



How Muslim women are represented in Swedish textbooks

A comparative study of religion textbooks between 1970s and the 2000s

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Abstract

This study is based on a comparative qualitative analysis of religion textbooks in elementary schools. The aim is to investigate how Muslim women have been represented in religion textbooks used as educational material in Swedish schools, between the 1970s and the 2000s. This study rests on the social constructivist theory which implies that reality is what we make it. In order to do a comparative qualitative analysis, three deductive stereotypes have been applied: the *oppressed*, the *submissive* and the *uneducated*. However, an additional, inductive stereotype was identified during the analysis of the material: the *independent*. The text analysis showed that Muslim women were mostly represented as oppressed and submissive, having no right to their own opinions, lives or bodies and simply needing to be covered to get accepted by the Muslim society. However, it was also possible to conclude that similar representations of Muslim women could be found in textbooks from the 1970s and 2000s.

Key Words: Muslim Women, Sweden, Textbooks, Representation, Stereotypes

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1. Introduction

“A Muslim girl does not make her own decision or seek control. She is trained to be docile. If you are a Muslim girl, you disappear, until there is almost no you inside you. In Islam, becoming an individual is not a necessary development; many people, especially women, never develop a clear individual will. You submit: that is the literal meaning of the word Islam: submission. The goal is to become quite inside, so that you never raise your eyes, not even inside your mind” (Ali 2007:94)

In Western society, Muslims have been – and still are – misrepresented. Specifically, Muslim women have been presented as a homogeneous group, whose rights are ignored by the society. This is mostly due to a range of historical and political events, and to the values and influences of the society (Ali 2003), (Poole 2000), (Bullock and Jafri 2000). Since we live in a socially constructed society that is constantly changing, different factors, such as representation, have a strong effect and influence on the decisions and interpretations we choose to make every day.

From an early age, we have been fed by our surroundings with certain beliefs and prejudices of what is good and bad, or wrong and right. The outcome of these beliefs and prejudices we have been given is that we view unfamiliar things, such as different cultures and religions, as something strange. Thus, Muslim women are often viewed upon as “different” or “foreign” in the West (Poole 2000), (Agha 2000). With the political and historical events in the world, such as the 9/11 attack and Orientalism, this negative picture has developed into an even more harsh and offensive one (Ali 2003:79). The misrepresentations resulting from these views may be seen even in textbooks, used as educational material around the world, in which Muslim women have been defined as repressed and ignored by their religion and culture.

Tingsten, a prominent Swedish political scientist, has written about school propaganda referring to the education instructions given in Swedish schools, and how they differ between regimes in the world. Tingsten argues that Sweden in the late 1800s was considered the ideal state for spreading school propaganda, referring to the state that gave the right educational guidance to its nation (Tingsten 1969:121). According to the school order in the 1800s, education was supposed to raise love and attention to one’s country and government. During this time, culture disagreement and struggles were unknown since all people were Swedish and had no relations to other nations. Changes that first emerged were when the state started to modernize in the

1900s and the society got a new government. During this time, children were provided the same education materials and information as the adults in Swedish schools. This was unlikely to occur in countries with more aggressive ideologies and hostilities against other people and nationalities in their education materials. The aim at that time, of the school commission was to educate democratic people by giving them an education that was not authoritarian, but rather objective and based on scientific proofs. Tingsten further states that propaganda and patriotism that was revealed in schoolbooks disappeared around 1900s. Even though modernization occurred, some schoolbooks still represented values and opinions from the late 1800s and early 1900s (Tingsten 1969:276-280).

The outcome of the school system from the 1900s lead to changes in school system politics and the curriculum for the textbooks, carried out by a special committee. Textbooks that were used in Swedish schools were reviewed and approved by Statens Läroboksnämnd, which was active from 1938 to 1974. Statens Läroboksnämnd had great influence on the regulations and controlled a great part of the school system. The authors of textbooks were very much dependent on the curriculum and most of the course instructions when writing. Nowadays, textbook publishers are more privatized which has led to more than 90 percent of the textbooks being written by teachers in active services (Larsson 1997:229).

In a report from 2006 written by the Swedish national agency for education, scholars have shown that school is an important factor in the development of democracy, equality, tolerance and respect for human rights. There are also some particular values that are lifted up in the syllabus for elementary and high schools, such as the sanctity of human life, individual freedom and integrity, people's equal value, equality between men and women and solidarity with the weak and vulnerable, that are expected to be followed. There are scholars that have made investigations on textbooks of biology, natural science, history, religion and social science to see if the mentioned values have been integrated in the Swedish textbooks. The result showed that the values of the syllabus were not followed because the textbooks were discriminating and insulting. One example that was found in history and social science textbooks, was that Muslims were framed as militant and characterized as terrorists which would lead to xenophobia. Textbooks that presented gender showed that men and boys are overrepresented while women and girls were represented as subordinated, mocked and blamed for all the burdens (Skolverket rapport 285 2006:42-44).

According to a report by “Statens offentliga utredningar”, Western schools in the society should give children literature that is as neutral and liberal as possible, in the sense that all material and information that is provided should be objective. The schoolbooks provided in Swedish schools have shown potential to slant the values of the society with the help of ethnocentric perspectives. The ethnocentric perspectives that occur in the literatures are the knowledge of different peoples, ethnic groups, religions and places. These are also not considered to be a part of the culture sphere, but rather seen as unfamiliar and inappropriate to our society. There are studies that support this statement where they have found racial and colonial discourses in Swedish educational materials from late 1800s to 1980s. Today’s societies have been developed by receiving more knowledge about the different cultures, but still there are research studies that claim that there are textbooks that express these prejudices and values (Statens offentliga utredningar 2005:224).

Our gap consists of that there are no comparative studies done on how Muslim women have been represented in Swedish religion textbooks in the 1970s and the 2000s. The importance of this comparative study is to see if there have been any changes in the representation of Muslim women, since the beliefs of today’s society to a great extent rely on generalizations of Muslim women. Prejudices that are presented by the society are also found in educational materials and are provided to the children. The study will contribute with a new perspective on Swedish education materials, but also with an analysis of how Muslim women are represented in the Swedish religion textbooks in 2000s. It is very important that the right information is given to children, since they form their first opinions when reading and learning the information provided.

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. It begins with an introduction, followed by chapter two that discusses previous research on the representation of Islam and Muslim women in the media and Islam and Muslim women in educational materials. Chapter three discusses our theoretical approach where we present our ontological assumption and central theoretical concepts and the discussion ends with an analytical framework. Chapter four describes our specific aim and research questions. Chapter five brings up our research design and methods and chapter six presents our analysis. Chapter seven is the last chapter where we present and discuss our conclusions.

2. Representation of Muslim women in Media and Textbooks in Prior Scholarship

There are two scholarly fields that are relevant for our thesis. The first research field is the representation of Islam and Muslim women in the media, and the second one is the representation of Islam and Muslim women in textbooks. We can conclude that there is a comprehensive research done on the representation of Islam and Muslim women in general. However, few studies have looked at Swedish textbooks and compared different time periods. With this study, we want to contribute to this field of research, which is lacking on the representation of Muslim women in Swedish textbooks. This literature review will begin with discussing media and women and then go on to Islam and Muslim women in Media, where we discuss how the media have presented them in the world. Then, following with how Islam and Muslim women have been represented in textbooks in the United States and Sweden.

Carilli and Campbell wrote the book *Women and Media*, looking at different perspectives on race, ethnicity, class and sexuality, and argue that mass communication theories have been led by certain agenda settings, which in their turn have shaped public opinions about women in media. These certain agenda settings were misleading the public opinion of women in the world by exclusion and marginalization (Carilli, Campbell 2005:xiii). Ockrent and Trainer who also discuss the women's hard and unbearable living situation of today, agree with Carilli and Campbell, but argue as well that segregation and stereotypical gender roles that appear are all led by the media, which give them different types of positions in media (Ockrent, Trainer 2007:447, Carilli, Campbell 2005:xiii). Beverly and Ross, who wrote the book *Women and Media a critical introduction* explaining how women have worked through times to improve their situation with the media, agree with Ockrent and Trainer and Carilli and Campbell that women have been portrayed as subjects and underrepresented in the media (Beverly, Ross 2006:77-78, Ockrent, Trainer 2007:447, Carilli, Campbell 2005: xiv).

2.1 Representation of Islam and Muslim women in Media

Agha (2000:221-222) writes about Islamic fundamentalism and the different images of Islam in the Western media and quotes Edward Said, who asserts that "the media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world". What he also implies is that the representation of media has made Islam for what it is today and everything that we witness from the media about Islam is characterized, analyzed and given from a subjective point of view. With this said he

continues to explain that the media are profit-seeking corporations who have one interest, that is to promote one kind of picture; in this case Islam is given by a negative point of view, where the public, have through the images been given a negative representation of the stereotypes. Poole (2000:157-159) analyzed the British newspaper coverage of Islam in the British press and argued that mass media is more interested in global Islam, in other words the total picture of Islam, than in a specific group, such as Muslim women. Instead the mass media seek to represent Islam as monolithic and Muslims as a homogeneous group who inherit their characters. This has contributed to the idea that all Muslims are one and the same.

Vintges (2012:284), who writes about Muslim women in the West through Foucault's theories and Western values, means that Muslim women characters have been framed as unattractive and oppressed because of their veil. Western women are represented as free, modern and attractive who lived up to the Westernized values. In another article by Bullock and Jafri (2000:35-36) who discussed the Canadians values and the misrepresentation of Muslim women in Canada, it is claimed that Canadian media have represented Muslim women as "the others" and "foreign", who do not live up to present any of the Canadian values, which characterize women as progressive, modern, liberated, free and educated. The article also argues that Muslim women are represented as supportive of indiscriminate violence and gender oppression.

