



PROGRAM ARBETSGRUPP 9: KRITISKA STUDIER OCH INTERSEKTIONALITET

SESSION 9 ONSDAG 17 MARS 15:00 – 16:30

<https://hh-se.zoom.us/j/69916956323?pwd=d1FBcXFVWVNFTTYzU3BaUCtQNXBUUT09>

15:00-15:20

Goran Basic

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Interculturality, Ethnicity and Multilingualism in Upper-Secondary Schools: An analysis of opportunities and obstacles in organisational and practical activities with newly arrived migrant students

The purpose of the present study is to achieve a new level of knowledge of interculturality, ethnicity and multilingualism in conjunction with practical and organisational activities involving newly arrived migrant students in upper-secondary education. The analysis revolves around the following two research questions: (1) How do newly arrived migrant students produce interculturality, ethnicity and multilingualism in conjunction with practical activities in upper-secondary schools? (2) How do those involved produce newly arrived migrant students' identity formation and reformation during teaching and learning activities in upper-secondary schools, and the significance of such processes to social integration? The empirical material used in the study consists of qualitative interviews, field notes and documents related to upper-secondary education obtained from a number of Swedish municipalities. Ten interviews have been conducted with newly arrived students attending different upper-secondary schools in Sweden. The dominant standard explanations of the category of newly arrived students (especially those who come from war zones) seem to focus on their psychiatric or medical needs. The common diagnoses that figure in the research include post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, recurring nightmares, emotional apathy, and flashbacks to traumatic events. Common explanations for absence in the school context include stomach aches, restlessness, anxiety, and depression, and competing explanations seem relatively de-emphasized. These may include (1) established inequalities in society and at school, (2) material and



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institutional difficulties in societal and school contexts, (3) bureaucratic hurdles in school and in the rest of society, (4) ethnic monitoring and social control in society and at school, (5) the humiliated identities of the actors in a societal and school context, (6) victimization in relation to the majority in the context; (7) demeaning ethnic categorizations in society and at school, and (8) discrimination in the school context and an overall societal context. Analysis of the collected empirical data in this study shows that the ethnic identities of newly arrived students are constructed and reconstructed during teaching and learning activities in upper-secondary schools. During these activities, an ethnified position of “us” and “them” is produced and reproduced between actors in the context of upper-secondary education. These positions are analysed in the present study as both an obstacle (“us” and “them” in the relationship between various ethnic categories of student and teacher, or as ethnified monitoring and social control in the school context) and an opportunity (a common ethnified “we” in the relationship between teacher and student).

15:20-15:40

Christopher Thoren

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Experiences of recognition and misrecognition: Muslim students in a suburban Swedish high school

This paper examine Muslim students experiences of recognition and misrecognition in high school and how those processes are intertwined in intersectional power relations, such as class, gender, race, religion, and place. The qualitative fieldwork was carried out during four semesters at a high school in one of Gothenburg's suburbs where a large proportion of the students identify as Muslims. As is the case with many of Sweden's suburbs, this area has relatively low income levels and high unemployment rates. And as parents' income and level of education have shown to be a factor for school results the area, as a whole, has lower average grades and lower eligibility for high school. The school's compensatory mission, to give all pupils an equal education and contribute to social mobility, is therefore considerably challenged. In addition, for many of the students, unfavourable prospects in the labour market await, as inequality, discrimination, and penalties for Muslims on the Swedish labour market have been documented. Muslim students in the suburbs also carry a double burden of being stigmatized on the basis of both place and group affiliation, often in association with each other. The Swedish suburbs



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have increasingly been associated with social problems and criminality, and stereotypes about Muslims and Muslim youth in Sweden is often associated with the suburb. Both aspects impact how Muslims experience the school environment and for the purposes of this paper with particular focus on recognition and misrecognition.

