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10.

Negotiations of Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Group Conversations among Jews and Muslims

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ABSTRACT The following chapter presents findings from group interviews with Muslims and Jews conducted in Norway between May 2016 and May 2017. Six groups were interviewed; three had Jewish participants and three had Muslim participants. The chapter explores interpretative patterns among the interviewees, focusing on the ways in which antisemitism and Islamophobia were expressed or rejected in the conversations, and how antisemitism and Islamophobia were perceived as contemporary societal problems. Photographs were used as visual prompts during the interviews and served as a starting point for the analysis of the social interaction between the interviewees. A central question of the analysis is how intergroup attitudes were negotiated and eventually regulated throughout the conversations.

KEYWORDS Latent antisemitism | Islamophobia | group interviews | Muslim-Jewish relations | photo elicitation | Norway

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, antisemitism among Muslims has emerged as a topic in research as well as in public debate.[1] A recent example of this attention is the massive protests in France following the murder of two Jewish women committed by Muslims in 2017 and 2018, accompanied by the publication of a "manifesto" against the "new antisemitism".[2] The manifesto was signed by a range of public persons and celebrities, among them former President Sarkozy and actor Gerard Depardieu. The "new" antisemitism is a term often used to describe a form of antisemitism that has emerged in recent decades among Muslims and in the European far-left in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and anti-Zionism. This "new" antisemitism is contrasted to "older" forms of Jew hatred that largely drew on religious, nationalist or racial biases.[3] However, the novelty of the phenomenon is debated. A central criticism underlines the continuity of the antisemitic notions, claiming that instead of representing "new" forms of antisemitism, the expressions are only modifications of traditional anti-Jewish ideas.[4] Furthermore, there is a tendency among some proponents of the term to attribute the "new" antisemitism particularly to Muslim immigrants, and thus to see antisemitism mostly as an imported problem in today's Europe. This discourse of "new antisemitism", indicating that antisemitism has been overcome in the autochthon populations of Western European countries, is also present in the Norwegian public debate. Connected to this, we find the assumption that Jews regard Muslims as a potential threat.

On the other hand, Muslims in Europe are perceived as targets of prejudice and stigmatisation resembling the antisemitism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While this portrayal may promote insight into some common experiences and ideological similarities, the idea of Muslims being the "new Jews" can contribute to a competition of victimhood and of prioritisation between the two minorities when it comes to measures fighting prejudice and discrimination. These two narratives, presenting Muslims either as "the new antisemites" or as

1. See, for example: Günther Jikeli, "Antisemitic attitudes among Muslims in Europe: A survey review" (*ISGAP Occasional Paper Series 1,* 2015a); Günther Jikeli, *European Muslim Antisemitism: Why Young Urban Males Say They Don't Like Jews* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015).
2. http://www.leparisien.fr/societe/manifeste-contre-le-nouvel-antisemitisme-21-04-2018-7676787.php.
3. Pierre-André Taguieff, *Rising from the Muck: The New Anti-Semitism in Europe* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002); Alvin H. Rosenfeld, ed., *Resurgent Antisemitism: Global Perspectives* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013).
4. Jonathan Judaken, "So what's new? Rethinking the 'New Antisemitism' in a Global Age", *Patterns of Prejudice* 42, no. 4–5 (2008): 531–560, https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220802377453.

"the new Jews", may thus promote negative attitudes between the two minorities. Professor of Religious Studies Björn Krondorfer states that:

> [I]n either case Muslim and Jewish communities are pitted against each other. Rather than sharing a common experience of facing fears and hatreds directed at Muslims and Jews, the experience of antisemitism and Islamophobia deepens the mistrust between these two communities.[5]

By analysing how participants discuss two events linked to the relationship between the two minorities, this chapter explores these interpretative patterns. Based on group interviews among Muslims and Jews in Norway conducted in 2016/2017, the study investigates experiences and attitudes among the minorities.

The interviews constituted a subproject within the larger project that also included the two quantitative surveys among Jews and Muslims and in the general population.[6] While the population survey showed a decrease in the prevalence of antisemitic prejudices (from 12.1 per cent to 8.3 per cent) and an increase in the percentage that did not support any negative statements about Jews (from 55 per cent to 69 per cent), the minority survey in 2017 also showed that two out of three Jewish respondents sometimes avoid showing their religious affiliation for fear of negative attitudes. Furthermore, the survey displayed widespread negative attitudes towards Muslims in the general population. One in four respondents (27 per cent) expressed what was defined as Islamophobic attitudes.

The survey was the first to explore attitudes between Jews and Muslims in Norway. The results underlined the importance of a nuanced approach, most notably related to how prejudice in the form of stereotypical views may be prevalent while other dimensions of negative attitudes such as antipathy or social distance may be less pronounced. The survey also indicated that the Jewish (75 per cent) and Muslim (48 per cent) minorities believe they have common experiences as minorities in Norway and that they can cooperate in the fight against prejudice and discrimination (Jews: 86 per cent and Muslims: 70 per cent).[7]

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5. Björn Krondorfer, "Introduction: Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia", *CrossCurrents* 65, no. 3 (2015): 292–296.
6. Christhard Hoffmann and Vibeke Moe, eds., *Attitudes towards Jews and Muslims in Norway 2017: Population Survey and Minority Study* (Oslo: Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities, 2017).
7. Hoffmann and Moe, eds., *Attitudes towards Jews and Muslims in Norway*, 72–75. See also, in the current volume: Werner Bergmann, "How do Jews and Muslims in Norway perceive each other? Between prejudice and the willingness to cooperate", and Ottar Hellevik, "Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Norway: A survey analysis of prevalence, trends and possible causes of negative attitudes towards Jews and Muslims."

Part of the background for this chapter is a public discourse that is concerned with antisemitic attitudes among Muslims and tends to portray the relationship between Muslims and Jews as polarised. Perhaps in contrast to what one might assume, based on the public discourse, the quantitative survey also revealed that negative views of Muslims are less prominent in the Jewish minority than in the general population.[8] This may in part be attributed to the very high level of education in the Jewish sample.[9]

FOCUS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

By focusing on "shared attitudinal patterns"[10] in group interviews, and by applying the concept of communication latency,[11] this chapter analyses the ways in which Jewish and Muslim interviewees interpret, express or reject antisemitism and Islamophobia. Forms of open or latent antisemitism are explored, as well as the extent to which antisemitism and Islamophobia are regarded as related problems in contemporary society. The diverse composition of the focus groups allows insight into the impact that generation, gender and religiosity have on inter-group attitudes. The analysis views social interaction as an intermediate layer between individual attitudes and discursive frameworks.

