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HATE CRIME OR GANG CONFLICT? VIOLENCE BETWEEN YOUTH GROUPS IN A NORWEGIAN CITY

The notions of "racist violence" or "hate crime" – that persons or their properties are attacked because they belong to certain categories of people – represent an important and indispensable paradigm. However, relying solely on this framework of interpretation may limit our understanding of other processes and perspectives that might also be highly relevant for understanding what is actually going on. The present paper presents a study from the city of Kristiansand of a local group described as "the neo-Nazis", and their counterparts, described as "the anti-racists" or "the Valla Gang". The "neo-Nazis" regularly committed acts of violence against other youths belonging to the multiethnic youth scene. As such, many of these incidents could clearly be described as acts of racist violence or hate crime. However, through interviews with 50 participants from both sides it became clear that the acts of violence were part of a more complex set of conflict dynamics between youth groups. This involved processes of polarization within and between the local youth scenes as well as cycles of generalised revenge based on widely shared notions of "one for all and all for one". Youth groups and individual actors switched between political identities and gang identities depending on the situation, and conflicts that initially had nothing to do with racism or anti-racism could easily become politicized.

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INTRODUCTION

The notions of "racist violence" or "hate crime" mean that persons or their properties are attacked because they belong to certain categories of people. These concepts also usually imply that there is an asymmetric power relation between victim and perpetrator, and that one side is the aggressor, the other the victim. This perspective is important and indispensable. However, relying solely on this framework of interpretation may limit our understanding of other processes and perspectives that might also be highly relevant for understanding what is actually going on.

"Hate crime" has a wider scope than "racist violence"; it opens for a number of other categories of victims, and possibly also for other constellations between perpetrators and victims. The notion of hate crime also encompasses other sources of hatred or forms of justification for violence than racism/xenophobia alone.¹

This paper presents a study² from the city of Kristiansand (pop. 70 000) of a local group described as "the neo-Nazis", and their counterparts, described as "the antiracists" or "the Valla Gang". Among young people, the local neo-Nazi group was notorious for their "nigger hunts" and similar acts of violence against other youths belonging to the multiethnic or antiracist youth scene. Many of these incidents would qualify as cases

of racist violence or hate crime by any definitional criteria. This is evident from the following statement by one of the active participants (age 17) in the neo-Nazi scene:

They are the foreigners. Sometimes we attack them just because they are brown or black. Then we can beat up one or two, and they will mobilise. (...) Sometimes we enter the bus to see if we can find someone, in particular in weekends when we are reinforced with visitors from (the Nazi skinhead scene in) Oslo. Then we jump at them and kick their heads with boots (...) If we meet niggers on the bus, we do not always beat them up. But they will always get some spitballs in their face. (#16)

Thus, some of the violent perpetrators do hold racist and neo-Nazi beliefs, and select their targets on the basis of skin colour, or association with "foreigners" or antiracism. When immigrant youths and native-born youths attacked Nazis, this was considered by themselves and many observers as "fighting back" – a form of antiracist struggle against the neo-Nazis. Thus, these violent clashes could be seen as a political conflict, fought over issues of racism and ideology. So there is no question that there are some obvious political dimensions in what is going on. The question is rather whether this political dimension tends to overshadow some other dimensions that may be equally important to understand the dynamics of the situation.

The notions of neo-Nazism, racism, anti-racism and hate crime carry heavy loads of values and moral judgements, providing an interpretive framework that tends to paint the picture in stark black and white. Once we attach these labels on the phenomenon in question or on specific incidents, there is a danger that our perception becomes closed and that we mistake labels for explanations. It may also prevent us from asking questions that might appear to "blame the victim". I do not believe that we should dismiss these labels of hate crime or racist violence, but we should use them with care. In particular, we should insistently ask ourselves and probe our data whether alternative interpretations or perspectives might make more sense.

In the research project on which this paper is based, we tried to achieve this by applying a conflict perspective, and interviewing systematically young people who were directly involved on both sides, representing different subgroups or perspectives, to gather their respective perspectives on the same events and conflicts.

ANALYTICAL APPROACH

The choice of applying a conflict perspective to the series of violent incidents between youth groups in Kristiansand is not incontestable. One might argue that violence between neo-Nazis and anti-racists/minority youths should rather be interpreted in terms of racist violence, victimisation and self-defence. The notion of "conflict" presupposes a form of symmetry between the parties that may not be the actual state of affairs, and may also imply a form of moral equality.

The following discussion will demonstrate that in the Kristiansand case, a conflict perspective fits the series of violent incidents as a whole even if it does not fit equally well all isolated incidents. However, in other locations we have studied, a conflict perspective would be completely misleading because the violent incidents generally had an asymmetric character of racist attacks against defenceless victims.³ The picture in Kristiansand is far more complex.

In situations characterised by conflict it is of great importance to be able to categorise persons and groups as friends and foes – Us and Them. Intensive conflict situations do not give participants much opportunity for being neutral. In these processes of cate-

gorisation, different forms of signs are used to show which side oneself belongs to, as well as to ascribe group affiliation to others. Such categorisation on the basis of signs obviously involves a strong element of interpretation. In the present study it will be shown that the conflict parties tended to take dress style, appearance, skin colour, and acquaintances as signs of what group that person belongs to and what opinions and values he or she holds. In many cases, youths *do* put on particular dress items with the deliberate purpose of showing adherence to a particular group, subculture or opinion. However, it is by no means certain that someone e.g. wearing a specific dress item *intends* to signal the group adherence attributed to that person by others. Nevertheless, such a "mistaken" interpretation of the meaning of e.g. a particular jacket may have as a consequence that the person in question is branded as an enemy, and is harassed and targeted for violence. It may also serve to push that young person into the group he or she is categorised as belonging to. Thus, semiosis, or the interpretation of signs, may have highly tangible consequences – both of a social, political, and even medical and legal kind.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of our study was to describe and analyse what was taking place between youth groups in Kristiansand on the basis of how the involved youths themselves describe the conflict and interaction.

