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Gad, Ulrik Pram

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Ulrik Pram Gad (2015)
Centre for Advanced Security Theory
Department of Political Science
University of Copenhagen

**From flip-flopping stereotypes to desecuritizing hybridity
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Abstract

Muslims are making their way into filmed entertainment in Hollywood and Europe. Critical reception has uniformly acclaimed the quantitative progress, however, disagreeing on the quality of the representation. One position laments how the increased representation of diversity is structured by negative stereotypes; another is encouraged by how the very same stereotypes are ironically taken to extremes. Bearing in mind the intimate relation between identity and security, however, the stereotypical representation of difference is never innocent. The overall narratives of Danish public service broadcast series such as *The Killing*, *Government* and *The Protectors* rely on stereotypical security policy narratives identifying Muslims as threats. Even when stereotypes are creatively articulated to reverse the negative valuation, Muslim roles are distinctly charged or 'securitized' when compared to non-Muslim roles. However, placing the 'Muslim' character centre stage allows a separate level of representation a distinct role in the way stories articulate stereotypes, facilitating hybrid identities.

Keywords

security policy narrative, Muslims, stereotypes, hybrid identity, broadcast drama, crime fiction

Muslim security providers – as known from broadcast dramaⁱ

Hollywood manuscripts increasingly involve non-white characters in a more diverse set of roles, and European filmed entertainment tell stories about both the enrichment and conflicts associated with living in a multi-ethnic and pluri-cultural society. Even Denmark, a country which (until recently) had a self-image as a perfectly homogenous nation state, now produces screen and television fiction representing ethnic diversity. Particularly Muslim characters are given unprecedented airtime. Prominent in this new trend are broadcast series such as *Forbrydelsen* [*The Killing*], *Borgen* [*Government*] and *Livvagterne* [*The Protectors*]. Having thrilled the Danish audience, they have successfully been exported and won both Emmy and BAFTA awards.

Critical reception has uniformly acclaimed quantitative progress: better to include brown faces than to reproduce an all-white imaginary. However, this article distils two positions from the literature reviewed, disagreeing on the quality of the representation. On the one side, academics and activists lament how the increased representation of diversity is structured by negative stereotypes: Muslim women are oppressed, migrants bring crime, and terrorists hide among refugees. Religious and cultural difference spells trouble, Islam equals violence. The other side is encouraged by how the very same stereotypes are deliberately taken to extremes: They find that ironical distance undermines racist demands for homogeneity and facilitates convivance.

This article establishes a third position as it shows that stereotypes can indeed play a different part in filmed entertainment than affirming essentialism. However, rather than ironic exaggeration of stereotypes, what is needed is time and complexity. This position is established through an analysis of how the overall narratives of broadcast drama series articulate stereotypical security policy narratives pointing out Muslims as threats – even when the 'Muslim' roles are designed to portray 'good guys' protecting us against 'bad guys'. Muslim roles are distinctly charged – securitized – when compared to non-Muslim roles even when stereotypes are creatively articulated to reverse the valuation. However, placing 'the Muslim' centre stage allows the time necessary to show that stereotypes are not characteristic of Muslims but of how Muslims are seen and dealt with by others. The claims of the article are based on an analysis of five Danish public service broadcast drama series,ⁱⁱ with special attention given to *The Protectors*, as it features the first (female) 'Muslim' main character in Danish broadcast drama. First, however, the article provides a brief introduction to Denmark as a case of integration and security policies targeting Muslims and a recap of what scholarly writing has had to say about Muslims in crime fiction and broadcast drama.

Denmark as a case of 'Muslim relations'

The Danish case of Western 'Muslim relations' deserves attention for a number of reasons. Since 2001, Denmark has been among the most eager countries following the Bush administration into war in Muslim countries and tightening laws at home to block immigration and enforce assimilation. Moreover, going to these extremes may be counted as rather surprising for a nation enjoying an image as uniquely tolerant (Lawler 2007). However, having no colonial history with Muslim subalterns and no significant immigration before the 1960s, Denmark has given itself a crash course in integrating Muslim migrants over the last few decades. As one result of the trouble involved in coming to grips with these new realities, Denmark has become important for the 'Muslim relations' of the West in a cause-and-effect manner: following the publication of a series of cartoons involving the prophet Muhammed in the daily *Jyllands-Posten*, Denmark has joined a league with the US, the UK, France and Israel, whose policies and practices receive special attention.