The development of antisemitism after the Holocaust and features of contemporary antisemitism constitute an important background for the analysis of this study. After the Holocaust, antisemitism lost legitimacy and was banned from

8. The question of the Jewish minority's attitudes towards Muslims was briefly touched upon in a survey conducted by the Jewish community in 2012. See Rolf Golombek, Irene Levin and J. Kramer, "Jødisk liv i Norge", *Hatikva,* no. 5 (2012). The topic was also touched upon in a qualitative interview study among Jews in Oslo and Trondheim conducted two years later. See Cora Alexa Døving and Vibeke Moe, *Det som er jødisk.. Identiteter, historiebevissthet og erfaringer med antisemittisme. En kvalitativ intervjustudie blant norske jøder* (Oslo: HL-senteret, 2014).
9. Hoffmann and Moe, eds., *Attitudes towards Jews and Muslims in Norway*, 23. High education levels were associated with less prevalent negative attitudes in the general population towards both Jews and Muslims (100).
10. Ralf Bohnsack, "'Orientierungsmuster': Ein Grundbegriff qualitativer Sozialforschung", *Methodische Probleme der empirischen Erziehungswissenschaft*, ed. Folker Schmidt (Baltmannsweiler: Schneider, 1997), 49–61.
11. Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb, "Kommunikationslatenz, Moral und öffentliche Meinung. Theoretische Überlegungen zum Antisemitismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland." *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie u. Sozialpsychologie, 38 no.* 2 (1986): 223–246; Heiko Beyer and Ivar Krumpal, "Aber es gibt keine Antisemiten mehr': Eine experimentelle Studie zur Kommunikationslatenz antisemitischer Einstellungen." *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 62 (2010): 681–705.

public discourse in Europe. Instead, the social norm of anti-antisemitism has come into place. However, this has not led to the disappearance of antisemitism as a phenomenon, rather to its transformation, suppression and coverage. Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb describe the "latency" of antisemitism as the underlying presence of antisemitic interpretative patterns and narratives in public discourses, social interactions or individual attitudes.[12] This latency can take a number of forms, such as re-framing or moderation of stereotyped language in public contexts (communication latency).

According to the theory of communication latency, negative attitudes toward Jews will less likely be expressed in the form of "classical" racist antisemitism that culminated in the Nazi ideology of extermination, but rather in more socially and politically acceptable forms.[13] One way in which antisemitic attitudes can find legitimacy lies in one-sided portrayals of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. According to Matti Bunzl, "Israel's policies in the struggle with Palestinians are giving Europe renewed license to openly despise the Jews."[14] The anti-globalisation discourse is another area that sometimes triggers antisemitic stereotypes and conspiracy theories.[15] In this discourse, antisemitism hardly appears as open enmity to Jews, but rather as a perpetuation of negative ideas about Jewishness and Jewish attributes. For the present study, the concept of communication latency generates several interesting perspectives related to social regulation and expression or rejection of antisemitism.

A set of visual prompts (photographs) used during the interviews served as a starting point for the analysis of the social interaction between the interviewees, asking how intergroup attitudes are negotiated and eventually regulated throughout the conversations. Six photographs were used, all of which were related to prejudice, hate crime and conflict on the one hand, and inclusion, recognition and participation on the other. The analysis focuses on two of these photographs, investigating how they promote different responses and interpretations among the interviewees both linked to the motifs on the photographs and to broader discursive tendencies in Norwegian society. One element in the analysis explores how interpretations can be connected to the photographs as "iconic" images, in the

12. Bergmann and Erb, "Kommunikationslatenz, Moral und öffentliche Meinung."
13. Werner Bergmann and Wilhelm Heitmeyer, "Communicating Anti-Semitism. Are the Boundaries of the Speakable Shifting?" *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* 33 (2005): 70–89.
14. Matti Bunzl, *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds old and new in Europe* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2007).
15. Nicolas Bechter, "Anti-Semitism and Anti-Capitalism in the Current Economic Crisis", *Global Anti-Semitism: A Crisis of Modernity*, ed. Charles Asher Small, (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 27–35.

sense that they draw on established metanarratives.[16] The chapter asks whether the conversations touch upon antisemitic or Islamophobic stereotypes and interpretations, and if so, whether antisemitism and Islamophobia are referred to as external phenomena or if the comments themselves convey antisemitic or Islamophobic ideas and interpretations. Do reactions indicate an underlying acceptance, or is the expression of negative views seen as a transgression of social norms and sanctioned accordingly? The chapter thus investigates signs of social regulation in the way that expressions of antisemitism and Islamophobia are discussed and commented on by the participants, exploring what can be termed the boundaries of the acceptable.

2. METHODOLOGY

Six group interviews were conducted between May 2016 and May 2017; three with Jewish participants and three with Muslim participants. Five of these interviews were conducted in Oslo, and one in Trondheim. The groups consisted of between three and five interviewees.

Being a qualitative study, the aim of the analysis was not to map prevalence of attitudes, but rather to explore nuances in the expressions and the meaning of social interactions. To accomplish this objective, the composition of the groups was broad in terms of variables such as generation, education, gender and religiosity.[17] The aim to explore social interaction and "negotiations" of meaning and normative underlying frames of reference suggested the members of the respective groups should be acquainted prior to the interviews or be recruited within the same milieu. Only participants in the last interview (J3) were not personally acquainted, though they too came from the same milieu.

THE FUNCTION OF GROUP INTERVIEWS AS PART OF THE MINORITY STUDY

The main purpose for supplementing the quantitative surveys with qualitative group interviews was to enable a deeper insight into the attitudes than that obtained by a questionnaire. Group interviews provide information such as a group's shared values and views, interpretations behind the views, insight into

16. Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, "Public Identity and Collective Memory (2003) Public Identity and Collective Memory in U.S. Iconic Photography: The Image of 'Accidental Napalm'", *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20 no. 1; 35–66.
17. For the composition of the groups, see appendix to this chapter.

underlying ambiguities, uncertainties or differences, and the underlying norms and processes behind the opinions.[18]

The group interviews also enabled exploration of the dynamic and adaptive character of the attitudes in question and how these attitudes are related to other opinions of the interviewees. The conversations between the participants demonstrate how opinions and interpretations may change following interaction with other people, and thus show how the expressions of attitudes are flexible and adapted to given social contexts. One of the questions guiding the analysis was how the interactive regulation of the expression of attitudes took place. The manners in which the interviewees modified their views during the course of the interviews varied, and could involve both directions – either downplaying or intensifying expressions. The conversations also showed how different topics can be related – for example when the interviewees referred to their own experiences when asked about the other minority.