Fifty youths (37 boys and 13 girls) between the age of 13 and 21 took part in a semi-structured interview, usually lasting 60-90 minutes. Sixteen of the youths had one or both parents of a non-Norwegian background, whereas both parents of each of the remaining 34 informants were all Norwegians. Concerning group affiliation, 16 informants were more or less active participants in neo-Nazi groups, and another four were former participants who had disengaged from the Nazi scene. Among the other informants, 10-12 belonged to (or were closely associated with) the multiethnic "Valla Gang" – a group that frequently flagged its antiracism. The remaining 20 or so youths belonged to other groups or scenes, such as organised antiracists, hip-hoppers, other "gangs", or had no particular group affiliation. Since several of the groups are overlapping, and several individuals have belonged to different groups, it is difficult to provide exact figures on group affiliation. One striking finding was that about ten of the informants had switched side from either being a "neo-Nazi" to join the multiethnic/antiracist scene, or switched from the multiethnic milieu to join the neo-Nazis. Most of these individuals reflected on their experiences from both scenes during their interviews.

Although we were unable to get interviews with the main leaders among the neo-Nazis and the opponent "Valla gang", we do feel that we got an excellent selection of informants, including several core members, and covering the main factions and perspectives. We also interviewed 20 adults who provided insights from positions as parents, police officers, youth workers, or politicians. Taken together, the interviews provided a rich data material that enabled us to explore the same incidents and conflict themes from highly divergent points of view.

In addition to the qualitative interviews (conducted during winter/spring 2001), we also made use of data from our school survey among first class secondary school pupils (mostly 16 year olds), collected in Kristiansand and three other cities during November 1999 (N = 995). This was a self-report questionnaire focussing on the youths' experiences with violence (as victims and perpetrators), gangs and other forms of problematic behaviour.⁴

We are not aware of any other studies that have applied a similar methodological approach to study violent conflicts between racist groups and their opponents.

THE CONFLICT PARTIES

The city of Kristiansand is located at the southern coast of Norway. The city itself has ca. 70.000 inhabitants but the larger urban area (including some neighbouring municipalities) would count a population of about 100.000 – a typical middle-sized Scandinavian city. The appearance of the city is generally affluent, without overt poverty or any particularly "bad" areas. The municipality has a well-developed system of social welfare agencies. The police, schools and social agencies have worked closely together in prevention and intervention with the violent conflicts, and to dismantle the racist scene in particular.

The youth informants pointed out that there were two main parties in this conflict in Kristiansand. One side was unambiguously described as...

THE NEO-NAZIS

At the time of the interviews (early 2001) the neo-Nazi scene numbered up to 30 participants, including some from neighbouring towns. In addition, there were also a relatively large group of sympathisers among pupils at a couple of youth schools (age 12-15). The activity level as well as the number of participants has varied strongly during the years since the scene emerged in 1994. The peak periods were in 1995/96 and fall 2000. Between 2001 and the present (early 2003), the scene has declined significantly. However, there have also been several shifts between two different directions within the scene, represented by two organisational wings that promoted different versions of neo-Nazi activism. One direction was the skinhead group *Boot Boys*, oriented towards street violence, beer drinking and skinhead style. Boot Boys had the character of being a gang rather than a formal organisation. The other direction was the more ideological organisation *Vigrid*, which distanced itself from intoxication and arbitrary street violence. Vigrid promoted a racial interpretation of ancient Norse religion, and organised pagan "baptisms", "confirmations" and wedding ceremonies for their members. Vigrid is strongly influenced by anti-Semitic notions of the Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG), adopted from American racial ideologist such as William Pierce (aka Andrew Macdonald: *Turner Diaries*). The organisation is against senseless violence, but promotes discipline and preparations for the great "racial war". During the years the scene has existed, the "centre of gravity" has shifted repeatedly between these two main directions. In some periods, participants of the neo-Nazi scene moved away from street violence and towards the more ideological activism of Vigrid; in other periods they were fed up with the Vigrid leader wanted to ban their beer drinking, and moved back to the skinhead life style of Boot Boys.

The degree of ideological consciousness varied greatly among the 16 active participants of the neo-Nazi scene we interviewed. Only two or three of them held relatively coherent national socialist or similar ideological ideas. Most of the others had racist and hateful forms of expression, with a thin veneer of racist ideology as a topping. Some emphasised that although they disliked immigrants, they disagreed with much of what Hitler and National Socialism represented. Being a "neo-Nazi" was to them mainly a group identity, and not necessarily an ideological identification. Most of them were rather ambivalent about the notion of neo-Nazism. What mattered to them was the loyalty of the group more than its ideology or politics. However, expressing racist views was part of what was expected of them as group members. And gradually, they adopted the views as well.

With only a few exceptions, youths in the local Nazi scene came from an underclass background: single-parent families characterised by low education and income, alcohol (or drug) abuse, psychiatric problems or family violence.⁵ The youths had in most cases failed at school, sometimes related to problems of ADHD and dyslexia. Many of them had also been victims of bullying or other violence. Thus, they generally had a "stacking of risk factors" that together increase the risk that the child will get involved in crime and other forms of problematic behaviour.⁶ More specifically, the majority of the youths in the Nazi scene had negative personal experiences with immigrants in the past – sometimes from close relationships (mother's boyfriend or own boyfriend, etc.). They shared and generalised these negative experiences within the group. There were only two or three exceptions to this pattern in our sample of 20 individuals. They were among the ideologues of the local scene.

There was also a periphery around the neo-Nazis, consisting of relatively "normal" Norwegian youths. They did not approve of the neo-Nazis' forms of expression, but found it useful to have contacts with them in case they needed help and protection against aggressive youths from the multiethnic scene – the Valla gang in particular.

THE MULTIETHNIC SCENE

The opponents to the neo-Nazis was a far more diffuse and mixed scene, described by our informants with various labels such as "Valla", "the antiracists" or "the foreigners". There were also many participants who were of an ethnically Norwegian origin. This side of the conflict consists of different groups and scenes that are partly overlapping and partly separate. Groups vary from serious and non-violent antiracist organisations to loose subcultural scenes such as hiphoppers and youths belonging to the drug scene, to more gang-like delinquent groups such as Valla (and formerly the Chilean Gang). The latter groups were also involved in various forms of criminal activities, such as theft, robberies and drug dealing. Several of these youths have recently arrived from countries characterised by civil wars. There is reason to believe that many of them have been traumatised by these experiences, and they tend to take easy recourse to violence. Several of them also come from families where fathers and brothers are heavily involved in organised crime, in particular drug trafficking. Local agencies have great difficulties to establish contact and cooperation with these families, and consequently had limited knowledge about the background of these youths. By contrast, the youths of the neo-Nazi scene had been highly involved with the social welfare services since their infancy.

Informants agreed that during the last few years,⁷ "Valla" had been the spearhead in the fight against the neo-Nazis. They were the ones who could mobilise others for physical confrontation with the Nazis – up to 200 persons if needed, mainly "foreigners".