Bullock (2002:1, 42), who discusses the Western stereotype of the veil in Muslim and non-Muslim countries, states that the veil has always been a strong symbolic tool for Muslim women in the world, but also a much discussed topic. Muslim women have by mass media been represented as a victim held in hostage by Islam. Christiansen (2011:337), who discusses Muslim women's clothing and appearance in Danish media, states that Muslim women's clothing and the veil have contributed to several actions around Europe against hijab and Islam. In Denmark, hijab has been a much discussed topic, and people from the political public sphere agree on that hijab is not just representing Muslim women but also a symbol that represent them as oppressed. Christiansen also claimed that the different clothing creates a distance and a hard time to integrate Muslim women in the society. Ehrkamp (2010:19, 24), who also discusses women's clothing and medias representation of Muslim women but in Germany, agrees with Bullock about keeping Muslim women in some kind of hostage by Islam, where they are not given any rights to have their own opinions, bodies or lives. Ehrkamp also implies that to integrate and to fulfill a full membership in a society, Muslim women need to wear more westernized clothes and unveil their bodies to decrease the existing gap between westernized

values and Muslim women. We will now continue to discuss how Muslim women have been represented in textbooks.

2.2 Representation of Islam and Muslim women in textbooks

We can conclude that there is a significant amount of research on how Muslim women have been represented in textbooks. In the United States, the stereotypes of Muslims are characterized in the first place by the media, but also through teachers, textbooks and education. According to Phelps, who writes about different ways to give Americans a better understanding of Muslims in the United States, claims that people are given the wrong information about Islam and Muslims (Phelps 2010:190). Jackson (2011:162, 172) also discusses Islam and Muslims in the United States and different ways to educate about Islam, argue that some states have a constitutional law on how much it is allowed to write about the religion Islam in textbooks. Muslim women are in this published material barely mentioned and the information is only based on general facts about Islam. Jackson also argues that whenever Muslim women are discussed they are represented as subordinated and have very limited freedom.

There are Muslim organizations in Sweden that accuse textbooks of describing their religion in the wrong way. They claim that textbooks misrepresent Islam by pictures and angled texts. Otterbeck (2000:61) discusses how to deal with different situation between parents, students and the school, and mean that the different occurrences in Islam have a tendency to influence the Swedish media in the long run. This means that it will lead to a disturbing concern on how it will affect students' presetting of Islam and how much the textbooks will be influenced by the negative image presented by mass media. Härenstam (1993:55-56) who writes an analysis of the image of Islam in religion educational materials, states that the content of the books is changing due to the world politics over time and then affects the directive curriculum for textbooks. Samuelsson (1999:112) is another scholar who discusses the matter of providing the best education for children when it comes to educating about Islam. He implies that only through a Muslim teacher will the children get the most objective point of view, instead of using the textbooks that are more subjective.

According to Härenstam, the textbooks used in elementary school in Sweden about Islam begin solely by barely mentioning Muslim women and go on later where the information becomes more substantial of Muslim women in the Middle East. In Secondary school Islam is presented in a more socio-political context where they bring up the Muslim women's role and rights. In all the textbooks Muslim women become a central topic where they describe more about how

they live in all the different Muslim countries. In High schools, textbooks have the socio-political context, but presented with a more philosophical orientation (Härenstam 1993:229-243).

Since researches have shown that there is a majority of studies done on Muslim women's representation in the world and only a few studies are done on Sweden and Muslim women and even less done on Muslims women's representation in Swedish textbooks. Thus, with our thesis, we hope to contribute to the missing field of research by giving the reader a deeper understanding and extended knowledge that will contribute to a much clearer image of Muslim women's representation in Swedish textbooks.

3. Theoretical Approach: Social Constructivism

This chapter will bring up the theory and concepts of representation of Muslim women by presenting stereotypical examples, which have been provided in earlier researches that have been socially constructed by the society. Our thesis will perform an interpreting and descriptive analysis through the theoretical approaches; social constructivism and postcolonial theory. The selected theories we have chosen suit well with our research question that rely on social constructivism theory. The chapter begins with a definition of representation, followed by an explanation of Bacchi's analytical framework and social constructivism. Then we will go on with Orientalist stereotypes of women where we mention Said and Mohanty, and definitions of the stereotypes, ending with an analytical framework of the concepts.

3.1 Representation

Representation helps us to identify ourselves and others in the society. With the help of representation, we separate people into different groups that relate them to each other by appearance, clothing and skin colors. Muslim women are often separated as the others and we connect them to a certain group in the society by their appearance etc. To explain Representation more specifically, "Representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts and language which enable us to refer to either the real world of objects, people, and events or to imaginary world of fictional objects, people, events etc." (Hall 1997:17). Representation has a considerable effect on how we choose to define and link objects in the real world.

Representation is categorized into two systems, the first consisting of concepts and meanings which are used in our mind to associate thoughts and objects of the real world. By trying to differ and organize these concepts in our minds, we are using principals and similarities as a help to classify them and form a complex relationship between them. The complex relations of mixing and matching provide us with the understanding of how we should interpret and understand the world individually. Our communication system is a conceptual map that includes shared thought and meanings, but also provides us with the knowledge of how we choose to interpret and construct the world in general as others (Hall 1997: 17-18). The second system of representation is language, which is an "overall process of constructing meanings" (Hall 1997:18). To be able to connect our concepts and ideas, we refer to words in different kind of signs that is in written, spoken or in visual images. These signs and images help us to

represent and influence our cultural meaning system in our minds. It also provides us with the tools that help us to distinguish between what we construct as our cultural system and what is seen as acceptable and unacceptable both mentally and in reality (Hall 1997:18-19).

In today's society the cultural meaning of languages and concepts is what causes us to see and believe in things without questioning whether it is good or bad. From an early age, we are affected and socially constructed by our culture and environment which are based on concepts, which in turn are based on beliefs, prejudices and experiences. Through communication such as written, spoken or visual images we have expanded our thoughts on what we consider to be acceptable and representative of what is normal (Hall 1997:17-19). One example is on how we choose to represent Muslim women in Swedish textbooks. The textbooks provided are all written by people with their own concepts and beliefs of life, people and objects etc. In their turn these concepts have been shaped by different kinds of languages and meanings, such as our images of certain people, agencies, etc. When textbooks authors are then trying to write down texts about certain groups in the society, they cannot help not to be influenced and shaped by the society since we live in a socially constructed world that is based on our beliefs and concepts.

3.2 What is the problem represented to be

With the WPR approach, meaning what the problem represented to be and explains how someone will understand a problem, "How you feel about something determines what you suggest doing about it" (Bacchi 2009:1-3), for example, how textbooks represent something has an enormous effect on how we feel, see and speak to and about a problem. The WPR approach rest on social constructivist assumptions based on constructivist ontology, who rejects the thought of an external reality that exists independently of our knowledge and conception (Hay 2002:199).

Social constructivism gives us the understanding to see the world as a social product that is led by social factors of the nature and gives us the knowledge that is socially constructed (Bacchi, Eveline 2010:117). Social constructivism brings up the importance of culture and context that is based on the understanding of the knowledge constructed by activities in a society, such as how Muslim women have been represented. The specific core assumptions are reality, knowledge and learning, to understand how the world works from a social constructivist's view, where the knowledge of reality is based on human activity. The knowledge that is a human product is socially and culturally constructed, and learning is a social process that is only based

within an individual that is active and engaged in social activities (Beaumie 2006:2-3). Since we are born in a society where our identity, meaning and values are determined by our culture, we immediately create judgmental prejudices by categorizing people as we and them. The negative representation of the society have given the world an angled picture of Muslim women, which in their turn has had a huge effect on how the textbooks have chosen to present Muslim women.

What we have assumed and taken for granted has to do with how something has been given to us, and textbooks' way of portraying Muslim women has given us different stereotypes that we identify Muslim women with. These stereotypes have not been questioned, but rather taken for granted and assumed to be right. It could also be the general judgment that we make subconsciously due to lack of knowledge, social interactions or the discourse of their religion (Bacchi 2009:35).

Bacchi's constructions of problems are divided in three representations; representation of the problem, cause and solution. We will only use Bacchi's model of analysis to investigate how Muslim women have been represented in the textbooks. Bacchi's framework is tools of policies analysis where the problem can be answered and addressed to different policies represented, rather than addressing to the reactions of the problem and how to understand the problem that are represented. Since we are modifying Bacchi's analytical framework, the solution presented is based on many causes and effects by the society, and is therefore socially produced by the system, which then is not possible to be answered (Bacchi 2010:70). Bacchi's analytical framework that suits to explore how Muslim women have been represented helps us to get a clearer vision of our central categories and concepts.

3.3 Orientalist stereotypes of women

“Stereotypes are sets of beliefs, usually stated as categorical generalizations, that people hold about the members of their own and other groups” (Rinehart 2010:137). Stereotypes are overgeneralized beliefs that rarely are linked to the objective facts, it is a set of characteristics connected to members of a social group. These characters are based on their physical appearance, intelligence and personality (Rinehart 2010:137).