The choice of group interviews as a method also made it possible to explore the significance of interaction and social acceptance in attitudinal development and expression. Michael Bloor et al. describe how conversations in groups enable articulation of hidden norms and attitudes:

> The situation of the focus group, in principle and with a fair wind, can provide the occasion and the stimulus for collectivity members to articulate those normally unarticulated normative assumptions. The group is a socially legitimated occasion for participants to engage in "retrospective introspection," to attempt collectively to tease out previously taken for granted assumptions. This teasing out may only be partial with many areas of ambiguity or opacity remaining and it may be disputatious (as limits are encountered to shared meanings), but it may yield up as much rich data on group norms as long periods of ethnographic fieldwork.[19]

The interviews focused on two questions: "What do you think is the reason for negative attitudes towards Jews" and "What do you think is the reason for negative attitudes towards Muslims?" The use of photographs facilitated an open conversation driven by the interviewees' free associations, which enabled the discussion to develop with lesser interference of the interviewer. The photos used in the interviews were "multi-layered" or even somewhat ambivalent, and could serve

18. Michael Bloor et al., *Focus Groups in Social Research* (London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2001).
19. Bloor et al., *Focus Groups in Social Research*, 5–6.

as a starting point for a broad number of associations.[20] The following analysis focuses on two photographs: no. 3, the "ring of peace", showing the solidarity event organised by young Muslims youth outside the synagogue in Oslo, February 21, 2015; and no. 4, "9/11" showing the two airplanes crashing into the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001.

During the interviews, the researcher's initial assumption, that almost all images shown were well-known to the interviewees, was confirmed.[21] Image no. 3 and no. 4 used in the analysis sparked off rich associations and conversations in both Muslim and Jewish groups. The two images proved to be particularly valuable for the exploration of mutual perceptions between the minorities. In addition, image no. 3, "ring of peace", provides a visual representation of one of the key questions in the minority survey regarding the cooperation between Jews and Muslims.

The interviewees were asked to describe and comment on the photos. They were free to choose whatever topic they preferred to focus on and were not obliged to comment if they did not want to.

3. ANALYSIS

9/11

The image of the airplanes crashing into one of the Twin Towers was well known to the participants. The iconic status of the motif was reflected in the way the photo was discussed in the groups, with almost identical phrases and frequent use of so-called narrative abbreviations. Narrative abbreviations are short and fragmented expressions that still contain a whole course of events.[22] The use of such abbreviations indicates that the events referred to are expected to be known to the listener, and that detailed explanations are unnecessary. Below are two examples

20. The photos showed: (1) A pig's head outside a mosque in Kristiansand (anti-Muslim incident from 2012); (2) A shop window with the text "Palestine calling. Jews are not tolerated in Norway" (photo from Oslo during World War II); (3) "The ring of peace"; (4) The 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers in New York; (5) The Norwegian King and Crown Prince wearing kippahs during a visit in the Oslo synagogue in 2009; and (6) The wall between Israel and the West Bank, with Jerusalem to the rear.
21. Image no. 2 was an exception, with Muslim interviewees being confused regarding the historical or present-day context of the image.
22. Jürgen Straub, ed., *Narrative, Identity and Historical Consciousness* (New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000), 123.

of how the interviewees talked about the 9/11 photo. The first is from a group with Muslim participants (M2):

4: To me, when I saw this, it was "the beginning of the war on terror".

1: "That's when everything changed" [speaks English], to say it like that.

4: It was a big turning point, absolutely.

1: Yes.[23]

Almost the same phrases were used in one of the groups with Jewish informants (J3):

2: This is the beginning, I believe, of many things...

1: Yes.

2: Many things that we struggle with today.

1: Very much changed at that point.[24]

As the examples show, both Muslim and Jewish interviewees perceived 9/11 to be a turning point in our time, linked to a number of contemporary societal challenges. However, following these initial remarks, interpretations deviated between the groups concerning which challenges were included into the narrative.

Different views of consequences

The Muslim interviewees referred to charges of terrorism being used as a pretext for Islamophobia as one of the effects of 9/11. Portrayals of both Muslims and Islam were seen as significantly altered in the aftermath of the attack. One interviewee pointed to how the portrayals of Muslims and Islam were politically motivated, and that Islam was interpreted as a religion that "commits terror". Another interviewee mentioned how this focus deeply affected Muslims in their day-to-

23. 4: For meg når jeg så denne her, så er det starten på krigen mot terror.
1: "That's when everything changed," for å si det sånn.
4: Det var et stort vendepunkt, absolutt.
1: Ja.

24. 2: Det er jo starten, tenker jeg, på veldig mye …
1: Ja.
2: Veldig mye som vi strever med i dag.
1: Da endret mye seg ...

day life immediately following the attack: "to look someone in the eyes was almost impossible." One of the interviewees contrasted the widespread group constructions of Muslims after 9/11 with the way the Norwegian public had reacted to the terror attack on 22 July, 2011. The "majority" Norwegian perpetrator made use of Christian symbols, but a similar group construction of Christians did not occur in the aftermath of the attack: "No one mentioned that a Christian was behind the attack, even though he had a cross on his manifesto. He was not 'a Christian' [makes quotation marks with her fingers]." The comment indicates a sense of injustice in the way Muslims are treated compared to other religious groups in the Norwegian public sphere, or perhaps more specifically between the Muslim minority and the majority, which is perceived as Christian.

The discussions in the groups with Jewish informants focused on the "war on terror" and international conflicts, but also on terrorism as a threat in Western societies (J3). The photo thus promoted interpretations that focused on change and had Muslims in a central position, but while Muslim interviewees often mentioned the rise of widespread Islamophobia, Jewish interviewees saw political conflict and (Muslim) terrorists.

Negotiating Islamophobia

An engaged discussion emerged in the first group of Jewish interviewees in connection to the 9/11 photo. Starting from a discussion about Muslims, Islam and integration, two of the participants later ended up debating the relation between (realistic, acceptable) descriptions and prejudice, more precisely where the line should be drawn in terms of characterisations and group constructions of Muslims:

2: You say a lot about Muslims that we don't like to be said about Jews

1: Really?

