

## DANISH MEDIA COVERAGE OF 22/7

### Abstract

When the two terrorist attacks in Norway took place and the identity of terrorist, Anders Behring Breivik (ABB) was revealed, attention turned to his network relations and shared ideas with Danish radical right wing communities, including the Danish People's Party. In this article, we focus on ABB's Danish connections through an analysis of the first 100 days of Danish media coverage. We scrutinised 188 articles in the largest daily newspapers to find out how Danish actors related to ABB's ideas. The key argument is that the discourses and opinions reflect pre-existing opinions and entrenched positions that have little to do with the event 22/7. Instead, they have everything to do with an attempt to contain domestic adversaries, if not enemies, such as "multiculturalists" and feminists, who were fiercely attacked by right-wingers, while left-wingers saw the radical right wing as the real enemy. At the same time, animosity towards Islam was reproduced leaving the enemy as being a multi-headed monster of Islamists, multiculturalists and feminists

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### Keywords

Multiculturalism • muslims • news media • effects without causes • opinion • tone of debate

## 1 Introduction

There is a conspicuous difference between what actually caused mass-murderer Anders Behring Breivik to kill 77 people, maiming and wounding others and the stories about why he did it. For most people, the entry into understanding the events comes exclusively through the stories of others. Through stories and counter-stories actors negotiate their positions while distancing themselves from Breivik, yet they still use the tragic event to promote their worldview and ideology. Psychiatrists commenting in the newspapers may attach importance to signals they pick up in Breivik's childhood mostly from other media coverage, whereas others emphasise the role of the various hatreds of Muslims, multiculturalists, feminists and left-wingers. Or rather, these comments are the stories of specialists, which become the stories of the media molded to fit the logics and structure of the news and to suit narrow concerns of strategy and security (Devji 2005: xvi).

Experts on violence experience similar difficulties of working on actual "causes" of violence. A simple division of "triggering" and "root" (or "structural") causes may be helpful (see Bjørge 2005), but it may also blur the unpredictability of co-existing generators of violence. Direct violence is what the police will deal with, but indirect violence such as rigid social stratification, relative deprivation, sustained experiences of injustice, draconian security surveillance, or open

support of hierarchies of gender, race, sexuality, language, or class does not convert into causes.

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks in 2001, Faisal Devji (2005) found that this and similar events could best be described as being characterised for their being "effects without causes". Oliver Roy points out that the Jihad of the suicide bombers did not result from oppressive or disturbed conditions in the Middle East, because fighters had no direct experience of such conditions and did not involve themselves in political struggles in their own countries but chose foreign locations for their attacks, which reduces causes to abstractions (Roy in Devji 2005: 4). Those who committed the suicide attacks had left letters that lifted the cause for their terrorist attacks away from the immediate events into some higher level of martyrdom. In this manner, they distanced themselves from the specifics of their deeds, which for most Muslims and Islamic theologians is rather un-Islamic and even hostile to Islamic thought and practice. At a distance, Osama bin Laden, in Devji's readings, made no effort of separating domestic from foreign reasons, local from the global or correcting news media representation in order to highlight the "real reason" for the attacks. Instead, causes are reduced to stereotypes and causality if disintegrated into universal complicity (Devji 2005: 7). Devji argues that such attacks are better approached as ethical

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acts, because they represent nothing in itself but are like deeds to be pursued as, for instance, the “Knights under the Banner of the Prophet” as written by al-Zawahiri (and quoted by Breivik), rather than political actions instrumental to some ideological uniformity (Devji 2005). We believe that the experiences Devji draws from the study of 9/11 stories are relevant for how to approach the fuzzy cause–effect relation of the 22/7 attacks.

Today, “mediatization of society” refers to the conceptualisation of a process whereby institutions, companies and individuals no longer operate independent of the news media, its logic and its experts. Thus, the understanding and the analysis of the news media or politics can only be understood as a single integral process (Hjarvard 2008; Strömbeck 2008). This has been particularly clear in the conduct of war ever since the Vietnam War, where the myth of winning the media is necessary for winning the war was born (Carruthers 2000). In modern wars, the relationship between cause and effect is effectively blurred (Hoskins & O’Loughlin 2010: 2).

In this article, we examine how the Danish news media covered the Breivik case during the first 100 days when the reactions are most clear and immediate as well as matching the study by Eide *et al.* (this volume). How are the causes of the attacks conveyed, and which actors are held responsible for a development that makes such an attack possible? Is this based on analysis of Norwegian material or do the stories draw on commentary that draws its logic from external semantic spaces? When researchers enter into sensitive areas such as 22/7 solid, well-documented research is needed, and we argue that the inductive principles of grounded research as found in social practice theory is a proper foundation.