However, it is not obvious what Valla really was. Some used the name as a label for the entire mobilisation network of a couple of hundred youths from the Kristiansand area. Others used the Valla label for a more specific group consisting of a core of around ten persons with another 10-20 regular participants in the outer circle. To begin with, it was a group of friends, of a predominantly Muslim background, who around 1997 started to appear as a gang in the city – partly because others called them "the Valla Gang" since they frequently used the Albanian expression "valla" (= I swear; it is true). They also made strong claims for "respect" from other youths. Thus, they behaved in very aggressive ways; they were perceived as a gang by other youths; and they gradually adopted this gang identity themselves.

Their main enemy at the time were a similar group, the so-called Chilean Gang. However, as the Chilean Gang disintegrated, the neo-Nazis became the new enemy. In

this new situation, the Valla group played down their gang identity, and rather tried to appear as antiracists, since this would enable them to mobilise far broader than from their own gang. By 2000, they claimed that "Valla is not a gang anymore". However, they continued to be referred to as "Valla" by other youths, and they also frequently did so themselves when they found it convenient. A young Valla participant (#30) recounted:

It was the police who invented this thing with the Valla gang. The police gave them the image, and now the entire country knows about the Valla gang. And then some of the youths have started to see themselves as the Valla gang as well. Now they have got used to it, and consider themselves a gang. Sometimes they are a gang, and sometimes they are just friends. Sometimes, when we have a fight with some others, and the others do not know about us, we ask: "Don't you know who we are – we are the Valla Gang!" Then they are really in for a shock! Slaughtering out loudly! They have heard so much shit about the Valla Gang that they do not want to get in trouble with them.⁸

It is a central characteristic of the neo-Nazis as well as their Valla opponents that they appear as street gangs in some periods and situations, and as something completely different – e.g. as political activists – in other situations. Who they define as their enemies or (potential) allies in the actual situation will to a large extent determine what form the group takes or what identity it adopts.

WHAT WERE CONFLICTS ABOUT?

We asked our young informants who the main conflict parties were and what they were fighting over. The majority stated that the struggle was between the neo-Nazis and the antiracists (or alternatively, Valla or "the foreigners"), and that racism was a central issue. Conflicts between the groups were described as a struggle between two opposing value-based or ideological positions. However, when they were asked to be more specific, youths from both sides tended to paint a picture that was far more complex. Their stories show that they were also struggling over issues and values that had little to do with politics, ideology or racism as such.

It is the Nazis against the antiracists. (...) The conflicts are about excitement and revenge – to them š.i.e. the neo-Nazis! at least! To us, it is all the time about revenge and fighting and... It has nothing to do with politics, not as I know of. (Participant in "Little Valla", #29)

Many of the violent fights were struggles over a set of entangled values that had to do with respect, power and domination. Both the Valla group and (some years earlier) the Chilean gang had tried to appear as "kings of the city". This was also (for a period) the case with the multiethnic female gang "Mafia Girls", who also, characteristically, called themselves "Queens of Markens" (which was the name of the main mall through the city centre). Youths who were unwilling to show them the respect they demanded, could in such situations risk to be branded as "Nazis". Many ordinary youths found the style and behaviour of these street gangs extremely provocative.

Whereas the multiethnic and gang-like groups dominated the city centre of Kristiansand, the neo-Nazi scene dominated some areas in two peripheral parts of the city. At the same time, they were refused entry to the attractive areas and facilities of the city centre, in particular the Markens Street. If individuals or small groups associated with the neo-Nazi scene were seen downtown, where Valla and their allies dominated, they risked to be beaten up and chased away. Rumours that there were "Nazis in town" spread rapidly by word and mobile phones, leading to immediate mobilisation and a hunt. Only for a few limited periods had the neo-Nazi scene felt sufficiently strong to

be able to challenge the dominance of the multiethnic scene in the city centre – and then only by staging brief "guerrilla raids" into Markens Street, and then withdrawing after a fight.

During the late 1990s, most of the fights took place in the peripheral parts of the city, in particular in relation to struggles for dominance over certain youth clubs. Around 2000, however, the fights were increasingly about the control of the city centre. This had to do with the fact that many of the core members of the neo-Nazi scene were getting older (18-20 years) and wanted to have access to pubs and other attractive entertainment facilities that were mainly located in the city centre.

Some of the conflicts started out as fights over girlfriends/boyfriends or sexual reputations. Although such conflicts may have little to do with ideology or political divisions, many of these fights are nevertheless caught up in the conflict field between the neo-Nazis and their enemies. Ritualised insults were also expressed in a peculiar mixture of sexuality and politics or group association: "Nazi whore" or "nigger whore" were common forms of name-calling used to provoke a fight.

Most of the informants emphasised that many of the fights had to do with revenge, and that this was the main justification for using violence. To outsiders, however, it was usually not at all obvious who started the conflict in question – although all the parties involved claimed that it was "the others"!

In our analysis of the conflicts between youth groups in Kristiansand, we focussed on two main conflict mechanisms that contributed to maintain the conflict and the disputing groups – the processes of polarisation and the logics of revenge.

POLARISATION PROCESSES

Many youths belonging to different groups in the city feel forced to position themselves in relation to the two opposing poles, conceptualised as "the neo-Nazis" on the one hand and "the anti-racists" or alternatively, "Valla", on the other. This is the opposition that many conflicts are organised around – even if these conflicts have very little to do with racism, politics or ideology initially. The opposing concepts of Nazism and antiracism have such powerful meanings that they tend to supersede other conflicts and determine how these conflicts are interpreted, mobilised around, and fought over.⁹

This process of polarisation can be described through a metaphor of magnetism, with two poles and a magnetic field of attraction and repulsion. Most "ordinary" youths can stay far away from these magnetic fields, or do not get affected. They do not have the characteristics that make them "magnetisable". They are like filings of brass rather than filings of iron. However, youths who are easily associated with one or the other side because of appearance (skin colour or dress style), opinions, or social networks can easily be branded as enemies or friends, and are pushed or pulled in the direction of one pole or the other.

The youth scene of Kristiansand is characterised by a strong tendency to brand certain youths as being "Nazis" or "antiracists" – often on the basis of such indicators as wearing particular clothes or having been observed "walking with" persons representing one side or the other. We estimate that around 200-400 local youths in the age-range of 13 to 20 are involved to different degrees in the polarised conflict system we describe. However, these youths probably constitute less than five per cent of the total youth population of the city.

