

# Abstract

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## **Bodies In and Out of Place: Local Readings of Displaced Bodies within a Low-Income Residential Area of Cairo.**

While bodies are increasingly fixed with places, readings of the body get employed to distinguish which bodies are considered "in" "out of place." Social science literature on readings of the body &#97;&#110;&#100; its markers &#97;&#110;&#100; scholarship on readings of place (particularly within urban studies, geography, &#97;&#110;&#100; architecture), address these concerns in examinations of in- &#97;&#110;&#100; ex-clusiveness amongst social groups within urban settings (Blakely &#97;&#110;&#100; Snyder, 1997 Day 1999 &#97;&#110;&#100; 2000 Imrie &#97;&#110;&#100; Hall 2001 Lewis, 1990 Lozano, 1990 Mohanram 1999 Nabih 1999 &#97;&#110;&#100; 2001 Relph 1976 &#97;&#110;&#100; 1997 Tuan 1980 Williams 1996). Viewing place not as a "passive, abstract arena where events occur" but as a site saturated with social relations &#97;&#110;&#100; identity constructions, we rely on the premise that subjects have close relationships with the landscape that surrounds them, one that "shapes their bodies &#97;&#110;&#100; perceptions... &#97;&#110;&#100; participates in identity formation of the individual" (Mohanram 1999, xii). Accordingly, this paper employs in-depth interviews &#97;&#110;&#100; observations to examine local readings of Sudanese &#97;&#110;&#100; Somali displaced persons &#97;&#110;&#100; their bodies within a densely populated low-income area of Cairo where many of them reside. We simultaneously explore the local Egyptians perception of their neighborhoods being an inhabited space shaped through social interaction. As a result of the daily interactions with the foreign migrant groups we aim to uncover how inscribed spaces, identity constructions &#97;&#110;&#100; meanings are shaped &#97;&#110;&#100; ascribed to different territories within Ard El-Lewa. We base our research within a specific settlement where asylum seekers commune in order to locate the place of interaction between local residents &#97;&#110;&#100; these transient immigrant groups. In so doing, we demonstrate that the process of "othering" results from these readings of displaced persons, the places they are perceived within, &#97;&#110;&#100; the activities in which they are engaged.