Reporting on the New Citizen: Towards Constructive Forms of Reporting on Immigrants[1]

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Abstract

Research indicates that media reporting, particularly on immigrants, depicts them in a stereotypical image. This image is tied to the type of information and voices used in the stories which contribute to the poor quality of news reporting. A key issue driving these negative portrayals is the manner in which journalists refer to and describe certain groups, and whose perspectives and voices they include in their reporting. This practice within journalism has attracted significant critique. This study explores the potential for adopting a more constructive approach to reporting on immigrants. Utilizing constructive journalism and peace journalism principles as a theoretical framework, and Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodological tool, the article examines how immigrants were covered in the local Swedish newspaper, *Barometern*, between 2017 and 2021. Results suggest that integrating constructive strategies in stories about immigrants facilitates a more balanced representation.

Introduction

In her seminal book *Making News,* sociologist Gaye Tuchman (1978) criticizes the media and how journalism transforms events and constructs reality. She describes news as a "window on the world" through which the public looks to the world (p.1), arguing that the public does not get information and images directly, but rather through media's representation and this is how the public creates images. Media, hence, plays a key role as a mediator and cultural translator (Hafez 2009). It also contributes to the dramatization of events and, consequently, to their de/escalation and image constructions (Spencer 2005; Cottle 2006). The audience, therefore, sees the world via a mediatic lens. The public, in turn, interprets the world through such a window, which is not a true reflection of the world, but rather the media's vision or angle of certain events. For these reasons, the negative discourses of news media can lead to various types of stereotyped representations (Ezz El Din 2016).

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This is particularly visible in news that reports about immigrant and marginalized communities as "the Other" (Ezz El Din 2019). The Other can be understood as a "binary separation" in discourses that distinguishes between self-identity and Other identity. Under a traditional stereotypical approach, constructions of the Other in the news contribute to xenophobic images and fear and/or hatred of foreigners and immigrants (Altheide 2002).

It is against this background that the current article is framed. It investigates the textual opportunities for a different form of construction of immigrants when an alternative approach is applied to media coverage.

One of the main issues that contributes to such negative constructions is the way that reporters refer to and write about a certain group, as well as which voices are used in the news reporting. This has led to criticisms on how the journalism profession is practiced (Christoph 2012; Ezz El Din 2016). With that criticism in mind and with recent changes in Swedish society (i.e. the increase in immigration after the 2015 refugee crisis), it is important to revisit how the media reports on the immigrant and examine the opportunities for better forms of news media representation. This study is aligned with calls for constructive media coverage that does not fall into the trap of different agendas that determine which group should be seen as the "enemy" or "threat". Media reporting should present quality news in a way that is suitable for new societies.

Research Problem and Aim of the Study

This study aims to investigate the opportunities for a more constructive approach in reporting on immigrants. Using principles of constructive journalism and peace journalism as a theoretical framework and Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodological approach, I analyze coverage on immigrants in Sweden between 2017 and 2021 in the local Swedish newspaper *Barometern[1]*.

I study whether the constructive journalism and peace journalism models can be used to report about immigrants as an alternative to traditional reporting, which reproduces the same dichotomous (i.e. "us" and "them" and stereotypical images). If applied in journalistic texts, the models could contribute to more balanced constructions of immigrants, i.e., new citizens. Using constructive approaches in reporting can provide alternative ways of reporting that contrast with how the media is most often considered to work.

Research Questions:

In what ways do constructions of immigrants reproduce and/or challenge traditional stereotypical images of immigrants?

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[1] *Barometern OT* is a local newspaper published in Kalmar southeast Sweden.

How are the different actors constructed in the articles analyzed?

Conventional Forms of Presentation of the Immigrant Other

When reporting about refugees and immigrant communities, the media is often blamed for its failure to report objectively about new citizens. Studies about the media's reporting of the Other, especially Muslim immigrants, show that they are reported in a stereotypical manner, which tends to construct them as a threat (Bullock and Jafri 2000; Martin and Phelan 2002; Kabir 2006; Christoph 2012; Sadar 2014; Abdelhady and Malmberg 2018; Holzberg et al. 2018). Muslims in particular are constructed in connection to crime portrayed to be dangerous, backward, violent, and terrorists (Manning 2004; Imtoual 2005; Lewis et al. 2009; Sadar 2014; Kanji 2018). Similarly, Axner (2015) underlines that Othering (i.e., "Us" and "Them") is strongly visible in how Muslims are constructed in Swedish media, with a focus on similar stereotypical representations and their links with problems considered distinctly "Muslim". Jacobs (2017) has found, for example, that TV news in Flanders tends to construct North Africans as the most threatening in comparison with other outgroups. Analyzing Australian media, Weng and Mansouri (2021) have also found out that Othering is evident in how Muslim and African immigrants are constructed with the same "violent" characteristics and portrayed as a threat to "national security."

