

## CHAPTER 12

# Framing Perfect Victims: The February 2015 Copenhagen Shootings in Danish Newspapers

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*In this chapter, I examine Danish newspapers' constructions of ideal victims, using compassion and morality as vehicles for involving readers in dealing with a terror attack on Danish soil. I argue that this is done through personalization, and a strong focus on the identities of the deceased, as well as through the voices of journalists and politicians who express compassion. The analysis shows how the identities of the two victims from the February 2015 Copenhagen shootings are constructed within several, sometimes conflicting, media frames. The two victims undergo a reconstruction over time. Different Danish newspapers position themselves through specific framing of the two deceased, who were not known to the public before they died, but became high profile victims post mortem. I argue that the framings of the two are similar in the sense that they both draw on conventional depictions of victims. However, differences emerge when the representations of the victims are influenced by a ten year old Danish cartoon controversy. This controversy is believed by some to provoke potential terrorists to carry out terror attacks in Denmark.*

**Keywords:** terrorism, framing, national identities, constructivism, victimisation

## Introduction

In December 2015 the Danish newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* elected Dan Uzan as Dane of the Year. In October 2015 the French state honored him with the medal of honor “Medaille de Courage”, while another Dane, Finn Nørgaard,

was awarded the French Order "Arts et Lettres". In May 2016, both men received a newly founded honorary award from the Danish Parliament for "dying while demonstrating extraordinary heroism". They were also awarded a memorial plaque on a pillar in the hall inside Christiansborg, where the Danish Parliament resides. Both men were killed by attacker Omar Abdel Hamid El-Hussein in what is officially labelled as a terror attack in Denmark and referred to as "the February 2015 Copenhagen shootings".

The attack on 55 year old Finn Nørgaard happened on the afternoon of 14 February 2015, when he was shot and killed. He was a photographer, film producer and director, though not widely known in Danish society. He was shot outside the local hall Krudttønden in Copenhagen where he took part in a public debate about freedom of speech. It seems that Omar El-Hussein had planned to attack the participants of this event inside the center. The course of events that led to Finn Nørgaard's death have not been fully documented, but it is believed that he left the room before or during the moment when Omar El-Hussein was shooting through the windows of the building. On the street, Finn Nørgaard was shot while attempting to overpower Omar. Several policemen were wounded as Omar El-Hussein escaped from the scene. This attack at Krudttønden, the killing of Finn Nørgaard, and the wounding of several policemen were characterized by the Danish Prime Minister at the time, Helle Thorning-Smidt, and the police of Copenhagen, as an act of terror, and an intense hunt for the presumed terrorist began.

Dan Uzan, a 37 year old Jewish man, was shot at 1am by Omar El-Hussein on 15 February, just a few hours after Finn Nørgaard was killed. As he had done many nights before, Dan Uzan was guarding the Copenhagen synagogue and the appurtenant reception rooms as a volunteer. At the time of his shooting, a party of approximately 100 people were celebrating the bar mitzvah of a young girl in the buildings. Dan Uzan was guarding the entrance of the synagogue, unarmed, accompanied only by two policemen. The two policemen were also wounded in the attack.

Neither victim was known to the public before the attack, but the post-mortem news coverage of them quickly made them public figures. In this chapter, I deal with some of the reasons why this happened, in order to understand how the narratives about them played a key role in the media's agenda after the incident, the first on Danish soil with a fatal outcome since the 1980s.

I am inspired by the notion of the ideal victim (Greer, 2004; Hakala, 2012; Sumiala, 2013; van Dijk, 2009), the tendency to a certain framing of victims related to spectacular events (van Dijk, 2009), and the idea that victims undergo a process of construction following media logic, a “mediatization of the victim” (Hakala, 2012, p. 273). There seems to be a need in the media for explicit stories that are personalized in post-violent and dramatic events (Hakala, 2012, p. 273).

The aim of the chapter is to show the attempts to construct the two deceased as coherent subjects, and to demonstrate how some of the newspapers idealize the two in distinct ways. I will also investigate the parallels as well as the differences in the ways the national papers impose grief following the loss of the men, since the coverage was not that consensual or integrative. I argue also that some of the frames that I identify in this case can be traced back to a significant controversy in Danish newspapers years before the incident took place. Finally, I present the mutual relations between the mediated frames and the agendas of leading politicians, and argue that the coverage and the identified frames serve both editorial and political purposes.

