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SCANDINAVIAN STUDIES

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**A Post-Colonial Study of Representations of Terrorism in Scandinavian Film and
Television**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to analyze the representation of terrorism in Scandinavian television series from the perspectives of Orientalism and post-colonialism. The ideas of the Palestinian-American literature professor Edward Said and the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard were the starting point for a theoretical overview and background for further analysis. The cinematographic narratological method was chosen for content analysis. The database for the analysis consists of three television series with a total of 28 episodes. The results of the analysis suggest that the media create a generalized, stereotypical image of Muslims and equate Muslims with terrorists. The representation of terrorism in all three television series, *When the Dust Settles*, *Thin Blue Line*, and *Caliphate*, is the result of Orientalist and post-colonialist thinking. For example, the distinct thinking of "us" and "them", the generalization of Muslims, the segregation of groups living within the same community, the superiority of Europeans (or Christians) over Arabs (Muslims) were the main peculiarities that identified that Muslims are highly stereotyped in the television series. Traces of Orientalist thinking are also present in the one-sided and straightforward narrative regarding Muslims. Hyperreality as an analytical concept helped to identify how reality is experienced as a medium through dialogue, symbols, and camera subtleties. In the television series analyzed, hyperreality is achieved through two techniques: the use of symbols and specific camera shots. For example, Muslims are constantly surrounded by attributes related to terrorism – guns, traditional Muslim dress, long black beards, and Arabic religious posters – which, combined with specific cinematographic tools such as close-ups, create the image that Muslims are equal to terrorists. Symbolism, combined with camera tools, creates hidden messages, something that is not openly articulated but still carries meaning.

Key words: terrorism, Orientalism, post-colonialism, hyperreality, media, image.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Even though the Nordic countries, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland, among the safest (The Institute of Economics & Peace, 2023) countries in the world and experience a smallest amount of terrorist attacks, terrorism is still a widely used narrative in Scandinavian television series and media overall. For example, of the 20 most fatal terrorist attacks in 2022 listed in the *Global Terrorism Index 2023* study by The Institute of Economics & Peace (2023), none happened in any of the Nordic countries. According to the same study, between 2007 and 2022, 137,009 deaths happened because of terrorism in the World, while just 885 of them occurred in the West, which is just over half of one percent. It is important to note that even if the number of terrorist attacks carried out in Scandinavia is small, the narrative in television series and the media as a whole implies a different view. This means that the image of terrorism and immigrants shaped by television series is a simulacrum that: "denies not reality, but the difference between the image and the real" (Fiske, qtd. in Laughey, 2007, p. 149).

Terrorism became crucial topic in the world after the 9/11 events in the United States of America. This event also contributed to segregation between the West and the East represented respectively by "us" and "them". Terrorism as a topic became a mainstream narrative in cinema, which represented the confrontation not just between different religions, societies or political regimes, but also between values. As stated by Jean Baudrillard in his book *The Spirit of Terrorism*: "Images are, whether we like it or not, our primal scene" (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 26). This means that images that represent the world situation also affect reality, creating a false image of events. Baudrillard in the same book argues that virtuality, as we see in television series or other forms of media, is no longer relevant as such because it has long since become something real: "This is because it (auth. note - reality) has absorbed fiction's energy and has itself become fiction. We might almost say that reality is jealous of fiction, that the real is jealous of the image... It is a kind of duel between them, a contest to see which can be the most unimaginable" (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 28). The media manipulate the images, and this process is directly related to how people perceive the reality, as Walter Laqueur says in his book *A History of Terrorism*: "One man's terrorist was another person's freedom fighter" (Laqueur, 2001, p. ix). This means that the same situation can be represented and evaluated differently depending on how the media shape the prejudices of one event or another.

This paper's objective is to examine the ways in which terrorism is portrayed in Scandinavian cinema and television, and the research aim is to identify any patterns that may exist in the representation of terrorism in this context.

Research questions:

1. How is terrorism depicted in Scandinavian television series?
2. Which groups of society are associated with terrorism?
3. What does the segregation of ingroups and outgroups say about the birth of violence from social and cultural aspects?

To perform the relevant analysis, three television series that tackle the topic extensively have been chosen. All of them were created between 2017-2020, which means that the political and social atmosphere in Scandinavian countries was similar, and this allows us to compare how the same topic is presented in different television series. Here are short summaries of the television series that have been selected for analysis:

- *When the Dust Settles* (org. *Når støvet har lagt sig*), created by Dorte Warnøe Høgh and Ida Maria Rydén in 2020. The series has ten episodes, and the main narrative is how the lives of eight strangers are fundamentally changed following a terrorist attack on a restaurant in Copenhagen.
- *Caliphate* (org. *Kalifat*), directed by Wilhelm Behrman in 2020. This series also consists of eight episodes. Its main narrative is how people in dominant positions can influence more vulnerable individuals and achieve their terrorist goals by manipulating outgroup members.
- *Thin Blue Line* (org. *Tunna blå linjen*) was launched in 2017 and created by Mikael Hansson, Anders Hazelius, Sanna Lenken and Maria Eriksson-Hecht. To date, it spans 18 episodes over two seasons, and the main narrative is concerned with government structure and violence. In particular, the series extensively portrays the daily life of four police officers in the criminally active city of Malmö, Sweden.

The subject of representation and contextualization of terrorism in its various forms (with a focus on Islamist terrorism) has been widely researched. This thesis draws on three specifically relevant areas of theory from the existing literature, and uses them as a basis for analysis:

- Post-colonialism
- Orientalism
- Hyperreality

Orientalist and post-colonialist perspectives are used as tools to illustrate how terrorism is represented in Scandinavian television series and which groups are most frequently associated with terrorism. Meanwhile, hyperreality is related to both perspectives because it explains how reality, with the help of the media, no longer represents real signs, but rather creates hyperreality. Section four will introduce each of these three dimensions in more detail. The following part considers the representation of violence and terrorism across several research disciplines. This background section gives an impression of how terrorism is being represented and perceived by the public.

2. INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE: REPRESENTATION OF VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM

Terrorism and its origins are influenced by several socio-cultural values. These values shape our response to brutality, which is influenced more by representational strategies than by violence itself (Matthews and Goodman, 2013). Although violence has always been a subject of social and cultural scientific research, violence as a topic has gained enormous popularity in the arts and humanities, with the representation of violence attracting particular interest. This highlights the need to analyze the relationship between violence and representation of it. Violence can be analyzed in three contexts: biological, psychological and sociological dimensions. This thesis will not focus on the biological dimension, but the psychological and sociological dimensions are relevant. The psychological perspective seeks to discover the origin of violent traits in individual histories of abuse and abandonment, while the sociological approach examines the connection between society and individual, and explores links between violence and ethnicity, gender, or class (Matthews and Goodman, 2013).

Both approaches are also closely related to the subjective evaluation of violence, which means that it can be difficult or almost impossible to avoid an emotional response to violence. This also illustrates why the definition of violence cannot be considered rigid; it is more appropriate to think of violence as a category between socio-cultural and political contexts (Matthews and Goodman, 2013). Steven Pinker has published one of the most significant studies in the field of violence, *The Better Angles of Our Nature*. Pinker argues that violence as a phenomenon is becoming less and less frequent, which means that assumptions about violence do not reflect the statistical evidence. Pinker also explains how the idea that violence is in decline may result in a false sense of security. It should be noted that violence is a subjective concept and can only be quantified approximately. The Oxford English Dictionary defines violence as "the exercise of physical force so as to inflict injury on, or cause damage to, persons or property; action or conduct characterized by this; treatment or usage tending to cause bodily injury or forcibly interfering with personal freedom."¹ This definition works well for statistical evidence, police reports, or expressing violence rates, but

¹ Oxford English Dictionary (1989). Available at: <https://www.oed.com/oed2/00277885> (accessed: 24 May 2023).

it also does not take into consideration other types of violence, such as mental, physical, domestic abuse, and violence against inanimate objects (e.g., buildings, cities, or beliefs). Ultimately, violence or abuse will always be personal, and thus at least partially be evaluated on an emotional level. Judith Butler, a renowned philosopher, states in *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* that some lives are perceived as more worthy of mourning and others as less so (Butler, 2009). This view is illustrated, for example, by the state-sanctioned assassinations of figures such as Osama Bin Laden after the events of September 11, 2001. The media created a representation of terrorists that posed a real, existential threat to the free democratic world, and this same media representation also created feelings of horror, fear, panic, or guilt.

In *From Prejudice to Intergroup Emotions. Differentiated Reactions to Social Groups*, Diane M. Mackie and Eliot R. Smith describe and explain the models of prejudice. According to Mackie and Smith, standard models of prejudice do not provide a theoretical background for the study of different reactions to social groups. For example, the attitude model states that the position towards groups that have antipathetic features (and thus are evaluated negatively) are similar to those toward groups that cause negative feelings (and thus are also evaluated negatively). The same applies to groups that evoke horror (and cause a negative perception), and those that generate rage (also perceived negatively). Such obstinacy has resulted in the creation of different models, where attitudes are based on affective versus cognitive versus behavioral foundations (Mackie and Smith, 2002).

Another important aspect of representation and violence is how and why people react emotionally when an event happens to their social group, but they are not directly affected. The emotions caused can play an important role in shaping the attitude of an individual belonging to one group towards individuals belonging to another group (Mackie and Smith, 2002). It is worth noting that negatively perceived groups are evaluated negatively regardless of the circumstances. This means that people may have pre-formed images of an outgroup that are not necessarily related to the actual behavior of that group. Scholars of society relations such as Mackie and Smith (2002) test theories that associate purely positive and purely negative evaluations to ingroups and outgroups. Intergroup perceptions will always be ambivalent and reflections of the event or group of people are never unquestionable. Therefore, the same outgroup or event can have both – positive and negative – evaluations, depending on an individual's point of view.

Finally, emotions are directly related to circumstances – different emotional reactions can be experienced about the same group in different situations. The theories presented in *From Prejudice to Intergroup Emotions* (Mackie and Smith, 2002) show that one reason why an event does not directly affect an individual, but other members of the same group, can still trigger a response is that individuals see themselves as a central, irreplaceable part of the group. This results in ingroup and outgroup relationships becoming part of an individual's identity. A sense of belonging to a specific group can also influence the level of emotional response – the more an individual identifies with a group, the stronger the emotions felt. The same applies to evaluations of a specific group. These will differ depending on whether an outgroup's actions have impacted an ingroup.

Like any other theory, it has limitations. Prejudice is defined as a "unidimensional liking or disliking associated with the mental representation of a social group that has some significant difficulties in explaining intergroup behavior", and consistent with this, recent findings in attitude theory reflect the same limitations (Mackie and Smith, 2002, p. 2).

A significant amount of research has been undertaken to examine the representation of ingroups and outgroups, and to understand how one group perceives another within the same community.

Orientalism and post-colonialism are two interdisciplinary fields that study not only the historical perspective of imperialism, but also how it influenced contemporary cultural and social system and beliefs. One of the consequences, terrorism, has been a huge problem in the Middle East for a long time. Now this phenomenon has spread all over the world and has become one of the biggest threats not just in the East, but also in the West. Terrorism, as a general problem of society, has always been a complex one, and therefore the study of terrorism was never very popular – maybe also because terrorism has appeared at different times and in different intensities. Walter Laqueur re-published *A History of Terrorism* in 2001 with a new introduction in which he states that another reason why terrorism was not a popular subject to study is political correctness: "The idea that some groups of people could be more aggressive than others was thought to be not just misguided but abhorrent. But this left a number of crucial questions open: why among people sharing the same convictions did some turn to terrorism whereas others did not?" (Laqueur, 2001, p. vii). He also explains that earlier society believed that terrorism is born where oppression persists – that is, terrorism is a way to fight against the oppressor. As Laqueur states, sometimes terrorism used to be treated even as equal to revolution. Following the historical perspective, he shows that there were terrorist movements fighting against oppressive regimes, but unfortunately these groups are

less common in the present: "Terrorism, more frequently than not, appeared not under the most oppressive regimes but, on the contrary, under conditions of relative freedom" (Laqueur, 2001, p. ix). Terrorism as a concept is tightly related to power and control. The representation of terror usually works from the center of power to certain groups or nations that are identified as the cause of terrorism or transmitters of it (Caoduro, Randell, Ritzenhoff, 2021, p. viii). It means that terrorism is not just a threat to society, but also a tool to manipulate society itself – to create better and worse religions, beliefs, nations, to shape in-groups and out-groups. Terrorism is the consequence of a capitalist system that divides the world into markets or spheres of interests. This purely capitalist view of the world also implies that religious beliefs have become a direct tool of violence: "To understand terror is to understand the operations of capitalism and religion"²(Caoduro, Randell, Ritzenhoff, 2021, p. viii). Those in power can manipulate the concepts, knowledge, and images. Meanwhile, the representation and evaluation of violence is directly related to the mediation.

It is important to understand the background dynamics before going deeper into the analysis, because it gives an understanding of what influences not just how the representation of violence is created, but also how the audience evaluates the image created by the media. The next section introduces and summarizes these earlier studies.

² Chomsky, N. (2002), "Terror and Just Response", *War Plan Iraq: Ten Reasons Against War On Iraq* (New York: Verso, 2002).

3. EARLIER STUDIES

Media portrayals of terrorism and people from the Middle East have been widely studied. Research interest increased as terrorist attacks became more frequent in Europe, and Europeans began to feel threatened, especially by the Middle East. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 were not only the starting point for discussions about terrorism and its origins, but also for broader debates about terrorism and extremism, the main causes of terrorism, the kind of people who carry out terrorist attacks, and their reasons for doing so. Many TV shows, series and movies focusing on the subject of terrorism have been and are still being created. This thesis will analyze three different but, at the same time, in some respects very similar television programs.

This section provides background information on what has already been achieved in this field of study and an overview of other researchers. Similar topics have been analyzed in a report by the Stockholm University Institute of Criminology, published under the title *Varifrån kommer hotet? Perspektiv på terrorism och radikalisering* (auth. transl. *Where does the threat come from? Perspectives on terrorism and radicalization*). Five researchers, Janne Flyghed, Magnus Hörnqvist, Emy Bäcklin, Elisabeth Nordén and Isabel Schoultz, published this report in 2011. Their research consists of five separate articles, two of which are particularly relevant to this thesis.

