Media Images and Experiences of Being a Jew in the Swedish City of Malmö

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Abstract

A series of high-profile incidents in and after 2008 placed Malmö in southern Sweden on the national and international map as a place that was unsafe for people identified as Jews. The primary aim of this article is to explore and exemplify what it is like to live with Jewish identity in Malmö within a framework of how the media reports anti-Semitism and how this group copes with being the potential target of anti-Semitic harassment and hate crime. Based on interviews with people with Jewish identity in Malmö, we analyze and discuss their experiences using different themes, such as violent and everyday anti-Semitism, the local impact of the Israel–Palestine conflict, how media images affect their lives, and how exposure and vulnerability are dealt with. The findings are important in terms of both possible long-term measures against anti-Semitism and as immediate support for those targeted.

Introduction

"I'm hated in Malmö!" This is the headline of an article in southern Sweden's biggest daily newspaper, *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* (SDS), in which a young woman with Jewish identity expresses why she has moved from Malmö in southern Sweden to Israel. In the article, she describes how she has been regularly called a "bloody Jewish whore" at school and is increasingly afraid of being exposed to anti-Semitic hate crime (SDS, July 19, 2015). Other people and their families have also moved from Malmö to other parts of Sweden or to Israel in recent years and have talked to the media about Jews' vulnerability and their decision to move, which has attracted international attention.

Although anti-Semitic incidents have occurred throughout Sweden, most of the focus has been on one city in particular, Malmö. Located in the south of the country, Malmö is Sweden's third largest city (300,000 inhabitants) and is well known from the television series *The Bridge*, which is seen across large parts of the world. Since 1994, the Social Democrats have been the dominating party in the city.

More than 170 nationalities are represented in Malmö. The largest groups come from Iraq, Denmark, ex-Yugoslavia, Poland, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to statistics published in 2013, 30% (about 92,000) of the population of Malmö were born outside Sweden and about 11% were born in Sweden to parents originating from another country (www.

malmo.se, February 19, 2014). As religion and ethnicity are not listed in the Swedish statistics, it is difficult to say exactly how many Jews there are in Sweden and in Malmö. The Official Council of Swedish Jewish Communities estimates the number of Jews in Sweden to be around 20,000 (www.judiskacentralradet.se). According to the information provided by the Jewish community in Malmö, there were 2,000 members in the 1970s. Ten years ago, the number was 1,000, while today there are only 600. However, not all Jews living in Malmö are members of the community (www.jfm.se, May 15, 2014).

White power groups (neo-Nazi) are active in Sweden today, and some anti-Semitic hate crimes are committed by their members. In Malmö, however, White power groups are very small. But the right-wing populist party, the Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna), which was a very small party around 15 years ago with strong connections to the White Power Movement, is now an important actor in the Swedish Parliament. The Sweden Democrats received 12.9% of the votes in the parliamentary elections in 2014, including 13.5% of the votes in Malmö, and have a political manifesto that prioritizes reduced immigration, resistance to multiculturalism and to Islam, which resembles the agendas of

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similar popular parties in Europe (Borevi, 2013). The party is divided in attitudes toward Jews—that are primarily Muslims who are considered a danger for Sweden—but there are party members who openly declare anti-Jewish positions (Ravid, 2013).

A series of high-profile incidents in and after 2008 placed Malmö on the national and international map as a place that was unsafe for people identified as Jews (see, for example, *Sunday Telegraph*, January 29, 2010). In the Swedish and international press, Malmö has been described as a city in which anti-Semitism flourishes; an anti-Semitism that is fueled by the Israel–Palestine conflict and which targets Swedish Jews as responsible for the actions taken by the state of Israel (see, for example, *Aftonbladet* [AB], August 14, 2014; *Göteborgs Posten* [GP], February 27, 2010; *Skånska Dagbladet* [SkD], January 25, 2010). In 2012, the situation in Malmö was considered so serious that Barack Obama sent his special envoy, Hannah Rosenthal, to gather more information about the situation there. Since 2010, the international Simon Wiesenthal Centre has been advising Jews not to travel to Malmö because their safety cannot be guaranteed due to the high risk of exposure to hate crime (SDS, October 1, 2012; SDS, March 8, 2013). The focus on Malmö can also be discerned in newspaper headlines, such as "USA's envoy reaches hateful Malmö" (*Kvällsposten* [KvP], April 24, 2012) and "The eyes of the world are focused on Malmö" (SDS, February 27, 2012).

Media exposure like this could have affected both the image of Jews' exposure to hate crime and the Jewish experience of such exposure. The media's contributions are important when it comes to structuring the images and discourses that help people to interpret the world (Golding & Murdock, 2000; S. Hall, 1997). Based on a combined interview and media study, this article examines Jews' experiences of vulnerability and anti-Semitic hate crime in Malmö in a framework of how the media reports anti-Semitism of the city of Malmö as a special place for hate crime. The connection between the media's news reporting and the experience of anti-Semitic harassment and hate crimes is, to our knowledge, not previously researched.

We are aware that ethnic identity and positions are not always the most important aspects, but that dimensions such as gender, race, class, religion, and age can interact intersectionally in complex ways. We all have multiple identities. Identity is a positioning that is dependent on a specific context and can be chosen or forced (Börjesson & Palmblad, 2008; Chancer & Watkins, 2009; Hammarén & Johansson, 2009). As there are major differences among and between Jews, generalizing Jews as a group can be dangerous. Despite the difficulties associated with generalizations, we have chosen to use the identity position Jews in the text. This categorization could help to identify the vulnerability of specific groups, even though there is risk of stereotyped notions being reproduced (see Strömblad & Myrberg, 2015, for a discussion about the dilemmas of categorization).

The primary aim of this article is to explore and exemplify what it is like to live with Jewish identity in Malmö within a framework of how the media reports anti-Semitism and how this group copes with being the potential target of anti-Semitic harassment and hate crime.

