

Papers on Antisemitism and Racism

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DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MUSLIMS AND ANTISEMITIC VIEWS AMONG YOUNG MUSLIMS IN EUROPE

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European Muslims: Between Integration, Exclusion and Discrimination

The vast majority of Muslims in Europe are immigrants, or descendants of immigrants, who settled in Europe after World War II.² Together with other immigrants, they came to work in the growing Western European economies during the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s; they were joined by their families, and later, others arrived as refugees. Out of the European Union's present population of 500 million, 15 to 20 million are Muslim. Two-thirds live in France, Germany, and the UK.³ France has the highest share of Muslims, but they still comprise only 6-8.5 percent of the population.⁴ However, the proportion is higher in some urban agglomerations and among young people. The history of migration to Europe has resulted in a diverse landscape of Muslim communities in each European country.

The majority of Muslims in Germany are immigrants or the descendants of immigrants from Turkey; about a quarter are ethnic Kurds. The second largest group comes from the former Yugoslavia.⁵ Some 80 percent of Muslims in France have a Maghreb background, mostly Arab but

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² I would like to thank Roni Stauber and Beryl Belsky for their careful reading of different versions of the manuscript and their thoughtful and constructive suggestions and comments. A more detailed paper focusing exclusively on antisemitism among European Muslims will be published in *Resurgent Antisemitism: Global Perspectives*, ed. Alvin H. Rosenfeld (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013). Some of the findings on discrimination against Muslims were published in Günther Jikeli, "Discrimination of European Muslims: Self-Perceptions, Experiences and Discourses of Victimhood," in *Minority Groups: Coercion, Discrimination, Exclusion, Deviance and the Quest for Equality*, ed. Dan Soen, Mally Shechory, and Sarah Ben-David (Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science, 2012), 77–96.

³ Open Society Institute, *Muslims in Europe: A Report on 11 EU Cities* (New York/London/Budapest, 2010), 22, http://www.soros.org/initiatives/home/articles_publications/publications/muslims-europe-20091215/a-muslims-europe-20100302.pdf; Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, "Mapping the Global Muslim Population – A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population" (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2009), <http://www.pewforum.org/newassets/images/reports/muslimpopulation/muslimpopulation.pdf>.

⁴ Thomas Vampouille, "France: Comment est évalué le nombre de musulmans," *Le Figaro*, April 5, 2011.

⁵ Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the EU: Cities Report: Germany. Preliminary Research Report and*

also Berber, from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. Other ethnicities include groups from Turkey, Sub-Saharan Africa and Middle East countries.⁶ Most Muslims in the UK are immigrants or descendants of immigrants from former colonies in South Asia, today's Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India.⁷

Today, the majority of European Muslims are an integral part of the fabric of their cities, regions, and countries. Although there have been vociferous discussions about terrorist plots by young European Muslims, public approval of the Shari'a, clashes in reaction to cartoons mocking the Prophet Muhammad, and public debates about Muslim women wearing the veil or outlawing the burkha, forced marriages, and "honor killings," they mostly concern a minority of Muslims and have not led to a general alienation of Muslims from mainstream society. It is important to bear in mind that Islam, far from being a homogeneous religion, varies according to doctrine, ideological stream, and individual preference. However, religious identity has growing importance for European Muslims. Today, most Muslims strongly identify with Islam but also with their country of residence.⁸

Muslim communities face a number of social-economic challenges, including particularly high unemployment rates, relatively poor housing conditions and lower levels of formal work qualifications. Discrimination is also a factor. In addition to racism and xenophobia, Muslims increasingly face negative stereotypes of Islam and Muslims. More than half of the population in Germany, France, and Britain associate Muslims with fanaticism or violence.⁹ In 2008, one in three Muslims in the EU had suffered discrimination in the previous twelve months.¹⁰ However, discrimination varied according to country and ethnic background, and was even higher against other minority groups: 47 percent of Roma and 41 percent of people of Sub-Saharan African origin had suffered discrimination in the previous 12 months,¹¹ indicating that racism is still the dominant factor

Literature Survey (2007), 14,

http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/eumuslims/background_reports/download/germany/germany.pdf; Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, *Muslimisches Leben in Deutschland*, (Nürnberg: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, 2009), 13: 57–93,

http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Forschungsberichte/fb06-muslimisches-leben.pdf?__blob=publicationFile; Martin Sökefeld, *Aleviten in Deutschland: Identitätsprozesse einer Religionsgemeinschaft in der Diaspora* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2008).

⁶ Jonathan Laurence and Justin Vaïsse, *Integrating Islam: Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2006); Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the EU: Cities Report: France. Preliminary Research Report and Literature Survey* (2007), 11, http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/eumuslims/background_reports/download/france/france.pdf.

⁷ Office for National Statistics, *National Statistics - Focus on Religion*, October 2004, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/ethnicity/focus-on-religion/2004-edition/focus-on-religion-summary-report.pdf>.

⁸ *The Gallup Coexist Index 2009: A Global Study of Interfaith Relations. With an In-depth Analysis of Muslim Integration in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom* (Washington, DC: Gallup, 2009), <http://www.muslimwestfacts.com/mwf/118249/Gallup-Coexist-Index-2009.aspx>.

⁹ Pew Global Attitudes Project, *The Great Divide. How Westerners and Muslims View Each Other* (2006), <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/253.pdf>.

¹⁰ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), *Data in Focus Report – Muslims*, European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (2009), 5, http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/EU-MIDIS_MUSLIMS_EN.pdf.

¹¹ FRA, *European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey* (2009), 36,

in discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities. Ten percent of Muslim respondents believed that the discrimination they experienced was based on religion or belief; 32 percent considered it was a result of ethnic or immigrant origin; and 43 percent assumed that it was a combination of all of the above.¹²

Reports suggest that anti-Muslim acts have supplemented racist manifestations in Europe in recent years and Muslim organizations point to mounting fears and anger among the communities about the rise of anti-Muslim sentiments.¹³ However, statistics indicate that racism and xenophobia still constitute the main forms of intolerance. Comparative figures exist for France regarding acts of physical violence. In 2012, there were 118 racist or xenophobic, 53 anti-Muslim, and 177 antisemitic acts of violence.¹⁴ The proportion of violent xenophobic and racist events is even greater in countries such as Germany and the UK.¹⁵ However, there is a growing sense of victimhood based on Islamic belief. Debates on Islamic fundamentalism and increased anti-terror measures are often viewed as anti-Muslim bias.¹⁶

Comparative Study Results: Perceptions of Discrimination and Exclusion

How do young European Muslims perceive discrimination and how and to what extent do they identify with their respective European countries and nationality? A qualitative study conducted among 117 young males who consider themselves Muslim provides some insights into perceptions of discrimination and differences between them in Germany, France, and the UK.

The young men, aged between 14 and 27, were asked on the streets of Berlin, Paris, and London about their experiences of discrimination and self-identification. They self-identified as Muslim.¹⁷ The interviews were conducted between 2005 and 2007, as part of an international study on discrimination and antisemitism.¹⁸ Interviewees were asked whether they had experienced racism

http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/eumidis_mainreport_conference-edition_en.pdf

¹² FRA, *Data in Focus Report – Muslims*, 5.

¹³ European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), *Muslims in the European Union. Discrimination and Islamophobia* (2006),

http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/Manifestations_EN.pdf. For recent figures on France see Commission nationale consultative des droits de l’homme (CNCDH), *La Lutte Contre Le Racisme, Antisémitisme Et La Xénophobie. Année 2011* (Paris: [La Documentation Française](#) 2012), <http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/var/storage/rapports-publics/124000269/0000.pdf>.

¹⁴ Commission nationale consultative des droits de l’homme (CNCDH), *La lutte contre le racisme, antisémitisme et la xénophobie. Année 2012* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 2012), 106-49.

¹⁵ Bundesministerium des Inneren, *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2011* (Berlin, 2012), 34–51; Home Office, *Hate crimes, England and Wales 2011/12*,

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/hate-crimes-1112/>. The actual figures from the different countries cannot be compared in a meaningful way due to different methods of registration and report.