The first report, *Utanförskap eller kultur? Television perspektiv på terrorismens orsaker* (auth. transl. *Outsidership or culture? Two perspectives on the causes of terrorism*), looks at the causes of terrorism and provides the reader with background information on the influences on the broader debate on terrorism. The fact that terrorism as a process or act has been precisely defined in the Western world until 2001 has led politicians and other government officials to manipulate this definition for their own purposes. Manipulating the concept means that there were no clear guidelines for how terrorism should be described. This led to the phenomenon that the same person could be celebrated as a hero fighting for a higher cause in one society, while the opposite interpretation applied in another society. According to Hörnqvist and Flyghed (2011), the situation changed after the al-Qaeda attacks in September 2001, when dominant Western regimes began to cooperate more to fight terrorism. While this situation led to the creation of a definition of terrorism that best suited the Western world, it was also a starting point for discussing the reasons behind terrorist acts (Hörnqvist and Flyghed, 2011). The European Commission's November 2005

counter-terrorism strategy document is a primary source for this report. The document is important in the discussion and analysis of terrorism because it represents a strategic commitment by all EU member states to fight terrorism globally. The stated objectives are to uphold human rights and to make Europe safer so that EU citizens can live in an environment of freedom, security, and justice. The strategy highlights four main aspects of the prevention of terrorism:

- prevent
- protect
- pursue
- respond.

The document sets out that member states have a primary responsibility to combat terrorism by strengthening national capabilities, facilitating European cooperation, developing collective capability, and promoting international partnership (Council of The European Union, 2005).

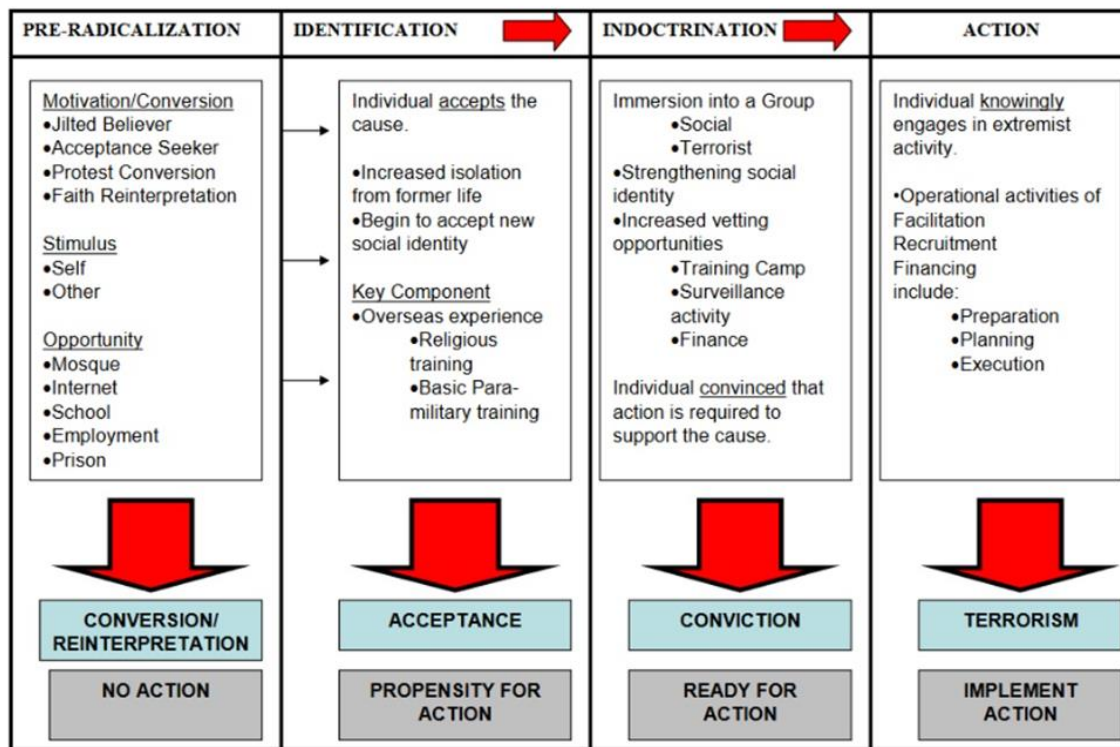
The main aspect of this research has two perspectives: the social integrationist discourse, and the moral underclass discourse. Understanding of these two perspectives is crucial in order to be able to draw conclusions about terrorism and its roots in a society. The social integrationist discourse stipulates that the individual is bound to the wider social community through social relationships. By contrast, the moral underclass assumes that a society is a homogeneous community of values. This means that every society is part of a cultural sphere that is positioned against other, foreign cultures (Hörnqvist and Flyghed, 2011). These two different perspectives allow us to take a two-dimensional view of the same subject. It follows that terrorism cannot be seen only as an act related to immigrants from the Middle East, but that it is closely related to society and its treatment of individuals. It is stated that, from the perspective of exclusion, it is natural to seek the explanation for the implied Islamist terrorism in the social and economic development of European societies in recent decades. Terrorism has been associated with exclusion, unemployment, lack of integration, discrimination, fracturing of community values, a diluted civil society, as well as with the war against terrorism itself. The well-integrated are relatively protected from radical ideas, while the marginalized are more vulnerable (Fraih, Marret, Alonso, Ranstorp & Dos Santos, qtd. in Hörnqvist and Flyghed, 2011, p. 8).

Terrorism is more likely to occur in social groups or minorities that face difficulties in daily life, ranging from struggles with unemployment to exposure to direct discrimination. It is therefore important to consider these two perspectives when analyzing acts of terrorism.

Another highly relevant concept established in previous research is the radicalization process. This process is clearly visible in the TV series *Quicksand* and *Caliphate*, both of which will be analyzed later. The radicalization process consists of four stages: pre-radicalization, identification, indoctrination, and finally action. This view of the radicalization process was introduced in the 2006 Federal Bureau of Investigation assessment report *The Radicalization Process: From Conversion to Jihad*.

Figure 3.1. *The Radicalization Process*

The Radicalization Process



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation (2006), p. 4

The FBI report explains the stages of the process and describes how to identify each one. As stated in the article *The Radicalization Process* by the Center for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence: "Radicalization that leads to violence rarely takes the form of a sudden or

abrupt change but rather of a complex social change that operates on several different levels."³ The main idea of the radicalization process is that an individual usually goes through three different stages before they are ready to carry out a terrorist attack. The first stage, pre-radicalization, is the phase in which the individual's life situation is most important. The second stage, identification, encourages the individual to look for others who share the same thoughts and goals. The third stage, indoctrination, is when an individual is already involved in the group, where they get information and are encouraged to fight for their beliefs. The final stage is the end result of the previous three – a terrorist attack. This view of the radicalization process is central to changing the perception of terrorist attacks: it shows that an actual terrorist attack is only the final step of a long and complex process. However, consideration of the first three stages is crucial in evaluating the concept of terrorism. The process model shows that an individual carrying out a terrorist attack has usually been influenced by a variety of external factors that are related to or rooted in society itself.

Orientalism and post-colonialism are interdisciplinary fields that study not only the historical perspective of imperialism, but also its influence on contemporary cultural and social systems and beliefs. One consequence is that terrorism has long been a major problem in the Middle East. Now this phenomenon has spread all over the world and has become one of the biggest threats not only in the East but also in the West. Terrorism, as a general problem of society, has always been complex, and therefore the study of terrorism has never been very popular – perhaps also because terrorism has occurred at different times and in different intensities (Laqueur, 2001). Walter Laqueur reissued his book *A History of Terrorism* in 2001 with a new introduction in which he noted that another reason why terrorism was not a popular subject to study is political correctness: "The idea that some groups of people could be more aggressive than others was thought to be not just misguided but abhorrent. But this left several crucial questions open: why among people sharing the same convictions did some turn to terrorism whereas others did not?" (Laqueur, 2001, p. vii). The author also explains that in the past, society believed that terrorism was born where oppression persisted – that is, terrorism was seen as a way to fight an oppressor. As Laqueur notes,

³ *The Radicalization Process* by Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence. Available at: <https://info-radical.org/en/the-radicalization-process/#:~:text=The%20process%20is%20the%20result,physical%20and%20virtual%20social%20networks> (accessed: 24 May 2023).

terrorism was at times even treated as equal to revolution: "It was argued in these circles that terrorism always occurred where there was oppression, social or national, that the terrorists had genuine, legitimate grievances - hence the conclusion that once the grievances were eradicated, terrorism would also disappear. Terrorism, in brief, was seen as a revolutionary phenomenon; it was carried out by poor and desperate human beings and had, therefore, to be confronted with sympathetic understanding" (Laqueur, 2001, ix). Following the historical perspective, he shows that there were terrorist movements that fought against oppressive regimes, but these groups are rarer in the present: "Terrorism, more frequently than not, appeared not under the most oppressive regimes but, on the contrary, under conditions of relative freedom" (Laqueur, 2001, p. ix). Terrorism is closely linked to power and control. The representation of terror usually works from the center of power to certain groups or nations that are identified as the cause of terrorism or transmitters of it (Caoduro, Randell, Ritzenhoff, 2021, p. viii). This means that terrorism is not only a threat to society, but also a tool to manipulate society – to create the notion of better and worse religions, beliefs, nations, to create in-groups and out-groups. Terrorism is the consequence of a capitalist system which divides the world into markets, or spheres of interests. This purely capitalist world view also implies that religious beliefs have become a direct tool of violence: "To understand terror is to understand the operations of capitalism and religion"⁴ (Caoduro, Randell, Ritzenhoff, 2021, p. viii). Those in power can manipulate concepts, knowledge, and images. Meanwhile, the representation and evaluation of violence are directly related to the mediation.

Elizabeth Nordén's paper *Hotbilder om terrorism* (auth. transl. *Threat images about terrorism*) is related to the analysis of *When the Dust Settles* and *Thin Blue Line*. The research focuses on the question why Muslims are perceived as more likely to carry out terrorist attacks than other social groups, and why the media tend to highlight terrorist attacks carried out by Muslims more than those committed by other groups. This phenomenon also leads to increased hatred towards Muslims, as the media play with people's emotions, which are often more related to faith, religion, and other social aspects than to the facts themselves (Nordén, 2011, p. 21). Nordén also discusses the topic of why the 9/11 events have changed views in the West as drastically as they did. Related to this, she introduces the concept of "us" and "them": "The reason why global terrorist threats are

⁴ Chomsky, N. (2002) "Terror and Just Response", *War Plan Iraq: Ten Reasons Against War On Iraq*. New York: Verso. ISBN-13: 978-1859845011

being noticed may have to do with thinking in terms of 'us' and 'them', terrorism is now considered a problem for us not just for them" (Eriksson & Noreen, qtd. in Nordén, 2011, p. 21). She argues that it is the media, more than political ideologies, that connects terrorism with religion. This is a possible explanation for why the term Muslim terrorist is used much more frequently than, for example, Arab terrorist. In this way, the media suggests that the religion of Islam itself is a terrorist ideology. This is achieved through specific phrases and images: "Even the media today creates associations between Islam and terrorism. For example, reporting on terrorism in news features has often been combined with clipped video sequences of Muslims praying" (Schiffer, qtd. in Nordén, 2011, p. 23). This phenomenon further confirms the earlier notion (by Nordén) that terrorism is a highly politicized concept which is very complex, and that many cases do not primarily relate to religion or country of birth, but rather to society, norms, and individual-community relationships.

Representationer, stereotyper och nyhetsvärdering. Rapport från medieanalys om representationer av muslimer i svenska nyheter (auth. transl. *Representations, stereotypes and news evaluation. Report from media analysis on representations of Muslims in Swedish news*) is a study that was carried out in the winter of 2014/15 on behalf of the Swedish Discrimination Ombudsman. The main purpose of this research was to examine how Muslims are portrayed in Swedish news media. Sample material was collected from 11 newspapers and three broadcast media outlets, and a total of 186 articles were analyzed. A central conclusion of the study was that representations of Muslims are almost always related to threats, violence, and other tensions in society (Axner, 2015, p. 8).

The two studies *Hotbilder om terrorism, Utanförskap eller kultur? Television perspektiv på terrorismens orsaker* and *Representationer, stereotyper och nyhetsvärdering. Rapport från medieranalys om representationer av muslimer i svenska nyheter* analyze why and how Muslims are represented as a group related to terror, violence, and fear. This group lives together with others in the same society, but at the same time is excluded from this society in several ways. Another "us" and "them" motif also relates to both articles and can be observed in the TV series analyzed later in this thesis: according to Axner, Islam is used as a label for all Muslims, and as a result they are almost never represented as individuals (Axner, 2015, p. 9). Whilst articles from different genres (foreign and national news, including news articles and opinion pieces) were analyzed in the

research, the researchers conclude that stereotypical representations of Muslims and "us" and "them" representations are obviously and vividly present in Swedish news media. Having analyzed 186 articles, the authors conclude that almost all articles represent Muslims as either directly or indirectly related to violence, threats, or tensions in society. Although none of the sample articles deal directly with violence, the analysis finds that the vast majority of media reports use language and imagery that equate Muslims with problems and violence.

The Journal of Religion in Europe has published the article *Religion between Politics and Media: Conflicting Attitudes towards Islam in Scandinavia* written by Knut Lundby together with Stig Hjarvard, Mia Lövheim and Haakon H. Jernsletten in 2017. The article examines connections between religiosity and political attitudes, based on a comparative study of media and religion in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. The data for the analysis comes from population-wide surveys conducted in all three countries in 2015. The article speaks about the growing politicization of Islam, which is influenced by the way the media represents it: "Media are not neutral tools of communication but play an active, constitutive role in how religion and conflicts over religion play out. The Mohammed cartoon crisis in 2005–2006⁵ and the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack in 2015 are exemplary cases of how mediated representations of religion can become the very object of religious conflict" (Lundby, Hjarvard, Lövheim, Jernsletten, 2017, p. 440). The cross-national Scandinavian survey performed for the article shows that Islam has become a main narrative in the news media. According to the article, Scandinavians believe that religion, instead of bringing peace, causes conflict in the world around them. 80% of Danes fully or partially agree with this statement, which is a higher percentage than in the other two countries. Just six percent of Danes disagree that religion causes more conflict than peace. It makes sense that Scandinavians want the media to be critical of religion because they associate religion so strongly with conflict. This explains why news about religion tends to pique people's interest more than information on religious doctrine and institutions. It is understandable that people would talk about religion that

⁵ Crisis emerged after Danish newspaper "Jyllands-Posten" has published cartoons named "The Face of Muhammad". After the Danish newspaper "Jyllands-Posten" published cartoons titled "The Face of Muhammad," a crisis developed. Many thousands of people protested the cartoons, resulting in close to 250 fatalities and 800 or so injuries. Islam has a long history of animus, and in most Islamic traditions, it is regarded as extremely blasphemous to depict Muhammad. Many Muslims were offended by this, which was exacerbated by their perception that the cartoons mocked Muhammad and Islam. Danish Muslim organizations who took issue with the portrayals responded by petitioning the governments of Islamic nations and Denmark to take action. They also filed a legal complaint against the newspaper, which was later dismissed in January 2006 (Agius, 2013).

appears in the news, particularly news on religious extremism, when religion becomes something that people must be on guard against, as a contentious challenge to society and individual lives (Lundby, Hjarvard, Lövheim, Jernsletten, 2017, p. 446). The authors, after analyzing critical attitudes towards Islam, found some national differences. Although the opinions of respondents from the three countries differed, one pattern was obvious – more than half of all respondents expressed the view that Islam is a threat to their culture and values. The findings of this study support the notion that the mediatization of religion and the politicization of Islam are interdependent processes. Even though many people believe that Islam is a threat to Scandinavian cultures, respondents show little interest in news stories about religious practices or cultural, spiritual, or other aspects of religion. Furthermore, when discussing religion, respondents tend to focus on the political and violent aspects of Islam. Other forms of media dynamics, such as social media networks, contribute to this politicized and critical perception of Islam. It appears that news media and politics work together to portray Islam in a contentious way.