This rise to prominence is related to how Muslim migrants, descendants and converts pose a particular challenge to Danish identity discourse. Since 2001, Muslims have been described as the primary Other of Danish identity.ⁱⁱⁱ Identity is always and everywhere a fragile construction, its (preliminary, imagined) existence depending on what delimits and threatens it (Laclau 1990, 39). But Denmark takes itself to be particularly successful in resembling the national ideal; total coincidence of the borders of territory, society, institutions, language, culture, religion and even skin colour. On the inside is homogeneity and identity; difference is relegated to the outside ([Author 2010](#)). In this situation, Muslim difference is particularly annoying (Hervik 2011), as it is perceived as persistent and, hence, dangerous. Muslim difference is presented as a threat to cultural homogeneity and Muslim violence as a threat to our peaceful society ([Author 2011](#)). Muslims are stereotyped (cf. Hall 1997; Said 1978) in the bottom of a hierarchical relation in which Danish equals freedom and enlightenment, whereas Muslim connotes Medieval coercion ([Author 2010](#)). Since Denmark sees itself as an example to the world, Muslims ought to want to become Danes - they should want their difference to go away ([Author 2011](#)). Hence, what is in Denmark discussed as demands for 'integration' would in other countries be counted as 'assimilation' (Emerek 2003). But moreover, Muslims are talked about as determined in their actions and personality by an inert, religious essence ([Author 2010](#)) and cultures are apprehended as digitally distinct (Eriksen 1995) rather than fluid, flexible and bricolated. So even 'Muslims' performing as 'well-integrated' on all

accounts constantly risk mis-recognition in the sense that their sincerity is put in doubt (Hage 2008). In such a discursive situation, insisting on a hybrid identity - i.e., affirming elements of cultural heritage with diverse ancestry and perhaps even dual allegiances - becomes a potent yet problematic political position (Nederveen Pieterse 2004; cf. Bhabha 1994).

In response to the 'Muslim' threats, Danish governments present policies for the future telling how the government will act and make others act to fend off the threats: To stop the 'influx' of strangers, government officials need new laws to close the border. In order to ensure integration in the labour market and to enforce assimilation to critical elements of Danish culture, local authorities and civil society must be empowered and engaged (Author 2010). When it comes to traditional security as domestic counterterrorism and wars abroad, however, weapon and wiretapping will not suffice. In order to know who to (not) shoot and what the wiretapped suspects are saying in their 'Muslim' languages, security organizations require 'Muslim expertise'. The most immediately accessible source of 'Muslim expertise' to tap is the Danish Muslims. Hence, the diversity policy adopted by the Ministry of Defence explains that "ethnic minorities ... will be of great use when on missions." (Forsvarsministeriet 2011, 3). To gauge the conditions in which Danish Muslims are invited on board, it might be helpful to watch TV.

Muslims in the Movies

"Media culture provides the materials from which many people construct their sense ... of 'us' and 'them'" (Kellner 1995, quoted by Cottle 2006). Phenomena such as conflicts, terrorism and counterterrorism, identity and difference (Cottle 2006, 143–83) and religion are experienced and engaged primarily or solely via media (Cottle 2006, 192; Hjarvard 2008). Media content comes labelled both as 'fact' and 'fiction'. Self-declaring as 'facts', Western news coverage of Muslims has generally been found disproportionately negative and largely organized around a distinct set of stereotypes involving violence.^{iv} When the events and topics narrated are of a kind with which most of us have no first-hand experience, however, fictional narratives may come to frame how the general public perceives the reality of the topic (Denzin 2001). One such topic is how Muslims, working in Danish security organizations (e.g., army, intelligence, police) think and behave (cf. Hussain 2010, 57). In studies of international politics, a genre of movies or even a single popular broadcast drama series has been found to provide the general cultural framework through which

sense is made to a stretch of reality outside that which counts as fiction (Nexon and Neumann 2006, 19). Currently, filmed entertainment "is one of the single most important forums in Danish society for discussions of citizenship and ethnicity" (Hjort 2005, 269), Danish public service broadcast drama holds a unique position as one of the few phenomena which 'unite the nation' (cf. Redvall 2013, 37-40), not only to entertain but also succeeding to spur debates on important issues.

Particularly in the US, a distinct strand of research has taken its cue from Edward Saïd's seminal work on Orientalism (1978), analysing how movies and TV series have portrayed Muslims. Shaheen (2003) surveyed a massive 900 Hollywood movies from 1896 to 2001, finding that Muslims are narrated through a limited number of overwhelmingly negative stereotypes. More detailed studies (Sardar and Davies 2010, 242, fn. 1) have confirmed that 'the Muslim' is presented as inherently violent (Shaheen 2003, 176ff; cf. Shoat 2000, 680).^v Hussain sums up, that "the religion as it is lived out on the television drama is one of violence – there seems to be no other substantive practice that embodies Islamic faith" (2010, 55). Action series in particular are prone to linking Muslims to violence as "in the broad melodramatic world of television ... conflict often requires an identifiable villain. In the current zeitgeist, these 'stock' villains are Muslim" (Hussain 2010, 60, fn. omitted). Even when a particular Muslim character is relatively sympathetic, Muslimness is linked to violence (2010, 65).^{vi} Moreover, Muslims are articulated by the standard colonial trope as the object of Western reform efforts, which are, alas, all in vain due to the inert essence of Islam (Morey and Yaqin 2010, 155). In sum, US broadcast drama suggests that "as a supposedly unassimilated interloper, the Muslim stranger's allegiances are always in question" (Morey and Yaqin 2010, 150) – or even more to the point: "any Muslim could be a terrorist" (Hussain 2010, 65; cf. Stam 2000, 662). Surveys have shown that among Americans, stereotypes of Muslims as violent are commonplace and correspond to support for the War on Terror (Sides & Gross 2013).

