnic identity – being a Bangladeshi man - and the shared language helped to create a relaxed atmosphere. Having repeated interview-conversation with the same respondent was beneficial as it helped me to go deeper to understand the complex process of marginalisation. My starting assumption was that Bangladeshi migrants would face discrimination because of Islamophobia. Yet, I found that most of my respondents said very little about their marginalisation at the first meeting. It was frustrating for me because I met most of my respondents long before the interviews started and I thought that I gained enough trust. However, this frustration taught me two things. First, about my positionality as a researcher. Even though I am a Bangladeshi, my educational status along with my temporary residence in the Netherlands created barriers. For Bangladeshi migrants, positionality is linked with both the Netherlands and Bangladesh, as they possess higher status in Bangladesh because of their European residency. Therefore, they were sceptical to showing their marginal situation to a Bangladeshi man. Secondly, after two-three meetings, I realised that marginalisation is not static and not all people experienced it equally. So for intersectional research, one marker of marginalisation is not static or the same all the time; it can change, mix with other marker or used as a marker of superiority. The same markers, which create problem for him/her in some places, can help him/her in other places. These adjustments help me to focus on dynamics and flexibility of Bangladeshi migrant men's positionality in Dutch society.

Data collection and limitations of the study

I have conducted qualitative interview with ten respondents. In most cases, I conducted those interviews in three meetings, sometimes at the respondent's home, sometimes in their workplace.

I met with many interviewees long before the interview took place. My Bangladeshi nationality helped me to meet with them on various social occasions. In addition, their homes and restaurants in which some of them work were also places where I met other migrants and was able to interest them in my research and obtain an interview.

My respondents are first generation migrants, both male and female. Connell (1995) showed the importance of understanding and acceptance of male role and hegemonic aspects of masculinity among both men and women. Most of my respondents either are restaurant workers or worked in a restaurant previously. However, one of my respondents was a University teacher, which allowed me to compare class dynamic within Bangladeshi migrants. Profile of my respondent is in Appendix 1.

Bearing in mind the small number of interviewees, the results of this research cannot be generalised to all Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague. While this can be seen as a limitation, I hope it also offers a good starting point for the understanding of complexities of processes and dynamics of exclusion in migrants' lives and thus can inspire further research. At the same time, these results cannot be seen as valid for migrants from different backgrounds, as literatures show that men from the Middle East living in Europe face different challenges.

1.5   Structure of the paper

Beside this introductory chapter, this study has five more chapters. In chapter two, I discuss theoretical issues that inspired this research. There, I address intersectional approach as well as the concepts of 'hegemonic masculinity' and 'coloniality of power and gender' to show their relevance for understanding the situation of Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague. In the subsequent three chapters, I analyse positionality of Bangladeshi migrant men in three different but interconnected spheres: workplace, family and broader Dutch society. In the penultimate chapter, I review my overall discussion and draw relevant conclusions.

2 Theorising Bangladeshi migrant men's masculinity

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the theoretical issues, which shape my understanding to analyse the situation of Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague. For that purpose, first, I will discuss Connell's (1995) concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' and show some limitations of his initial conceptualization, which restricts to see complexities between and within gender relations. I will argue that his later reformulation will be more helpful to understand the positionality of Bangladeshi migrant men. In relation with that, I will then discuss intersectional approach used by feminist of colour, which will help me to understand the dynamics of race, ethnicity, religion and class intersection where Bangladeshi migrant men situate. After that, I will bring the Quijano's concept of 'coloniality of power' and Lugones's concept of 'coloniality of gender' to understand how those intersectional axes shaped by the colonial discourse. In the final section, I will contextualise the situation of the Netherlands in relation to my work.

2.2 Hegemonic masculinity and the experiences of migrant men

In recent migrant studies, the idea of hegemonic masculinity has become important for the understanding of migrant men's life experiences. Connell (1998: 5) defines hegemonic masculinity as a set of ideas and practices that are perceived as ideal for all men. Those ideals and practices are marked, first, by a belief of male superiority and dominance in relation to women, and second, by absolute privileging of heteronormativity that structures relations between men and women, as well as among men. Needless to say, very few men are able to achieve those ideals. Connell's discussion is important here as it showed variation among men and illustrated that not all men (equally) enjoy the dividend from patriarchal social norms. Migrant men, for example, may have a very limited possibility to exert any kind of dominance towards both women and men of the host society, even when they hold power over women in their own family or community. However, Connell's initial conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity faced strong criticism from the various academic corner.

At the heart of Connell's argument is the Gramscian concept of 'hegemony', which enables him to see the power relationship between and within gender. Gramsci showed that it is ideological formation, not material reality, which establishes "fusion of the objectives of various social groups to run under the leadership of one social group" (Dudink 2004: 9). Although various elements that form hegemony are not necessarily based on class, but it is dominant class that organises such hegemony. Similarly, Connell uses the concept of hegemonic masculinity to argue that power relation between and within gender is related to the various spectrum like race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation etc. embedded in the process of marginalisation and domination.

Similar with Gramsci, he too argues that it is one group (dominant men) that benefited from it (ibid). The attraction of this conceptualization is that it enables us to look at gendered power relation in the intersection with race, class, religion and ethnicity to understand the difference between men. However, Connell seems to limit this opportunity by stating that all these factors, in the end, reproduce male dominance and legitimise patriarchal social norms. This creates a problem for understanding multiplicity and flexibility of those axes. The difference between men then become merely an outcome of patriarchal social norms, not as an important reality, which we can focus on and explore.

Connell's perception of hegemonic masculinity presumes that some features and practices of men become hegemonic because they ensure men dominance over women. Other masculinities, as Demetriou (2001: 344) argued, are subordinated not because they are naturally inferior but because they are inconsequential to the practice of dominance over women. So, the plurality of masculinities in not an end of his argument, but rather an instrument to show the complexity of gender discrimination (ibid). He draws a simple relationship between hegemonic and marginalised masculinity where all men try to achieve whatever hegemonic masculine idea exist in that time and some get benefit from it while others are marginalised. Later studies, however, showed that the process is far more complex than Connell thought. Demetriou (2001) for example showed that hegemonic masculinity does not become hegemonic by creating distance between heterosexual and homosexual practice, rather it becomes more legitimised by incorporating some aspects from homosexuality. He gives examples of recent films and practices of gay culture and various advertisements to show that ideal men nowadays are not like a Sylvester Stallone 'Rambo' type but rather a person who have the quality of both softness and hardness (Demetriou 2001: 354). Although he explained that these outcomes did not liberate gay person, but his arguments show us how hegemonic masculinity operates by taking some aspects of marginalised masculinity.

Heteronormativity is one of the pillars of Connell's hegemonic masculinity. In this understanding, homosexuality becomes marginalised because it not only creates problem for the perception of ideal men but also fails to make distinction from the perception of idealised femininity (Demetriou 2001: 344). However, this generalised idea of homosexuality limits us to understand homosexual practice as always marginalised and in opposition to hegemonic masculinity. In contrary, Sarrah Bracke (2012) shown that homosexuality can become a part of hegemonic masculinity which can be used to marginalised Muslim men. She argues that politics of 'saving women' has now changed into the politics of 'saving gays' in the Netherlands. For her, this is a paradoxical scenario, because in colonial period Arab men were characterised as having problematic sexual orientation, as homosexuals, and rejected as deviant for that. However, today, in Europe, Arab men are stereotyped as homophobic. On the other side of the coin, Dutch norms of gender equality and gay rights are idealised as widely and universally accepted by all white Dutch citizens. Within these new stereotypes, gay men in Muslim

communities (in the Netherlands and abroad) are defined as being in danger because of Islamic norms, and thus need to be saved. This is then coupled with the 'saving Muslim women' politics and general approach to 'civilise' Muslims in the Netherlands. Where in colonial period 'civilised people' were characterised as those who practice heterosexuality, now 'civilised' are those who uphold gay rights. This scenario did not prove that gay men now become dominant in the Netherlands, but it shows how those perceptions of homosexuality can become, in some cases, a dominant one and marginalise other masculinities.

Donaldson (1993) also criticises the concept of hegemonic masculinity by giving example of the new care and household work by men. For him, if gender is understood by what person does rather than what s/he is perceived to be, then men who work in the household and take care of their children nowadays seem to challenge hegemonic masculinity (Donaldson 1993: 650). In hegemonic masculinity, men's work in the household mean very little but Donaldson argues that men who only work outside and do not engage in non-paid care work seem to create emotional distance from their children. Men who work in the home beside their breadwinner role, on the other hand, live a more harmonious marriage relationship (Donaldson 1993: 651). It completes their masculine role. So, according to Donaldson, female role does not always discredit men from hegemonic masculinity rather it can be incorporated and enrich men's position in the family.

Connell himself later reformulates his primary conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity. In his recent article together with Messerschmidt, he abandoned the one-dimensional approach to see the power relation of hegemonic masculinity in relation to various groups of men and relation to women's subordination (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 847). Authors emphasised multiple ways power relations operate, where dominant masculinity can be fragmented at the local level and can also incorporate feminine and homosexual quality. They also stress that incorporation and marginalisation can work together. Some aspects of homosexuality may be incorporated in dominant discourses but violence against gays is still occurring in many places. Furthermore, they also take race, class, ethnicity spectrum to understand the complexity of power relation where hegemonic masculinity operates.

This understanding of hegemonic masculinity is important for this research. Hegemony does not operate from the top, where some dominant groups practice and others become marginalised, rather different local groups can perceive, challenge and in some case reject dominant idea and create something of their own. Similarly, this paper will argue that Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague do not always adopt dominant perception of masculinity in the Netherlands. They incorporate something, reject something and introduce something new to create their own ideal of masculinity. Furthermore, their practices and understandings of masculinity are linked with race, class, religion and ethnicity. I will now turn to these intersections.