In the study, this aim is broken down into three specific questions:

- How do people with Jewish identity experience their lives in Malmö?
- How is vulnerability dealt with in cases of obvious and potential hate crime?
- How is the media image of Malmö as a city that is especially prone to anti-Semitic hate crime?

Listening to victims' stories is vital and enables us to gain access to and understand openly manifested anti-Semitism as well as the more subtle expressions of prejudice and stereotyping. Based on interviews with people with Jewish identity in Malmö, we analyze and discuss their experiences using different themes, such as violent and everyday anti-Semitism, the local impact of the Israel–Palestine conflict, how media images affect their lives, and how exposure and vulnerability are dealt with. The findings are important in terms of both possible long-term measures against anti-Semitism and as immediate support for those targeted.

Previous Research and the Theoretical Point of Departure

In recent years, reports of anti-Semitic hate crimes against Jews and Jewish institutions have increased in Europe as a whole and range from the vandalism of Jewish burial grounds to murder (Iganski, 2013, Rich, 2014; Smith, 2012). In December 2013, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published the report titled *Discrimination and Hate Crime Against Jews in EU Member States: Experiences and Perceptions of Anti-Semitism*. Around 5,500 Jews in eight member states, of which Sweden was one, responded to an online survey about anti-Semitism and hate crime. The survey showed that many Jews had been exposed to anti-Semitism and hate crime in the examined countries. On average, 66% of the respondents regarded anti-Semitism as major problem. In Sweden, the figure was 60%. Eighty percent of the respondents in Sweden said that anti-Semitism had increased in recent years. Of those responding in Sweden, 22% said that they had personally been subjected to verbal or physical attacks in 2012, although 75% said that they had not reported this to the police because they did not think that it would lead anywhere (FRA, 2013).

Some of the anti-Semitic incidents/hate crimes in Sweden are reported to the police, although the number of unrecorded cases is probably great. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention publishes annual statistics on the number of reported hate crimes,[1] including those with an anti-Semitic

motive. The statistics show that more hate crimes were reported to the police in 2014 (270 cases) than in 2013 (190 cases; Brå, National Council for Crime Prevention, 2015). It is difficult to say anything definite about the intensity of anti-Semitism based on reports to the police and online surveys. The only thing that we can be sure about is that being Jewish in Sweden in 2015 is problematic, even though many regard Jews as part of the "white" establishment in Sweden (Nylund Skog, 2006).

The influence of anti-Semitism on Swedish thinking and acting in a historical perspective is well documented in research (see, for example, Andersson, 2000; Bachner, 2009; Berggren, 1999; Carlsson, 2004; Tydén, 1986). Kvist Geverts (2008) uses the phrase "background noise" to explain that while most people condemned anti-Semitism in Germany, anti-Semitic notions were "normal" in society and were always present, like a constant murmur. However, Kvist Geverts's metaphor has been criticized. Tydén (2010) claims that Kvist Geverts takes anti-Semitism for granted, and thus does not examine whether the different treatments of Jews can be due to various causes. Åmark (2011) explains that there was a change in the beginning of the 1930s toward polarization of views on anti-Semitism. For example, Swedish Nazis use vulgar anti-Semitic propaganda, while others previously involved in everyday anti-Semitism reacted by distancing themselves from the anti-Semitic speech.

After the Second World War, anti-Semitism was regarded as something that belonged to the past. However, in many parts of the world, including Sweden, anti-Semitic hate speech and violence are again on the rise (Bergmann, 2008; MacShane, 2008; Salzborn, 2010). Studies report that Jewish communities continue to experience violence against people and their property—synagogues, cemeteries, businesses, and homes (Bunzl, 2005; Salzborn, 2010; Smith, 2012). The growth of new communication and transport technologies facilitates the dissemination of anti-Semitic ideas between different countries and leads to the creation of local and international anti-Semitic ideological networks (Judaken, 2008; Watts, 2001). Such tendencies are visible not only in the Middle East, where anti-Jewish sentiments are often linked to hostility toward Israel, but also in the West, where in the last decade incidents of anti-Semitic expression and violence have become more visible (Balogh, 2011; Bergmann, 2008; Cohen et al., 2009; Iganski, 2013; Iganski & Kosmin, 2003; Partington, 2012; Peace, 2009; Smith, 2012).

The academic literature on anti-Semitic hate crime in Europe is extensive. Much of the literature argues that today's anti-Semitic hate crimes are triggered by the conflicts in the Middle East—often referred to as "new anti-Semitism" (e.g., Bacquet, 2009; Bunzl, 2005; Chesler, 2003; Forster & Epstein, 1974; FRA, 2013; Glazer, 2010; Iganski, 2013; Iganski & Kosmin, 2003; Levy, 1991; MacShane, 2008; Marrus et al., 2005; Rensmann & Schoeps, 2010;

Silverstein, 2008; Smith, 2012; Taguieff, 2004). Many of these authors argue that a new wave or outbreak of hostility toward Jews in Europe began with the start of the second Palestinian intifada in September 2000 and is still making its presence felt. This "new anti-Semitism" manifests itself as hostility toward the state of Israel, which implies that there is a parity between individual Jews and the state of Israel (Cohen et al., 2009; Fine, 2009; Glazer, 2010; Judaken, 2008; Klug, 2003).[2] Several researchers claim that if the "old" anti-Semitism mainly had been advocated by the extreme right, the new wave of anti-Semitism was spread partly by the left (see, for example, Ulrich, 2013; Wistrich, 2010). This also applies to Sweden according to Bachner (2000), who contends that it was certainly only extreme right groups who stood for open anti-Semitism, but from the 1960s variations of anti-Semitism have also been expressed by some left groups.

