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Review article

The Role of the Media in Shaping the Perception of Terrorism

Anita Klikovac^{1*}

¹ Ministry of Internal Affairs, Emergency Situations Department,
Mije Kovačevića 2-4, Belgrade, Serbia, anitaklikovac@yahoo.com.

* Correspondence: e-mail: anitaklikovac@yahoo.com

Abstract

The paper analyzes the role of the media in shaping public opinion on terrorism in contemporary society, with a particular focus on how media reporting contributes to the construction of risk, fear, and moral panic. Starting from the theoretical framework of the risk society, based on the works of Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Zygmunt Bauman, the paper examines how terrorism is transformed through media representations from a security phenomenon into a permanent social problem and a symbol of a constant threat. Special attention is paid to the analysis of media mechanisms such as sensationalism, framing, and agenda-setting, which are selectively highlighted and interpreted in relation to certain events, thereby influencing perceptions of insecurity and legitimizing restrictive security policies. The paper also points to the importance of cultivation theory, emphasizing that long-term exposure to violent content contributes to the normalization of fear and a sense of permanent vulnerability. The paper analyzes the role of the media in shaping public opinion on terrorism in contemporary society, with a particular focus on how media reporting contributes to the construction of risk, fear, and moral panic. Starting from the



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theoretical framework of the risk society, based on the works of Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Zygmunt Bauman, the paper considers how terrorism, through media representations, is transformed from a security phenomenon into a permanent social problem and a symbol of constant threat. Special attention is paid to the analysis of media mechanisms such as sensationalism, framing, and agenda-setting, through which certain events are selectively highlighted and interpreted, thereby influencing perceptions of insecurity and legitimizing restrictive security policies. The paper also points to the importance of cultivation theory, emphasizing that long-term exposure to violent content contributes to the normalization of fear and a sense of permanent vulnerability.

Keywords

Media, terrorism, risk society, public opinion, moral panic, culture of fear, security, media reporting.

1. Introduction

In modern society, the media are among the most important factors shaping public opinion, social attitudes, and risk perception. The development of mass and digital media has enabled the rapid dissemination of information but has also changed the way individuals experience social threats, insecurity, and violence. Among the phenomena that occupy a special place in the modern media space, terrorism stands out, with its media representation going beyond mere information to become an important social and political factor.

Although most citizens have no direct experience with terrorist attacks, the perception of terrorism is largely shaped through media discourse. Continuous reporting on violent events, dramatization of content, and intense visual presentation of terrorist acts contribute to the creation of a sense of insecurity and social anxiety. In this way, the media not only influence the public's awareness but also shape a collective sense of fear, risk perception, and attitudes towards security policies.

The modern media system is characterized by the speed of information flow, market competition, and the need to attract the audience's attention, which is why violent and dramatic events often take center stage in the public space. In such circumstances, terrorism becomes not only a security prob-

lem, but also a media-constructed social phenomenon that influences political decisions, public reactions and the everyday sense of security of citizens.

A particularly important issue relates to the way in which the media, through sensationalism, framing and agenda-setting, shape the perception of terrorism and contribute to the creation of moral panic and a culture of fear. Long-term exposure to violent content can lead to the normalization of the feeling of permanent vulnerability, making fear an integral part of modern social life.

Starting with the importance of the media in modern society, the paper analyzes their role in shaping perceptions of terrorism, with particular attention to the mechanisms of media representation of violence, the construction of social risk, and the consequences of such reporting for public opinion and security policies.

2. Methods

The paper is based on a qualitative analysis of relevant domestic and foreign literature across sociology, media studies, criminology, and security studies. The research employed a theoretical-analytical method to examine the role of the media in shaping perceptions of terrorism and the social sense of fear in contemporary society.

The analysis relies on an interdisciplinary approach that connects theories of risk society, theories of media effects and contemporary approaches to the study of terrorism. Special attention is paid to the theoretical concepts of Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Zygmunt Bauman, as well as the theories of agenda-setting, framing, cultivation and moral panic.