The studies discussed above exemplify how Islam as a religion and Muslims are manipulated by the media. This shows that the media creates the link between Islam and terrorism, and Muslims and terrorists. The results of the studies highlight that migrants and terrorism are stigmatized in the media regardless of historical circumstances, i.e. the media creates antagonism between Europeans and immigrants from the East, between Christians and Muslims.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Three main dimensions, Orientalism, post-colonialism, and hyperreality, form the basis of this analysis. These theories will be used to dissect how terrorism, violence, and out-groups are represented in Scandinavian television series. The three disciplines complement each other and form a holistic framework for this research. The theory of post-colonialism highlights how Europe's history of colonial power still shapes the view of European nations as superior to other regions. The concept of Orientalism will help to identify and explain the division of people into better and worse. Finally, the hyperreality perspective provides tools to explain how terrorism and radicalization are presented to a society, and how societies sometimes exist in simulacra. This means that the process by which signs and images are transformed into simulacra precedes the real, which is no longer what existed before its representation (Lucy, 2016, p. 173). These three dimensions together form a framework for analyzing the stereotypical images that logically arise from the perspectives of Orientalism and post-colonialisms. Both Orientalism and hyperreality deal with division and segregation, which lead to prejudice against out-groups.

4.1 Post-colonial perspective

The subject of post-colonialism studies is to examine the legacy of the Western perceptions of the non-West, to examine the legacies of colonization and imperialism, and to define how non-Western nations are perceived as "other" and as inferior to the Western ones. All this allowed Europeans to construct their power and domination over others, explaining it as a natural process of developed and less developed countries (McGlinchey, Walters, Scheinpflug, 2017). Post-colonialism theory questions expansionism, the belief system that supported such a movement, and why it is still considered authoritative. It also examines the process and its after-effects on the community as well as the individual. Post-colonialism also studies how the colonized nations fought back culturally (Bertens, 2008). One of the leading post-colonial theorists, Homi Bhabha, put it this way: "Postcolonial perspectives emerge from the colonial testimony of Third World countries and the discourses of 'minorities' within the geopolitical divisions of east and west, north

and south. <...> They formulate their critical revisions around issues of cultural difference, social authority, and political discrimination in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments within the 'rationalizations' of modernity" (Bhabha, 1992, p. 438).

There is no single correct answer to the question of when colonization began, whether it started with Columbus's voyage or with the late medieval Anglo-Norman conquest which led to the occupation of Ireland. But all post-colonial theorists agree that post-colonialism is mainly about re-evaluating the correlation between the metropolis and its colonies (Bertens, 2008). Post-colonialism is an interdisciplinary subject, and post-colonial thinkers do not treat it as a phenomenon of the past, but rather as a critical attitude towards present-day cultural processes beyond the borders of colonialism (Eriksson, 2005). Post-colonialism still defines the contemporary world, and countries which did not have colonies in the East are still part of post-colonialism. According to Hall (1996), one advantage of the term 'post-colonial' is that it has drawn attention to the fact that colonization never really left the colonial power's own society unaffected. On the contrary, it was deeply inscribed in them, just as it was indelibly inscribed in the culture of the colonized nations. Post-colonialism is based on the notion of superiority of Western civilization, and this is how the distinction between the colonizer and the colonized is created. This also gave rise to a wave of racism, as local people were treated as less valuable or important than people from the West – the colonizers. The theory and critique of post-colonialism emphasize the antithesis between the metropolis (which in the colonial framework can also be called the imperial center) and the colonies. The critique of Eurocentrism is at the heart of post-colonial theory. The focus is on people who have become victims of Eurocentrism in one way or another, whether through racism, military expansion, or utilitarian politics of rationality (Bertens, 2008).

To better understand how global class relations are constructed, it is necessary to clarify why these relations seem normal. The constructed view of global poverty, for example, is always accompanied by images and narratives of Oriental societies and governments, which are later presented as primitive, less worthy, and aggressive. In summary, post-colonialism argues that it is difficult for Westerners to remain objective and find solutions to poverty or inequality because of their biases (McGlinchey, Walters, Scheinflug, 2017). Post-colonialism also shows how the West's perception of the Orient reveals the West's own insecurities. For example, the 1979 Islamic

Revolution marked the rise of Islam throughout the Muslim world. Political Islam not only confronted neo-imperialist interventions, but also laid bare the consequences of cultural and social changes that led to a more interconnected economy.

Post-colonialism as a concept and theory is used in different fields, from the history to social sciences. The field of media studies has felt the effects of post-colonial theory as well. As stated in the article *Postcolonial Media Theory* by Juan Llamas-Rodriguez, a first point of contact with any foreign culture is through media representations. These mediated spaces serve as a battlefield for conflict between the representer and the represented.

4.2 Orientalism

Richard King, in his book *Orientalism and Religion. Postcolonial Theory, India and 'The Mystic East'*, had extensively discussed three phenomena of Orientalism originally introduced by Said. The first phenomenon is that an Orientalist is "anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient – and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian or philologist - which literally applies to anyone claiming to have knowledge of Oriental studies. The second phenomenon is that "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident" (King, 2001, p. 83). The third phenomenon is that "Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism⁶ is interrelated". This point of view shows the complexity of the relationship between the nature of and Western imperialism. The use of binary terminology, generalities, and a one-sided relationship between Orient and Occident is characteristic of media scholarship (Ranji, 2021). It follows that it is basically impossible to study reality without using terminology such as Western / non-Western, democratic / undemocratic, rational / emotional, which further contrasts the two sides, Occident and Orient.

⁶ Ahmad, A. (1987). Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and the "National Allegory", *Social Text*, pp. 91-109. London: Routledge.

Orientalism is a broad field of study that analyzes not only political aspects of the Orient and Occident, but also cultural, social, and interdisciplinary approaches such as cinematography or language. The "West defined themselves as the superior race compared to the Orient. These representations constructed by the West create a discourse that is traditionally aimed to spread two hegemonic purposes; those are to make imperialism legal to the government; and to make false conviction that the West is capable of helping and bringing a 'better' civilization to the Orient" (Bartnes, qtd. in Maliyana, 2013, p. 2). As mentioned, Orientalism has a strong historical background of colonialism, and even though the process of colonization is only a matter of history today, its consequences reach into the present. The phenomenon of the West vs. East opposition forms the specific imaginary view of the Orient. If the West is seen as the developed countries focused on scientific progress and economic growth, then this means that the Orient is the opposite – primitive and backward. The Orient can be represented as bizarre, strange, mysterious, while according to the same phenomenon the West is rational and familiar (Praveen, 2016). This image is raised in various political contexts, as well as in the media and cinema. Said himself quoted Marx's 18th Brumaire of Luis Bonaparte: "they cannot represent themselves, they must be represented" in his book (Said, qtd. in Çolak, 2021, p. 113). This quote defines the essence of Orientalism and shows how the West continues to construct different images of the Orient. Islam in general, as a religion and as a word to define the Orient, has fostered negative stereotypes, mostly due to the irrational acts of extremists. As a result, the Western world has a preconceived, generalized image of Muslims. Stereotypes and prejudices are clearly visible in various types of media, where Muslims are described as irrational, primitive, fanatical and, above all, dangerous terrorists. Muslims who fall into the category of a threat to the Western world can no longer represent themselves, and so the Western world creates its own representation of the Orient: "in other words, because of the prejudice towards others, people see in their behavior what they expect to see on the basis of their prejudice, with the result that they inevitably will make wrong predictions concerning the behavior of members of the other group" (Shadid and Koningsveld, 2002).

The presence of in-groups and out-groups is another theme of Orientalism. As Said says of the Orient: "were rarely seen or looked at; they were seen through, analyzed not as citizens, or even people, but as problems to be solved or confined" (Said, 2003, p. 207). What Said means here is that the West, or the Occident, has always been interested in the Orient merely as a subject that

needs to be defined and explained, or as an out-group that is opposite to "us", the West. In short, this relates to the representation of the Orient. The West has always recreated the East in a way that suits the West: "the east is always represented as mysterious, wonderful, and perhaps immoral. In this way orientalism as a discourse and oriental studies multiplies yearly" (Praveen, 2016, p. 48). The concept of "us" and "them" is another of Said's ideas. It is said that "western metaphysics is based on binary oppositions, a hierarchy in which one is privileged, and the other is unprivileged. Binarism ranges from general binaries such as light/dark, white/black to some more complicated and culturally weighted as man/woman, the colonizer/the colonized and in the case under consideration the self/other" (Moosavinia, Niazi, Ghaforian, 2011, p. 105). The binary opposition also has a very important place in post-colonial and Orientalist theories. The self – be it male, Western, white – is represented as positive. And the opposite – female, Eastern, black – is inevitably represented as negative. "The Self is the familiar (Europe, the West, 'us') and the Other is strange (the Orient, the east, 'them')" (Said qtd. in Moosavinia, Niazi, Ghaforian, 2011, p. 105). Treating certain groups of people as images of something negative also dehumanizes them, which can be represented in different ways, but the most popular is to represent them as a homogeneous group. Representation itself as an act can be controversial, which means that the representative has the power to create the image they want to create. It is only the representer's interpretation of a subject that might be completely misleading. According to Said, it is controversial to what extent representation gives superiority to Westerners as "genuine creator, whose life-giving power represents, animates, constitutes, the otherwise silent and dangerous space beyond familiar boundaries" (Said qtd. in Moosavinia, Niazi, Ghaforian, 2011, p. 106).

4.3 Theory critique

It is not surprising that such widely discussed publications as Edward Said's form a generally accepted part of academic theory, yet they ought to be questioned and re-evaluated. Harry Oldmeadow, an academic focusing on religion, philosophy, and tradition, in *The Debate about 'Orientalism'*, lists a few familiar names and brief quotes regarding Said's theory: "Orientalism offers us little more than the rehashing of the work of Said's unacknowledged predecessors in the

field (Ziauddin Sardar⁷); it succumbs to the same homogenizing, essentializing and totalizing tendencies which it stigmatizes in Orientalism (B.J. Moore-Gilbert, Sadik Jalal al 'Azm, Rosane Rocher⁸); Foucauldian discursive theory (on which Said draws so heavily) is a remarkably blunt instrument with which to dissect historical particularities and the 'micropractices, irregularities, historical discontinuities and discursive heterogeneity' of Orientalism itself (Ali Behdad⁹); Said's depiction, it is also argued, fails to recognize and account for the significant variations in different national Orientalist discourses and is unable to account for the fact that German and Russian orientalism developed independently of Empire (Sheldon Pollock, C.F. Beckingham, James Clifford¹⁰)" (Oldmeadow, 2004, p. 10).

As mentioned above, Said's theories are based on Foucault's ideas, especially those explained in *Discipline and Punish* (1977). The popularity of Said's arguments is also related to the Foucauldian principle that knowledge is always highly dependent on operations of power (Oldmeadow, 2004). However, Said later became a leading critic of Foucault's explanation of the concepts of truth, power and knowledge. For Said, as for Foucault, the Orientalist discourse is the expression of power and knowledge defined by the Foucauldian understanding (Varol, 2017). Foucault implies that power is everywhere and comes from everywhere, which is closely related to the superiority of the West over the East. This means that the West is already in the position of power and truth because it shapes what is true and false, what is good and bad. It is the result of the educational system, the media representations, and political or economic ideologies. In the TV series that will be analyzed, the Foucauldian understanding of power and knowledge manifests itself in different ways: Europeans are in government and make decisions about the lives of immigrants, the executive treats every immigrant as a terrorist, people living in the same community divide themselves into in-groups and out-groups.

It is said that the theory of orientalism omits or ignores at least four important sub-themes: resistance of the colonized, resistance within the West, the importance of gender, and historical

⁷ Sardar, Z. (1999). *Orientalism*, p.67. Open University Press. ISBN 0335202063.

⁸ Moore-Gilbert, B.J. (1997). *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics*. London: Routledge. DOI <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315843452>.

⁹ Macfie, A. L., (2000). *Orientalism: A Reader*. Edinburgh University Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctvxcrbwv>

¹⁰ Pollock, S., (2019) "Indology, Power, and the Case of Germany", *Orientalism: A Reader*, New York: New York University Press. DOI 10.1515/9781474470476-033

circumstances (McLeod, 2013). Following the narrative of Orientalism, it is assumed that the West is active, and the East is passive, but Said does not consider the resistance of the East – how indigenous peoples have manipulated Orientalism to create their own response to it. Homi Bhabha¹¹, for example, argues that colonial discourses are deeply complex, and that it is not acceptable to confine them to a "single, monolithic agenda" (King, 2001, p. 86). Said does not examine how the colonized confronted colonial discourse, how Oriental people responded to Orientalism, and how they resisted it. In *Orientalism*, Said said that every European was racist, imperialist, and almost entirely ethnocentric (Said, 2003, p. 204), which led to another wave of criticism questioning why Said never mentioned nations fighting against imperialism. Moreover, Said omits any information about how imperialism was perceived by the Occident. For example, Said does not take into account the German Orientalist tradition (the perspectives of Hegel, Nietzsche or Marx), which illustrates the opposite of Said's theory – Germany did not have colonies in the East, but following the historical narrative, it is obvious that the idea of the pure Aryan race can be defined as the dominance of one group over another. This example shows that Said's thesis that Orientalism is always linked to imperialism does not hold. Jayant Lele, professor emeritus in the Departments of Political Studies, Sociology, and Global Development Studies at Queen's University in Kingston, makes another important point regarding the drawbacks of Orientalism – Orientalism not only has a negative influence on the Orient, but also limits the possibility of self-analysis for the West: "Through a culturally imposed stupefaction of the people', both Western and non-Western people are manipulated and subjugated through the 'same project of control and exploitation" (Lele, qtd. in King, 2001, p. 85). Although prejudice is most often created against Muslims and the Orient as a whole, occasionally in-groups and out-groups are created within Europeans themselves. Anything different than or diverging from the common image created by dominant cultures and governments is perceived as less valuable. This creates a two-tiered image of terrorists.