Some scholars emphasize that anti-Semitism stems from prejudices, ideologies, and conspiracy theories portraying Jews as powerful, cunning, and dangerous (e.g., Bergmann, 2008; Bilewicz & Krzeminski, 2010; Byford, 2003; Kersten & Hankel, 2013; Rensmann & Schoeps, 2010; Rudling, 2006). Much of this literature argues that understanding the causes of anti-Semitic hate crime also means recognizing the conspiratorial and mythical nature of the anti-Semitic ideology. As Bergmann (2008) notes, the core feature of anti-Semitic conspiracy theory and prejudice is that Jews are regarded as the embodiment of supranational modern phenomena, such as international financial markets, communism, and liberal values. Accordingly, their rapid social advancement in most European societies is interpreted as confirmation that Jews secretly dominate the economic and political world (Byford, 2003). According to these studies, the causes and persistence of anti-Semitic hate crimes in Europe cannot be understood if the mythical and conspiratorial nature of anti-Semitic ideologies is not accounted for.

In line with scholars like Bachner and Ring (2005), we argue that traditional anti-Jewish thinking has contributed to the intensification of anti-Semitism in Europe, which is explained by its deep historical and cultural roots. However, latent anti-Semitism is fanned into life by external events and developments and the reactions they trigger (Bachner & Ring, 2005; see also Klug, 2003). Similarly, Iganski (2008) argues that the Israel–Palestine conflict sometimes serves as a catalyst for the venting of prejudices that for many people are simmering below the surface.

The literature on anti-Semitism in Sweden today tends to view anti-Semitism as something that is mainly manifested among Muslims (Bevelander & Hjerm, 2015; Tossavainen, 2005). However, Bachner (2014) warns against reducing anti-Semitism to a "Muslim problem" and thinks that anti-Semitism should be understood as a wider social problem. This is also one of our points of departure.

What a victim perceives as anti-Semitic harassment is not always regarded as a crime from a legal point of view,

although this does not negate the victim's lived experience of the event. Even though the media often highlights and focuses on violent hate crime, many victims say that it is not the violence that is "psychologically worst" but rather the everyday "low-level" nature of the crimes (McClintock, 2005). Studies, such as that conducted by Iganski (2008) on the different categories of people exposed to hate crime, show that such crimes are often committed as part of the normal everyday routine. If harassment is part of everyday "normality," it is less likely to be reported to the police and becomes part of the victim's everyday life (see also Wang, 2002). This so-called "everyday anti-Semitism" has been underexplored so far. The modes of oppression are in some ways similar to what is called "everyday sexism" (Bates, 2014).

From a legal point of view, anti-Semitic hate crime and hate crime in general are often regarded as well-defined and separate events, although according to Bowling (1999) they should be seen as part of a continuous chain. Hate crime is generally based on prejudice, and it is difficult to say where a hate crime starts and stops. It is rather an ongoing process with a cumulative effect; a dynamic process that develops over time in a specific social, political, and historic context (Bowling, 1999). Iganski, Kielinger, and Paterson (2005) maintain that like hate crime in general, anti-Semitic incidents do not occur in a vacuum but take place in a cultural context in which prejudice and violence are used as social resources.

Many scholars claim that hate crime is worse than many other crimes because it signals that the group to which the victim belongs should "know its place" and that compared with other categories many hate crime victims suffer from long-term psychological problems such as fear, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, a loss of self-confidence, and sleeplessness (Ehrlich, Larcom, & Purvis, 1994; N. Hall, 2005; Herek, Cogan, & Gillis, 2002; Iganski, 2008). McDevitt, Balboni, Garcia, and Gu (2003) mean that the consequences of hate crime are different from those of other crimes, in that the victims are replaceable, that is, anyone in the targeted group could be a victim. In addition, it is not only the victim who experiences problems later on but also the group to which the victim belongs or is seen to belong. Some victims of hate crime are afraid of being targeted again because they belong to a certain group (Boeckmann & Turpin-Petrosino, 2002). According to Craig (2002), hate crime is a unique form of aggression that prevents targeted individuals and groups living a "free" life. Potential victims experience that they need to be careful and perhaps even conceal their identity, which restricts their movements and lives. As one study on anti-Semitism in Sweden (Nylund Skog, 2006) shows, hiding one's Jewish identity by concealing symbols like the Star of David and the kippah is common.

The fear of being exposed to hate crime due to group affinity can also be strengthened by the media's descriptions. The extent to which different target groups are portrayed in the media depends on a number of factors. Some groups have stronger voices than others, and can therefore be regarded as more exposed. It is therefore difficult to determine which groups are most vulnerable to hate crime as a result of media reporting. The media in turn can influence opinion by setting the agenda for which type of hate crime is featured (Strömbäck, 2009). According to Munro (2014), the media plays an important role in this process, in that it can choose which hate crime victims to report on and which to ignore. Our knowledge about hate crime is often limited to what we read in the newspapers or watch on TV, which can give us the impression that hate crime victims are exposed to extreme violence. Drama sells and the media often focuses on the most extreme cases. Behind the reported incidents of extreme violence are thousands of other, more everyday, incidents that do not make the news (see, for example, Tiby, 2010). Serious crimes are often overrepresented in the media, and the reporting of crime can reinforce the fear of being exposed (Chermak, 1998; Gunter, 1987; Reiner, Livingstone, & Allen, 2000).

According to Haavisto and Petersson (2013), although our attitudes may not change as a result of a newspaper article or blog spot, if a way of thinking or perspective is repeated and hammered year after year from many different directions it can affect our self-image and understanding of the world. Research (see, for example, Demker, 2014; Sandberg & Demker, 2014) indicates that there may be a connection between how people experience a concern, for example, anti-Semitism, and how often the media highlights the different events linked to it. There could thus be a connection between the extent of the media coverage of hate crime incidents in Malmö and Jewish people's concern about being targeted. This connection is one of the issues that we examine in this study.