A study on Swedish news media representations of refugees between 2010 and 2015 found that the representations tended to be more negative than positive (Strömbäck, Andersson, and Nedlund 2017). The results showed that negative frames constructed immigration as a factor that weakened "social cohesion" and Sweden's economy, and was also tied to crime. Positive frames, on the other hand, were tied to the benefits of immigration and the relevance of immigrants to the labor market (Strömbäck, Andersson, and Nedlund, 2017).

Previous research underlined the relation between the voices interviewed in the stories and the image construction. The absence of voices of certain groups has been identified as a problem that contributes to negative constructions of immigrants (Ezz El Din 2016; Szczepanik 2016; De Cock et al. 2018). Comparing Belgian and Swedish newspaper coverage of the European refugee crisis during summer 2015, De Cock et al. (2018) confirmed the relevance of the voices used in news texts. In their study, they explain that the lack of refugee voices in the news texts contributes to their collective negative construction. On the contrary, the use of positive angles, lack of negativity, and the individualization of news gives a more positive image of the immigrants (De Cock et al. 2018).

This is in addition to the media's decision to use certain approaches and frames when reporting news which, if negative, can also contribute to and boost stereotypical constructions of marginalized groups (Ezz El Din 2016;

De Cock et al. 2018). The media, in this case, contributes to the reproduction of stereotypical representations of the Other. In this sense, media discourse could be held responsible for the ways in which the world is constructed and discussed (Tuchman 1978; 1979; Richardson 2007).

Media Challenges in a Global Society: Calls for an Alternative Approach

Hafez (2009) questions the media's role in integrating certain "minority/marginalized" groups. Media organizations have not changed their reporting style to share globalized values; particularly when reporting about certain cultures, they still carry stereotyped representations (Ezz El Din 2016; Hafez 2009; Hafez 2022). Negative stereotypical types of reporting enhance Huntington's (1993; 1996) vision of a cultural clash between civilizations—an idea that is not suitable for global hybrid societies. However, it has been shown in previous studies (Eide 2007; Hervik 2008; Camauër 2010; Anderson 2015; Ezz El Din 2016) that, in the case of non-polemic/positive representations, the situation changes. Here, it is possible to detect the presence of different voices and sources, a lack of collective negative constructions, and alternative frames that reflect a hybrid global society rather than a deadlock that suggests a clash. A hybrid integrated society provides the right to all citizens to be visible and equal, which is a fundamental aspect of democracy. Journalism, hence, has a major role in enhancing democracy and citizenship (Hanitzsch and Vos 2018). With the increase in mobility and migration to Europe, there are many new citizens that need to be integrated into new communities.

From a normative point of view, journalism as a profession should ideally watchdog and inform in a non-polarized way, reporting about other cultures and societies in a way that brings "deeper understanding" without taking "emotive" or "sensationalized" positions, especially during times of conflict (Spencer 2005, 1–2). The media's promotion of polarization may reinforce historic hostilities and stereotypical perceptions of, and between, cultures. It should, hence, change its reporting focus from negative aspects to a more constructive approach.

I, therefore, subscribe to the possibilities and ambitions of a better form of reporting, such as constructive journalism (Haagerup 2017; McIntyre and Gyldensted 2017) and peace journalism (Galtung 2002; 2008). These are frameworks that can be said to contrast with how the media is commonly considered to work. i.e., that it primarily reproduces stereotypes that contribute to the construction of polarized divisions between people and the escalation of conflict (Manning 2004). Constructive journalism is based on journalists' understanding of social issues and their contribution to societal integration, security, and well-being. It promotes new ways of reporting, where it offers alternative information and possible solutions (Aitamurto

and Varma 2018; Rotmeijer 2019). There are also other forms of journalism that stress journalistic reporting for society's well-being that fit under the "umbrella" of constructive journalism, among which is peace journalism (McIntyre and Sobel 2018).

Peace journalism (Galtung 1990; 1998; 2002; 2008) is about quality reporting. Scholars argue that it provides a more nuanced and constructive reporting. It challenges the mainstream media's criteria for newsworthiness and calls for going beyond using elite sources, promoting the use of alternative voices when reporting news. Peace journalism advocates contextualization of events and encourages reporters to go deeper and present all sides concerned with an issue, while avoiding emotional and vague words. At its core peace journalism encourages constructive solutions since it calls for solution-oriented coverage and urges to avoid labeling certain groups, as well as tying them to bad deeds. Examining how audience response to stories that use a peace journalism approach, Lynch and McGoldrick (2013) argue that the audience show less anger and were more 'empathetic' and 'hopeful,' as readers are more interested in solutions and problem solving rather than conflict in comparison with viewers who watched war-oriented produced stories.

