

**SACROSANCT VALUES, CONTROVERSIAL ARTISTIC EXPRESSION,  
AND TODAY'S GLOBAL SOCIETY:  
A DRAMATISTIC ANALYSIS OF  
THE MUHAMMAD CARTOON CONTROVERSY**

**BY**

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## DEDICATION

To Timetrious and Ronald,  
the two most important people in my life.

*Yes, you, I, we can.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a debt of gratitude to the many people who assisted me in bringing this project to completion. Ronald's encouragement to keep moving forward was invaluable. And his attention to some of life's details made it possible for me to focus on the work at hand. Expressions of support from Timetrious empowered me to press on in the face of what, at times, seemed like insurmountable challenges to completing this project. I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my immediate and extended family for their unwavering love and support. You are a gift from God.

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## ABSTRACT

The Muhammad<sup>1</sup> Cartoon Controversy was unique to all other art controversies involving the melding of the sacred and the profane. And it differed from all art conflicts prior to it in that it was global in scope; engaged millions of people in protest (peaceful and violent); and resulted in property damage, economic disaster, the loss of good will between nations, and the loss of life. Following publication of the cartoons, a debate about freedom of expression vs. religious sensibilities swept the globe.

This study is an exploration into how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy unfolded at three critical thresholds of the conflict's development vis-à-vis a comprehensive examination of the scope of the phenomenon. First, this study focuses a lens on critical communications that transpired in Denmark among key figures engaged in the conflict. Second, the interviews of Flemming Rose provide insight into how the conflict was dramatized by *Jyllands-Posten* and Flemming Rose for international dissemination. Third, the televised broadcasts provide examples of how the controversy was dramatized for American audiences.

Together, these rhetorical artifacts allow for analysis of the product of the worldviews as expressed through the cartoons, multiplied by the values and traditions of the interlocutors, and multiplied by the amplification of the conflict through televised broadcasts. Dramatizations by parties at the center of the controversy

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<sup>1</sup> Out of respect for the religious sensibilities of readers, where the name Muhammad and the term Prophet appear in this work the phrase Peace Be Upon Him is understood.

affected how the phenomenon was perceived in Denmark and Europe. How the controversy was framed in mediated discourse resulted in a different, more toxic, interpretation of the conflict for American audiences. The ultimate purpose of this study is to determine what lessons learned can be applied to ameliorate future international conflicts involving disparate value systems.

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*The corrective of the scientific rationalization would seem necessarily to be a rational of art—not, however, a performer’s art, not a specialist’s art for some to produce and many to observe, but an art in its widest aspects, an art of living.*

-- Kenneth Burke, *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purposes*, 1984, emphasis in original.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Symbolic Disequilibrium

The publication of cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad sparked a debate over whether respect for religious sensibilities trumps free expression of ideas, or vice versa. Moderate Muslims condemned the violent protests that erupted in response to the publications, but also questioned why the cartoons were published, first in the Danish newspaper *Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten (Jyllands-Posten)*, the country’s largest daily, then in several other European newspapers that reprinted the images in a show of solidarity. Supporters of the cartoons cited them as a legitimate exercise of the right of free speech. They argued that the satire of religion is a Western tradition and that artistic expression, in the form of the Muhammad Cartoons, underscored the issue of upholding long-held traditions in a period of extremist terrorism. Ardent critics described the cartoons as blasphemous and Islamophobic, with the rhetorical intent of humiliating Muslims. Reflecting on the nation’s history, Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen identified the cartoon controversy as Denmark’s worst international crisis since World War II (Saunders, 2008, p. 14).