We use aspects of agenda-setting theory to analyze the media's representations of anti-Semitic hate crime in Malmö. Agenda-setting theory is about which social issues are given most attention in the media. The first level concerns which objects—factual matters, organizations, and people—are high on the media's agenda. The second level concerns how the media reports certain issues and how the general public understands them. This shifts the focus to how prominent the different attributes are on different agendas. By attributes, we mean the qualities and characteristics that are associated with various objects (Strömbäck, 2009). Hate crime as an object has attracted considerable interest and been high on the media's agenda in recent years, with Malmö being especially highlighted as a city in which anti-Semitic hate crime has escalated. A number of incidents, which we call here key incidents, have put Malmö on the map both nationally and internationally. What is known as priming is found at the second level of agenda-setting theory and concerns the interplay between the media content and a person's cognitive state (Strömbäck, 2009). The mind can be seen as an associative network consisting of different nodes and links that connect

the nodes to each other, as per the associative network model (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). The links between the different nodes are both cognitive and affective, and relate to which objects are associated with each other and how a person feels about the links (Strömbäck, 2009). The object Malmö acts as a node, which for many people is connected with the nodes of anti-Semitism and hate crime. The more often we hear about Malmö and anti-Semitic hate crime, the more likely we are to connect Malmö with this.

Materials and Method

This article is mostly based on in-depth interviews conducted within the project titled "Hate Crime—A Challenge to Democracy." This is a multidisciplinary study on hate crime in Skåne that focuses on the causes, consequences, and support initiatives, and is financed by the Swedish Research Council and the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation Support Authority. The project studies groups that are often exposed to crime, such as Jews, Muslims, Afroswedes, Roma/Travelers, and the LGBT community, and this article is based on one of the project's substudies.

As our primary aim in this article is to examine how people who identify themselves as Jews in Malmö experience and deal with anti-Semitic hate crime in a framework of media reporting of anti-Semitism, we have interviewed people with some connection to the Jewish community in Malmö. All the interviews were semistructured, concentrated on a number of fairly wide themes, were tape-recorded, and later transcribed. An important intention with the interviews has been to try to capture the informants' own meaning making, that is, how they describe their own and others' experiences of violation and hate crime. To formulate the relevant research questions, we first presented our project at a meeting (March 15, 2012) of the Jewish community in Malmö in connection with a discussion about the subject of hate crime. On that occasion, we were able to listen to different people's experiences of anti-Semitic hate crime. We also met with a Jewish cultural association (June 19, 2014). After a few introductory interviews, the authors made contact with other informants via the snowball method (Bryman, 2008). As this method builds on other people's social contacts, the informants are not representative of the group in a statistical sense (Bryman, 2008). The people we choose to interview all had experiences of anti-Semitism. In one case, we contacted a woman we had identified through the media. It should be pointed out that very few people are convicted of hate crimes, which makes it very difficult to contact informants who have been officially recognized as hate crime victims. However, despite the lack of convictions, we know that the number of people affected by hate crime and similar incidents is great. For this reason, we have been both broad and explorative in our projections.

In this substudy, a total number of 11 people between the ages of 16 and 67—seven women and four men—were interviewed separately and are presented here with fictitious names. All the informants identify themselves as Jewish and are proud of it. All except one of the informants are well established in Swedish society and were also born in Sweden. They can thus be said to have a high social, economic, and cultural capital. As the study does not include all Jewish individuals and groups in Malmö, the findings cannot be generalized, although they can contribute to a deeper understanding of the vulnerability that many experience. We stopped collecting data when we considered that a "saturation" point had been reached and when the results of the themes raised in the interviews began to show similarities with each other (Bryman, 2008). In the article, we have chosen to allow many of the informants to speak for themselves by making use of short, yet representative quotations from the conducted interviews. We have also used longer narratives to illustrate our conclusions and thereby create a better understanding of the problems. Miller (2000) maintains that in studies based on life stories or biographical research, narrative interviews are more oriented toward eliciting the informants' perspectives than objective facts. To a great extent, the interviewer is part of the process, in that he or she is included in the construction of the informant's story.

All the interviews were conducted in Swedish, and the individual interviews lasted between 1 and 2 hr. The informants were told about the purpose of the study and that participation was voluntary. Anonymity was also guaranteed. We have made minor revisions to the language used when translating from Swedish to English but have tried to stay as close as possible to the original wording. Data were collected, and analyses were conducted throughout the research process. The interview guide was frequently revised to suit the varying circumstances, in that questions were added and some were omitted. The analysis began by listening to the taped interviews and reading the transcriptions and documentation. The interviews were then coded according to the central themes that had been identified. Comparisons were made between the researchers' interpretations and the coding revised accordingly. Theoretical concepts were then applied to analyze the interpretations. This led to new questions, which were addressed by returning to the empirical material—an abductive process (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 1994) that was enhanced by alternating between the theory and the empirical material.

Attacks on Jewish buildings and individuals, for example, the rabbi, are things that affect Jews as a group (see, for example, Boeckmann & Turpin-Petrosino, 2002, on how hate crime spreads fear). The image of Malmö as an anti-Semitic bastion emerged at the end of 2008/beginning of 2009 and can be linked to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. In the interviews, the informants often referred to incidents that had been reported in the media, and that these events and the media coverage of these events have affected their experience of vulnerability, which led us to conduct a media survey and content analysis of a qualitative and

interpretive nature. We searched a variety of databases for Swedish newspaper articles on anti-Semitism and hate crime published between January 2009 and September 2015. This search yielded 126 articles from a total of 31 different Swedish daily newspapers at both the local and national levels. The reporting mainly focused on news events but also included in-depth interviews with Jews who in various ways have been exposed to hate crime and contributed to debates. In our analysis of the material, the main focus has been on how the connection between the city of Malmö and anti-Semitism is construed in the media. We began the investigation by sorting the material chronologically, which enabled us to follow the media's portrayal of anti-Semitic hate crime over time. We then tried to identify important key incidents, that is, events that took place in Malmö and attracted wide media coverage. It became apparent that these incidents had also been reproduced intertextually in different newspapers and in some cases also internationally. It also became clear that different key incidents were reproduced over time. When a new incident that could be linked to anti-Semitism occurred in Malmö, the media connected it with earlier incidents, which added to the image of a town in which anti-Semitism was strong. Finally, we analyzed and interpreted the media material in relation to the interviews.

Results and Analysis

An Increased Vulnerability and Vigilance

Independently of each other, most of the informants describe and share the experience that the situation for Jews has worsened in recent years.