The methodological approach of the paper is based on the interpretation of scientific literature, the analysis of the theoretical positions of relevant authors, and the comparative consideration of different approaches to the relationship between media and terrorism. The research aims to determine how the media influence the construction of perceptions of risk, insecurity, and fear, and how these perceptions, in turn, influence public opinion and contemporary security policies.

The data analysis was conducted through an interpretative and comparative approach. After collecting the literature, a selection of relevant theoretical positions and a classification of key topics related to the media representation of terrorism were made.

The analysis process included identifying dominant patterns in the scientific literature, comparing different theoretical approaches, and interpreting

their significance for understanding the contemporary relationship between media and terrorism. A special focus was placed on how the media influence the perception of risk, the construction of social fear, and the legitimization of restrictive security policies.

The findings obtained were interpreted within the framework of the theoretical concepts of risk society, reflexive modernity, culture of fear, and moral panic to enable a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under analysis.

3. Discussion

3.1. *The role of the media in modern society*

The ubiquitous and widely accepted view that the media significantly influence the formation of public opinion is rarely questioned; that is, few people question it. For this reason, in the context of the topic of the relationship between journalism and the formation of public opinion, the very concepts of public and public opinion should first be defined.

In sociology, numerous theories of the public have been developed, among which the two most important are the democratic and utilitarian conceptions. The most prominent representative of the democratic approach is Jürgen Habermas, a German philosopher and sociologist who defines the public as a space where citizens, through reasoned discussion, can question authorities and imposed truths. This understanding of the public develops within the framework of modern society, where critical thinking is a key factor in shaping public opinion. At the same time, the mass media play an ambivalent role - on the one hand, they enable the spread of different attitudes. On the other hand, they influence the shaping of ideological frameworks within which these attitudes are articulated (Habermas, 2013, p. 136).

The media and large non-governmental organizations are replacing the old institutions of the public sphere. Public opinion is therefore manipulative, and increasingly critical. In other words, the critical potential, which is stated at the core of the public, is now lost in the imposition of ready-made views in a wide area of the public, which includes not only the media, but also the education system, and even colloquial speech and customs (Habermas, 2013, p. 161).

On the other hand, the utilitarian approach to public opinion starts from the assumption that the process of its formation is complex and heterogeneous, and that the isolated influence of individual factors cannot explain it. In this sense, public opinion is viewed as a phenomenon that can be researched

and analyzed using quantitative methods, to predict its movements mathematically and statistically. However, it is also characterized by the ability to self-regulate, including complete calming down or a transition to silence, as indicated by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann (Noelle-Neumann, 1948, p. 48). According to this model, the public is formed through a complex process of legislation, or it is stabilized in certain social situations. For example, during elections, public opinion is stabilized by forming a dominant position on specific issues.

The development of media research is usually divided into three main phases. Initially, the dominant understanding was that the media have a strong and direct influence on the audience, which was especially significant in the context of wars and the emergence of totalitarian regimes. Later research, influenced by social psychology and new methodologies, showed that the effects of the media are nevertheless limited and that the audience is not a passive recipient of messages. Modern approaches emphasize the mutual interaction between the audience and the media - the audience actively interprets messages, and the way they are received depends on the social and cultural context (Pooley & Park, 2008, p. 27).

The development of traditional mass media, primarily the press as the initial mass medium, and later radio and television, fundamentally changed the relations of social communication (Obradović, 2023, p. 1).

A similar point of view is held by Zoran Slavujević, who emphasizes that mass media are the primary channel through which individuals acquire and disseminate knowledge about the world, including the political sphere. Regardless of whether the media faithfully reflect reality, to a certain extent shape it, or even distort it, their key role lies in cognitive function. The emergence of each new medium also expands individuals' ability to learn about phenomena beyond the limits of their immediate experience and perception (Slavujević, 2009, p. 44).