2.3   Masculinity, intersectionality, and Islam: Post 9/11 Europe

Intersectional approach, pioneered by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), is an analytical tool to understand "gender as a multidimensional phenomenon where multiple axes of identity (gender, race, class, ability, age) interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels, creating a system of oppression that reflects the 'intersection' of multiple forms of discrimination" (as cited in Sinatti 2014: 218). Black feminists use this approach to understand the reality of women of colour. This approach can also be useful to understand the reality of migrant men. In their settlement process, they have to negotiate with various dimension of identities such as race class, ethnicity, religion, and gender (Hibbins and Pease 2009: 3). Some identities may become more important in some contexts and may help them, while others may create problems. Their perception and the practice of masculinity lie in the experiences of different dimensions of identities. However, very few researches have been done on that intersection in order to understand life experience of migrant men. Moreover, some literatures, which deal with those issues, take migrant communities as homogeneous assuming they all go through the same experiences. In relation to Muslim migrant men, some literatures make distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim migrants, but the differences among Muslim communities in terms of race, ethnicity, and class have most often been overlooked.

Ferruh Yılmaz (2015) shows the relevance of both class and religion while discussing the new type of social formations in Europe which create antagonism between 'Europeans' and 'Muslims' in Denmark. According to him, during the last three decades, class difference became less important and cultural difference became a centre of attention in the group identifications in Denmark. In this context, public characterization of foreigners changed from a 'migrant worker' of the 1960s into a 'Muslim immigrant' since the late 1980s and 1990s. In Europe, class struggle played an important role in the mid-twentieth century. While migrant workers regularly faced discrimination in labour market and their contribution to the state was repeatedly ignored, they have still been seen as workers. But now, "immigration has been transformed from being a labour issue into a cultural one, and immigrants who were originally characterised as workers (a class category) are turned into Muslims (a cultural category)" (Yilmaz 2015: 38). So-called 'Islamic norms' are simultaneously seen as problematic and incompatible with European (Danish) values. People who fight against class struggle, xenophobes, feminists, gay rights organisations now all stand on a common ground to identify 'Islamic norms' and 'Muslim migrants' as a problem for Danish society. Differences between Muslims in terms of nationality, ethnicity, class etc. have become less important as all Muslims are characterised as practitioners of 'bad cultural norms': honour killings, forced/early marriages, headscarves, female circumcision, etc. For Yilmaz, this type of identification also serves to characterise what is meant by 'being Danish': i.e. to identify Danish people as those who do not practice those 'bad cultural norms', who see women as equal

and uphold gay rights. Yilmaz describes this type of antagonism as a hegemonic practice to create difference between 'us' and 'them' (Yilmaz 2015: 39). What is 'us' in this context means what the other lacks. This type of othering process not only marginalises some groups of people but also obscures the need for discussion of class politics and the labour market discrimination.

Noel Clycq (2012) brings other important issues that point to the relevance of context-specific intersection between different relations of power, within various European countries. In his research on the people of Belgian, Italian and Moroccan origin living in Flanders, Belgium, he shows how global and national discourses of othering come together. Analysing intersections between ethnicity, religion, and gender; when asking parents how they would react to the daughters' marriage choices; he argued that those power relations create boundaries between the three groups. For Belgian and Italian parents, Moroccan sons-in-law would be perceived as problematic not only because of their subordination of women but also because this subordination is associated with Islam. Therefore, when parents were asked whether they are ok that their daughter marries a Moroccan man, they respond negatively and depict Islamic norms that would lead to subordination of their daughter. However, they do not see this problem when their son is dating or marrying a Moroccan woman. Women, in this case, are seen as someone who can and should easily transform or adopt new norms or culture. Clycq goes further to show how differently religion and ethnicity are approached. When Belgians are asked about their daughters having Italian partners, they depict gender discrimination in terms of 'being Italian'. When both partners are Belgian, male dominance and patriarchal attitudes are seen as individual men's characteristics, not as national characteristics. However, when Belgians and Italians are asked about Moroccans, then patriarchy and male domination are explained by Islam. Both Belgians and Italians see Moroccan men as problematic in the same way, and religion becomes the main boundary. Clycq argues that dominant social representation plays a hegemonic role to shape the understanding of individuals as well as groups.

Clycq's (2012) argument is interesting because it shows the difference of perception in different migrant ethnic communities that I find relevant for my own research on Bangladeshi men in the Netherlands. This literature, however, does not address differences within a religious community in terms of ethnicity, class or race, nor differences between various Muslim communities. In terms of Bangladeshi migrants, those differences are important for the understanding of the social construction of their masculinity and negotiation process with that construction. Regarding negotiation, it is very interesting to know what happen when a man migrates. Would specific gender ideologies also travel with him or would the new context force the migrant man to reconstruct gender ideology and change his understanding of masculinity, femininity, heteronormativity and gender hierarchies? Discussion of Silberschmidt (2001) can be useful here. She explains how socioeconomic changes can marginalise men. In her work in rural Kenya and urban Tanzania,

She showed how men could also be marginalised within their own communities if their traditional role of breadwinner is impossible to realise. Similarly, Haque and Kusakabe (2005: 185-208) show in the case of rural Bangladesh that men's self-esteem and pride weaken when they lose their job or when they work in the household which is seen as a female domain. Discussion of Silberschmidt (2001), and Haque and Kusakabe (2005) give us an indication that socio-economic changes that are associated with migration can change the situation and perception of masculinity. For this reason, it is also important to understand the practices of masculinity that the migrant men engage in while living in Bangladesh, as well as the multiple forms of discrimination – following class, ethnicity or religion – experienced before migration.

2.4   Coloniality of power and gender

Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano (2000) uses the concept of 'coloniality of power' to understand how the power dynamics which dominated in colonial time are still operating in all forms of social hierarchies. For her, racial classification, which defines white European men superior to others, creates multiple social stratifications based on racial classification. To understand migrant people's experience and discrimination in Europe means to understand 'coloniality of power', which shapes the understanding of migration and migrants as individuals and communities, and the structural injustices that shape their lives. Applying 'coloniality of power' in my research helps me to understand the social location of Dutch Bangladeshi migrants in relation to European and Dutch colonial history. They come to a land, which already holds a certain understanding of race, and racial hierarchies, which have been shaped by the long Dutch colonial history. Bangladesh was not colonised by the Netherlands, but by Britain. Nevertheless, they are affected by the legacy of Dutch colonialism within the Netherlands. Grosfoguel et al. (2015: 642) called this type of migrant group "colonial immigrants". Through this lens, although Bangladeshi migrants did not experience colonial rule of the host country, they nevertheless are affected by Dutch imagination about "colonial/racial subject of empire" and experience the same racial hierarchy, which Indonesian or Surinamese people experienced (ibid). Their colour, physical appearance, clothing, attitude etc. become sources of their marginalisation because of the colonial power relations and social hierarchies articulated by them. For migrant men, this brings a double jeopardy. On the one hand, they have to maintain breadwinner role, which is a prime factor to give sense to their masculinity, while facing discrimination in host country's labour market because of the colonial heritage and the subsequent social stratifications. On the other hand, they, and especially Muslim men are seen as problematic since 9/11 terrorist attacks on the USA, and especially since the number of high profile terrorist attacks in Europe (such as Spanish bombing of the train station, UK 7/7, and more recently those in France, Belgium, and Germany).

Discussion of coloniality of power helps me to understand how dominant social representations of migrants in the Netherlands shape the way Bangladeshi-*allochtonen* men are perceived, and how they become 'other' in Dutch society. However, I also want to know how Bangladeshi men position themselves, and are positioned, within other Muslim migrant communities. The hierarchal racial discourses created in the 'coloniality of power' do not only work in the mind of dominant ethnic, religious or gender, social groups. Because hegemonic ideas are upheld and cherished in many social and political spheres, they also operate among marginal groups. So, an Indonesian or Surinamese man who found himself at the bottom of Dutch colonial or contemporary social hierarchy can become superior to a lower paid, dark-skinned Bangladeshi man. Because of his dark skin, country origin, and socio-economic location in relatively low-paid jobs (such as restaurant work), Bangladeshi men can find themselves at even lower social position than Turkish or Moroccan men. Thus, a nuanced way to understand how race, colour, class, ethnicity and religion work may be helped by the use of the framework of coloniality of power.

Maria Lugones (2008) also uses the concept of 'coloniality of power' and intersectional approaches to understand gender relationship. However, she thinks coloniality of power leads us to naturalise gender as the biological difference between human populations. She argues that Quijano's concept is helpful to understand how European concepts become ideal but it leaves very little space to understand how gender itself becomes an important social stratification for all human being. She gives an example of Oyéronké Oyewùmí's work and shows that gender was not an organising principle in Yoruba society prior to European colonisation (Lugones 2008: 8). She also gives an example of Paula Gunn Allen who discusses about many Indian tribes where gender was not understood in the biological term, e.g. a woman who dreams as a man can act like a man next day (Lugones 2008: 10). With these examples, Lugones argues that we should not fall into a trap to understand gender in a Euro-cantered way e.g. heterosexual, male dominant, biological dimorphism etc.

Lugones emphasises the inseparability of the intersection. She proposes the concept of 'coloniality of gender', which focus on various intersectional categories in relation to one another and are shaped by coloniality of power. In doing so, she also wants to deconstruct dominant discourses of gender and race. Her argument is helpful to my research as it concentrates on the inseparability of various identities. Furthermore, the insight she gives on the concept of 'coloniality of gender' helps me to be aware of the Eurocentric understanding of gender. I am more interested in how Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague relate their experiences with various intersectional identities, not only gender; and how they position themselves towards other migrant men, not only towards Dutch. However, I am also interested to see the fluidity of those intersectional identities. If we take only coloniality as the fundamental discourse, which shapes every social order, then we may overlook the flexibility of those intersectional identities. For example, I will show that

dark skin colour – which usually marginalises people within Europe, may bring other power dynamics for the Bangladeshi men in the Netherlands.