Being branded, harassed or physically attacked for being associated with one or the other side of the conflict have generally led to three different types of responses: Some youths seek towards the side with which they have been associated for protection and support. Others fight actively against being pushed towards one side or the other to avoid being drawn into the conflict. And some fight against the stigma by joining the opposing group to which they were branded as belonging to.

How do these processes of polarisation and branding take place?

PROCESSES LEADING INTO THE NAZI SCENE

Among the 20 informants that were former or present members of the local Nazi scene, only a couple of informants cited agreement with the political positions of the groups as a main reason for joining in the first place. For most of the others, the political views were something they adopted *subsequently*, as they were becoming more and more tied to the group. Their reasons for joining were several and compounded. To many of them, it was combinations of push and pull factors. Some themes reappear frequently in their stories.

The positive pull characteristics of the groups are described as friendship and good company, kinship ties (e.g. older brothers being members), excitement, protection, and lively parties. "I have never in my life found as many good friends (as among the Nazis) – no others have treated me (as nicely) as they did", one girl (#45) stated. "They took care of me, physically and mentally", another participant in the Nazi scene (#8) recounted.

Regarding the push factors, several striking patterns emerged from the interviews. A majority of the informants emphasised that having been victimised by bullying, violence, threats and harassment was an immediate reason for joining the Nazi scene.

Bullying in particular seems to have been an important factor. One of the neo-Nazi activists (#47) stated, "Most of those in the Nazi scene are boys who have been bullied and who have been much alone. For my own part, I was rather among those who bullied". Several informants emphasised that one of the two main Nazi leaders was actively seeking out young victims of bullying, taking them under his wings, offering them protection, and building them up to become persons others would fear. This leader had been a victim of bullying himself when he was a child, but had become big and intimidating as a teenager (having used anabolic steroids). However, he obviously knew something essential about the needs of those being bullied – and used this knowledge in his recruitment strategy. There should have been others who were there to take care of these young victims. But the only "Victims Support" around were the Nazis. And they delivered. To children and youths who had experienced humiliations and bullying from others, it was a new and powerful feeling to experience how others came to fear them. An ex-Nazi (# 31) stated,

I was a lot together with (name of local Nazi leader) in the three years I took part. He wanted me on his right hand side when we went to town, and I felt rather tall!

Several of these new recruits were merely 11-12 years old when they got in contact with the Nazi scene. Some were small, vulnerable, and easy targets. Others had particular psychosocial problems, such as hyper-activity (ADHD), which made them unpopular and marginalized among other children.

Having been beaten up or threatened by the Valla gang or other immigrant gangs was another common experience that pushed several youths into the Nazis group.

- *Why did you join the Nazis?*
- *I was really pissed off. I had been beaten up by some foreigners for something some others had done. They attacked me and kicked me – 10 or 12 of them against me alone. After this, I started to go with the Nazis, and party with them. But I still had some good immigrant friends as well. (Ex-Nazi, #28)*

To others, being beaten up for being associated with the Nazis propelled them further into the group. A former Nazi (#9) who had switched side, and become a hipopper and Valla associate, stated,

I was about 12 years old when I started to go with (the Nazis). To begin with, I was at their parties, and gradually I became one of them. The attitudes came quite early on, but I did not hold those views before I joined them. I was beaten up several times by some immigrants who called themselves antiracists, because I was with the Nazis. This created more hatred in me, and pushed me further into the milieu. If somebody were disrespecting me, I hit back. I skinned myself, and donned a green bomber jacket and boots. As a consequence, I was even more branded as a Nazi.

Informants from different camps also stated that whenever someone gets involved in a conflict or fight with the "Valla Gang", they are immediately branded as "racists" or "Nazis" – for any or no reason.

The tendency towards stigmatisation is more powerful in relation to the neo-Nazis than towards other youth groups, because the neo-Nazis are more excluded from normal social life than almost all other youth groups. The neo-Nazis also emphasise their otherness through provocative forms of expression, such as racist symbols, dress code, and aggressive behaviour. However, it takes little before someone risks to be branded as belonging to (or sympathising with) the Nazis, and as a consequence, be exposed to negative sanctions. Using particular clothes or being observed with alleged neo-Nazis may be sufficient reason to become associated with them by others.

As soon as I showed myself publicly with some from the Nazi milieu, I was called a "Nazi" and a "Nazi whore". It was like I came walking with the Devil himself. (Girl who is now part of the Nazi scene, #2)

To be seen with people who are identified with one side or the other easily leads to oneself being classified as belonging to that faction. Informants recount a number of violent episodes that had happened because the victim had been observed together with the wrong persons.

I was branded as a "bloody Nazi" just because I had walked with a guy who had been in conflict with some immigrants – and he was not even a part of the Nazi scene. (#14)

To "walk with" is a characteristic local idiom for expressing voluntary interaction with one or several others. However, "walking with" someone involved in a conflict is also seen as taking a stand. The core issue in "walking with" is companionship. By being with someone, others deduce that this person also has sympathy. The interviews are full of stories of how such classification takes place. One informant even explains his recruitment into the Nazi scene to this classification process. When he was 11, his mother by coincident bought him a green pilot jacket on a sale, unaware that such jackets were used by the neo-Nazis as part of their uniform. However, when he turned up at school in his new pilot jacket, other pupils started to scorn him. The harassment brought him together with others wearing similar outfits, "... and after a while we were five kids hanging out with the older (neo-Nazis)." (#8) Another boy recounts a similar experience:

It is incredibly easy to get branded as a Nazi. If you wear an ordinary fashion jacket with a Norwegian flag on it, you are called a "Nazi". I do not like immigrants, but I do not consider myself a Nazi because of that. (Boy, age 15, who nevertheless now participates in the Nazi scene, #14)

Various forms of negative experiences with immigrants were also key events that led some youths to join the Nazi scene. Several of the boys in the Nazi scene had mothers who had had immigrant men as their partners, and this man had treated their mothers (or sometimes also the children) badly. Two of the boys had even been abandoned (or kicked out of the house) by their mothers – in favour of an immigrant boyfriend. One boy had a sister who had been raped by her "foreign" boyfriend. Four of the girls in the Nazi scene had in the past been girlfriends of boys in the multiethnic gang scene, and had been beaten and mistreated by their boyfriends. Although such negative incidents were linked to specific individuals, these traumatic experiences caused feelings of hatred and aggression that were generalised towards immigrants in general – in particular when they talked it over with others in the Nazi milieu that had similar stories to tell.