2: The generalisation – if you had only said "certain Muslims", "certain imams", "certain mosques" –

1: No, I think it is –

2: then, it would have been ok –

1: a majority of Muslims who have those attitudes.

2: But there are still certain… your moderation comes somewhat late and is too small…

1: But would you see it differently, if the same had happened in Norway, which has happened in Paris and Copenhagen?

2: Yes

1: Would you be a little less for a "colourful community" then?

2: Maybe.[25]

The initial reaction is concerned with the lack of nuances and a tendency to associate negative characteristics with all Muslims. By drawing attention to similar group constructions and prejudices towards Jews, the interviewee explicitly relates the Jewish and Muslim experiences, appealing for self-reflection and moderation in the discussion.[26] However, the perspective is not supported. On the contrary, it is met with insistence that the problems can be found among the majority of Muslims. Furthermore, the interviewee is confronted with the reality of terror attacks as an ultimate argument against a general sympathy with Muslims.

The atmosphere in the conversation was tense at this point of the interview, and it was clear that the participants differed both in their opinions about Islam and Muslim integration and in their view of what was appropriate to express on these subjects. While displaying a lack of consensus, the discussion thus simultaneously opened for an articulation and negotiation of norms indicating where the limits of

25. 2: Du sier mye av det om muslimer som vi ikke liker at blir sagt om jøder
1: Å?
2: Den generaliseringen – hadde du bare tatt med enkelte muslimer, enkelte imamer, enkelte moskeer –
1: Nei, jeg tror det er –
2: Så hadde det vært –
1: et flertall av muslimer som har de holdningene
2: men det er fortsatt enkelte.. modereringen din kommer litt for sent og litt for lite..
1: Får du en annen innstilling hvis det skjer i Norge det som har skjedd i Paris og i København?
2: Ja –
1: Vil du, vil du være litt mindre for fargerikt felleskap da?
2: Kanskje.

26. This perspective is at the core of the Common Identity Ingroup Model, which asserts that perceptions of common experiences of discrimination and prejudice may support the development of common identities and engender positive attitudes between members of stigmatised groups. See Samuel L. Gaertner and John F. Dovidio, *Reducing intergroup bias: The common ingroup identity model* (Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press, 2000). In contrast to this, research on social identity threats indicate that perceptions of such threats lead to derogation of members of outgroups. See Nyla R. Branscombe, Naomi Ellemers, Russell Spears and Bertjan Doosje, "The context and content of social identity threat", *Social identity: Context, commitment, content*, ed. Naomi Ellemers, Russell Spears and Bertjan Doosje, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 35–58.

expression should be drawn. The citation also indicates how the severe threat that Jews may experience from extremist individuals among the Muslim minority can represent an obstacle towards an inclusive and open approach to Muslims in general and in the question of integration in Europe.

Conspiracy theories

The 9/11 photo promoted references to various conspiracy theories both in the Jewish and the Muslim groups. In one of the Jewish groups, such ideas were referred to in an ironic manner, underlining the absurdity of the claims. Again, the conversation suggested that the ideas were well known among the participants (J1):

> 1: Yes, speaking of antisemitism, there were no Jews who died in the attack, so it must have been Jews who were behind.
>
> 3: Yes
>
> 2: I too have heard that.
>
> 1: Have you also heard this? [turns towards interviewers]
>
> 2: Yes, yes, all the Jews working in the building were told to stay at home that day.
>
> 1: Yes, hm.
>
> 2: Received a phone call.
>
> 1: But that is not really correct, either.
>
> 3: It's rare that antisemitic propaganda is correct, isn't it, or what do you think?
>
> [laughter][27]

27. "1: Ja, apropos antisemittisme, det var ingen jøder som døde i det angrepet, så det må ha vært noen jøder som har stått bak.
3: Ja.
2: Jeg har også hørt [det].
1: Har dere hørt den historien der også? [henvender seg mot C og V]
2: Ja, ja alle jøder, alle som jobbet i bygget fikk beskjed om å holde seg hjemme den dagen.
1: Ja, mm...
2: Fikk en telefon...
1: Men det stemmer jo ikke, det heller.
3: Det er vel sjelden at antisemittisk propaganda stemmer, er det ikke det da, eller hva tenker du?"

The joking indicates a relaxed attitude towards the conspiracies and the otherwise serious subject. Some of the interviewees also mentioned the similarities that exist between antisemitic and Islamophobic conspiracy theories.

References to conspiracy theories were typically made in a way that suggested a distance to the ideas. However, in the group with the older Muslims (M1), a discussion developed indicating that one of the interviewees supported the idea of a Jewish conspiracy or at least was uncertain of how to relate to it. He started by defining conspiracy theories as something people believed in "the third world", thereby distancing himself and the rest of the group from such ideas. However, as the conversation continued, he expressed more doubt:

> 3: What people think is that, to split the Muslims, the Muslim world, and the USA, in order to create hatred between them, the Jews did this themselves. They have done it, there is planning behind, and they have done it. I am just telling what it says in the newspapers. […] Many people in Pakistan and India or Bangladesh or such places believe that the Jews are behind this, that they took the day off from work and that there were no Jews at work that day, or just a few … Important people who did not go to work and who planned this themselves, and they provided training and money and stuff to the Muslims who are behind it. So, "in reality" [makes quotation marks with his hands], it is Jews who have played this themselves, to split the US and Muslims. Very many believe [this], in Asia.
>
> 4: But we do not know what the truth is.[28]

Interviewee no. 3 returned to the claim that Jews were behind the attack several times, though he did not receive much support from the others. Interviewee no. 4 underlined how shocked they had been over the attacks, and that he was horrified over the way innocent people had been killed. However, the discussion ended with him stating that the truth about the attacks is as yet hidden. Though the main purpose

28. 3: "Men det folk tror, var for å splitte muslimer, muslimsk verden og USA, for å sånn, få hat mellom de to, så har jøder spilt dette selv. De har gjort, de ligger planlegging bak, og de har gjort dette. Det er bare sånn, jeg forteller deg det som står i avisen. [...] Det er veldig mange som tror i Pakistan eller i India eller Bangladesh eller noe sånt, at det er jøder som står bak dette, og de tok fri den dagen fra jobben, ingen jøder ble jo den dagen på jobb, eller noen få som ble jo viktige personer, som ikke gikk på jobb, at de planla jo dette selv, og de ga jo trening og penger og sånn til noen muslimer som står bak dette. Og så i "realiteten" [lager anførselstegn med hendene] så er det jøder som har spilt dette selv, for å splitte USA og muslimer, det tror veldig mange, i Asia
4: Men vi vet ikke hva sannheten er."

seemed to be to end the conversation on the topic, the remark effectively served to spread doubt as to whether the interviewees supported the conspiracy theory.