The media play a significant role in further shaping already-adopted social attitudes, especially in identifying and articulating social risks. They influence the formation of public awareness and perception of danger, but at the same time contribute to the reproduction of existing social patterns. Their function is not limited to transmitting information but also to actively shaping how society understands and interprets crises and threats. Through the selection of topics, the manner of reporting, and the frequency with which certain events are presented, the media influence the collective consciousness, as well as citizens' sense of security or insecurity. It is precisely because of such an influence, especially in the context of terrorism, that it is of particular importance to examine in detail how modern society perceives and interprets terrorist threats.

3.2. *Media and the formation of risk perception*

The perception of certain phenomena is often more important than their objective characteristics and actual extent. Given the limited possibilities of direct insight and understanding of such phenomena, individuals are referred to indirect sources of information. In this context, media content is a dominant channel for acquiring information on topics of interest (Ilic, 2021, p. 309).

Constant risks and uncertainties characterize contemporary society, and the media play a key role in how these risks and uncertainties are perceived and interpreted. To understand how risks are constructed and perceived, it is necessary to consider the theoretical frameworks of the risk society offered by Beck, Giddens, and Bauman.

According to Ulrich Beck (2001), the process of modernization, in addition to undeniable benefits and progress, also generates new forms of risk. Unlike earlier eras, in which dangers predominantly originated from the natural environment, contemporary risks increasingly arise from social and technological processes, making modern society extremely vulnerable. In other words, modernization also involves the release of potentially destructive forces that are difficult to control fully. While risks in the premodern period were predominantly transcendental in nature, generated by nature, which science sought to subordinate to the interests of civilization, in the contemporary context their effects cannot be viewed in isolation. Although natural risks still exist, their effects are inextricably linked to the complex network of modern life (Beck, 2001, p. 35).

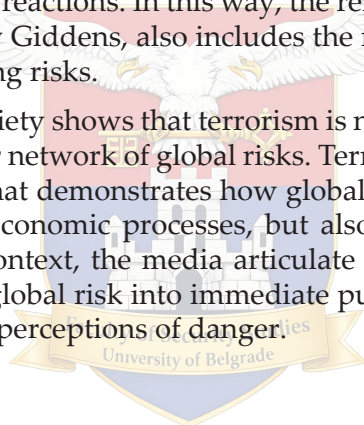
After the collapse of the utopia of creating a world society, in the context of new world antagonisms, class mobilization, which determined the global political scene in the last century, remains in the background. Instead, solidarity of fear appears (Beck, 2001, p. 73).

Ulrich Beck connects the modern risk society with the transformation of the media's role, emphasizing that the media no longer serve only as a channel of information but as a key producer of perceptions of danger and insecurity. In the context of globalized risks, such as terrorism, economic crises, or migration, the media contribute to the creation of a "global community of fear", in which the feeling of threat extends beyond the individual's immediate experience and becomes part of everyday social reality. Continuous reporting on crises and security threats contributes to an atmosphere of uncertainty, which further strengthens what Beck calls "solidarity of fear" (Beck, 2001).

Similarly, Zygmunt Bauman (2006), in his concept of “liquid modernity,” argues that modern man lives in a state of permanent insecurity due to the weakening of stable social institutions and collective identities. In this context, the media play an important role in reproducing feelings of anxiety and social fragmentation, as they daily place content that emphasizes dangers, crime, conflicts, and social threats. According to Bauman, the culture of fear is becoming a basic characteristic of modern society, with media discourse significantly shaping the perception of the “other” as a potential threat and the acceptance of restrictive security measures (Bauman, 2006).

In this context, the media become key intermediaries in shaping the perception of risk. Through reporting on events and potential dangers, they create frameworks in which the public interprets risks. Terrorism, as an example of manufactured risk, becomes visible to the public primarily through media representations, which directly affects the way individuals experience danger and shape their reactions. In this way, the reflexive nature of modern society, as described by Giddens, also includes the media’s active role in informing and interpreting risks.

