



Mellan orten och kalifatet

En studie om utresandefenomenet

av

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Abstract

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Starting 2011, many travelled from other countries to support different parties of the Syrian revolution. Many came from Sweden, and many joined the Islamic State. Swedish "Syria travellers" often came from areas labelled as [especially] vulnerable. The purpose of the thesis is to examine and analyse different understandings of the phenomenon of individuals travelling from Sweden to the conflict areas in Syria and Iraq, based on narratives collected from actors with local anchoring. The empirical material consists of 54 interviews with public and local actors, and Syria travellers. The results show a territorial stigmatization and a moral differentiation where the residents of the [especially] vulnerable area is understood as "failed" or "tolerated" citizens, something that informants link to the study object. There is a gap between those who seek background explanations in religion and those who seek them in social structures. Furthermore, the results indicate that there are several possible representations of Syria travellers, ranging from terrorists and nihilists to moralists. The work against "radicalization" is described as poorly anchored among practitioners and an extended supply of knowledge is requested. The interviewed Syria travellers describe themselves as moral actors, and often highly religiously motivated. The thesis also show how guilt by association is a lived reality for Muslims in a time where negative representations of Islam dominate. The thesis should be regarded as a contribution to the expansion of the important field of research on professionals' social representations of why some individuals make violent interpretations of Islam and are attracted to movements such as the Islamic State. The thesis is also a call to further explore Syria travellers' own representations and arguments. Both local actors and Syria travellers represent groups that professionals may encounter in their work. Knowledge of such social groups, and about the representations articulated within them, is valuable for the practice of Social Work, but also for other professions such as teachers, leisure workers, police, and decision makers at different levels in society.

Keywords: Islamic State, Radicalization, Foreign fighters, Especially vulnerable areas, Territorial stigmatization, Social representations, Moral disengagement, Social Work

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