¹⁶ The term “Islamophobia” is often used to blur the distinction between anti-Muslim bias and criticism of Islamic doctrine and practice.

¹⁷ After some initial questions about their neighborhood, conflicts, and discrimination, interviewees were asked about their religious affiliation.

¹⁸ Conducted by the International Institute for Education and Research on Antisemitism, www.iibsa.org, and

and discrimination, and in what forms. Although not all kinds of discrimination are necessarily perceived by its victims as such, and other incidents might be misinterpreted as discrimination, the responses capture instances of *perceived* discrimination. It is the sense of discrimination, exclusion, and of being different that influences the perception of one's position in society. This can constitute an important factor in personal identification with a (religious or ethnic) community instead of with mainstream society.

The majority of interviewees reported suffering discrimination or of being subjected to negative stereotyping and prejudices directed against their ethnic or religious community. However, the question of whether the discrimination was rooted in racism or in anti-Muslim prejudice is probably less relevant for young Muslims than for scholars. Interviewees complained about the effects of discrimination and prejudice and were less concerned about the motives or ideological reasons. Farouk¹⁹ from Paris, who believes that he is more affected by racist discrimination than religious discrimination, said: *“No, I don't think it's because of religion. But, I dunno, honestly, I'm not in their heads, so I can't know why.”*

Discrimination varies from place to place. Neighborhoods with large migrant communities are often seen as free of discrimination – with the exception of situations involving the police. Discrimination is usually felt in other districts of the city or in other cities altogether.

Interviewees reported hostile looks, as well as threats and physical attacks, particularly in Germany. Many participants from France experienced discrimination in the job market because of their skin color and Arab-sounding names. Discrimination based on social background and district of residence is felt especially in Paris. Within their district, a number of interviewees in Paris and London perceived the police as racist and complained about the frequent stop-and-search policies. The French police, in particular, were accused of racism, including alleged racist remarks and mistreatment.

The perception of otherness reveals differences among the three countries. Generally, interviewees in Germany believed that there was discrimination against “foreigners,” based on skin (and hair) color. They often felt foreign, despite having German nationality. In France, discrimination appeared to be focused primarily on Arabs and blacks, based on skin color, Arab names, and stigmatized areas of residence. In Britain, while many thought that discrimination was based on skin color, too, others felt that anti-Muslim prejudices prevailed.

Further differentiation can be made between perceptions of discrimination against Muslims and perceptions of hostility against Islam. Some interviewees, mostly from Britain, complained about prejudice against Islam and Muslims, or felt themselves affected indirectly by alleged attacks

part of a Ph.D project at the Center for Research on Antisemitism, Berlin. Günther Jikeli, *Antisemitismus und Diskriminierungswahrnehmungen junger Muslime in Deutschland* (Essen, Ruhr: Klartext, 2012).

¹⁹ All names of interviewees are pseudonyms. They were chosen from a list of common names among people of their particular ethnic background.

targeting “the Muslims” in other countries. This lack of distinction poses a serious problem not only for research.²⁰ Notably, perceptions of anti-Islam or anti-Muslim hostility on a global scale, rather than experiences of personal discrimination, are often linked to conspiracy theories against “the Muslims” or an alleged war against Islam in which Jews are viewed as the main enemy. The remarks of Sabir, a British Muslim from London, are telling: “*I haven’t been discriminated in any ways. Let it be job, going to a church, even though I’m a Muslim, it wasn’t really a problem. It’s alright.*” However, he believes there is a global conspiracy against Muslims in which America and a “Jewish plan” are the driving forces. He alludes to “two white men” found with explosives near London, who might have been part of a plot to blame Muslims for terrorism; he then links this to the Iraq war and 9/11 attacks, eventually framing these events as part of a predestined religious war prescribed in the Qur’an. He ends with the wildest of conspiracy theories:

I remember once reading on one of the articles. They found more than enough explosives in two white men's house somewhere down Essex. That did not come on the news. What were they playin’ with that? They could have actually put the bombs here and puttin’ the blames on the Muslims. It’s all conspiracy. I don’t know how to put it down to be honest. It’s, they are just targeting the Muslims for some reason I don’t know why. And mainly I think it’s because of the super power country which is America. The whole reason the people went to war with Iraq was for the oil... and Tony Blair, the dog, sucking his arse.... This 9/11 thing, I don’t believe it was actually Muslim who’ve done that. This is just bullshit because... these two planes would not have taken this building down... And it’s not only that. When the bomb went off... there’s so many Jews working in that block. None of the Jews were working that day, so what happens here? ... It’s all planned out... Muslims are supposed to be the Jewish’s worst enemies... The way I’d say the planning is: ‘cause in the Qur’an it says there will be a holy war. One solid war that will end the world and for the first couple of hundred years, Muslims will suffer but then the Muslims will overcome and they will take the pride. They will win the war. And the way it’s goin’ on, as far as Islam and Jew... the time is actually comin’ it’s not very far. It’s comin’ there. So the reason I think, this is part of the Jewish plan. They are planning it all out, “so let’s take out all the Muslims, make their side weaker,” ‘cause that’s what they are

²⁰ The controversial term “Islamophobia,” which is often used to silence critical views of Islam and Islamic practices, does not distinguish between negative perceptions of Islam and discrimination against Muslims. The term “Islamophobia” gained popularity in Britain with the report of the Runnymede Trust, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* (London: The Runnymede Trust, 1997). It has since been used in international reports such as EUMC, *Muslims in the European Union: Discrimination and Islamophobia*. The term is used less in Germany and France. For a critical discussion, see Astrid Bötticher, “Islamophobia? The German Discussion about Islamophobia,” *Central European Political Studies Review* XI, nos 2–3 (2009): 210–29.

trying to do. Because Saddam was a super power man for us because he was a Muslim, strong, he had lot of armies, he was a good support to us. If the war came along we would definitely have his support [sic].

Sabir's interview is an example of how the perception of a general war against Muslims can be intertwined with antisemitic conspiracy theories. His is an antisemitic interpretation of reality.

Identification as German, French, or British

The study exposes major differences between the three countries in respondents' identification with national identity. This can be largely explained as a result of disparate concepts of national identity and immigration policies. Rogers Brubaker contrasted the model of French citizenry as a "territorial community" based on place of birth and residence, with that of German citizenry as a "community of descent" based on ancestry.²¹ These opposing representations are also referred to as "civic" (inclusive) and "ethnic" (exclusive) conceptions, or in legal terms, as *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*.²² In most countries, both concepts are applied to some extent – even in today's France and Germany. In Britain, both place of birth and ancestry have been employed in determining citizenship and national belonging.²³

In Germany, interviewees felt that they were not regarded as German, despite having German citizenship; they accept and internalize their non-acceptance as Germans, demanding acknowledgment by German society as "foreigners," "Turks," or "Arabs," and as permanent residents of Germany. The generally strong identification with ethnic background among all interviewees is viewed by many of them as opposition to German national identity. This can be regarded as internalization of an ethnic-exclusive concept of nationality in Germany. The statement of Murat from Berlin is telling: "*I was born here, have a German passport, but I still am and remain a foreigner.*"

By contrast, the French civic model of a "territorial community" allows immigrants to identify as French. Most respondents consider themselves French although many also have the feeling that they are not regarded as French. This was expressed by Omar from Paris in the statement:

²¹ Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

²² Michael Keating, *Nations Against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia, and Scotland*, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke, Hampshire/New York: Palgrave, 2001); Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991); William Safran, "Citizenship and Nationality in Democratic Systems: Approaches to Defining and Acquiring Membership in the Political Community," *International Political Science Review* 18, no. 3 (July 1, 1997): 313–335.

²³ Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-War Britain: The Institutional Origins of a Multicultural Nation* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Stephen Small and John Solomos, "Race, Immigration and Politics in Britain: Changing Policy Agendas and Conceptual Paradigms 1940s-2000s," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 47, nos 3–4 (August 1, 2006): 235–57.

“We're at home without being at home.”