The modern risk society shows that terrorism is not an isolated phenomenon, but part of a wider network of global risks. Terrorism within a risk society is a phenomenon that demonstrates how global threats do not originate only from natural or economic processes, but also from socio-technological networks. In this context, the media articulate and visualize terrorism, transforming abstract global risk into immediate public perception, thereby directly shaping social perceptions of danger.



3.3. Perception of terrorism in modern society

The media, as the dominant channel of information and interpretation of contemporary risks, play a crucial role in shaping public awareness of terrorism. Since most citizens have no direct experience with terrorist attacks, their perception of this phenomenon largely depends on the way it is presented in the media discourse. Although direct exposure to such events is relatively rare, terrorism has a strong potential to cause anxiety and fear in the general public. The mere possibility of its execution often has a stronger influence on the formation of perception than an objective assessment of the actual risk. Intense media interest and frequent reporting on terrorist acts contribute to the creation of dramatic and disturbing images in the collective consciousness, which are most often associated with the sudden suffering of a large number of innocent people, often bystanders (Ilic, 2021, p. 210).

Understanding the link between media consumption and fear of terrorism is crucial, given its importance for policymaking and political responses (Guler & Piazza, 2024, p. 2).

According to Srdanović (2002), at the beginning of the 20th century, the international community sought to define terrorism as a crime that threatens general security (p. 18). Later definitions, such as Hoffman's (2000), emphasize that the key characteristic of terrorism is the use of violence for political purposes (Hoffman, 2000, p. 34).

According to Jean Baudrillard, the difficulties in precisely defining terrorism arise from its diffuse nature in the postmodern context. Unlike earlier forms of terrorism, in which violence was grounded in specific ideological goals that served as a kind of justification, contemporary terrorism is characterized by a logic of reciprocity, or the principle of "terror as a response to terror". In such circumstances, violence no longer requires a clear ideological foundation, nor does it necessarily seek to change the political order. Instead, as Baudrillard (2007) points out, terrorism in contemporary society functions as a self-perpetuating mechanism, in which violence generates new violence, creating a spiral that becomes its own justification and reflects the brutality of the contemporary world (Baudrillard, 2007, p. 62).

Contemporary terrorism as a phenomenon has a complex structure in which ideological, social, religious, ethnic, psychological, and other elements are intertwined (Marinov, 2021, p. 159).

The media shape not only the topics the public thinks about but also how these topics are interpreted. As McCombs and Shaw (1993) point out, the media may not tell us what to think, but they are extremely successful in showing us what to think about and how to understand this information. In this context, the media select information, emphasize dramatic events, and often use a sensationalist tone, thereby enhancing the sense of urgency and fear. The continuous emphasis on terrorism as a dominant theme in the context of threat, risk, and insecurity contributes to the formation of the perception that terrorism is one of the most important social issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1993, p. 65). In this way, it can be seen how the theory of agenda setting, combined with framing, explains the media's influence on public perception of risk.

The violence profile is a set of indicators that monitor aspects of the television world and the conceptualization of social reality that television programs seek to shape in viewers' minds. Long-term exposure to such depictions of violence, including terrorist events, according to the cultivation theory of Gerbner & Gross (1976), shapes the perception of reality and increases the feeling of fear and insecurity in viewers, showing how media content

indirectly influences the attitudes and feelings of the audience (Gerbner & Gross, 1976, p. 184).

Contemporary research further emphasizes the complexity of the perception of terrorism. In this context, Jiang and Wilson (2025) point to a “symbiotic relationship” between terrorism and the media, with the media playing a key role in shaping public perceptions of these events. Although the importance of the media for terrorist actors is obvious, this relationship is reciprocal, since the media also derive certain benefits from terrorism. Namely, media organizations tend to report on content that attracts audience attention, and terrorist attacks, due to their dramatic nature, are often among the most attractive topics. Accordingly, reporting on such events may align with the commercial interests of the media (Jiang & Wilson, 2025, p. 3).