2.5   Old and new migration in the Netherlands

In the context of Bangladeshi migrants living in The Hague, socio-political contexts also have an effect on their social location of how they perceive and understand their masculinity. In this respect, literatures related to old and new migration patterns in Europe help us to understand those socio-political contexts. Discussion of old and new migration is also relevant to my analysis as it depicts the situation of recent migrants – especially those who came after 9/11 - compared to the older generation.

Migration in contemporary Europe has various trends. After the Second World War, people mostly from southern European countries migrated to western European countries to fill the gaps created by economic growth. After that, came a wave of migration in the 1970s, when global oil crisis leads to low paid job opportunities filled by people from Asia and Mediterranean (Reyneri and Fullin 2011: 32). These unskilled migrants took whatever job they got and did with very low wages. They helped to lower the price of commodities even in the oil crisis. Many of them got permanent residence and brought their family to Europe. The next wave of migration into Europe started in the 1980s and continues until now: asylum seekers, refugees and educated people (ibid). The Netherlands and Denmark become the prime location for asylum seekers as these countries' policies initially favoured asylum seekers (Reyneri and Fullin 2011: 41). However, migration policies of Western Europe after 9/11 especially become tighter than ever before. Therefore, it becomes difficult for unskilled migrants to come into Europe. Reyneri and Fullin (2011) in their comparative analysis of the Netherlands, UK, Denmark, Germany, Italy and Spain showed that there is a trade-off between unemployment and job quality. In Netherlands and Denmark, quality of job for migrants is relatively better than in Italy and Spain but the unemployment rate of migrants compared to natives is much higher. The reason behind this according to their analysis is that manual jobs are rare in the Netherlands and Denmark. Therefore, it is very difficult to get a job for an unskilled worker. In my view, however, their analysis lacks the social and political aspect of migrant unemployment. Both Netherlands and Denmark increasingly become hostile towards the migrant community, therefore getting a job become additionally difficult for migrants. Various policies such as Dutch civic integration policy also create obstacles for employment of migrants. Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (NIHR) reported that employers tended to hire native Dutch rather than migrants in the higher paid jobs (Netherlands Institute for Human Rights 2015: 5). Girls wearing hijab also face discrimination to get internship posts. Therefore, these issues play a significant role in migrant unemployment.

Andriessen et al. (2010) also show that persons belonging to an ethnic minority in the Netherlands have less chance to be called for an interview than native Dutch, even when having similar qualifications. They found discrimination to be severe in the hospital and retail sectors, especially in

customer care section. Furthermore, they also found that men from ethnic minorities face more discrimination than women, as migrant men (especially Muslims) are perceived more negatively than women in Dutch dominant social representation (Andriessen et al. 2010: 95). NIHR report also showed similar kind of discrimination practices for the migrant communities in the Netherlands. Stating from a research conducted by Panteia, NIHR notes that "half of the Dutch population have a negative opinion of Muslims" and 61-71% of students in the secondary level make negative comments on Muslims, which may come from the media representation (Netherlands Institute for Human Rights 2015: 10). The report also stated that state policies such as Action Programme on the Integral Approach to Jihadism and the Interim Counterterrorism have some responsibility for these (ibid). The report suggested that such approaches create negative stereotyping about Muslim community, which may create problems in the job market and other social areas.

Gloria Wekker (2016) also criticised Dutch integration policy for focusing only on the migrant community. Her examination of Dutch policies related to ethnic minorities showed that these policies moved from a question of economic independence to cultural emancipation. She criticised those policies for assuming white men and women to be "race free" and culturally emancipated, and only ethnic minorities like Turkish and Moroccan are left to emancipate (Wekker 2016: 59). Wekker notes that these ideas are problematic in two ways. First, they hide racism, which is very much present in the Netherlands. Secondly, those policies try to enforce specific kind of cultural norms towards the migrant community, which also hides the economic discrimination they face. Wekker explores the paradox of Dutch society where tolerance and innocence in self-representation coexist with racial discrimination, violent colonial history, and xenophobia. Using postcolonial and intersectional approaches, she explores "racial organising grammar" which inherently shapes Dutch society (Wekker 2016: 23). She argued that using 400 years of colonial history, Dutch society created a "cultural archives" about themselves and the colonial others (Wekker 2016: 19). In those archives, white Dutch are represented as innocent, polite people who tried to emancipate others, while colonised people are represented as lacking the qualities that Dutch have. For Wekker, this differentiation through racial lines of representation created an archive, which Dutch white nationals still use to understand people of different ethnicity and race. She goes further to claim that this cultural archive is updated through the time by incorporating xenophobic and Islamophobic policies such as civic integration policy, making difference between *allochtoon* (people from outside) and *autochtoon* (people from inside) categories in official state census and statistical departments, affirming that racism is an inherent feature of Dutch society. Her argument is interesting as she goes deeper on the micro-level of everyday conversations, television programs and state policy discourses where those cultural archives play significant role to understand people through racialised distinctions. Although all migrants are perceived as the others, Muslim migrants are thought to be more problematic within Dutch societies, especially when gender and sexuality

are in question (Wekker 2016: 118-125). Giving example of famous gay politician Pim Fortuyn, Wekker argues that Muslim men and women are seen as lagging behind modernity.

Sarah Bracke (2012) also discusses Pim Fortuyn who sees scarf-wearing young Dutch Muslim women as infantile, who do not understand what they are doing. Fortuyn sees wearing scarf only as a sign of oppression, rather than for example, a protest to cultural discrimination, symbol of modesty, or sign of religious practice. In this context, Fortuyn wants to save and civilise those young women by forcing Dutch norms onto them. By Dutch norms, he means gender equality and gay rights. His allies in this struggle come –surprisingly - from the feminist corner. Ciska Dresselhuys, chief editor of Dutch feminist monthly *Opzij*, supported Fortuyn arguing that for the greater cause sometimes feminist can make ally with the right-wing politician. What was the greater cause? Emancipation of Muslim women in the Netherlands. Although Dresselhuys criticised various Fortyn's points and opinion, she still agreed that Muslim women need to emancipate and that emancipation comes from civilising them by taking off headscarf and incorporating Dutch gender norms. Abu-Lughod (2002) describes how similar ideas are also used in the US where 'saving Afghan women' propaganda legitimised attack on Afghanistan. She describes that veil can be symbol of many things: a traditional dress, symbol of modesty, fashion or a symbol of oppression when women are bound to wear it, and not only oppression. Abu-Lughod (2002) points to the colonial knowledge production where western ideas become the benchmark to understand the non-western world, and continuously shape our understandings of people and communities. For Bracke (2012), this colonial idea of modernising 'oriental people' is still working in the name of feminism in the Netherlands. Like colonisers, those feminist - right wing coalitions define Muslim women as incompetent, who do not understand their own good and whose emancipation can only come from the norms of the West, in this case, the Netherlands.

3 Negotiating masculinity and marginality at the workplace

In this chapter, I will try to explore workplace related experiences of Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague in relation to their perception of masculinity. By using comments of the interview, I will explain how colour, class, and gender intersection embedded in the positionality and migrant life experiences of Bangladeshi migrant men.

The number of Bangladeshi migrants in the Netherlands is very small. According to official data, it about fifteen hundred Bangladeshi migrants live in the Netherlands (Van Meeteren et al. 2013: 131). In The Hague, the number is even smaller, around 150 people according to my interview source. Bestowing to my interviewees, most of the Bangladeshi migrants came to the Netherlands at the 1980s and 90s for pursuing better economic life. In most cases, these are single men who came here first, and after getting permission to live in the Netherlands, they married and brought their wives to the Netherlands. This male only migration may link with the fact that men in Bangladesh thought to be main breadwinner and female only migration thought to be a shameful act for the family (Dannecker 2005: 660). These men start working in the restaurant and some of them eventually become the owner of the restaurant (Van Meeteren et al. 2013: 133). It is very interesting to see that most of the Bangladeshis in the Netherlands work in the restaurants and in fact many of the Indian restaurants in the Netherlands actually own by Bangladeshi migrant men (Van Meeteren et al. 2013: 134).

Their small number creates an obstacle to form a separate community in the mind of dominant Dutch representation. In the official document, Bangladeshi migrants are part of broader 'other non-western *allochtonen*', which comprise non-western migrant people other than Indonesia, Turkey, Morocco and Suriname (CBS 2000). In this respect, Bangladeshi migrants often regard as Surinamese or Indian base on their skin colour similarities. However, their religious identity creates problem for this representation as most of the Surinamese and Indian migrants in the Netherlands are not Muslim. This contradict identity of Bangladeshi migrant men is important here as it can explore Bangladeshi migrant men positional in the Netherlands in relation to their work in the restaurant. Bangladeshi men are very similar with Indian men and people from outside Indian subcontinent find it difficult to separate Bangladeshi from Indian. Indian food is very popular which speared from 'colonial homeland' – Britain to other European countries. Bangladeshi men for this case can easily take advantage of where their skin colour allows people to believe that they are buying food from an actual Indian restaurant. Sometimes these restaurants owned by Dutch national but the workers and sellers are all from Bangladesh which thought to make an influence on the customers.

Beside this skin colour aspect, there are other practical aspects too. Getting a job in the Netherlands is not easy and most cases need some kind of diploma. However, for restaurant work they can avoid these things and can join straight to work. As my interviewee Iqbal, a former restaurant worker and now a chef in the old house centre stated:

> Bangladeshis work in restaurants because you do not need a diploma to get a job in a restaurant. I do not know anything when I join the work. Now for the last 15 years, I learn many things; I take diploma for cooking and cleaning. It's helped me. But for the first instance, I did not need any diploma. Moreover, there are already some Bangladeshi involve in the restaurant. So it is easy to find a job.

However, this work demands lots of passion, hard work, and industry. They have to work morning to night, sometime in holidays. It left very few time for socialisation. They fall in a "vicious circle of working-eating-sleeping-working" (Farid 2014: 348). Owners have to buy stuff in the restaurant besides working for there. Workers also have some personal and family work with that restaurant job. Nevertheless, they describe these works are their responsibility that they have to do. As Newaz, a restaurant owner stated-

> At first, I was a worker of the same restaurant that I owned now. I worked day and night, saved all my money and managed to buy this restaurant. Now I own this restaurant but my workload doesn't lessen. I work as a cashier in my restaurant. I also have to buy stuff and look for everything. It just works after work. Sometimes I feel like an animal. But you know this thing I have to do. I am a man and I feel good when I think that I am providing my family with a good life in here. This is my duty and I will always do this!