John, now in his late 60s, was born and bred in Malmö, and remembers how people were very quick to respond to anti-Semitic demonstrations when he was growing up: "It simply wasn't tolerated by society" (John, December 5, 2012). Susan, a woman in her mid-50s who has lived in Malmö all her adult life, agrees with this and says that the situation for Jews in Malmö has become much worse over the last couple of years and that nowadays anti-Semitism is much more tangible and visible (Susan, April 18, 2012). Today, the limits have been stretched, and the general level of acceptance of abusive language is much greater. The view of hate crime is related to the use of language—the discourse—that is accepted at any given point in time (Cowan, Resendez, Marshall, & Quist, 2002). According to several of our informants, the acceptance of verbal anti-Semitic harassment now seems to be greater than ever before. In addition, several of the informants say that anti-Semitic feelings have grown not only in neo-Nazi circles but also in minority groups from the Middle East (John, December 5, 2012).

The younger informants are not sure whether the targeting of Jews has increased in recent years, but say that awareness of the problem and watchfulness has increased. For example, Sara says, "My awareness has increased and I am now much,

much more vigilant in town" (May 30, 2012). The Internet is an important source of information for those wanting to remain informed and updated about hate crime. On the more negative side, social forums on the Internet are a haven for the spread of hatred (Wigerfelt, Wigerfelt, & Dahlstrand, 2015). All the younger informants are extra vigilant when surfing the net because they never know when they might come across an anti-Semitic website or be unexpectedly exposed to anti-Semitic propaganda. They all share the experience of being at the receiving end of offensive comments in social forums or being threatened, including death threats, on social media sites such as Facebook, via email or text messages (Adam, May 30, 2012; Anna, May 30, 2012; Christopher, June 12, 2012).

Several of the informants describe incidents that have occurred in connection with two children's camps at a Jewish conference center located outside Malmö. On the first occasion, in 2008, a small group of young people suddenly appeared shouting abusive insults but disappeared when the police arrived on the scene (Susan, April 18, 2012). Two years later, in 2010, a group of about 15 young people appeared on the first evening of the camp shouting "Jewish pigs," "Kill all Jews," and "Heil Hitler" outside the center. On the following evening, the youth, aged around 14 to 15, reappeared, and this time kicked down the fence, behaved in a threatening manner, and threw eggs and glass bottles at the building. The incident came as a shock to those present and, according to one of the informants, the younger children cried and were afraid (Filip, May 30, 2012). The perpetrators on these occasions were local youth with "Swedish" backgrounds, and the motives for the attacks seem to have been anti-Semitism in connection primarily to prejudices as well as conspiracy theories. The local school arranged a meeting with the assailants' parents and measures were taken (John, December 5, 2012). The quick reaction to the incident is something that several of the informants regard as very positive and worthy of imitation (Susan, April 18, 2012; John, December 5, 2012). The area in which the conference center is located is one of the most prosperous in southern Sweden. Although very few inhabitants are born outside Sweden, the area has had problems for several years with explicit racism. In other words, anti-Semitism is not just a phenomenon that can be linked to segregation, outsiderhood, and the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Its manifestations and extent differ at different times and in diverse places.

Everyday Anti-Semitism

According to Bachner (2000), the term anti-Semitism has become "overcharged" and often implies an intensive, open, and action-oriented hate, as described above. However, the connection between Nazism has resulted in a partial blindness to other kinds of anti-Semitism, such as culturally determined prejudices and inherited negative attitudes. In a similar way, Iganski (2008) argues that many hate crime incidents

have nothing to do with people's violent hate, but rather indicate a kind of latent anti-Semitism that in many people simmers below the surface. Anti-Semitism surfaces at random and can be triggered by a conflict or everyday irritation in the encounter with a Jewish person.

At a more everyday and subtle level, general anti-Semitic prejudices seem to have been passed down through the generations and have spread to other circles. This anti-Semitic prejudice can erupt in different situations, sometimes from friends, neighbors, school- and workmates, which many of the younger informants have experience of. Jokes and ironic remarks about Jews are common phenomena for those we talked to, are part of the respondent's everyday life, and something that is almost seen as "unavoidable." As they are impossible to predict, people are forced to be constantly on guard. Our informants found it increasingly difficult to accept jokes about Jews, partly because they felt more vulnerable now and partly because the jokes reproduced old, classic, anti-Semitic stereotypes about Jews. The younger informants told us that it can start with someone telling a joke about Jews, which then escalates to people openly expressing a menacing anti-Semitism, which can be seen as an interrelated process.

As the Jewish group in Malmö is small, Jewish youth are more vulnerable in certain situations. There is a power aspect to this, where the number of Jews in relation to other groups is significant. According to Ben, being a single Jew in a public place can feel particularly vulnerable, even though many regard Jews as part of "white Sweden": "There are so few Jews in Malmö that people can shout whatever they want" (Ben, May 30, 2012). Sara gave an example of meetings in which she had been verbally attacked because she was Jewish and where the aggression had spread to other people: "If they are supported by 3-4 people I cannot defend myself at all. I am outnumbered when I am alone. If I am not with my Jewish friends then I am alone" (Sara, May 30, 2012). The fact that the Jewish presence in Malmö is small and appears to continue to diminish contributes to a vicious circle, where young people who want to live a richer Jewish life move to Stockholm or Gothenburg because the Jewish communities are much larger there and it is possible to "keep the traditions alive." The Jewish community thus continues to diminish, and those who remain can experience themselves as part of a diminishing minority and therefore more vulnerable.

Jewish Identity and Spatial Limitations

Our informants said that as Jews in Malmö they were forced to reflect on where and in which situation their Jewish identity could or could not be exposed. Some of the informants thought that they could choose their Jewish identity, whereas others, like John, said that they looked like Jews on the outside: "Nobody could have failed to notice that I am a Jew" (John, December 5, 2012; see also Börjesson & Palmblad, 2008).