However, the central issue in the discussion was that such ideas are widespread among other Muslims in *other* – "third-world" – countries, not here, or perhaps, more specifically, not among the participants' own community. Research has shown how support for conspiracy thinking rarely involves complete "theories", but is made indirectly, by pointing to what "others" believe or claim to know, or by hinting at broader ideas.[29] The example demonstrates how different interpretations of the terror attack may be used to express group identities and group boundaries; while Muslims in various Asian countries are perceived to believe that Jews are behind the attacks, Norwegian Muslims are not. Furthermore, the discussion indicated where the limits of socially acceptable interpretations were drawn. When one of the interviewees, despite his initial rejection, indicated support for certain elements of the theory, he was immediately confronted by his discussion partners. The reaction may have been reinforced by the interview situation and the presence of the interviewers, but the discussion nevertheless demonstrated awareness that such support was not "ok".

Interpretations of victimhood

The issue of double standards came up in the discussion in the third group of Muslim interviewees (M3). One of the younger participants mentioned how the victims of 9/11 are commemorated every year in the USA, in contrast to other victims of war and conflict:

> 4: Many commemorate this, at least in the USA. Do we have commemorations every day for those who are killed in Yemen, Afghanistan? And Guantanamo, where people have been held prison for 14 years, do we talk about that? People are tortured; I can't even bear to engage in it. And you call that democracy? It is probably criticised here and there, but that is not my point. If that is not terrorism, I don't know what is. If you ask me, the politics of ISIS and of the US are not that different. It's the same, just different ...[30]

29. Wolfgang Benz, *Was ist Antisemitismus?* (München: C.H. Beck, 2004), 87.
30. 4: "Det er jo mange som markerer dette, i hvert fall i USA. Har vi markeringer hver dag for de som blir drept i Jemen, Afghanistan? Og Guantánamo, der mennesker har vært 14 år i fengsel, snakker vi om det? Mennesker blir torturert, og jeg orker ikke sette meg inn i det engang. Og det kaller man demokrati. Det blir sikkert kritisert, men det er ikke det som er fokuset mitt. Om ikke det er terrorisme, så vet ikke jeg. Så for min del, så er ikke IS og USAs politikk så forskjellig. Det er likt, bare andre..."

The comment describes a difference between the commemoration of the victims of 9/11 in the USA and the attitude towards what are generally Muslim victims of war, indicating a difference in the valuation of the victims. The comment was made by the interviewee who also was critical to the "ring of peace" (see below), and displays a feeling of injustice that goes beyond the concrete situation of Norwegian Muslims and Jews. The feeling of double standards was related to the way "the West" and the USA act in the world, particularly with regard to military dominance. The conversation touched on a number of issues where the interviewees perceived imbalances and injustices. The comment also suggests a reinterpretation of central concepts such as "democracy" and "terrorism", which essentially serves to counter the perceived imbalance by reinstating a new understanding where there is "no difference" between the USA and ISIS.

This sequence of the discussion was from the beginning oriented towards a comparison of victims, the first remarks pointing to how the war that followed the 9/11 attack had resulted in new victims, and the disproportion between "100,000 deaths because of 1000 people dying there."[31] An important point in this argument concerns the relation (or lack of such) between the victims and the crime, with the interviewee underlining how the victims of the post 9/11 war had nothing to do with the terror attack. However, the innocence of the victims of Islamist terror is not mentioned; the focus is solely on the victims of war and the perceived opposition between "the West" and "the Muslims".

In this sequence of the group interview, an interpretative pattern emerges based on the bitterness over political injustice, resulting in an avoidance or rejection of empathy with the victims of Islamist terror. The frustration over the lack of attention and focus on the victims of Western/US warfare might be legitimate; however, the comparison, and even competition of victimhood opens the way to a slippery slope. Similar arguments are used in connection to the notion that Jewish victimhood receives too much attention, while the suffering of other victims is neglected, particularly as a criticism of Holocaust remembrance. Our informants did not mention victims of the Holocaust or memory culture after the Holocaust. Rather, the perceived imbalance in acknowledgement of and attention towards the victims in question was based on a criticism of Western military power and dominance. However, the conversation later displayed unwillingness to specifically acknowledge Jewish victimhood and to show solidarity with Norwegian Jews (see next section), indicating that the anti-antisemitism norm did not have a strong impact in this group.

31. "100.000 er døde på grunn av at tusen mennesker døde her."

In summary, the 9/11 image disclosed a set of interpretations among Jews and Muslims, some of which contributed to notions of mutual understanding and solidarity, others to mistrust and hostility. The analysis also showed that notions of conspiracy theory were regarded as problematic and subject to social regulation.

"THE RING OF PEACE"

Reactions in all groups suggest the "ring of peace" photo is iconic in the sense that everybody was familiar with the reference and talked about it in a manner that indicated an established narrative of "young Muslims initiating solidarity action for Norwegian Jews." The overall response both among the Jewish and the Muslims interviewees was positive, typical examples of comments being, "Then we have this one [picks up the photo of the circle], this we support;" "That was really nice, I think. To show that you are *together*" and "Yes, that was really nice, it was outside here and a good ambiance."

Underlying ambivalence

While positive association dominated the immediate reactions among all participants, one of the Jewish interviewees also mentioned the Jihadist terror that caused the "ring of peace" demonstration. Her remark revealed a certain ambivalence towards the whole event, indicating distrust of the motives behind it and towards the Muslim participants. She said:

> I had just come from Copenhagen, because this was straight after Copenhagen, so I had just been to Copenhagen that week to lay down flowers with my family. It made a strong impression. Lots of emotion, and I definitely did not feel safe and I also sensed a certain ambivalence.[32]

The comment gives an indication of the significant impact the terror against the Danish synagogue had made. Both the fact that the interviewee travelled to the place of the incident to lay down flowers and the use of the abbreviation (this was "after Copenhagen") indicates the strong impression and may also explain the insecurity she felt at the event in Oslo. She later referred to the Facebook page of

32. "Jeg hadde akkurat vært i København, for dette var jo rett etter København, så jeg hadde jo nettopp vært i København den uken og lagt ned blomster sammen med familien min der. Og det var jo så sterkt. Det var masse følelser, og jeg følte meg absolutt ikke trygg og jeg følte også en sånn ambivalens."