Irrespective of criticisms, Said's theory of Orientalism is highly useful for the analysis of the counterpart of Western and Eastern Worlds, or between "us" and "them". The theory enables us to define how the East is being represented by the West, and to identify the peculiarities and aftermath

¹¹ Bhabha, H. K. (1985). Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817, *Critical Inquiry*, 12(1), pp. 144–165. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343466>.

of such a representation. The persisting popularity of Orientalism is evidence that the topic is still relevant today. Even if Said omits sub-topics such as feminism, he still thoroughly examines the confrontation of two poles of the world.

4.4. Simulation and hyperreality

Simulation is most often understood as an illusion of reality, or the replacement of the real event with an image of it. However, Jean Baudrillard, who originally introduced the concept of simulation, explains it differently: "If you start from the idea that the world is a total illusion, then life, thought, become absolutely unbearable. So, you have to make every effort to materialize the world, realize it, in order to escape from this total illusion. And the 'realizing' of the world, through science and technology, is precisely what simulation is - the exorcism of the terror of illusion by the most sophisticated means of the 'realization of the world'" (Baudrillard, qtd. in Butler, 1999, p. 24). The purpose of simulation is not to replace reality, but to make it real. In this sense, simulation is not a vision in the traditional sense, but rather an attempt to dispel the underlying illusion that permeates everything. Butler, in *Jean Baudrillard. The Defence of the Real*, also refers to the paradox of the copy, where he says that if the copy comes too close to the original, it no longer looks like the original, but it becomes another original (Butler, 1999). This is also the main limitation of simulation: the goal of a simulation is to bring out what is only implicit in the real and make it explicit, but there comes a point where it gets too close to the original (Butler, 1999). It is important to keep in mind that simulation is not just "a simple derealization of the world but also its realization" (Butler, 1999, p. 25).

Baudrillard's example of Disneyland perfectly defines what the author means by the third order of simulation and its relationship, or more precisely lack of relationship, to reality. The author explains how Disneyland gets as close to reality as possible and makes society believe that it is the real thing: "Disneyland is a perfect model of all the entangled orders of simulation, to begin with it is a play of illusions and phantasms: Pirates, the Frontiers, Future World, etc. This imaginary world is supposed to be what makes the operation successful. But what draws the crowds is undoubtedly much more the social microcosm, the miniaturized and religious reveling in real

America, in its delights and drawbacks. You park outside, queue up inside, and are totally abandoned at the exit" (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 22). According to Laughey, "This is what Baudrillard means when he states that Disneyland is the *real* America, because the *real* America is actually a hyperreal phenomenon divorced from the once genuinely real place called America that has now vanished from human experience" (Laughey, 2007, p. 149). Presenting Disneyland as the real world is simply an attempt to exclude the real. The image of Disneyland itself creates the visual of an entity within reality, as the real within the real. The fictional Disneyland is neither true nor false; it is a device of deterrence set up to reanimate the fiction of the real in reverse. It is meant to be a childish world, to make us think that adults are somewhere else, in the "real" world, and to hide the fact that true childishness is everywhere (Baudrillard, 1983). The same approach works with other aspects of society, such as the representation of terrorism. It is impossible to assess the exact level of the real, just as it is impossible to stage an illusion, because neither illusion nor reality is possible anymore, according to Baudrillard's book *Simulations* (Baudrillard, 1983).

The magnification of certain events presented in the media is known as hyperreality. Hyperreality is something between physical and virtual realities (Antony and Trambo, 2020). It is crucial to critically evaluate all media sources and establish what is real and what is hyperreality. Baudrillard in his book *Simulacra and Simulation* states that illusions based on reality are presented as originals. Society is surrounded by various fantasies and illusions presented in media and literature, which leads people to confuse reality with fictional images. With the development of technology, simulacra have become more appealing and comfortable to live with: "Communication, technology, and media always control humanity, sometimes they provide misinterpretations and ideas" (Antony and Trambo, 2020, p. 3314). Hyperreality not only confuses reality with imaginary things, but also creates symbols that represent something that does not actually exist. The authors also introduce two new concepts: simulacra and simulation. Simulacra are copies of something that is either no longer original or never was original, while simulation represents a copy as a substitute for reality (Antony and Trambo, 2020, p. 3314). Dan Laughey in *Key Themes in Media Theory* (2007) refers to three orders of simulation:

1. First-order – represents signs that copy real things;
2. Second-order – uses signs to refer to other signs that copy real things, intertextuality;

3. Third-order – signs no longer correspond to reality and work in the opposite way – trying to cover the reality when true and false collapse.

The categorization is based on Baudrillard's ideas, where the first and second order still maintain the relationship between the real and representations, while the third order has already lost the connection between the reality and images or signs, and functions as the hyperreal. Hyperreality is a widespread problem in postmodern society, as it can be observed in almost every field, and most certainly in the mass media. The media always deal with symbolism and images that overlap with reality. Baudrillard presents four phases of hyperreality:

1. the reflection of a profound reality,
2. the masking and denaturing of a profound reality,
3. masking the absence of a profound reality, and
4. having no relation to any reality; it is its own pure simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 6).

The author argues that hyperreality harms society by confusing the real and the imaginary and by limiting the ability to evaluate events objectively: "Just as prisons conceal the fact that society as a whole is imprisoned in the sense of being unable to access genuine reality, so television and other electronic media conceal processes of simulation which effectively regulate and restrict our versions of the 'reality' (hyperreality actually) we sense around us" (Laughey, 2007, p. 150). This means that the audience is ultimately unable to define what is real and what is hyperreal. Baudrillard talked about the "non-event" and the "absolute event". As a non-event, Baudrillard cited the Gulf War, where the brightest memory of the war for those who witnessed it from the sidelines was the broadcast of images on television: "This is not a war in the sense of prolonged combat and conflict (the first two world wars, by contrast, really did take place); instead, we experience a virtual war, much like a video game simulates real warfare, and therefore this real-time, media-saturated spectacle is nothing other than what Baudrillard calls a 'non-event'" (Laughey, 2007, p. 151). In Baudrillard's view, the Gulf War was not a real conflict, but an atrocity pretending to be one. Most of the time, the Iraqi army was avoided by the American military through the use of overwhelming air power, and few casualties were suffered by the US. The number of Iraqi deaths was hardly ever reported. As a result, in the eyes of the West, the fighting "did not really take place". Moreover, propaganda art was the sole source of all the knowledge that viewers acquired about the conflict. It was impossible to distinguish between the actual experience of the conflict and its stylized, selective misrepresentation through simulacra because of the

carefully controlled media presentations. At the same time, Baudrillard refers to the 9/11 events in the USA as the absolute event: "With the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, we might even be said to have before us the absolute event, the 'mother' of all events, the pure event uniting within itself all the events that have never taken place" (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 4). The main difference is that the fall of the Twin Towers had more symbolic than physical significance. In contrast, Baudrillard also explains that the fall of the Twin Towers was still not a real event for those who witnessed it on television: "The image consumes the event, in the sense that it absorbs it and offers it for consumption" (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 27). In the television shows analyzed in this paper, the dominant powers are seen using people as tools to achieve their own goals, using only hyperreality and simulation in relation to terrorism. Hyperreality can be used to convince and manipulate people. Hyperreality as a concept is related to imperialism – the process of conquest and attempts to make simulators seem real (Baudrillard, 1994).

Like any other theory, Baudrillard's ideas have their own limitations and critiques. Baudrillard, among other things, claims that Los Angeles is a utopia or that the system of symbols is the only reality. Most of the academic community would probably agree that the fact that Baudrillard's ideas feature strongly in academic literature confirms that his concepts are still relevant in today's society. It is not surprising that someone who has been so widely analyzed has also been heavily criticized. As stated in *The Jean Baudrillard Reader* by Steve Redhead: "The most divisive social and cultural theorist of all time, Jean Baudrillard was controversial both in life and in death. He has been denigrated as merely "an overrated French theorist" (Cohen 2007: 110), a "political idiot," and a "philosopher clown," worshipped as the high priest of postmodernism, and, more viciously, denounced as one of the notorious "intellectual imposters" (Sokal and Bricmont 2003) <...> One of his most scandalous ideas about the Gulf War was described as "nihilistic and amoral" (Redhead, 2008, p. 99). Jean Baudrillard's writing in three articles on the Gulf War is not, as many banal analyses of media culture claimed at the time, an instance of the collapse of the real into the image. It also is not an illustration of Baudrillard's later turn to the right and support for the military-industrial complex, even though he was once an extreme leftist (Redhead, 2008, p.100). As a result of society's increasing reliance on the media, Baudrillard argued that the media was designed as a tool to destabilize society. Today's media – advertising, television, and the Internet – are things that most people take for granted as part of their lives. The desire for a simulation of so-called reality, rather than the need for communication, is what gives the media its place in

society. The issue of hyperreality is relevant to this analysis because it illustrates how the media can create false images and assumptions.

5. METHOD

This thesis is based on a cinematographic narrative structural analysis of television shows. The television shows selected for analysis already contain oriental and post-colonial narratives. Moreover, these shows combine violence, terrorism, and the representation of ingroups and outgroups. Cinematographic narrative structural analysis will help to examine how terrorism is represented in Scandinavian television shows from the perspectives of Orientalism and post-colonialism, and how narratives of ingroups and outgroups, i.e., "us" and "them", are revealed in Scandinavian media. Cinematographic narratological analysis, among other approaches, works in terms of semiotics and narrative. In contrast to literature, the media include audiovisual elements that constitute new layers for analysis.

As Roland Barthes said, narrative "is present at all times, in all places, in all societies; indeed, narrative starts with the very history of mankind; there is not, there has never been anywhere, any people without narrative" (Barthes, 1975, p. 237). Narratological analysis is concerned with story elements such as plot anatomy, character motivation, and theme. Narrative structure analysis usually considers the flow of the story, the effect of following the structure, and analyzes how the theme itself is shaped. The subject of this paper, television shows and any other media (films, video games), offer some main aspects to consider in analyzing the narrative. First, the visual data, which includes the smallest unit of film (frame or cell), shots, cuts and transitions, angles, lighting, color palette, filters, and film stock. The second major aspect is audio data – the soundtrack (divided into diegetic sound, non-diegetic sound, and overlapping sound). The third point is composition and narration. This categorization follows Manfred Jahn's *A Guide to Narratological Film Analysis* (2021), and these guidelines will be applied in the following analysis. According to Annette Kuhn's and Guy Westwell's *A Dictionary of Film Studies* (2020), and the chapter *Colour* in particular, color affects our perception of things differently depending on its electromagnetic wavelength. Writing about color in film studies has aimed to explain how physiological, optical, chemical, and technological processes serve as the foundation for the creation of color film and the perception of color by viewers. The discussion of color in relation to mise-en-scene and cinematography is an essential component of film analysis. For film analysis, the following terms are favored when cinematographers use color temperature as a technical measure of color: Brightness (also called lightness or value) refers to how dull or bright the color is. Hue refers to

which part of the color spectrum is most prominent.¹² Another aspect of why narrative is so important to this thesis is that it is closely related to the shaping of human images and processes: "We are paying increasing attention to the political effects of narrative, seeing storytelling not only as a way of creating community but as a resource for dominating others, for expressing solidarity, for resistance and conflict; a resource, that is, in the continuing negotiation through which humans create language and society and self as they talk and act. We see narrative more and more as a way of constructing 'events' and giving them meaning, as we pick out bits of the stream of experience and give them boundaries and significance by labeling them" (Johnstone, 2005, p. 644). By studying narrative, one sees how certain events are given narrative meaning, interpreted for the viewers and made to signify the story. The story creates exceptional identities – the narrators. According to Johnstone, shared stories also create and connect the groups (Johnstone, 2005, p. 641). It means that narrative has a strong meaning in communities. Each community can have different kinds of shared stories, which also creates the identities as mentioned earlier. Having that in mind, it is not surprising that different communities having their own shared narratives can feel a confrontation of the shared values as well.

A combination of literal and figurative signs makes up our world. A sign favorable to one person may be unfavorable to another. Our community, its businesses, and its government present signs that reflect generational and cultural differences, as well as ever-changing meanings and social norms. Narratological analysis also contains part of semiotic analysis, which is concerned with the meaning behind metaphors, symbolism, and analogies. It is an important approach for this research because semiotic analysis also deals with some common visualizations such as, an actor's appearance, which then carries specific meaning in creating a character's personality. It helps to analyze how signs are used to create the representation of a character. The main concern of this narrative analysis is how meaning is created and transmitted. Another highly relevant idea introduced by Saussure is that meaning is created by relations that are oppositional (Berger, 2004, p. 7) and that can also be found in the method of narrative analysis. This means that opposites explain each other, for example "rich" means nothing if there is no "poor". It is the same with the

¹² Kuhn, A., Westwell, G. (2020). *Colour, A Dictionary of Film Studies*. Oxford University Press. Available at: [Color in film - Film Studies - Research Guides at Dartmouth College](#) (accessed: 25 May 2023).

social groups that are being analyzed: there is no "outgroup" without a corresponding "ingroup", and there is no "Orient" without "Occident" on the other side.

Cinematographic narrative structural analysis gives more powerful tool to analyze the television series. The study of intertextual and interdiscursive systems can be done more effectively through narrative. The discourse of semiotics, which deals with signs and communication code is useful tool for cinematographic narrative structural analysis but focusing not just on syntax or meaning but also on interpretation of the visuals. Cinematographic methods help to apply the three-dimensional analysis consisting from semantics, pragmatics and syntax. As the analysis that will be performed has multiple layers of theoretical background, it also demands respectively broad method to perform the analysis. Narrative film analysis enables to do research towards multimedia, composition and syntax.

6. ANALYSIS

Terrorism and power structures are the main narrative themes in all three television series presented in the introduction. By analyzing scenes from these television series, I was able to distinguish four main sub-themes and analyze their representation. The main sub-themes are:

- How media creates symbols that become our hyperreality;
- How manifestations of power structures are created and represented;
- How the media creates an "us" versus "them" relationship;
- How mediation works in media – its detachment from reality.

6.1. Orientalism: "us" vs. "them"

Further analysis will provide examples of how Orientalism and Postcolonialism perspectives interact with media and terrorism discourse. Orientalism provides the colonial state's dominant power with a discourse of otherness to support the stereotypical segregation of ingroups and outgroups. The first section of analysis is going to mostly deal with segregation of ingroups and outgroups from different perspectives, it will also analyze not just the segregation itself but also how it is born in the society, what socio-cultural aspects influence this and also how it is represented in Scandinavian television series. The research of how the narrative of "us" and "them" is created within the media is the starting point of the analysis.

The opposition between the natives and the immigrants is one of the strongest motifs of the television series *When the Dust Settles*. In the first episode, there is already a scene of an old Danish man living in a retirement home – completely weak and vulnerable, unable to take care of himself and still refusing to let a Muslim nurse help him get up after he fell to the floor in his bathroom. The man shouts that he will never let the one with a rag (auth. note - hijab) take care of him. He also asks another nurse why they hire them (referring to immigrants). The nurse replies that nobody else wants to do this kind of work. This scene shows that xenophobia is widespread among all groups of society and the hatred is so strong that even the elderly man, who is contemplating

suicide, cannot let the immigrant with her own traditional clothes help him, even though immigrants are the ones who take care of elderly Danes.