This leads to a sense of injustice and the insistence on being French. However, national self-identification depends on the situation and context. Most interviewees identify as French when asked about their nationality, including in the context of rivalry with other nations, for example, when talking about sports or even military strength. On the other hand, when speaking of topics such as discrimination, their neighborhoods, schools, or rivalries with youths from other ethnic backgrounds, they might describe themselves as Arab, black, Algerian, Moroccan, or Tunisian, often in direct contrast to “white people” and “people with French parents,” who are then considered French. National identification among young Muslims in France is therefore situational.

The multicultural concept in Britain seems to facilitate dual self-identification, which only a few respondents in France and Germany also use. In Britain, not being accepted as British seems to be less of an issue than in France or Germany, although some voiced concerns about non-acceptance and discrimination against them either directly or institutionally, as members of ethnic or religious minorities. Most respondents identified Britishness as an important dimension of their identity, often in combination with ethnic background, and in self-descriptions such as “British-Asian.” According to Rahoul from London: *“British-Bengali, because we are proud to be who we are!”*

Muslim identity and identification as German, French, or British are usually not perceived as contradictory among young Muslims in Europe, except for those who have a Manichean perception of Islam, which establishes a clear divide between Muslims and non-Muslims, a trend observed particularly in the UK. This explains responses in surveys to the effect that Islam and democracy are incompatible. In 2006, 36 percent of Muslims in Germany, 28 percent in France and 47 percent in Great Britain, thought that there was a natural conflict between being a devout Muslim and living in a modern society.²⁴

Conflicting perceptions of Muslim identity consist of an emphasis on the community of Muslims combined with dichotomic views of Muslims and others. The latter are often related to a conspiratorial view of a “war against Muslims,” frequently phrased in religious terms, such as a war between Islam and Christianity and Judaism. These perceptions can be found in all three countries, but in Britain they are connected more directly to alienation from national identity, to a certain extent because of the involvement of British troops in the Iraq war, which is seen as part of the “war against Muslims.” Such views often imply conspiracy theories in which “the Jews” or “the West” are deemed responsible for the alleged global war against Muslims. The study shows that hatred of the West and the Jews stems not from the discrimination they experience but rather from conspiratorial perceptions of being the victim of an alleged global attack on Muslims.

A sense of discrimination and exclusion, but also certain perceptions of ethnic or religious identity and the concept of national identity in the respective country, are important factors for

²⁴ Pew Global Attitudes Project, *The Great Divide*.

identifying as German, French, or British, and result in different levels and forms of identification in each of the three countries.

Muslim Antisemitism in Europe

Antisemitism is present in a number of groups in Europe today. Antisemitism among Muslims has added weight to antisemitism from the far Right, the Left, and mainstream society, and poses an additional security risk.²⁵ Antisemitism among European Muslims and Muslim organizations is frequently manifested in anti-Israel demonstrations, and has sometimes led to veritable antisemitic riots, such as in Oslo at the beginning of 2009.²⁶ Several violent incidents were perpetrated in recent years by youths of Muslim background. Most infamously, Mohamed Merah slaughtered three children and a teacher at a Jewish school in Toulouse, France, in 2012.²⁷ Ilan Halimi was tortured and murdered in Paris, in 2006, by a group of mostly Muslim youths calling themselves the “gang des barbares.”²⁸ In addition, other incidents in which young Muslims or Arabs were involved included the assault on a rabbi and his six-year-old daughter in Berlin in August 2012,²⁹ and an attack on Jewish dancers at a local festival in Hanover, Germany, in 2010.³⁰ Muslim antisemitism is also a

²⁵ Robert Wistrich provides an excellent overview, with numerous examples. Robert S Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad* (New York: Random House, 2010); idem, *Muslimischer Antisemitismus: eine aktuelle Gefahr* (Berlin: Edition Critic, 2012). See also Pierre-André Taguieff, *Rising from the Muck: The New Anti-Semitism in Europe* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2004). Surveys regularly show that antisemitic attitudes are widespread in mainstream society. A comparative study of eight European countries reveals that 24.5 percent agreed with the statement that Jews have too much influence in their country and 41.2 percent supposed that “Jews try to take advantage of having been victims during the Nazi era.” However, there are significant differences among the countries. See Andreas Zick, Beate Küpper, and Hinna Wolf, *European Conditions. Findings of a Study on Group-focused Enmity in Europe* (University of Bielefeld, Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, 2009), http://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/w/files/pdfs/gfepressrelease_english.pdf.

²⁶ Eirik Eiglad, *The Anti-Jewish Riots in Oslo* (Porsgrunn, Norway: Communalism Press, 2010).

²⁷ On March, 19, 2012, Mohamed Merah opened fire at the Ozar Hatorah school in Toulouse. The gunman chased people inside the building and shot at them. He grabbed a 7-year-old girl, shooting her at close range. He then retrieved his moped, and drove off. Gabriel (4), Arie (5), their father and teacher at the school, Jonathan Sandler, and Myriam Monsonégo (7) were killed and a 17-year-old student was gravely injured. The perpetrator, who also killed three unarmed French soldiers some days earlier, filmed his crimes, intending to publish them on the internet and on Al Jazeera. “Mohammed Merah and Abdelkader Merah (Shootings in Toulouse, France),” *The New York Times*, April 4, 2012.

²⁸ The self-named “gang des barbares” abducted Ilan Halimi because he was Jewish. Members of the gang tortured him for three weeks and eventually murdered him in a Parisian suburb. “Meurtre d’Ilan Halimi: Le ‘Gang Des Barbares’ Jugé En Appel, sans Son Leader,” *Le Monde*, October 25, 2010.

²⁹ Günther Jikeli, “Der Neue Alte Antisemitismus Müssen Juden Sich Wieder Verstecken?” *Stern*, September 14, 2012.

³⁰ Johannes Wiedeman, “Angriff Auf Tanzgruppe: Der Alltägliche Antisemitismus in Hannover-Sahlkamp,” *Welt*, June 26, 2010. For other examples, see Christine Schmitt, “Bei Gefahr 0800 880280,” *Jüdische Allgemeine*, February 25, 2010; “Un Rabbin Agressé à La Gare Du Nord,” *Le Monde*, April 21, 2007; Nick Cohen, “Following Mosley’s East End Footsteps,” *The Observer*, April 17, 2005; Leon Symons, “Teacher ‘Sacked for Challenging Antisemitism,’” *The Jewish Chronicle*, February 9, 2010; Léa Khayata, “Battles of Paris. Anti-Semitism in the 19th Arrondissement, a Neighborhood with a Recent History of Violence,” February 11, 2010.

problem in the context of schools and education, as reports and teachers' testimonies in Germany,³¹ France,³² and Britain³³ have shown. Problematic views are often voiced in the context of education about the Holocaust.³⁴

Discussing Muslim antisemitism is politically challenging. This became apparent when a study, commissioned by an EU agency in 2002 and revealing that “physical attacks on Jews and the desecration and destruction of synagogues were acts mainly committed by young Muslim perpetrators mostly of an Arab descent in the monitoring period,”³⁵ was not published by the agency. It was feared that naming the problem would contribute to further stigmatization of Muslim minorities.³⁶ I argue that scholarly discussions about antisemitism among Muslims in Europe are necessary for a detailed understanding of the phenomenon and its sources in order to inform the development of effective tools for fighting antisemitism in Europe. It is only if Muslims are essentialized, that is, if it is assumed wrongly that people of Muslim background *necessarily* or “naturally” adhere to certain attitudes, that they become further stigmatized. Neglecting specific forms of antisemitism and groups of antisemitic perpetrators, on the other hand, is detrimental to the struggle against antisemitism.

Systematic data on ethnic background of perpetrators of antisemitic acts are available mainly for Britain and France. In recent years, more than 30 percent of perpetrators of violent antisemitic incidents in those two countries were Muslim (a large proportion of the victims were unable to identify the ethnic origin of their attackers).³⁷ Data from Germany indicate that the percentage of

³¹ Amadeu Antonio Stiftung, “Die Juden sind schuld”: Antisemitismus in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft am Beispiel muslimisch sozialisierter Milieus. Beispiele, Erfahrungen und Handlungsoptionen aus der pädagogischen und kommunalen Arbeit” (Berlin, 2009), <http://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/w/files/pdfs/diejuden.pdf>.