In order to understand some of the mediated frames in this study I need to present a brief introduction to a settled dispute in Danish media. In 2005, the editor of the newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* chose to print a number of cartoons that depicted the prophet Muhammed. The aim was to raise a debate as to whether Danish media self-censored or if they dared to criticize Islam. Since the beginning of what is known as *the cartoon crisis* or *cartoon controversy* the newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* has asserted that Danes and Danish media suppress criticism of Islam, and that they thereby suppress freedom of speech. Ever since, there has been an ongoing uncompromising national public debate on the value of freedom of speech versus tolerance towards multiple religious stances. Hjarvard (2006) argues that there is a close relationship between “news” and “views” in Danish media and that the mediated debate has a political character. The binary idea of the need to prioritize between the two principles dominates Danish media.

The cartoon crisis is believed to be a major reason why Danish society has been a target for terrorists for many years. Lars Vilks, who was supposed to speak at Krudttønden when Finn Nørgaard was killed, has been an advocate for the right to depict the Muhammed cartoons in order to pay tribute to freedom of speech.

In the analysis I argue that the constructions of the personalities and identities of the two deceased men from the Copenhagen shootings aim to mobilize the audience and to engage them morally, based on the assumption that the audience engages in identifiable narratives that attempt to create empathy. The mediation of death, not least in this case, is a question of “politicization” (Christensen & Sandvik, 2014). As I will show, leading Danish politicians actually engaged in straightforward debates on the ways that the deceased are represented. Scholars stress that the media’s practices for accentuating questions of emotion in relation to people’s deaths, disastrous events and the like, can have both social and political aspects. Sentiments might serve a specific purpose: “Briefly put, without emotion there is no commitment or ethical action” (Pantti, Wahl-Jorgensen, & Cottle, 2012, p. 62). One aim of applying emotions in news coverage in a disastrous situation like a terror attack is to encourage the audience to take appropriate action and acknowledge moral obligations (Pantti et al., 2012, p. 77).

## Case

The February 2015 Copenhagen shootings can be defined as a high-profile tragedy (Walter, 2008, p. 245), and in such a case the victims and deceased often happen to be represented by idealized imagery (Sumiala, 2014, p. 100; van Dijk, 2009). This study deals with the construction of identities of the deceased who had not been known to the public before their deaths, but become “victims of dramatic violent actions” (Sumiala, 2014, p. 91). Their deaths can be labelled as the death of ordinary people dying under extraordinary circumstances (Kitch, 2000; Thomas, 2008), which in some specific cases are grieved and mourned in the media (Sumiala, 2014, p. 91). Humans can be victims in different ways, either as deceased, injured, eyewitnesses, bereaved (Hakala, 2012, p. 259) or survivors (van Dijk, 2009). In this case, I deal with constructions of deceased victims.

The media texts analyzed display a growing tendency to focus on the stories of ordinary people (Coward, 2013) as well as the media’s interest in “high profile victims” (van Dijk, 2009). Though the two men were not known to the public before they died, I will argue that they became celebrities afterwards (Kitch, 2000).

Because the February 2015 Copenhagen shootings are officially labelled as a terrorist attack, it can also be discussed whether the framing of Finn Nørgaard and Dan Uzan is to be analyzed as if the attacks were disastrous events, terror, crime or a combination (Greer, 2004; Linenthal, 2001; Pantti, 2009). A frame analysis of the ways the identities of the two men are constructed can contribute to shedding light on the ways that the media make sense of the societal impact of a terrorist attack.

## Sample

I choose to analyze five Danish printed newspapers, both broadsheets and tabloids. *Berlingske Tidende*, *Politiken* and *Jyllands-Posten* are broadsheets, whereas *BT* and *Ekstra Bladet* can be characterized as tabloids. The reason why I choose texts from the printed media and not news from the web, is that I expect more narrative accounts of the two deceased in print. News from the web is to a larger extent characterized by breaking news. I choose both broadsheets and tabloids, since some argue that a focus on emotions divides tabloid journalism from quality journalism (Pantti et al., 2012, p. 64).

I have searched the Danish media database *Infomedia* for texts with the two men's names from the days they were each killed, on 14 and 15 February respectively, until 4 April 2015. 173 texts had Finn Nørgaard's name in them, and 188 texts featured Dan Uzan's name. In addition, media texts from 1 December 2015 to the end of March 2016 are part of the coverage. Here 130 texts featured Finn Nørgaard's name, and 122 had Dan's name as part of the content.<sup>1</sup>

The choice of these periods represents the idea that mourning post disaster is not a defined process with a closure. Rituals related to death and loss are repeated in a cyclical way in society in general, and ceremonial news coverage is often related to anniversaries of disastrous events (Sumiala, 2014, p. 104). This is why media analysis of events, like the one studied here, benefits from the involvement of samples that follow up in cycles. Scholars argue that the traditional tendency of media coverage to fade out after a period, in some cases, is replaced by a "renaissance of rituals" (Walter, 2008, pp. 246–247), also pointed out by Kalvig (2014).