Across the pond, parallel analyses have tended to the roles recent^{vii} Danish broad screen movies present for 'migrants' (Necéf 2003), 'strangers' (Necéf 2003; Jørholt 2007; Necéf 2011), and 'the Newdaners' (Hjort 2005; Johannesen 2012).^{viii} Even if 'The Muslim' is not the central category in these analyses, nevertheless, it does seem to have a special place.^{ix} Or rather, echoing Shaheen's analysis of US' film, two special places: First, Muslims (mostly women, but also a few men) appear to be split between a traditional, patriarchal, Muslim culture and a sexually liberated, individualistic, Danish culture.^x Second, (male) Muslims appear as violent criminals. However, this

stereotype of violence and crime is often exaggerated to achieve an ironic effect. The disagreement in Denmark in terms of how to evaluate this ironic articulation of stereotypes are part of a broader European debate over how to facilitate difference and hybridity. Some, first, acclaim the strategy as a way of turning the stereotypes against those who promote them seriously (Hjort 2005, 267): what is mocked is not the migrants but rather stereotypical images of migrants promoted by racist segments of the majority populations. Second, mocking and accepting to be mocked are signs of inclusion and accept - and, hence, conducive to convivance (Jørholt 2007, 22-4; Necef 2003).^{xi}

Others worry that, once established, a stereotypical framing is difficult to get rid of. Lakoff argues that "it doesn't matter if you are negating ... or questioning them, the same frames and metaphors will be activated and hence strengthened" (Lakoff 2008, 15 et passim; Hjort 2009, 15). The obvious alternative strategy is to allow minority characters to "develop into deeper, rounded characters endowed with all the psychological gravity and complexity that is taken for granted" in White majority characters (Gilroy 2007, 234). For some, this is best realized by minority self-representation (Wright 2002, 69; Hjort 2005, 255), ideally in documentary form to facilitate identification (Hjort 2009). Yet others insist that identification with victimized Others absolves the majority spectator for his/her responsibility for processes of exclusion; preferable is a strategy promoting narratives which 'disidentify' a majority character by mistaking him/her for an Other, thereby subjecting him/her to degrading and unsettling events (Aaron 2007, 117; Lykidis 2009, 39-41). The analysis below suggests not only that allowing time centre stage for a 'Muslim' character allows identification with difference. Time centre stage also facilitates hybridity in the face of stereotypes - if it is clear from the story that stereotypes are something distinctively external that happens *to* the character rather than something the character *is* from the outset.^{xii}

Scandinavian crime fiction and Danish broadcast drama have been remarkably successful of late. In both cases, success is partially due to a political ambition: The success of Scandinavian crime fiction seems related to its reputation as engaging social and political problems. The Danish national public service broadcaster (DR) has explicitly formulated a policy of articulating a 'dual narrative' in their drama series involving characters in "an overall plot with ethical/social themes" (Redvall 2013, 68-70, 137). Since the series have been taken to represent reality, DR has succeeded in engaging wide audiences in debates on real-life societal problems, such as gender equality, work/life balance, the rule of law and the social causes of crime (Agger 2011, 113; Redval 2013, 138). Even if scholarly analyses of the series have indeed been tuned to the social conditions for

identity construction, gender and (related) work/life balance^{xiii} have generally overshadowed ethnicity and religion. Nevertheless, Hansen finds – among the varieties of Scandinavian Lutheranism, Roman Catholics and Buddhists – disproportionate attention in Scandinavian crime fiction (written and filmed) allotted to "the radical reverse side of Islam, where forced marriages, violence, rape, oppression of women, fundamentalism and violent terrorism are the strategic means to keeping the religious ranks" (Hansen 2012, 236, my translation). Particularly in relation to the Danish broadcast drama *Livvagterne* – generally found to affirm moderate, spiritual forms of religion – Hansen notes that Islam is described as a problem generator (2012, 247). However, closer attention to the narratives constructed to stabilize the intimate yet tense relation between security and identity allows an understanding of the roles awarded to Muslims in Danish crime drama which is both more complex and nuanced but also allows more specific grounds for optimism on behalf of hybridity and desecuritization.

Stereotypical security narratives making sense of Muslim characters

To highlight the identity–security relationship, this article proceeds in two steps to construct an analytical strategy focusing on stereotypical security policy narratives:

First, rather than describing the overall narratives of each of the broadcast drama series, the aim is to highlight the rudimentary narrative structures which render Muslim characters meaningful. Primetime TV fiction relies for its charms and effectiveness on presenting a well-known set of stereotypes to the viewer (cf. Lakoff 2008, 22) – and then surprising by adding nuance, switching to or pointedly deviating from other stereotypes. When the audience first encounters a crime investigator, the default position is that his love/hate relation to his work has cost him his marriage (cf. Agger 2011, 118). The 'stereotypical deviation' from this basic stereotype – casting a female investigator – has received ample scholarly attention (cf. Povlsen 2010). Both academics and – judging from the narratives – the writers have awarded less attention to how 'Muslim' stereotypes are employed. This article analyses how 'Muslim' roles only make sense by resonating with a cultural repertoire of narratives about what a generalized 'Muslim' is and does.