Another scene where a Danish woman with her daughter comes to the refugee camp to donate some clothes and sees the whole camp surrounded by a fence – the mark between "us" and "them":

Figure 6.1. *When the Dust Settles*, Episode 1, 14:56.

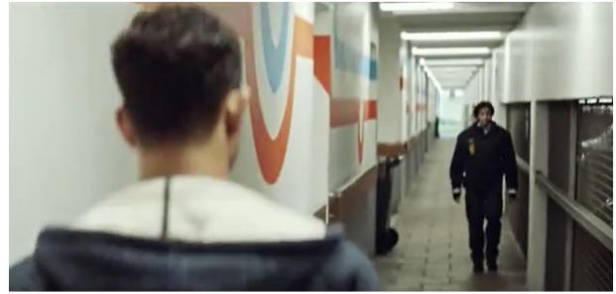


Source: Høgh et al., 2020

This view also implies that immigrants are something to be feared, something that needs to be kept further away from the locals and most of all monitored by government authorities. The same girl later finds a backpack full of bullets and guns next to the camp, which also creates the image that all Muslim immigrants are terrorists who came to Europe just for revenge. From the cinematographic perspective – in this scene (as in many others when creating a segregation between immigrants and locals) extreme long shot and dark colors palette dominates. Dark colors dominate not just on the cloth of the actors but also in the environment as well – the surroundings, such as buildings or cloudy gloomy weather. The choice of colors palette creates a gloomy mood of the scene. Such pattern of representation directly relates to the image of immigrants that are being represented in those scenes – the dark colors create unwelcome and uncomfortable feeling, suggesting that something terrifying or dangerous might happen.

One of the similarities between the television series *When the Dust Settles* and *Caliphate* is that Muslims are very often depicted in a shabby apartment building environment:

Figure 6.2. *When the Dust Settles*, Episodes 7 and 10, 1:23, 23:08, 7:32, 31:39.



Source: Høgh et al., 2020

In the television series *Caliphate*, the worn facades of the factories and the huge houses in the suburbs of Stockholm play almost as important a role as the skilled actors who portray terrorism as a social issue and not just a headline in a newspaper or a television ad. In the television series, not only are Muslims portrayed as an outgroup, but their living environment is also somewhat gloomy, uncomfortable, and inhospitable. Native Scandinavians, for example, are always shown in a completely different environment – usually in private houses where light colors dominate both inside and out, usually without high metal fences. Such a huge and accentuated cinematographic difference in the depiction of the environment is not only part of the narrative, but also has a symbolic meaning. It creates the segregation between people living in the same community and speaks to the character of immigrants. Their living environment becomes part of their image, where poor conditions are equated with less worthy personalities. Conversely, when Europeans are concerned, their living surroundings do not define the people themselves, and there is no narrative created that would connect these two things. This also leads to the idea that Europeans, or Scandinavians in this specific example, are evaluated as individuals, while the image of immigrants is being influenced by all kinds of social aspects. The environment of such shabby apartment buildings also works as a clue to the question of where terrorism is being born. The representation of the immigrants' surroundings is directly related to the radicalization process - something that is being planned in dark, shabby places far from others and from the city centers. Orientalist representation of immigrants has a strong connection to hyperreality – where detail and

continuous stereotypical representation of Muslims serves as the reality to the viewer. The television series portray an image that is more real than the true reality itself. As a result, audiences are no longer able to separate the simulacra from the reality.

The example below is a very suggestive shot in terms of composition and framing. Certain shot compositions can emphasize the narrative itself. The long shot shown in the figure number five is a type of framing – it usually represents the relation between the subject and its surroundings. In this case, it shows Muslims in their repulsive, unpleasant environment. The framing also gives context to the shot, depicting the surroundings not just as an apartment block, but as a reference to segregation from the rest of the community. This shot and framing also allow the audience to identify with the characters and see reality through their eyes.

Figure 6.3. *Caliphate*, Episode 5, 35:41.



Source: Behrman, 2020

It is worth noting that such a framing composition also has a symbolic meaning – the characters represented in a tight circle again symbolize also the segregation from the society. It shows that immigrants are not only segregated from the rest of the community, but the social context itself traps them in a bubble. Characters highlighted in such a circle can also be interpreted as a target – someone to blame for things that happen in a community, or someone who is always suspicious and should be watched. The tendency to segregate and highlight the immigrants in the society

which stem from Orientalist and post-colonialist thinking build the simulacra – the reality that audience creates for themselves while observing how television series or media overall represents the out-groups.

This representation creates a clear judgment and a clear Oriental "us" and "them" narrative, the opponents and the community. The image of surroundings is the reference to *The Million Program* (se: *Miljonprogrammet*) – a huge housing program implemented in Sweden and Denmark between 1965 and 1974. The idea of the program was to build one million new homes for poorer people. *The Million Program* was mainly criticized because of the poor aesthetical view, small apartments and, most importantly, for creating a segregation between poor and rich. Per Lindvall¹³, a Swedish economist covering macroeconomic and business topics, describes it as solving one problem and creating another at the same time (Lindvall, 2020). Sweden's government had the idea to build good homes for strong communities, that is to also create more public places such as schools, churches, hospitals. Unfortunately, this led not only to socio-economic but to ethnical segregation as well: "many immigrants lacked insight towards Swedish cultural norms, lacked interactivity with native Swedes and other more integrated groups and had weak connections to the labor market. The study warned about the risk of the development of parallel societies, gangs and organized crime - problems that top the headlines today" (Lindvall, 2020). In *When the Dust Settles*, Sweden's minister of justice is referring to these suburbs as ghettos, where terrorists are born. Ghetto historically means the Jewish quarter in a city, and in the series Muslims today are in the same position as Jewish people once were – dominated by better Europeans, Westerners that tried to protect their neighborhoods, cities, countries and even race from the other ones – from out-groups that are in a lower position than Europeans. A narrative very close to the housing situation is presented in *Thin Blue Line*. Here, all the contradictory situations between citizens and police take place in the suburbs, where immigrants are the dominant group in the neighborhood. These suburbs are represented as shabby and unwelcoming, with no beautiful greenery or welcoming public spaces. The suburbs are also portrayed as dangerous to visit, and in the series a police team would never drive there alone, no pedestrians or children would be visible. This representation is again based on an Orientalist perspective, with a strong implication of contradiction and conflict

¹³ Lindvall, P. (2020). "Housing - Engine for Swedish Segregation", *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*. Available at: <https://www.fes.de/en/shaping-a-just-world/peace-and-security/article-in-peace-and-security/wohnungsbau-motor-der-segregation-in-schweden> (accessed: 24 May 2023).

between locals and immigrants. It is not surprising that the suburbs created during the time of *Miljonprogrammet* created a hyperreal image of ethnic otherness in sharp contrast to the ethnically Swedish central areas.

Another important part of identity is language. This is also tightly related to ideology – where the language functions as the tool for ideology to thrive. The immigrant narrative gives a particularly powerful setting for examining the effects of a language-driven hyperreality. The significance of immigration and ethnic otherness arising from Orientalism and post-colonialism makes language the tool for simulacra and fake symbolism. A controversial issue concerning immigrants is their learning of the language of the foreign country. In *Thin Blue Line*, this topic is also mentioned. The most memorable scene occurs in episode two, when police officers Magnus and Sara ask four foreign women to leave an outdoor restaurant where they have been eating food they had brought with them. A language barrier arises between the women, who neither understand nor speak Swedish or English, and the police officers, who do not know the native language of the immigrants. Magnus, the police officer, just grabs all the food and disrespectfully orders the women to leave:

Figure 6.4. *Thin Blue Line*, Episode 3, 05:07.



Source: Hansson et al., 2017

The generalization of all immigrants is also evident in this situation when one of the police officers tells the women ‘devleia’ (auth. transl. goodbye), assuming that all these women are Muslims, which is also underlined with the tools of appearance: hijabs and darker skin tone. From the point

of view of narrative discourse, it is said that an individual needs to have a coherent, respectable, and constantly revised life story to exist in the social world with a comfortable sense of being a good, socially acceptable, and stable person (Linde, 1993: 3 qtd. in Johnstone, p. 640). It shows that language, and speaking in general, is the way in which people understand not just each other but the world itself. The division of language is an important motif in both *When the Dust Settles* and *Thin Blue Line*. This creates an "us" and "them" opposition, which later leads to the image of immigrants as threat to Western values and communities. Muslim women, who are portrayed as completely dependent on their husbands or older sons in financial and social aspects, are also represented as instruments of terrorism. Such women are more easily recruited to carry out terrorist attacks.

The representation of "us" versus "them" or the representation of "Swedishness" in *Thin Blue Line* is apparent in the episode where a Swedish woman attacks a young woman wearing a hijab for covering her head. The Swedish woman questions why the other woman is wearing a hijab when she is in Sweden, and whether she speaks Swedish. She says: "Take that rag off your head. You are in Sweden now!":

Figure 6.5. *Thin Blue Line*, Episode 5, 43:00.



Source: Hansson et al., 2017

These statements imply that the Swedish woman is in a position of power to define what is Swedish and what is not. She considers the woman wearing the hijab to be in an inferior position compared to "real Swedes". This episode shows not only the difference between ethnic groups, but also

xenophobia and public prejudice. It highlights power relationships based on ethnicity, class, or gender. Cinematographically, the main tool to highlight the conflict is the close-up camera shot. This shot of a Muslim woman signifies that she is the main character here, even though she appears in the episode just occasionally. The emphasis is put on the woman as a symbol of otherness and immigrants. Close-up shots create a strong connection between the audience and the media – it lets the viewer experience not just experience the narrative of the story from the side but also to see the subject's facial expressions in great detail, to almost feel part of it – which later leads to the impression of reality, the simulacra.

The narrative that "immigrant" equals "criminal" is evident in the visuals of *Thin Blue Line*, as well as in the script. One such situation is demonstrated in episode one, where an alarm from the police station announces the search for two young boys who, according to witnesses, are dressed in black sweaters and hoods. Two police officers, Magnus and Sara, notice two dark-skinned young men. After the police ask them to stop, the men ask what they are accused of and why the officers are arresting them. Then one officer suddenly grabs one of the men and pushes him against a wall.

Figure 6.6. *Thin Blue Line*, Episode 1, 13:20.



Source: Hansson et al., 2017

The police officers then contact the emergency center to report that they have found two men matching the description, but the dispatcher informs them that the real criminals have already been arrested. The officers let the men go and do not explain to them why they were arrested. This situation shows the strong preconceived notion of what criminals look like – dark skin, hoodies,

backpacks. The actions of the officers are based solely on the ethnic characteristics of the men, which are different from what "Swedishness" is supposed to look like. The physical confrontation between locals and immigrants gives a predefined idea of what locals and immigrants should look like, which is directly related to post-colonial thinking. Police officers, or locals in general, are represented as light-skinned, light-haired, dressed-up, while immigrants are always shown as dark-skinned, usually with long beards, wearing oversized dark clothes. The differences in appearance not only create segregation in society, but also create a mysterious and threatening image of immigrants; it looks like they are hiding something under their big, black beards and hoods. This also shows how the government, and especially its executive branch, is superior to some groups in society, for example young, black-skinned immigrants. Such a distribution of power is based solely on ethnicity, which is the basis for xenophobia.

The confrontation between "us" and "them" is one of the main sub-themes in the TV series *Thin Blue Line*, which often portrays Muslims as criminals and terrorists. Another representation of this is found in episode five, where police officers receive an alarm from the emergency center about a suspected armed man on public transport. Without further explanation, a police officer arrests the man and handcuffs him:

Figure 6.7. *Thin Blue Line*, Episode 5, 10:12.



Source: Hansson et al., 2017

The little brother of the arrested man even asks the police officers if they are going to shoot his brother, which implies that such police behavior creates fear in society. After examining the backpack of the arrested, the police officer makes sure that the arrested man is telling the truth and

that there is no gun in his backpack. The police officer apologizes and lets the man go. This situation implies that police officers, or government structures in general, have a preconceived image, which is also part of the hyperreality of what armed men or criminals look like. This often leads to the arrest of innocent immigrants, just because they look more like criminals than for example a white-skinned European would. Cases like these illustrate how immigrants are seen as potential terrorists. From the immigrants' perspective, however, the police are the source of constant terror. As stated in the 2011 report by members of the Stockholm University Institute of Criminology, *Varifrån kommer hotet? - Perspektiv på terrorism och radikalisering*, placing all Muslims under suspicion on the basis that a few have committed terrorist or other violent acts, forces the rest of the Muslim population to prove their innocence – usually by not practicing their religion, not wearing traditional clothing, or becoming apolitical. At the same time, the fear of being seen as a terrorist or a radicalized Muslim is spreading among Muslims because such prejudices are being based solely on the meetings they attend, the recreational activities they engage in, the friends they associate with, or environment in which they live. Such extensive surveillance, as depicted in the television series *Thin Blue Line*, can easily backfire and become counterproductive. It means that trying to stop the radicalization process based on suspicion alone risks leading to the opposite – more and more people becoming radicalized (Hörnqvist and Flyghed, 2011, p. 10). The television series *Thin Blue Line* implies a process of radicalization through the techniques of representation. Structural armed and political violence against immigrants functions as the starting point of the radicalization process. The hatred towards immigrants and the hatred of immigrants towards government structures is represented by constant riots, physical and social resistance, and hateful language. Young Muslims in *Thin Blue Line* are always portrayed as being in a separate group from other members of society, only communicating with other Muslims and thus creating division. They are usually represented as doing "less worthy" jobs than the locals, like selling newspapers on the street, while the Swedes are portrayed as working in the government, the police, or owning their own businesses. The same applies to immigrants' leisure activities – they are frequently represented as people who have no hobbies and who mainly just drive around town in their cars or bother people in the streets. The environment, social and cultural relationships in which immigrants are portrayed also characterizes and creates a stereotypical image of Muslims that leads to prejudice. For example, in *Thin Blue Line*, the most common leisure activity of young immigrants is depicted as driving around town while listening

to loud music. Every time police officers stop one of the vehicles, they find illegal substances or some other violation. In this way, the creators of the television series generalize all Muslims and treat them as one unit instead of autonomous individuals. Generalization of Muslims also leads to stereotyping and prejudice. What the series presents is not real, because the notion that every Muslim is a terrorist is not accurate; criminological reports and statistics of terrorist activity disprove what is being represented by media. Similar to hyperrealism, this conceals the lack of reality.