Similarly, Mahfuz, a restaurant worker from the restaurant that Newaz own, showed his grievance when he stated-

> Sometimes I thought why I came here? I lost many things. I lost my friends, my culture, and family. I married 16 years ago. Since then I did not go to any marriage occasion. You know how nice marriage occasion is in Bangladesh where everybody wants to attend. But when I see my children, I think somebody has to sacrifice for the greater future of the family. It is my life, which I sacrifice for my children's future.

These two statements show that even though some Bangladeshi migrants manage to own a restaurant, their life experiences remain bounded in a work-eat-sleep circle. This is the reason why they do not want their children's involvement in restaurant work or even restaurant business. They like their children to be work in a hospital, multinational cooperation, engineering jobs etc. When I asked them that those places are highly populated by white Dutch people. So is this mean they feel that those jobs are more honourable? They agreed and told me that those jobs are more prestigious and argued that white people populated there because of their education level are good and there are biases based on skin colour. They told me that Turkish and Moroccan people (second or third generation) now become more educated but very few of them able to find a job in the administrative section or in multinational cooperation.

For that reason, they also fear about their children's future. They blame Geert Wilders Islamophobic politics. Many of them discuss the Geert Wilders's Islamophobic short movie *Fitna* with me[3]. For them, it creates fear among Dutch employer to recruit Muslim men and women in the higher paid jobs. Geert Wilders, a political leader of PVV party, won many of seats in the Dutch Parliament. He speared negative comment about Muslim migrants and asked to reduce migrants. The documentary discusses western value and democracy where it showed Islamic ideology a threat for those ideas (Larsson 2013: 152). This comes to a time when Europe, including the Netherlands, shakes by global economic recession. People's income was getting lesser, job market was shrinking, and all the economic sectors were suffering. These processes affect in higher paying white Dutch people as well as lower paid migrant workers. Wilder manage to convince at least part of the white population that it is the migrant people who taking away their jobs. Although this is far from true. These migrant people very rarely work on that white colour job as Wekker (2016) shown that colonial racial discourse in the Netherlands structurally keeps away migrants from those higher paid jobs. It is interesting that Wilders mostly discussed the cultural morality of Muslims men and danger of the Netherlands for that 'bad morality'. Nevertheless, that unstable situation of the weaker economy made it possible for the white people to link their economic crisis with the inferior morality of Muslim men.

For Bangladeshi men, restaurant work is also important as it fulfils their masculine role. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005: 844) discuss how the hegemonic idea of maleness also related with femininity. The fact that women's practices and beliefs, which shaped by patriarchal norms also reproduce the ideal norms of what can be called as men's work and what can be called as women's work. For this instance, men who work in lower paid become effeminate in that case where men breadwinner role stand as the prime factor for masculinity. Men may maintain hegemonic notion and practice of masculinity within the home, but subordinate and marginal outside the home, at the workplace and in the larger society.

In contemporary Bangladesh, men role as a breadwinner is seen to be a prime factor for hegemonic masculinity whereas hegemonic femininity more related with the private sphere, in child care and household maintenance (Khan and Townsend 2014: 119). Although shear number women work outside the home in recent time, those works still seen related for ideal women. My respondents for this research also share the same idea that breadwinner role is the core factor for men. They also give importance physical strength and behaviour. Nevertheless, breadwinner seems to surpass these all aspects.

When men were asked about their lower paid jobs and how these affect their masculinity, they argued that these jobs are lower paid in the context of the Netherlands, but not in Bangladesh. Bartolomei's (2010) work is relevant

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[3] Critical analysis of the content and the debate surrounding the short movie *Fitna* can be found in Larsson, G. (2013) 'Geert Wilders and the Anti-Muslim Movie Fitna' in T. Hoffmann and G. Larsson (eds.) *Muslim and the new information and communication technology. Notes from an Emerging Field*, pp. 147-162.

here. She gives an example of a black man who thinks working under a black woman is more humiliating than a white woman as cultural difference gives him the advantage of not feeling shameful of working under a white woman (as cited in Haile and Siegmann 2014: 108). In the case of Bangladeshi restaurant workers in The Hague, this also is true. They live in a Bangladeshi bubble where their friends, family, interest and aspiration all link with Bangladesh. They do not feel competition with white Dutch men and their class status. Another important fact is their living in the Europe itself becomes a prestigious aspect.

All of these factors help them to negotiate with lower paid job status in relation with masculinity. As Mahfuz stated his situation-

> Most of the Dutch men may be richer than me but it does not matter for me. I do not have any Dutch friends; I do not go their occasion…it's no mean to me. People from Bangladesh, honoured me when they heard that I am living in Europe. It doesn't matter for them what jobs I do in here. My parents in Bangladesh also feel honoured because of this.

However, Mahfuz is working under a Bangladeshi man. Is this not creating problem for him? In his idea, this affects very little. People who own this type of restaurant are actually not that economically different from workers. Most of these restaurants are small (in size) and income is very modest. The lower paid workers get subsidy from the government, which helps them to maintain at a certain level of economic life. Owners, on the other hand, do not get subsidy, which makes them closer to the workers. Furthermore, if restaurant work is stigmatised, owners do not get out of that stigma as they also involve some form of work in most cases. Class difference, however, does not only depend on economic status. As Bourdieu (1977: 85) explained social class also reproduces through cultural and social capital like education, political network, taste etc. which create a form of 'habitus' to reproduce class differentiation in the society. Some Bangladeshi migrants in The Hague became highly educated and managed to find work in the 'white colour' section. For instance, Atiqur, a Bangladeshi originated university teacher in The Hague, describe his problem on both sides. First of all, his skin colour creates an obstacle for him to incorporate in the mainstream and secondly, his educational status keeps him apart from other Bangladeshi migrants in The Hague. As he stated:

> I have problem from both sides. People who do not know me think I am an Indian or Surinamese and these groups of people very rarely become university professors. So it is a problem. In general, you will not see these racial discriminations but on many occasions, I have to give my occupational status to some people to get respect from the people, which my fellow white colleagues do not have to. On the other side, I cannot mix with other Bangladeshi migrants in here. I try to mix with them but it is difficult. My choice, taste and activity are different from them and they also showed less interest to me. So for me, it's a double problem.

For Mahfuz and other lower-paid migrant workers, this class difference within Bangladeshi men in The Hague means very little. Those people are mostly from second or third generation migrants. So, rather than feeling competition they feel proud in comparison to the educated Bangladeshi migrants. Another important thing is the latter are very few. Maybe four or five living in The Hague, which nullified any sense of competition between lower waged Bangladeshi migrant men and educated one.

The situation, however, different in relation with other migrants. Bangladeshi migrants work with people from the various ethnic backgrounds. Most of them, however, are from non-European countries although there are a growing number of Polish migrants working in the restaurant and lower paid jobs where Bangladeshi migrants are working. Bangladeshi migrants' perception about these men is little bit complicated. In some cases, they share the dominant negative perception of other migrants, in other cases, they feel solidarity with them. For example, they perceive Surinamese men as 'quarrelling' and always fighting with each other but still think that they are as hardworking as Bangladeshi migrants are. Turkish men are seen as rough in behaviour, do not follow Islamic norms but they do go to their mosque for prayer. Moroccans are seen as selfish and difficult to work with but their women are seen as gentle and generous. These contradictory perceptions about their fellow migrants actually show their positionality in the Netherlands. All of my interviewees told me that they feel uncomfortable when people called them Surinamese. The negative stereotypes which were form in the colonial period and continuously shaping understanding about Surinamese people also seem to make an effect on the mind of Bangladeshi migrants. This represents Foucault's idea of power where power operates through knowledge and everyday practice; not only dominant group but also marginalise groups exercise this knowledge which makes it more legitimise (as cited in Sawicki 1991: 20). Here Bangladeshi migrants perceiving other marginal group from a dominant discourse but rejecting the idea that similar idea can also be said against them. They, however, found some similarity, e.g. hardworking, between them and Surinamese men, which they think is a Bangladeshi characteristic. They see the world from their point of view where they accept some dominant discourses and reject some. On that worldview, they also found problem in Turkish and Moroccan men, which they did not think ideal. Lots of time, my interviewees told their bad experiences of work with Turkish and Moroccan men. Like Shafiq, a 40 years old shop owner told his experience when he was working in a restaurant

> Moroccan and Turkish feel superior from us. They think we are from a poor country that's why we do not know anything. When I was working in the restaurant, my fellow Turkish and Moroccan colleague made fun of me. They made fun of my eating habit, my Bengali accent; they even teased me when I speak. That's why I left that job and made my own shop.

However, these Bangladeshi migrant men did not feel the same with Moroccan women. They think that these women are generous and dedicated to their family. They, however, think these cannot be said about Turkish women

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as they see them caring less about their family. For me, these are all stereotypes, which showed Bangladeshi migrants sense of masculinity and femininity. They see male breadwinner role and family dedication is the prime factor for masculinity. Detaching Turkish and Moroccan man from family dedication and breadwinner activity actually make them less 'man' than Bangladeshi migrants. Making difference among Moroccan and Turkish women is also a stereotype, which gives example of their perception of female role and femininity. In this way, they also show how women from Bangladesh represent ideal femininity. Despite the fact that some of the Bangladeshi women work outside, most of my respondents both male and female think women's primary role is in childcare and family maintenance. They think woman who dedicates her life to childcare and family is the ideal woman. They give various example how Moroccan women take care of their children and family despite their husband's bad behaviour. In this way, they put forward their perception of masculinity and femininity.