There are elements in the peace journalism approach that resonate with constructive journalism. It is seen as an alternative approach for reporting when writing about different subaltern[1] groups, especially when some groups have already been represented negatively/collectively as, for example, an enemy or a threat. Anderson (2015) suggests that a peace journalism approach is useful when reporting about Islam and Muslims to counter Islamophobia. Similarly, Sunata and Yıldız (2018) argue in their study that peace journalism allows for an alternative representation of refugees and is considered to be relevant in reporting about humanitarian crises.

Peace journalism is not only a theory; it also includes practical principles to guide journalists in reporting in a de-escalating manner. Constructive approaches aim to counteract the negativity in reporting and call for a better way and a better quality of news reporting, which this study investigates when reporting about immigrants in Sweden. One can argue that using such approaches can contribute to the construction of non-stereotypical images of the immigrant. Overall, they strive for less sensational reporting and more in-depth coverage and inclusion of different voices.

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[1] Subaltern in this article is defined according to Spivak's (1988) postcolonial definition of marginalized groups.

Beyond the Traditional Dichotomous "Us" and "Them"

Although globalization has created optimism for a new world and generated a more multicultural global society, it has also raised concerns about identity. This is reflected in the notion introduced by Beck (1992; 1999; 2009) called "risk society". The fear from the Other that has emerged in relation to the development of "risk society" is evident in several studies that have examined media since the 9/11 attacks (cf. Poole 2011; Khiabany and Williamson 2012; Sadar 2014; Weng and Mansouri 2021). In a global society, it has been argued that a homogeneous society is replaced with a hybrid society (Maalouf 2011; Ezz El Din 2016). This resonates with Ulrick Beck's (2014) "both and logic," which accommodates different cultures and accepts and recognizes the existence of differences.

It is important for media in the global hybrid world to challenge the traditional dichotomous "us" and "them", which reveals stereotypical constructions where one group is always represented to be superior to the Other, while the "them" is inferior.

It has been argued that hybrid identity is suitable for global society (Maalouf 2011; Ezz El Din 2016). Such identity reveals non-conventional alternative forms of Othering and has been traced in previous studies (Eide 2007; Hervik 2008; Camaüer 2010; Anderson 2015; Ezz El Din 2016). The alternative forms of Others are represented as "close" and "distant"[1] Others. In this case, for example, one group can distance themselves from extremism or the "bad doer" and not necessarily align themselves with the "bad deeds." On the contrary, the "bad doer" is distanced within the group. At the same time, other groups can appear to be closer not based on physical or religious features, but rather on closeness in vision towards some issues with common understanding. The "close" Other can be seen as a more integrated immigrant. Such form is revealed in texts when alternative voices are evident. It has been suggested that the "close Other" and contextualization for reporting events can, thus, be seen as vital components for a global integrated society.

Methods and Material

This study uses a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach. CDA is a convenient method to delve deeper into a text and reveal discourse, ideologies, and power (van Dijk 1993; 1995; Richardson 2007; Wodak and Meyer 2015). CDA works best on small samples (17 articles in this study) since it goes deep and looks between the lines for what is hidden. In that sense the CDA approach is "sensitive to absences as well as presences in the texts, to representations, categories of participants, and construction of

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[1] The term refers to those who share a number of similar linguistic, physical or ethnic features within the same society but, at the same time, have opposite or disparate values that distance them within their own society.

participant identity and participant relations which are found in the text" (Fairclough 1995, 54). Thus, one can look in the text for what is implicitly or explicitly indicated.

According to van Dijk (1993), CDA is an approach that examines the relations between power, society, and culture. His approach is employed in similar studies on identity construction, which is relevant to the current study. I analyze the text both on macro and micro levels using van Dijk's schematic and thematic structures to underline ideology and its relevance in the reproduction of discourse.

All news article texts have a fixed format i.e. a schematic organization that consist of headlines, leads, and a summary (van Dijk 1993), this schema is the starting point for the analysis. On a macro level, I investigate the thematic structure that reveals the main theme or topic in articles, headlines, and leads. While on a micro level, I go deep in the texts analyzed since the approach goes beyond language usage per se and looks into the language and power relations that are produced and reproduced in the texts (Wodak and Meyer 2015; van Dijk 2001). It allows for a more thorough analysis for media representations and allows the analysis of how the new citizen is constructed in the texts through language for example lexical choices, adjectives, adverbs, and metaphors, as well as looking into voices/actors.