The three scenes described above have some cinematographic aspects in common – the typical image of the suspect. All have come to Sweden from abroad, all are male, and all are considered dangerous simply because of their race and ethnicity. All the suspects do not fit the common image of a decent citizen, or the image of how a decent citizen should look and behave – and that is the main reason why they fall into a category of suspected terrorists and threats to society. The series define a proper member of the community as everything that an immigrant is not: light-skinned, speaking at least Swedish or English (which also means being an international individual, not "just" a member of Oriental society), having a job, not gathering in groups with other people of the same ethnicity. This representation is formed by people's prejudices, in the series it is usually represented by people calling the police as soon as they see an immigrant from the Middle East with a hoodie and a backpack or assaulting them for wearing their traditional religious clothes – such as a hijab. Such representations create an unequal relationship between "us" and "them". Moreover, as counter-terrorism measures are based on guilt by association, ethnic stereotypes are further exploited. Orientalist thinking and ethnic segregation leads to the blaming of an entire group, and it is always the "others" – the foreigners – who are affected by this collective suspicion (Hörnqvist and Flyghed, 2011, p. 1). The series *Thin Blue Line* deploys narrative tools so that regardless of what a local person does, their life story and circumstances are presented in more detail than the act of violence that they commit. It is implied that the audience should look for reasons and explanations for their questionable behavior in external factors, while when Muslims are depicted committing the crime, the television series does not consider their background story at all. This shows that there is strong prejudice and collective suspicion when it comes to attitudes towards immigrants and most especially Muslims.

In the television series *When the Dust Settles*, following the terrorist attacks the mood of social division is stronger than ever. Immigrants are classified as either more or less worthy, e.g., an immigrant from an Asian country shouts at a Muslim immigrant because he does not speak Danish, even though he lives in Denmark. Or a little immigrant girl tells her teacher at school that her family do not watch the news at home because the shooters are always portrayed as people with darker skin, they are always to blame. The superiority of the Occident over the Orient is demonstrated even in food, which is generally a part of culture. Following a terrorist attack, the owner of the restaurant where the attack was carried out decides to make some pork sandwiches outside and is being blamed for creating even more opposition between the two groups, immigrants and natives. The restaurant owner mentions that it is still Denmark here, and asks whether he should prepare hummus and chickpeas instead. In this scene, food choices (pork versus chickpeas) are used to symbolize two separate groups, Muslims and Christians.

Although in this TV series, unlike in *Caliphate*, Muslims are not shown in traditional dress, and none of the characters worship Allah or pray, they are still represented as terrorists, only are they not fighting because of Allah, but against the system. Muslims are portrayed as a segregated group and as victims of their own ethnicity. It is shown in *When the Dust Settles* that third-generation Muslims who were born in Denmark and speak the local language are still being treated as an out-group. From the theoretical point of view, Said uses the term "simulation" to describe the textual representational mode of the Orient by the Occident. A parallel between theories of simulacrum and the theory of Orientalism is evident in the situation provided above. Said suggests that the same process is operating in textual form, with the image projected in a text being of an abstract nature. The creation of simulations in the TV series involves layering images repeatedly until they are so mixed up that the audience cannot distinguish between the real world and the simulation, when every Muslim becomes a threat to society.

The scene below, from the seventh episode of the first season of *Thin Blue Line*, deals with violence and xenophobia, when a brutal clash between police and residents occurs. The scene depicts the relationship of "us" and "them" not only as Muslims and Christians, or good and evil, but also as structure versus citizen, free speech versus armed police. The sense of fear and chaos is reinforced by the choice of colors and music.

Figure 6.8. *Thin Blue Line*, Episode 7, 38:36 – 38:40.



Source: Hansson et al., 2017

In this scene, both the objective camera angle and the subjective angle appear. The objective angle shows the events from a far distance, making the viewer a spectator from a longer and untouchable distance. The subjective camera is used from a close, intimate distance and gives the viewer the feeling of being part of the event (Ledin, Machin, 2018, p. 59). In a scene where one of the policewomen gets red soot thrown on their helmet, the viewer sees this from an objective camera angle, but soon after the camera angle changes to a subjective one with a close distance and height similar to the policewoman's own. The camera is positioned at the same height and position as the person who threw the jar, with the officer looking straight into the camera. This puts the viewer in the position of the person who threw the red paint at her, and the one who looks into her eyes and hears her loud breathing. This camera technique makes the audience feel like they are in the scene with the actors, and thus creates a feeling of reality, a simulation. For example, the officer's loud breathing implies the fear, the fatigue, the anxiety. This is one of the categories of terrorism – fighting the political and governmental system.

The protesters are trapped behind a police cordon, which, according to Ledin and Machin (2018, p. 121), indicates separation and less space for movement. Furthermore, the camera position in the scene shows a far distance and gives viewers a bird's eye of the protesters. This evokes a feeling of inferiority and powerlessness of those represented. In his essay *The spirit of Terrorism*, Baudrillard explains that terrorism "goes far beyond the hatred of the unprivileged and the exploited toward the dominant global power, of those who fell on the wrong side of the world order. <...> There is no need for a death-wish or for destruction, nor even for a deprived effect. It is very logical and inexorable that their exercise of power exacerbates the will to destroy it, and that it is an accomplice on its own destruction" (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 6). The extreme violence

used by the armed police in *Thin Blue Line* represents the attitudes and prejudices against immigrants and the center of terrorism itself.

6.2. Post-colonialism: the radicalization process

This section examines how the radicalization process is represented in the three TV series. The radicalization process as a whole is the result of post-colonialism and will be analyzed not only as an act of terror, but also as a continuous process influenced by various socio-cultural aspects. The narrative of the radicalization process is an important indication in order to analyze the representations of terrorism in media. Baudrillard in his work *The Spirit of Terrorism* also analyzes terrorism as a concept and its symbolic meaning to society. That is why it is important to consider Baudrillard's ideas when discussing radicalization and acts of violence.

In the television series *Caliphate*, as in reality, the Islamic State (IS) recruits online, but also, like the student assistant Ibbe in the series, goes out among young people and targets those who are easily influenced. For any vulnerable member of society, IS can become a promise of the community that is missing. Two sisters become radicalized in this way, and they want to go to Raqqa to fight for what they consider to be Islam.

Figure 6.9. *Caliphate*, Episode 6, 33:01



Source: Johan Paulin, SVT

The shot above also carries symbolic meaning – girls from Sweden is dressed from head to toes in black Arabic clothes, their looks seem angry, concerned. The composition is minimalistic, so that all attention would be focused on the girls. This is how the conversion to Islam of those two girls is represented not just narratively, but also visually. In the same way, a young girl from a troubled family finds a warm welcome at Ibbe’s house, without knowing why he takes care of her. Later, the recruiter convinces the young, vulnerable girl to become a suicide bomber, wearing a jacket with a bomb inside so that she can blow herself up in the concert hall:

Figure 6.10. *Caliphate*, Episode 8, 49:27



Source: Behrman, 2020

This scene also implies that Muslims cannot be trusted, and that if they do not commit terrorist acts themselves, they will recruit others to do so. As Baudrillard explains in *The Spirit of Terrorism*, the secret of the effectiveness of an act of violence is the responsibility to sacrifice. This means that any act of violence or terrorism is not individual heroism, but rather a "collective sacrificial act sealed by an ideal demand" (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 22). This also refers to the opposition between Occident and Orient, between the "zero-death" (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 16) system and those who are willing to die for their beliefs. As Baudrillard explains, this means that everything here is about death, not only the violent irruption of death into the present, but also the irruption of a death that is much more than that: a death that is symbolic and sacrificial, or the absolute event (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 17). In both, *Caliphate* and *When the Dust Settles*, IS recruitment and the radicalization process are closely linked to the search for identity and belonging that stems from Orientalism and post-colonialism. For some characters, joining

murderous terrorist organizations like the Islamic State is the only way to connect to their ethnic roots or to be a part of a group; to finally belong to an ingroup rather than an outgroup of society.

As mentioned above, the radicalization process is a strong motif throughout the series *Caliphate and When the Dust Settles*. All four steps, pre-radicalization, identification, indoctrination, and action are evident. As discussed in the report *Varifrån kommer hotet? Perspektiv på terrorism och radikalisering?*, the main idea of the radicalization process is that a person becomes radicalized in the first three steps listed above in order to eventually commit an act of terrorism. The first step, pre-radicalization, is mostly concerned with personal life circumstances. For example, in *Caliphate* we see how young Muslims in school start to contemplate the injustice of executive police forces law enforcement or the judiciary towards immigrants. One Muslim girl worries that nobody from her school will ever become a police officer in Sweden, because to do so would probably require changing one's name to something more Swedish, like Erik or Ingrid. She says that to become a police officer in Sweden, you must renounce Islam. The second phase, identification, happens when an individual sets a goal and tries to find other like-minded people, as in the series *Caliphate*, where girls felt not valued enough in society and were easily tricked by the recruiter to fight against society and take revenge. The third step, indoctrination, deals with the situation when an individual is already recruited into a group and receives encouragement from the recruiter as well as some training for subsequent actions. In the same TV series, it is represented shown how the recruiter teaches young girls to pray, to wear hijabs, and tells them what is according to Allah's will and what goes against it. He also tries to separate the girls from their families and their usual environment to create a separation between parents and children, which only encourages the teenagers to fight even more strongly. And the last final phase is action; a convinced individual who is ready to plan and carry out a terrorist attack. In *Caliphate*, we see one of the girls wearing a suicide vest to blow herself up in the concert hall. The radicalization process in the series is represented as the result of a fundamental transformation at the individual level. The radicalization process is also depicted in *When the Dust Settles*. In the series, one of the main characters is a young Muslim man who helps carry out a terrorist attack. He is portrayed as an unhappy young man in his family, tempted by his older brother, forced to obey his instructions, to give up his personal life and his personal ambitions. This is the starting point of his radicalization process, the pre-radicalization phase. Later, he gets to know a man who supplies weapons to carry out terrorist attacks, and that is how identification and indoctrination begin. The young man finally

finds a place where he can express himself, where he feels valued and useful. And even though the final phase, action, in this example was simply delivering weapons to the site of the terrorist act, it can still be considered the culmination of the radicalization process.

Although the radicalization process is visible in all three TV series, the level of elaboration differs, and this influences how the audience absorbs the images that are created. As introduced by Baudrillard, images are the thing that sticks with us the most through all these transformations. Since images are our primal scene, this impact and fascination is what we remember. Furthermore, the acts of violence can also be considered to have radicalized the way people view reality, while at the same time radicalizing the state of the world (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 26). The depiction of the radicalization process also questions the essence of Orientalism and leads to the question of whether the depiction of radicalization supports the perception of Orientalism, or whether it challenges and opposes it. In *Caliphate*, for example, the radicalization process is one of the main motifs of the narrative, and all four parts of the radicalization flow can be explicitly observed. As a result, we see that characters are influenced by various cultural, social, and economic aspects of their daily lives, which eventually leads to the final step – terrorism. Such a detailed representation of the radicalization process makes the audience question the image they see. It shows that individuals who commit terrorist attacks are not only driven by a desire for revenge and blood, but that society itself contributes to the radicalization of people. The television series *Caliphate* and *When the Dust Settles* not only represent the final step of the radicalization process, but also question the roots of terrorism. Both series encourage the audience to question the birth of terrorism and widely present the socio-cultural environment that influences the life of immigrants. In *Caliphate*, for example, the root cause of terrorism is segregation from society. The Swedes themselves are isolated from the communities because of their physical or mental characteristics, which leads to hatred for the society from which they were excluded. Speaking of *When the Dust Settles*, isolation from the community is also the main motive for radicalization. In this case, a Muslim man is being ignored and abandoned by his own family, and so he looks for another community – somewhere where he would be treated right, even if that community is a radical one. It is interesting to note that both natives and immigrants can be recruited to perform terrorist attacks. This fact also challenges Orientalism itself. It shows that not only the Occident and the Orient are pitted against each other, but that people within the same community can be separated from other members. This of course challenges the stereotypical image that all Muslims are

terrorists, and makes the audience question whether these external forces might be what leads individuals to terrorism. Conversely, in *Thin Blue Line*, we are basically shown only the last step of the radicalization process: the shooting scenes. Focusing solely on the final stage of the radicalization process results in an even stronger stereotypical picture being conveyed. This approach does not encourage the audience to question what they see or to look for the cause of the issue, but rather reinforces the prejudice and idea that all immigrants are terrorists and a threat.

6.3. Hyperreality: Muslims equal terrorists

*"Everything is metamorphosed into its opposite to perpetuate itself in expurgated form."*¹⁴

In semiotics and postmodernism, the inability of consciousness to distinguish between reality and simulated reality, especially in technologically advanced postmodern societies, is called hyperreality (Devika, 2016). Hyperreality is considered a perfect blend of reality and fiction, with no clear distinction between the end of the one and the beginning of the other. Orientalist and post-colonialist perspectives are closely related to the concept of hyperreality. According to Kellner, in Baudrillard's simulation process, representations of things eventually take the place of the things being represented. They ultimately grow to be larger than reality, which is one explanation for the existence of Orientalist stereotypes. The line between reality and representation is blurred in the second order of stimulation, while in the third order, the representation of the desired image comes first, preceding reality, resulting in hyperreality (Kellner, 2015). Human experience can be treated just as a simulation of reality; hyperreality takes over as the dominant framework for understanding and engaging with the world. Sounds, lights, and other special effects create hyperreality to enhance the audience's enjoyment. However, it can also create a false image of the aspects represented – people, processes, etc. Media is strongly influenced by hyperreality, which means that all kinds of media represent artificial realities that distort the reality (Antony, S., Trambo, I. A., 2020). To objectively evaluate media sources, it is necessary to take into account that the media

¹⁴ Baudrillard, J. 1995. *Simulacra and Simulation*. University of Michigan Press. DOI: 10.3998/mpub.9904

tend to manipulate the feelings of the audience. Baudrillard presents definitions of hyperreality, simulacra, and simulation, which help understand and analyze the media coverage of daily events, and especially the ones that are highly sensitive in a society such as terrorism (Baudrillard, 1983, 2003).