Second, the analysis concentrates on a particular kind of 'Muslim' and a particular kind of narrative: How are 'Muslims' casted as security *providers* articulated in *security policy narratives*? In the current state of affairs in Denmark, the mere mention of 'immigration' or 'integration' (or the

visual impression of a face with a darker complexion than a standard Nordic tan) activate a 'Muslim' *frame*, whether the individual in question self-identifies with Islam or not. A frame provides a number of categories to make sense of the problematique and situation at hand (Lakoff 2008, 15). Frames involve prototypes or stereotypes according to which "members of categories, real or imagined, can stand for categories themselves [as] a typical case, an ideal case, [or] a nightmare case" (Lakoff, 2008, 159; cf. Hall 1997, 257). Simple frames combine to form more complex frames (Lakoff 2008, 23). Hence, the 'Muslim' frame comes with a number of more particular frames, some structured in temporal sequences: *Narratives* are frames that tell a story (Lakoff 2008, 250). As a generic form of discourse, a narrative places a set of characters in a series of events between a beginning and an end (Ricoeur 1988 [1985]); however, the 'beginning' and 'end' need not delimit a grand narrative: any "an instance, no matter how small, of ... events and existents in a chain of temporal causality or at least contingency" will count (McQuillan 2000, 8).

A *policy* narrative is a particular kind of narrative in which 'the end' is placed in the future. The author and audience of the narrative are thus placed at a crucial point in time in which the choice of one policy is promoted as leading to an attractive future, whereas policy alternatives presumably lead to less attractive futures (Author 2010). In the special category of *security policy narratives*, one alternative future is so catastrophic that it is necessary to employ extraordinary means to protect what is held important and valuable (Author 2010; cf. Wæver 1995).^{xiv} When one character (individual or collective) is identified as a threat, the narrative is likely to suggest extraordinary means directed towards this position. When 'the Muslim frame' is activated in Denmark after 9/11, security policy narratives are never far away. The analysis, hence, asks how 'a Muslim' can be narrated around the paradoxes implied in protecting 'Us' against a threat from 'Them' – when the stereotypical images of Muslims that are articulated suggest that 'Muslims' are part of the threat.

Summing up, the analytical strategy focuses on situations in the overall narrative of broadcast crime drama wherein 'a Muslim' is positioned to defend 'Us' against a future threat which is likely also to be 'Muslim'. While 'Muslim' characters are by now frequently appearing in many Danish drama series, 'Muslim protectors' are still infrequent. The following analysis concentrates on productions from public broadcaster DR, since this institution – related to its successful record of engaging the public (both in front of TV sets at home and abroad but also in public debate) – has, deeply engrained in its organizational culture, an old school interpretation of the concept of 'public service',

including an obligation to enlighten the public. Hence, if anywhere, one would expect to find nuanced representations of Muslims in DR productions.^{xv}

Flip-flopping stereotypes

Muslim characters have been gradually integrated into Danish broadcast drama. *Taxa* [*Taxi*] (1997–99), portraying a Copenhagen cab business, could not escape including ethnic minorities in the cast. In the detective genre, *Rejseholdet* [*Unit One*] (2000–04) featured Muslims as objects of investigation. *Ørnen* [*The Eagle*] (2004–6) was a pioneer in terms of including a Muslim in the team of investigators forming the core of the cast. *Forbrydelsen* [*The Killing*] I (2007) and II (2009) featured ethnically cleansed investigating teams – but among the suspects investigated were Muslims working as professional security providers. *Borgen* [*Government*]^{xvi} (2010–3), a political drama with frequent security-related intrigues, advanced ahead of real-life integration history by sporting a character with Muslim background in the decidedly non-stereotypical role as chairman of a government party. *Livvagterne* [*The Protectors*] (2008–10) was the first Danish primetime broadcast series with a 'Muslim' lead character: the series follows a trio including a standard Danish Lutheran Christian, a colleague with a Jewish background and another with a Muslim element in her bio.

Nazim Talawi (Janus Nabil Barkawi) is the closest friend and colleague of the protagonist in *Ørnen*. Born in Denmark to a family of Palestinian refugees, "[h]e might as well have ended up a criminal".^{xvii} Instead, Nazim's 'Muslim' *competences* are put to good use by the police as he questions a Muslim cleric and an underworld informant in Arabic about a hostage situation at the airport (episode 1; cf. episode 15). As the situation unfolds, Nazim rehearses Arabic phrases for the protagonist to use to comfort the suspected hijackers. However, the villains turn out to be petty criminals set up as a decoy by a Russian Mafioso – and the police inspector may acclaim the cool handling of the crisis compared to how "everybody loses their head when they hear about Muslims and Jihad." The series repeatedly stresses how Nazim is involved in raising his daughter and therefore struggling with the work/life balancing like the typical Dane (cf. Agger 2011, 116). In the *grande finale*, Nazim dies, having put his life in harm's way – after demonstrating perfect Scandinavian civic spirit by letting colleagues leave him alone on an observation post so that one of them could pick up her child from kindergarten (episode 21). The series concludes with Nazim's

coffin cloaked in Danish colours being carried from an aircraft before an honour guard (episode 22). Having assimilated to and having died for the Danish nation state, Nazim is the *symbol of perfect integration*.