PROCESSES LEADING INTO THE MULTI-ETHNIC GANG SCENE

Racism represents one of the harshest forms of exclusion and stigmatisation of whole categories of people as "enemies". This process can take several forms, from subtle discrimination and exclusion of "foreigners", to neo-Nazis targeting individuals for assault just because of their dark hair and skin colour. In Kristiansand, a number of youths with a minority background have been harassed and physically attacked by neo-Nazis at school, in the streets, or at the bus. Sometimes, such attacks appeared to be carried out just to terrorise people with the "wrong" colour of their skin, in other cases such assaults are intended to provoke a response.

Typically, youths are attacked because they belong to (or are associated with) a particular group or subculture that the neo-Nazis define as their enemies. This particularly includes those wearing "sagging" trousers and other stylistic elements identifying them as hiphoppers.¹⁰ It is significant that the hip-hop subculture has antiracism as a core element of its identity package. The local hip-hop scene is highly multiethnic, and there are also a large number of "native" white boys taking part. Breakdance, rapping, DJ-ing, and graffiti are main activities. There are several local "crews" (graffiti teams) that compete peacefully with each other. However, one of these crews (called "The Makers' Crew") is also part of Valla, and is known to respond rather brutally if other crews hamper with their tags and pieces. These links to antiracism and Valla are sufficient to make any youth wearing hip-hop style outfits into "enemies" and potential targets of attack for the neo-Nazis.

I was assaulted by the Nazis because I hung out with foreigners and is a hiphopper. (...) At my school I cannot wear my sagging trousers without being beaten up. I have to wait until after school to put them on. (Boy with a Norwegian background, #40)

There are lots of threats from the Nazis. I receive (SMS) messages with swastikas on my mobile. They also phoned me on my mobile and said, "you wear a pig outfit!" – just because I "sag" and is a hiphopper. (Boy who has disengaged from the Nazi scene, #9)

Thus, sagging trousers (or pilot jackets) are attributed powerful symbolic meanings about group affiliation and political identity. Wearing sagging trousers communicates messages about having chosen to side with the antiracists. Moreover, "walking with

the enemy" is also seen as an expression of having chosen side in the conflict. This qualifies for a beating.

The Nazis attack foreigners as well as whites going with the foreigners. I have had the Nazis chasing me as well. (Norwegian boy participating the hip-hop scene, #22)

Several youths belonging to the multiethnic hip-hop scene stated that the Valla people behave foolishly when they demand "respect" all the time, but it was nevertheless useful to have friends in Valla if they were in need of protection:

The Valla people are involved in a lot (of crime). I know one boy who was stealing for them. He was not very good at school and had few friends. However, when he steals for payment, he also gets full protection from Valla. The problem is just that he has to continue, because they have got something on him. (Norwegian boy knowing many people from different scenes, #36)

Several foreigners have told me that I just have to tell them (if I need help). However, I do not know if I want to, because I will just get involved in more trouble. Once, at the Billiard club, (a Valla member) took me aside and showed me his pistol. He told me that if I needed help, he would take care of it. (Boy of minority background who has been in conflict with neo-Nazis and others, #37)

Thus, both the neo-Nazis and the Valla gang offer protection to youths threatened by someone from the other side. But accepting such protection may come with a heavy price tag. They risk being dragged further into conflicts, and are expected to return the favours by backing up their "protectors" when they mobilise for other fights.

There was a guy who joined us after an immigrant gang had beaten him up. But when we had smashed up that gang for him, he backed out and would not support us anymore. Then we beat him up as well. (Neo-Nazi, #16)

However, the process of "joining" the multi-ethnic scene is different from recruitment to the Nazi scene. The multi-ethnic groups – including the "gangs" – do not have sharp boundaries delimiting them from the mainstream youth scene. Whereas the Nazis is a stigmatised and excluded group, this is not the case with Valla people, who do interact easily with "ordinary" youths. To "walk with Valla" brings few social costs beyond an increased risk to get involved in fights with the Nazis.

BETWEEN THE POLES – THE PROBLEM OF KEEPING DISTANCE TO EXTREME GROUPS

In the field of tension between the two main "magnetic" poles – the neo-Nazis and Valla – there are a number of various groups and cliques struggling to avoid becoming too closely associated with one extreme pole or the other. One group of local boys, associated with a particular area of the city, is one example:

We have got a lot of trouble in town because we are seen as the "Mosby Gang". Many of us are a bit violent, particularly when we get drunk. Then we easily end up in fights. (...) But we are really just a bunch of friends who go out together. But when we are encountered in the city, we are considered a gang. (...) We have been involved in a lot of trouble with the Valla gang. (...) We are probably the only ones who dare to stand up against them. (...) We got involved in something it was hard to get out of. Once we were seven against 150, so we know it is not a very smart thing to do. (...)

We have a friend who was a Nazi in the past but has quit. Because of him, the Valla people said that they consider us to be Nazis. Just because our friend has had some connection with them! We are against Nazism, but we are also against the gangs dominating the city centre – and these gangs are predominantly immi-

grants. We don't fight with the Nazis; we just keep distance to them. Some of us may speak with them, but we consider the Nazis to be ridiculous. But it is OK if the Nazis and Valla fight each other. That is probably why we are not anti-Nazis. (...) It is OK that the Nazis take a bit of the punch with Valla. Then Valla knows they have a bit resistance and will not be as arrogant. So we think it is a good thing that the Nazis give Valla some beatings now and then. (Norwegian boy, age 20, # 34).

Because of their conflict with Valla, the "Mosby Gang" has been pushed towards the neo-Nazis and lumped together with them by Valla. Even if they have no sympathy with the views of the Nazis, the common enemy makes it useful to have the Nazis there. Hence, our informants find no reason to dissociate from them.

Other youths who get in trouble with Valla are also easily pushed towards the Nazis:

We hate Valla. They think they are the bosses of the city. They beat up people just for fun. If you just look at them, you are in for a beating. If they find out where there is a party going on, they come and force themselves in, make trouble and destroy the house. (...) The Nazis are on our side in this. They never did us any harm. We are friends with some of them. (...) We do not walk with them but we talk all right with them.

– Did you ever ask the Nazis for help?