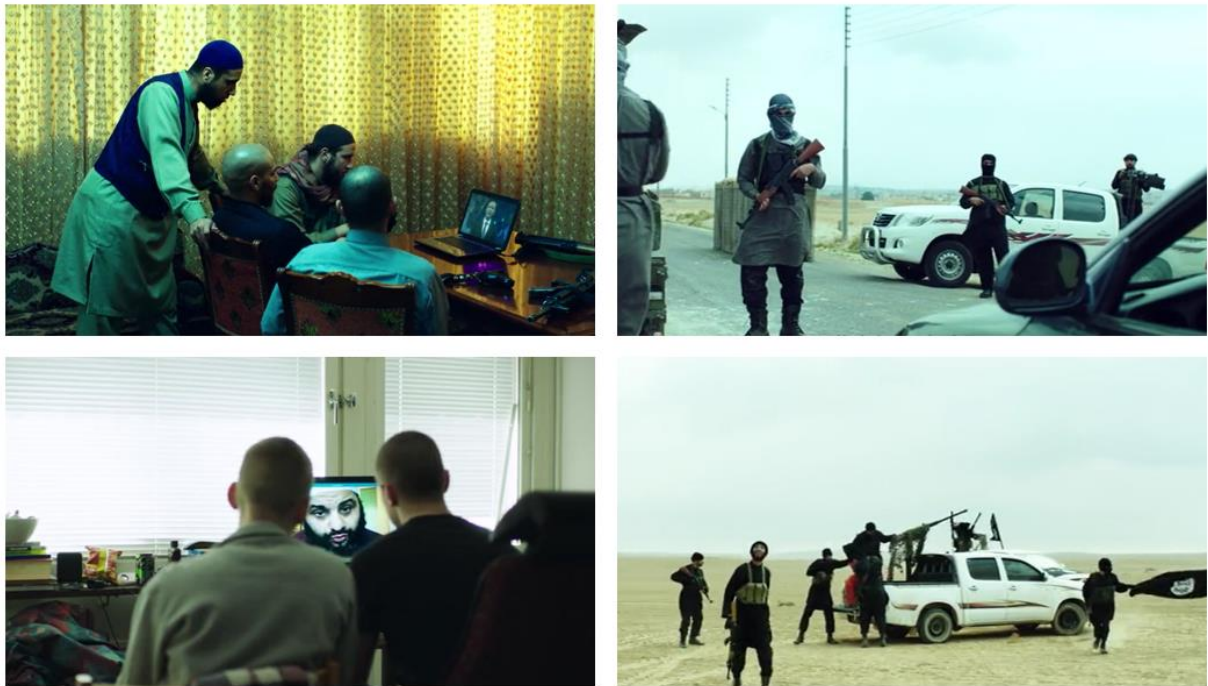
The television series *Caliphate* presents a straightforward portrayal of Muslims and Islam, and this representation creates a strong basis for stereotypes, xenophobia, prejudice, and Islamophobia. The series creates prejudice by associating Islam with extremism, violence, and terror. Islam as a religion is so closely associated with terrorism that we have no other image of Muslims. We are also shown collective representations as originally introduced by Durkheim. According to Oxford Reference, it is believed that these representations are produced through the complex interaction of religious rituals, and because they are richer than individual activities, they become independent of the group from which they originated. Collective representations not only express, symbolize, and interpret social relationships but also help to organize and make sense of the world. Collective representations both encourage and discourage social action. They have power or authority because they are both internal to each of us, and external to the individual. An intense kind of assembly produces collective representations, which later survive the dissolution of this higher collective life as sacred (and thus morally coercive) beliefs, values, and symbols.¹⁵

The emotions of the audience are also manipulated by confronting Western civilization with the Orient, which is portrayed as a threat to so-called "Western values". *Caliphate* creates strong associations between Islam and terrorism by representing Muslims as:

- Frequently shouting *allāhu akbar* (auth. transl. Allah is the greatest)
- Wearing dark clothing
- Carrying weapons
- Worshiping Allah and the Quran as the only true religion
- Humiliating women and the Occident
- Celebrating every death of people who do not belong to the IS.

¹⁵ Overview of collective representations, *Oxford Reference*. Available at: <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095624310;jsessionid=D7C5B88897C26D112EB0BC8F61AE34F1> (accessed: 23 May 2023).

Figure 6.11. *Caliphate, Episode 1, 18:35, 32:13.*



Source: Behrman, 2020

This is also directly related to fiction, because the representation of Muslims in the series is one-dimensional and consequently creates an unvarnished image of Islam and Muslims. As Baudrillard states, the principle cause why Islam is perceived as the greatest enemy of Western values is that: "with the eclipse of Communism and the global triumph of liberal power: it was at that point that a ghostly enemy emerged, infiltrating itself throughout the whole planet, slipping in everywhere like a virus, welling up from all the interstices of power: Islam" (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 15). This means that Islam as a religion was used to create the symbol of the enemy of the West, to create the opposition to the free human of the West. Islam and terrorism have not always been equated. Some researchers believe that terrorism comes and goes in waves, and that the current wave is a religious one (Nordén, 2011, p. 21). For this reason, terrorism has become less related to political ideologies, but rather to religious beliefs, which leads to the equation of Arab terrorists with Muslim terrorists (Carr 2006:237ff, qtd. in Nordén, 2011, p. 22). This is also represented in the television series *Caliphate*, where the radicalization process of three of the main characters is specifically triggered by extreme religiosity. The motive behind the violence is the worship of Allah and contempt for the West. In this way, acts of violence are seen as stemming from the religion of Islam.

The media dominated by the West not only misinterprets the facts (intentionally or unintentionally), but also uses the tools of filmography to create a simulacrum. Showing video coverage of Muslims and depicting them praying or carrying guns when the subject of the video is unrelated is just one of the few examples of how hyperreality is created. Baudrillard says: "Countless disaster movies bear witness to this fantasy, which they clearly attempt to exorcize with images, drowning out the whole thing with special effects. But the universal attraction they exert, which is on a par with pornography, shows that acting-out is never very far away, the impulse to reject any system growing all the stronger as it approaches perfection or omnipotence" (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 7). An accurate representation of this is found in *Thin Blue Line*, where the opposition between Christianity and Islam is also represented with the help of cinematographic tools. For example, a Christian police officer is often shown singing in a church choir. This has a symbolic meaning: not only does it imply that good people (the police) are decent Christians who attend church, but also that they find peace and calmness there, and the environment is always bright, light colors are used, and we typically see frontal lighting and light coming from above, which emphasize the subject. As for Islam, we are presented with the opposite view: it is most often associated with shouting, weapons, violence, submission to the dominant, dependence on others, and physical and social limitations. From a cinematographic point of view, they are usually represented in backlight, which creates a dramatic image and focuses on the subject in a different way – mysterious, aggressive, and threatening. When analyzing the portrayal of Muslims and terrorists in this television series, it is important to keep in mind that the series is not about "regular Muslims", but rather about the process of radicalization and the Islamic State, and about people who left Sweden and joined the IS not because of their religion or ethnicity, but because of their personal beliefs. Even though the TV series mainly deals with extremist Muslims, it also presents a dualistic image, creating a distinction between *good* and *bad* Muslims, which suggests that there is already an out-group within Muslim society itself. In *Caliphate*, potential terrorists hide behind the most pretentious, well-groomed beards, and every burqa is a gateway to even more dangerous fundamentalism.

Another interesting phenomenon related not only to hyperreality but also to symbolism is called home-grown terrorism, which is also represented in *Caliphate*. As stated in the report *Varifrån kommer hotet? Perspektiv på terrorism och radikalisering*, the definition of home-grown terrorism came into use following the London bombings of July 7, 2005 (also referred to as 7/7), as the

people responsible for the terrorist acts were British citizens. These acts, as well as the one represented in *Caliphate*, where two young brothers of Swedish origin are planning to carry out a terror attack, do not fall into the category of "typical" acts of terrorism:

Figure 6.12. *Caliphate*, Episode 8, 10:27.



Source: Behrman, 2020

We are presented with a paradoxical situation: two young men of Swedish origin are about to carry out a terrorist attack while wearing Swedish military uniforms. Baudrillard explains this as follows:

"they have even <...> used the banality of American everyday life as cover and camouflage. Sleeping in their suburbs, reading and studying with their families, before activating themselves suddenly like time bombs. The faultless mastery of this clandestine style of operation is almost as terroristic as the spectacular act of September 11, since it casts suspicion on any and every individual. Might not any inoffensive person be a potential terrorist? If *they* could pass unnoticed, then each of us is a criminal going unnoticed (every plane also becomes suspect), and in the end, this is no doubt true. This may very well correspond to an unconscious form of potential, veiled, carefully repressed criminality, which is always capable, if not of resurfacing, at least of thrilling secretly to the spectacle of Evil." (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 20).

This means that Swedish military uniforms were chosen as a cover so as not to arouse suspicion among the people around. The idea behind this is that, for example, traditional Arab clothing such as hijabs or abayas would immediately attract people's attention and could result in a failed

terrorist attack. Even though this terrorist attack was carried out by men of Swedish origin who did not display the usual terrorist attributes – traditional clothing, long black beards – they were still presented as highly religious, converted to Islam and worshipping Allah, and as a weapon of the fundamental system due to their willingness to accept their own deaths for the Islamist cause. The situation does not fit the stereotypical image of terrorists as socially excluded or raised in poor conditions, which also complicates the notion of a Muslim terrorist. For example, according to the New York Police Department, the most common image of a terrorist was an educated man under 35, from a middle-class background, with no financial problems – and with little or no criminal record (Silber & Bhatt, qtd. in Hörnqvist, M., Flyghed, J. 2011, p. 11).

Having analyzed the most significant terrorist attacks in Scandinavia in recent years, the 2017 Stockholm truck attack, the Gothenburg bombings in 2016 and 2017, the Trollhättan school attack of 2015, and the attacks and bombings in Norway in 2011 and 2010, respectively, it transpires that three of these five acts of terrorism were committed by Scandinavian citizens who were either right-wing extremists, or members of the Nordic Resistance Movement¹⁶. The other attacks have been carried out by immigrants recruited by the Islamic State or by Al-Qaeda. This comparison shows that the Nordic countries not only suffer from terrorist attacks carried out by immigrants from the Middle East, but they also face a great threat from domestic aggressors, even though this phenomenon is significantly less represented in the media or cinema. When this is taken into account, the image of the terrorist needs to be reconsidered. It can no longer be argued that people from socio-economically disadvantaged areas are more likely to commit acts of terrorism than others. The data provides the background to question the reality and simulacrum created in the television series. In all three series, those who carried out the terrorist attacks are in one way or another related to Islam as a religion, or to Muslims as an ethnic group, but none of the TV series shows the terrorists to be educated, middle-aged, light-skinned, middle-class individuals.

Three different orders of simulation (Laughey, 2004) mentioned in section 4.4 help analyze how the simulacrum works in the three TV series. *Caliphate* contains all three orders: guns are a direct representation of violence, then there are religious attributes presented in the background while Muslim terrorists are shown in a close-up shot, which relates the religion to terrorism, and thirdly

¹⁶ Statista Research Department. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/search/?q=terrorism&qKat=search&newSearch=true&p=1> (accessed: 24 May 2023).

the logical distinction between terrorists and immigrants fades away, when all Muslims are being represented in the same, generalized way. We see that a stereotypical image of Muslims, which corresponds to the ideas of Orientalism, represents the flat reality without any incentive for the audience to critically evaluate what they see. The television series allows for hyperreality and simulation. On the other hand, *When the Dust Settles* tries to analyze the phenomena more critically by referring to the first and second orders of simulation. It encourages the viewer to question the visuals and to think more about reality.

Popular culture media operate based on their own interpretations of religious phenomena, so the media can lay the groundwork for how the issue is presented in the wider media, and this is not necessarily based on reality. Baudrillard explains that reality "has absorbed fiction's energy, and has itself become fiction. We might almost say that reality is jealous of fiction, that the real is jealous of the image... It is a kind of duel between them, a contest to see which can be the most unimaginable" (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 28). In *Caliphate*, for example, all the characters are basically victims of their own religion; they suffer either because they were introduced into the religion against their will, or because they were falsely seduced by a greater goal, which eventually turns out to be terrorism perpetrated by IS. The television series *Caliphate* challenges prejudices formed by associations. One of the male Muslim characters, Hosam, beats his wife for being raped, then kisses the Koran and prays. Sulle is cruel to her parents when she is religious, but kind when she takes off her veil and leaves religion behind. In keeping with the secular society's view of religiosity as a sociological phenomenon, there is no sincere religious belief among the characters. In the series, religion is a matter of identity and an excuse to vent personal anger. Elisabeth Nordén, in her 2011 report *Hotbilder om terrorism*, makes an interesting observation about the relationship between different religious groups and terrorism. She describes a bomb attack carried out in Oklahoma in 1995 that destroyed hundreds of buildings killed 168 people. It was one of the most brutal terrorist attacks in American history. Stereotypically, before any investigation was carried out, hypotheses involving Islamists were formed. After the investigation, it was clear that the act was committed by an American war veteran who had close ties to the Christian Identity movement. However, only few media sources discussed the event, and it was seen primarily as a single act of lunacy (Carr 2006:275ff, qtd. in Nordén, 2011, p. 25). This example perfectly illustrates how the media manipulates the feelings of the audience and is only interested in terrorist attacks when there

is a close connection with Islam, and also promotes hyperreality - when the images created about Islam are so vivid that they also shape the reality.

As Nordén notes, it is much easier to be guided by emotions rather than by rationality, which opens the door to xenophobia (Nordén, 2011, p. 23). The author also explains that a simplified representation of the enemy is much more effective than a sophisticated one. For example, in *When the Dust Settles*, as soon as the subject of terrorism is mentioned, the face of an immigrant is shown in close-up:

Figure 6.13. *When the Dust Settles*, Episode 3, 31:50



Source: Høgh et al., 2020

These filmmaking tools and techniques draw the audience's attention to the characters and imply their importance to the narrative. Bringing up the image of the Muslim immigrant in the context of terrorism implies that the two are related; in this way, the filmmakers create the image of the Muslim terrorist. The series also features a representation of Muslim children playing with guns found in their home as if they were toys:

Figure 6.12. *When the Dust Settles*, Episode 4, 4:24



Source: Høgh et al., 2020

In filmmaking, color is one of many tools used to create a specific mood or atmosphere. Colors, much like the soundtrack or shot angles, can work independently from the actors and can convey a message even without them. When analyzing how colors affect the message of a movie, it is useful to consider three aspects: hue (the color itself), saturation (the intensity of the color), and brightness (how dark / light the color is) (Manfred, 2021).

Media can create both negative and positive views of Muslims and Islam in the society. No matter how realistic a television series is, its primary function still is to entertain, and this can create distorted images of various religious aspects. The fact that only extremist Muslims are portrayed in *Caliphate* creates the false impression that all Muslims are equal to terrorists and therefore a threat.

Figure 6.12. *Caliphate*, Episode 6, 35:12.



Source: Behrman, 2020

Religion in this series is represented as the one and only guide to life. Muslims are shown as proud servants of Allah, they are proud to die for Allah, they believe that their purpose in life is to avenge everything that has been done to Muslims since the time of the Crusades. For example, after hearing on TV that a terrorist attack has killed 70 people, they are proud and celebrate the achievement and declare that they will strike again and again. Muslim terrorists take the advantage of the media coverage of terrorist acts (Baudrillard, 2003). Moreover, Muslims in the television series *Caliphate* are most often depicted praying, kissing the Koran, and in ways that show devotion for Allah, wearing traditional clothes, and long black beards. Narratively, the worship of Allah is expressed by saying that dying for Allah is the purest thing a Muslim can do, that committing an act of terrorism is something that Allah would be proud of. This motif is dominant in the series *Caliphate*. All three characters who committed or planned the terrorist attack were driven by extreme religiosity.