Breivik makes numerous references to his inspiration from Denmark and the country’s tough anti-migration ideology and practice. This is not missed by the Norwegian coverage and the question is being asked, what the Danish connections mean for understanding the development of Breivik’s modality and motivation to use mass-murder for his self-staged quest.

## 2 Approach

We chose to collect the Danish newspaper articles from the first 100 days after the attacks in Oslo and on Utøya from the Danish media database “Infomedia.” The articles were found in the seven largest nationally circulating newspapers: *Berlingske*, *B.T.*, *Ekstra Bladet*, *Information*, *Jyllands-Posten*, *Kristeligt Dagblad* and *Politiken* (for number of copies sold, see Figure 1).

The keyword that we worked with when searching for articles was “multiculturalism”, because the opposition to the multicultural society is central to Breivik, and thus the debate about Breivik is, to a large extent, centered around this topic. The aim was to examine the debates that took place in Danish newspapers after the attacks, concerning Breivik and the subsequent discussion of multiculturalism

	2011	2012
Politiken	98.973	97.820
Jyllands-Posten	104.195	97.481
Berlingske Tidende	100.811	90.006
B.T.	66.547	59.401
Ekstra Bladet	66.764	59.342
Kristeligt Dagblad	26.952	26.931
Information	21.763	21.014

Fig. 1. Copies of newspapers sold during 2011 and 2012

triggered by these terrorist acts. However, the first day after the attacks (23/7/2011) proved to be different from the rest of the period because the perpetrator of the attacks and the motivations were still unknown to the public by the time of the newspapers’ fixed deadline. We chose to make a separate search for the articles from this day since the search words “Breivik” and “multikultur” obviously would not provide any usable results. Therefore, we chose to search the words “Oslo” and “Terror”/or “bombe” for the 23/7/2011. This gave us 52 results. For the remaining 99 days, we used the words Breivik\* and Multikultur\*. A search of these two words together during the period 24/7/2011 to 30/10/2011 came up with 188 articles.

In the analysis of the newspaper themes, we are interested in the patterns that emerged from asking how the cause of 22/7 is dealt with, i.e. the stories about what the problem is and which actors are involved. For this purpose, we rely on frame analysis, not least the methods for text analysis that is brought out in the work of Claes de Vreese (2005) and to some extent also in Robert Entman (1993). According to Todd Gitlin: “Frames are principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens and what matters” (1980: 6). The focus of our frame analysis is on how communicators “construct a particular point of view that encourages the facts of a given situation to be viewed in a particular manner” (Kuypers 2010: 300).

Entman argues that frames define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments and suggest remedies (Entman 1993: 52). Berg and Hervik (2007) operationalised this in their study of the Danish media’s Muhammad Cartoon Coverage into some simple questions for analysis: What is the problem? Who created the problem? What actors are presented in what roles? Who are the good ones, who are the bad ones? What can be done? What is the language of the frame? These questions served us as a guide for identifying the dominating, agenda-setting themes in the Danish coverage of 22/7.

The first 24 hours make up our first theme for analysis. From here on, everyone knew the identity of Breivik and acknowledged the first erroneous associations of the bombings with Islamic terrorism. For this reason, each newspaper ceased to form separate islands of interpretation and treatment became more and more interwoven. The articles from the remaining 99 days were, therefore, treated chronologically. A first close reading and preliminary screening of these articles revealed a number of major themes, and the most dominant ones were inferred for further analysis.

### 2.1 Terrorist attack on Norway: Effects without causes

The Danish coverage of the first 24 hours of 22/7 is wrapped around the idea of effects without causes and schema-driven, automatic reactions reaching for the Islamists to explain. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, terrorism has consistently been connected to Islamic extremism and placed within the frame “Islamic fundamentalism vs. the West”, or “the West against the rest” a.k.a. “the clash of civilizations”. Thus, in order to explain the events of 22/7, journalists turned to this discourse as their main explanation frame.

In the analysis of the first day after the attacks, we found that the frames that were used on that day already reverberated with something that people knew, because the newspapers were drawing on a recognition pattern of terrorism, which they shared with the public, i.e. a pattern that connects terrorism with fundamentalist Muslims. The newspapers were successful with this frame, because

it was something people already felt strongly about and it was an understandable recognition pattern to draw on (cf. Nisbet 2010:41). In this manner, without knowing what caused the attacks, the newspapers, in general, managed to single out Muslim extremists as the perpetrators.