– No, but they have said that if we get in trouble with foreigners, they offer to help us. They say that they will beat up Valla if they fuck with people from our part of the city. (Local boy, #49)

Young organised antiracists, wanting to carry out serious and non-violent political work against neo-Nazism, have great problems to avoid being associated with violent groups that call themselves antiracists. A female leftwing antiracist activist (age 17) stated:

Last fall, there were some big street fights between Valla and some "small Nazis".¹¹ The local newspaper wrote that it was a fight between neo-Nazis and antiracists, or leftwing radicals. We got real angry because it ruined our reputation as serious antiracists. We complained, but the paper responded that it was the police who said so. And the police would not apologise. (...) We try to get in contact with Valla and discuss with them. (...) They provoke us because they beat up people in town and at the same time call themselves "antiracists". All that fighting of theirs is really far out! (...) I do not think there are any political motivations driving Valla. When they fight the "small Nazis", they call themselves "antiracists". But I think it is just an excuse for fighting, and there is no political reason. As I remember them from the past, they were always the fighting gang. They can beat up anyone – just because people look at them a bit too long (...). I think it is just to get more power. (#44)

The antiracists also consider it a problem that leading police officers have publicly characterised neo-Nazis and antiracists as "equally good", and have sometimes warned parents that their children are involved with antiracist groups. Thus, the police have not always distinguished between different forms of antiracism.

You really cannot say that an antiracist is as bad as a Nazi! That causes a lot of discord. Parents should not have to worry because their child is an antiracist! It ruined a lot for the antiracists here that they were made comparable with the Nazis. It was difficult even to walk down the street with antiracist buttons. (Young organised antiracist, female, age 15, #42)

Organised antiracists in Kristiansand have also in the past felt a strong need to distance themselves from violent youth groups operating under the banner of antiracism. This

happened for instance when a large group in 1997 vandalised a house where neo-Nazis had a party, and some of them tried to put the house on fire.

– *These incidents have nothing to do with antiracism, said [the] leader of Socialist Youth.*

– *This vandalism was committed by people lacking any political basis. Now we have to win back the credibility of the term antiracists. (Fedrelandsvennen, 14. mars 1997)*

As a consequence of this incident, several youth organisations joined forces to establish the organisation "Antiracist Forum" to work seriously with the issue.

BREAKING OUT – OR CROSSING OVER

Most youths who join racist groups, leave the group sooner or later. Depending on the circumstances, these ex-members do sometimes get severely threatened when they disengage.¹² The Nazi group in Kristiansand has been known to punish its defectors particularly severely. Alleged "traitors" have been attacked in their homes. Even family members and girlfriends have been threatened – in some cases even injured.

However, defectors are not only exposed to revenge from former friends. They also risk to be attacked by former enemies who still have unresolved grievances to revenge. The fear of standing alone, without protection from the group, is a main reason why some potential defectors do not dare to break with the racist scene. There are also cases of ex-Nazis having been literally chased back to the Nazi group they had belonged to.

One of the most surprising findings that came out of the interviews in Kristiansand, was that so many youths had switched side from one extreme group to the opposite – and in some cases even back. Around ten of the fifty interviewed youths recounted their own varieties of such experiences, and they told about others as well. Although we know of similar crossover stories from other localities, it usually appears to be individual incidents. In Kristiansand, however, this comes out as a striking pattern. Apparently, those who manage to fight their way out of the "magnetic field" of one group are easily pulled into the "magnetic field" of the opposite pole.¹³

Several boys who had been active in the Nazi scene for several years switched side completely when they broke with the Nazis, joining the former enemies instead: Valla, the hiphoppers or the antiracists. Three main reasons were mentioned: 1) The need for protection from a strong group against revenge from former friends in the Nazi scene; 2) the need to demonstrate that they had broken radically with Nazism; and 3) that there was a social network that would accept them if they lived up to the expectations of that environment (i.e. by fighting against the former friends in the Nazi group).

A few girls who had been girlfriends of boys in the multiethnic gang scene represented a particular form of switching sides. They recounted that they were mistreated by their boyfriends, regarded as their property, and beaten when they did not obey. When they tried to break out of the relationship, they were even more threatened and beaten. In this situation, 4-5 girls switched over to the Nazi group – partly for protection in a strong group, partly to take out their hatred and revenge on their former boyfriends. In their new group setting, their hatred tended to become generalised towards immigrants in general. To the neo-Nazi group, it became an important issue to show that "immigrants" were abusers of women, whereas they were protecting white girls and their dignity.

THE LOGICS OF PROVOCATION AND REVENGE

This far we have discussed how processes of polarisation – that push or pull individuals or groups with particular traits towards one or the other pole – tend to maintain the groups and the conflict system. We will now look at another closely related process that also maintains and reinforces the conflicts: the behaviour and logic related to provocation, revenge and the preservation of "respect".

There have been several cycles of revenge between the neo-Nazi and the multiethnic (or antiracist) scenes in Kristiansand. One of the most dangerous feuds took place in spring 1997. Some neo-Nazis had captured one of their opponents from the "Chilean gang", handcuffed him to a lamp post, and stoned and hit him – allegedly in revenge for something he or his friends had done to the Nazis. The following weekend, it became known to the multiethnic scene that the neo-Nazis had a private party in a villa in the outskirts of the city. They mobilised around 100 young people, stormed the house and vandalised it. With about a dozen scared neo-Nazis and an intervening neighbour hiding on the first floor, some of the "antiracists" tried to put the house on fire. By all luck the fire died out, but a major disaster could easily have happened.

PROVOCATIONS, STYLE AND CATEGORISATION

Youths involved in the conflicts generally justify their violent attacks against "the others" by stating that it is a response to provocations, or a reprisal for something "the others" have done to "us". Who and what started it all to begin with is often unintelligible. What are seen as provoking might be specific acts but "they" may also be provocative just by their mere presence.

When youths belonging to the same scene meet each other, they usually carry out rituals of salutation to reaffirm their bonds of friendship, loyalty and solidarity. These greeting rituals are particularly noticeable in the multiethnic scene. However, when youths belonging to antagonist groups meet in the city or at the bus, they usually exchange expressions of hostility and disrespect. "Both Valla and the Nazis are equally bad in this – they provoke each other systematically", stated a native Norwegian girl (#7) who belonged to the multiethnic scene.

The most common forms of provocation was to "cast muck" on someone from the other side. These insults often contained negative characteristics of the group, such as "Nazi bastard" or "Nigger devil". Frequently, this muck casting also contains a sexual element: "Nazi whore!", "I've fucked your sister!" or "mother-fucker!" When such insults are made publicly, it will often lead to a violent response, ending in a fight.