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<sup>1</sup> There are a number of doublets in both samples since the names of both men appear in parts of the texts.

## Constructions of coherent subjects

In this first part of the analysis, I will identify traits from the mediated framing (Entman, 1993; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) of the two men in order to detect the possible power of the media texts (Entman 1993). In this analysis, frames can be understood as a central organizing idea, sets of discourses and packages of sense, though not in a straight and unequivocal way, since ambivalence is expected to occur (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). The analysis will cover both specific textual and visual elements (Vreese, 2005). In addition, I will examine if the characteristics and constructions of the identities of the two deceased occur in defined frames. An additional point made by Vreese (2005) is that certain newspapers sponsor different frames, meaning that they include and exclude differently. Framing is, among other things, a question of what is being included and what is excluded.

Often, journalists present *a core plot*, which has the characteristics of a tale that the audience is somehow familiar with even though new details appear (Kitch, 2003, p. 180). When celebrities die the media describe the deceased, so we get to know the story of the person who has been lost, in some cases not only lost to the bereaved but to society in general. Kitch argues that, “When such an icon dies, then, something dies in ‘us’, and news coverage moves out of the realm of obituary and into that of tragedy” (Kitch, 2000, p. 185). This remark is highly applicable in the case of mourning the two men. Framing is a dynamic process, Vreese (2005) argues, and this is a particular characteristic in this case. I attempt to present this ongoing process and the dynamics of the framing.

### Dan Uzan

The course of events that led to Dan’s death is described as a fatal attempt to obstruct Omar’s plan to attack the synagogue. By his death Dan saved a number of other people from dying (*BT* 19.02.15); his death prevented a catastrophe (*BT* 16.02.15); “Dan Uzan gave his life for others” (*Berlingske Tidende* 16.02.15); and, “The location of him and the two policemen prevented an even worse situation than Dan’s death and the wounding of the two policemen” (*Jyllands-Posten* 16.02.15). This leads to a headline in *BT*: “Buried as a Hero” (*BT* 19.02.15), and a headline in *Berlingske Tidende*: “Goodbye to an Everyday Hero” (*Berlingske Tidende* 19.02.15). A consensual frame of heroism (Goldstein & Tye, 2006) runs through the media texts.

Hakala's (2012) point about the ideal victim as vulnerable and innocent is even more accentuated by Van Dijk, who argues that attempts are made by the media to frame high profile victims as having a sacrificial nature (2009, p. 4), since societies respond with sympathy to passive suffering. In the descriptions of the way Dan lived, and especially how he died, we get hints of the shadow of Christ: a victim of evil, unarmed, dying for others (van Dijk, 2009). Dan is a hero, a non-violent, self-sacrificing one. In the initial period after the attacks, the framing of Dan is that of the 'martyr with appropriate values', to paraphrase Sumiala (2014, p. 100). Not least the broadsheet newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* holds on to this distinct core plot of Dan, who sacrificed himself in order to save the Jewish community, and thereby the Danish community. In addition, the loss of Dan Uzan is to some extent the loss of a child, at least he is constructed as a proxy variable for a child, since children represent symbolic innocence (Moeller, 2002). This is emphasized through the media's extensive interest in his father's mourning (*Berlingske Tidende* 21.03.15, *BT* 21.03.15, *Jyllands-Posten* 15.03.15).

One question differentiates the texts: Did Dan Uzan belong to the small Jewish community or the broad Danish community – or both – after his death? A member of the Jewish community states that "he took the bullets" for the community (*Jyllands-Posten* 19.02.15). The newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*, which covers Dan's death with the most pathos, states: "The death of Dan Uzan has become all of Denmark's story" (*Berlingske Tidende* 25.02.15). This could be interpreted as if *Berlingske Tidende* wishes to state that Dan *took the bullets for Denmark*. An acquaintance of Dan from outside the Jewish community is cited as saying that Dan "also had friends 'on the other side' and that his appearance was never characterized by religion" (*Jyllands-Posten* 16.02.15).

Dan was "an angel", his father states after his death, Dan held the vision that "evil could only be defeated by kindness" (*Berlingske Tidende*, 21.03.15). He was "tolerant", "unprejudiced", and "caring towards all people", something that is repeatedly illustrated by the narrative of him playing basketball with people of all kinds of religious backgrounds (*Ekstra Bladet* 16.02.15, *Ekstra Bladet* 18.02.15).