3.4. Media reporting on terrorism and its effects

The perception of certain phenomena often exceeds the significance of their objective characteristics and real scale. Given the limited possibilities for direct insight and understanding of such phenomena, individuals rely on indirect sources of information, among which media content occupies a central place. Terrorism is one of the phenomena that is unknown to most citizens through personal experience, and its image is largely formed based on media reporting. Although direct exposure to terrorist attacks is relatively rare, this phenomenon has a pronounced potential to cause anxiety in the general public. The very possibility of its execution often has a stronger influence on the formation of perception than an objective assessment of the risk. Intense media interest and emphasized reporting on terrorist events contribute to the creation of dramatic and disturbing images in the collective consciousness, which are most often associated with the sudden suffering of a large number of innocent people, often bystanders (Ilić, 2021, p. 310).

One of the most important authors in this field – Paul Wilkinson, emphasizes that terrorism is the systematic use of injury, killing and destruction, or the threat of them, to create a climate of terror, popularize the cause and intimidate the wider target into accepting the goals of the terrorists. Similarly, Brian Jenkins suggests that terrorism refers to the use or threat of violence to create an atmosphere of fear and alarm and, thus, lead to a political result (Ilić, 2021, p. 310).

Our image of terrorism, like our image of security, is shaped by both subjective (media, political discourse) and objective (data, facts) factors. These two approaches must not differ significantly (Ilić, 2021, p. 315).

Terrorist organizations differ from one another in the target audiences they seek to influence and the messages they aim to convey. Some groups aim to provoke state structures in order to encourage indiscriminate repressive measures, thereby undermining citizens' trust in government and further legitimizing the use of violence. Others, however, use terrorist acts to demonstrate their ability to inflict serious blows on their opponents, thereby seeking to consolidate support from existing ones and attract new supporters. In this context, media attention is a key channel of communication between terrorist actors and their audiences, which is why many groups seek to influence not only the volume, but also the manner and tone of media coverage of their activities (Archetti, 2013).

Terrorist attacks vary significantly in the degree of media attention they receive, with a large number of them remaining outside the focus of mainstream media outlets. Understanding patterns in media coverage of terrorism can have a significant impact on national security policies at multiple levels. First, the fact that many attacks do not attract significant attention points to differences among terrorist groups in their ability to design actions that will be noticed by the media, suggesting that control over media coverage is not simple or entirely in the hands of the actors themselves. Analyzing why some attacks attract attention while others remain marginalized can contribute to a better understanding of the political goals, media strategies, and organizational capacities of the perpetrators. Also, deeper insight into the media's motives and constraints can be important for designing more effective public relations and public diplomacy strategies for institutions responsible for combating terrorism.

As discussed in more detail below, some argue that the media have incentives to provide overly extensive coverage of terrorist attacks. This coverage can provide terrorists with a means to convey their political messages to a wide audience, and it can also distract the public from understanding the difficulties of preventing terrorist attacks and the steps that governments are taking to achieve this goal. Research in this area has begun to systematically investigate the conditions under which the media are more or less likely to devote significant coverage to terrorist attacks rather than to other topics or other aspects of counterterrorism. Third, the structure and competitiveness of the news industry appear to influence the media's attention to terrorism. As the media landscape becomes increasingly decentralized and competitive, news outlets may attempt to maintain market share by devoting more attention to terrorist attacks that employ novel tactics or are particularly violent. Such developments could pose new challenges for national security agencies' media relations by distorting the public's perception of the terrorist threat and reducing the ability of governments to explain their policies and contextualize the issue of terrorism. Fourth, existing research is beginning

to explore how the tone of media reporting on terrorism affects the attitudes and behavior of the general public, including voters as well as potential sympathizers of terrorist movements. There is considerable evidence that reporting on terrorism increases fear and anxiety, and that these emotional changes influence the propensity of some members of the public to adopt forceful counterterrorism policies. This can make it more difficult for governments to respond to terrorist attacks with other types of policies, even if those policies may yield better results. It is sometimes argued that terrorists are effective at manipulating media coverage to convey their message to a mass audience and gain sympathizers and supporters (Walsh, 2010, p. 2).