The articles framed the attacks as Islamic terrorism in several ways. For example, some articles did not explicitly state that they believed the terrorist attacks to be a matter of international terrorism. But by framing the attacks as being against “the West”, “Europe”, or “the North/Scandinavia”, they revealed an underlying understanding of the attacks as somehow coming from “the outside” rather than being a matter of national terrorism, which the following headlines exemplify: “This is why Norway has become a target for terror” (Sørensen 2011), “The West condemns Oslo-terror” (Kongstad 2011), “Norway under attack” (Broberg 2011), “Norway under attack: The most severe terror attack against Europe since 2005” (Skjoldager and Davidsen-Nielsen 2011) and “Drawings make Norway a target for terror” (Davidsen-Nielsen and Skjoldager 2011).

Another way to frame Islamic terrorism was when the articles did not directly and explicitly state it as the explanation for the attacks, yet they presented no other alternatives as to what could be the motivation and they relied on experts on radical Islamic terrorism. Such coverage invariably left the reader with a view that it was probably an instance of Islamic terrorism. Once it became clear that the perpetrator was blonde and seemingly Norwegian, the likelihood of right-wing extremism emerged.

The news coverage of the first 24 hours reveals how “old” printed news media through its structure and logic ends up airing the Islamist terrorist schema from the finalisation of the morning edition in the evening before. The coverage is the outcome of a longer process within the news institution that ends up in “finished” stories as opposed to the news streaming on the Internet. In this manner, several of the printed papers reproduced the stereotype of the terrorist as Muslim. At the same time, however, the Norwegian police knew better and earlier. They apprehended this blond, Norwegian mass murderer and terrorist, while journalists still reached for their gut-level senses and stereotyped experiences to argue that this was an Al-Qaeda-like undertaking.

The second theme, “the pathologisation”, arose as a set of answers given to the question of what impelled Breivik to commit the horrific killings.

## 2.2 Pathologisation

In the beginning of the first 100 days of coverage, there were several articles that attempted to explain Breivik’s actions from a psychological viewpoint by scrutinising his childhood, his interests and his role models as described by his friends and family and in his compendium 2083: *A European Declaration of Independence*. In the articles, he was often described as a regular, good looking and well-read young man whom no one would have ever suspected of being an extremist. Several times, however, the articles described him a person who did not really fit in anywhere in the real world, but who instead used the Internet to connect with like-minded people.

Other people, primarily right-wing politicians and pundits, also showed a tendency to make use of the psychological explanation, although not from a biographic standpoint. There was a clear tendency for these right-wing people, who were often linked to Breivik, to describe him as a maniac/psychopath/mentally ill person. Either people in these articles described him simply as a lunatic, or

they questioned his mental health: “A lunatic like Anders Breivik” (Søndberg and Mærsk 2011), “the man must be a psychopath” (Nielsen 2011), “most of all, Breivik looked like a sociopath with narcissistic traits” (Tholl 2011) and “The lacking sense of guilt and empathy is a well-known characteristic of the psychopath” (Skårderud 2011). What these articles had in common was that they often described Breivik as “a lone wolf” who did not fit in anywhere. For example: “Breivik sought community but ended up as a lone wolf” (Pagh 2011), “He has made a solo run in order to become famous” (Davidsen-Nielsen 2011b).

On the contrary, there were also those who preferred stressing that, rather, Breivik was fanatic (e.g. Krog 2011; Aagaard 2011). They recognised that Breivik felt strongly about his ideology and that he was by no means alone with his views. They viewed him as a product of the growing right-wing populism in Europe and the increasingly harsh tone towards foreigners.

Some argued that Breivik acted completely rational according to his ideological standpoint. One example is: “If his premise is that the government consists of traitors and that Norway is occupied, then his actions become completely logical” (Gjerding and Geist 2011).

Most of the authors and sources who called Breivik a psychopath or maniac have direct or indirect relations to the Danish People’s Party (DPP). When reading the DPP’s various versions of the party’s Principle Program and its manifesto (Dansk Folkeparti Folketingsgruppe 2001), it is evident that their opinions about foreigners and the multicultural society are similar to Breivik’s opinions on these matters. Nevertheless, in the articles published after 22/7 the representatives of the party made it clear that they by no means wished to be pigeonholed with him. Therefore, they went on the offensive when people linked them to Breivik or the tone of the debate and, in connection with this, they often wrote him off as a psychopathic maniac. Thus, on the one hand, it is interesting that the people related to the DPP completely wrote off Breivik, while on the other, in the articles they published, they openly presented views that were similar to those of Breivik.