An obvious Jewish symbol that is very uncommon in Malmö is the headwear known as the kippah, which can be seen as a mark of identification. The interviewees experienced this as a "stigma symbol" (Goffman, 1963/2007). Other important "stigma symbols" include Jewish jewelry/necklaces that many are careful about wearing openly in different situations:

> I usually wear a necklace bearing my Hebrew name. I always wear it, but if I'm in Lund [an academic city close to Malmö] it doesn't matter where I have it. It's always there. But if I go out on an evening in Malmö I usually take it off. I put it in my pocket. And if we are in Malmö on a weekday afternoon or evening I always check where it is. If it is in front I turn it round. (Sara, May 30, 2012)

According to Craig (2002), targeted individuals/groups are prevented from living a "free" life. Potential victims feel that they have to be careful and, if possible, conceal their identity, which restricts their lives. Although Andrea (June 21, 2012) has not personally been exposed to harassment as a result of her Jewish identity, she has heard a lot about it from friends and relatives. These narratives have made her much more cautious: "I don't tell everyone that I'm a Jew because I don't want to be a target myself." Christopher is also cautious about revealing his Jewish identity: "I don't hide my identity but I don't tell everyone that I'm a Jew. You have to be careful who you talk to" (Christopher, June 21, 2012).

The spatial consequences of hate crime can be that vulnerable groups create mental maps of a town and where it is safe, which affects the everyday situation (Iganski & Lagou, 2009). It is clear that the informants are very conscious of spatial limitations. The majority of hate crime takes place around the synagogue and assembly hall in Malmö—places where attacks have occurred and where safety measures are in place. These are places of symbolic significance and where hate crime is clearly against Jews as a group. The likelihood of being exposed to hate crime here is greater than anywhere else. The Jewish community's rabbi, Shneur Kesselman, is the most vulnerable and is regularly subjected to abuse, insults, and gestures from passers-by and people driving past in cars. Most of the reported anti-Semitic hate crimes are directed against him. But other members of the community also know that they need to be vigilant on their way to or from the synagogue, because the likelihood of being attacked is greatest there.

The Israeli–Palestinian Conflict, Its Local Imprints, and Media Images

There was a significant increase in the reporting of hate crime against Jews in the Swedish media, with a special focus on Malmö, at the end of 2008/beginning of 2009, which was largely associated with the conflict between Israel

and Palestine. An attribute that was ascribed to Malmö was that hate crime was increasing. This was reflected in newspaper headlines such as "Jewish hatred is rampant in Malmö" (SDS, February 7, 2009) or "Jewish hatred drives them away from Malmö" (SkD, December 12, 2012).

In 2008/2009, the conflict in Gaza escalated due to the Israeli military operation known as Cast Lead. In Sweden, Jews began to feel threatened. The Council of Swedish Jewish Communities wrote to the Swedish Government to ask for help in stopping an increasing threat toward Jews in Sweden. The background to the letter was that threats, violent actions, and arson attacks had been directed at Jews and Jewish institutions (*Dagen*, February 4, 2009). The worsening situation on the Gaza Strip had local imprints. In Malmö, a Jewish network/association organized a demonstration demanding Israel's right to exist, which ended in chaos with demonstrators being pelted with stones and eggs. Some of the demonstrators were reported to have shouted "fucking Jews" and "Heil Hitler." The police were unable to guarantee safety and security, and many people, including Jews, sought shelter in the streets and alleys adjoining the square (*Dagen*, February 4, 2009). This incident—an important key incident in the media images of Malmö as a city especially characterized by anti-Semitic hate crime—was reported in both the national and international media. In the weeks and months following this turbulent demonstration, Jews experienced an escalation in the number of harassments. In an interview, a spokesperson from the Jewish community described the incident as a kind of collective trauma for its members, and perhaps also for the inhabitants of Malmö (SkD, January 27, 2010).

In March 2009, shortly after Cast Lead and the demonstration described above, the city of Malmö hosted a Davis Cup tennis match between Sweden and Israel. Due to the turbulent nature of the demonstration, the increase in reported anti-Semitic hate crimes and lobbying by anti-Israel groups, the police decided that the match should be played privately and not be open to the public. This decision resulted in a polarized and heated debate, both nationally and internationally. For example, the Israeli media accused Sweden, and specifically Malmö, of anti-Semitism (*Nordvästra Skånes Tidningar* [NST], December 7, 2012). This can also be seen as yet another so-called key incident that recurs in both the informants' narratives and media reports.

Without exception, the informants living in Malmö stress that they all are affected by the Israel–Palestine conflict but that over the years they have developed strategies to cope with it. They emphasize the importance of being informed about what is happening in Israel and do this by reading daily updates on the Internet, accessing information via Facebook, from friends living in Israel, and so on. All our informants in Malmö experience a clear connection between increased anti-Semitic harassment and open conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians. They feel themselves to be held collectively accountable for the events in the Middle East. Sara said that she and other Jews were held responsible for what happened in Israel:

> When anything happens people don't distinguish between Israel and us. The conclusion is that Israel plus Jews equals one. But it isn't. I can't be held responsible for a whole country's actions. I have to stand up for my own actions. (May 30, 2012)

Over the years, Susan has learned that certain subjects are charged and no longer gets involved in discussions about, for example, circumcision, or the Israel–Palestine conflict, at her place of work. The discomfort increases when the situation in Israel heats up:

> What I have come up against and is very unpleasant is at work when something happens in Israel. It's discussed at work and it feels as though I have to shoulder the blame for everything that happens there. I make a hasty retreat. I've learned not to get involved in such discussions. (Susan, April 18, 2012)

Petra said something similar in another interview:

> You are singled out as guilty. "Why are YOU firing missiles?" And then you hear on the radio that of course they don't like Jews here in Sweden because they murder their families in the Middle East. I get so very angry. What have we, I am 16 years old, done? Have I shot someone there? They see us as a group and mix it up with the state of Israel. They don't see us as individuals. (June 21, 2012)

Ben thought that it was people from different backgrounds who hurled insults, although in the main it was people from the Middle East:

> At school there are also Swedes (who insult us), but in the main it's people from the Middle East. It's not just Palestinians, but others too. Some may have friends who are Palestinians. (May 30, 2012)

Students with a Middle Eastern background attend many of Malmö's schools. Some informants told us that their children have been exposed to hate crime incidents initiated by some of these students. As a result, many Jewish families have chosen to send their children to schools where there seems to be less risk of them being targeted. Jewish teachers also talked about their vulnerability in school, which in some cases has led to teachers leaving the profession due to harassment and threats.