A former participant of the neo-Nazi scene recounted:

People are so mouthy all the time. When they throw muck, they will get something back. And when you are drunk, it gets even worse. At parties in the neo-Nazi scene they listen to 'White Power' music before they go out in the streets. And then there are always someone who is mouthy, saying "fucking Nazis" and such things. Both sides are involved in this quarrelling and fighting. But if the immigrants had just let the Nazis alone, nothing would have happened. But they won't. (...) The fights are mostly about revenge – that is clear. If just people could keep their mouths shut and not provoke... (ex-Nazi, #17)

One of the purposes of making an insult is to provoke a reaction – possibly a response that will end in full confrontation and fighting. It is a commonly held idea among many youths that a person who does *not* respond to a public insult virtually accepts the characteristic, meaning that the allegation of being a "whore" or "coward" acquires credi-

bility. However, if you respond to the affront with aggression and violence, you may regain respect. And if beaten, you may also mobilise sufficient support and force to take revenge. "Respect" is to these youths a limited value in a zero-sum game – it can only be won at the loss of others.

This line of thinking was underlined in an interview with a boy, age 14:

- *When you react so strongly, what is provoking you?*
- *It is particularly when someone says something bad about your parents. The worst you can say is "I will fuck your mother!" If someone says that to some of us foreigners, we will bring a knife...*
- *But couldn't you just ignore it?*
- *No, you can't! (...) If someone says something like that, you just have to hit back! Especially if your friends hear it, then you have to get even unless you are willing to loose your pride.*
- *What about those who do not hit back?*
- *I do not know any foreigners who do not strike back. I never experienced that. But the Norwegians do not hit back...*
- *No, it is just because they do not dare. If they try to get even with us, they will not dare to go out on town later. If we have had a fight with someone, all the foreigners will know who that guy is. If someone sees him coming to town, many will go to get him. The first may have a reason to beat him; the others will beat him up just for fun (boy belonging to the "Little Valla" group, #48).*

In the respect game, provocations and insults are often open and direct, not to be mistaken. However, participants in this game tend to be hypersensitive to any possible insults and may ascribe to others hostile intentions they do not necessarily have. Even to stare at someone for too long, or not lower the gaze, may be interpreted as a provocation:

We were called "the Mafia Girls". (...) If someone stared at us with a bad gaze, we could just go over and beat them down. (...) When I was 14 or 15, I always hit first. When they talk shit to you and you do not take action there and then, they will get a hold on you. You have to get respect, or they will get at you in the city. (Former member of a multi-ethnic female gang, age 20, #32)

People may also be seen as provocative just by their identity and presence. Standing out openly as a Nazi or as an antiracist is considered a provocation by their opponents. This identity is commonly displayed by carrying particular symbols or clothes. Donning a bomber jacket or sagging trousers will immediately place that person in a category on this side or the other. Such an act is interpreted as self-identification with the "enemy", and consequently as a sufficient reason to be beaten up.

Due to their declarative symbols and dress code – with bomber jackets, Doc Martens boots and skinned heads – most people in the city see the neo-Nazis as provocative and intimidating. And that is obviously intended. Their style communicates strong messages to others. It signals an attachment to a highly violent group. Their style and symbols are also associated with Nazism, racism and xenophobia.

A local school even banned certain combinations of clothes and style elements on school premises because it led to fear and conflict. In interviews, several of the youths in the neo-Nazi scene expressed astonishment for not being allowed to dress like they wanted, and claimed to be unable to understand why their style should be seen as so provocative that they were banned or assaulted because of that. At the same time, however, they were obviously aware of the powerful and intimidating messages their style communicated to their surroundings, and frequently they took advantage of the effects.

The dress codes of the multiethnic and hip-hop scenes did not signal a similar aggressiveness, as was the case with the Nazi style – at least, most people do not construe any aggressive message from the style of the hip-hoppers or antiracists. However, the neo-Nazis do interpret the use of e.g. sagging trousers as identification with the enemy group, and therefore close to a declaration of war. The difference is that almost everyone see the style of the neo-Nazis as provocative, whereas only the Nazis perceive anything provocative when someone through statements or style appear as an antiracist.

The notion of antiracism as provocation came out strongly when we asked our informants from the neo-Nazi scene to comment on a murder some weeks earlier, in January 2001. Members of a closely allied skinhead group in Oslo knifed to death a 15 years old boy who had earlier spoken out against racism on TV. This boy had a black African father and a Norwegian mother. One of the leading members of the neo-Nazi scene in Kristiansand commented:

When I heard about this murder I thought, "how stupid is it possible to be?" But I also understand that they killed him. When people come from somewhere and have a different skin colour and assert themselves like he did, it is not so strange. He stepped on their toes, and they wanted to set a warning example (#40).

A more marginal participant stated independently:

He did not deserve it. But he had provoked. It is provocative when he was involved in antiracism. But he was only 15 years of age, and did not deserve that. However, there is nothing that can be done about that now (#18).

Participants in the multicultural scene also recount that they have attacked people because they dress up in Nazi style. To appear publicly as a Nazi is a provocation by itself:

Sometimes a small gang go through Markens street [the main mall] in full Nazi outfit, doing "sieg heil" salutes and provoking. Once they sent out two Nazis to run through Markens. When they provoked, and the antiracist came after them, there were a whole lot of them hiding in a park to ambush the pursuers. Of course there will be quarrels when they are racists and show it. (...) The foreigners get pissed off when the others wear sweaters with "White Power" slogans (participant in the Valla group, #11).

Some girls belonging to the multiethnic gang scene interpreted the dress style of other girls as signs of political affiliation, which sometimes led to violent action.

There are often fights with girls who are hanging out with the Nazis. They dress up very provocatively, like bimbos. It is sufficient that they dress with a bare stomach and a small top. Then you can know for sure that they are against foreigners and support the Nazis – they are the ones who dress up like that. Many of them have got a lot of beating from other girls. (...) The bimbo style is a little bit whorish. I have beaten up some girls myself. There are so many rumours, and the "whore" label is buzzing all around. They cannot call you a whore, just like that. Then you have to deal with them. (Norwegian girl in the multiethnic scene, age 15, #35)

Understanding the processes whereby youths classify each other is crucial for understanding the dynamics of the violent conflicts. Violence is mainly carried out between *representatives of categories*. A person classified as a representative of an enemy category is automatically exposed to the risk of being targeted for violence from the adversary. When we asked youths to tell about their latest experience with violence, many of the stories described how they were attacked as a representative rather than as an individual. In these cases, skin colour or dress code were main criteria for target

selection. "I was assaulted just because..." was a recurring theme – pointing to the group category to which the person in question was associated with.