Edward W Said is a well-known post-colonial theorist who discusses Orientalism and how it has been portrayed. Orientalism has formally existed since the year 1312 in Wien when some professors were established in Arabic, Greek, Hebrew and Syriac (Said 1978/2000:125). The

Orient is an idea that has a history and traditions of thought, given its reality and presence of the West. Orient and Occident are a complex hegemony that is based on power and domination. The Orient's stereotypical model of women, where they never spoke for themselves, showed no emotions, presence or history. They were always dominated by a wealthy foreign man who spoke and represented them in all kinds of situations. The concept Orientalism is often identified as the idea of Europe; Europeans' identities of nations are explained as we and them. This is one of the reasons that have led the European culture to be seen as a hegemonic power that acts as superiors both within and beyond Europe. The Europeans' vision of the Orient is seen as to be backwards and European dominance is therefore needed (Said 1978/2000:1-9).

Chandra Talpade Mohanty is another well-known post-colonial theorist that writes and criticizes the Western feminism model of the third world women (Mohanty 2003:17). The Western feminist discourses of women have been categorized and subjected, where the assumptions of women as a group have been characterized as powerless, exploited and sexually harassed. Mohanty has described the Western feminism discourse of third world women, with the help of six categories, which are one, married women as victims of the colonial process two, women as universal dependents three, women and development process four, women being victims of male violence five, women and the familial systems and six, women and religious ideologies (Mohanty 2003: 34-33). We choose to use only three of her six categories, since they are the most relevant for our thesis and they do also bring up the Muslim woman. The first category is women being victims of male violence and sexually oppressed in some parts of the world. In Africa and in the Middle East women are victims of genital mutilation, where the goal is to control their sexuality. These women have also restricted power of freedom and constantly reminded of their social position that is always clarified to a certain extent (Mohanty 2003:23-24).

The second category is about women and the familial systems where the Arab and Muslim societies do not see them as a part of the family. They see women as something that will affect the kinship structure, therefore, always need to be defined within and by the family in every situation. To accept the Muslim women in the hierarchical social structure, they need to be identified as sexual, political subjects before their entrance into the family. The exclusion of women in such hierarchical structured society is what causes women to be oppressed and represented as different (Mohanty 2003:28). The third category is about women and religious ideologies where Mohanty explains that when doing cross-cultural analysis, women have been

divided into an independent category, when trying to discover certain economic reductionism (Mohanty 2003:28-29).

The post-colonial discourse in the West has been very much influencing the society on how we still choose to represent Islam and Muslim women today. The post-colonial thoughts still remain as a base for our prejudices of the Orient. Mohanty means that even though there have been development of Arabs and Muslims as she referred to the Orient (Mohanty 2003:28). There are still specific characteristics that are represented, and possible to be found in different parts of the world and in Western texts written by different scholars around the world.

3.4 Muslim women as oppressed

Oppression is a common concept that has many times been tied to the Muslim women and is often used to generalize and represent them in the world. Oppression can also be defined as “Inhuman or degrading treatment of individuals or groups; hardship and injustice brought about by the dominance of one group over another; the negative and demeaning exercise of power. Oppression often involves disregarding the rights of an individual or group and is thus a denial of citizenship” (Dalrymple, Burke 2006:41). The term oppression is emotive and complex and seeks to explain situations that exercise power (Dalrymple, Burke 2006:40). This concept has also been brought up more and more in the same context as Muslim women by the Western media.

The made-up picture of Islam by the West has contributed to negative stereotypes of Muslim women, one of them is the veil that has several times been combined with Muslim women being oppressed. According to the West the veil is a visible symbol with the characters of honor and shame. These represented characters have contributed to Western media's representation of Muslim women being seen as oppressed in today's society. There are many debates about veiling and unveiling that have contributed to numerous investigations made on political and economic sources of women's oppression. The Western observation means that unveiling bodies are taken as a norm and in a cross-culturally valid nation's discourse of how a feminine body should look like. The Western claim that the lack of knowledge of Islam as a culture and its symbols due to Muslim women wearing a veil and being represented as oppressed, have enforced many of the Muslim women choosing to wear the veil by strategic choice. One is to gain respect in the men's-dominated countries, the other one is through wearing the veil, it is one way of staying true and defend your Muslim identity when Western countries go against and debate the veil (Roald 2001:254), (Aquil 2011:21-22, 28-29), (Rosenbaum 2013:215).

Western prejudices have not always contributed to well-reasoned thoughts about Muslims and Muslim women around the world. Many of the prejudices that are represented by the West have its roots in the post-colonial encounter between the Orient and the Western power. The veil is not only a symbol for the Islam, but also a historical code for the female modesty. According to the Western ideas, Islam is seen as a backward culture were the Muslim women are passively oppressed. In today's society the veil is often seen as an ideal symbol, when being oppressed as Muslim women, meaning that they are unjustly treated by the norms and social groups. There are numerous of Muslim women in the Western society that stands between two ideologies, where one thinks they should accept their traditions, values and practice their religion as they are expected to do. The other one is based on the Western cultural norms and ideas who emphasizes freedom in the first place, and sees the Muslim women as someone who have lost their identity and are oppressed. They mean that the Muslim women need to go against the Islamic norms and take part of their freedom instead of standing behind the man and be represented as helpless (Atasoy 2006:204).

3.5 Muslim Women as Submissive

Submissive is another category that Muslim women have been connected with and represented by the media. Submissive behavior is connected with classes and linked to social circumstance and grade of threat. Some of the concepts that submissive behavior reflects are avoidance and escape. This kind of behavior does not require strong signals; it is quite obvious by the distance of avoidance. Submissive behavior does not always refer to distance between the dominate one and the submissive one. The fear of losing social status and the fear when you already lost it can start the submissive behavior of a human being (Allan, Gilbert 1997: 469-470).

In recent years in the societies it has been more common than before to talk about the stereotype submissive and how it has represented Muslim women. Islam and their values are one of the reasons why media choose to represent Muslim women as submissive. According to the Western stereotype beliefs, Muslim women are represented as submissive slaves that are not able to be a part of the civilized world just because they are Muslim women. The concept of representing Muslim women go back in time where they were represented as submissive to the male dominance. At the same time they argue that they are modest and moral in the patriarchal kind of way. Meaning that in the patriarchal domination Muslim women need to be controlled and observed by men (Mahmood 2001:205), (Afshar 2008:4), (Read and Bartkowski 2000:396), (Hamdan 2010:95).

The term submissive has been a combining word to oppression, ignorant and uneducated that has been mentioned in many associations regarding the Muslim women around the world (Aquil 2011:21). What differs submissive behavior from oppressed is that submissive behavior refers to obey the one who is dominant and serve him or her in all kinds of way, while oppression refers to disregarding the ones rights as a human being but also living under hardship and injustice. Post-colonial theorist's has explained the Orient vision of women as to be submissive and can only be represented by their men (Said 1978/2000:1-9).

3.6 Muslim women as uneducated

Uneducated is also one of the beliefs and prejudices Muslim women have been represented as in different sides of the world. The meaning of the word uneducated has to do with both educational and political implications where the culture context will many times determinate if you will be literacy or illiterate (Onwuegbu 2004:4).

The historical stereotype of how Muslim women have been represented has influenced the communication between Muslim women and the society. The stereotype uneducated of Muslim women has been a repetitive topic in the international media and the public literature. Muslim women, including scientist have spoken about how the society represent them as undereducated and uneducated, showing no understanding of speaking English because they wear hijab. One magazine called Azizah, who wants to challenge the American mainstream media and Muslim extremists, about Muslim women being represented as uneducated. They argue that the media have represent the wrong picture of Muslim women as uneducated and by having continued on this path, has led to beliefs of Muslim women not having a voice to be heard (Schmidt 2004:108), (Contractor 2012:84-85), (Cooke, Lawrence 2005:170).

There are many articles that speak about Muslim women as low-class-women, who do not have any education and do not speak any other languages than their own. Many prejudices among Western societies share the same beliefs of Muslim women as uneducated or undereducated. Reasons to these predicted values of Islam and their women has its roots in the Western values and languages provided by different media sources such as; magazines, newspapers and visual images, that have lack of communication with this group. There are studies done by British feminist writers, who argue that Muslim women are helpless and uneducated and mean that the cause of it is their religion (Codell 2003:203). The stereotypical representation of Muslim women as uneducated is much more common to be found in the Western beliefs and languages (Alidou 2013:16).

There is a clear vision that the Western beliefs do not support in any occasion, the Islamic values and the religion. This categorization has made it hard for Muslim women around the world that are struggling for the rights to an opinion, right to their body and the right to speak up where and whenever they want. Muslim women have by history been exposed as objects where their duty were and still is, to obey and not show any signs of contradiction even if they are treated unjustly. When doing investigations on these central concepts, conclusion can be made that most of them speaks and represent Muslim women in the same way by using similar language and concepts.

3.7 Analytical framework

We use Bacchi's (2009) analytical framework that we modify when doing our analysis, to explore our essential concepts of textbooks representation of Muslim women derived from earlier scholarships. This will be later presented in the framework scheme below. By using the qualitative analysis, we have chosen to have three deductive stereotypes, which can be found in previous research. One of them will remain open, so that we inductively can look for when doing our analysis. The stereotypes oppressed, submissive and uneducated that have been discussed will give us a clearer framework on how Muslim women may be represented in Swedish textbooks. To explain our analytical framework more clearly we going to explain each section of the central concepts more deeply. The concepts that we bring up in the framework will help us later on when we will be searching for the stereotypes.