As mentioned earlier a total of 17 articles were collected from the Swedish local newspaper *Barometern* between January 01, 2017 and September 30, 2021. The *Barometern* is a local newspaper published in Southeast Sweden, based in the Baltic Sea city of Kalmar, established in 1841 (Ohlsson 2012). In 2003 it merged with three other newspapers to form the holding company Gota Media which is partly owned by Bonnier News. It is affiliated with an additional 55 Swedish morning papers spread across the country. The newspaper is an important source of news for the region with a circulation of 36 000 and its editorial line is Liberal/Conservative (Danielson & Nykvist 2023).

Local media in Sweden has a traditional historical importance for Swedish society. It has been described as the "backbone" of Swedish media for over two centuries, having first developed in the 19th century (Nygren, Leckner, and Tenor 2018, 33; Nygren 2020). Although the print media is declining now and according to Nygren and Schjærff Engelbrecht (2018), around half of local newspapers are closing down and have reduced their workforce by 30-40%, local and regional media organizations continue to produce news suitable for different platforms (Nygren 2020). Local media in Sweden is considered to be an "infrastructure to democracy," as described by the Swedish Minister of Culture, Alice Bah Kuhnke (Nygren and Schjærff Engelbrecht 2018, 4). A study conducted by Nygren and Schjærff Engelbrecht (2018) showed that there is a tendency that citizens' voices are visible in larger municipalities, while absent from rural municipalities. It is,

hence, important in the current study to include articles that use voices of citizens and not just elite sources and explore how the construction of immigrants appears in such stories published in local media as the *Barometern*.

The selection of material was purposively sampled based on articles that focus on immigration and immigrants' news. The criteria for selection required the inclusion of different voices beyond elite voices. Therefore, the articles focus on immigrants, especially those of Middle Eastern background.

Results and Analysis

The articles analyzed revealed four discourses that share special characteristics in reporting: Breaking the stereotypical norm; shifting the blame; constructive citizen; and acceptance of the Other. The most dominating discourses are 'breaking the stereotypical norm' and 'shifting the blame'. Some of the discourses also appear in more than one article as secondary discourse.

Breaking the Stereotypical Norm

This discourse challenges the traditional stereotypical image of immigrants that has been identified in previous studies. It is characterized by the following elements. First, it is solution oriented, so the news does not just present the problem, but provides solutions based on experts' opinions. Furthermore, it offers contextualization of the problem, which provides deeper analysis of the issue discussed.

For example,[1] when discussing problematic issues tied to high rates of unemployment, the reporting offers a solution rather than just presenting statistics or underlining the problem. The coverage also points to the cause of the problem. Although the voices quoted recognize the problem of immigrants who lack adequate education necessary for the job market, they still explicitly articulate the necessity for immigration and values of immigrants. The voice used underlines that the immigrants are young and there are "good opportunities." The voice goes against the right-wing approach of anti-immigrant calls and threats to send them home. Instead, the quote explicitly shows that Sweden is in need of more immigrants and "workforce" (art. 1)[2]:

> "But many (immigrants) are young, so the opportunities are good," she continues.

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[1] In this article, I am using several examples only to demonstrate the arguments raised in the discussions. However, there are similar occurrences in other articles that are not mentioned here, but are analyzed as part of the broader project.

[2] The quotes have been translated by the author.

> "And if you look at what the labor market looks
> like in a longer perspective, we need more
> people in the workforce," says *Name*.[1] (art. 1)

One of the important characteristics within this discourse is the non-conventional representation of the Other. The Other is represented individually, unlike the traditional collective construction of some groups where there is a collective stereotypical representation of the whole group. The coverage focuses on suggestions for integration and efforts to clarify what Islam is and how Muslims think of extremism and contrasts the stereotypical example of Muslims as a 'threat" and "terrorists." The example flips the other side of the coin and highlights the condemnation of Uzbeks in Kalmar[2] after the 2017 Stockholm terrorist attacks committed by an Uzbek immigrant. The headline and the voice of an Uzbek in Kalmar deviates away from the stereotypical image of Muslims as "terrorists." The headline explicitly says that an Uzbek in Kalmar is intimidated by the act in Stockholm. It shows a condemnation of the terror attack:

> "Uzbeks in Kalmar are frightened by the crime in
> Stockholm."