In *Forbrydelsen I*, the investigation into the murder of a high school girl leads to a series of suspects. One is her teacher, *Rama* (Farshad Kholgi), who speaks devotedly about the Danish romantic poetry he is teaching (episode 3). A series of clues increases the suspicion cast at him; he has previously had an episode with a young girl (episode 6) and his imam suggests that he is part of a religious conspiracy (episode 8). Both the episode and the conspiracy are revealed to be part of Rama's efforts to save Muslim girls from forced marriages (episode 9). After all, he is not a *fifth column* radical Muslim disguised as a Danish teacher; rather, he is indeed the *emblem of perfect integration*: As part of the Danish national school system, he does his best to induce the youngsters with reverence for Danish culture. And as part of civil society, he does his best to fight uncivilized customs among co-Muslims – a fight he is perfectly suited to fight since his background facilitates connections with other Muslims. Before it is revealed that Rama is providing security rather than threat, however, he is nearly beaten to death by the victim's vigilante father (episode 9). Undercover security work means the risk of being seen as a threat – and the risk is greater when always-already securitized qua Muslim. The overall narrative of *Forbrydelsen* is critical towards cultural essentialism: The plot is set in motion when the girl runs away with the son of the neighbourhood Muslim greengrocer, because their fathers agree not to accept their relationship – and it ultimately turns out that a close friend of the victim's father killed the girl to protect the father's decision (episode 10).^{xviii}

In *Borgen*, *Amir Diwan* (Dar Salim) is the leader of a small party, the junior partner in a coalition government. His 'Muslimness' plays absolutely no role in the daily humdrum of coalition politics (episodes 1–14) and only a marginal role in the press frenzy leading him to abandon politics (episode 15). However, as part of a plot to repair Denmark's post-Cartoon image and bolster her personal popularity, the Prime Minister calls Amir back to public service to broker a peace between North and South Kharun (modelled on Sudan) (episodes 17–18). As explained by the mock newspaper *Expressen* (published on the website by DR to build a community around the series), Amir "has, due to his Arab background, a good understanding of both language and culture and seems to have played a decisive role for the successful result of the peace negotiations".^{xix} So Amir

went from *'nothing-to-notice'* to a reservoir of *useful Muslim expertise* according to the needs of the series' dramaturgy.

Bilal (Igor Radosavljevic), in *Forbrydelsen II*, is a platoon commander in the Danish army suspected (on and off from episode 2, prime suspect from episode 9) of a series of murders cloaked in Islamist propaganda. Having found evidence that Bilal purchased Islamist literature on the Internet, an investigator asks him: "You're a Muslim, too?" So the first Muslim stereotype which Bilal embodies is the *fifth column* infiltrating the Danish army. However, Bilal claims that he followed orders, educating the soldiers about the enemy (episode 2), and a superior tries to convince the investigators to re-frame Bilal as the *exemplar of integration*: "Bilal ... hates those medieval figures more than we do ... Bilal is a boy scout" (episode 9). Finally, Bilal appears as the extreme 'violent Muslim' stereotype, *the suicide bomber*: He kidnaps the wife of the hero – only to release her before revealing a suicide belt, pulls the pin from a hand grenade, gazes towards the heavens and exclaims "For God, King, and Fatherland". He has been covering up the killing of civilians and ends his disgrace as he realizes that they were not "Taliban informants" (episode 10).

Like *Forbrydelsen I*, the overall narrative of *Forbrydelsen II* is pointedly critical: The killer turns out to be a traumatized Danish ranger covering up his wrongdoings in Afghanistan. However, the critical approach does not hinder the recirculation of Muslim stereotypes. Bilal's 'suicide for democracy' hardly makes any sense as the conclusion to his personal narrative but completes the set of distinctly Muslim stereotypes between which a Muslim character may flip-flop. The following analysis of *Livvagterne* shows that placing the 'Muslim' centre stage makes for less erratic articulations – even if the stereotypes remain.

Time centre stage allows for nuance and complications

According to Danish integration narratives, any Muslim in Denmark must find her/himself split between a Danish future and a Muslim past (combination is not an option) – and some essence in Islam apparently holds you back (Author 2010, 303). The 'Muslim' protagonist in *Livvagterne*, *Jasmina El Murad* (Cecilie Stenspil) does not escape this stereotype, even if her background is considerably more hybrid than demanded by standards of success set by Danish integration narratives. According to her 'personnel file' available on the series' website, her father is an Egyptian professor of psychology, her mother a Danish art conservator, and the family moved to

Denmark after the assassination of Sadat. The file further informs us that "Jasmina was raised in a secular manner by her father". Jasmina's 'Muslim past' comes in the form of her mother and sister, both "Muslim believers".^{xx} When Jasmina is accepted as a bodyguard trainee in the Danish Security and Intelligence Service – the same day a Bosnian-born bodyguard dies protecting the Minister for Defence – the sister exclaims, initially mocking the Danish authorities: "we lost a Muslim bodyguard, so we just grab another Paki ... [Y]ou'll be in a strange place with 19 men. What do you think Mom will say? ... You're such a wannabe-Dane!" (episode 1).^{xxi}