The 10-week long court case led to the verdict that Breivik was not mentally ill, but acted as a rational, cynical, mass murderer. From racism studies, we know that rhetorical emphasis on the perpetrators mental state or pathology by no means is unique. Rather than coming out as the product of insight or analysis of specific cases, such a focus is better understood as an external attempt to distance themselves from the horrifying events. To reduce actions to individual pathology or the lone wolf serves to shield the case from history and avoid taking social responsibility (van Dijk 1993; Wodak & Reisigl 1999; Omi & Winant 1994).

## 2.3 The Tone of the Debate

Throughout the period observed, there was a wide-ranging discussion about the character of language concerning foreigners and “multiculturalism”. The concept “tone of the debate” (*tonen i debatten*) has become a catch-all term in the Danish news media debate for radicalisation and the brutal directness of the language used in representing issues of the ethnic minorities and refugees in Denmark. This third theme was discussed from two different angles in the articles we analysed. On the one hand, there were those who discussed the general tone of the public debate, and on the other hand, there were those who discussed the tone of language used on the Internet. Regarding the first angle, the DPP was repeatedly held accountable for the character of language in the public debate

in Denmark, which was criticised as being harsh and verging on being xenophobic. The party was seen as a forerunner in the Nordic region for introducing the harsh tone towards foreigners (Information 4/8/2011) and their views were seen as opening up for/normalisation of extreme right wing views (Information 4/8/2011). Thus, they were framed quite negatively. The proponents of this frame encouraged the DPP to do some “self-examination” and to tone down their rhetoric as they saw a direct link between the harsh tone and Breivik’s attitudes, which shared many similarities. The following excerpts are examples of this framing:

Pia, Søren, Søren, Morten and Karen [Pia Kjærsgaard, Søren Krarup, Søren Espersen, Morten Messerschmidt and Karen Jespersen] have all fanned the embers of hate which bursted into flames among the young people of Norway. Will you ever become any wiser? (Politiken 27/7/2011).

Right-wing extremists and right-wing populists share the view that Muslims pose a threat to a series of fundamental Western values: civil rights, Christianity, the relationship between the sexes. Through parliamentary channels and by using propaganda with carefully aligned rhetoric, the right-wing populist parties are seeking to carry out as much of the ideology as possible as concrete legislation (Bundegaard 2011).

Breivik must be viewed as the product of the anti-Islamism, xenophobia, political polarization, and left-wing contempt that right-wing populist forces, media, and parties in all the Nordic communities have contributed to conjure up. Thus, the Danish People’s Party and the Progress Party, to a large extent, have a moral and ideological responsibility (Lund 2011).

The members of the DPP denied that their role had had a negative impact on the debating culture, and they justified their use of language in several ways. One way was that they referred to their freedom of speech. DPP member Søren Espersen expressed that there was a great difference between word and action, and that because the DPP did not use or agitate violence, the members of the party were free to speak their mind, or as he expressed it: “We have a sharp tone and we say whatever the hell we want” (Andersen 2011). In this manner, he equated a trenchant debate with freedom of speech thus using his “democratic right” to legitimise the harsh tone towards foreigners.

Another form of justification appeared when the DPP claimed that the strict tone they had applied to talk about foreigners had been necessary because it prevented extremists from boiling over with hate (see Eide *et al.* this volume and Lakoff 1987 for this folk model of anger that has anger existing outside of a person’s control). Several times it was expressed that the sharp tone worked as a safety valve for extremism. Frequently, a simple logic was used as an explanation as to why this was true: in Norway and Sweden, the debate tone had not been open and both countries had experienced extremist attacks. In Denmark, the debate tone had been open, and we had not experienced extremist attacks. Hence, in this view, the open debate equalled less extremism. One example is from DPP member Mogens Camre.

It is precisely in Norway and Sweden that we have seen the bloodiest effects of the culture conflict. Both countries have enthusiastically attempted to obstruct the debate about the problems of immigration in Sweden to such a degree that it has

become reminiscent of a dictatorship. In Denmark we discuss problems and their solutions openly and we have avoided the attack from an extreme right wing (Camre 2011).