Inequality in schools is well researched, but the experiences of religious minorities is to a high extent not part of the analysis. In the case of high school students, who identify as Muslims, this is regrettable considering that Islam has come to occupy a significant role in the Swedish school debate and with reference to suburbs. The ambition has been to collect detailed and variations of stories, i.e. “rich data”, from the students, mainly through semi-structured interviews and participatory observations. The study is inspired by constructivist grounded theory to provides a systematic but flexible strategy for collecting and analysing empirical data. Grounded theory's principles for theoretical sampling, theoretical sensitivity and coding of empirical data have therefore provided guidance for the analysis. Having said this, a theoretical pre-understanding has supported an abductive approach where theory is in dialogue with the data. An intersectional approach has proven important in that students' vulnerability is manifested in different ways. Intersecting and simultaneous processes of power given class, race and gender are intertwined in the situation in which young people find themselves. Ideological struggles and debates about Muslims in school on for example clothing (most often in reference to women wearing hijab), deity rules and religious holidays, and secularist ideals also effect the students in different ways. Preliminary analyses also suggest that Muslim students experience of (mis)recognition informs student's choice of school, their experiences and interaction with teachers and other students, as well as their strategies for studies and plans for future work.

15:40-16:00

Klara Öberg

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Social sustainability from an intersectional perspective. The moving crisis - from welfare to precarity

This paper critically discusses the concept of social sustainability from an intersectional perspective. The example is based on data from qualitative interviews and related to the experiences of persons who have not been able to enter the formal labour market. They have



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escaped a conditioned, problematizing social security that is experienced as yielding no possibility for economic nor social mobility and instead entered the irregular and precarious labour market. Unemployed persons, particularly newly arrived persons, migrant women and residents in so called “exposed areas”, suburbs in Swedish cities with are continuously described (the media, the government, research etc.) within a discursive crisis narrative. Accused of failing to raise a labour culture, trust for the authorities, to provide role models for symbolic integration and as parents. That discursive crisis narrative has since the 1990’s increasingly formulated labour as the solution and in a neoliberal way put the responsibility on the individual. One critical question is, whose crisis this is? It is unquestionably a multifold crisis for the parent who cannot provide for her children and who is stuck within a welfare administration that demand both control over and actions from the unemployed. And it is a real crisis that hurt the individual working under exploitative and insecure conditions. The meanings of state capitalism have changed from having control over the economic life, the state itself has become one of many actors with interests in the market. Or as sociologist Zoran Slavnic puts it: the relation between the citizen and the state has changed. The geographer David Harvey understands the capitalist crisis as a spatial phenomenon that moves to counter crisis and expand/continue profit. In the dialectics between welfare and entrance to the irregular labour market - crisis can be understood as moving when persons are pushed out of welfare into precarity.

Through an intersectional analysis of the rejection from welfare into a precarious and irregular labour market we describe contemporary capitalist relations between the state, the market and the citizen. This paper further investigates and discuss how a critical notion and use of social sustainability demand a structural change to cultivate a future democratic and equal welfare society.

16:00-16:20

Jonas Grahn

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Radical Alternatives to Gunnar Myrdal’s Work on Race Relations in the US

The most ambitious sociological study of racism in the US during the 1940s was the widely influential study *An American Dilemma*, under the direction of the Swedish economist, and future Nobel Laureate, Gunnar Myrdal. This dilemma, the problem of racism in the US, is in



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Myrdal's work essentially a moral dilemma, consisting in a moral tension or conflict about the discrepancy between the ideals of Americans and their actual behavior. By way of rational planning and social engineering, these problems could, according to Myrdal, find a solution, or at least a significant improvement. At the time of publication of Myrdal's work, C.L.R. James, a Black social theorist from the Caribbean, Raya Dunayevskaya, an activist and immigrant from then tsarist Russia, and Grace Lee Boggs, a young philosopher and activist, had formed a group on the far left which together composed a critical review of Myrdal's work. In a thought-provoking and original way, they argued with references to both Du Bois and Marx that capitalism is a system that inevitably produces an underclass and that this is the root of race prejudices in capitalist society. At the same time, they effectively argued against class reductionism, affirming that racism takes on a life of its own and extends beyond economics. This paper explores this marginalized voice to expand an understanding and contribute to stimulate a new analysis of race relations today.