3.4.1. Moral panic in relation to terrorism

Moral panic is a concept widely represented in academic research on crime, deviant behavior, and the role of the media. Although this phenomenon has been discussed more intensively only in the last few decades, a development associated with the emergence of social and media conditions that enabled its more pronounced manifestation, this does not mean that similar patterns did not exist in earlier historical periods. However, the limited capabilities of the media forms of that time did not allow for the rapid and widespread dissemination of public reactions to phenomena perceived as a threat to the dominant value system, which is today one of the key characteristics of moral panic (Ilić, 2017a, p. 78).

Moral panic is a social phenomenon that arises and persists to serve the interests of those who have an interest in it. The goals can differ, and so can the list of potentially interested actors who participate in the process of creating moral panic (Ilić, 2017a, p. 110).

In order to understand the phenomenon of moral panic, or the stages through which it arises, it is necessary to consider several theoretical approaches based on the criterion of the source of moral panic, or the subjects from which it originates. It distinguishes three main ways of interpreting moral panic: as a reaction that arises spontaneously in the general public, as a phenomenon shaped by political and social elites, or as a product of the actions of interest groups and movements (Ilić, 2017b, p. 298).

An important aspect of moral panic is its social function, so in this sense it is important to consider the role that various social factors play in its emergence. In this context, the actions of moral activists, as well as representatives of formal social control bodies, are particularly emphasized. Given that different views have been expressed regarding the role of moral activists in the emergence of moral panic, an analysis of these approaches has identified

situations in which moral activists can play a crucial role in creating moral panic (Ilić, 2020, p. 73).

Public concern and consensus regarding terrorism have often reached seismic proportions after attacks. Supported by its violent and unpredictable nature, and further fueled by the volume and intensity of media and political discourse, terrorism produces a “culture of fear,” a dynamic that is evident in public opinion polls, news reports, official warnings, security checkpoints, warning signs, armed guards, concrete barriers, and other signs of a siege mentality (Walsh, 2016, p. 6).

Terrorism aims to produce and exploit the very conditions—high anxiety, intense outrage, and excessive punitive response—that define moral panic. By employing violence that is horrific, unexpected, and directed at everyday spaces and infrastructures, terrorists seek to induce affective states of extreme fear and intense psychological and social disruption. Moreover, in doing so, terrorists exploit the propensities of the two most important institutions implicated in the eruption of moral panics: the media and the state’s institutions of social control. To gain notoriety and amplify perceptions of vulnerability and imminent danger far beyond their actual capabilities and material influence, terrorists rely on the expected publicity from a media eager for spectacle. In addition, disproportionate responses from security-obsessed states represent an important resource for terrorist organizations. By eroding legitimacy and generating support for their cause, the collateral consequences of indiscriminate and clumsy retaliation are a central means by which terrorists amplify their influence, mobilize resources, and gain and maintain their power (Walsh, 2016, p. 15).

3.4.2. Fear of terrorism

There are numerous definitions of terrorism in academic discourse, but the root of the term lies in the Latin word “terror”, which means “fear” or “horror” (Schmid, 2012, p. 158). In an effort to establish a universally accepted understanding of terrorism, Schmid proposes the following definition to capture the fundamental aspects of terrorist acts: “Terrorism refers, on the one hand, to the doctrine of the presumed effectiveness of a particular form or tactic of violence that induces fear and coercion, and on the other hand, to the conspiratorial practice of calculated, demonstrative, direct violent actions without legal or moral restrictions, directed mainly at civilians and non-combatants, carried out for their propaganda and psychological effects on various audiences and parties to the conflict” (Schmid, 2012, p. 158).