Although the DPP was often held accountable for the harsh tone of the debate, there were also those who instead talked more about the generally harsher debating tone, which we all had a responsibility for (Jensen 2011) e.g. that the language of the right-wing had become normalised in Danish society and that not opposing xenophobic discourse was a passive acceptance of its existence. As Thomas Hylland Eriksen noted, “For years, multiculturalism has been a negatively loaded word and the limits for derogatory generalizations about Muslims have been wide-stretched a long time ago” (Eriksen in Davidsen-Nielsen 2011). Thus, this focus had more to do with the general attitude to how people use value-laden language.

Connected to this mainstreaming of radical right-wing discourse is the focus on the language use on the Internet. Many articles pointed out that the tone of the language on the Internet was extremely harsh – harsher than the language applied by the DPP. The Internet has no restrictions and in the name of anonymity, anyone can post hateful expressions without repercussions. It was argued that this form of hateful expression could ultimately agitate violence and motivate people like Breivik, because this was a place where extreme views were shared and accepted, maybe even encouraged because people incited each other to hate. Again, the debate was divided into two. On the one hand, there were those who believed that the freedom of speech allowed for these hateful expressions, among others, because there was a certain moral line separating talk and action (violence) that you did not cross. The following excerpts are from an editorial in *Berlingske* and an article by the conservative debater Kasper Støvring, respectively, and they exemplify this distinguishing between talk and violence:

We have the right to want the multicultural society or to believe that it is a slippery slope that leads to dispute and ghettoization. We have the right to say whatever we want without pre censure and if we take it too far, if for example we end up making calls for violence, making racist remarks or other loathsome things, we can be punished according to the law. That is how a liberal society that builds on law principles works (Aagaard 2011).

Should selected blogs, websites, and extreme groups be banned? The line is drawn at the call for and the use of violence. On the contrary, a free debate contributes to channeling frustrations into democracy thus bringing them under control. The things that are suppressed are at the risk of returning in a demonic form. One of the biggest threats to democracy is closed forums where statements cannot be contradicted (Støvring 2011).

On the other hand, there were representatives from both sides of the political spectrum who believed that there should be limits to the freedom of expression when Internet language was concerned, because they saw a direct link between Breivik and his online behavior. The following examples are statements from the former political spokesman of the Social-democratic party, Henrik Sass Larsen, and the former leader of the Liberal Party, Uffe Elleman Jensen, respectively:

Actually, I do not believe that there is a particularly hateful tone in Danish politics. But on the Internet there is almost a free employment of hateful expressions. There is a need for

regulations in the public debate, which ensures that we avoid these hateful utterances that, among others, are found among the comments to many blog entries ... I do not believe that a hateful tone is good for our democracy. I find it difficult to understand how it can be a blessing that people can chain-hate each other on the Web (Søndergaard and Bonde 2011).

On the Internet all dikes are broken down. People write things that no one will stand by and the raw attacks are left undisputed (Arnfred et al. 2011).

Both of the two angles above concern the way that people talk about foreigners and thus "multiculturalism". Therefore, this debate is also relevant when looking at how multiculturalism, as well as lived multiculturalism, is talked about in the Danish debate after 22/7. It is clear, when looking at both the debate surrounding the DPP and when looking at the debate concerning Internet language that there is a division between those who favour a harsh, unrestricted debate and those who favour a free but constrained debate that does not offend, generalise and exclude.

#### 2.4 The Danish Peoples' Party on the Breivik case

Apart from their dominant role in the tone of the debate, the DPP, the fourth theme, was particularly visible throughout the media coverage of the Breivik case, both not only directly through its members and associates but also indirectly when people referred to them. Blame on the DPP for contributing with debate and policies to an environment that facilitates the grounds for the generation of extremists activities turned the party into an agent in the conflict, which produced many responses from the party.

However, the focus somewhat diverted away from the party itself when DPP sympathiser Sørine Gotfredsen contributed to the debate with her feature article "Let us use Breivik the right way" (Gotfredsen 2011). Whereas the DPP was accused of being somehow linked ideologically to Breivik without having publicised any such views after Breivik's actions itself, Gotfredsen did in fact express in her article a sort of understanding for Breivik's actions. In the following, we will go into more detail with the views of Sørine Gotfredsen, which was by far the most dominant theme in the 100 days of coverage.

Gotfredsen framed Breivik differently than almost any other debater in the bulk of articles we analysed, and she stood out with a controversial approach, which was met by a massive opposition. Her principal argument was that we must understand that Breivik acted the way he did in frustration over the political system in which he felt his world was threatened because of immigration, which was not addressed because those who favour the multicultural society simply opted for more broadness. According to her, this is what drove Breivik to commit the terrorist actions, or to "resort to direct means" (Gotfredsen 2011) as she expressed it to avoid talking about the violence of his actions.