> "Cannot link terror to nation." (art. 2)

The actor is explicitly quoted both in the byline and the text to argue against the connection between terror and a certain nation. His voice is important in underlining the difference between a terrorist who commits a crime and a whole nation that is against violence. The voice of the ordinary Uzbek citizen shows a different image compared to the collective "terrorist" image that the news media construct when reporting about the terrorist attacks. Instead, in this text the ordinary citizen is offered an opportunity to express his thoughts and show that they are a "hospitable" nation and that the "terrorist" is seen as an outsider.

> The text provides the voice of an Uzbek, thereby giving him
> a chance to explain his position and opinion and express
> how he feels about the terrorist attack, as well as clarify the
> misinterpretation about Islam and violence.

Along the same line, the newspaper covered the event "Ask a Muslim," where imams talk to people on the street about Islam. The newspaper coverage did not present Islam or Muslims in a "collective" or "negative" way like previous studies show; instead, in this case, it provided the voice for Muslim imams to condemn extreme groups like ISIS and the Taliban. Therefore, terrorism is being Othered by Muslims and distanced from Islam

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[1] The names of the interviewees have been removed by the researcher to keep their identity anonymous. Although the articles are published, the researcher has decided to keep both names anonymous for ethical reasons.

[2] Kalmar is in southern Sweden and is the home of the *Barometern* newspaper analyzed.

and Muslims. Hence, by allowing the Muslim actor to express his thoughts, the text shows that there is a difference between Islam and Muslims and terrorists' groups. They are not equated or referred to collectively. According to the principles of peace journalism, the "bad doer" is labeled here and underlined in the text.

The quote used not only explicitly show the imams' condemnation of ISIS and other Islamists' actions where he explicitly says that their actions "hurt(s) me deeply," but also distinguishes between the Islamists who are intolerant and aggressive and the tolerant Muslim:

> "It (ISIS) is terrible, of course. Their intentions, their deeds, their hatred of people - it hurts me deeply that they use my religion and that they do it against other Muslims. They express the worst form of intolerance," said *Name*, adding:

> "If you study ISIS and which people are joining, it is not for religious reasons, but it is the community they are looking for. They (ISIS and other Islamist groups) cannot present a uniform interpretation of the religion that justifies what they do, but they must devote themselves very much to 'pick and choose.'" (art. 14)

The Muslim voice in the text does not just present an opinion, but is represented as an active actor. He is given space to express recommendations and a wider vision for integration and combating extremism. The Imam explicitly suggests that second-generation immigrants feel part of the country. He argues that dialogue is very important to provide a sense of security to immigrants and make them feel that they belong to the country and are not foreigners. The actor's voice lifts relevant arguments connected to integration, which includes dialogue, mutual understanding and a sense of belonging. Swedish society is not an active actor. The Imam refers to it, but there is a lack of voice that represents the authorities or people in charge of integration to highlight what can be done to ensure that the new citizens are welcomed in the Swedish community (see example art 14 below):

> To counter religious extremism in Sweden, *Name* believes that the single most important thing is that newcomers, refugees, and second-generation immigrants feel part of the country.

> He believes that the best way to achieve a sense of belonging is through conversation and discussion.

> "It is a two-way communication where society must also show that you are a part of the country." (art. 14)

The idea of "foreignness" and "sense of belonging" has been found in Ezz El Din (2020) study on Arab immigrants. The problem with the "foreignness" identity is that the new citizen finds himself as an outsider in Swedish society, which can contribute to integration problems. The *Barometern* text analyzed here draws upon a relevant debate that is already often discussed in the Arab diaspora sphere in Sweden.

Breaking the stereotypical norm also challenges the image of the immigrant Other portrayed as a "criminal." The text (for example, article 15) presents voices of immigrants who were born outside of Sweden and raised in Sweden. The article quotes both actors to be positive immigrants, even though one of them had prior involvement in a criminal gang before deciding to become an active citizen. The blame discourse that appears in previous literature on immigrants is not present in this text and is replaced instead by underlining their integrated role in society:

> "*Name* and *Name* were both twelve years old when they came to Sweden. *Name* fled the civil war in Somalia and *Name* fled the war in Iraq. One is a top student and entrepreneur who worked internationally. The other is a gang criminal who has been in prison three times and ruined many people's lives. Today, they both stand in the same place, fighting for integration and inclusion."
> (art. 15)

The comparison in the example above shows that they both "stand in the same place," indicating that they are similar, even though they had divergent pasts, and that they both are "fighting for integration and inclusion." The quote shows that they are a positive force in society and the text uses the voice of the immigrant to represent himself, not politicians or other people who do not represent him. This is in contrast to previous studies where the immigrant is an absent actor, talked about but not interviewed to self-represent.