Both sides retaliate. The revenge may be directed at the person who had committed something, or against anyone in the other group (boy, age 15, belonging to Valla, #29)

Since violence and retaliation is directed against representatives of "the Other", it is rather arbitrary which persons associated with the enemy are targeted. Both sides ascribe to each other a form of collective responsibility for what one or a few of the Others might have committed. Anyone associated with the other side is considered a legitimate target for revenge.

Last summer a friend and I beat up two guys from Valla. (...) Later this autumn two of them took my sister. She was only 15, and she has never been part of the [neo-Nazi scene]. But they knew she was my sister, and they beat her up so severely that she had to get hospitalised. Just because she was my sister! (participant in the neo-Nazi scene, age 20, #20)

The Valla youths would primarily behave provocatively towards their main enemies – the neo-Nazis – and persons they associated with them. However, their demand for "respect" from others was also found offensive by ordinary youths. They felt they had to submit to Valla's dominance in order to be able to move freely around in the city. What they found most provocative – to native Norwegian youths in particular – was the way Valla members on a number of occasions forced their entry into private parties, threatened or beat up the hosts, and sometimes vandalised the house. In several cases, the neo-Nazis offered the victims to take revenge on their behalf.

Many of the conflicts started out as non-political quarrels and affronts, but soon escalated into a chain of revenge where mobilisation followed the political divisions of "neo-Nazis" vs. "antiracists". Acts of violence and assault were frequently made with reference to earlier affronts carried out by someone on the other side against some of ours. Who started it and how it all began was soon lost track of. The previous affront from the enemy was always sufficient reason for our side to take revenge.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

So what kind of phenomena have I described? Is it meaningful and useful to describe these acts of violence in terms of "hate crime" or "racist violence"? Or are these labels misleading, limiting our understanding of what is actually going on?

One problem with these labels is that they tend to force our analysis into a cognitive and moral framework that defines one side as the evil perpetrator and the other side as the innocent and passive victim. This would be a reasonable interpretation concerning many of the incidents as long as we see them in isolation. Many of the violent acts committed by the neo-Nazi side were committed by a group against weaker victims selected on the basis of skin colour or association with the antiracist side. However, there were also a number of attacks from groups of antiracist opponents against individuals associated with the neo-Nazi side, frequently claimed to be revenge of former misdeeds. Many of the clashes were group fights and acts of retribution in a cycle of revenge where it was not clear "who started" and who were the victims. Both sides targeted their victims as (alleged) representatives of the opponent – as belonging to a category of enemies. The immediate target of revenge was not necessarily the specific person(s) who had committed the act that should be avenged. The musketeer principle¹⁴ of "one for all and all for one" was adopted by both sides for defensive as well as

for offensive purposes – in other words, for dehumanising and victimising random representatives of the Other.

There are various criteria for placing someone in an enemy category. To the neo-Nazis, dark skin colour is of course a major criterion for defining someone as being an adversary and a potential target for violence. However, both the neo-Nazis and the violent parts of the multi-ethnic scene consider style of dressing, family association or observing a person together with someone from the enemy as sufficient reason for hatred and to target that person for violent attack. Speaking about "hate crime" – dress items and skin colour may serve similar social functions as signs of group adherence and markers of enemy categories. There is a fundamental difference, however. You can throw away your bomber jacket or put on a pair of less sagging trousers if your style gets you into too much trouble. But you cannot shed your skin.

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ENDNOTES

- 1 For a general discussion of hate crime, see Barbara Perry, *In the Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crimes* (London: Routledge 2001).
- 2 This paper is based on a larger study, Tore Bjørge, Yngve Carlsson and Thomas Haaland: *Generalisert hat, polariserte fellesskap: Om konflikter mellom ungdomsmiljøer i en norsk by* (Oslo: NIBRs plussserie 2001/4). All data were collected and analysed jointly
- 3 We have applied the racist violence approach in many of our earlier works, such as T.Bjørge (1997): *Racist and Right-wing Violence in Scandinavia* (Oslo: Tano Aschehoug); T. Bjørge & R. Witte (1993): *Racist Violence in Europe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan); T. Bjørge & Y. Carlsson (1999): *Vold, rasisme og ungdomsgjenger: Forebygging og bekjempelse* (Oslo: Tano Aschehoug).
- 4 Cf. T. Haaland (2000): *Vold – konflikt og gjengdannelser: en undersøkelse blant ungdom i fire byer* (Oslo: NIBR prosjektrapport 2000:14).
- 5 The underclass character of the neo-Nazi scene in Kristiansand was more pronounced than any other similar group we have studied. Elsewhere, members of racist youth groups have typically come from a working class background (e.g. Brumunddal) or even from middle class families (Nordstrand in Oslo).
- 6 R. Loeber (1996): "Developmental Continuity, Change, and Pathways in Male Juvenile Problem Behaviors and Delinquency", i Hawkins (ed.) *Delinquency and Crime*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- 7 Interviews were conducted during winter 2001
- 8 Interview with a young boy of immigrant origin, age 17, claimed by others to be a Valla member. Note that he shifts perspective between speaking about Valla as "them" and "we"
- 9 Cf. Eidheim, F. (1993): *Hva har skjedd i Brumunddal: Lokalsamfunnet i møte med de fremmede og seg selv* (Oslo: NIBR rapport, 1993:20).
- 10 See J. Demant, C. Klinge-Christensen /& A-S. Sørensen (1997): "Den danske HipHop-kultur – et neo-tribalt fælledsskap", *Dansk Sociologi* 3/97 ; V. Vestel, A. Bakken, G.H. Moshuus & T. Øia (1997): "Ungdomskulturer og narkotikabruk"? Oslo: NOVA temahefte No. 1: 1997.
- 11 "Small Nazis" refer to an emerging scene of 11-16 years old youths that constitute a second "generation" of the local Nazi scene. They are frequently involved in fight with "Little Valla", representing a similar age-graded set of younger brothers of the original Valla members.

- 12 The processes of joining and leaving racist groups, and the problems involved, is described in more detail in Bjørge (1997), *Racist and Right-Wing Violence in Scandinavia* (Oslo: Tano Aschehoug), ch. 6.
- 13 Obviously, jumping between a multi-ethnic scene and a neo-Nazi scene is mainly an option to "white" youths, but there have been interesting exceptions in some other localities.
- 14 The musketeer principle is also at the base of the NATO Treaty's Article 5, stating that an attack on one member state will be considered as an attack on them all.