

The Effect of Unconscious Exposure to Religious Concepts on Mutual Stereotypes of Jews and Muslims in Israel

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Abstract : This research examined the impact of subliminal exposure to religious content on the mutual attitudes of majority group members (Jews) and minority group members (Muslims). Participants were subliminally exposed to religious concepts (e.g., Mezuzah, yarmulke or veil) and then they filled questionnaires assessing their stereotypes towards the out-group members. Each participant was primed with either in-group religious concepts, out-group concepts or neutral ones. The findings show that the Muslim participants were not influenced by the religious content to which they were exposed while the Jewish participants perceived the Muslims as less 'hostile' when subliminally exposed to religious concepts, regardless of concept type (out-group/in-group). This research highlights the influence of evoked religious content on out-group attitudes even when the perceiver is unaware of prime content. The power that exposure to content in a non-native language has in activating attitudes towards the out-group is also discussed.

Keywords : intergroup attitudes, stereotypes, majority-minority, religious out-group, implicit content, native language

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