The problem and reasons of oppression have many key indicators, some of the central indicators we have presented are central for many Muslim women in the world. The covering is natural expected practices of Muslim women were parts of their bodies and head should be covered. Muslim women's identities are also strongly connected to the veil whose characteristics consist of the honor and shame of their family and disregarded rights. Western societies argue that this is wrong and mean that Muslim women need to start reacting and go against these cultural norms and traditions by starting to take part of their rights as citizens. Contradictions side says that Muslim women choose to wear the veil by strategic choice of the Western but also to gain more respect in their male dominated world. Reasons for the problems represented may be western Media's negative representation that have contributed to western prejudices and given society a narrow view of Muslim women (Roald 2001:254), (Aquil 2011:21-22, 28-29), (Rosenbaum 2013:215), (Atasoy 2006:204).

The Islamic values and traditional expectations have contributed to Muslim women being represented as submissive as well. Westernized societies have represented Muslim women as in escaping and avoiding associations in the society. They need to integrate with other people from different sides of the world, but instead they take distance because of their religion and beliefs. Being submissive has also been associated with the class society and patriarchal domination where the women have always been represented below the men in all conditions. Media has not made it easier for the Muslim women, when they are being framed as objects that are controlled and threaten by their men if they are not obeying. Western beliefs mean that instead of being passive and represented as submissive slaves, they need to start to integrate in the society (Allan, Gilbert 1997: 469-470), (Mahmood 2001:205), (Afshar 2008:4), (Read and Bartkowski 2000:396), (Hamdan 2010:95).

Muslims women being represented as low-class women and do not speak any other language than their own have led to prejudices as uneducated and undereducated by the Western society. Problems of such beliefs are made up when two opposite cultural contexts occur, but also lack of communication between the individuals living in the society. Generalizations coming from Western values and divisions between inhabitants in different social cohesion have led to integration problems. This has contributed to rumors about one another. In some cultures the culture context determines if you will accept to be educated or not. Hijab has also been a contributed factor when representing Muslim as being uneducated. Reasons for this have mainly to do with bad communication and lack of knowledge of Western, but also media framing (Schmidt 2004:108), (Contractor 2012:84-85), (Cooke, Lawrence 2005:170).

How Muslim women have been represented according to previous research:				
	Oppressed	Submissive	Uneducated	Open
Problem?	- Covered - no rights (Roald, Aquil, Rosenbaum, Macdonald)	- Subordinated - Avoidance (Allan, Gilbert, Mahmood, Afshar, Read & Bartowski, Aslam)	- Beliefs - Language - Bad communication (Schmidt, Contractor, Cooke, Lawrence, Codell, Alidou)	

Reasons?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negative representation - Honor and Shame <p>(Roald, Aquil, Rosenbaum, Macdonald)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patriarchal domination - Controlled <p>(Allan, Gilbert, Mahmood, Afshar, Read & Bartowski, Aslam)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Media - Religion - Culture context <p>(Schmidt, Contractor, Cooke, Lawrence, Codell, Alidou)</p>	
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What we have concluded from the analytical framework, is that, the different stereotypes show Muslim women being represented as oppressed, submissive and uneducated. For further development of our thesis, we will use one open category of the stereotypes when looking deeper in our analysis about how Muslim women are being represented in Swedish textbooks in the 1970s and the 2000s.

4. Aim and Specified research questions

The aim of this study is to examine how Muslim women have been represented in the Swedish religion textbooks in the 1970s and the 2000s, using postcolonial theories about stereotypes about Muslim women.

More specifically, we ask to answer the following:

- Are stereotypes of Muslim women as oppressed, submissive and uneducated present in Swedish textbooks? If so, how are they represented?
- What are the differences and similarities in how these stereotypes are represented in the 1970s and the 2000s?

5. A comparative qualitative case study

This study main focus is to see how Muslim women have been represented in Swedish textbooks through a qualitative analysis. This chapter begin with the selection of the design, follow with method and collection of data and end with method of analysis and reliability.

5.1 Design

The thesis will look into the representation of Muslim women in Swedish textbooks in two specific time periods. We will be using a comparative case study with a descriptive analysis in order to provide a better understanding of our analysis of the textbooks from 1970s and the 2000s. We find the comparative design to be most suitable for our thesis, which also is more accurately explained by Bryman, who claims that the comparative design “entails studying two contrasting cases using more or less identical methods” which in our case is associated with the two different time periods 1970s and the 2000s that we have chosen. What Bryman also implies is that “we can understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations” (Bryman 2008:58). Other designs than the comparative design would be hard to imply to our research since we are comparing two time periods.

By the deductive approach we will with the selected central concepts, analyze how Muslim women have been represented in Swedish textbooks in the 1970s and the 2000s. We will also have an open category where we inductively will look at alternative representations to be able to carry on a further discussion. We will use qualitative text analysis to explore how the representations of Muslim women have been represented in Swedish textbooks in 1970s and the 2000s. Our intention with this thesis is to analyze and compare the two time periods, to see if there have been any changes of how Muslim women have been represented in the 1970s and the 2000s in Swedish textbooks.

To raise the question of generalizability in this study, we have to ask if it is possible to generalize beyond the 1970s and the 2000s. What can be concluded is that due to that society is changing, so are the cultural ideas, but also the way the society choose to represent the problems, gives us the answer that it is not possible. The question about being able to generalize Swedish textbooks to other countries, is possible if one country has a similar system, values, patterns, social life and economy to the Swedish one; such country could possibly be another Scandinavian country.

5.2 Method and collection of data

The collective process for gathering relevant material for our analysis started with searching for secondary data that consisted of relevant articles for our thesis. We collected the articles by searching in different databases such as Academic search elite and Super search. This helped us getting a clearer view of our subject and what has been studied before when it comes to Muslim women in textbooks both in Sweden and in other countries. When we looked in the different databases for information we used words such as Muslim women, textbooks, Media and Islam. When searching for these specific search words, we came about many articles concerning Muslims duties, Islam, and the problematization with Muslims and Muslim women's status. The difficulties we encounter when searching for articles where to find the right scientific articles for our thesis and how the Muslim women were represented in general in Sweden.

When it comes to the collection of the textbooks, we also searched for them in the same databases as the articles. The different databases gave us an overview of what Swedish educational materials from the 1970s and the 2000s could be found. After searching in the databases where we did not get any big responses to what we were looking for, we decided to go to the different libraries in Gothenburg and Trollhättan, to see if there were any religion textbooks that could be found in place but were not registered on the libraries databases. The relevant religion textbooks used in elementary schools in 1970s and the 2000s could only be found in the Pedagogical library in Gothenburg but in a limited amount. The implications with this kind of collecting process is that it is time consuming since not all textbooks are registered or possible to find in the individual databases from each library. This forces one to go to possible libraries in place and search for relevant material.

During the 1970s elementary school became obligatory by Swedish law and is also one of the reasons why we have chosen to concentrate our study specifically on textbooks from the 1970s and the 2000s. Religion educational material that was and still is provided today, should give the children a brief overview of different religion and cultures. Reason why we have selected religion textbooks is that this is the only relevant subject that presented the religion Islam and Muslim women on deeper level compared to other subjects in schools. Social science is one subject that has the most potential to bring up a discussion about Islam and Muslim women. Examples of discussions can be when discussing culture differences, representation of the "others" but also when discussing societies that do not give equal rights to women, etc. Other

subjects in school are not relevant for discussing Islam or Muslim women, because they are focusing on a different kind of field of study. Relevant educational material is randomly selected based on availability in the data bases and libraries. The religion textbooks that we found and that were used are;

Textbooks from 1970s:

- *Religion* Block, Per, Bolinder, Jean, Camitz, Hans, Frostin, Per, Herrström, Birgit, Häger, Bengt Åke, Knutsson, Birigitta, Von Krogh, Torbjörn, Lillifeldt, Håkan, Lindman, Harry, Modie, Peter, Moen, Jan, Pettersson, Olof, Särman, Marianne, Wadensjö, Gösta, Wadensjö, Torgny (1976)
- *Sexans religionskunskap* Bylock, Maj, Lunell, Bertil (1972)
- *Religionskunskap åk 6* Eklund, Torsten, Hanstrop, Erling, Husen, Lennart, Lundblad, Birgitta, Törnvall, Anders (1972)
- *Religionboken för grundskolans högstadium* Friedner, Gun, Hammarberg, Petrus, Lidman, Sam, Narrowe, Morton, Rimmerfors, Einar, Selin, Ingvar, Sundvall, Görge, Söderström, Hugo (1978)
- *Religionskunskap 2H sex arbetsområden häfte B* Hammarstedt, Jan, Hartman, Lars (1971)
- *Religion omfattar hela högstadiet* Hammarstedt, Jan, Hartman, Lars (1977)
- *Religionskunskap för grundskolan högstadium* Hermeren, Harry (1970)
- *Religionskunskap åk 9* Leven, Sören, Anderson, Börje, Magnusson, Åke, Wesslegård, Melker (1974)
- *Religion Faktabok* Ström, Ingemar, Petersson, Olof, Sundström, Erland, Wall, Håkan (1972)
- *Arkiv religion* Sundström, Erland (1973)

Textbooks from 2000s:

- *Puls Religion* Abrahamsson, Marianne (2011)
- *Religion Grundbok* Abrahamsson, Marianne, Lindgren, Joakim, Jonsson, Magnus (2005)
- *Religion punkt SO* Arlebrand, Håkan, Olofsson, Hans, Uppström, Rolf (2006)
- *Religion 3 grundskolans senare del* Höberg, Ole, Sundqvist Mats (2005)
- *Upptäck Religion Ring* Börje Johansson, Daniel (2008)

5.3 Method of analysis and reliability

The first assignment when you are doing comparative case and a descriptive analysis, is to you construct the analyzed tools and to be able to capture the essential aspects of the social phenomenon (Esaiasson, Gilljan, Oscarsson, Wängnerud 2012:137). When doing a qualitative analysis you first have to read the content of the texts carefully and choose the most appropriate parts of the textbook. Then read the selected chapters carefully, to be able to take out the most accurate parts of the texts and then analyze the information given. A qualitative analysis is most suitable since we are analyzing the content and the text that is hidden under the surface (Esaiasson, Gilljan, Oscarsson, Wängnerud 2012:210). In this case a quantitative analysis would not be suitable, because we are focusing on texts analysis and analyzing of words, therefore quantitative analysis is more suitable when doing statistics or when you have the intention of counting or measuring something (Bryman 2008:314).