As the series proceeds, it is time and again demonstrated how Jasmina is *not* the stereotypical Muslim migrant (unassimilable, un-educated and therefore un-employable). At the training camp, she takes over the piano and chorus when one of the other cadets gets lost in *Midt om natten*, the title song of 1980s movie that is rather critical of the police (episode 1). Hence, she demonstrates both command of a Danish cultural repertoire and that she is capable of administering self-irony; a quality taken to be particularly Danish. She demonstrates how her 'Muslim' background has not hindered the crucial integration in Danish drinking culture. Later, it appears as though she has been in a relationship with a rather bohemian fellow (episode 7), so her heritage demonstrably has not kept her from having out-of-marriage sex. She impresses the police psychiatrist by being able to quote the 1970s anti-psychiatry Guru R.D. Laing at length (episode 8), showing off the cultural capital of an academic family background. The zenith of her will to integrate is reached as she cuts off her pony tail after it has proven to be her Achilles' heel in close combat training (episode 1).^{xxii}

However, the exchange of words between the two recruiting officers watching Jasmina's performance at the obstacle course (episode 1) makes clear how once identified as a Muslim, you are never 'just a Dane' – you are also a potential Muslim security threat:

Officer 1: "The one with the hair; where's she from?"

Officer 2: "Bellahøj police" [wry, sideways glance at the other officer] "Egypt".

Officer 1: "Did you have her checked?"

Officer 2: "Her mother's Danish. The Service has used her as an Arabic interpreter".

The conversation also points out how the service values Jasmina as an asset: The present threat picture renders her Arabic language skills a valuable 'Muslim *competence*'. But her Muslim *connections* also prove valuable, as when a casual acquaintance of Jasmina confides her suspicion

of a terrorist plot unfolding in her ghetto (episodes 5–6). Furthermore, Jasmina's heritage gives her a particular Muslim *connectivity*. When sweeping Pakistani locations for terrorist plots to secure the visit of a Danish Minister, Jasmina's background makes it possible for her to bond with a young female receptionist at her Islamabad hotel (episode 11):

Receptionist: "I've lived my whole life in Denmark."

Jasmina: "So have I."

Proceeding from this introduction, the two go shopping – chitchatting all the while Jasmina is particularly attentive to clues concerning the terrorist plot.^{xxiii}

Finally, *Livvagterne* tells of how a successful 'Muslim' employee is an asset as an *emblem of successful integration*. A Muslim defending Denmark (against Muslims) proves that it is possible to integrate Muslims. When the 'Muslim' in question is a woman, she adds feminist credibility to the official integration narrative: Even Muslims may aspire to Danish gender equality – and we may credibly demand them to do so. One of the prospective bodyguards refers to Jasmina's role as a symbol when he snarls at her: "You've only survived [in the elimination process of the training program] because you're both a Paki and a bitch" (episode 1). Later, it appears as though the (female) head of service actually does take a particular interest in Jasmina's fate during training and exams.

To the state, successful integration is a virtue – to others, a threat. When the Prime Minister appoints a Muslim to serve as a minister in the government, the new minister immediately receives bodyguards for protection (episode 3). The appointment provokes a nationalist group to instigate a plot against this symbolic act of successful integration. Instead of the immediate target of the plot being the Muslim minister, the target is actually Jasmina, who has been 'outed' in the press as a Muslim bodyguard (episode 4). There is more propaganda purchase in killing the Muslim protector than the Muslim minister; the Minister is only doing *fifth column* work with words, whereas the police agent has infiltrated the official security apparatus, armed with a gun. Being an emblem of successful integration involves not only elevation – it may also make you the target of unauthorized security measures to eliminate the threat to nationalist narratives of homogenous cultural identity which you embody.

At first sight, the three religions featured in *Livvagterne* seem to share a bifurcated structure: There is bad religion: fanatic, extreme, divisive and violent – and there is good religion: moderate, embracing and comforting (cf. Hansen 2012, 246–7).^{xxiv} Upon closer inspection, however, the bifurcation of the three religions does not function in the same manner: An articulation to Islam is radically different than an articulation to other religions. 'Christian' *Rasmus Poulsen* (Søren Vejby) never relates religiously caused mayhem and suffering to his own spirituality: When Christianity appears as determining violence, it is simultaneously excluded – either as clinically diagnosed madness (episode 8) or sectarian extremism (episodes 17–18; cf. Hansen 2012, 246–7). For *Jonas Goldschmidt* (André Babikian), Judaism seems either to be something of the past or something dangerous but very far away and voluntary: Jonas developed a close relationship to his grandmother, only disturbed by her "rabid" religion.^{xxv} And when Jonas' wife leaves him with their daughter to go live in an ultra-orthodox Israeli community, she changes her mind and goes swimming in Eilat. But terrorism legitimized by theology claiming to represent the true version of Islam is not only present; it is constantly made relevant – even for as thorough a secularist as Jasmina.