Speaking of hyperreality, the title of the television series *Thin Blue Line* already has symbolic significance for narrative analysis. According to the National Police Association¹⁷, the expression

¹⁷ Shults, J. F. (n.d.) "That Thin Blue Line - What Does It Really Mean? ", *National Police Association*. Available at: <https://nationalpolice.org/that-thin-blue-line-what-does-it-really-mean/#:~:text=The%20symbolism%20of%20the%20thin,military%20or%20the%20federal%20government> (accessed: 24 May 2023).

"thin blue line" represents the barrier between law enforcement (associated with blue police uniforms) and the community (Shults, C. J., n.d.). The phrase itself has a long history, dating back to 1854, and has always symbolized the line between members of law enforcement and society. The same can be seen in *Thin Blue Line*, where police officers in blue uniforms are depicted as the line between good and evil, between criminals and (potential) victims. A message on the social platform Twitter (FOP5-30, 2020), which can be treated as mediation within mediation, reads "If you've ever wanted to see what the Thin Blue Line looks like..." and contains a perfect visual representation of the TV series' title and main narrative:

Figure 17. *If you've ever wanted to see what the Thin Blue Line looks like...*



Source: Twitter

The audience can see such representations of encounters between power structures and community members several times in the series. Police officers are shown struggling to deal with the various dramas and traumas that a large, multicultural city can impose on its public servants, such as cases

of missing children, racial tensions, human trafficking, addiction problems, and other issues. The sensitivity and vulnerability of police officers also creates a closer relationship between them and the audience of the television series. The focus on police officers in this television series also allows viewers to see that these characters are multidimensional; they are not just doing their job and being tools of the government, but also individual personalities with strong and complex emotions. The show often pits police officers against residents to highlight the use of excessive force against minority groups.

In the middle of the series *When the Dust Settles*, in the fifth episode, the main event, a terrorist attack, happens. After the attack the whole city is depicted as empty, calm, without rushing people, no traffic on the streets. This impression is directly related to the title of the series, *When the Dust Settles*. The name as well as the view of an empty city imply that something big has happened, and after that something changed. Extremely long shots include panoramic views and surroundings that allow the audience to get familiar with what has been happening beyond the characters' point of view, it forms a general picture of the society after the terrorist attack: changed, empty, unfamiliar, and unpleasant. Such a representation of the city after terrorist attacks also illustrates the theoretical concept of hyperreality – living in a simulacrum, experiencing the representation without the original as the real one, when the landscape seems to be surreal, the lightning and colors pallet also corresponds to a fiction rather than to reality. Terror attacks can be the end of the world for some, while others may not even know about the terror; which means that life does not stop after a terror attack. The empty city is a symbol of metamorphosis – the idea that an attack changes not only the people involved, but society as a whole. Such an apocalyptic view also implies living in hyperreality - where the fictional view seems more real than reality itself. The simulacra in which people live impose the symbolic meaning of the terrorist act, and it does not question reality, it has no relation to it:

Figure 6.13. *When the Dust Settles, Episode 5, 53:50 - 55*



Source: Høgh et al., 2020

This also represents the act of terrorism as a symbolic event that emphasizes the brutality of the event. "The spectacle of terrorism introduces the terrorism of the spectacle" (Baudrillard, 2003). Baudrillard speaks about the senselessness of terrorism without media coverage. He reasons that there is no difference between the spectacular and the symbolic as far as media tools are concerned. The distinction between acts of violence and their representation cannot be defined (Baudrillard, 2003). The provided images above do not depict the act of terrorism, but they strongly imply the element of terrorism in the depicted scene. The impact of terrorism, which consists primarily of its effect — is not conveyed and felt through a violent eruption as such, but rather through the spectacular threat of its purely contingent, random manifestation.

In the other two TV series, *Thin Blue Line* and *Caliphate*, acts of terrorism are not emphasized at all. Both series focus more on the process of radicalization and terrorism rather than on the act itself. This implies that the meaning is not in the physical act of the event, but rather in its symbolic meaning and in the characters' decision process for carrying out the attack. In both series, the socio-cultural and economic aspects of the radicalization process seem to be more important than the act itself. This is also what distinguishes Scandinavian television series from Hollywood cinema, especially after 9/11 (Lynchehaun, 2013).

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The aim of the cinematographic narratological structural analysis was to show how terrorism is represented in the television series analyzed, and to understand the depictions of terrorism in the series with the application of Orientalist and post-colonial perspectives. The narratives of the Scandinavian television series show several important discourses. This leads to the first research question, how terrorism is depicted in Scandinavian television series. Even though radical Muslims are only a small part of all Arab people, the television series generalize the image of radical Muslims, which results in one-sided narratives. As Edward Said notes in his book *Orientalism*, Muslims are portrayed as a gray mass of people rather than as individuals or personalities with their own histories and motivations (Said, 2004, p. 427). The television series *Thin Blue Line* only confirms this assumption; Muslims are usually represented as always spending time together, as a group. And this image leads to people being afraid of something that is unfamiliar, that is different. *Rapport från medieanalys om representationer av muslimer i Svenska nyheter* (Axner, 2015) finds that a quarter of the analyzed articles use the terms "Islam" and "Muslims" to identify a group, and hardly ever represent Muslims as individuals (Axner, 2015, p. 8). Overall, the author of the report, Marta Axner, concludes that almost all articles directly or indirectly link Muslims to violence, threats, and tension in society. The author also notes that, even when Muslims are portrayed as victims of a crime, they are still separated into "us" and "them" groups. From my point of view, the television series – and the media as a whole – manipulate the image of religion to create one-sided image of Muslims. Elisabeth Nordén in her article *Hotbilder om terrorism* examines where Islamist terrorism came from. Until the end of the Cold War, terrorism was associated with left-wing organizations and nationalists. After the end of the Cold War, however, scholars who used to research terrorism began to highlight the antecedents of religious terrorism, such as Jewish zealots¹⁸. From point on, terrorism became less linked to political ideology and more linked to religion. As a result, Middle Eastern terrorists became not Arabian terrorists but Muslim terrorists. This naming also led to the terminology of Islamist terrorism, which in turn leads to representation of the religion of Islam as the religion of terrorism (Nordén, 2011, p.22). The author provides

¹⁸ Kohler: 'Zealous defenders of the Law and of the national life of the Jewish people; name of a party opposing with relentless rigor any attempt to bring Judea under the dominion of idolatrous Rome, and especially of the aggressive and fanatical war party from the time of Herod until the fall of Jerusalem and Masada'. Available at: <https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/15185-zealots> (accessed: 24 May 2023).

examples of how the media shapes a stereotypical image of Islam and terrorism, which was also evident from the analysis I conducted. Whenever Muslims were present in an episode, they were linked to religion – for example through actions such as kissing the Koran, or the presence of religious writings or imagery in apartments. None of these representations or depictions were deployed in the portrayal of Christian characters, or in fact of anyone other than Muslims. This is related to the post-colonial approach to power disposition, whereby Christianity is valued as a religion and Islam is treated as less worthy. Said notes that the aim of Orientalism is to create and maintain the separation between "us" and "them", where the Orient is presented as economically and socially backward and in a lower position than the West (Said, 2003).

Having analyzed the three TV series, it seems that there is a general stereotypical frame in which terrorism and, inevitably, Muslims are depicted. This frame is so widespread that it is hard to find any other image of terrorism or Muslims in the media. Television series as works of fiction do not necessarily represent the true facts. This peculiarity of fictional media is closely related to hyperreality. However, even though audiences know that television series are fictional works of art with paid actors, cinema can make people mix reality with images created by cinema and television makers. Harry Oldmeadow in his article *The Debate about 'Orientalism'* commented that Orientalism functions as a colonizing knowledge while creating a contradiction between the masculine, progressive, dynamic, and democratic West, and the feminine, stagnant, backward and despotic East (Oldmeadow, 2004, p. 8). Considering this, it is important to understand that the perceived image of Muslims as related to terrorism is a much stronger factor in the attitudes toward Muslims than the actual behavior of immigrants from the East. In conclusion, the findings of this analysis do not refute the essence of Orientalist and post-colonial perspectives, but rather confirm the existence of these concepts in the television series *Thin Blue Line*, and provides new insights on these issues. The series *Caliphate* and *When the Dust Settles* question the birth of violence and terrorism and elaborate more on the external determinants that have a significant impact on society's attitudes toward Muslims and immigrants in general. It is also implied that radicalization is not just the pure act of terror, but the result of a long and complex process that is influenced by social, cultural, and economic aspects.

After analyzing the representation of Muslims in Scandinavian television series from the perspectives of Orientalism and post-colonialism, it is evident that a strong association between

Islam/Muslims and terrorism and violence is constructed in the analyzed TV series, because Islam and Muslims are rarely connected to the perspective of an individual, or to an understanding of Islamic life and faith. Traces of Orientalist thinking are also apparent in the one-sided portrayal of Muslims. Even without minor nuances such as character names, physical attributes around characters, or cinematographic props, the representation of Muslims was one-dimensional, generalized, and simplified to an anonymous mass. For example, the clear thinking of "us" and "them", the generalization of Muslims, the separation of groups living in the same community, the implied superiority of Europeans (or Christians) over Arabs (Muslims) were the main peculiarities that showed that Muslims are highly stereotyped in the television series. Hyperreality as an analytical concept helped to identify how reality is experienced as a medium through dialogues, symbolism and camera subtleties. In the three television series, hyperreality is achieved through two tools: symbols and specific camera shots. E.g., Muslims are always surrounded by attributes related to terrorism, such as guns, traditional Muslim dress, long black beards, and Arabic religious posters, which combined with specific cinematographic tools such as close-ups create the image of the Muslim equal to the terrorist. The methods of terrorist recruiters (and the principles at play in the radicalization process) rely in part on some of the same principles that are applied in the depiction of Muslims in the three TV series. Establishing an "us" versus "them" mentality through an in-group/out-group view, and the approach of equating Muslims with Islamist terrorists can be found in both cases. Arguably, this portrayal of Muslims as a homogenous group and Islam as their terrorist religion in the TV series (and the media) directly contributes to the radicalization process.

The research area is broad and offers opportunities for further analysis, emphasizing different perspectives. A deeper focus on the representation of terrorism in Scandinavian media in general (beyond the format of fictional TV series) could supplement and extend this analysis. It would also be valuable to broaden the analysis to include additional countries or regions, in particular to areas that are more exposed to acts of terrorism than Scandinavia, and Sweden in particular.

8. SAMMANFATNING

Magisteruppsats: En postkolonial studie av representationer av terrorism i skandinavisk TV.

Skärningspunkten mellan Väst och Öst är ett tvärvetenskapligt studieområde som omfattar inte bara ekonomiska, politiska utan också sociala och kulturella fenomen. Edward Saids boken *Orientalism* är ett av de mest kända verk som presenterar idéerna om motsättningen mellan väst och öst och utforskar manifestationerna av denna motsättning i samhällets vardag. Orientalismen som studieområde lade grunden för postkoloniala studier som växte fram ur den. Båda dessa teorier blev grunden för min analys. Det huvudsakliga forskningsobjektet för denna masteruppsats är representationen av terrorism i skandinavisk film och TV. Analysen av representation ledde till en annan teoretiker och sociolog, Jean Baudrillard, vars idéer om hyperrealitet och simuleringen fungerade som en teoretisk grund för medieanalys.

Metoder för filmisk narrativ analys valdes för analysen av tre tv-serier: *Tunna Blå Linjen*, *Når støvet har lagt sig* och *Kalifat*. Det valda metoder gjorde det möjligt att analysera inte bara TV series handling, utan också de filmiska och semiotiska sätten att förmedla den önskade idén. Totalt granskades 28 avsnitt av material, vilket gjorde att jag kunde dra lämpliga slutsatser om representationen av terrorism i skandinavisk film och tv.

Resultaten av studien avslöjade att personer av muslimsk nationalitet, oavsett deras handlingar, är förknippade med terrorism. Islam som religion framställs som en integrerad del av terrorismen. Detta är en helt motsatt bild till de européer som porträtteras i samma analyserade TV serie Det observeras också en vanlig berättelse om att människor från öst framställs som raka motsatsen till individer från väst, d.v.s. västerlänningar framställs som demokratiska, rationella, progressiva, fredliga och utbildade samhällsmedlemmar, medan invandrare från öst framställs som aggressiva, irrationell, driven av känslor.

9. SANTRAUKA

Magistro darbas: Terorizmo reprezentacija skandinaviškuose filmuose ir televizijoje iš postkolonijinės perspektyvos.

Vakarų ir Rytų sandūra yra tarpdisciplininis studijų lakas, kuris apima ne tik ekonominius, politinius, bet ir socialinius bei kultūrinius reiškinius. Edward Said darbas *Orientalizmas* yra vienas žymiausių kūrinių pristatantis Vakarų ir Rytų priešpriešos idėjas bei tiriantis šios priešpriešos apraiškas kasdieniame bendruomenės gyvenime. Orientalizmas kaip tyrimo laukas, patiesė pagrindą iš jo kylančioms Post-kolonijinėms studijoms. Abi šios teorijos tapo mano analizės pagrindu. Šio magistro darbo tyrimo objektas yra terorizmo reprezentacija Skandinaviškuose filmuose ir televizijoje. Reprezentacijos analizė vedė prie dar vieno teoretiko ir sociologo Jean Baudrillard, kurio idėjos apie hiperrealybę bei simuliakrą veikė kaip papildomas teorinis pagrindas medijos analizei.

Trijų televizijos serialų: „Plonytė melsva linija“, „Kai nusėda dulkės“ bei „Kalifatas“ analizei buvo pasirinkti kinematografinės naratyvinės analizės metodas. Pasirinktas metodas leido analizuoti ne tik televizijos serialų siužetą, bet taip pat ir kinematografines bei semiotines priemones norimai idėjai perteikti. Viso buvo peržiūrėti 28 epizodai medžiagos, kuri leido padaryti atitinkamas išvadas apie terorizmo reprezentaciją Skandinaviškame kine bei televizijoje.

Tyrimo rezultatai atskleidė, jog musulmonų tautybės asmenys, nepriklausomai nuo jų veiksmų, yra siejami su terorizmu. Islamas, kaip religija yra vaizduojamas kaip neatskiriama terorizmo dalis. Tai yra visiškai priešingas vaizdas europiečiams, vaizduojamiems tuose pačiuose televizijos serialuose. Taip pat pastebėtas gajus naratyvas, kai žmonės iš Rytų yra vaizduojami kaip visiška priešingybė asmenims iš vakarų, tai yra – vakariečiai vaizduojami kaip demokratiški, racionalūs, progresyvūs, taikūs bei išsilavinę visuomenės nariai, kai tuo tarpu imigrantai iš rytų yra vaizduojami kaip agresyvūs, neracionalūs, valdomi emocijų.

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