

Svenska Forskningsinstitutet i Istanbul  
Forskarkollegiet

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med

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Humanitarian handicrafts as (dis)empowerment of women left behind  
**A Swedish help to self-help project in the Northern Greek village Vlasti (1963-1988)**

Textile handicrafts is often seen as an important tool for women to handle times of crisis and societal change. In this article, I will explore and discuss the Swedish humanitarian organization *Individuell Människohjälp* (Swedish Development Partner), IM, and its work with developing local traditions of textile handicraft work as help to self-help in the small mountain village of Vlasti in Northern Greece, 1963-1988. It is a period affected by various crises – the memories of occupation and civil war in the 1940's, the take-over of the military junta and dictatorship as well as social and economic hardship. It is also a time of urbanization, labor migration and family separation. When most men had died in the wars or left for work in other places, women, children and elderly were left behind. IM identified that support systems for these groups were needed to be bolstered to help them cope with detrimental impacts of the crises. Through analyzing the narratives and practices of IM, as published in newsletters, reports, memory accounts and a documentary film, I discuss gender empowerment as access to human, social and economic resources. I then show how the narratives and practices are embedded in contemporary gender norms and the deep entanglement of notions of gender, empowerment and handicrafts in humanitarian narratives.



Moderator: Frederick Whitling, Svenska institutet i Aten.

Tid: 16 februari, 19.00-20.30

Plats: Zoom. Länk och seminarietext erhålles vid anmälan.

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