

Media of Flows and Genealogical Thinking

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Abstract

The “key avenue for the flow of cultural phenomena and the transformation of diasporic identity” is, as Steven Vertovec said in 1999, in today’s globalized world “global media and communications”. Backed up and accelerated through the “global media and communications” is another avenue for the flow of cultural phenomena, images and meanings, i.e. the genealogical thinking as it exists with the Hadhrami diaspora in Indonesia and in many other parts of the world. On this avenue, already in existence long before the global media, travelled concepts of belonging together and of distance, of similarity and difference, of kinship and ideal marriages as well as of social relations. But not only that: metaphorically even people travelled this road: kinsmen followed relatives, who already stayed in the diaspora and provided at least provisional livelihood and in many cases a first accommodation. The paper focuses on the conceptions flowing back and forth on this avenue, where cultural phenomena flow: e.g. patterns of marriage the immigrants brought with them, concepts of the workings of genealogy, how others are brought in or kept out, ideas about their own society and about their neighbours living in the land where they arrived as immigrants.