

Terrorism, as seen in Norway

22 July - what can we learn?

Professor Elisabeth Eide
Oslo and Akershus University College

22 July and previous massacres

- Finland (different, but frightening): Jokela (2007) and Kauhajoki (2008)
- Young men posting their messages on the web **before** the terror, rapidly spreading
- Anders Behring Breivik: hatred towards «cultural marxists» and Muslims («Eurabia»)



A nation in mourning, a larger «WE»?

- Political leadership and the royal family led the nation in mourning: «More openness, more democracy»
- Many Muslims said they felt more «at home», more accommodated
- BUT: In some media, very different tendencies occurred



Sartre on the Jewish experience

- «Sur la Question Juive», 1945
- Jews in France often adopted society's view on the Jews (internalization)
- The Jew has passionate enemies and not so passionate defenders
- The anti-Semite wants a life where *reasoning and research* only play a subordinate role.



A fundamental debate ...

- Have views critical to Islam/Muslims been marginalized? (And did this contribute to ABBs acts of terror?)
- Did ABB feel that he had support for his views, and thereby (also, maybe) for his deeds?



Three streams/positions post 22-7 (I)

- ABB's acts were wrong, but (some of) his views make sense. This view has more access in the public sphere now (mainstream media)
- Government got what they «asked for»
- ABB is a hero, he did right (very few say so, but still ...)



Media context: «terror*» in Norwegian press, 5 years

	Terror* and Islam*	Terror* and right wing extremism*	Terror* and separatist*	Terror* and muslim*	Terror* and racism*
2011	3451	876	133	2640	397
2010	2774	101	229	2215	195
2009	1915	74	187	1364	165
2008	1899	45	214	1255	153
2007	1922	64	140	1194	111

Source: Retriever, 15.9.2011. How would the blogosphere look?

Consistent editorial practice?

Hamzah Rajpoot found an entry negative to Islam on Aftenposten.no*. He changed it so that the words Islam and Muslim were changed to Jewishness and Jew. The entry was then removed immediately

Another entry hostile to Christian migrants from the USA was removed, while the original one was removed ½ year after, as a result of critique

Source: Ny Tid 28.10.2010

*The web version of our largest newspaper



Three streams/positions (II)

- Only ABB can be blamed for the terror and assassinations.
- But he may have felt that he had support for his views (and acts); «Rhetorics of war»
- Much hostility to Muslims in the media and elsewhere.



Three streams/positions (III)

- The blamed ones. some precarious hours on 22 July, Muslims faced hate (the collective guilt syndrome)
- How much hate speech does one have to face?
- Withdrawal



Sophia Adampour (13) on July 25th, 2011

“Hi, I am 13 years old and a Norwegian Muslim and I feel that this is my fault. He says he killed everybody since I am here. Should I move to protect Norwegian children in the future? This is how I feel. Greetings from Sophia.”

(At debate forum with psychologists, NRK)



Compassion and victim positions

- Compassion for the 22-7 victims – large and global
- Compassion for the right wing extremists, partly marginalized (also victims?)
- Compassion for the first to be blamed and partly marginalized minorities (hit by hate speech).



A new climate for debate?

- While I fight for your right to free expression
- I'll also fight for a media atmosphere where anonymity is a rare exception
- ...and for the right of the ones talked about to be free of discrimination
- and for decency and humanity



Thank you for your
attention!