Those perceptions differ when they speak about Dutch men and women. Most of the time they meet with white Dutch people in office, hospital, children's school premise etc. By talking with them, it feels like these two groups have very little conversation in their daily life. In some cases, Bangladeshi migrants work under Dutch white owner and some other cases, some white Dutch become colleague of Bangladeshi migrants. Nevertheless, these situations are very few in comparison to Bangladeshi migrants contact and conversation with other migrants or other Bangladeshi migrants. This is interesting as they live in a country where the majority of people are white Dutch; but they live, work and communicate within their domain where white Dutch people become marginal in number. Blokland and Van Eijk (2010: 332) showed in their work in Rotterdam that even the place where municipality takes the policy to ensure diverse ethnic residency, people rarely mixed with other ethnic groups. Part of the reason behind is that these people stay most of their time in workplaces and they get less time to meet in the urban area. Another part is that sharing same neighbourhood did not mean they are equal in class or practice similar behaviour. Because of good transport infrastructure in the Netherlands, people can go far away, have discussions and eat and come back home for sleep. A similar observation can also be made of Bangladeshi migrants' relation with white Dutch people. Even though they see lots of white men and women, very rarely this transforms into a friendly conversation or sharing thoughts. Nevertheless, most of the respondents possess positive idea about white Dutch people but also give some negative comments regarding marriage, and alcohol drinking. Here also they give the indication of their sense of masculinity.

To summarise, Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague are very small in number, which failed to create a sense of single community within dominant discourse. Their skin colour, migrant status and ethnic background channel them into a constricted set of labour market options, with restaurant work being a foremost option. They show their satisfaction and dissatisfaction with this at the same time. Working hours, lower status of this job make them dissatisfied as they feel they are losing their social life because of work.

Satisfaction, on the other hand, is related to their sense of masculinity as it fulfils their masculine breadwinner role. They also give importance of family integrity and good behaviour as markers for ideal men along with breadwinner role. In this respect, they find similarity and dissimilarity with other migrants. Most of the time they display stereotypes about other migrants as well as Dutch men and women, which actually represent their sense of masculinity and femininity. They practice the same dominant racialised discourse, which marginalises them within Dutch society when they speak of Surinamese men are bad. However, they find some similarities between them in relation to hard working. They negotiate their low-paid occupation stressing their better behaviour than Moroccan and Turkish man, not quarrelling like Surinamese men etc. They put a certain type of femininity – such as Moroccan and Bangladeshi women as ideal. For first generation Bangladeshi migrants, religion seems to less important than their ethnic and racial identity. However, they do feel worry about their children's future because of Islamophobic discourse in the Netherlands. They feel it can be an issue in the higher paid jobs where their child will compete. Nevertheless, religion does appear an important marker in the family and social sphere for the first generation Bangladeshi migrant men, which I will explain in the next two chapters.

4 Being a proper family man

Family is an important social organisation in Bangladesh as Sarah White (2002: 1098) showed persons inside the family are not mere "detached individuals", but rather their selves and personhood are "essentially constituted" through the relationship with other members. In this respect, person's identity in relation with family drives what he can do and give meaning to it (ibid). Through this process, individuals become a man or a woman and give meaning to their role. Power relation in the family in Bangladesh is not neutral as a man gets more opportunity to practice their power over a woman. However, this in no way means that he has complete autonomy. His power is restricted to his masculine role and failure to maintain that role can crumble his power. Moreover, not all men can practice power equally and there is a hierarchy among men and among women inside a family. As Sarah White (1997: 17), showed older men have authority over younger men and as Deniz Kandiyoti (1988: 279) showed in South Asian case, a mother-in-law practices power over her daughter-in-law in the domain of patriarchal bargain. Hence, a man may have more chance to manoeuvre his power but there are also some limitations.

For Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague, family norms in Bangladesh still play an important role. In general, this is because of two reasons. First, most of them are first generation migrants; they were raised and spent a significant amount of time in Bangladesh. Secondly, most of them married in Bangladesh and brought their wives after they secured job and got legal status to live in the Netherlands permanently. So their family composition is based on the Bangladeshi social and gender norms. Moreover, their continuous living in a Bangladeshi bubble, which I explained in the previous chapter, and regular contact with people back home remind them about Bangladeshi family norms. However, migration and new social environment do have some effects on their perception of family values. All of my respondents mention their family norms and values as a core issue in their life. By family norms, they argue about their dedication to the family, caring for children and successful marriage partnership. For male migrants, the family norms seem to be their main bargaining point in coping with lower job status and lower social position. As Shafiq, a shop owner stated:

> One thing you need to understand is that the trees will grow well if you take care of them. In my family, I take care of my children. They are getting a good education from here but my wife and I teach them about morality and truthfulness. We try to secure our children's future. For that reason, you will see our children will not become addicted to alcohol and our daughter will not engage in the bad social behaviour. I feel good to see my family in good order; it takes away all of my sorrow.

Like Shafiq, most of the Bangladeshi migrants put childcare, or in their words *manush korano* (making them better humans), as their main work in their family. Yet, when I asked what they do for their children's care as a father, male respondents of my research gave their economic provision as the main factor, which they think, is helping their children's future. However, for the nurturing and caring, women do the most of the work. Women too see their

main work as childcare and household work like cleaning and cooking. However, men also do the care work occasionally. However, it is rather as 'helping' their wives than perceiving household work as their own work. The case of Mahfuz and Shova can be helpful to understand this issue.

Shova came to the Netherlands with her father. After few months, she faced harassment from her father. She complained to the local police office and managed to leave her father's place. At that time, she was only 19 and did not have a legal permit to stay. After five years, she managed to get permission. She was working in a restaurant where she met and fell in love with Mahfuz, a Bangladeshi migrant who was illegal at that time. They got married and Mahfuz got legal citizenship. They continued to work in the same restaurant. However, when their first child was born, Shova left the job. Until now, she is 'unemployed'. Shova, however, does not agree on unemployment status. As she stated:

> I am taking care of my child and securing his future. If I involve in jobs who's going to take care of my child? I neither believe that childcare centre can take proper care of my child nor I have money to spend there. Mir's (Shova's son) father work morning to night. He is also not able to take care of him. So, I am not unemployed; I am doing job – I am taking care of my children.

Mahfuz, on the other hand, works morning to night to maintain their family and covers for the absence of Shova's income. This is the thing that he believes he has to do. For him: "…somebody has to sacrifice. I am providing money for my family; that's my job and Shova taking care of household and children - that's her job". Mahfuz cooks and cleans during the weekend. He regards these works as helping to Shova. Shova too perceives her husband's cooking and cleaning work as a help. She constantly expresses her good feeling about her husband in relation to his household work. Nevertheless, she foremost praises her husband's economic provision for the family, which she believes, is the main job for men. She told me that she never mentions to her family in Bangladesh that her husband does the occasional cooking and cleaning, which for her may create disrespect. In her words:

> I never told my mother that Mahfuz cooks. In Bangladesh, men do not do the household works. People have housemaids there. But in here men need to help their wives. They will not understand our situation. Mahfuz is such good husband. He works all day and night and when he gets time, he helps me as well.

From Shova's statement, it is clear that she sees her husband's household work as help, and not his responsibility. She protects her husband's image within their family back home, which may be damaged by his household work. For her, he is 'helpful' and a 'good human'. In this process, she also reproduces hegemonic notions of masculinity and femininity. When I visited their home for my interview, Shova did not allow her husband to do the cooking despite the fact that it was a weekend, when he would usually do it. She believed that showing her husband's involvement in cooking to another Bangladeshi man – myself – would degrade not only her husband's masculinity but also her femininity, as she may be perceived as a woman who is not doing her responsibility.

Although context and perspectives may be different, I have also found such perceptions of masculinity and femininity in other cases as well. In the case of Zaman and Rima, this perception is also found though Rima works outside the home, next to household works. Zaman works in a big restaurant and also owns a grocery shop. He works morning to noon at the restaurant and thereafter in the shop. However, he is not regular in the shop. It is Rima who manages the shop most of the time. She also does the household works. Although a vast amount of their income comes from the shops, it is Zaman who is perceived as the main economic provider. When I ask Rima about her work in the shop, she argued that she is just helping Zaman. She constantly showed her grievance about working in the shop, which she thinks she has to do because of her child's future. Their daughter is studying at the university; therefore, they have to spend a large amount of money on her education. Rima told me that when her daughter's study would finish, she would stop working in the shop. She also mentions Zaman's hard work and dedication for their family. In this way, she too is balancing the idea of her husband's masculinity with his dedication and good manners. Like Shova, she also thinks breadwinning is not women's responsibility. Whereas Shova sees her husband's household work as helping her, Rima sees her own work outside the home as helping her husband.

The situation gets complicated when they speak about their daughters' role in the family, as most of them want their daughters to work outside the home after their marriage. However, they still prefer that their daughters' partners' income should higher than the income of their daughters. This leads to the question whether they really think a man as a sole breadwinner and a woman as a sole home keeper. Their aspiration for their daughters to work outside the home may indicate that they question hegemonic gender roles in the family, but their preference for higher earning of son in laws offers a different picture. The fact is, women who work outside the home, even in high paid jobs, do not always escape from their responsibility of childcare and household work. Similarly, preferring higher earning of son in law reflects a sense of hegemonic male and female role in the family and understanding of men as main economic provider and women as main child care provider and household worker. Men may help in household work, or women may help in the economic provision, but their main responsibility remains within hegemonic norms.

These examples suggest what Connell and Messerschmidt (2005: 848) argued: women themselves can reproduce gender hierarchies. Similarly, we can also argue that racially marginalised people can also reproduce racist hierarchy. In the previous chapter, I have discussed how Bangladeshi migrants believe that their breadwinner role and family dedication are important attributes through which they see themselves better than other migrant men. Same apply here as Bangladeshi migrants see white Dutch and Surinamese people as having lack of family dedication. They gave me example of big percentage of divorce rate among these groups. They also argued that these groups of people do not take care of their children and their children face problem when they see their parents living separately. However, they make further distinctions

noting that Dutch have good manners, even better than Bangladeshis. They gave lots of example of good behaviour, attitude and pleasantness. It seems like they are also trying to learn these behaviours like talking with smile, eating early in the evening and maintaining order in the public places. I argued with them that these habits could also be found in Bangladesh but they disagreed with me and argued that white Dutch people do it better.