Similarly, the immigrant voice presents his opinion and underlines that it is important to investigate the real representation of immigrants who contribute to Swedish society by working in different fields, such as transportation and healthcare. The actor as quoted in article 15 below reminds the reader of the contributions of immigrants in different areas in Swedish society and implicitly warns against exclusively focusing on reports of crime rates where immigrants are blamed and their contributions to society are ignored.

However, at the same time, he also holds politicians responsible for bridging the gap between the poor isolated areas where the crime rate is higher in comparison with other areas. The actor suggests that there should be more investments in vulnerable areas to combat the crime rate.

> "When reading the report (in reference to a report issued by the *Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention* or articles about crime among immigrants and their children), we must never forget the majority of foreign-born people who drive our buses and work in healthcare. It is also those who are hardest hit by the serious violence, those who live where the criminals commit crimes, who are shot by mistake and do not dare to go out," says *Name*. (art. 15)

> Of course, some people living in exclusion and poverty can see opportunities in crime. So, politicians must also invest in the most vulnerable and ensure that they are given the opportunity to enter the labor market. And being a criminal must cost! (art. 15)

The immigrant voice here positively contributes to the image of immigrants in the media because they discuss how they see the problem of integration and express their demands. Subsequently, in the text, they are constructed as active citizens with demands from politicians like any other member of society and not a member who is seen as a burden or blamed for being a criminal or not contributing to society.

> Furthermore, the example below about the actor's vision for his young children constructs him as an ideal father who cares for his children unlike the stereotypical image of the Muslim who is violent and aggressive towards his family. This construction goes against the news that usually highlights social services taking custody away from an immigrant child's parents because they are unable to raise them safely. On the contrary, the text here promotes the vision of a caring father regardless of his ethnicity.

> *Name* has two sons, 2.5 years and six months old. He wants to give them what he himself did not get, which was a rulebook for what it is that applies in Swedish society, and he never wants them to identify with a problem area. (art. 15)

It has been conventional to use the term "terrorist" in media reporting about Muslim perpetrators who commit violent crimes in the West, while a similar crime convicted by white or non-Muslim perpetrators were less likely to be labeled as "terrorism" (Kanji 2018). Previous studies have found that Muslims are most likely to be associated with terrorism and labeled collectively as terrorists 23 times more compared to a white preparator who is usually referred to in an individual manner and as a criminal instead of a terrorist (see Kanji 2018; Kearns, Betus, and Lemieux, 2019). However, in

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the example below, one can observe that the terror attacks on mosques in Norway are labeled in the coverage as "terrorist attacks" by right-wing extremists. Such reporting breaks the stereotypical norm of terrorism tied to Muslims. It also labels events as they should be labeled, according to peace journalism. Right-wing extremism is explicitly described and associated with terror and, in this case, the victims are Muslims.

> Norwegian right-wing extremists pay tribute to the perpetrator behind the terrorist attack on the mosque in Bærum outside Oslo - and call for new terrorist acts, according to the security police PST. (art. 9)

> Furthermore, the authorities quoted in the text do not hide or exclude the Muslim threat, but at least equate extremism to both sides. The key term in the text is the association of crime and terror to extremism, not to a Muslim or non-Muslim. Thus, the article does not hide information about the threat of terror, but rather explicitly names the bad-doers "radicals" and "extremists" instead of a stereotypical generalized image.

Shifting the Blame

The results presented in previous studies (cf. Strömbäck, Andersson, and Nedlund 2017) show the negative construction of immigration as a factor that weakens society and that reporting always blames the immigrant for various societal, economic, and security-related issues. However, in the present study, there is a shift in blame and holding other people responsible.

This discourse shifts the blame from the immigrant Other to the "inactive" "bad-doer" and instead names the authority or people responsible for a certain failure. In this group of articles, the texts hold those in charge responsible and do not put the blame on the immigrant when discussing societal issues. When raising problems tied to integration, for example, the text goes deeper with analysis on what Sweden might need to do for integration and to provide more job opportunities. In this case, the blame is not placed on the immigrants, but rather on the Swedish authorities, criticizing their strategies and holding them responsible for not providing a "broader vision" for migration policy aside from just "subsidies" (art. 6). The text even suggests solutions for integration beyond those implemented, which is an element that appears in the constructive journalism approach.

> Sweden's conditions require a broader vision of what reforms are required to cope with the challenges of migration. Subsidized services and education do not go all the way (art. 6).

The use of different voices also contributes to constructive representation. For example, the use of the expert's voice (in this case, a researcher) in one

of the articles (art. 3) comes in support of the immigrants' voice, where the responsibility is-given to politicians who should be accountable.