³² Emmanuel Brenner, *Les territoires perdus de la République: antisémitisme, racisme et sexisme en milieu scolaire* (Paris: Mille et une nuits, 2002). An English translation is available at <http://www.ajc.org/atf/cf/%7B42d75369-d582-4380-8395-d25925b85eaf%7D/LOST%20TERRITORIES.PDF>.

³³ The Historical Association, *T.E.A.C.H. Teaching Emotive and Controversial History 3-19* (2007), 15, <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/RW100.pdf>.

³⁴ Günther Jikeli and Joëlle Allouche-Benayoun, eds, *Perceptions of the Holocaust in Europe and Muslim Communities Sources, Comparisons and Educational Challenges* (Dordrecht; New York: Springer, 2013).

³⁵ Werner Bergmann and Juliane Wetzel, *Manifestations of anti-Semitism in the European Union. First Semester, 2002*. Synthesis Report on Behalf of the EUMC, 25.

³⁶ Some populists essentialize Muslims in their criticism of Muslim antisemitism. See Peter Widmann, “Der Feind Kommt Aus Dem Morgenland. Rechtspopulistische ‘Islamkritiker’ Um Den Publizisten Hans-Peter Raddatz Suchen Die Opfergemeinschaft Mit Juden,” *Jahrbuch Für Antisemitismusforschung* 17 (Berlin: Metropol, 2008), 45–68.

³⁷ This estimation is based on annual reports on antisemitic incidents in these countries. The official French commission on human rights in France stated that 33 percent of violent antisemitic acts in 2007 and 2008 were committed by people with Arab or Muslim background and many perpetrators have not been identified. Thus the share of Muslim or Arab perpetrators is most likely higher than 33 percent. Commission nationale consultative des droits de l’homme (CNCDH), *La lutte contre le racisme et la xénophobie: Rapport d’activité 2008* (Paris: [La Documentation Française](http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr), 2009), 28. In 2011, 129 acts of antisemitic violence were registered. 19 were committed by people of Arab origin and Muslim background and 15 were made with reference to neo-Nazi ideology. The majority of perpetrators were not identified. Commission

right-wing perpetrators of antisemitic attacks is particularly high there (about 80 percent of violent antisemitic acts).³⁸ The statistics do not allow for an accurate estimate of the percentage of Muslim perpetrators³⁹ but it seems to be lower in Germany than in France and the UK.⁴⁰ While the share of Muslim perpetrators in all three countries is disproportionately high for violent antisemitic attacks, it is disproportionately low for other forms of antisemitism, such as threats.⁴¹

Surveys demonstrate that antisemitic attitudes are stronger and more widespread among Muslims in Europe than among non-Muslims. The Pew Global Attitudes Project published the only internationally comparative survey that distinguishes between Muslims and non-Muslims in 2006. Muslims and non-Muslims in a number of countries were asked whether they had a “favorable or unfavorable opinion of Jews.” In the UK, 47 percent of Muslims and 7 percent of the general population stated that they had an unfavorable opinion of Jews. In France, the figures were 13 percent of the general population and 28 percent of Muslims, and in Germany, 22 percent of the general population and 44 percent of Muslims. The contrast is even greater when “very unfavorable” opinions are compared.⁴²

Country-specific surveys that include a distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims

nationale consultative des droits de l’homme (CNCDDH), *La Lutte Contre Le Racisme, Antisémitisme Et La Xénophobie. Année 2011* (Paris: [La Documentation Française](#), 2012), 86, <http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/var/storage/rapports-publics/124000269/0000.pdf>. The Community Security Trust (CST) in the UK regularly publishes reports on antisemitic incidents. It uses six categories to describe the ethnic background of perpetrators based on physical descriptions: white, East European, black, Asian, Far Eastern, and Arab. Based on data from the 2011 census on ethnicity and religion, it can be assumed that most of those classified as Arab, the majority of those classified as Asian, and a few of those classified as black are Muslim. The CST reports show that in the last seven years (until 2012), 30–43 percent of perpetrators of antisemitic incidents in which the ethnicity was identified were described as being of (South) Asian or Arab appearance. The percentage of black perpetrators ranged between 7 and 12 percent. The reports are available on the CST website <http://www.thecst.org.uk/>.

³⁸ Bundesministerium des Inneren, *Antisemitismus in Deutschland. Erscheinungsformen, Bedingungen, Präventionsansätze. Bericht des unabhängigen Expertenkreises Antisemitismus* (Berlin, 2011), 36.

³⁹ Jikeli, “Der Neue Alte Antisemitismus Müssen Juden Sich Wieder Verstecken?”

⁴⁰ However, a report on Berlin shows that 12 of 33 acts of antisemitic and anti-Israel violence between 2003 and 2005 were committed by “foreigners” and 15 by right-wing extremists. *Antisemitismus im extremistischen Spektrum Berlins* (Berlin, 2006), 53,

http://www.berlin.de/imperia/md/content/seninn/verfassungsschutz/fokus_antisemitismus_2_aufl.pdf?start&ts=1234285743&file=fokus_antisemitismus_2_aufl.pdf.

⁴¹ The perpetrators of threats, including graffiti, often remain unknown but, according to figures from the French CNCDDH for the year 2009, 13 percent of antisemitic threats in France were related to neo-Nazi ideology and 5 percent were committed by people of Arab or Muslim background. Commission nationale consultative des droits de l’homme (CNCDDH), *La lutte contre le racisme, antisémitisme et la xénophobie. Année 2009* (Paris: [La Documentation Française](#), 2010), 45. Bergmann and Wetzel observed already in 2003 that different forms of antisemitic actions can be assigned to different groups of perpetrators. Bergmann and Wetzel, *Manifestations of Anti-Semitism in the European Union. First Semester 2002*, 25–26. The share of “Islamists” sending antisemitic letters and emails to the Israeli embassy in Germany and to the Central Council of Jews in Germany is only 3 percent. The vast majority comes from mainstream society. Monika Schwarz-Friesel and Jehuda Reinharz, *Die Sprache der Judenfeindschaft im 21. Jahrhundert* (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2013), 21.

⁴² Pew Global Attitudes Project, *The Great Divide*. The survey was conducted before the Lebanon War in summer 2006.

confirm and detail these results.

In Germany, two studies commissioned by the German Ministry of the Interior came to similar results. Katrin Brettfeld and Peter Wetzels (2007) conducted a non-representative study of 2,683 students, including 500 Muslims, from Cologne, Hamburg, and Augsburg: 15.7 percent of Muslims of migrant background, 7.4 percent of non-Muslims of migrant background, and 5.4 percent of non-Muslims with no migration background, strongly believed that “people of Jewish faith are arrogant and greedy.”⁴³ The second study commissioned by the Germany Ministry, focused on radicalization of young Muslims (14–32 years old). Two hundred German Muslims, 517 non-German Muslims, and a representative sample of 200 young non-Muslim Germans, were surveyed in 2009 and 2010. The questionnaire included two items on antisemitic attitudes, both related to Israel: 1) “Israel should be blamed exclusively for the origin and continuation of the Middle East conflict,” and (2) “It would be better if the Jews left the Middle East” [translation by the author]. About 25 percent of both German and non-German Muslims and less than 5 percent of non-Muslim Germans agreed on both items.⁴⁴ Jürgen Mansel and Viktoria Spaiser carried out a survey in 2010 on 2,404 students with different ethnic backgrounds in Bielefeld, Cologne, Berlin, and Frankfurt; about one-third were Muslim. Antisemitic attitudes related to Israel, religious antisemitism, classic antisemitism, and equations between Israel and the Nazis were significantly higher among Muslim students than among other students.⁴⁵ The researchers also found differences regarding ethnic background: 24.9 percent of students of Turkish-Muslim background, and 40.4 percent of those of Arab background, agreed “completely” with the statement, “Jews have too much influence in the world.” Only 3 percent of non-migrant background concurred. Some justified their antisemitic views by citing their religion: 15.9 percent of Muslim students of Turkish background and 25.7 percent of those of Arab background agreed unreservedly with the statement, “In my religion it is the Jews who drive the world to disaster.” Looking at a different dimension, in response to the statement, “I am tired of hearing about the crimes against the Jews over and over again,” 20.2 percent of those without migrant background were in complete agreement, compared to 14.7 percent of Turkish background and 26 percent of Arab background.⁴⁶ This was also confirmed in another study from 2012 conducted

⁴³ Katrin Brettfeld and Peter Wetzels, *Muslimen in Deutschland* (Hamburg: Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2007), 274–75.