In the unpublished document “Att läsa resonerande texter” the philosopher Mats Furberg has captured the central approaches on how to do a qualitative analysis. According to him we must read the text actively, ask questions of the text and later see if the text or we can answer these questions. The questions depend on how the argumentation chain looks: what are the points of the text? Do the points support the conclusions? What are the arguments? And on what the premises do the findings rest on? If the scientists are going to be able to have an understanding of the text, they need to read the text several times, slowly and thoughtfully (Esaiasson, Gilljan, Oscarsson, Wängnerud 2012:210). As mentioned above we will use philosopher Mats Furberg framework of how to analyze the qualitative data of the text analysis.

When doing our analysis, we began first, by looking through each content of each textbook, to see if the religion textbooks are including relevant chapters that brings up Muslim women or the religion Islam. Then when finding the most appropriate chapters of the textbook, we look through them by reading the sub-headings, and then read the most accurate parts of the chapters carefully through. Then, following on with the help of our timetable and keywords of the problem and reason, analyze the texts to see if Muslim women have been represented as oppressed, submissive and uneducated. The next step of our analysis was to see if there were any other stereotypes to be found upon Muslim women.

Our analysis is done through Bacchi´s analytical framework where we explain how the problem came about and what the different causes lie behind the representation of Muslim women in textbooks. Through our represented deductive stereotypes oppressed, submissive and

uneducated, analyze the chosen textbooks. A deductive approach goes from a broader generalizations and theories to specific problematizations (Halperin and Heath 2012:319). A fourth potential stereotype will be inductive for new findings. An inductive approach “is when you go from particular observations and cases and develop generalizations about them” (Halperin and Heath (2012:31).

In our analytical framework, then we will compare our stereotypes with the two different time periods, and how the selected textbooks from each time period have represented Muslim women based on our stereotypes. The reliability of our thesis will be strengthened through quotes from the different authors of the textbooks, that will help us prove and support our statements and discussions of how Muslim women have been represented when we comparing the 1970s and the 2000s. The quotes we used in our analysis were in Swedish from the beginning, but we have coded and translated them into English. To avoid misunderstandings we have put the Swedish quotes at the end of the page.

How Muslim women are represented in Swedish textbooks 1970s?				
	Oppressed	Submissive	Uneducated	Open
Problem?				
Reasons?				

How Muslim women are represented in Swedish textbooks 2000s?				
	Oppressed	Submissive	Uneducated	Open
Problem?				
Reasons?				

For our analysis we will use the timetables as showed above. These will show our results and findings of how Muslim women have been represented in the chosen time periods 1970s and the 2000s, and the timetable will help the reader to distinguish how Muslim women have been represented.

6. Analysis of religion schoolbooks in 1970s and the 2000s

In this chapter, we are going to do an analysis of textbooks used in Swedish schools as educational materials. The representation of the analysis is focusing on how the Muslim women are represented in religion schoolbooks in 1970s and the 2000s. We will present the religion textbooks through our central concepts, and then end with a following discussion. What we can conclude from our analysis is that similar stereotypes like oppressed and submissive are found in the religion textbooks in 1970s and the 2000s.

Religion textbooks in the 1970s and the 2000s from elementary school that did not mention Islam or Muslim women were not found in a larger amount. The textbooks that did mention Islam or Muslim women in the 1970s and the 2000s represented Muslim women in one section in the chapter, often when discussing the religion Islam. The amount of textbooks that we analyzed were ten textbooks from the 1970s and five from the 2000s. The continuing part will be followed by the presentation of our findings through our concepts.

6.1 Religion textbooks in the 1970s

6.1.1 Oppressed

Being oppressed is mainly about exercising power over another human being. Oppression is also referred to inhuman and degrading treatment of individuals or groups, meaning they are unjustly treated and their rights are taken away (Dalrymple, Burke 2006: 40-41).

The textbooks “Religionkunskap för grundskolan högstadium”, “Sexans religionskunskap” and “Faktabok Religion” have represented and characterized Muslim women as oppressed (Hermeren 1970:90), (Bylock, Lunell 1972:106), (Ström et al. 1972:142). One example is shown in “Sexans religionskunskap” where they state that:

“Women do not namely go to mosque instead they pray at home”¹ (Bylock, Lunell 1972:106).

This quote show that Muslim women’s rights to practice their religion wherever they want is limited, by advising them to stay at home. Another quote where women’s rights are oppressed is showed in “Religion Faktabok” by stating that:

¹ “Kvinnorna går nämligen inte till moskén utan ber hemma”

“Women are only allowed in the mosque as observers and are not allowed to take part of the service”² (Ström et al. 1972:142).

What we can analyze from these textbooks is that Muslim women were unjustly treated by the mosque, by telling them that they are not allowed to enter the mosque whenever they want and have no rights to practice their religion in the holy house of god, because they are only allowed as observers during the service. In “Religionskunskap 2H sex arbetsområden häfte B” states that:

“In Muslims countries unmarried women are rarely seen walking on the streets. Women are often referred to stay at home. They should be protected from all evil and harm. This includes that in some places they are covered, when being seen outside”³ (Hammarstedt, Hartman 1971:180).

Traditions and practices are expected to be followed by Muslim women and according to this citation, their rights are limited and the best thing considered for them is to stay at home. In this citation it is also claimed that, unmarried Muslim women have no opinion on choosing what the right thing is for them because they are seen as unable to protect themselves and therefore need to be covered. In this quote we can see obvious thoughts of the Orientalism are still living on, where Muslim women according to Said never spoke and represented themselves (Said 1978:1-9). Another textbook “Faktabok Religion” claims that:

“According to the Koran a woman shall wear a veil, but the requirement shift today in different parts of the world”⁴ (Ström et al.1972:142).

Muslim women are here stated as not having choice to choose if they should be covered. At the same time the quote argue that this obligation is shifting in different parts of the world. A reason to this is that if Muslim women want to be seen as “good” Muslims they should follow the holly book of god. The textbook “Religion” does also discuss Islamic customs that prefers Muslim women wearing a veil and cover up (Block et al. 1976:155).

The veil is also brought up in “Religionskunskap 9” where the state that girls:

² “Kvinnor får vara med som åskådare i moskén men inte delta i gudstjänsten”

³ “I muslimska länder ser man sällan ogifta kvinnor flanerande på gatorna. Kvinnorna är ofta hänvisade till hemmet. De ska skyddas från allt ont och skadligt. Hit hör också att de på sina håll är beslöjande, när de vistas utomhus”

⁴ “Enligt koranen ska kvinnan bära slöja, men de kraven växlar idag i olika delar av världen”

“Since nine years old has she seen the world through the black veil and show no intention today of wanting to be free from”⁵ (Leven et al. 1974:69).

Muslim women growing up in Islamic societies are used to living under these certain conditions, unlike the rest of the world who see them as not having any freedom and being oppressed. Muslim women being oppressed, is also brought up in the textbook “Religionsboken för grundskolans högstadium” where they claim that:

“The woman has no right to enter the holy place closest to Kaba”⁶ (Friedner et al.1978:188).

In this statement Muslim women’s rights are insulted and unjustly treated, one reason could be because they belong to the wrong gender, by stating that they are not allowed to be near Kaba. Another example that is brought up in the textbook is that:

“In conservative environment she lives separated and in some parts it is considered inappropriate for the women to be seen together with several men outside their home”⁷ (Friedner et al. 1978:189).

This citation demonstrates that in a conservative Islamic society it is a common occurrence that Muslim women are once more oppressed, by separating them and claiming that it is inappropriate to be seen together with men. The third statement that is brought up in the same textbook claims that:

“According to the Koran she should cover her face. This means that in a modern society she cannot wear a short skirt, gymnastic clothes or swimsuit to be able to protect her moral. She should also according to the Koran lower her gaze, keep her virginity and do not show any parts of her body expect for those parts she cannot hide”⁸ Friedner et al. (1978:189).

In this statement traditions have a huge effect on not just the practices of Muslim women, but also their personal sexual lives, which are limiting Muslim girls from taking part of school activities as one example and living a normal life as other youths. In the end it is concluded that in the statement they do not have any rights on anything regarding their lives, which means that Muslim women are clearly oppressed. Mohanty in this statement would argue that this is a clear statement were Muslim women are sexually oppressed. By wanting to control their sexuality

⁵ “allt sedan nioårsåldern har hon sett världen genom den svarta slöjan som hon idag inte visar minsta intresse att vilja bli fri från”

⁶ “Kvinnan har inte rätt att beträda det heliga området närmast Kaba”

⁷ “I konservativa miljöer bor hon avskilt och på en del håll anser det opassande att kvinnor vistas tillsammans med mer män utanför hemmet

⁸ “Enligt koranen ska hon bära slöja för ansiktet. Detta innebär att i modern samhälle hon får inte bära kort kjol, gymnastik kläder eller baddräkt för att kunna skydda hennes moral. Hon ska också enligt koranen sänka sin blick, bevara sin oskuld och inte visa sina behag förutom dem som du inte kan gömma”

and limiting their freedom, but also constantly reminding them of their social situation by telling them how to act (Mohanty 2003: 23-24).