Furthermore, while media interpretation of public statistics held immigrants and their activities responsible for the spread of COVID-19, reporting in one of the *Barometern* articles shifts the responsibility to the authorities. The text underlines the fact that the information about the pandemic does not reach Somali immigrants. Using the voice of a human rights activist (art. 11 below) showed that this group does not have access to information and do not know where to find information. The actor explicitly states that there should be quick measures to spread health-related information to the public, holding the authorities to account and removing the blame from immigrants:

> "Many people do not know where to turn to find the right information.
>
> If we do not quickly ensure that these groups have access to adequate information on how each of us can help stop the spread of infection, then it will have devastating consequences," says human rights activist *Name* (art. 11).

Even though the article refers to statistics that show that at least "6 out of 15" who died from coronavirus in Stockholm were Somali, the way the fact is constructed does not put the responsibility on the Somali immigrants. Instead, it calls for the responsibility of the authorities to distribute the information in a way that can be accessible to the different immigrant groups. Thus, although the facts and statistics are not hidden, the way that the text is constructed and how the article uses those facts contributes to an alternative constructive way of reporting about the immigrant groups during the COVID-19 crisis.

The text also presents the immigrants as active actors who started different initiatives, such as the #tellcorona initiative, to help inform fellow immigrants instead of waiting for the authorities' help. In contrast with previous studies that show the construction of immigrants as "abusers" of social benefits in society, the construction of the immigrant as a contributor to society is visible in this text when underlining the initiatives. This strategy does not frequently appear in the news about immigrants (see art. 11 below):

> "To prevent further spread of infection, sharp information measures aimed at various immigrant groups are now required," *Name* emphasizes.
>
> In #tellcorona, he (in reference to the activist) and his staff have collected video information in different languages. (art. 11)

One of the hottest topics discussed in the media and among politicians in Sweden is the freedom of asylum seekers to choose the area they want to live in and blaming immigrants for building their own communities and refusing to integrate in Swedish society. However, in an article discussing the right of refugees to live where they want, the journalist interviewed immigrants who defend their right to live where they want and also explain the challenges. All the voices interviewed explain that, even though there are challenges for the immigrant, they managed to learn the language, made it through school and are working and some of them have even purchased their own apartments. They also have a chance in the text to explain why living in crowded areas can be considered sometimes as a better option compared to living in isolation in asylum houses:

> "At the same time, not everything happens in Stockholm. Integration becomes difficult due to segregation. I understand why you want to limit it," says *Name* who grew up in Strängnäs.

> "I was the only dark-skinned person in school, you can imagine what it was like. But I still learned Swedish and got into society quickly. If you have to learn a language, then you learn it." (art. 12)

The text also underlines the problem that they want to live and integrate in Swedish-populated areas, but the housing problem is the issue, not them. Hence, the article points to the problem of housing and releases the blame from the immigrant. On the contrary, it promotes a different image for the immigrant and represents an immigrant identity that fights and overcomes any challenges.

One of the discursive strategies used in this discourse is a reflection on reality instead of reproducing stereotypes. When reporting crime stories, for example (article 13), the coverage does not just mention statistics about the overrepresentation of immigrants in the crime statistics, but uses the voice of the Minister of Justice, Morgan Johansson, to show that this is not a representation of the reality of the immigrant in Sweden. The quote from the Minister of Justice underlines the danger of looking at half of the cup without looking at the contribution of immigrants to work and "health care", for example. The article also places responsibility on the state when quoting the minister assuming responsibility and arguing that "we," in reference to politicians and people in power, should exert more efforts towards the marginalized groups.

> "We must ensure that we do even more when it comes to preventive measures, when it comes to social services, schools and leisure activities for the groups that have been marginalized," he says (art. 13).

Although the article quotes actors from the right wing and opposition, the warning that appears in the lead articulating the risk of abuse of such data from "racists" (as the minister refers to them) implicitly constructs the anti-immigration comments from the right-wing actors as racist comments. Thus, the article includes different voices of politicians, but it manages to reinterpret negative anti-immigrant arguments made by the right wing and portray them to be racist instead. It is important to understand that an alternative approach in reporting does not mean excluding voices, but rather paying attention to how the article is structured and how the voices are integrated.

Constructive Citizen

This discourse, although not prevailing in the sample analyzed, is important to highlight in order to show the elements that contribute to such constructions. It is characterized by highlighting the active citizen in society (a "close Other"), showing the integrated citizen, and providing good examples from society. The texts explore positive deeds and the contribution of immigrants to society (as active employees, taxpayers, as well as raising the issue of the need for young immigrants).