⁴⁴ Wolfgang Frindte et al., *Lebenswelten junger Muslime in Deutschland* (Berlin: Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2012), 245–47.

⁴⁵ These attitudes were measured using the following indicators: “Because of Israeli policies, I increasingly dislike Jews”; “Regarding Israel's policy, I understand someone who is against Jews”; “In my religion, the Jews bring disaster to the world”; “Jews have too much influence in the world”; “What the State of Israel is doing to the Palestinians is basically no different from what the Nazis in the Third Reich did to the Jews”; “Jews throughout the world feel more strongly attached to Israel than to the country where they live” (translation from German by the author).

⁴⁶ Jürgen Mansel and Viktoria Spaiser, *Abschlussbericht Forschungsprojekt: “Soziale Beziehungen, Konfliktpotentiale Und Vorurteile Im Kontext Von Erfahrungen Verweigerter Teilhabe Und Anerkennung Bei Jugendlichen Mit Und Ohne Migrationshintergrund”* (Bielefeld, 2010), <http://www.vielfalt-tut->

in Germany: Muslims endorse classic antisemitic statements more often than their non-Muslim counterparts; approval of so called “secondary” antisemitism related to the Holocaust was slightly weaker.⁴⁷ An earlier survey, published in 1997, asked youths of Turkish background in Germany whether they thought that Zionism threatened Islam; 33.2 percent agreed.⁴⁸

A Danish study from 2009, based on interviews with ethnic Danes and immigrants from countries and regions with Muslim majorities (Turkey, Pakistan, Somalia, Palestinian Territories, and ex-Yugoslavia), found that a number of antisemitic stereotypes were significantly more widespread among immigrants than among ethnic Danes. 65.8 percent of respondents with migrant background and 18.2 percent of ethnic Danes agreed that “one cannot be careful enough vis-à-vis Jews in Denmark.” The study also shows that anti-Jewish attitudes were more common among Muslim immigrants than among Christian immigrants of the same ethnic origin (Palestinian and ex-Yugoslavian background).⁴⁹ In Britain, Muslims were interviewed by the polling institute Populus in December 2005. Although the survey does not provide comparative figures for non-Muslims, antisemitic attitudes seem particularly high: 53 percent agreed with the allegation that “Jews have too much influence over foreign policy”; 46 percent concurred that “Jews are in league with the Freemasons to control the media and politics”; and 37 percent even supported the statement that “Jews are legitimate targets as part of the ongoing struggle for justice in the Middle East.”⁵⁰

A comprehensive survey on prejudices and stereotypes among students in Sweden identified Muslim students as the group with the highest percentage of strong antisemitic views (8.3 percent compared to 3.7 percent among Christians). However, the group of nonreligious students followed closely with 7.6 percent.⁵¹

In France, 33 percent of citizens of African and Turkish background and 18 percent among the general population exhibited antisemitic attitudes, according to a poll from 2005. However, antisemitic attitudes were lower among the second generation born in France (17 percent). Interestingly, antisemitism among French citizens of African and Turkish background was only

gut.de/content/e4458/e8260/Uni_Bielefeld_Abschlussbericht_Forschungsprojekt.pdf and http://www.vielfalt-tut-gut.de/content/e4458/e8277/Uni_Bielefeld_Tabellenanhang.pdf.

⁴⁷ Oliver Decker, Johannes Kiess, and Elmar Brähler, *Die Mitte Im Umbruch. Rechtsextreme Einstellungen in Deutschland 2012*, ed. Ralf Melzer (Bonn: Dietz, 2012), 79. The study found “primary” antisemitism among 11.5 percent of the overall population and 16.7 percent among Muslims, but 23.8 percent of “secondary” antisemitism among the overall population and 20.8 percent among Muslims. However, the poll included only 86 Muslims out of a sample of 2510 people.

⁴⁸ Wilhelm Heitmeyer, Joachim Müller, and Helmut Schröder, *Verlockender Fundamentalismus: Türkische Jugendliche in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), 181, 271.

⁴⁹ Peter Nannestad, “Frø af ugræs? Antijødiske holdninger i fem ikke-vestlige indvandergrupper i Danmark,” in *Danmark og de fremmede: Om mødet med den arabisk-muslimske verden*, ed. Tonny Brems Knudsen, Jørgen Dige Pedersen, and Georg Sørensen (Århus: Academica, 2009), 43–62.

⁵⁰ Populus, “Muslim Poll,” December 2005, http://www.populus.co.uk/uploads/Muslim_Poll-Times.pdf.

⁵¹ The Living History Forum, *Intolerance. Anti-Semitic, Homophobic, Islamophobic and Xenophobic Tendencies among the Young* (Stockholm: Brottsförebyggande rådet [BRÅ], 2005), 59 and 152–53, http://www.levandehistoria.se/files/INTOLERANCEENG_0.pdf.

weakly related to conservative attitudes, ethnocentrism, and authoritarianism, but correlated strongly with the level of Islamic practice.⁵² One of the authors of the study, Vincent Tiberj, argued that the social envy hypothesis, education, and even negative attitudes toward Israel, cannot be explanatory factors as respective correlations are relatively weak. The level of hostility toward Israel (in contrast to antisemitic attitudes) was similar among people of African and Turkish origin and the general population in France.⁵³ A Belgian study by Mark Elchardus from 2011, in 32 Dutch-speaking high schools in Brussels, revealed that about half of Muslim students agreed with the following statements: 1) “Jews want to dominate everything” (total: 31.4 percent; Muslims, 56.8 percent; non-Muslims, 10.5 percent); 2) “Most Jews think they're better than others” (total: 29.9 percent; Muslims, 47.1 percent; non-Muslims: 12.9 percent); 3) “If you do business with Jews, you should be extra careful” (total: 28.6 percent; Muslims, 47.5 percent; non-Muslims, 12.9 percent); 4) “Jews incite to war and blame others” (total: 28.4 percent; Muslims, 53.7 percent; non-Muslims: 7.7 percent). Antisemitic attitudes were unrelated to educational level or social status.⁵⁴ Elchardus confirmed the findings in 2013 with a study of 863 students from Gent and Antwerp, including 346 Muslim students: 45-50 percent of Muslim students revealed antisemitic attitudes compared to “only” about 10 percent of non-Muslims.⁵⁵

What Rationales Are Used by Young European Muslims?

Results from an Empirical Study

How do young Muslims express antisemitic views and what reasons do they give for their aversion to Jews? As mentioned above, my colleagues and I conducted face-to-face interviews with more than 100 young male⁵⁶ Muslims in Berlin, Paris, and London over a period of three years (2005-2007) until the arguments were repeating itself and no additional stereotypes or views were expressed. The

⁵² Among French people of African or Turkish origin antisemitic views were found among 46 percent of practicing Muslims, 40 percent of “infrequently” observant Muslims, 30 percent among non-practicing Muslims, and 23 percent among those who have no religion. Sylvain Brouard and Vincent Tiberj, *Français Comme Les Autres? Enquête Sur Les Citoyens D'origine Maghrébine, Africaine Et Turque* (Paris: Presses de la fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 2005), 104.

⁵³ Vincent Tiberj, *Anti-Semitism in an Ethnically Diverse France: Questioning and Explaining the Specificities of African-, Turkish-, and Maghrebian-French* (2006), http://www.aup.fr/pdf/WPSeries/AUP_wp33-Tiberj.pdf.

⁵⁴ Mark Elchardus, “Antisemitisme in De Brusselse Scholen,” in *Jong in Brussel. Bevindingen Uit De Jop-monitor Brussel*, ed. Nicole Vettenburg, Mark Elchardus, and Johan Put (Leuven; Den Haag: Acco, 2011), 265–96.