The difference between Gotfredsen and the members of the DPP – represented primarily by Pia Kjærsgaard, Søren Krarup and Søren Espersen – is that Gotfredsen believed that Breivik should not just be written off as a mentally disturbed man, but that instead it was important to understand that he was not alone with his extreme views (Bonde 2011).

When Pia Kjærsgaard assured that she disagreed with Gotfredsen, she did not say that she disagreed with her standpoints,

rather she said that you should not "start examining his sick brain" (Bonde 2011). Thus, Pia K maintained the DPP's view that Breivik was an isolated psychopath, while Gotfredsen addressed Breivik's ideology and the view that there was more of his kind to be found. This exemplified the DPP's reluctance to deal with the subjects of Breivik's possible ideological peers, and although Gotfredsen agreed with the DPP's ideological views, she appeared to disagree with their view on Breivik. The writer Christian Braad Thomsen described Gotfredsen's feature article as courageous "because the circle around the Danish People's Party finally owns up to its fundamental agreement with Anders Behring Breivik's view of humanity and society" (Thomsen 2011).

The feature article functioned as a critique of multiculturalists and the multicultural society, which she viewed as "a dangerous utopia" and "a dangerous fantasy that can incite horrific powers" and she argued that we must "understand the danger of the multicultural". Thus, she clearly framed the multicultural society as dangerous, whereas other debaters focused on Breivik and his ideology as being dangerous.

In Gotfredsen's representation, multiculturalism in Denmark seems to be synonymous with Muslim presence, and that Muslim immigration is in fact the biggest obstacle to peace, because of the culture clash the Muslim presence in a Christian culture entails. Gotfredsen (herself a priest) framed the multicultural society as one in which Islam and Christianity clashed. One of the framing tools that Gotfredsen used in her feature article (Gotfredsen 2011) is "historical examples from which lessons are drawn" (van Gorp 2010: 91). For example, she argued that

We cannot comprehend the present circumstances unless we take both history and human nature into consideration because history tells us that Islamic and Christian culture have always proved incredibly difficult to coexist in peace, and if you look back on the Danish debate, since the beginning of the 80s, a part of the warning against the multicultural society has contained an admonition of what went ahead. When Søren Krarup criticized the immigration and the immigration law from 1983, his concern was inextricably linked with the evidence of history about the massive problems that arise when Christian and Islamic views of human nature and society try to co-exist. The conflict runs like a red thread from the time of the Crusades around the year 1100, to the battles between the Ottoman Empire and Western Europe, the disputes in the Balkan, and today ghettoization and parallel societies in large parts of Europe.

In this manner, Gotfredsen used history to support her viewpoint that Danes as Christians cannot live peacefully together with Muslims. Basically, Gotfredsen expressed the same views as Breivik expressed in his compendium.

Gotfredsen focused on the clash between Muslim culture and Christian culture, and this became a symbol for the multicultural society. Several other debaters shared this view that foreigners have to adapt to the Danish Christian society. For example, the Danish priest and politician, Michael Fagerlund said:

Over time, a perception of Denmark as a camping ground, where anyone can settle down, has emerged. We must have an open society with room for other cultures, but if we are to avoid unfortunate consequences, it has to be in respect of the Christian cultural heritage, which is the culture that bears our society. (Kristeligt Dagblad 4/8/2011)

DPP member Mogens Camre wrote, “It is not immediately obvious that old, well-functioning countries with a Christian culture have to open up for a population surplus from the failed nations of the Muslim world” (Jyllands Posten 29/7/2011), and Kim Møller (creator of the radical-right website Uriasposten) said: “The islamists in a multicultural society will suppress the Christians” (B.T. 6/8/2011). Thus, although most Danes are extremely secular in their everyday lives and only use their Christianity on traditional occasions and a few holidays, these debaters used Christianity as the single most important argument as to why Muslims would not fit into Danish culture. They acted as if it was all a matter of religion, rather than an issue of new racism and the presence of foreign cultures and bodies in Europe.

## 2.5 Multiculturalism

After Gotfredsen’s article was brought, a debate about “multiculturalism” set off, which is the fifth theme. In this debate, the previous themes “the tone of the debate”, “the DPP” and “Sørine Gotfredsen” were all represented. The word multiculturalism was mentioned often throughout the articles analysed, but in the beginning only objectively as a reference to Breivik’s views. Because Gotfredsen put the debate about multiculturalism on the agenda, it is inevitable that this section, to a large extent, also centers around her article.