Anti-Semitism and Segregation

According to Bachner and Ring (2005), the anti-Semitism that is evident in certain Muslim groups in Europe is sustained by the Israel–Palestine conflict but is probably also fueled by the social and economic marginalization and outsiderhood that characterizes many of the migrant groups in Europe (see also Bergmann & Wetzel, 2003; Taguieff, 2004). Several of the informants point to the city's increased segregation as an explanation for why Jews feel more exposed in Malmö than in other parts of the country (John, December 5, 2012; Petur, July 19, 2014). Susan reasons in a similar way

and thinks that the most important factor for Malmö in combating anti-Semitism is to invest in a good integration policy. In this, she points to the major schisms in the city, where many people are unemployed and live in socially vulnerable areas (April 18, 2012).

Sophia is a Jewish woman in her late 30s. She lives in Malmö but was born and brought up in a small village outside the city. For several years, and especially in connection with the intensification of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, she has been repeatedly harassed; an experience that began when she moved to Malmö. For more than a decade, she has lived in a segregated area that is populated by a large number of people from different parts of the Middle East, where it is well known that she and her friend have a Jewish background. She has experienced harassment in her everyday life. For her, taking the dog out for a walk and going to the supermarket are everyday situations in which she is constantly exposed to physical and verbal harassment.

> Both the woman with whom I share a flat and I have had stones thrown at our heads. My friend even had a mug of urine thrown over her from an upstairs balcony. . . . I have been called a "fucking Jew," a "Jewish whore" and a "Jewish cunt." (Sophia, May 28, 2013)

One experience that was particularly painful and upsetting for Sophia was a late-night burglary in her home. When she realized that the things that were missing were sacred Jewish artifacts of great sentimental value, she connected the theft with anti-Semitism. Attacks like these have affected both women's health—especially psychologically—and restricted their movements, to the extent that they are now afraid to leave their home and mix with other people.

The effects of hate crime go beyond the immediate victim. Others in the same group who hear or read about the hate crime can react angrily and/or with fear (see, for example, Boeckmann & Turpin-Petrosino, 2002; Craig, 2002; Craig-Henderson, 2009; Wachtel, 1999). Several of our informants said that they felt vulnerable as Jews even when something happened in other places:

> When something happens that is directed at Jews in other places the tension increases, because the threat is always there. We are always vigilant and this affects us a lot, especially when the threat is real. We can't "keep looking over our shoulder" but have to try to live a normal everyday life. (Judith, March 22, 2012)

The Media Images of an "Anti-Semitic City"

The Jewish community's rabbi became something of an "official face" and "object" for the anti-Semitism manifested in Malmö. Rabbi Shneur Kesselman, clearly identifiable as a Jew with his black clothes and long beard, has talked about his vulnerability in Malmö in several newspaper interviews.

Kesselman's appearance singles him out as especially exposed. He describes being spat at on the street, having soft drink cans thrown at him while walking through the streets and almost being run over by a passing car. The rabbi usually reports most of the hate crime incidents he is involved in to the police. As yet, none of the reported incidents have led to any legal action being taken (*Dagen*, February 4, 2009; *Dagens Nyheter* [DN], November 7, 2011; KvP, March 5, 2010; KvP, October 28, 2011; KvP, April 24, 2012; SDS, February 7, 2009; SDS, July 17, 2011).

> What about our rabbi? He looks like a Jew. He walks around town and is harassed, spat at or whatever. But imagine if we'd all looked like him! Would we be able to live here at all? I don't understand it. He hasn't even done anything. He's not even from Israel. He's from the USA. (Petra, June 21, 2012)

Ilmar Reepalu, the former mayor of Malmö, who has received a lot of negative attention in the debate on anti-Semitism and has been accused of anti-Semitic rhetoric in his public utterances about Jews living in the city, can also be seen as an "object" with negative attributes in the media descriptions of Malmö as an anti-Semitic city. For example, Reepalu has said that Jews in Malmö ought to distance themselves from Israel's actions. This has been criticized and discussed in the media by politicians and other actors. Reepalu has thus become an official representative of Malmö, and his utterances have contributed to headlines such as "Hate of Jews is greatest in Malmö" (*Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå* [TT], January 29, 2010). Reepalu's statements have also been strongly criticized in the local press (SDS, September 29, 2012), as exemplified by the headline: "Reepalu is the Problem" (SDS, September 30, 2012). Reepalu's statements have been reproduced and discussed in several newspaper debate articles and have been taken up in contexts in which Malmö is described as a city characterized by anti-Semitism. Reepalu has come to personify the critique that government agencies and politicians do not do enough to combat and stand up to anti-Semitism.

A consequence of the key incidents described above and one's own and others' experiences of harassment is that many Jewish families have moved away from Malmö. According to both the media and our interviews, it is clear that some Jewish families have decided to leave Malmö in the hope of finding a better life elsewhere. Some families have even talked openly to the press about why they want to move. In one newspaper article, a family was interviewed about why they wanted to move from Malmö to Israel. The main reason that was given was an increasing anti-Semitism. "My children are not safe here. It will only get worse," said the man in the family. Some of his relatives have lived in Malmö since the beginning of the 1800s, while others who had survived the extermination camps came in 1945. The man said that people had shouted "fucking Jew" at him, and he had witnessed how his friend had been seriously violated and threatened. He said that if someone shouts "Kill the

Jews," it also affects him and pierces his heart. The man did not know of anyone who dared to wear visible signs of Judaism, such as the Star of David or the kippah. He was critical of those in power in Malmö, and thought that they did not openly distance themselves from anti-Semitism (SkD, January 25, 2010). In an interview, one of the informants said that it was not only anti-Semitic hate crime that made families leave Malmö but also dissatisfaction with politicians who did not take the problem seriously. If they had, the families might have stayed (Eva, September 25, 2012).