⁵⁵ Antisemitic attitudes were somewhat stronger among “conservative Muslims” than among “progressive Muslims.” Nicole Vettenburg, Mark Elchardus, and Stefaan Pleysier, eds., *Jong in Antwerpen En Gent* (Leuven; Den Haag: Acco, 2013), 187–222.

⁵⁶ We also interviewed a small number of female interviewees but the analysis is restricted to male interviewees for methodological reasons. The role of gender in attitudes toward Jews is unclear. Different surveys show contradictory results. The study by Frindte et al. on young Muslims in Germany found no gender differences, whereas the study by the Living History Forum found significant gender differences among young Muslims in Sweden. Cf. Frindte et al., *Lebenswelten junger*, 226 and Living History Forum, *Intolerance*, 59 and 152–53.

sample was thus “saturated” across the three cities.⁵⁷ The interviewees had various ethnic and educational backgrounds (from early school leavers to university graduates). The majority of interviewees in Germany were of Turkish origin; most interviewees in France had a Maghreb background, and in the UK the majority originated in South Asia. Thus, the ethnic backgrounds represented largely those of Muslims in the respective countries. This, and the fact that the arguments were repeated in all three cities despite the different contexts and interviewees backgrounds, is a strong indication that they can be found also among other young (male) European Muslims.⁵⁸

Whereas the focus here is on negative views of Jews, it should be kept in mind that many European Muslims do not exhibit any antisemitic attitudes and some interviewees in the sample spoke out explicitly against antisemitic views among their friends and family.⁵⁹

However, the analysis of the arguments shows four distinct patterns of antisemitic argumentation used by young Muslims in all three cities:

- 1) “Classic” antisemitism (conspiracy theories, “Jews are rich,” etc.);
- 2) Negative views of Jews with reference to Israel (allegations such as “Jews/Israelis kill children”);
- 3) Negative views of Jews with reference to Muslim or ethnic identity or to Islam (“Muslims dislike Jews”);
- 4) Negative views of Jews without rationalization (perception that it is “natural” to loathe Jews, or the use of the word “Jew” as an insult).

1) “Classic” Antisemitism

This category comprises antisemitic conspiracy theories and well-known stereotypes of Jews. The trope of rich Jews, as well as related stereotypes, such as the belief that Jews are stingy or greedy, is very popular among interviewees from all countries and backgrounds. Jews have also been portrayed as clannish, treacherous, and crafty. More rarely, certain physical characteristics have been attributed to them. Common themes of antisemitic conspiracy theories include “Jewish power” in the world, “Jewish influence” in the United States, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, “big business,” the Holocaust, the media, suicide attacks, the Middle East conflict, the alleged war against Muslims, and, occasionally, even topics such as AIDS and tsunamis.

There are many reasons why people want to believe in conspiracy theories. A central rationale among interviewees seems to be the wish to explain and personalize complicated processes.

⁵⁷ This approach is used in Grounded Theory (“saturation” of arguments). However, the analytical strategy might be considered too focused for an orthodox method of Grounded Theory. See Jane C. Hood, “Orthodoxy vs. Power: The Defining Traits of Grounded Theory,” in *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*, ed. Antony Bryant and Kathy Charmaz (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2010), 151–64.

⁵⁸ For more information on the sample and methods, see Jikeli, *Antisemitismus und Diskriminierungswahrnehmungen*.

⁵⁹ For a detailed analysis of these anti-antisemites' rationales, see *ibid*.

“For everything that must happen, there is a reason,” declared Neoy from London, after stating that, “it’s obvious now, that there is someone, and not just someone, but a group of people... like a ruling class we hardly see.” This is a textbook illustration of the tendency to seek out simplistic worldly explanations.⁶⁰ Neoy holds conspiracy theory beliefs about the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Holocaust, and Israeli power, and assumes that, “all these other big channels they are owned by Jews and they do control the majority of the media.”

Such “classic” antisemitism is also widespread in mainstream society: In 2008/2009, 21 percent in Germany, 33 percent in France, and 15 percent in the UK believed that it is “probably true” that Jews have too much power in the business world.⁶¹ Classic antisemitic stereotypes and conspiracy theories connect to well-known negative tropes of Jews within mainstream society. They are also expressions of psychological mechanisms in modern societies⁶² and serve as simplistic explanations of the world’s problems.

2) Negative Views of Jews with Reference to Israel

Antisemitic attitudes with reference to Israel involve: a) conflation of Jews with Israelis, and b) Manichean views of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Negative views of Israel thus serve as justification for general hatred toward Jews, including German, French, and British Jews. Almost all interviewees who showed hostile attitudes toward Israel or Israelis conflated Jews and Israelis at one point or another and also exhibit negative attitudes toward Jews. This confirms surveys in Germany and other European countries.⁶³

One of the most common antisemitic tropes relating to Israel is “Jews/Israelis kill children,” including the allegation that “the Israelis” or “the Jews” (usually the latter) kill children on purpose, out of cruelty and evil. It is part of a Manichean view of the Middle East conflict and vilifies Israel. It also relates to the old antisemitic trope of the blood libel.⁶⁴ According to Kassim from Berlin:

The Israelis, they are warriors, they kill children, and the Palestinians are such poor people... and they [the Israelis] come and just attack them.

⁶⁰ Wolfgang Benz, *Was Ist Antisemitismus?* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2004), 192.

⁶¹ Anti-Defamation League, “Attitudes toward Jews in Seven European Countries,” February 2009, http://www.adl.org/Public%20ADL%20Anti-Semitism%20Presentation%20February%202009%20_3_.pdf.

⁶² Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (London: Verso, 1972).

⁶³ Andreas Zick and Beate Küpper noted that 90 percent of Germans who criticized Israel in 2004 also endorsed antisemitic statements. Andreas Zick and Beate Küpper, “Traditioneller Und Moderner Antisemitismus” Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, November 28, 2006, <http://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/antisemitismus/37967/traditioneller-und-moderner-antisemitismus?p=all>. The fact that antisemitism often appears in the guise of criticism of Israel is also reflected in comparative surveys in a number of European countries. Andreas Zick, Andreas Hövermann, and Beate Küpper, *Intolerance, Prejudice and Discrimination: A European Report* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Forum Berlin, 2011), 162, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/do/07908-20110311.pdf>.

⁶⁴ Léon Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism. From the Time of Christ to the Court Jews* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).

Such dualistic perspectives on the Middle East conflict, however, can also be found in European media and are generally widespread in Europe.⁶⁵

Fundamental delegitimization of Israel is another issue. Various rationales are used to deny Israel's legitimacy, which, according to the EUMC definition of antisemitism, is an antisemitic trope in itself.⁶⁶ The main argument used is that since Jews built Israel on what is regarded as “Muslim (or Palestinian or Arab) land,” the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine wronged them from the outset. Others accept the Jewish State of Israel as a reality.

However, hostility against Israel is rarely a question of borders or specific policies by the Israeli government or “settlements”. The topos “Jews have taken over Muslim/Palestinian/Arab land” is often used to deny the legitimacy of the State of Israel entirely.

The intensity of hostility against Jews justified by the Middle East conflict is related to identification with “the Palestinians,” either via an Arab or Muslim identity, or both. Not all interviewees identify with Palestinians, but most respondents of Arab background do. Arab identity is an important additional factor that can enhance hostility toward European Jews, on the basis of claims related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is often understood as a conflict between Arabs and Israel/“the Jews.”

3) *Negative Views of Jews with Reference to Religious or Ethnic Identity*

The interviews demonstrate that some Muslims relate their negative views of Jews to their ethnic or religious identity or to their perception of Islam. The assumption of a general enmity between Muslims and Jews is widespread. Somewhat less frequently interviewees believe that there was an eternal enmity between their own ethnic community and Jews. Such views are voiced approvingly in statements such as “Muslims and Jews are enemies” or “the Arabs dislike Jews.”⁶⁷ As such, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict merely serves as an example. The enmity is understood in much wider terms. “*As a Muslim you have problems, not with Israelis, [but] with Jews.*” explained Ümit, an interviewee of Turkish origin from Berlin. However, justifications are often vague.