On July 30, Gotfredsen’s article was printed in *Berlingske*. This was the first article where the subject of multiculturalism was thoroughly discussed, despite the fact that it had been mentioned almost a hundred times throughout the articles preceding hers. Apart from the examples discussed previously, Gotfredsen also referred to European leaders’ denouncement of multiculturalism as a legitimisation of why multiculturalism is a failure (Gotfredsen 2011). And she was not the only one to refer to the European leaders’ denouncement of multiculturalism. Kasper Støvring wrote that they denounced it because “multiculturalism leads to division, mistrust, and in some cases to chaotic conditions” (Støvring 2011). Ralf Pittelkow also argued against multiculturalism and said that “it is not exactly a coincidence that the leaders of the EU’s three largest countries have called the multicultural model a failure” (Pittelkow 2011). Again, in an editorial in *Jyllands Posten*, the editor referred to multiculturalism saying: “it is an ongoing legitimate viewpoint to be sceptical to the transformation of Western Europe, including Denmark, into a multicultural society. After all, this viewpoint is shared by the heads of government in Europe’s three largest countries” (Jyllands Posten, editorial 7/8/2011).

Thus, it seems that when debating multiculturalism, European Leaders’ denouncement of multiculturalism was one of the favorite arguments of proof of its failure. Another example can be found in *Politiken*, where Pia Kjærsgaard wrote, “If you do not accept the multicultural society, or if you try to work against it, you are automatically scorched. In fact, you are not allowed to criticize it at all” (Kjærsgaard 2011). These examples, and many more, showed that many people used 22/7 as a platform from which they could criticise multiculturalism, which is often used as a synonym for Muslim presence, and where people react to the presence of Muslims in Denmark rather than diversity in general.

The proponents of multiculturalism were mostly represented in articles that were written as reactions to Gotfredsen’s feature article. For example, Christian Braad Thomsen wrote in *Berlingske* that “Denmark has always been a multicultural society. It did not emerge with our time’s peaceful Muslim immigration, but with the violent

introduction to Christianity about 1000 years ago”. He also wrote “the Christians of the Danish People’s Party are not familiar with this multicultural richness because their home-country paranoia prevents them from opening their eyes to the great and wonderful world we live in” (Thomsen 2011). Also, in *Kristeligt Dagblad*, the Dean of the Cathedral Anders Gadegaard was quoted for saying “to argument the way she does can be compared to legitimising the Nazi’s view on the Jews in the 1930s. The Nazis portrayed Jews as a threat to the German unity culture and that is exactly what she is doing when she points out multiculturalism as a threat to a Danish or Norwegian unity culture” (Gehlert and Vincents 2011). Thus, the proponents of multiculturalism reacted to Gotfredsen’s claim that multiculturalism (and Islam) is a threat to Danish culture and society.

In between the two positions above were also several commentators who argued that people have the right to discuss multiculturalism in different terms, and that most do not resort to violence like Breivik (Jyllands Posten 26/7/2011; *Kristeligt Dagblad*, editorial 10/8/2011).

Moreover, the above shows that Breivik had really made people discuss multiculturalism. This did not go unnoticed by debaters. In a letter in *Berlingske* member of the Socialist People’s Party, Ida Auken, commenting on Gotfredsen’s article, wrote:

The problem is that she lets Anders Breivik channel the debate exactly in the direction that he wants: ‘to understand the danger of the multicultural’ and ‘multiculturalism’ must of course be discussed, but not in connection with Breivik. Because this is exactly what he wanted (Auken 2011).

And the commentators were right, through the debate that Gotfredsen initiated, the Danish media started discussing multiculturalism like never before.

## 3 Conclusions

Although the Danish news coverage is dealing with the issue of 22/7, our analysis leads us to conclude that beneath the surface lies the same opinions and values as you will find from the same people in any other debate, for instance, the Muhammad Cartoon Affair (Hervik 2011, 2012). Accordingly, the articles are not really analysing the historical event “22/7”. They are better understood as competing stories about the meaning of 22/7, which are informed by larger discourses and positions in Danish news coverage, in particular the right-left division according to values (see Meret 2010). This could also be the reason that in Denmark, the Breivik case develops more into a kind of entrenched warfare between positions. The news coverage does not pursue a dialogue and calls for change, for instance, in the tone of the debate. In these stories, surprisingly perhaps, the tone of the debate in the Norwegian news media is never raised. In 2002 and 2003, Norway witnessed a new height of tough confrontational language and entrenched positions well documented by Marianne Gullestad, who on a personal moment noted that during this debate she felt an “unarticulated resistance” that she had never met before (2006, see also 2002).