This study is an exploration into how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy unfolded at three critical thresholds in the conflict's development rather than a comprehensive examination of the scope of the phenomenon. First, this study focuses a lens on critical communications that transpired in Denmark among key figures engaged in the conflict. Second, the interviews of Flemming Rose provide insight into how the conflict was dramatized by *Jyllands-Posten* and Flemming Rose for international dissemination. Third, the televised broadcasts provide examples of how the controversy was dramatized for American audiences. Together, these rhetorical artifacts allowed for analysis of the product of the worldviews as expressed through the cartoons, multiplied by the values and traditions of the interlocutors, and multiplied by the amplification of the conflict through television broadcasts. The ultimate purpose of this study is to determine what lessons learned can be applied to ameliorate future international conflicts involving disparate value systems. This work is intentionally interdisciplinary and draws upon the work of scholars, journalists, and commentators from the international community.

In this study, I conduct a rhetorical analysis of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy to provide an understanding of how discourse surrounding the phenomenon defined debates in the media. Rhetorical studies on the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy in newspapers and television broadcasts have been recognized previously. But what has not been understood are the rhetorical strategies employed to frame the rhetoric of individuals and groups at the nexus of the controversy, as well as the contribution of moderate Muslim voices to the debate.

The function of rhetorical strategies employed by interlocutors on either side of the debate point to the need for insight into the nature of public discourse involving cardinal values that are rooted in disparate cultures. In an increasingly global society cross-cultural interaction is on the rise as is the potential for misunderstanding aided by technology that makes rhetoric anywhere in the world immediately available. Thus, analysis of any past controversy about cultural issues and failures to address cultural values can provide guidance for dealing with future potential controversies. Specifically, this chapter begins with a background on the controversy, and then moves to a literature review. It is followed by an overview of the study.

#### Anatomy of the Controversy

The cartoon controversy erupted following the publication of twelve cartoons depicting Islam's Prophet Muhammad in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* on September 30, 2005. The paper published the images as a check on self-censorship when a Danish author of a children's book, Kare Bluitgen, could not find an illustrator to depict the Prophet. Publication of the cartoons was problematic because depiction of the Prophet is prohibited. The prohibition is observed by Muslims worldwide; illustrations by Muslims and non-Muslims alike are deemed highly offensive. There is no explicit edict against depiction found in the Koran (cited in Schacht, 1982) but the *Hadith*, recorded sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad that are orally handed down by an uninterrupted chain of transmissions (*isnad*), admonishes Muslims not to depict any living creature.

It was in response to Kare Bluitgen's situation that Flemming Rose, cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten*, searched for illustrators to publish cartoons to demonstrate the right to free speech (Rose, 2006). Twelve of the 25 members of the Association of Danish Cartoonists responded (2006). Danish Muslims protested the publication. Ambassadors from Muslim countries and the Palestinian representative in Denmark sought to meet with Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen who declined, stating "the Danish government has no means of influencing the press" (Muslim Ambassadors, 2005; Rasmussen, 2005). He directed them to seek redress through the court (Rasmussen, 2005).

A Danish Muslim coalition brought a criminal complaint against *Jyllands-Posten* and brought the issue to the attention of a delegation of Muslim religious and political leaders convened in Saudi Arabia (Fattah, 2006, February 9). Amid backlash from Muslim organizations worldwide, media outlets of numerous European countries published the cartoons in a show of solidarity. Editors of Jordanian newspapers who published the images were arrested, gag orders were issued to prevent publication in much of the Muslim world, and foreign publications containing the offending images were barred from entering their countries ("Prophet Cartoons Row", 2006).

To better understand the cartoon conflict it is helpful to survey the political and social conditions in Denmark just prior to and at the time of the publication of the Muhammad cartoons. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the influx of a substantial Muslim population had resulted in some tension between Muslims and the rest of

society (Bureau of Democracy, 2005). A 2004 report by the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights concluded that “the overall political climate for Muslims [in Denmark] has deteriorated since 2001” (2005). Tensions between Muslims and Danish society began to find expression in policy reforms that targeted the Muslim community.