Such generalizing and essentializing assumptions of enmity deny different views among individuals within the community and different interpretations of Islam, and wrongly portray Muslims as a unitary category regarding their attitudes toward Jews.⁶⁸ Moreover, such assumptions

⁶⁵ Zick et al., *Intolerance, Prejudice and Discrimination*.

⁶⁶ The EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism states, “Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination,” as an examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the State of Israel. EUMC/ FRA, “Working Definition of Antisemitism,” 2005, <http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/material/pub/AS/AS-WorkingDefinition-draft.pdf>. The term “delegitimization” is explained in Natan Sharansky, “3D Test of Anti-Semitism: Demonization, Double Standards, Delegitimization,” *Jewish Political Studies Review* 16:3–4 (October 2004).

⁶⁷ Religious and ethnic identities often get blurred in this context. The enmity is seen as one between “us” and “the Jews.”

⁶⁸ Tarek Fatah is probably the most prominent contemporary scholar who writes from a Muslim perspective

that are bound to the collective religious identity make it difficult for individuals to distance themselves from them.

The same goes for rationales related to ethnic identity. It has been argued that anti-Zionism and antisemitism are part and parcel of Arab nationalism.⁶⁹ Many participants of Arab background believe that their Arab identity encompasses negative views of Jews. This underlying assumption is often uttered in passing: “*In any case, we, the Arabs, we never get along with them [the Jews],*” said Hafid, from Paris, who is of Algerian origin. Two main rationales are used for this justification. It is argued that either such hostility is a reaction to Jews’ alleged hatred of Arabs, or the Middle East conflict is used to explain why (all) Arabs allegedly dislike Jews.

Religious rationales, on the other hand, are intertwined with arguments based on both religious sources and Muslim identity. In young Muslims’ discussions about an “interdiction” against befriending or marrying Jews, for example, alleged religious reasons and pressure from other Muslims are intertwined. Interviewees’ references to a long history of animosity between Muslims and Jews can be related to historical perspectives of confrontations between the two groups or to interpretation of Islamic scriptures that highlight conflicts between Muhammad and Jewish tribes. Direct references to the Qur’an or to the belief that suicide bombers go to paradise for killing Jews, on the other hand, are rooted in certain views of Islam. References to the Qur’an have a particularly strong authority as it is regarded as the word of Allah, dictated to the Prophet Muhammad. It is thus seen as reflecting divine truth, often in a literal understanding of fragmented scriptures.

The level of animosity toward Jews related to Islam or Muslim identity can vary. This also holds true for those who see similarities between Judaism and Islam or who regard Muslims and Jews as “cousins.” “*Muslims are supposed to be the Jewish’s worst enemies,*” said Sabir from London, who saw Muslims and Jews (and Christians) in a global war. Some root their notions of Jewish enmity in apocalyptic visions and conspiracy theories. Others assume the existence of a mutual antipathy but reject notions of war. Patterns of argumentation related to Islam include direct references to God’s perception of the Jews, who allegedly condemns them for their materialistic and life-affirming existence.

However, it is important to note that it is particular perceptions of Islam and Muslim (and ethnic) identity that are relevant for such forms of antisemitism. As in all purported rationales for Jew-hatred, these notions are chimerical⁷⁰; they are not the actual reason for antisemitic attitudes.

against the assumption that Muslims and Jews are enemies. See Tarek Fatah, *The Jew is not my enemy: Unveiling the Myths That Fuel Muslim Anti-Semitism* (Toronto/Ontario: McClelland & Stewart, 2010).

⁶⁹ Jochen Müller, “Von Antizionismus Und Antisemitismus. Stereotypenbildung in Der Arabischen Öffentlichkeit,” in *Antisemitismus in Europa Und in Der Arabischen Welt. Ursachen Und Wechselbeziehungen Eines Komplexen Phänomens*, ed. Wolfgang Ansorge (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2006), 163–182.

⁷⁰ I borrowed this term from Gavin I. Langmuir, “Towards a Definition of Antisemitism,” in *The Persisting Question. Sociological Perspectives and Social Contexts of Modern Antisemitism*, ed. Helen Fein (Berlin/

4) No Rationalization

All antisemitic attitudes are, by definition, irrational. There is no “reason” to hate “the Jews.”

As demonstrated in the description of the three previous categories of argumentation, participants often try to justify their hostile attitudes toward Jews by making negative claims about them which they assert to be true or by extrapolating particular traits or behaviors of some Jews to “the Jews.” But some participants do not even attempt to offer justifications for their hostility. In their minds, negative views of Jews are self-evident.

“*Jewish people are Jewish, that's why we don't like them,*” said Ganesh from London. And Bashir from Berlin confirmed his outspoken hatred of all Jews, “*Because they are Jews nevertheless. Jews are, a Jew is a Jew anyway.*”

The “argument” of hating Jews because they are Jews points to the essence of antisemitism: its irrationality. Endorsing such irrationality is radical but consistent. The antisemite longs for the extermination of the Jews. Bashir wishes, “*that the damned Jews should be burnt.*”

Antisemitic resentments stem not only from acquired stereotypes but also from unconscious projections onto Jews, whose actual behavior or lives may shape only the nature of antisemitic expressions. The argument of hating Jews because they are Jews is rarely bluntly voiced, but this irrational “cause” often shines through when hatred against “all Jews” is justified by accusations for which only some Jews can possibly be responsible. Others consider their negative feelings toward Jews to be “common sense” and normal. This finds expression in a peculiar use of language. The very term “Jew” is understood among many interviewees, but also in general among many young people in Germany and France, as bearing negative connotations.⁷¹ The words for “Jew” (*Jude* in German and *Juif* and *Feuj* in French) are used as insults or in an otherwise pejorative way by interviewees in France and Germany. (Such usage appears to be less frequent in Britain today.⁷²)

The Relation between Antisemitism and Perceptions of Discrimination and Exclusion

Some scholars have linked prejudice against Muslims and Muslim antisemitism, alleging that a key cause of antisemitism among European Muslims lies in their marginalization, discrimination and

New York, 1987), 86–127.

⁷¹ Günther Jikeli, “Anti-Semitism in Youth Language: The Pejorative Use of the Terms for ‘Jew’ in German and French Today,” *Conflict & Communication Online* 9, no. 1 (2010): 1–13; Günther Jikeli, “‘Jew’ as a Slur in German and French Today,” *Journal for the Study of Antisemitism* 1, no. 2 (2009): 209–232.

⁷² The interviews in London indicate that this usage of the word “Jew” in Britain is not as common as in France and Germany among youths. Anna-Brita Stenström et al. did research on common insults among youths in London and did not report usage of the term “Jew” as an insult. Anna-Brita Stenström, Gisle Andersen, and Ingrid Kristine Hasund, *Trends in Teenage Talk* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 2002). However, there were reports of such usage in the UK in the late 1990s. David Margolis, “Anti-Semitism in the Playground,” *The Independent*, February 1, 1999.

exclusion.⁷³ The theoretical assumptions of such suppositions remain unclear. One could also argue conversely: that suffering discrimination and exclusion would lead to criticism of prejudices against other minorities, including Jews. Moreover, it does not explain why other minorities that experience similar or even stronger discrimination display antisemitic attitudes to a lesser degree. In our sample we could not find a correlation between discrimination and antisemitism.⁷⁴ The same is true for a relation between antisemitism and the sense of belonging to the national society. Self-identification with the nation is very different in Germany, France, and Britain, as shown above, but the level of antisemitism is similar, and, according to surveys, even stronger in Britain, where most interviewees identify themselves as British.

Focusing only on statistical correlations, however, may be misleading, for two reasons: a) possible relations between discrimination and antisemitism are complex and not straightforward cause-and-effect; b) some perceptions of global discrimination against Muslims include antisemitic conspiracy theories. This was shown above in an example by the interviewee who believes there is a global war against Muslims in which Jews (and Christians) are seen as the enemies. Similarly, the rhetoric of victimhood competition can contain antisemitic arguments.⁷⁵ Correlations between such attitudes would only confirm that antisemitic perceptions of discrimination and victimhood are linked to an antisemitic world view. However, as demonstrated, the formation of complex attitudes such as antisemitism are unlikely to be rooted in a single factor.