The different actors in the Danish news media coverage had each their own interpretation of what the problem was. Everyone seemed to agree that Breivik’s actions were wrong, and no one openly wanted to support his ideological standpoint. But who is represented as the “real” enemy that sees Breivik either as a pathological exception, a symbol, or a symptom of some larger process? What are the facilitating circumstances leading to mass murder?

One of the reactions to the 22/7 event is to pathologise Breivik himself that is to turn him into a mentally ill person, or a lone wolf. This reaction does not derive from any analysis of what is known about Breivik but constitutes both a speculation and serve as a rhetoric device to Breivik and 22/7 into an exception or even an accident. If Breivik is mentally ill, history is taken away from him. Attention is diverted away from his basic opinions, which are in fact shared by many people on the far right.

The right-wingers viewed the enemy to be “the multiculturalists” and Islam. For example, Gotfredsen indicated that in her view, the ones to blame were “the entire well-behaved wing” (meaning the left wing) or “the multicultural supporters” (Gotfredsen 2011). More specifically, she hypothesised that people like Marianne Jelved, Svend Auken, Margrethe Vestager, Carsten Jensen and the late Tøger Seidenfaden who were all proponents of the multicultural society animated Breivik. Thus, in her view, people like these were the reason why Breivik, an extremist right-winger, committed his acts of terror. Similarly, other right-wing debaters singled out the newspaper *Politiken* as the “enemy”.

It seems that right-wingers viewed the problem as two-pronged. On the one hand, it was a problem that left-wingers allowed too much immigration into the country, which created tensions and clashes of culture. On the other hand, despite the fact that they denied the tone of the debate to have any significance, the problem in their view was also that the debate was too restricted in that it suppressed radical views, and they believed it needed to be more open, which could, e.g. be achieved by repealing the racism paragraph. Thus, both of these problems were viewed as having been created by “the politically correct elite” constituted by left-wingers and *Politiken* and thus a break with their practices would solve the problem.

Left-wingers, on the other hand, viewed right-wingers as the problem, or the “enemy”. Especially, the DPP and Gotfredsen were singled out in this accusation. As previously discussed, they believed that the tone of the debate animated Breivik and that this should be changed in order to prevent future “Breiviks”. Thus, the primary problem, in their view, was that the ideas of the political right were becoming too powerful and they inspired people like Breivik. This problem, they believed, was created by the DPP in particular, and the solution was a break with the xenophobic and Islamophobic discourse of the radical right-wing, which could only be achieved if people like the DPP agreed to tone down their rhetoric.

Even though multiculturalism is attacked, the concept is opaque and blurred, but nevertheless reveals the presence of an anxiety and frustration on the right that in radical language sees political opponents as both “cowards” and “traitors”, since they let “too many immigrants” into the country and the wrong kind (non-Westerners and Muslims) (Boe and Hervik 2008).

The 22/7 attacks and their coverage in Danish news media should, we argue, be viewed in connection within the “multiculturalism

backlash”. Events such as the 2001 spring riots in England, 9/11 in New York and Washington, DC, the Madrid bombings, the London bombings and the Muhammad cartoon controversy have particularly contributed to the increasing media discussion about the potential dangers of multiculturalism and “the M word” has become a negative word. Especially the London bombings raised concern about homegrown terrorism as a result of allowing Muslims to practice their own culture instead of adopting the national culture and it was feared that multiculturalism provided a haven for terrorists due to the alleged segregation that multiculturalism entails (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010).

It is out of this discursive environment that Breivik decided that he needed to act as a soldier at war – for ethical reasons as Faisal Devji suggested. His views are heavily anti-Islamic and anti-multiculturalists and thus completely in line with the multiculturalist backlash that has developed in recent years. Although Breivik conducted the attacks alone and finds few open sympathisers for his violent actions, it is pivotal to view his actions in this broader perspective. The initial reactions to the attacks too resembled this discursive climate. Even when Breivik’s motivations were unknown immediately after the attacks, Muslims were the center of attention. Except then, they were held responsible for executing the attacks. When the public found out Breivik’s motivations for the attacks, Muslims were again the center of attention, because they were after all in this thinking still the “real” reason for his attacks.

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