The framing of Dan as a sacrificing, non-violent hero, is one of the two frames that stick to Dan in the weeks after his death. This is a strong storyline that "resonates with larger cultural themes" (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, p. 5) like the one of the sacrifice of Christ. In addition, the media's constructions of

his identity are linked to one of the dominant Danish media frames with an origin in the cartoon crisis: the frame that appeals to avoiding potential demonization of Muslims (Berg & Hervik, 2007). No severe attempts to demonize can be identified in the printed media following the attacks in Copenhagen, but the underlying message, particularly of *Berlingske Tidende's* framing of Dan, is that the attack should not be handled with revenge and further escalation of a cultural and religious conflict. Dan Uzan is constructed as a protagonist for this message.

## Finn Nørgaard

The attempts to frame the other victim, Finn Nørgaard, contain elements of a core plot (Kitch, 2000) but not as consistently as in the case of Dan. In some media texts, Finn is described as “unprejudiced” and “openhearted” like Dan (*Berlingske Tidende* 16.02.15). He was “a spokesperson for tolerance and intercultural understanding” (*Berlingske Tidende* 16.02.17), “very fond of children and young people” and had an “especially strong interest in the conditions and constraints of the marginalized” (*BT* 24.02.15). He wished to “bring about understanding between people across cultural differences” and envisaged “how inclusion of the marginalized can take place” (*Ekstra Bladet* 23.02.15, *Politiken* 25.02.15). He was a “brave person”, always “able to see the best in people despite their religious and ethnic backgrounds” (*Jyllands-Posten* 25.02.15). If one only takes these accounts into consideration, it could be argued that Finn is framed just like Dan: As an opponent to the further demonization of Muslims, in light of the 10 year ongoing Danish debate about tolerance towards religion and culture (Berg & Hervik, 2007). However, the framing of Finn is more political than the framing of Dan. In the quotes in this paragraph, it seems as if Finn had the “do not demonize agenda”, not only in his private life but professionally as well, since he produced films that deal with questions of inclusion. This means that he was less *innocent* than Dan (Moeller, 2002), since he took a more overt stance concerning questions of tolerance, inclusion, and integration, according to these texts.

The ambiguity in the efforts to construct Finn as a coherent subject relates first and foremost to the fact that Finn was participating in a public debate about freedom of speech in the local hall at the time he was shot. The competing media frames from the cartoon crisis is one reason why the

constructions of Finn as a coherent subject seem to vary more, and his appearance as an individual depends on the newspaper and the editorial line of the newspaper. Among the Danish papers, *Jyllands-Posten* has a special interest in Finn Nørgaard's preoccupation with the question of freedom of speech. This question has been much debated in Denmark since the beginning of the cartoon controversy, which was initiated by the same paper (Berg & Hervik, 2007). Therefore it is notable that *Jyllands-Posten's* constructions of Finn's identity are significantly different from the other papers in the first period of time following his death. In an obituary, the newspaper positions him as if he tried to conceal the fact that he was much engaged in this debate "since he was discreet by nature, this was only something he discussed with a few of his friends until the attack at Charlie Hebdo" (*Jyllands-Posten* 16.02.15). The characterization of Finn Nørgaard as an opponent of Islam is enhanced by *Jyllands-Posten*. This paper argues that people like him are suppressed in Danish public debate. This is why *Jyllands-Posten* appreciates his engagement in this delicate question.

But parallel to his participation in the arena discussing the suppression of freedom of speech, his involvement in producing documentaries about the integration of ethnic minorities into Danish society is applied to construct him as a proponent of tolerance, as well as a defender of the freedom to demonize Muslims (*Politiken* 16.02.15). Since the cartoon crisis, the two stances have been incompatible in Danish public debate and as media frames. Tolerance and freedom of speech are binary opposites.

This makes it difficult for some papers to position Finn Nørgaard in the same martyr role (Moeller, 2002) as Dan Uzan. It takes *innocence* to be framed as a passive suffering victim (van Dijk, 2009), and in a Danish context, it is not innocent to participate in public debate while holding on to the argument that freedom of speech is unquestionable.

At the same time, *Jyllands-Posten* contributes to the framing of Finn Nørgaard as an ideal victim. That the framing of him is complex, and that his *core* is difficult to detect and agree upon, can be recognized in a column in the same newspaper (*Jyllands-Posten* 28.02.15) where a right wing debater pays him tribute: "[He] got shot for one single reason: because he was unusually brave. This came as a big surprise to me. We are not familiar with middle-aged men from the creative class who suddenly act heroically." The fact that he, in the eyes of the debater, does not act as a stereotypical left-wing artist, who

ought to be a fleeing pacifist hiding when trouble occurs, makes him an ultimate hero.