Conclusions and implications for identity politics, security and conflicts

Muslims are certainly featured in Danish broadcast drama series – they are even disproportionately represented in positive roles. In contrast to American filmed entertainment, where 'Muslims' are directly articulated to violence as the violent, criminal, terrorist, etc., Danish screen writers seem to be on a mission on behalf of integration, nuance and desecuritization when it comes to Muslims. In order to make primetime TV drama work, however, writers rely on stereotypes – and the culturally available Muslim stereotypes are negative and violent. Nevertheless, Danish writers take pains to tell positive stories when articulating them. However, as long as the 'Muslim' characters remain minor and marginal, nuance gets lost and the stereotypes rule.

Even when narrated as security providers, 'Muslim' characters given subordinate parts in Danish broadcast drama present a recognizable set of stereotypes: A Muslim background may be presented as an *asset* instrumental in providing 'Muslim expertise' to the security organization when dealing with 'Muslim threats' (*Ørnen*, *Forbrydelsen I*, *Borgen*, *Forbrydelsen II*). Employing 'Muslim expertise' to secure Denmark against 'Muslim threats' is blatantly heralded (*Ørnen*) or silently implied (*Borgen*) to be an *emblem of perfect integration*. A Muslim background, character and identity – instrumental as it may be – simultaneously casts a shadow of doubt as to whether the

Muslim in question is instead acting as a *fifth column* (*Forbrydelsen I*, *Forbrydelsen II*). On top of this set of stereotypes directly related to a position in the security organization, a number of more general 'Muslim' stereotypes persist: Muslims are articulated to violence and street gangs (*Ørnen*), forced marriages (*Forbrydelsen I*), violent conflicts 'back home' (*Ørnen*, *Forbrydelsen II*, *Borgen*) and suicide bombings (*Forbrydelsen II*). Moreover, if necessitated by the overall series narrative, a subordinate 'Muslim' character may flip-flop from one Muslim stereotype to a surprisingly unrelated one.

Only place centre stage and time to see the world from the perspective of a hybrid identity renders visible a level of representation which denies the relevance of a supposedly 'real' Muslim essence.. When portraying its 'Muslim' character, *Livvagterne* relies on the same catalogue of stereotypes – each implying a Muslim past as explanation and each prognosticating a Muslim future course of action linking 'Muslims' with violence.. However, placing 'the Muslim' centre stage as one of the main characters allows much more sophisticated articulations.^{xxvi} Most importantly, it allows a level of representation distinct from unmediated reality: Clearly, much of what happens to Jasmina springs not from her essence (Muslim or not), but rather from other characters *seeing* her as a Muslim, and therefore *dealing* with her as a Muslim. Her 'Muslim competencies', her 'Muslim contacts', and her 'Muslim connectivity' are seen as valuable in the fight against Islamist terrorism. However well integrated, she is not (only) a Dane – she is (also) a Muslim. The series, hence, reproduces the notion that Islam is more defining for individuals than Christianity and Judaism – and even the idea that Muslims are by definition related to violence. Crucially, the series complicates this idea by showing how the defining power comes not from Islam as an essence encoded in the individual, but rather from society repeatedly defining the individual seen as Muslim by Islam's supposed relevance. The message of the series is unequivocally that her relations to the stereotypes are not due to an essential 'Muslimness' but rather due to how other characters insist on seeing and treating her as a Muslim.

This analysis has implications for how we think about the triangular relation between identity, security and conflicts. All of the analysed crime series pivot (because they are crime series) around the fight against that which threatens Us: terror, violence, crime, etc. And a lot of these vices are presented as 'Muslim' by nature. At the same time, however, it becomes clear that the fight with evil we are involved in does not match in a 1:1 manner with a distinction between Danes and Muslims. The more self-reflexive series (*Livvagterne*, *Ørnen*, *Forbrydelsen*) grapple with the problem that

We might be intimately related to (and even causing) evil ourselves. One way of leading the demand for identity away from triggering the threat/defence logic of security is to allow time and space for representing identities which – paradoxically – do not insist on their own identity (cf. Galtung 1978; Author 2010): identities which include depending on difference as central elements; identities which in that sense acknowledge their own hybridity; identities which accept a need to change (in some regards) to uphold identity (in other, more important regards).

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Endnotes

ⁱ I thank xx, and two anonymous reviewers for EJCS for helpful input when writing this article.

ⁱⁱ The five series are all produced by Danish public service broadcaster DR: *Ørnen* [*The Eagle*] (2004-6), *Forbrydelsen* [*The Killing*] (2007), *Forbrydelsen II* [*The Killing II*] (2009), *Livvagterne* [*The Protectors*] (2008–10), and *Borgen* [*Government*] (season I, 2010).

ⁱⁱⁱ On the one hand, survey data suggest that Danes are more or less split down the middle in their attitudes towards Muslims and migrants (Thomsen 2006): On the other hand, qualitative analyses have documented how narratives implying or explicating 'Muslim threats', which were marginal two decades ago, are now mainstream. Cf. Author (2010), for references to a series of studies which, based on diverse empirical studies, cloaked in a variety of theoretical languages, all come to a comparable conclusion.