The textbook “Religion” discusses Muslim women’s limited rights, by claiming that:

“In front of a court a woman’s testimony is only worth half of a man’s”⁹ (Block et al. 1976:155).

Even in court Muslim women’s rights are disregarded by turning the law against them, and showing that their already limited rights are not equally valued to the men’s in front of the law.

The textbook claims as well that:

“The Koran does also decides that a woman only inherit half of what a man inherit. It is further stated that a man can divorce his wife whenever he wants”¹⁰ (Block et al. 1976:155).

This citation is clearly showing that Muslim women are oppressed by the law and once more not equally valued as the men, and therefore have no rights to take any important decisions, since it is only the man who can take out a divorce if he wants.

6.1.2 Submissive

Submissive behavior is a reflection of avoidance and escape, which also is related to the social status or when one have lost it. Which can lead to one feeling threaten and start a submissive behavior when one wants to dominate another individual (Allan, Gilbert 1997: 469-470).

The textbook “Religionskunskap för grundskolans högstadium” from 1970s, states that:

“Women’s value was and is still considered to be much lower than the men’s. However in relation to time Islam has raised the value of the woman from being considered close to livestock to human”¹¹ (Hermeren 1970:90).

In this statement it clearly that Muslim women have no value and are subordinated. They do show it more accurately when state that Islam have once equally valued Muslim women as animal but now have raised their value equal to human. In three other textbooks “Sexans religionskunskap”, “Religionskunskap 2H sex arbetsområden häfte B” and “Religionskunskap åk 6” Muslim women are being brought up when discussing their standing points in the society

⁹ ”Inför domstol är en kvinnas vittnesmål bara värt hälften av en mans”

¹⁰ ”Koranen bestämmer också att en kvinna bara ärver hälften av vad en man ärver. Det står vidare att en man kan skilja sig från sin hustru när han vill”

¹¹ ”Kvinnans värde ansågs och anses dock långt mindre än männens. Men i förhållande till sin tid upphöjde islam kvinnan från nära nog boskap till människa”

(Bylock, Lunell 1972:111), (Hammarstedt, Hartman 1971:179-180), (Eklund et al. 1972:36, 46). One example that is brought up in “Religionskunskap åk 6” is that:

“The woman has not same standing point as the man. In the Koran it is stated that she is the man’s slave”¹² (Bylock, Lunell 1972:111).

To be considered as the man’s slave is a simple statement with a strong meaning, where Muslim women are clearly subordinated. Reasons for this may be that Muslim women are living under the control by their men, where they need to follow orders and obey them. Another example, where Muslim women are represented as submissive is in the textbook “Religion” where they argue that:

“A man has the right to hit his wife if she’s not obeying him”¹³ (Block et al. 1976:155).

According to this statement a man’s words stand above the woman’s by giving him the permission to assault her and control her in all situations. Since they are living in a man dominated world where Muslim women’s duty is to do as told. In the textbook “Religionskunskap åk 9”, polygamy is explained from its roots and how it came to be a part of the Islam by stating that:

“Mohammed introduced polygamy as a lead of the woman’s emancipation. During his time it was a custom in Arabia that widows were sold as slaves by the men’s relatives or children, because of the man passing away his wife was degraded to animal. During Mohammed’s time it was common with widows, especially around his own followers that largely had fallen during the war. Mohammed commanded that his men should marry their companion’s widows to be able to spare them from an inhuman destiny and give them a better life”¹⁴ (Leven et al. 1974:67).

The statement shows that married women during this time were considered to be worthless without their men, and therefore had to remarry or be sold as slaves. The statement clearly shows that Muslim women were controlled and subordinated by the society and the religion. Where they had to remarry against their will, even though Mohammed wanted to help the Muslim women, they had no other options than to obey. The post-colonial theorist Mohanty would in this case say that since the kinship structure is living on, where the man stands above

¹² ”kvinnan har heller inte samma ställning som mannen. I koranen står det att hon är mannens slavinna”

¹³ ”En man har rätt att slå sin hustru om hon inte lyder honom”

¹⁴ ”Muhammed införde månggiftet som ett led i Kvinnans emancipation. På hans tid var det sed i Arabien att änkor såldes som slavar av männens anhöriga eller av barnen, i och med mannens död blev hans hustru degraderad till djur. På Muhammeds tid var det vanligt med änkor, särskilt bland sina egna följeslagare som till stor del stupade i de krig de utkämpade. Muhammed påbjöd att hans män skulle gifta sig med sina kamraters änkor för att bespara dem ett omänskligt öde och ge dem en bättre tillvaro”

the woman and she must therefore obey him to not affect the kinship structure (Mohanty 2003:28).

Other textbooks as Religionskunskap 2H sex arbetsområden häfte B”, “Faktabok Religion ” and “Religion omfattar hela högstadiet” all discuss polygamy and argue that it is an old tradition, that is still a part of Islam and still exercised in some Islamic countries today (Hammarstedt, Hartman 1971:179-180), (Ström et al.1972:142), (Hammarstedt, Hartman 1977:269). Textbook “Arkiv religion” states that:

“Some Muslims say that Koran really allows polygamy and that it is a big wisdom. Otherwise a huge amount of women would namely stay unmarried”¹⁵ (Sundström 1973:135).

This interpretation of polygamy is differently interpreted by Islamic societies, and according to some Muslims as they state in the quote it is considered to be a good cause. Polygamy is a clear example of Muslim women being subordinated, meaning that man can have four wives.

6.1.3 Uneducated

To be uneducated is a word that is combined with both political and educational implications. In some parts the cultural context is the one that decide the fate of a woman, which is if she should be literacy or illiterate (Onwuegbu 2004:4).

In the textbook “Religion” from 1970s, that brings up Muslim women argue that

“For a woman to be able to obtain a better standing point in the society she needs to get an education, work and change the relationships within the family”¹⁶ (Block et al. 1976:155).

The statement gives two different visions, one, is that Muslim women are undereducated and need to improve their standing point in the society through education, work and relations in their surroundings. The other one, is that they are considered withdrawing from associations because of bad communication and cultural reasons. Therefore the statement claims that the circumstances need to change for Muslim women to be able to improve their standing point in the society.

¹⁵ “andra muslimer säger att koranen verkligen tillåter månggifte och att detta är en stor vishet. Annars skulle nämligen ett stort antal kvinnor förbli ogifta”

¹⁶ “För att kvinnan ska kunna erhålla en bättre ställning i samhället måste hon få utbildning, arbete och ändrade förhållande inom familjen”

6.1.4 Independent

We have surprisingly found a new stereotype during our analysis of the textbooks from 1970s, where the Muslim women have been represented as independent. Being independent means that one has the ability and the freedom to take your own decisions, when it comes to life, body and accomplishments in life (Desetta, Wolin 2000:42). Having the right to choose what is best for yourself and having the choice to decide whether or not, one wants to do one thing is another factor that is being placed under the concept independent (Beresford, Carr 2012:245). Islam has given Muslim women more rights and privileges, but also equal status as the men where they implicate that they have the same responsibility but not identical, it still differs. Islam has also accepted Muslim women as independent and responsible for their own actions and decisions (Mondal 2005:20).

The textbooks “Religion Faktabok” and “Religionsboken för grundskolans högstadium” states that there are some countries that give Muslim women more rights as for example in Pakistan and Egypt where they are given the same opportunities as the men to study at university (Ström et al. 1972:142), (Friedner et al. 1978:190). The textbook “Religionsboken för grundskolans högstadium” discusses that:

“In Pakistan women play an insignificant role in politics and some years ago a woman ran for the president”¹⁷ (Friedner et al. 1978:190).

The quote shows that the position of Muslim women in the society has improved by giving them a bigger role in the politics but also a possibility to run for the president. Reason to this is that due to modernization within the Islamic societies Muslim women are taking a more important role in the society.

To sum up all our four stereotypes that were founded when analyzing our textbooks from 1970s, we can say that the problems that causing Muslim women being represented as oppressed is that Muslim women’s rights have either been limited or taken away by not giving them the freedom to their own personal decisions. Another problem is that they need to cover up in all situations. Reasons for this could be their traditions, that play a huge role in their lives and if they want to be considered as a “good Muslim” they need to follow the traditions and the Koran.

¹⁷ “I Pakistan spelar kvinnorna en icke obetydlig roll i politiken och för en del år sedan kandiderade en kvinna till president”

The reason why Muslim women are being represented as submissive has mainly to do with that they are living in a man dominated world, where polygamy is allowed to be practiced. Another problem, why Muslim women are subordinated is because they are almost always being controlled and valued lower than men.

Muslim women have also been represented as uneducated in the textbooks, the problem with this is that they are withdrawing from activates and associations in the society. The two main reasons for this may be that one, since Muslim women are withdrawn from different associations in society, lead them to have bad communications with other people of other cultures in society. The other one is the cultural context where Muslim women should mainly interact with their own people that have similar thoughts and ideas of life. We did also find a new stereotype, where they represented Muslim women as independent. The problem why they are represented as independent are because Muslim women are given the same opportunities and rights as men. The reason for this is that since the Islamic societies are modernizing so is the interpretations and obligations where Muslim women are given a more important role and taking a greater place in the society.