When the newspapers apply frames in order to construct the identity of the deceased, strong attempts are made to leave a specific impression in the reader's mind (Moeller, 2002). However, in the case of Finn Nørgaard the initial phase does not lead to a consensual narrative, and the core plot becomes blurred. The narratives of Finn Nørgaard are ambiguous both within *Jyllands-Posten* and in comparing *Jyllands-Posten* with other newspapers following right after the attack. In the first phase, two competing and opposing frames in Danish media – avoiding the demonization of Muslims, versus protecting freedom of speech – are applied, in order to characterize Finn Nørgaard. Competing attempts are made to frame him within two of the most binary, conflicting frames in Danish media: The frame that urges not to demonize versus the frame of freedom of speech.

But there is still one struggle left regarding the framing of Finn Nørgaard. In the first days after the shootings, there is no overview of the course of events, and hence no explanation for why Finn Nørgaard faced attacker Omar El-Hussein on the street. It takes days before it is stated in witness testimonials that Finn made an active attempt to defeat the armed terrorist (*Berlingske Tidende* 20.02.15, *Ekstra Bladet* 20.02.15), and it is only from the disclosure of these statements that the idealization of Finn becomes significant. From that point, he is described as “courageous” and “righteous” (*BT* 20.02.15). The testimonials strengthen the narrative of Finn as a hero: “He refused to hide when he faced injustice, and so he ran straight towards the attacker to overpower him, and though he was shot to death, he prevented a massacre” (*BT* 25.02.15). After the details about Finn Nørgaard's death are established, they begin to influence the characterizations of him: “He was a hero and he died as a hero” (*Ekstra Bladet* 25.02.15).

The media construct “idealized identities” (Sumiala, 2014) concerning the deaths of both Dan Uzan and Finn Nørgaard, and the courage and sacrifice of both men become dominant in the narratives for a period of some months after they die. But it takes time before the frames containing the narrative that both men suffered passively through their sacrificial nature (van Dijk, 2009), and the constructions of their heroism in a Christian sacrificial manner, become an inseparable part of the discourses of the two (Goldstein & Tye, 2006).

A striking feature in this analysis is the absence of attempts to construct the identities of the two men in the broadsheet newspaper *Politiken*. Since the beginning of the cartoon crisis, the paper has taken a significant position in this controversy. *Politiken* has advocated for the do not demonize frame (Berg & Hervik, 2007). In the coverage of the February 2015 Copenhagen shootings, the paper refrains from covering the mourning of the two to the same extent as the other papers. It seems as if it avoids any involvement in emotionally loaded coverage. Both the wording of texts and choice of pictures are characterized by a remarkable absence of constructing the identities of the deceased.

## Mediated compulsory grief as sanctioned by the state

I will now first analyze the mediated grieving over the two men. Then I will examine how leading Danish politicians adapt the narratives of the deceased, and continue to use the frames provided by the media in relation to their own agendas. There is a significant general interplay and tacit agreement between the media and leading Danish politicians to mourn the two in the first period of time after the attacks, though the mediated frames differed as shown above.

In the case of high-profile tragedies, the media often engage in thorough descriptions of the grief of the bereaved (Chouliaraki, 2008; Walter, Littlewood, & Pickering, 1995). Mediated narratives are often bound up with emotions, (Pantti et al., 2012, p. 78), and there can be political reasons for emotionally loaded media coverage, since emotions of grief reinforce solidarity.

Media texts that cover memorial ceremonies and funerals as news, are especially “infused with emotions” (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013). Particularly through the use of pictures, the media attempt to display what Turner defines as “social drama” (see Simonsen, 2015a, 2015b). The death of two innocent victims is such a tragic event. Because grief seems so obvious, the media often find it unnecessary to quote sources or write directly about the drama in parts of the coverage. Instead, the assumption can be read indirectly in pictures (Sumiala, 2014; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013, p. 135). This is characteristic of this case as well, where pictures from the funerals, commemorations, and spontaneous shrines in front of the sites of the attacks play a dominant role in the coverage of the attacks.