one of the organisers, and how it had contained strong anti-Israel statements. While emphasising her positive view of the ring, she admitted that these statements gave her a "double feeling". However, the sense of ambivalence seemed also to be related to how the interviewee viewed those who were behind the ring in relation to the rest of the Muslim population in Oslo: "I still get goose bumps when I think about it, that they stood up the way they did. After all, they can get stabbed in the back by their own for taking that stand. It was brave." The comment suggests that the Muslim community did not generally support the attitude behind the "ring of peace". The assumption can be linked to reactions in the aftermath of the event, among others from a Norwegian Muslim convert who claimed the ring had been "a mistake" due to the Zionist affiliation of the Jewish congregation in Oslo.[33] The fact that the interviewee underlined the "braveness" of the Muslims who initiated the ring also indicates her mixed feelings: the immediate sense of insecurity due to the fresh impression from the terror attack in Copenhagen, the admiration for the organisers of the event, and the assumption that their attitudes were not supported by many other Muslims.

In the first group of Jewish interviewees (J1), ambivalence was related to how the event necessarily pointed out the minority identity of the Jewish participants. One of the interviewees said her goal was that a Jewish identity would be seen as something ordinary, "like hair colour or a hobby." In contrast to that desired normality, the "ring of peace" had underlined that the minority was "different, small, protected and special." So, while she appreciated the solidarity demonstrated by the event and liked to take part in it, the interviewee could not embrace it wholeheartedly.

Ownership and pride

The interviewees in the group of young Muslims (M2) expressed a sense of pride and ownership related to the "ring of peace":

> 4: [The act of terror] shows that Muslims are prejudiced, too, and that some Muslim individuals hate Jews intensely. Still, you see an entire generation of young, Norwegian Muslims, standing together, hand in hand, in order to protect and create a ring around a synagogue. There is no better response than that. It is so crystal clear that this is just perfect.
>
> 2: Mm [confirms]

33. https://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/i/5xE91/Muslimske-linstad-fredsringen-er-en-alvorlig-feil. Accessed December 5, 2018.

> 4: Such actions can contribute to breaking up stereotypes.
>
> 2: Not just in public, but one also has to work within one's own groups. Muslim leaders must be more engaged in the Norwegian debate and establish a dialogue with different members of parliament that keep some of these attitudes against Muslims, so we can break up the vicious circle. So, it is of absolute importance that Muslims go out more and do not defend themselves, but prove the opposite.[34]

In this short sequence, interviewee no. 1 acknowledges that there are negative attitudes and hate against Jews among Muslims, but describes how these attitudes are found in a minority (some individuals), which were confronted by "an entire generation of young Muslims" during the event. Furthermore, she sees the event as the ultimate way of counteracting negative stereotypes against Muslims, a view that is supported by one of the other interviewees. In this, she accepts the responsibility of (young) Muslims to show society that they stand up against antisemitism in their own community. She also claims that Muslim leaders should more clearly confront those having negative attitudes by "proving the opposite". In this way, she positions the young Muslim organisers of the ring of peace as role models for the Muslim community, and even as their leaders.

Imbalance

In contrast to the pride and ownership expressed in the group of young Muslims (M2), one of the interviewees in the group of female Muslims (M3) was sceptical. Her criticism was mostly related to perceptions of the expectations Muslims face:

> 4: As Muslim, we really try hard to show that we are not evil. I mean, how many times have there been "rings of peace" around mosques? Do we really have to go out, it is almost expected, one always expects that Muslims distance

34. 4: "[Terroren] viser at også muslimer har mye fordommer og enkelte muslimer har mye jødehat. Likevel ser du en hel generasjon unge, norske muslimer som står samlet, hånd i hånd, for å verne og slå ring rundt en synagoge. Det finnes ikke noe bedre svar enn det. Det er jo så krystallklart og det er jo så perfekt.
2: Mm.
4: Sånne handlinger er det jo som gjør at man kan klare å bryte ned stereotypiene.
2: Ikke bare i offentligheten, man må også jobbe innad i egne grupper. Muslimske ledere må i større grad være med i den norske debatten og gå i dialog med ulike norske stortingsrepresentanter som har i seg en del av disse holdningene mot muslimer, slik at vi klarer å bryte den onde sirkelen, da. Så det er absolutt viktig at muslimer går mer ut og ikke forsvarer seg, men beviser det motsatte."

> themselves when something happens, but do the Americans do that? Did all Norwegians go out in the streets to say "we do not support ABB" [meaning the terrorist Anders Behring Breivik], or the Jews say: we are against Netanyahu's actions? The intentions were surely good, but I wouldn't have taken part in it. Because I do not need to go out to say that I do not kill Jews. I do not have anything against Jews, so why do I have to express it?[35]

This interviewee is clearly less willing to accept responsibility for distancing herself from acts of terror performed in the name of Islam and Muslims. From her perspective, it is unfair that Muslims in general are held responsible for whatever bad things any Muslim does. It is quite interesting that she chooses the Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik and the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu in order to illustrate that other people are not held responsible for actions conducted by individuals. Here, we see another example of comparison. The sequence expresses what can be termed the counterpart of the interpretative pattern of competition of victimhood, namely the comparison of wrongdoings. By mentioning Netanyahu, the interviewee indicates that his actions are comparable with Islamist and right-wing extremist terror.

The two sequences together can serve to illustrate what Bohnsack describes as underlying collective patterns of orientation in group interviews.[36] The interviewees seem to share an underlying view according to which Muslims do not receive the acknowledgement and respect they deserve, but are blamed and scapegoated in society. In one of the groups (M3) this seems to result in a rejection of empathy or solidarity with groups they regard as being favoured.

Towards the end of the quote, the interviewee in M3 stresses that she does not feel hatred against Jews, though she once again mentions the feeling of being pressured to take distance from such hate. The feeling of imbalance when it comes to the claims society directs towards Muslims and the lack of solidarity shown to Muslims ("how many times did we see 'rings of peace' around mosques?") seem to be the reason for the unwillingness to support the ring of peace around the synagogue. However, this unwillingness to show empathy and solidarity, com-

35. 4: "Som muslim så prøver vi jo skikkelig hardt å vise at vi ikke er onde. Altså, Hvor mange ganger har man hatt fredsringer rundt moskéer? Må vi virkelig gå ut, det forventes nesten som man alltid forventer at muslimer tar avstand når noe skjer, men.. Gjør alle amerikanere det? Tok alle nordmenn i gatene og sa 'Vi støtter ikke ABB'? eller om jødene sa: Vi er i mot Netanyahus handlinger? Det var sikkert gode intensjoner, men jeg hadde ikke deltatt der. For jeg har ikke behov for å gå ut å si at jeg dreper ikke jøder. Jeg har ikke noe imot jøder, så hvorfor skal jeg gå ut og ytre meg?"