^{iv} Poole and Richardson (2006) summarize the existing research on the Anglo-Saxon world and provide additional evidence. Jacobsen et al. (2013) do the same for Danish media, adding some nuance to earlier research. Evans et al. (2008) find Danish media to be comparatively negative vis-à-vis Muslims, but find reporting on the West in many Muslim countries even more negative.

^v The Muslim male, that is - leaving the Muslim female passive and in need of protection from the Western male (Saïd 1978; cf. Abu-Lughod 2001, 105)

^{vi} Comedy series apparently allow more space for non-violent Muslims (Hussain 2010, 55).

^{vii} Before migrants and refugees became regular acquaintances in Danish filmed entertainment, a few movies in the 1970s and 1980s portrayed the strangers as victims of Danish intolerance (Hjort 2005; Jørholt 2007).

^{viii} Elsewhere in Europe, scholarly attention is tuned to the difference made by minority members gaining executive functions in movie production (cf. i.a. Wright 2002; Tarr 2004), a phenomenon which remains nascent in Denmark (Hjort 2005).

^{ix} Necef (2003) slides from an initial focus on 'Muslims' (in Denmark) when discussing social trends to expanding his focus to include a broader range of 'strangers' when analysing moving pictures (from Denmark and abroad).

^x Early instances of this construction present the two cultures as digitally split (they cannot be combined; you must choose), while later a tendency to allow explorations of hybridity becomes more widespread.

^{xi} Jørholt (2007) discusses this argument in relation to a couple of series of action movies featuring ex-Yugoslav (non-Muslim) gangsters.

^{xii} The strategy suggested is akin to the one Dyer outlines after developing a distinction between, on the one hand, novelistic types which 'belong' to society and are allowed to develop with the plot, and, on the other hand, stereotypes which "always carry within their very representation an implicit narrative" and, hence, "insist on boundaries exactly at those points where in reality there are none" (2000, 15-16).

^{xiii} For an analysis of *The Killing*, cf. Agger (2011, 118ff). For other studies contributing to this tradition of focusing on gender in Scandinavian crime fiction, cf. Agger (2010) and Povlsen (2010).

^{xiv} Watson (2012) argues for cross-fertilizing framing theory and securitization theory on the epistemological terms of Lakoff's cognitivist theory. Lakoff insists on basing frames, their inertia and effects as co-constitutive with neuro-structures of the brain (Lakoff 2008, 33, ch. 4). However, this article utilizes the concepts of frames and narratives to account for agency structured by meaning while remaining un-committed to their possible foundation in human wetware (Author 2010).

^{xv} No new insights would have followed from including *Anna Pihl* (2006–08) in the analysis, a series produced by the commercially funded public service broadcaster TV2 (Denmark), featuring a 'Muslim' as a sidekick to the title figure, a newly trained police officer who is as single mother.

^{xvi} *Borgen* literally translates to *The Castle*. However, DR promotes the series internationally as *Government*, whereas BBC broadcasted it under its original Danish title, *Borgen*. Only season I (2010) is relevant for the problematique of this article.

^{xvii} The presentation of the cast on the official Danish Radio series website is explicit on a number of biographical points which are not readily available from the moving pictures: http://www.dr.dk/oernen/person_Nazim.asp (accessed 14 November 2013).

^{xviii} Vron Ware (personal communication 2013.05.30) alerted my attention to this way of making bigotry the true culprit, to which the article's focus on security providers is blind.

^{xxix} <http://www.dr.dk/DR1/Ekspres/topnyheder/20111111155116.htm>; (accessed 14 November 2013).

^{xxx} <http://www.dr.dk/DR1/Livvagterne/Personaledossier/20081127141207.htm> (accessed 14 November 2013). The file also includes a proclamation of political philosophy: "Jasmina does not believe in a national community of destiny. What holds us together is the Constitution – and the Constitution shall not be bent to fit the religion or ideology of individuals."

^{xxxi} In later episodes, it appears as though the sister is less of a religious stalwart after all.

^{xxxii} Goffman (1961) includes the haircut in his list of initiation rites typical for total institutions. The accompanying symbolic loss of piety does not go lost on Jasmina's sister (episode 1).

^{xxxiii} Later, the receptionist dies in the terrorist attack on the hotel, at which point Jasmina realizes, alas too late, that the receptionist's ex-fiancé was involved in the attack.

^{xxxiv} (There might actually be two separate versions of 'good religion': a moderate, diffuse spirituality which may be comforting, and a principled – bordering on the extreme – religiosity which insists on embracing in the face of violence. But that is not a discussion of urgent importance for this paper.

^{xxxv} <http://www.dr.dk/DR1/Livvagterne/Personaledossier/20081127141207.htm> (accessed 14 November 2013).

^{xxxvi} To broadcast drama script writers, it is a truism that minor characters necessarily rely heavily on stereotypes. This only serves to further make the point – that minority members need to be put centre-stage every now and then – more pertinent.