It is interesting to note that Bangladeshi migrants – according to their own statements – meet with white Dutch people mostly in the official arena when they need something, or in the restaurants, where Dutch come as customers. Bangladeshi informants did not socialise with Dutch at home, and in other spaces – such as on the streets – these two groups seem to simply pass by each other. On the other hand, Bangladeshi interviewees have very negative stereotypes of Surinamese, as bad people, often involved in stealing and drinking, and not following rules etc. It seems that racial hierarchy within Dutch society also influences their perceptions, as my Bangladeshi informants assume that all Surinamese are black – therefore 'bad people'. The colonial racial hierarchical discourse along with the lower class status of Surinamese migrant people seems to have an effect even in the mind of marginalised group such as Bangladeshi migrants. In the line of family dedication, neither white Dutch nor Surinamese people seem to live up to the ideal for Bangladeshi migrants. However, they do mention some good aspects of white Dutch family life, such as fathers carry children in their hands when they go outside. For Bangladeshi men, this is a good 'helping' attitude. Nevertheless, they argue that Dutch family norms are problematic as they lead to divorce or separation, and they see both Dutch men and Dutch women responsible. Mirza, a magician who was married to a white Dutch woman and got divorced after five years told me:

> Living with Dutch woman is difficult you know. My former wife expected that I should do the household work as well as the outside job. We tried to get along but it was difficult because we were raised up in a different environment. It was hard for me to break the family but I could not help it.

Although Mirza mentions different understanding for that breakup, he nevertheless accuses Dutch family norms, which for him creates vulnerability for a stable marriage. Mirza later married a woman from Bangladesh. However, he now most of the time stays at home as his magician work is not as successful as in the earlier times. Because of being home without work, he is now facing stigma from Bangladeshi community. For Mirza what makes a proper man is his compassion and dedication to the family. He takes care of his children. By taking care, he means he takes them to school, gives them religious education, feeds them and takes them to the field for play. His experience is, however, different from other Bangladeshi migrants as he stresses the importance of household work. Nevertheless, he relates his work with religion: his religion taught him to take care of home and family, and – in his opinion - makes him a better man. It seems like he is balancing his stigma of non-involving in regular paid jobs with religious dedication.

Religion does, in fact, play a significant role in the family sphere of Bangladeshi migrant men's position in The Hague. Bangladesh is a country where ninety percent people are Muslim[4]. Religion there as Sarah White showed "does not appear in the classic modernist formulation as something set apart, but rather as interwoven with and giving meaning to other aspects of daily living" (2012: 1445). Similarly, my respondents put Islam in the core of their family and intimate relationship, as all of my respondents are in fact Muslims. However, there seems to be a paradox in this understanding of Islam in relation to their migrant status. On the one hand, they fear that their children may follow some 'un-Islamic' activity to fit into Dutch society, because of their minority status. On the other hand, they think they can practice their religion better because of migration. In the first aspect, they fear that their children, especially girls, may engage in a sexual relationship before marriage, which for them is neither Bangladeshi nor Islamic norm. They feel this can happen because they live in a society where such practice is 'normal'. Therefore, they try to teach their children Islamic norms and beliefs at very early age. Many times my respondents have shown me how their children learn about Qur'an and Islamic norms. Other aspects of that paradox come from this learning process. They think their children have a better opportunity to learn about Islam in the Netherlands than in Bangladesh. Although Bangladesh is a Muslim majority country, they think people there do not understand Qur'an and its interpretation in a proper way. In The Hague, they argue, Turkish and Moroccan mosques offer a better understanding. In this way, they actually criticise Bangladesh and uphold Turkish and Moroccan migrants. As Mirza stated:

> I sent my children to learn Qur'an in a nearby Turkish mosque. Here Imam teaches them Qur'an with good interpretation. So my children learn and understand Quran. But in Bangladesh, you know everybody interprets it as they like. People are doing lots of un-Islamic work in the name of Islam. My children even teach me about what should I do.

These ideas give a sense of solidarity between Turkish and Moroccan migrants with Bangladeshi migrants in The Hague. It also shows that Bangladeshi migrants actually think that Turks and Moroccans are better Muslim than they are. This may be related to the idea that those two countries have a long history of Islamic rule under caliphate. In contrast, Bangladesh was never under caliphate and pre-Islamic traditions are still dominant "which emphasise [Islam's] syncretism and malleability, it is grounding in Sufi thought and long co-residence with Hindu neighbours giving many different and localised traditions of practice and belief" (White 2012: 1431). However, such ideas do not count when Bangladeshi respondents talk about family and sexual relationships. For them, some Turkish and Moroccan people are dedicated to their family but others drink alcohol, involve in sexual relationship before marriage and practice polygamy. They see the adoption of 'Dutch style of living' and 'not following Islamic values' as the main reasons. However, this

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[4] Exactly, it is 90.39% according to Population and Housing Census 2011 in Bangladesh Bureau of Statics report 2015.

actually shows their hegemonic understanding of family and intimate relationships. It will be hard to argue that all Bangladeshi migrants do not involve in pre-marriage sex, have the high dedication to their family and never drink alcohol. They see these things as ideals, which at the same time create solidarity with other communities through religious identity but also reproduce colonial racial hierarchy by giving certain attribute to those same migrant groups.

Above discussion showed the perception of masculinity and femininity linked with family relations among my Bangladeshi respondents. They understand family as a core social institution where they perceive men's role as breadwinner and women as child caring, despite their aspiration to see their daughters in a paid job outside the household. They justify this in religious terms and thus create a paradox whereby they feel solidarity with other marginal group but at the same time adopt certain colonial racial discourses. They balance their masculinity and femininity by accepting those discourses in some situations and rejecting them in others.

5 Migrant bubbles: living in the Netherlands

In the previous two chapters, I have explored how Bangladeshi migrant men position themselves in family and workplace sphere in relation to their various intersectional identities such as Islamic religious identity, brown skin colour, Bangladeshi national and ethnic identity, and marginal migrant and economic status. Research findings show that these various interconnected identities sometimes give them advantage and sometimes make them vulnerable. Their understanding of masculinity is situated within the ambiguities between advantages and vulnerabilities. In this chapter, I will further explore these ambiguities by using two interrelated concepts – 'coloniality of power' and 'colonial immigrants' – while reflecting on how are Bangladeshi migrant men situated within the broader Dutch society.

Coloniality of power, discussed by Anibal Quijano (2000), refers to the power relation between colonisers and colonised, based on the social classification of human population through the race. Quijano (2000: 215) defines race as "a mental construct that expresses colonial experience and that pervades the most important dimensions of world power, including its specific rationality: Eurocentrism". For her, the racial classification, which was created in the colonial mode of production, is still present in the contemporary capitalism. The colonised non-white people who were used as slaves and forced labourers to create surplus for the industrialisation of the white Western world and Europe have now become cheap labourers who continue producing surplus for the global north. In this line of exploitation, the axis between white superior and black/brown/olive 'inferior races' reinforces and actively contributes to the world system of thought, ideas as well as capital. Grosfoguel et al. (2015) use this 'coloniality of power' concept to understand the situation of migrant workers in Europe. For him, migrant workers who live and work in their 'colonial homeland' live in a circumstance where racial/ethnic hierarchy in relation to colonial discourse is endlessly present (Grosfoguel et al. 2015: 642). These migrants are thought to be inferior to the dominant white group and live and work with a lower social status. For Grosfoguel, the situation of the migrants who are from peripheral location and are not directly colonised by the country in which they live is not different from the colonial subjects. Because of the colonial racial discourse, these people also understood as colonial subject and also live inferior life. He called this group 'colonial immigrants'.

How can these two concepts help us understand the situation of Bangladeshi men in the Netherlands? Bangladeshi migrants live in a country, as Wekker (2016) argued, where racial grammar – which was created in the colonial period to make hierarchy between colonisers and colonised – is still present and even became a dominant discourse. Netherlands' 400 years of colonial exploitation of Indonesia, Surinam and other places made possible for a tiny nation to become a world super economic power (Wekker 2016: 5). The processes of exploitation continue even after the colonial empire broke down

through accumulations of capital by Dutch multinational companies. Racial discourses continue to be used as a benchmark to understand people who migrated from various colonialized locations.

Examples of this racial grammar can be found in the *Zwarte Piet* debate and in civil integration discourse. *Zwarte Piet*, a black face character of annual *Sinterklaas* ceremony plays a servant role of white Saint Nicolas. People from the various corners of Dutch society have criticised this representation of the black character as a servant, which for them signify colonial racial discourse of black as inferior. Surprisingly, many white Dutch people continue to defend that *Zwarte Piet* character and justify it as tradition and for children. Their argument actually reflects how the racial grammar is deeply embedded in Dutch society. Arguments about tradition and children's celebration show how Dutch society normalises colonial racial hierarchy. Integration law is another example of the colonial racial discourse. Started from 2005, this law aims to assimilate migrants within Dutch society. One of the reasons behind the introduction of this law is that migrants, especially Muslim migrants, are generally defined as homophobic, misogynous and morally inferior, thus in need to be taught the so-called 'Dutch values' (Wekker 2016: 55). It is sometimes difficult to understand what is precisely meant by 'core Dutch values', but ideas about homosexuality and women's emancipation have become part of Dutch norms and are now used to restrict immigration and sustain discursive differences between white Dutch and Muslim migrants. These discourses represent the colonial racial hierarchies where colonial white master position himself as superior and try to teach morally inferior non-white/non-western/colonialized students.