The example below shows a story of an Uzbek immigrant who saved a girl from a gang and, even though he won a prize, he refused the money. This explicitly and implicitly constructs him as a hero unlike the "abuser" or "terrorist" image of Muslims that has appeared in previous studies (art. 2):

> He himself fits in well with the picture. *Name* became a local hero when he last New Year's Eve, saved a young girl from a boys' gang. This effort was rewarded with a prize from regional insurance. But he declined the prize money (art. 2).

The texts analyzed also go deeper by interpreting the statistics and not just presenting a problem. For example, if there is a problem with a group of immigrants to access the job market, the articles underline that the pace is different. However, one can see that the new citizens manage to enter the job market by the article underlining the areas where they work. This makes the new citizens visible in society and can show where they work and contribute to Swedish society (art. 5).

Acceptance of the Other in Society – New Citizen Welcomed vs. Racism Denounced

Raising multicultural aspects that fit into global society is the main characteristic of the stories that are included in this discourse. The articles analyzed promote respect of the Other, hybrid/multicultural identity and Sweden as a multicultural society that encompasses all its citizens. For example, a cultural news story includes the holidays that the new citizens

from the Middle East celebrate (article 4). It not only makes clear that society recognizes these holidays, but also that it is important to inform those who do not have knowledge about these types of holidays. Thus, the article becomes an informative tool as well. It implicitly shows that the new citizens are welcome in Swedish society and the traditions of the new citizens are respected and celebrated. This discourse also includes elements promoting democracy, tolerance, and integration. The texts analyzed show that the respect of the Other can be tied to Beck's (2014) "both and logic."

Another strategy in this discourse is the explicit articulation of drawbacks of a racist society. The headline of one of the articles, as well as its lead, explicitly underline that there is a high level of racism in Swedish society. The text raises an important issue for a democratic and tolerant society to pay attention to, a society where not everyone feels equal, but, on the contrary, feels racialized. It is a constructive approach to recognize a problem and name the "evil" or "bad" habits. The text uses statistics to scientifically show that there are certain groups who face racism based on research. Reporting right-wing extremism shows the negative aspects of such ideologies. The text covers the increase of right-wing extremism in Denmark and the title explicitly covers the story, showing that the calls from one of the political parties in Denmark that is expected to win several seats in parliament are racist. Even though the text reports on what they say and does not hide their racist views (e.g. the calls to "deport hundreds of Muslims" and the actor quoted explicitly describing them as a "threat"), the article also shows that the party leader was sentenced for racism. Therefore, it is clear from the construction that such comments are racist and that the article reflects a critique of right-wing extremism. One can also see that the text explicitly connects the Swedish Social Democrats (SD) to the racist Danish People's Party (DF), which asserts the fact that SD is a racist party.

> For a long time, the election campaign was characterized by welfare issues and the climate. Immigration and integration—where several of the major parties, including the Social Democrats, embraced the now roomy Danish People's Party (DF) strict line—seemed to get married (art. 7).

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, based on the *Barometern* sample examined, one can see different constructive representations of the immigrant that challenges the stereotypical images presented in previous studies. The constructive journalism and Galtung's peace journalism models can be traced in the texts reporting on immigrants, which can be seen as an alternative form to traditional reporting that reproduces the same dichotomous stereotypical images. Constructive journalism and peace journalism call for going beyond

quoting just the elites and for bringing other voices into the news discourse. Positive framing appears in the articles that delve deeper in their reporting and present the positive/constructive aspects of immigrants in life, as well as the assets that immigrants contribute to society. Hence, contributing to the construction of societal cohesion. These are alternative approaches instead of focusing on stories that emphasize immigrants and crime or immigrants' abuse of social benefits, which suggests the immigrants abuse taxpayers' money and makes immigrants a burden on society rather than an asset.

Integration is discussed in relation to mutual respect. Ulrick Beck's (2014) "both & logic" is visible in the texts when the image of an integrated immigrant is not just shown by the immigrant adopting certain traditions, but rather by showing the acceptance of each other instead requiring the merging of one certain/only tradition.

The use of alternative voices, lack of collective negative construction, individualizing the reference to the bad doer, and contextualization of issues contribute to the positive frames and counters negative collective stereotypes. Thus, a global hybrid society that fits a global world is reflected in the reporting, where all citizens have a voice and are treated individually not collectively. Reporting about a collective or a general group without specifying the "bad" doer constructs a negative image, while from the analysis, one can see that media can play a role in countering negative discourses on immigrants when presenting the immigrant voice and giving the subaltern a chance to speak (Spivak, 1988). In this case, the coverage contributes to the construction of an equal, welcomed new citizen.

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