Mourning the deceased is to a large extent displayed in pictures. Shrines from both crime scenes play an important role (Simonsen, 2015a, 2015b), and pictures of mourning people, both bereaved and people who are moved though they did not know the deceased, are numerous. Particularly displayed are pictures of the Danish crown prince and leading politicians from all political parties in the parliament participating at memorial ceremonies and the two funerals. There are a number of visual representations of the head of the opposition at the time, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, who grieves, though the prime minister at the time of the attack, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, is given the most attention, and a number of pictures of her looking devastated and crying at the two funerals are displayed on several of the newspapers' front pages (*BT* 19.02.15, *Jyllands-Posten* 19.02.15, *Berlingske Tidende* 19.02.15). Not only depictions of the grieving bereaved, but also of many official Danish representatives and leading politicians from different parties can be said to support the idea of grief "sanctioned by the state" (Walter, 2008, p. 242). Quotes from the official representatives about their grief can be found, although it is the visuals that dominate.

Before the shootings, the Danish Prime Minister in 2015, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, was criticized for not showing her feelings and private side, which affected her image negatively – a critique that is also identified in cases of other female prime ministers (Fonn & Lindholm, 2015). In a Danish context, it can be argued that it was news in itself that the prime minister showed emotion. Kitch argues that "news of feelings" as well as "news of facts" is part of the media coverage (2000). A number of pictures showing Thorning-Schmidt crying at funerals and memorials are published (*Berlingske Tidende* 25.02.15, *Ekstra Bladet* 19.02.15, *BT* 25.02.15), and headlines such as "Thorning in Tears" (*BT* 19.02.15) are ways to frame leaders who express their emotions in crisis, also observed in other contexts (Simonsen, 2015b). It can be argued that Thorning-Schmidt, in the initial phase after the killings, becomes the protagonist (Wahl-Jørgensen, 2013) in the media's representations of the official grieving over the two deceased. Helle Thorning-Schmidt is cited as saying that "she was angry that Dan Uzan got killed" (*BT* 19.02.15), although a few days later she states in *Politiken* (21.02.15) that Dan's funeral changed her way of understanding this anger, and she left the funeral and the encounter with the Jewish community with another more positive perspective: "Upon my departure I had more positive thoughts, that we are able to handle this. The Jewish community is very strong [...] And Danish society is strong as well".

Even though Thorning-Schmidt appears to be a protagonist in the media's representations of official Danish grief, the newspapers also shed light on the reactions from other politicians, and especially the agreement of mourning the dead. The pictures represent an agreement that the situation calls for mourning. In addition, they convey the message that officials gather across everyday disagreements and conflicts of interest (*Berlingske Tidende* 25.02.15, *BT* 25.02.15, *Politiken* 17.02.15), since there is no political disagreement in the process of mourning the two men in this phase. For a moment it seems as if the political elite are gathered and united in their grief over the two: "Ritualization of death [...] has the potential to create a subjunctive universe, a shared social world of 'as if' or 'could be' around death" (Sumiala 2014, p. 92).

After a terror attack, audiences are "invited to feel for, and act upon, the suffering" (Pantti et al., 2012, p. 63). News coverage is to a large degree a question of morality (Kitch, 2000), and in this case there is morality embedded in the media's invitation to mourn the two. Politicians play a part in this, and the storytelling of the grief has a dimension of moral purpose, an element that aims to engage. And maybe it mobilizes an audience as well (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013, p. 137). Emotions in media coverage might have a political outcome: Social change might appear, not through traditional politics, but through frames as stepping stones to mobilization (Pantti et al., 2012, p. 162).

The dominant mediated narratives of the subjects Dan and Finn are constructed as a counter balance to the anger and blame that might occur post disaster. In the news media, anger never becomes the prevalent emotion following the Copenhagen shootings. This is done through constructing the identities of the two as idealized victims, who become an antithesis to the meaningless terror attack (Sumiala, 2014, p. 102). The framing of the men who lost their lives for *us*, is an occasion to mobilize the audience and invite them to engage in moral questions. Through the media's overall unity on this question, the attempts to mobilize the audience are so dominant that they become "compulsory" (Pantti et al., 2012, p. 126).

## A hierarchy of grief

The plots of the narratives of the two men are not identical, but attempts are made to give the two men an equal status, to unify them, and mourn them in the same way. *Politiken* states: "It appears as if they both, though in different

ways, seem to have made a courageous effort to stop the alleged terrorist” (*Politiken* 16.02.15). In *Berlingske Tidende*, a columnist writes that “the murder of Finn was a murder of conversation” while “the murder of Dan was a murder of humanity”, all in all it was the “murder of two good men” (*Berlingske Tidende* 01.03.15). It was due to their sacrificial natures, and the fact that they were in the wrong place at the wrong time that they were killed, even though it appears from the framing that they were killed for different reasons.