Vulnerability theory states that fear depends on three interactive factors: exposure to risk, loss of control, and expectation of serious consequences (Killias, 1990, p. 105). According to the assumptions of vulnerability theory, when people understand the seriousness of the consequences of terrorist attacks and feel their inability to control the situation, they feel vulnerable to terrorist incidents and their consequences (Skogan, 2009).

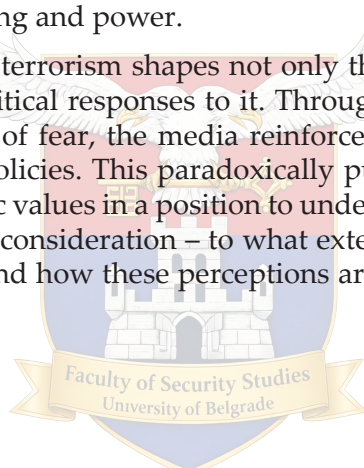
Fear is one of the most important means by which public opinion about terrorism is shaped. Although individuals experience it personally, it always arises within the broader social and political environment. The culture of fear is built through media narratives, political discourse, and collective memories, and personal feelings of insecurity are shaped through these broader processes (Jackson, 2013, p. 274; Biess, 2022, p. 99). In other words, fear of terrorism is not only the result of real dangers, but also the social constructions that give it meaning and power.

Media reporting on terrorism shapes not only the perception of danger, but also social and political responses to it. Through mechanisms of moral panic and the rhetoric of fear, the media reinforce the sense of threat and normalize restrictive policies. This paradoxically puts societies that seek to defend their democratic values in a position to undermine those very values. This leads us to a final consideration – to what extent the media shape perceptions of terrorism and how these perceptions are reflected in contemporary security policies.

4. Conclusion

The role of the media in shaping perceptions of terrorism is an important issue in modern society, especially in the context of global insecurity, the rapid flow of information, and the development of digital communications. Although terrorism is statistically less common than many other forms of violence and crime, its presence in the media space is disproportionately large. For this reason, the public's perception of terrorism is often not based solely on objective risk indicators but largely depends on how the media present and interpret such events.

The analysis of theoretical approaches has shown that the media do not act only as transmitters of information, but as active participants in the construction of social reality. Through mechanisms such as agenda-setting, framing, and sensationalist reporting, the media influence not only which topics the public perceives as most important but also how they are understood. Long-term exposure to violent and dramatic content contributes to



the creation of a sense of permanent threat, with fear becoming an integral part of everyday social experience.

A particularly important aspect relates to the phenomenon of moral panic and the culture of fear, which are further intensified by the continuous media presentation of terrorism as an immediate and omnipresent threat. In such circumstances, the public often develops a perception of risk that goes beyond the realistic scope of the danger, which can strengthen social anxiety, stereotypes, and support for more restrictive security policies. In this way, media discourse becomes an important factor in shaping political decisions and social reactions to contemporary security challenges.

At the same time, the analysis indicates a complex, reciprocal relationship between the media and terrorism. Terrorist actors use media attention to expand the symbolic effect of their actions. In contrast, the media, driven by market logic and the need to attract an audience, often favor content that provokes strong emotional reactions. This establishes a kind of cycle in which media exposure contributes to the spread of fear, while fear further increases the public's interest in such content.

In a modern risk society, the media's responsibility goes beyond simply informing the public. Professional, ethically based, and balanced reporting can contribute to a more rational understanding of terrorism, reduce moral panic, and strengthen social resilience to fear manipulation. Therefore, developing a critical attitude towards media content is of particular importance to preserve the balance between the public's right to information and the need to prevent the creation of an atmosphere of permanent social insecurity.

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