

“Like a bird flying with two wings” Committed Muslims in Germany

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Summary

The dissertation focuses on highly religious Muslims in Germany who are involved in activities of their own religious community as well as in non-religious civil society organisations. They are thus committed to society as a whole - for example, in the areas of environmental awareness, human rights, media, politics, welfare or integration - and are involved into various socio-religious networks. What role do these specific networks play in the commitment? How do the committed Muslims justify their commitment? What factors enable access to a commitment, what favours and consolidates a commitment? What conflicts arise and how can they be resolved?

Based on extensive qualitative research, the study distinguishes between four types of committed Muslims: Self-initiated Social Entrepreneurs (religiously inspired and non-religiously inspired), Progressive Religious Activists, Structure-oriented Integration Helpers and a potential fourth type of the Irritated Religious Preserver. Social and religious networks, reactions to ongoing negative public discourses about Islam, individual (migration) experiences and low-threshold opportunity structures play a crucial role in engaging for the common good.

Short structure

1. Introduction: Committed Muslims - who, how, what and why

- 1.1. The research question
- 1.2. The structure of the study
- 1.3. Remarks on language and presentation

2. State of research and theoretical concepts around committed Muslims

- 2.1. Social, sociological, historical, and theological backgrounds around Muslims
- 2.2. Theological basis: social-ethical and political Islamic principles
- 2.3. On the embedding of committed Muslims in different social and religious networks
- 2.4. The commitment of Muslims in Germany and beyond
- 2.5. Summary: Theoretical premises and research desiderata

3. Narration meets network: methodological approach

- 3.1. Methodological embedding
- 3.2. The methodical design of the study
- 3.3. Sampling and field access
- 3.4. Data collection and analysis, operationalisation, triangulation
- 3.5. Critical self-reflection

4. Commitment of Muslims: Fields, approaches, reasons and conflict behaviour

- 4.1. Fields of engagement: Structures, offers and services
- 4.2. Access and push factors
- 4.3. Reasons for commitment
- 4.4. Conflict behaviour of committed Muslims

5. Four types of committed Muslims

- 5.1. Criteria for the formation of types
- 5.2. Type 1: Self-initiated Social Entrepreneurs
- 5.3. Type 2: Progressive Religious Activists
- 5.4. Type 3: Structure-oriented Integration Helpers
- 5.5. Potential type 4: Irritated Religious Preserver

6. Overall view, theses and outlook

- 6.1. Theses and concluding remarks
- 6.2. Outlook

Bibliography

Appendix