However, in this last part of the analysis, I will present the media’s subtle struggles to define whether one is more worthy of grief than the other. The contours of a hierarchy of grief begin to manifest themselves not long after the attacks. Accounts of the deceased construct a hierarchy of grief (Andersen, 2013; Butler, 2004; Chouliaraki, 2008), as victims who die in the same incidents seldom receive equal public interest (Cathrine Bell in Sumiala, 2014, p. 92). Distinctions are made for dead people as well as for the living, and distinctions are displayed in controversies over whether some people are more worthy of grief than others.

One argument is that the death of Dan Uzan should be mourned the most, due to the vulnerability of the Jews. In a letter to the editor of *Berlingske Tidende* it is stated:

If you stretch your tolerance, you might get a vague understanding of how the aggressors resort to violence to oppose the criticism of and satire on their religion, but it is impossible to comprehend why they, as a cynical appendix, had to cause an attack on Jewish institutions (*Berlingske Tidende* 17.02.15).

This perspective is also found in a column written in the same newspaper by former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen. Again, a differentiation is being made between the causes of the attacks on the two men. Ellemann-Jensen argues that the lesson to be learned from the shootings is that “we ought to guard our Jews more actively and demonstratively [...] without the Jews our country would be a poorer country” (*Berlingske Tidende* 17.02.15). These perspectives are strongly criticized in another comment which disapproves of Ellemann-Jensen, who

ignores [...] the second victim [...] who is not mentioned as one of the citizens that Denmark has to protect [...] Ellemann-Jensen flirts with risky logic, when he attributes to one victim more right to protection than the other [...]. Two men were killed in Copenhagen this weekend. Both were in need of protection (*Berlingske Tidende* 19.02.15).

Even though a partial consensus is temporarily reached in the mediated frames of the two, and despite the fact that the plots of the narratives about the two and how they were killed is framed within a discourse of heroism in a self-sacrificial way, dissent continues. In December 2015, a very overt controversy over who to mourn the most, breaks out. Whereas the first debate seemed subtle, this is not the case in the debate that occurs later.

*Berlingske Tidende* is the paper that frames Dan Uzan most intensively, not only following the weeks and months after his death. In December 2015, the newspaper proclaims Dan to be “Dane of the Year”, an award that is given to a person who “has made a crucial difference for other people”. He receives this award after his death since “he has paid the highest price possible in order to safeguard other people’s lives. And because he literally did guard freedom of religion”. The chief editor states in his tribute to Dan Uzan: “He saved other people’s lives and sacrificed his own. This is the ultimate way to live up to the criteria for receiving the award.” The Danish Prime Minister at this time, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, is present at the ceremony, and he gives a speech where he states: “Dan symbolizes a year characterized by tough conditions and tough incidents. He has become an image of the threat against Danish Jews, but he is first and foremost a true Danish everyday hero” (*Berlingske Tidende* 09.12.15).

In his New Year’s Speech on Danish television a few weeks later, Lars Løkke Rasmussen begins with a tribute to Dan Uzan: “Dan possessed courage: the courage to be kind. He protected the guests at a confirmation party. He guarded others, without caring for himself.” The choice to enhance Dan Uzan, and not mention Finn Nørgaard, is strongly criticized in the months that follow. Finn’s sister expresses her devastation in long interviews carried out a year after the attacks (*Jyllands-Posten* 07.02.16, *Ekstra Bladet* 08.02.16), and the editor at *Ekstra Bladet* questions the prime minister’s choice: “The exclusion of Finn Nørgaard in the speech cannot be explained by obliviousness [...] It is ruthless, especially to Finn Nørgaard’s family” (*Ekstra Bladet* 02.08.16). The Chairwoman of the Danish Parliament Pia Kjærsgaard argues in a similar way:

I understand Finn Nørgaard’s sister. I have had the same thought. I have great, great respect for both – and their families. It is true that Finn Nørgaard has passed into oblivion, and that is not fair [...] I believe that Dan Uzan has received a lot of honor – which definitely is well-deserved. Though I have been thinking: Where is Finn Nørgaard in all this? (*Ekstra Bladet* 08.02.15).

*Ekstra Bladet* prints an interview with a retired professor of history, who states that:

It is peculiar and strongly conspicuous to mention the one, but not the other [...] one can definitely talk about ‘damnatio memoriae’ [...] [which] means that you wipe out the memory of someone [...] They also did so in Hitler’s Germany and in Stalin’s Soviet Union (*Ekstra Bladet* 08.02.16).