In November 2001 Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen’s right-leaning government was elected, “riding a wave of popular anger about rising immigration” (Sullivan, 2005). “Nearly overnight, the government reversed Denmark’s generous immigration policies” (2005). Rasmussen’s minority government includes the Danish Peoples Party. Founded in 1995, the Danish Peoples Party managed to put aliens policy, integration of immigrants and refugees, and the issues of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious society vis-à-vis the Danish national identity at the center of the political agenda (Bille, 2006). They increased their number of seats in Parliament, the Folketing, from thirteen to 22 at the General Election in 2001 and to 24 in 2005 (2006). The 2001 and 2005 elections were historic because right-of-center parties together gained a majority for the first time since 1929 (2006).

The Folketing’s principal functions are the reading and passing of bills together with the control of government and administration (Bille, 2006). Denmark, like some other western European nations, maintains hate speech and blasphemy laws that played a role in the government’s involvement in the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy (Winfield, 2006). The hate speech law in Section 266(b) of the Criminal Code punishes “any person who, publicly...makes a statement...insulting or

degrading a group of persons on account of their race...or belief....” (cited in Winfield, 2006). Denmark also maintains a blasphemy law for which offenders may be imprisoned for up to four months (2006). Section 140 of the Criminal Code punishes “any person who, in public, ridicules or insults the dogmas or worship of any lawfully existing religious community....” (cited in Winfield, 2006). As this broadly worded legislation criminalizes offensive expression, the government was thus “specifically empowered to prosecute any news organization that published copy mocking or scorning Islamic doctrines or acts of worship” (Winfield, 2006). However, the Crown’s Prosecutor, Henning Fode, upheld the regional prosecutor’s ruling which held that the drawings published in *Jyllands-Posten* on September 30, 2005 did not violate bans on racist and blasphemous speech (“No Charges for Paper”, 2006).

Denmark’s population is approximately 5.4 million (Bureau of Democracy, 2005). In January 2005, 83.2 percent of the population belonged to the official Evangelical Lutheran Church (2005). The Lutheran faith is taught in the public schools and approximately twelve percent of the Church’s revenue comes from state subsidies (2005). “Members of other faiths, most notably Catholics, have argued that the system is unfair, and that the Government does not provide religious equality, despite providing religious freedom” (2005). Denmark’s second largest religious community is Muslim, approximately 3.5 percent of the population (180,000 persons) (2005).

Governmental support is extended to the private sector of Danish society as well. For example, Kare Bluitgen, the Danish author who unsuccessfully sought illustrators to depict the Prophet Muhammad for his children's book reported that he lives on Biblioteksafgiften (a yearly sum paid to Danish writers by the state) (Sekki, 2008). He contended that Denmark needs his most recent publication, a translation of the Koran with illustrations of Muhammad's life, arguing that "with the growing number of Muslims in Denmark, the Koran has become an important book" (2008). Popular support of Rasmussen's coalition center-right Government suggests a symbiotic relationship between the anti-immigration government and the citizenry. During its election campaign in February 2005, Rasmussen's Government was successfully re-elected to a four-year term (Bureau of Democracy, 2005). It affirmed its commitment to pursuing and promoting effective integration policies intended to address "disproportionately high crime rates and unemployment among immigrants from Islamic countries (and other ethnic minorities in Denmark)" (2005). A survey found that in 2005, 80 percent of Danes supported new laws to battle terrorism and control immigration (Sullivan, 2005).

The Muhammad Cartoon Controversy unfolded in the tense atmosphere following 9/11. Portrayals of Muslims as intolerant and backward terrorists in the news and popular media caused many to feel that their culture and religion were under attack. Seeing the drawings as a direct attack on their values, some Muslims called the publications a "hate program" (Ghattas, 2006). There was, and continues to be, displeasure with American occupation of Iraq and the handling of the war (Fattah,

2006, February 9), including the atrocities at Abu Ghraib. Officials of some Muslim countries and the U.S. military suspected that extremist groups exploited the controversy by inciting protestors to riot around the world ("4 More Afghan Deaths", 2006). Another belief of some Western government officials was that Arab governments exploited the conflict to undercut the appeal of Western democracy to Arab citizens (Stewart, 2006). Despite the tense atmosphere, the U.S. fight to win the hearts and minds of Muslims in favor of democratic reform across the Middle East was ongoing even as widespread publication of the images set off the global firestorm (Kaplan, 2005).