Sources and Factors of Influence

The formation of any attitude is a multidimensional process.⁷⁶ This is also true in the case of antisemitism. The genesis of antisemitic attitudes among European Muslims cannot be reduced to religious beliefs or affiliation. Nor are they a result of disadvantaged living conditions. Exposure to antisemitic remarks or propaganda, or to antisemitism in the media, enhances antisemitic beliefs, but does not necessarily lead to antisemitic attitudes, as proved by some interviewees who, despite these

⁷³ See Matti Bunzl, *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds Old and New in Europe* (Chicago, Prickly Paradigm Press 2007), 26–27. Paul A. Silverstein wrote a “Comment on Bunzl” in the same volume. See also Esther Benbassa, “Jewish-Moslem Relations in Contemporary France,” *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies* 11, no. 2 (2007): 189–94. Klaus Holz adopted a similar argument and mentioned the social, racist and religious exclusion of Muslims as indirect reasons for the manifestation of antisemitism. Klaus Holz, *Die Gegenwart Des Antisemitismus: Islamistische, Demokratische Und Antizionistische Judenfeindschaft* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2005), 9.

⁷⁴ I explore a number of possible links (such as comparing negative attitudes toward Jews and toward their own community, comparing the minorities, exclusion as a factor for an emphasis on religious identity, etc.) in more detail in Jikeli, *Antisemitismus und Diskriminierungswahrnehmungen*, 278–90.

⁷⁵ Bernard Henri Lévy, *Ce grand cadavre à la renverse* (Paris: Grasset, 2007). See also Jochen Müller, “Auf Den Spuren Von Nasser. Nationalismus Und Antisemitismus Im Radikalen Islamismus,” in *Antisemitismus Und Radikaler Islamismus*, ed. Wolfgang Benz and Juliane Wetzel (Essen: Klartext, 2007), 85–101.

⁷⁶ William D Crano and Radmila Prislin, *Attitudes and Attitude Change* (New York; London: Psychology Press, 2008).

factors, ultimately reject antisemitic views. The eventual adoption of antisemitic stereotypes and ways of thinking is a choice made by individuals.⁷⁷

Along with a number of other factors, antisemitic attitudes are related to worldviews and individual psychological processes and mechanisms.⁷⁸ The interviews provide some insights into projections onto Jews. In some cases, participants directly linked their fantasies, which they know are immoral and thus have to be suppressed, to antisemitic assumptions. Hussein from London, for instance, explained the events of September 11, 2001 with his own wish to have more money and to do whatever it takes to obtain some. He suspects similar wishes and motives for the alleged Jewish conspirators of 9/11. Other examples in which Jews were blamed for terrorist attacks can also be interpreted as expressions of pathological projection. Many interviewees had difficulty in accepting that Muslims were the perpetrators of terrorist attacks and used their religious convictions to justify their deeds. The terrorist attacks are still seen as evil, but some projected the responsibility of Muslim perpetrators onto the Jews and thus blamed them. However, Ümit from Berlin, who is convinced that people who believe in Islam cannot undertake suicide attacks, took this a step further. He feels that Muslims are unjustly accused of terrorism, and stated that Jews or Americans disguised as Muslims might have blown themselves up in Israel. Another area of projection is the wish for solidarity or social stability. Some envy Jews for their alleged commonality and accuse them of being clannish. This can take on a positive tone: “*The Jews are really smart... They can get work really easily, not like us, they can do a lot of things that we can't do,*” said Omar from Paris.

Interviewees explicitly mentioned a number of sources for their antisemitic beliefs: anti-Jewish views by friends and family, as well as perceptions of religious and ethnic identities, conversations in mosques, the influence of media such as television, the internet, music, books, and newspapers, and, in some cases, schools.⁷⁹ The level of education influences the form of expression of antisemitic attitudes: those with a higher level of formal education tended to voice negative views of Jews in more socially acceptable ways, such as insinuations and allegations about Jewish influence

⁷⁷ Cf. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Réflexions sur la question juive* (Paris: Gallimard, 1954). However, the notion of free choice is disputed. For a critical debate on free choice and antisemitism see Thomas Maul, “Dialektik und Determinismus. Zum Verhältnis von Adorno, Sartre und Améry.” *Bahamas* 64 (2012), 46-52.

⁷⁸ Scholars have discussed a number of reasons for the development of antisemitic attitudes, such as transmission of stereotypes and beliefs, and psychological mechanisms of group dynamics or unreflected projections. For a discussion of different theories, see Samuel Salzborn, *Antisemitismus Als Negative Leitidee Der Moderne: Sozialwissenschaftliche Theorien Im Vergleich* (Frankfurt; New York: Campus, 2010). *Projection* is a psychological defense mechanism whereby one “projects” one’s own undesirable thoughts, motivations, desires, and feelings onto someone else. Psychoanalytical theories on antisemitism have identified projection as the main mechanism of antisemitism. Hermann Beland, “Psychoanalytische Antisemitismustheorien Im Vergleich,” in *Antisemitismusforschung in Den Wissenschaften*, ed. Werner Bergmann and Monika Körte (Berlin: Metropol, 2004), 187–218.

⁷⁹ For similar findings, based on a survey of social workers in Berlin, see Gabriele Fréville, Susanna Harms, and Serhat Karakayali, “‘Antisemitismus – ein Problem unter vielen’: Ergebnisse einer Befragung in Jugendclubs und Migrant/innen-Organisationen,” in *Konstellationen des Antisemitismus Antisemitismusforschung und sozialpädagogische Praxis*, ed. Wolfram Stender, Guido Follert, and Mihri Özdoğan (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2010), 185–198.

in the finance sector and media, conspiracy theories, or demonization of Israel, instead of open approval of hatred or violence against Jews.

Conclusions

The ways in which discrimination and exclusion are perceived vary significantly in Germany, France, and Great Britain. Generally, interviewees in Berlin feel there is discrimination against “foreigners,” based on skin and hair color. In Paris, the impression is that discrimination is focused foremost on Arabs and blacks, based on skin color, Arab names, and stigmatized neighborhoods. In London, many also think that discrimination is based on skin color, but others believe that, currently, anti-Muslim prejudices prevail.

Still greater differences of perceptions among the three countries can be observed regarding identification with the nationality of the state of residence. Only exceptionally do interviewees in Germany identify as German, despite German citizenship. In France, by contrast, most interviewees consider themselves French, although many feel that they are not accepted as such. In Britain, Muslim non-acceptance of being British seems to be less of an issue than in France, although some voiced concerns about direct or institutional non-acceptance and discrimination against them as members of ethnic or religious minorities. However, most respondents in Britain identified Britishness as an important dimension of their identity, often in combination with ethnic background, as well as in self-descriptions such as “British-Asian.” These differences can be explained largely as a result of disparate concepts of national identity and immigration policies in Germany, France, and Britain.

Many young Muslims in Europe exhibit antisemitic attitudes; some resort to violence. While polls reveal that only a minority of European Muslims endorse antisemitic views, they also show that the level of antisemitism is significantly higher among Muslims than among non-Muslims. Our survey of young male Muslims from Berlin, Paris, and London provides some insights into sources and reasoning about negative views of Jews among young Muslims.

The genesis of antisemitic views cannot be reduced to a single factor. Ethnic or religious identity and interpretations of Islam are significant for some. In this sense, use of the term *Muslim antisemitism* is apt and meaningful. Others relate their hostility toward Jews to their hatred of the State of Israel. Many use classic antisemitic attitudes that are also widespread in mainstream European society. However, negative views of Jews have become the norm in some young Muslim social circles so that they do not feel the need to justify them. This facilitates radical forms of antisemitism and antisemitic violence.

Sources of antisemitic attitudes include the stereotypes and beliefs held by friends, family members, religious circles in and around mosques, foreign and domestic TV, and the internet. Projections onto Jews of fears and wishes also play an important role. While discrimination and

exclusion of Muslims in Europe is still a reality, this does not seem to be a relevant factor influencing antisemitic attitudes.