6.2 Religion textbooks in 2000s

6.2.1 Oppressed

To be oppressed is about seeking power and disregarding the rights of individuals or groups. Oppression is also when one treat individuals or groups unjustly (Dalrymple, Burke 2006: 40-41).

The textbooks “Puls Religion” and “Religion Grundbok”, discusses both Muslim women and different ways of covering their bodies (Abrahamsson 2011:128), (Abrahamsson et al. 2005:117). “Puls Religion” states that:

“The Koran is interpreted in the sense that a woman is not allowed to show parts of her body to others than those who belongs to the family. In some countries the law decides that all women that are seen outside should wear clothes that cover their bodies in different ways. Even in countries were the women can choose for themselves,

how to dress old traditions still remain. Women want to dress in an appropriate way and consider that one should hide the hair from unfamiliar”¹⁸ (Abrahamsson 2011:128).

The statement shows obvious examples of women that are living in Islamic societies are supposed to be cover different parts of their bodies, even the law in some countries agree on this certain dress code. In some countries where women can choose for themselves how to dress they still choose to cover and dress in the old traditional ways. Reasons for their choice could be to gain acceptance and respect from their relatives, but also to protect the honor of the family. Another textbook “Religion 3 grundskolans senare Del” states that:

“Girls should not dress themselves in challenged or tight clothes”¹⁹ (Högberg, Sundqvist 2005:100).

This statement shows how a good young Muslim girls should dress if they want to gain acceptance in an Islamic society. One of the reason why they struggle to gain acceptance and not dress in challenging clothes is to be taken more seriously, but also to follow the Islamic traditions. In this statement Mohanty would argue that they are clearly reminded of their social position which is below the man and limiting their sexuality, by giving them restriction on how they should dress (Mohanty 2003:23-24).

6.2.2 Submissive

A submissive behavior is interacted with class and social status, but also avoidance and escape when one feel threaten (Allan, Gilbert 1997: 469-470).

In “Religion punkt SO” from 2000s discusses Muslim women being submissive and states that:

“According to the Koran and Sunna the man has for example the duty to support his family. He should also be the guardian over his wife and their children. Under some circumstances a man can have four wives (something that is unordinary today). Many Muslims mean that all this still doesn't mean that women are less worthy than men”²⁰ (Arlebrand et al. 2006:24).

¹⁸ ”Koranen tolkas så att en kvinna inte får visa delar av sin kropp för andra än dem som tillhör familjen. I några länder bestämmer lagen att alla kvinnor som vistas utomhus ska bära kläder som döljer kroppen på olika sätt. Även i länder där kvinnorna själva får välja hur de vill klä sig lever gamla traditioner kvar. Kvinnor vill klä sig på ett sätt som känns passande och anser att man bör dölja håret för främmande”

¹⁹ ”Flickorna ska inte klä sig utmanande eller i tätt åtsittande kläder”

²⁰ ”Enligt Koranen och Sunna har mannen till exempel plikt att försörja sin familj. Han ska också vara förmyndare över sin hustru och deras gemensamma barn. Under vissa omständigheter kan en man ha upp till fyra hustruar (något som är mycket ovanligt idag). Många muslimer menar att allt detta ändå inte betyder att kvinnor är mindre värda än män”

According to this quote Muslim women are stated as to have value, but still being placed below the men, therefore they are not trustworthy and need to be guarded. This also means that Muslim women are subordinated by the Koran and Sunna (refers to Prophet Muhammad's values). The statement do also give the man the right to practice polygamy even if it is unordinary today, this means that Muslim women are once more subordinated. In this statement Said would argue that Muslim women are clearly submissive, since they need a guardian and polygamy is exercised. Said would therefore argue that Muslim women in this kind of situation are always represented by their men who always spoke for them (Said 1978:1-9). The textbook "Religion Grundbok" argues that:

"According to Islamic law women and men are equal but have different assignments. Woman's most important assignment is taking care of the household"²¹ (Abrahamsson et al. 2005:116).

The statement argues that Muslim women are equal valued as men, but still their most important duty is to stay at home and take care of the household. Reason to this may be that Muslim women according to the Islamic law are not seen to be trustworthy. Even if they are valued the same way as men, therefore it is the best for them to take care of the household.

6.2.3 Independent

During the analysis of the textbooks from 2000s, we did also find a new inductive stereotype, where Muslim women have been represented as independent. The possibilities of finding a new inductive stereotype were more expected in the 2000s than in 1970s. Since we today live in a society where Muslim women play a bigger role than they did in the 1970s, and where Muslim women are not afraid of standing up for their rights when being unjustly treated regarding of religion or look. The word independent means having the right and freedom to make your own decisions upon how one wants to live their life, do and look like (Desetta, Wolin 2000:42), (Beresford, Carr 2012:245). Muslim women have been given privileges and rights, but also equal status by Islam, by pointing out that both Muslim men and Muslim women have equal responsibilities on things, but even though the responsibility are equal it still differs in the end (Mondal 2005:20).

²¹ "Enligt Islamisk lag är kvinnor och män jämlika men de har olika uppgifter. Kvinnans viktigaste uppgift är att sköta hemmet"

The textbook “Upptäck Religion” from 2000s discusses Muslim women being independent, and argue that:

“In a valid marriage both partners must agree on marrying each other. Both shall sign a marriage contract. The man must pay a bridal deposit direct to the woman. That she will keep in case of a divorce”²² (Ring, Johansson 2008:37).

In this statement, Muslim women are given more rights by allowing them to choose whether or not they want to enter a marriage. A marriage is therefore not possible to occur if a Muslim woman is against it. The marriage contract does also give Muslim women more rights that are more equally valued to men’s rights. Another example where the Muslim women are more stated as free can be found in the textbook “Religion Punkt SO” where they argue that:

“The Koran states as an example that both gender have equal responsibility for their actions. Men and women have different roles but same value according to this interpretation of the Islamic scripts and traditions”²³ (Arlebrand et al. 2006:24).

In this statement Muslim women are represented as having the same rights as men, by arguing that they are responsible for themselves and their actions according to the Koran. The Koran do also value Muslim women and men equally, but mean that the only difference are that they have different assignment. According to the Koran women and men are valued the same and the only differences between them are their assignments.

To sum up the representations of the stereotypes oppressed, submissive, uneducated and the new stereotype independent of the analyzed textbooks from 2000s. The overall representation of Muslim women has changed since 1970s. The biggest changed between the time periods were that Muslim women went from being represented as uneducated to educated, this is why we do not have any material of Muslim women being represented as uneducated in the textbooks from the present. The main problem of Muslim women being represented as oppressed has to do with their appearance and how they look. Covering has been the most important indicator that has connected Muslim women being seen as oppressed. Reason for this

²² “I ett giltigt äktenskap måste båda partner vilja gifta sig med varandra. Båda ska skriva under ett äktenskapskontrakt. Männerna ska också betala en brudpenning direkt till kvinnan. Den ska hon kunna behålla vid en eventuell skilsmässa”

²³ “Koranen säger exempelvis att båda könen har lika stort ansvar för sina handlingar. Män och kvinnor har olika roller men samma värde enligt denna tolkning av de islamiska skrifterna och traditionerna”

have brought many discussions, but we have concluded that is mainly about Muslim women being accepted by the Islamic society and the family's honor.

The problem of the second stereotype submissive has to do with that Muslim women are being put below men in all kinds of situations. The reason why they are subordinated is because they are not trustworthy by the religion. The new stereotype independent was also found in the textbooks from 2000s. The problem with Muslim women being represented as independent is because they have been given rights as for example when it comes to marriage. Reason for this could be that Muslim women are valued the same as men, but also have a role to play in the society.

6.3 The differences and similarities in the 1970s and the 2000s

The majority of the textbooks have in overall, showed that there are some differences and similarities on how the textbooks have represented Muslim women and what has impacted the authors and their way of writing them. The major differences and similarities between 1970s and the 2000s textbooks were not many. The few similarities we came about where that the textbooks from both time periods, presented Muslim women as oppressed, submissive and independent in various ways. Another similarity that was found where that some of the textbooks used similar words to describe Muslim women. In both time periods the authors preceded from the Koran and Islamic traditions, but represented their interpretations in different ways. One argument on why the authors have different interpretations of the Koran may have to do with their cultural contexts, but as well as the time period they grew up in, and what kind of influences they had from the society, but as well their personal values and opinions.

The differences between the time periods and the textbooks were found in a larger amount. The major differences were that textbooks from 1970s represented Muslim women in a harsher way of their standard living. The authors of the 1970s were not afraid of accusing the Koran and Islam, one example is when the Koran equalizes Muslim women to animals, or that they are seen as the man's slave (Bylock, Lunell 1972:111), (Leven et al.1974:67). The textbooks from the 2000s represented Muslim women in a more objective way. Where they represent them as more free to make their own choices and be more responsible for themselves. At the same time as they are free, they have duties and assignments that needed to be done (Abrahamsson et al.

2005:116). The authors of textbooks from the 2000s were more careful in their writing. A reason for this could be that since the Sweden changed from a homogeneous society to a more multicultural society, can have affected the authors writing and the society's way of representing Muslim women. What also changed from the 1970s to 2000s textbooks were that Muslim women went from being represented as uneducated to educated. This is one reason why we did not find any material from the 2000s where they represent Muslim women as uneducated. This may have to do with that Muslim women started to interact within the society and therefore the image and beliefs about Muslim women being uneducated changed. In the overall conclusion that could be made is that due to the different time periods the representation of Muslim women has changed and the benefits are that Muslim women's rights have improved through time.