While there were peaceful protests in response to the publications in many parts of the world, widespread protests in other parts of the world resulted in destruction of property, violence, and death. Several Muslim countries boycotted Danish products, imports were banned, and ambassadors withdrawn (Williams & Born, 2006). On January 30, 2006, *Jyllands-Posten* published a statement saying that it regretted offending Muslims, but stood by its decision to publish the cartoons (Sullivan, 2006). The Danish Prime Minister called on all parties to abstain from aggravating the dispute further and sought dialogue with Muslims to resolve the conflict. Moderate Muslim leaders and intellectuals invited public debate on issues underlying the controversy as they called on protestors to stop rioting (Tanz-Flaum, 2006). Instead, they called for peaceful solutions to resolve this controversy over religious sensibilities vs. freedom of artistic expression.

## Controversial Artistic Expression

The arts have provided an important avenue for expression for previously marginalized groups. Expression of their collective identity and what they desire have been immortalized in various media (Dubin, 1992, p. 2). Such works document social change and register a response to what has occurred. Largely, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century art controversies have been symbolic struggles since it is easier for marginalized groups to establish a presence in the “world of making images” than it is for them to affect the equitability of the relatively unyielding realm of organizations, institutions and political structures (p. 3). Art also functions to “push-back” change from the status quo. This battle has been “engaged in the cultural sphere” by opponents of change “because it is *somewhat* more acceptable...to assail a group’s speech or their images of themselves than it is to attack them directly” (p. 3, emphasis in original). Moreover, reluctance toward change finds its expression in the creation of images that rearticulate staid notions and representations. And fear of displacement can find its expression in artistic endeavors that attempt to define new groups that pose a threat to the status quo. These battles confirm that significant social conflicts may have been relocated to the cultural realm, but they have merely been reassigned, not resolved (p. 3).

Several distinct conditions heighten the probability of art controversies. One is the nature of the subject (Dubin, 1992, p. 11). The extent to which the work either displays satisfactory categorical fit or violates understood and accepted beliefs is determinative in whether the artifact is accepted or rejected. Rejection is more likely

when art blends together what social conventions generally separate (p. 11). Two is the degree of fit between the audience and the work. What is legitimate in one setting and before certain audiences may be devalued when it is thrust before others (p. 11). Inseparable from this notion is the question of what discourse individuals bring with them when they evaluate art. When critics carry a frame of reference they have derived primarily from within the contemporary art world, they may dislike a certain creation but it may not lead them to discount the entire category of art (p. 11). But when convictions originate in other social spheres, e.g., politics or religion, a creation that violates what is viewed as sacred can cause the critic to see the entire category of art as “irreversibly befouled”(p. 11). Finally, add to this combination fundamental social and demographic shifts along with generally unsettled social conditions and there is fertile ground in which art controversies may germinate (p. 11).

The eruption of art controversies requires the “combination of two critical elements: there must be a sense that values have been threatened, and power must be mobilized in response to do something about it” (Dubin, 1992, p. 6). In his compendium on art controversies involving elite and popular, and performing and visual art forms from 1988-1992, Dubin posited that there are situations in which conditions are insufficient for art controversies (p. 7). For example, although critical values are assailed in certain instances, the failure to arouse people and to consolidate resources consigns some potentially contentious situations to the domain of nonevents.