When Bangladeshi migrants come to a place where colonial racial hierarchy shapes social reality, they too become part of the inferior subject, although Bangladesh was not colonised by the Netherlands. For migrant men, the reality of racist colonial legacies becomes an integral part of their position in society. Within such colonial hierarchy, Bangladeshi migrant men find themselves at the bottom. Their lower paid job status creates obstacle to achieving ideal hegemonic masculine figure as economic status plays significant role in the hierarchy of masculinity. Their skin colour and ethnicity also make them other. Discussion of Mrinalini Sinha (1995) can help us to understand this little more. Sinha argued that colonial Britain compared Bengali men with British women within the colonial racial hierarchy. In the latter half of the nineteenth century when Bangladesh was part of British India, some Bengali men manage to gain higher education from Britain and become eligible for jobs, which were usually occupied by white British men. These 'newly educated' men's demand for those jobs created problem for the colonial administration. On the one hand, these people need to be recognised as educated from 'colonial homeland'; on the other hand, it created problem as it implied that Bengali men could be equal to white British men. According to Sinha (1995:35), the way out of this paradox was to redefine Bengali men are effeminate and thus lack the capacity to govern. The same lack was used by the British establishment in denying women the right to vote. As Sir Lepel Griffin, a senior Anglo-Indian official stated at the time:

Although it would be both impertinent and paradoxical to compare English women – the most courageous, charming and beautiful of the daughters of Eve – with Bengali agitators, yet it is a curious fact that the question of admitting Bengalis to political power, occupies in British India, the same place that in England is taken by the question of the extension of the vote to women, both may be advocated on somewhat similar grounds and both may be refused in compliance with the necessities of the same arguments (as cited in Sinha 1995: 35).

This colonial assumption of effeminacy that makes Bengali men ineligible for higher paid jobs in colonial Britain can be related to dominant discourses about Bangladeshi migrants within Dutch society. Bangladeshi men are a colonial other, albeit not being Dutch colonial subject. They are a different other than Surinamese and Indonesians who were direct Dutch colonial subjects, but they are other, nevertheless. Bangladeshi migrant men belong to the lower socio-economic strata of the society; their colour differentiates them from white Dutch, and their religious identity is also an important element in comparing them to the ideals of masculinity in Dutch society. Because Muslim men are thought to be morally inferior, Bangladeshi migrant men go further away from dominant Dutch idea of hegemonic masculinity. All these aspects push Bangladeshi migrant men to the marginal position.

However, not all of them have exactly the same weight, nor play the same role either in the lives of individual migrants or in the migrant community. This research has found that the process of marginalisation is rather complex and dynamic. In the colonial racial discourse, Bangladeshi migrant men become inferior because of their brown skin colour as well as their Islamic religious identity. These two aspects, however, do not always join together. Brown skin and facial features of Bangladeshi men mark them different from the physical appearance of Turkish, Moroccan and other Middle Eastern men who face the brunt of Islamophobic and xenophobic discourses and practices in the Netherlands. Thus, in a way, Bangladeshi men are racialised but ideas about race also protect them to some extent and help them to remain unexposed. The case of Shafiq may help us to understand this ambiguity between protection and exposure:

Shafiq used to work in an Indian restaurant when he first came to the Netherlands. After his application for asylum had been accepted, he was offered a house in a village near Utrecht. As the process of acquiring the house was taking very long, he went to the housing office to inquire about the situation. He met his restaurant owner's wife who happened to be a clerk in that office. She told Shafiq that village inhabitants had written a letter to the municipality that they do not want a foreigner and a Muslim in their neighbourhood, and that is why the process is taking so long. She photographed him and sent his picture to all the neighbourhoods, also telling that Shafiq has Dutch citizenship and thus has the right to live there. After some days, local people accepted him and he got his house. Maaike, who was the officer of the housing department, told Shafiq that it was easy for local people to accept Shafiq because he looked like an Indian man, and village people felt more threatened by Turkish and Moroccan people whose facial

features are different, and whose skin is usually whiter than that of Bangladeshi people. Moreover, people knew very little about Bangladesh, which also helped Shafiq. As he stated:

> People here do not know about Bangladesh. They think we are either Indian or Surinamese. When I told them that I am from Bangladesh, they did not care! Even who knew only asked about the flood situation!

Shafiq told me that people later got surprised when they heard from him that ninety percent of people in Bangladesh are Muslims. Shafiq argued that it was easy for him to mix with the people at that time as people perceived him as a poor person from Bangladesh, not as a Muslims. He did not go to the mosque during that time and cultivated vegetables, an activity he shares with other community members. However, the situation changed when he brought his wife in the Netherlands. His wife wears a headscarf and he started going to the mosque then. At this point, he felt alienated from the neighbourhood and moved to The Hague where other Bangladeshi people live.

Shafiq's case shows us that his skin colour – while important in racist discourses - as well as a lesser-known national identity, did, in fact, help him to remain unexposed as a Muslim – and thus protect him for a while from Islamophobic discourses. However, when he and his wife showed their Muslim identity openly, the situation become a little bit difficult for them. He told me that he never faced direct confrontation but he found the change in the attitude of his white Dutch neighbours. Therefore, in social sphere skin colour and ethnic identity do give Bangladeshi migrants some sort of protection although there is no guarantee that this will have a lasting effect. Other Bangladeshi migrants also shared their experiences of situations where their skin colour and nationality helped them to mix with white Dutch community, but later become unimportant. Rohmat, for example, told that he used to live in a village called Uden. He was the only Muslim in that village, but people did not perceive him as Muslims, seeing him through his dark skin:

> People in that village initially thought I am an Indian and Hindu. They regularly say *Namestey* to me. I told them I am a Muslim. But because of my wife's sari and our food habit, they keep thinking of us as Indian. It was not bad because you know people, especially older people, do not like Muslims here. But when the Paris attack happened, some people burned a mosque in a nearby village. I got scared. I saw the hatred in people's eyes, the same people who were previously thinking I was Hindu and Indian. So I applied for a new house and came to Hague a few months after.

So, skin colour and ethnic identity do not always have an effect but they may play a crucial role to minimise the importance of other identities in specific context. However, the skin colour can make migrants vulnerable to racism, as 'cultural archives' about white and non-white people may have an effect within Dutch racial hierarchies. Yet, this research found that Bangladeshi migrants very rarely compare themselves with white Dutch men. Actually, the restaurant industry where they mainly work is very much occupied by migrant communities, and white Dutch people are either owners or customers, but seldom co-workers. For this reason, Bangladeshi migrants accept the higher

social and economic position of white Dutch people. Rather than competing with white Dutch men economically or financially, they stress the ways money is used.

For them, economic providing and family dedication are the most important characteristics of masculinity. In this aspect, they found they are better than white Dutch men are because whatever earning they make, they spend on their family welfare and children's future, which, according to them, migrants from the other communities and white Dutch men do very rarely. It is not the amount of money that matters, they stress, rather the dedication to the family. As Shova stated:

> My husband earns 1200 euro a month and spends all this money for the family. A person may earn 4000 or 5000 euros but if he does not look after his family, spends money for selfish reasons like smoking, alcohol, going to night club etc., he is not ideal husband or father. But Mahfuz (Shova's husband) not only earns, but also takes care of the family. He is a better man.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005: 849) showed that hegemonic masculinity is not a static factor and it may be different in different places and times. Similarly, Bangladeshi migrants adhere to specific ideals of masculine hegemony that – in their views – position them differently from dominant Dutch ideals of masculinity. Bangladeshi migrants give various meanings to their life as a man. For them, currently, Islamophobia is the main problem, which they fear may create problems for their children. In this, Bangladeshi migrants become closer to other Muslim migrants in the Netherlands. Although they possess negative ideas about Moroccan and Turkish men regarding family matters, in the social sphere they found solidarity with those groups. Most of the Imams in the Mosques in The Hague are Turkish or Moroccan. For that reason, Bangladeshi people call those mosques Turkish or Moroccan mosques. Nevertheless, they go to these mosques to teach their children Qur'an and express their commonality with other Muslims. As Mirza stated:

> Turks and Moroccans are main Muslim communities in the Netherlands. When they hear that, I am Muslims they hug me, and they even offer to help us when they hear we are Muslims.

However, this solidarity does not remain stable all the time as some Bangladeshi migrant's experiences show. They feel their ethnic identity and way of dressing differentiates them from Middle Eastern Muslims and creates problems. Mahfuz has stated:

> Turkish and Moroccan migrants think they are better Muslims than us. Because Prophet Muhammad (S) is born in the Middle East, they think they know Islam better than us. But the fact is we are following more Islamic practice than they do. They told that sari that our women wear is not Islamic because you can see women's belly. But they also wear similar kind of stuff. It doesn't matter what kind of dress you wear. What matters is how you wear it. If you cover your body with your dress, then it does not matter what you wear.

Nonetheless, Bangladeshi migrants still often feel closer to those communities than other migrants in the Netherlands. As the Islamophobia increases and religious identity becomes an important factor of exclusion and marginalisation in the Netherlands, these migrant groups feel more solidarity with each other. This solidarity should not be taken for granted, however. Ambiguous sentiments of my Bangladeshi respondents show that it is tested through various social encounters and their different histories, where race, colour, social and economic status and religion all play a role in specific, but often paradoxical and ambiguous ideals of masculinity. Nevertheless, the contemporary dominance of Islamophobia and negative perceptions of Muslim men especially creates conditions for solidarity, as much as dynamics of race or class may create conditions for differentiation between migrant groups.

6 Conclusion

In this study, I have tried to give answer to the question how gender, race, colour, class and religion/Islam are implicated in social location and experiences of manhood among Bangladeshi migrants in the Netherlands. I used feminist intersectional approach, as well as concepts of coloniality and hegemonic masculinity to understand how Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague positioned themselves in relation with other Muslim migrant communities and with white Dutch men, and focused on their perceptions and experiences at the workplace, in the family and in broader Dutch society. Research findings show that gender, race, colour, class and religion impact social location of Bangladeshi men. However, the process is much more dynamic and complex than I previously imagined.

