

MASTER PROGRAMME PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES

New publication by Tim Heinkelmann-Wild, Daniel Beck and Alexander Spencer

ABSTRACT

An increased number of refugees entering Germany between 2015 and 2017 has resulted in a fierce political debate on the potentials and dangers of increased immigration and the increasing of 'refugees' in the country. So far, most studies on the social construction of the 'refugee' either have focused on the linkage between immigration and threats, such as terrorism, or examined the process of constituting the 'refugee' as a passive victim without agency. By adopting a post-structuralist perspective and combining insights from discourse theory and metaphor analysis, we examine the social construction of the 'refugee' in the German tabloid media. We investigate an instance in 2016 in which specific refugees from Syria were constructed not as terrorists or as victims but as heroes following their help in the arrest of a terrorist in Chemnitz. While this constitution of the heroic refugee appears to be a positive development at first, we argue that the celebration of the good refugee is in fact counterproductive as it reinforces the idea that it is unusual for refugees to oppose terrorism. By celebrating the unique heroic refugee, the German tabloid media unwittingly constitutes the large majority of refugees as 'others', cementing the understanding of the 'German self'.

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The article by **Tim-Heinkelmann-Wild, Daniel Beck and › Prof. Dr. Alexander Spencer**

([http://www.pacs.ovgu.de/Team/Prof_+Dr_+Alexander+Spencer-p-](http://www.pacs.ovgu.de/Team/Prof_+Dr_+Alexander+Spencer-p-468.html)

[468.html](http://www.pacs.ovgu.de/Team/Prof_+Dr_+Alexander+Spencer-p-468.html)) examines the social construction of the 'refugee' in the German

tabloid media by investigating an instance in 2016 in which specific refugees from Syria were constructed not as terrorists or as victims but as heroes following their help in the arrest of a terrorist in Chemnitz. While this constitution of the heroic refugee appears to be a positive development at first, the article argues that the celebration of the good refugee is in fact counterproduct as it reinforces the idea that it is unusual for refugees to oppose terrorism.

◀ Vorherige Meldung

Nächste Meldung ▶