This may be due to the paucity of leaders who have established their credibility or amassed followings, a lack of preexisting organizational

expertise, or community fatigue or disinterest because of other circumstances. In such instances what might otherwise explode, instead fizzles” (p. 7)

What can be drawn from art controversies generally, and the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy in particular, is that artists affect the broader world and social conditions influence artistic expression. Threats to religious dogma, a changing political climate, a shortage of resources, a desire to inflate archaic images of marginalized groups, fear of displacement, and other social struggles are reflected in artistic expression that can give rise to controversy. Important to understanding controversies involving religious iconography in artistic expression is the knowledge that religion is the source of the most basic and enduring values of a society (Dubin, 1992, p. 79). Artwork that violates sacrosanct values signals a challenge to those values. The challenge registers as a threat to core values. And efforts to defend basic values result in conflict.

Contemporary art has dealt extensively with threats to the religious values of various faiths. Blending the divine with the mundane; representing holy persons or religious narratives in a manner that is incongruent with a given faith; or violating the prohibition of depicting a religion’s adherents, holy persons, or other living creatures have routinely sparked art conflicts. Such works are found valuable and non-offensive by some, worthless and offensive by others, worthwhile but offensive by a few. One argument by opponents of such works is that they could affect behavior, belief, or knowledge and perception of the faith in question. The remainder of this literature review provides examples of artistic expression involving religious subject matter that have sparked controversies. We will see that, as in the case of the Muhammad

cartoons, art and piety is an intersection where religious sensibilities and freedom of expression collide.

### *The Sacred and the Profane*

Mircea Eliade is credited with being the first to employ the use of the terms “sacred” and “profane” to classify religious experience (Lee, 2006, p. 15). He posited that the manifestation of the “sacred” is something of a wholly different order, a reality that does not belong to our world, in objects that are an integral part of our natural “profane” world (Eliade, 1959, p. 11). Durkheim extended this notion by stating that “sacred things are things protected and isolated by prohibitions; profane things are those things to which the prohibitions are applied and that must keep at a distance from what is sacred” (Durkheim, 1995, p. 38). For some groups, the depiction of venerable religious figures in art violates this protective order.

Traditionally, sacred art functioned to translate religious experience into a concrete, representational form by seeking to make the invisible visible (Eliade, 1986a, p. 55). But artists are no longer interested in traditional religious imagery and symbolism (Eliade, 1986b, p. 82). And while offensive and obscene elements have always existed in art, contemporary art exhibits an insistent and progressive exploration of the forbidden frontiers of the human experience (Iannone, 1990). Works such as ‘Christ is risen’ brought the artist and the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art under fire (2008). Terrence Koh’s plaster model of Jesus with an erection drew a measured response from the Reverend Christopher Warren of St.

Mary's cathedral in Newcastle who stated that "to interpret [Christ] in a sexualized way is an affront to all we hold dear" (cited in Grant, 2008, p. 56).

A major theme of religious dogma is man's mortality, the notion that man has his beginnings on earth as descendants of the gods (De Wall Malefijt, 1986, p. 165). This explanation stresses "man's mortality and his separation from the divine" (1986). In the history of human thought "the sacred and the profane are always and everywhere conceived by the human intellect as separate genera, as two worlds with nothing in common" (Durkheim, 1995, p. 36). Encounters between man and the divine in artistic expression that violate the void that separates the two can ignite dramas that are played out in society. The 'Christ is risen' exhibit incited one Newcastlelander to say that "if other religious characters were portrayed like this there would be riots" (2008).

Sculptor Edwina Sandys considers 'Christa' to be her most influential work (Gillis, 2008). The 1975 bronze poses a female nude in the posture generally reserved for the crucified Christ. The sculpture was created during the height of feminist activities in the United States and Europe and "seems to comment on the patriarchal traditions of Christianity and the traditionally male-oriented purview of western culture" (Meyer, Spring 1997). By the early 1970s, a feminist coalition began to challenge long-held views concerning the place of women in religions defined by centuries of patriarchal interpretation (Meyer, Spring 1997, p. 20). When the work was unveiled in the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in Manhattan in 1984, "gasps could be heard throughout the main chapel" (HP-Time.com, 1984). That the

work was controversial was echoed in the comments of two female parishioners. On the one hand, one thought 'Christa' was "not at all blasphemous" reflecting that it portrayed a mystic Christian view that "sees Christ as our mother" of the church (1984). On the other hand, another woman stated "It's disgraceful. God and Christ are male. They're playing with a symbol we've believed in for all our lives" (1984).