First, various literatures show that Muslims migrants in the Netherlands face problems because of Islamophobic and xenophobic discourses, as well as because of colonial racist discourses. Although Bangladesh was not colonised by the Netherlands, their reality is linked to colonial racial hierarchy where white Dutch men are on the top and Bangladeshi migrant men close to the bottom. Their skin colour, lower paid work along with the history of colonialism by Britain push them into the group of other migrants who were directly colonised by the Netherlands, while the Islamophobic discourse makes them more vulnerable. This situation is worse for men than for women because men are thought to pose more threats.

However, this process of marginalisation of Bangladeshi men is not straightforward. The skin colour and religious identity of Bangladeshi men do not always work together in the process of marginalisation. Actually, the skin colour seems to give men protection, as they are often perceived to be Indians or Surinamese. The fact that most migrants from India and Suriname are not Muslims means that the skin colour initially hides Bangladeshi migrants' religious identity and helps them avoid the brunt of Islamophobic discourse. However, the research findings show that, once Bangladeshi migrants disclose their religious identity, they also face Islamophobia. However, Bangladeshi migrants are especially worried that Islamophobic discourse in the Netherlands can create problems for their children. Most of the Bangladeshi migrants in The Hague work in lower-paid jobs. For that reason, they feel less competition with white Dutch people who are mostly occupied the white colour jobs. Besides, they do not socialise much with Dutch, staying much more within Bangladeshi community. However, for the second generation, Bangladeshi migrants aspire to see their children in better-paid and more prestigious jobs where they have to compete with white Dutch. For that reason, Bangladeshi migrants fear that their children may face problem if current Islamophobic discourse continues.

Second, the perception of masculinity of Bangladeshi men is related with their religious, racial and ethnical identity. Their skin colour and similarity with 'Indian' help them to involve with restaurant work. Although they share

dissatisfaction with these jobs, it nonetheless fulfils their aspirations of masculinity, which emphasised men's breadwinning role. However, Bangladeshi migrants also give importance to family integrity and good manners. In this respect, they create stereotype about white Dutch men and women, as well as about other migrant communities. This research argues that stereotypes are produced through the intersection of masculinity and femininity with other power relations, and especially ethnicity, race and religion. For instance, Bangladeshi migrant men have negative stereotypes of Turkish and Moroccan men, seeing them as not having good manners. On the other hand, they possess positive idea about Moroccan women who, for them, are lot more caring about family, which reflects Bangladeshi migrant men's sense of ideal masculinity and femininity. Religion is important here as they relate their sense of masculinity with following proper religious practices and adhering to religious doctrine. Those stereotypes create a paradox where Bangladeshi men possess negative ideas in relation to Turkish and Moroccan men's family dedication and good manners, but uphold them as the best representative of Muslims in the Netherlands and go to their mosque for religious practice.

Third, Bangladeshi migrant men negotiate their marginalised masculinity by stressing their own good manners, family dedication along with breadwinner role, where they perceive themselves better than white Dutch men and other migrant men. Bangladeshi migrants live within a 'Bangladeshi bubble' in The Hague. Most of their friends and acquaintances are Bangladeshi. Sometimes they also work under a Bangladeshi restaurant owner. They have regular contacts with Bangladesh. Thus, they seldom mix with other migrant communities in the Netherlands, or with Dutch. In this circumstance, their perception of masculinity is related not only to the reality of the Netherlands but also to Bangladesh. They may be marginalised in the Netherlands, but living in the Netherlands itself gives them higher status and pride in Bangladesh. Therefore, ideals of white Dutch masculinity appear to have very little to do with Bangladeshi migrants' life. Very rarely, they compete with white dominant Dutch people, and enclosure into the Bangladeshi bubble helps them ignoring masculinity ideals of broader Dutch society. They create their own hierarchies of masculinity within where they criticise Dutch family norms, which they see as problematic for successful long-term marriage. However, even if Bangladeshi migrant may ignore what white Dutch men may think about them, they cannot ignore what other migrant men think. In their workplace, their competition is with other migrant communities. In this respect, they perceive themselves better than other migrant men: better behaviour than Moroccans, not quarrelling like Surinamese and better family dedication than Turkish. In this way, they create hierarchies about ideal manhood and place themselves on the top.

Overall, experiences of Bangladeshi migrant men in The Hague alerts us that ideals of hegemonic masculinity do not operate in a simple way, that is-dominant men shape how marginalised men understand masculinity. Rather, my research shows that men from marginalised corners can ignore some aspects of dominant discourses and create masculine hierarchies of their own.

In some contexts, skin colour, and lower economic status of Bangladeshi men protect them from Islamophobic discourse and competitions with dominant white Dutch masculinities, while in other contexts their ethnic and religious identities come to the surface and expose them to xenophobic and colonial racist discourse. Their positionality as migrant Muslim men in The Hague is situated in this ambiguity between protection and vulnerability.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Profile of the Respondents of this Research

Pseudo Name	Age	Sex	Occupation	Year of living in Netherlands
Mirza	45	Male	Magician	25
Zaman	50	Male	Restaurant worker and shop owner	19
Rima	40	Female	Shop owner and household work	13
Mahfuz	30	Male	Restaurant worker	6
Shova	27	Female	Household work	8
Rohmat	35	Male	Food processing industry	10
Iqbal	42	Male	Chef in an old home centre	20
Atiqur	37	Male	University teacher	15
Newaz	40	Male	Restaurant owner	20
Shafiq	40	Male	Shop owner	11

I met with Zaman and his wife Rima in program organised by Bangladesh embassy. He was very friendly to me and invited me to his home. I went there and met Shova and Mahfuz. I explain them my research idea and they all appreciate. I proposed them to be the interviewee for my research and they agree. At that point, my idea was broad; I was looking for the marginalisation they faced in the Netherlands. We discussed various issues including the political situation in Bangladesh, which is always a discussing point for Bangladeshi migrants in here. They shared their experience of how they manage to stay in Netherlands and differences between Bangladesh and Netherlands. All of them told me that they have many interesting stories to tell which may help me. Later on that month, Shova invited me along my wife in her house. It is customary in Bangladeshi culture to invite and feed a people whom you feel friendly. I felt good that they took me as their friend, which helped me talking with them freely and discussing something, which otherwise they may not share. I went there and met with Newaz, Rohmat and Mirza. It was a big opportunity for me and they all agreed to be interviewed. On the case of Atiqur, I met him in an embassy program and explained my research to him. He also agreed to give interview.

Making schedule for interview with Shova, Mahfuz, Zaman and Rima were easy as they regularly invited me in their places. However, after a couple

of interviews, I realised that taking interview in their places was not always helpful as they often busy with many works and talking for a long duration, hence became difficult. Therefore, I invited those two couples in two different times and learned about their experiences. On that stage, I learned about many dynamics of marginalisation. Next, I went to Mirza's house. Later we took a walk and he took me to the places where he feels attached. He asked me to visit a Moroccan mosque. There he discussed his solidarity with other Muslims. Shafiq is an owner of a shop where I used to go to buy Fish. My regular trip to his shop helped me building good relationship with Shafiq as well as other Bangladeshi customers. It was his place where I met with Iqbal. I took interview of Shafiq at his shop. I stayed there and observed the activity. I found that it was mostly migrant people who visited his shop most of the time. At one incident, a brown-skinned man questioned Shafiq whether he is from Suriname? He replied negatively with an uncomfortable look. Later he shared his negative perception of Surinamese men with me. I visited regularly in his shop even after my interview. This place helped me to understand social position of Bangladeshi migrant and other groups, which I may not capture if only relied on the interview. Meeting with Newaz and Rohmat were relatively short. I met with them two times as getting time from them was difficult. In the case of Atiqur, I sent an email to him and asked for the interview. Taking the interview with him was different from other conducted interviews, as he possessed different social class. However, he went to the question of marginalisation quickly than other participants. He explained his position of being a teacher but a non-white person in a country where race does play an important role.

I used recorder to record my interview conversation however, I always took their consent. Respondents had the right to get away and stop at any point. Shafiq, for example, did not feel comfortable with the recorder. Therefore, I took notes in his case. I made transcripts of those interviews, which I later used to analyse the findings.

Appendix II: Map of the Research Location - The Hague

Appendix III: Interview Guideline

Research sub-questions	**Related questionnaire**
1) *What is the specific socio-political context in the Netherlands that are implicated in the social location for Bangladeshi allochtonen men?*	1. How long do you live in the Netherlands? Do you see any difference in the way Dutch people relate to foreigners now and when you arrived in the Netherlands? If yes, tell me a story related that. 2. Have you or the members of your family ever experienced an unpleasant situation in public space (street, restaurant, school) because you are foreigners? Tell me about it.
2) *How this context impacts Bangladeshi community, especially Bangladeshi allochtonen men's social location vis-à-vis other migrants in Dutch society?*	1. Where are you working and how did you get that job? 2. What problems Bangladeshi people face in their workplace? Did you face any of those? Tell me something about those? 3. Do other foreigners face similar problems? 4. Do you work with Dutch people or with other foreigners or with both? Do you notice any difference in working with Dutch or with foreigners?
3) *What are the experiences and life strategies Bangladeshi men take to deal with their marginalised manhood in their family as well as in the Bangladeshi community in relation to other Muslim migrants and white Dutch men?*	1. Do you think that the life style of your family is different than the life style of white Dutch family? If yes, what do you see as main differences? 2. Does your wife work outside the home? (for men) 3. Do you make important decisions for your family together with your wife, or mainly on your own? 4. There is much discussion about women's rights and gay rights in the Netherlands. What do you think about it?

5. Do you have daughter/s? If yes,
    i) Do you think her life is better here than in Bangladesh? Why is that? (If yes why and if no why)

    ii) What do you think if your daughter wants to marry a Dutch Christian man?
    iii) What do you think if your daughter wants to marry a Turkish or Moroccan man?

6. Do you have any son/s if yes?
    i) What do you think if your son wants to marry a Dutch Christian woman?
    ii) What do you think if your son wants to marry a Turkish or Moroccan woman?