36. Bohnsack, "'Orientierungsmuster': Ein Grundbegriff qualitativer Sozialforschung."

bined with the equation of Netanyahu and "Jews" sheds light on the previous comment about "not hating Jews". This statement seems to expresses a commitment to the anti-antisemitism norm, understood as the obligation to (at least) not to *hate* Jews.

Victimhood versus agency

While there seems to be an underlying agreement in the group of female Muslims (M3) of an unwillingness to show solidarity with Jews due to a perception of Muslims being more discriminated against, the members of the other group of young Muslims (M2) conclude differently when talking about the hostility they experience. One female interviewee talks about how Muslims are being dehumanised:

> 1: If we look at Norway as a body, Muslims are almost regarded as a tumour. The question is if this tumour is benign or malign? If it is malign, how shall we remove it? How shall we fix the problem? How shall we fix the tumour? Cure Norway? If it is benign, how can we let it be, not touch it and kind of calm it down? If we look at Muslims as a vital organ in the body that is Norway, how can we contribute to making this body a hundred times better? I think this is underlying the entire debate. (...)
>
> 4: I think it is understandable that Muslims somehow take the victim position. It is also understandable if you think about all that pressure from the media, a lot of verbal harassment on the internet. It is understandable. The victim position does not come by default. But the problem is that we have very few voices in the media who manage to give an academic response, few who can break the media image.[37]

37. 1: "Hvis vi ser på Norge som en kropp, så blir muslimene sett på som en svulst, nesten. Og så er spørsmålet om dette er en ondartet svulst eller en godartet svulst? Og hvis det er en ondartet, hvordan skal vi fjerne den? Hvordan skal vi fikse problemet. Hvordan skal vi fikse svulsten? Kurere Norge? Og hvis det er en godartet, hvordan skal vi bare la den ligge, ikke røre den og liksom dempe den ned? Hvis vi ser på muslimene som et vitalt organ i kroppen, som er Norge, hvordan kan vi være med til å gjøre kroppen hundre ganger bedre? Det er dette jeg synes ligger under hele debatten, da. […]
4: Jeg synes det er forståelig at muslimer går litt i offerrolle. Det er forståelig også med tanke på alt det mediepresset, mye verbal hets på, nettet.. Det er jo forståelig. Det er jo ikke ubetinget at offerrollen kommer. Men problemet er at vi har dessverre veldig få stemmer i media som klarer å gi et akademisk svar tilbake, som kan knekke ned mediebildet."

This interview sequence starts with referring to a drastic and dehumanising aspect of Islamophobic discourse. At this point, it would not be surprising if the conversation turned in the same direction we saw in the other group, rejecting any claims of the wider Norwegian society. But as the interviewee continues to ponder the metaphor of Norway as a body, she turns it into the complete opposite, insisting that Muslims are a vital part of the nation, being able to contribute positively. As this interviewee refrains from a self-victimisation, the other interviewee reflects on how the victim position can emerge. However, similar to the first speaker, he chooses a positive outlook of being able to give an "academic response" and "break the media image."

In these two short paragraphs, we see an underlying orientation contrasting the one in the first group: instead of dwelling on the subject of discrimination and using it as a pretext for rejecting claims of empathy or solidarity, this group insists on being able to intellectualise their experience and articulate their own voice. Positioning themselves as resourceful agents against discrimination, they also position themselves as agents of solidarity when another minority is threatened.

Balance of solidarity

In the interview with the Muslim "veterans" (M1), the issue of "balance" was brought up as the discussion lead on to solidarity. One of the interviewees referred to an event held in front of one of the Oslo mosques a week after the "ring of peace" around the synagogue. However, the event by the mosque did not receive the same amount of support, neither through direct participation or coverage in national media. On the contrary, due to allegedly antisemitic statements by the mosque's imam, the initiative was met by a number of critical reactions. Despite this, the interviewees seemed to regard the two events as equally important:

> 1: Then it is this here [points to the image of the "ring of peace"], we support that! We joined it, and we took part in it. And then we had [one] right outside [mosque X]. So, there are images of them, why do you not have images of [the other event]?
>
> 3: But it was nice, that one.
>
> […]

4: We wish to see such kind of solidarity.[38]

In this short sequence, we see the negotiation concerning the evaluation of the ring of peace around the synagogue at work. The way the interviewee uses "we" here suggests an almost formal statement, an "official" attitude towards this issue, indicating that there is little room for different views of interpretations. However, there was a certain tension between the interviewees, one critically asking why no representation of the ring of peace around the mosque had been included into the set of images, while the other underlines the sympathy with the ring of peace around the synagogue. Is it a necessary condition for the appreciation of the event that also a similar "ring of peace" around a mosque is acknowledged? Or is the act of solidarity in itself unconditioned, a "nice thing" which can be appreciated? The tension was settled by the somewhat open comment on solidarity – which in fact could have been related to either one or both of the events.

Doubt about long-term effect

As shown in the previous paragraphs, both Jewish and Muslim interviewees shared an overall positive evaluation of the "ring of peace". It had clearly given the participants a positive encounter and common experience with (representatives of) the other minority. Following Gordon Allport and what is known as "contact theory" in the field of research on prejudice, such symbolic and clearly emotionally loaded events can contribute to dismantling existing negative attitudes towards groups.[39] In the case of the "ring of peace", massive and undivided positive media coverage will have contributed to this effect beyond the persons directly involved in the event. However, some of the Jewish interviewees expressed doubts about the prevalence of this effect, as this quote illustrates: "well intentioned indeed, but unfortunately forgotten two days later. Thank you, next one please."

The young Muslim interviewees, who had shown such enthusiasm about the "ring of peace", expressed some of the same scepticism:

38. 1: "Så er det den her [viser bildet av fredens ring], den støtta vi. Den var vi med på, og den har vi tatt der og så har vi tatt rett utenfor moskéen [X]. Så det er bilder av dem, hvorfor har dere ikke bilder av [den andre ringen]?
3: Men det var en fin en, den der.
[…]
4: Sånn solidaritet vil vi ha."
39. Gordon Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Basic books, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979 [1954]).