Emotions were mixed but rarely mild.

To New York Suffragan Bishop Walter Dennis, it was a "desecration" of Christian symbols. He urged parishioners to write the diocese's presiding bishop, the Rt. Rev. Paul Moore Jr., "if it shocks you as much as it did me." Cathedral Dean James Parks Morton, who organized the display with Moore's concurrence, responded that the effort to "send a positive message to women" had upset only the same people who oppose ordination for women. (1984)

Eliade reminds us that "artistic endeavor inspired by divine subject matter seeks to demonstrate the nature of the gods and their creations" (Eliade, 1986a, p. 58).

Clifford Geertz notes that works embodying religious symbols, which are "historically created vehicles of reasoning, perception, feeling, and understanding," give meaning to existence by modeling the world as it is or as it ought to be (cited in De Wall Malefijt, 1986, p. 269). 'Christa' "reverses gender in title and image" and refocuses the lens on traditions of "sin as female-generated and salvation as male-engendered" (Meyer, Spring 1997, p. 20).

Martin Scorsese's (1988) film "*The Last Temptation of Christ*" depicts Christ as vulnerable, riddled with self-doubt, given to anger and sexual desire, and at times haughty. Such a display of human frailty in a divine symbol of perfection exhibits illicit intercourse between the "sacred" and the "profane." According to Durkheim, "the mind experiences deep repugnance about mingling, even simple contact,

between the corresponding things, because the notion of the sacred is always and everywhere separate from the notion of the profane” (Durkheim, 1995, p. 37). The aversion is particularly acute among the Abrahamic religious traditions.

Scorsese met wide-spread praise among members of the film community for his controversial take on Christ as fully human and fully divine (Burton, 2008, p. 33). But the proximity of the two genera without their having been morphed into one is what “drew enormous negative attention in many religious circles” (Greydanus, 2001). Steven Greydanus, who writes film criticism informed by his Christian faith, called the film “deliberately iconoclastic, self-consciously contrary to traditional Christian understanding, [and] calculated for shock value” (2001).

For a director of significant stature, the script and production quality of Scorsese’s film should have drawn more rebuke than the subject matter (Scorsese, 1988). Perhaps the quality was intentional in order to impress on the subconscious of the audience that the narrative is an exploration into the notion that the Messiah was more human than our idealized notion of one who is destined to save mankind. The disclaimer at the start of the film and Scorsese’s expertise support this hypothesis. However, neither the disclaimer that the film is not based on scripture and is exploratory, nor the highly stylized presentation of the subject matter allowed Scorsese to escape the conflict surrounding the film. Regardless of presentational style, the melding of the “sacred” and the “profane” in artistic expression has the potential to influence beliefs, values, and understanding of the world. And when

artistic expression combines what society traditionally separates the ground is tilled for controversy.

### *Visualizing the Sacred*

When artists disregard prohibitions against visualizing the sacred controversies can erupt that may be dramatized in the broader society. It should be noted that “all religions have in common the embodiment of sacred beliefs” (De Wall Malefijt, 1986, p. 145). Consequently, there have been instances where the very act of portraying the sacred has created controversy even though the representations did not alter the traditions of the faith. And for some religious groups it is accepted truth that neither the sacred nor the mundane are to be replicated in artistic expression. The nature of the prohibition is usually connected with the notion of not creating graven images which could potentially become an object of worship. This practice is found most often in religions of the Abrahamic tradition—Judaism, Islam, and Christianity—based on the injunction commanding followers not to make “any graven images, or any likeness *of any thing that is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth” (Exodus 20:4 *Holy Bible, second commandment*, n.d., emphasis in original). The various religious traditions practice this admonition to varying degrees. Sects of a particular faith may adhere to the practice while others may not. Temporal considerations, geographic region, and interpretation of the command are factors in whether and to what degree the prohibition is applied.

