

A personal story of radicalization
and deradicalization

The Jihad Caravan

MONTASSER ALDE'EMEH & PIETER STOCKMANS

We will never fully comprehend extremism in Europe and the Middle East without an appreciation of the interplay between the intimate life stories of those involved and the bigger geopolitical picture. This is the main premise behind 'The Jihad Caravan' by Montasser AlDe'emeh and Pieter Stockmans. Once jihad expert Montasser AlDe'emeh stood on the brink of taking up arms himself. As a young Muslim who completely lost his roots in Belgium and grew up in an environment of hate, but found a solution in knowledge, he is best placed to understand why young western Muslims answer to the call of the caliphate.

It brings the reader closer to the origins and the reality of armed jihad than most of the analyses.

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Together AlDe'emeh and Stockmans travel to Zarqa in Jordan, the cradle of international jihad and AlDe'emeh's birthplace in a refugee camp. They returned with surreal stories that make this book unforgettable. At the same time they analyze the mechanisms at home that feed the radicalization processes. They hold a mirror up to everyone: politicians, journalists and teachers, but also to Muslims. The book concludes with a set of recommendations for us all.

'The jihad Caravan' is a must read for everyone interested in the challenges multicultural society brings forth.



AUTHORS



Montasser AlDe'emeh (b. 1989) is a Belgian-Palestinian Arabist, islamologist, jihad expert and political scientist. At the Catholic University of Leuven he did research on islamic radicalization. For his doctoral research on western fighters in Syria and Iraq, he spent two weeks doing field research in Syria. He is the founder of the knowledge, research and counselling centre 'The Way To' for the reception of returned fighters and support-seeking Muslim youths and parents. **Pieter Stockmans** (b. 1979) is a research journalist. He has been travelling across North Africa and the Middle East. He is the co-founder of the journalistic project 'Between Freedom and Happiness' and has published in Knack, De Standaard, MO* Magazine and Middle East Eye.

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