The first interview initiating the explicit questioning of whether Dan is worth more grief than Finn is presented in *Jyllands-Posten*, the newspaper that had acknowledged Finn Nørgaard the most, though the harsh critique that follows is in the tabloid newspaper *Ekstra Bladet*. The lack of a single unequivocal discourse leads to the construction of a hierarchy of grief. It is built up through a complex interaction of discourses (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, p. 2).

The consequence of this overt controversy is that, in the months that follow, the media, politicians, and others make sure to mention both men when references are made to the shootings.

## Conclusions

In this chapter, I have analyzed a case of how death initiates journalism that involves the construction of identities and emotions. This is an example of the ways the media frame the identity of victims differently, and how media texts can be understood as tributes to people who die in spectacular and unforeseen events. Although the case analyzed in this chapter can be characterized by a low number of casualties and, in that respect, is not as disastrous and overwhelming as other recent terrorist attacks, it provides an opportunity for an in-depth analysis of how the media construct identities – also of the deceased. In this case, the journalistic media strive to construct the two men as coherent subjects, and they appear as highly valuable victims. As idealized victims they become points of identification for loss and suffering.

In the case of the Copenhagen shootings, the media coverage accords a great deal of attention to the deceased, to the bereaved family and friends, and to official representatives. The salience of this is to a large degree a question of repetition (Entman, 1993, p. 53). I argue that leading politicians take ownership of the frames provided by the media. It is difficult to detect any

independent attempts to frame the deceased among the leading representatives from the parliament.

I have identified a pattern in the way media frames are applied. Most of the media – and leading politicians – apply what seem to be consensual frames: The media cover the deaths of the two as a sacrifice to be remembered as heroism, which is constructed as an ultimate ideal. The constructions of both men's identities seem to underline the dominant ideology advocated by the media and the state: strive for peace and avoid conflict. This frame can be identified in many cultural and national settings, and it is not really questioned in the media or among politicians.

Another frame is more contested. This frame can be traced back to the beginning of the Danish cartoon crisis and has had a longer national history in Denmark. The frame regards the importance of avoiding the demonization of Muslims. A contrary frame in Danish public debate is the importance of freedom of speech. These are binary frames in a Danish context that have dominated public debate for years. They are oppositional, held in a dialectical relationship (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, p. 6). The newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, that initiated the cartoon crisis, attempts to frame the death of Finn Nørgaard as a question of fighting for freedom of speech. However, this frame never fully prevails. Other crises following from disastrous events around the world have led to more consensual frames (Kitch, 2003) than in this case, but even though elements of disagreement can be identified, a dominant part of the Danish coverage is consensual.

All frames identified are prior to the case (Vreese, 2005) in the sense that they have been identified before, though applied in other contexts. An issue specific frame (Vreese, 2005) is that of the innocent victims. This frame can also be recognized in other cases where people are hurt in dramatic events often with a violent dimension. The frame has been applied before in similar cases, to depict different kinds of victims. But the media also sponsor generic frames (Vreese, 2005): one of freedom of speech and a second of tolerance towards Muslims. These frames are particularly related to a Danish context, and since the cartoon crisis the frames are brought into a number of different cases, which do not necessarily touch on dramatic events.

By framing the men as sacrificing heroes, whose death will not lead to conflict and exclusion of Muslims from Danish society, the media personalize a possible and suitable solution to the social problem of intolerance and conflict among people with different religious backgrounds. In this respect, mourning

the deaths is a way to gather the audience in a political project. The audience is invited to engage in a reinforcement of solidarity, though the attempts do not pass without controversy. Finn Nørgaard's sacrifice seems more complex than Dan Uzan's. The blurred narratives of Finn seem to trouble a coherent framing, and the apparent controversy of whom to mourn the most leads to a hierarchy.

The expansion of stories concerning emotions and sentiments is by some labeled as *tabloidization* since emotions like compassion and grief have been argued to be “entertaining” and “sensational”. In the case from Denmark, there seems to be a variation in the way the newspapers in the sample cover emotions and grief. However, it is not a difference that can be explained as a distinction between broadsheets and tabloids. It is the broadsheet paper *Berlingske Tidende* that covers the emotions and mourns the death of Dan Uzan most intensively, whereas the broadsheet *Jyllands-Posten* and the tabloid *Ekstra Bladet* acknowledge Finn Nørgaard the most in the later phase. People's emotional life and sentiments are included in broadsheet papers as well as tabloids (Coward, 2013). The distinctions in the coverage are to be found especially in the comparison of some of the broadsheets. The deaths of the two men also provided an opportunity for the media to restate their position in the cartoon crisis.

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