In 2014, the conflict between Israel and Palestine flared up yet again in Gaza, which in Malmö meant that anti-Semitism was refueled and used by certain individuals to activate hostility toward Jews and Jewish symbols/buildings. Windows were smashed in the synagogue, and at one point five people shouting anti-Semitic slogans tried to force their way into the Jewish assembly hall next to the synagogue (SDS, August 3, 2014). The rabbi was attacked twice in the same day. On the first occasion, a bottle was thrown at him and on the second a cigarette lighter. A man shouted "Jewish pig" and other derogatory words at the rabbi (SDS, August 5, 2014).

Final Discussion

The reporting of anti-Semitic hate crime has increased in Europe as a whole in recent years. This anti-Semitic current has also affected Sweden, where the city of Malmö has been highlighted by the media and by the Simon Wiesenthal Centre as a dangerous city for people with a Jewish identity. Our examination of the Swedish media's reporting of anti-Semitic hate crime incidents shows that in recent years the focus on Malmö and some of the key incidents that have taken place there has increased. An attribute that is ascribed to anti-Semitic hate crime in Malmö is the city's unique position in Sweden. Objects like anti-Semitism, hate crime, and Malmö's politicians serve as nodes that are interconnected with other nodes and key incidents. The links between the different nodes are both cognitive and affective, in that they deal with which objects are associated with and how one feels about the links. In short, the more the media reports on Malmö and anti-Semitic hate crime, the more likely we are to connect the city with this. Also, the more often certain objects or attributes are highlighted in the media, the more often these objects are activated and attributed in our minds (priming) and the more likely we are to think about these particular objects or attributes.

The events described above have been intertextually repeated in other parts of Sweden's media and have contributed to a view of Malmö as the bastion of anti-Semitism; a stigmatization that the city finds difficult to shake off. This has also had international repercussions. The effect of this could be that anti-Semitic incidents in other places are ignored. The fear that is spread by the media is reinforced and accumulated by the so-called key incidents that many of the informants themselves, or their friends and relatives, have been exposed to. The key incidents that are particularly highlighted are harassment and threats in connection with demonstrations; for example, Jews being chased on the street, hate crimes committed against the rabbi, attacks on youth camps, and teachers and children with a Jewish identity being harassed at school—events that are distressing and confirm increased vulnerability. There is great disappointment among the informants that politicians and government agencies do not intervene forcefully enough.

The majority of the informants think that they have been collectively blamed for the situation in the Middle East, to the extent that has become more difficult to be a "visible" Jew in Malmö. This is most obvious in the case of the rabbi in Malmö, but in Sophia's story it is also clear that she and her friend are singled out as Jews in their neighborhood. The stories also show that Jews in other cities are forced to adjust to a kind of latent threat that tends to increase when the conflict between Israel and Palestine escalates. Some of the informants connect the perpetrators of hate crime with young men from the Middle East who mainly act when the conflict between Israel and Palestine is at its most acute. The presence of large population groups from the Middle East in relation to the small Jewish minority can lead to feelings of insecurity. Many point out that Malmö is a socially vulnerable and segregated city, and that it is also relatively compact, where encounters between people take place in a more direct way than in larger cities, for example, Stockholm, with its large geographic spread and suburbs some distance from the center.

However, the informants' stories also reveal a more complex picture of who the perpetrators are. One example of this is the prosperous area outside Malmö where Jewish children and young people are confronted by extreme right-wing Nazi slogans from local young people. The stories about anti-Semitic prejudices and stereotypes of friends, neighbors, and colleagues who are Jews indicate another, more widespread, abuse. For several of the informants, everyday anti-Semitism is very distressing. Iganski (2008) argues that most anti-Jewish incidents are what are sometimes called commonplace incidents—a kind of latent anti-Semitism that becomes manifest when the opportunity to ventilate prejudices presents itself and is triggered by simple schisms. It is often difficult to judge when an anti-Semitic hate crime starts and ends, because it is an ongoing process with a cumulative effect (Bowling, 1999).

The situation of Jews in Malmö has changed, and many experience that openly revealing their Jewish affinity is problematic due to the latent threats. Jewish symbols are often spontaneously hidden and, even if one has not been personally affected, there is concern and deliberation about where and when one's Jewish identity can be revealed. The synagogue, the Jewish community's premises, and the Jewish cemetery are obvious material symbols for the Jewish group and are targets for hate crime attacks. As a Jew, one is forced to be extra careful around these areas and be constantly on

guard. The consequences for the individual can be very serious. Restrictions in how one lives one's life also affect the entire group (Iganski, 2008; McDevitt, Balboni, Garcia, & Gu, 2003). When someone is affected by hate crime incidents, the entire Jewish group is affected. Anti-Semitic acts can also be described as "message crimes," in that they announce to the victim's group that they can also become targets (Lawrence, 2003). Doubts as to whether society can protect and support these members and the feeling of abandonment are some of the reasons as to why hate crime is seen as worse than crimes that are not motivated by hate crime (see also Tiby, 2009). It is therefore very important that hate crime is explicitly condemned by leading politicians and government agencies, and that special measures are introduced.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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Notes

1. Swedish legislation relating to hate crime and stiffer penalties is based on the motives of the perpetrator in a criminal action. The ruling about harsher sentences was introduced in Sweden in 1994 for crimes committed against a person, ethnic group, or other groups of people on the grounds of race, skin color, national or ethnic origin, faith, sexual orientation, or other similar circumstances (The Swedish Penal Code Ch. 29 2 §7 p).
2. Some scholars argue that the term "new anti-Semitism" is part of an increasing Islamophobia (Fekete, 2012), or that in any case Jews in general are seen as a less exposed group than most other minorities in the West (Kushner, 2013; Lerman, 2003).

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