2: But it is a little bit sad, it has been such a *golden opportunity* for the two communities to move somewhat closer together. But this has not happened yet, now in the aftermath. It is maybe more obvious that one should have more meetings.

4: But it became a little bit like that, somehow (# 2: yes, maybe). We still have the same grandfather.

[light laughter]

3: Yes.

4: We are family.

2: But, we talk about two minorities, who for sure could have learned from each other.

3: Yes, I feel that there was somehow, in any case in Oslo afterwards, there was an intention to stay in touch.

1: Yes, maybe, but it fades out [English in the original]. People have their own lives and so. It's like [makes a movement with her head] shall we be mingling?[40]

The interviewees doubt the long-term effect of the event, yet the scepticism is not rooted in a deeper sense of mistrust, but is rather explained by hectic lives and everyday challenges that make such promises difficult to keep. Though the tone

40. 2: "Men det var og litt synd, at det var sånn *golden opportunity* til at de to samfunnene kanskje er litt mer sammen da, men det har jo ikke skjedd ennå, nå i etterkant, det er klarere [?] kanskje, at man skulle hatt mer samlinger sammen
4: Men det ble jo litt sånn, eller sånn
2: Ja, kanskje
4: Vi har jo samme bestefar da, det har vi da
[lett latter]
3: Ja
4: Vi er jo i familie
2: Men, eh, det er jo to minoriteter da, som kunne sikkert ha lært av hverandre
3: Ja, jeg føler at det var litt, i hvert fall i Oslo etterpå, det var litt at man skulle ta kontakt og sånn
1: Ja, kanskje samme
3: Ja
1: Men det fader [engelsk] jo ut, altså folk har jo sine egne liv og så er det sånn der [lager en bevegelse med hode], skal man mingle, da?"

was disappointed, the interviewees did not seem to think that contact between the minorities was principally impossible; it was only difficult in practice.

In summary, the image of the ring of peace, being an icon of successful Muslim-Jewish solidarity, triggered immediate positive reactions among the interviewees. However, the image was also associated with some ambivalent feelings, insecurity and even a sense of resistance, the latter being related to perceptions among the Muslim interviewees of imposed culpability.

4. CONCLUSION

The photographs used as prompts in the group interviews sparked a range of reactions, comments and conversations in the groups, providing an insight into the attitudes the Jewish and Muslim interviewees hold towards each other. The two photos of 9/11 and the "ring of peace" were immediately recognised by the participants and seemed to have an "iconic" status in the sense that they were associated with established interpretations and narratives. Both images were related to different aspects and effects of Islamophobia and antisemitism, which was apparent in the discussions. However, few examples of open Islamophobia or classical antisemitic stereotypes were expressed, and when they appeared, they did not remain uncontested. The mentioning of conspiracy theories about the terror attack on 9/11 was accompanied by a certain unease among the other interviewees and led to attempts to place these ideas "outside" their respective communities. By suggesting that conspiracy ideas regarding Jews were widespread in other countries, but unacceptable in Norway, the interviewees distanced themselves from such ideas and positioned themselves as Norwegian. These interview sequences indicated how the fine line between acceptable and non-acceptable statements was established and maintained.

The analysis of the group interviews points to a double ambivalence among the interviewees. On the one hand, this ambivalence is an aspect of the relationship between the minorities; on the other, the interviewees express ambivalent feelings related to the experiences of being minorities in Norwegian society. The experience of not being acknowledged as proper Norwegians opens for an interpretation of having something in common as minorities. This complexity is illustrated by the fact that the Jewish interviewees were appreciative of the "ring of peace", but also expressed doubts and even anxiety towards the solidarity event organised by Muslims. The reactions thus showed little immediate trust, and indicated doubt as to whether the organisers and motivation behind the event could be regarded as representative. The Muslim interviewees were divided in their reactions: some

interviewees expressed pride and ownership, based on the acceptance of an obligation to distance oneself from antisemitism and terror. In contrast to this, other interviewees rejected any such obligation and expressed indignation over what they perceived as asymmetry regarding what the Muslim minority was expected to "prove" to the majority, compared to what was expected from the Jewish minority.

Methodologically, the study shows the usefulness of images as visual stimuli in the study of collective underlying orientations and latency. The exploration of interactions in social groups gives relevant insight into processes of negotiation of attitudes. The analysis has shown how the boundaries of the acceptable and non-acceptable are not static, but rather framed by existing social and cultural norms and regulated by social interaction of the groups.

In our study, we found perceptions of communality and solidarity between Muslims and Jews as well as perceptions of mistrust and competitive victimhood. Solidarity seems to be undermined when public discourse is perceived to apply different standards and expectations to the minorities. Latent negative attitudes against Jews expressed by Muslim interviewees in this study are linked to and legitimised by feelings of bitterness due to stigmatisation and lack of acknowledgement. The findings thus indicate that the impact of initiatives taken in order to establish trust and solidarity among the minorities only can be understood when taking into account the impact of public policy and discourse. The solidary shown by Muslims and Jews after the recent right-wing extremist terror attacks against a synagogue in Pittsburgh, USA[41] and mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand[42] show that a sense of mutual solidary may grow in the face of hate and violence targeting both minorities. The different ways that societal contexts and public discourse frame attitudes among minorities is a topic for further research.

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APPENDIX

COMPOSITION OF THE GROUPS:

Muslim interviewees	**Jewish interviewees**
M1: Three men aged over 70, first-generation immigrants from Pakistan, no higher education. The informants were mutual acquaintances and attended the same mosque. The interview was attended by two other individuals who did not actively participate, one of whom was the imam of the mosque.	J1: One woman and two men aged between 40 and 60. The woman described herself as atheist. The two men were religious. The informants were not personal acquaintances.
M2: Two women and two men aged between 19 and 25, high level of education, liberal interpretation of religion (one was a convert). Socially engaged. One individual in the group was personally acquainted with the others, but all of them belonged to the same community.	J2: Three women and one man aged between 20 and 30 and affiliated to the Mosaic Faith Community in Trondheim. The informants were personal acquaintances; two of them were related.
M3: Four women; two second-generation immigrants in their twenties, and two women in their forties of Norwegian descent who had converted to Islam as adults. All devoutly religious. The informants were personal acquaintances.	J3: Three women aged between 50 and 60, affiliated to the Mosaic Religious Community in Oslo. All participants had either backgrounds from countries other than Norway, families abroad, or had lived for long periods outside Norway.