7. Conclusion

The result is based on a comparative study with a qualitative analysis done of the religion textbooks from 1970s and 2000s, used in elementary schools. Our intention with the thesis was to see if there are any stereotypes to be found in the religion textbooks, and if so how are they represented, in the 1970s and the 2000s. The first part of our conclusion will consist of a summary of our findings by contributing with a discussion of our thoughts, ideas and implications of what have caused textbooks to represent Muslim Women as oppressed, submissive, uneducated and independent.

Our research questions that we answered are:

1) Are stereotypes of Muslim women as oppressed, submissive and uneducated present in Swedish textbooks? If so, how are they represented?

2) What are the differences and similarities in how these stereotypes are represented in the 1970s and the 2000s?

Most of the textbooks that we analyzed from 1970s gave the reader very short and concrete information. The information was very direct and mostly given from a negative point of view, which also was the only point of view that were represented. The textbooks that were used during this time used similar or identical meanings to describe Muslim women. One of the reasons could be that Sweden during the 1970s was a homogenous society with lack of knowledge of others cultures and religions, or could it have been as Tingsten explained, by stating that the Swedish society consisted only of Swedes with no connection to other nations (Tingsten 1969:276-280). Which led them not having any knowledge of other religions than the one that are provided in the textbooks. The religions that were commonly brought up in the textbooks from 1970s, where Christianity and Judaism. The textbooks that did introduce Islam were brought up most of the time in one chapter and Muslim women were then mentioned in one section in the chapters. Most often in the context when discussing marriage or man and woman within Islam. Implications for this could be that since the society consisted of a homogenous group, where the authors were included, led them to have no other reflections of the reality than the one that they were given by the society.

The textbooks from 2000s gave very concrete information about Islam and Muslim women, where the information could be found to be similar to another religion textbook. The major

differences between the textbooks in 2000s and 1970s was that 2000s textbooks preceded more from interpretations of the Koran and the Islamic customs than they did in the 1970s who instead preceded more from prejudices that they considered to be true. The authors of the textbooks did not give any direct information when describing Muslim women. Instead, they used different constructed sentences that could confuse the reader and give him or her two different interpretations of Muslim women. One example is when stating that Muslim women are free but still have duties to fulfill (Arlebrand et al. 2006:24). The implications of this could be that information from the present textbooks that is provided in schools should be as neutral as possible and objective of the Swedish law (Statens offentliga utredningar 2005:224). Since we are living in a democracy where society today have more knowledge of different cultures and religions of the world, makes the authors more afraid of reflecting their own values in the textbooks. The textbooks today are giving more information about Islam, but still the information about Muslim women is not that large enough to give the reader the right representation of them. However, since Islam is one of the largest religions in the world today, it is therefore natural that Islam is mentioned in the major part of the textbook by extending the chapters.

How Muslim women are represented in Swedish textbooks 1970s?				
	Oppressed	Submissive	Uneducated	Independent
Problem?	- No rights - Covered	- Subordinated - Polygamy	- Withdrawn	- Opportunities - Have rights
Reasons?	- Lack of freedom - Traditions	- Controlled - Man dominated world	- Culture context - Bad communication	- Modern Islamic countries

How Muslim women are represented in Swedish textbooks 2000s?				
	Oppressed	Submissive	Uneducated	Independent
Problem?	- Covered	- Subordinated		- have rights
Reasons?	-Acceptance	- not trustworthy by the religion		- Same values as the man

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The stereotypes oppressed, submissive, and uneducated and the new stereotype independent were founded when doing our analysis of the textbooks in 1970s and the 2000s. Muslim women in the 1970s were mostly referred as to be oppressed by pointing out that they needed to be covered in all situations, but also by ignoring their rights (Hammarstedt, Hartman 1971:180), Friedner et al. (1978:189). Muslim women were also seen in 2000s textbooks as needed to be covered and not dress in challenging or tight clothes (Högberg, Sundqvist 2005:100). What distinguishes these two periods when we compared the textbooks was that the rights of Muslim women were harsher under 1970s by treating them unjustly in all opportunities. While the focus on Muslim women in 2000s are more reflected on how they dress and their appearance. What could be the problem and cause of how we choose to represent Muslim women could have to do with the Islamic society today fear of being influenced by the negative representations of the West. Where they have a very light view on how the western women choose to dress. This has made the Islamic society wanting to protect their values of their religion, by taking harder actions against the Muslim women choose of clothing.

The stereotype submissive represented Muslim women in 1970s textbooks as victims of polygamy and subordination. Muslim women were considered to stand below men and valued them as equal to slaves who only should follow orders (Hermeren 1970:90), (Bylock, Lunell 1972:111), (Leven et al.1974:67). Muslim women in present textbooks where represented as submissive by stating that they need to be guarded, to be able to control them. Their most important assignment was to take care of the household (Arlebrand et al. 2006:24), (Abrahamsson et al. 2005:116). What distinguished Muslim women the most from 2000s where that in 1970s they were seen as living in a man dominated world where men controlled everything. While in 2000s Muslim women were not trustworthy by their religion because they were not reliable of taking the right decisions. Since the Islamic religion is causing the man to act in a certain way leads him to handle his woman in a certain way as well. This implication is based on the religion guidance that the man has received from the Koran. Which makes him believe that his actions are the right once, and where the Muslim woman has no opinion than to obey him.

The stereotype uneducated was only founded in the 1970s textbooks, were they argued that since Muslim women are considered to be withdrawn from society, they need to improve their

standing point by becoming more active in it. This would then lead them to improve their education and relations in their surroundings. Muslim women during this time were always separated from other people and therefore had bad communication with other nationalities in the society beside their own (Block et al. 1976:155). In textbooks from 2000s Muslim women were not represented as uneducated. The implications of this could be that Muslim women have improved their standing point and then received the right to study at university, or could it also be that they have taken part of the development and improved their communication by interacting more within the society and are standing more up for themselves.

Our fourth stereotype independent was an open one, and where possible to find in both periods during our analysis. Muslim women in 1970s textbooks were represented as having more rights and opportunities, by stating that they could study at universities. Even though Muslim countries as well as societies during this time developed and modernized, Muslim women had still limited rights. What distinguished those modernized countries were that some of them allowed Muslim women to get an education and be involved in politics (Friedner et al. 1978:190). While in 2000s textbooks Muslim women were more represented as free, modern and responsible for their own actions. The interpretations of the Koran is also stated to give women more rights and value them equal to men, which was not the case in 1970s textbooks (Ring, Johansson 2008:37), (Arlebrand et al. 2006:24). The implications of what could have caused such change could have to do with that Muslim women are standing up for themselves and have the courage to go against old traditions and the values of the religion. Another cause may be that, due to that the world have been given more knowledge about Muslims and Muslim women, people in the west have realized that there are differences among the Muslims and how they interpret Islam.

The conclusion that could be drawn from all the textbooks in overall is that they are all a reflection of the society's values. Which is based on representation of the reality we are living in. The reality we consider to be real is socially constructed and is based on beliefs coming from our cultures and traditions (Beaumie 2006:2-3). Since negative information is much easier to remember shows that representation has had and still has, a huge impact on how we choose to identify and interpret with different people in our surroundings. This has also led to implications on the society, where our prejudices and beliefs are mostly shown by our actions. The author's values and morals have also been affected by reality and different inferences in the world, these values and morals have been showed in the compared textbooks from 1970s and the 2000s. The generations that have been provided with textbooks from the 1970s, have been given

information from an angled view, which may have led them to develop certain beliefs and prejudices of Muslim women. Since the authors' values possibly effect their writings in the textbooks from the 2000s. Authors have therefore been more careful when accusing Islam to represent Muslim women in certain ways.

Different occurrence in the world has made us to believe that all Muslims are one and the same, and that Muslim women are reflecting characteristics of Muslims. This is due to the negative representations by our surrounding and the media. The implications of this create insecurity in the society by making the prejudices and the values from earlier generations coming true. Other implications could be that Muslim girls in Swedish schools will not recognize themselves in textbooks and will feel discriminated, which can lead them to feel insulted and more offensive of their religion.

Interpretations made by us are just one perspective to the world, and how we choose to state the problem, and cause of Muslim women's representation in religion textbooks. Alternative ways of interpreting and writing the thesis can be done in different ways, one of them is through interviews of teachers that educate in this subject or pupils that are provided with these textbooks. Other alternatives of analyses can be to analyze different years or by using different theories. Further research in this field, are depending on how one interprets the textbooks when doing the analysis. This can then give different results, since we choose to interpret the world differently. What our thesis contributed was to give a new point of view on Swedish religion textbooks and how Muslim women are represented in them. What we also wanted to contribute with is an opportunity for a further political debate regarding Muslim women's representation in Swedish educational materials.

What we have learned from this process is that the world is a huge common ground that is socially constructed and where everything is interacting with one another. This can give different interpretations and understanding of what is right and wrong, due to which side of the world you live in and the influence of information you are provided with in school. What we can gain from this thesis is the ability to question and criticize the sources we are given and realize that the truth is in the eye of the beholder. Meaning that if the Media's way of representing the Muslim women does not have to be the right picture of how it is in the reality, and individuals in the society need to make their own judgment, and determine their truth of how they view Muslim women by taking account to their education, experiences and values.

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