Two instances illustrate the conflict that arises when the prohibition is broken: *Nussenzweig v. diCorcia* and the production of the film, “*Muhammad, Messenger of God*.” In 2005, Erno Nussenzweig filed a lawsuit against Philip-Lorca diCorcia, a photographer, and the Pace/MacGill Gallery in New York seeking both a permanent injunction to prevent the defendants from using a photograph taken of him while walking on a public street in New York, and damages for the prior use of that photograph (Goldstein, 2008). Nussenzweig stated that he is an “Hasidic Jew with deeply held religious beliefs that are violated by defendants’ use of the photograph,” citing the Second Commandment prohibition as evidence (2008). In an affidavit submitted to the court, a chief curator of photography argued that “if the law forbids artists to exhibit and sell photographs made in public places without the consent” of the subjects “then artistic expression...would suffer drastically” (Gefter, 2006). He reasoned that the calculated participation of the subjects would alter the naturalness sought after in the works of art.

Supporting the curator’s contention, the photographer, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, argued that “there is no way the [collection of] images could have been made with the knowledge and cooperation of the subjects” (Gefter, 2006). Professional photographers watched development of the case closely “claiming equally high moral stakes” (2006). The court dismissed Nussenzweig’s case on the procedural ground that the statute of limitations had run out although the court was “sensitive to the plaintiff’s distress” (Goldstein, 2008). On appeal, the Supreme Court of New York upheld the decision of the lower court (“*Nussenzweig v. Philip-Lorca diCorcia, et*

al.," 2007 N.Y. App. Div. LEXIS 3636). Deciding the case on a procedural ground demonstrates the Court's reluctance to set precedent on conflicts involving the freedom of artistic expression vs. respect for religious sensibilities. This posture speaks to the problem that courts face when trying to balance freedom of speech and freedom of religion, both constitutionally guaranteed rights in America. The problem is that either courts lack the capacity to decide these types of cases on the issues or courts are not the best forum for resolving such disputes, or perhaps both.

The production of the film "*Muhammad, Messenger of God*" drew the ire of a group of Muslims (Akkad, 1977; Arnold & Turan, 1977). Many Muslim scholars were outraged by the film though the Syrian-born Muslim producer, Mustapha Akkad, observed the prohibition against representations of the Prophet (Steyn, 2006). Responding to objections by an ad hoc committee of New York area Islamic groups to alleged historical distortions and inaccuracies, Akkad invited them all to see the movie (Arnold & Turan, 1977). He challenged them stating that "if they can find one inaccuracy, historical or religious, I will destroy the film" (1977). The producer indicated that they all refused to view the film (1977).

One other situation where accurate representation in artistic endeavor was sought to be prohibited was the production of the film "*The Passion of the Christ*" (Gibson, 2003). Mel Gibson, director, reports that he attempted to provide a dramatic, artistic, and realistic depiction of "events leading up to and surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus Christ" (Brown, Keeler, & Lindvall, 2007, p. 91). Before the film was released, some Jewish groups and various scholars denounced the film for its

portrayal of Jews (2007). The film was described as displaying a disturbing and gratuitous use of violence toward Jesus by Jews (Burton, 2008, p. 27). Gibson acknowledged that he “showed as much violence as people [were] able to bear” but argued that “the crucifixion was actually more violent” than what he depicted (Brown, et al., 2007, p. 94). In his study, John Pawlikowski argued that the film could have conceivably rekindled post-Biblical Christian anti-Semitism because of its portrayal of Jews as responsible for Jesus’ death (Pawlikowski, 2004). Vatican officials praised the film, insisting that it was theologically accurate and not anti-Semitic and an endorsement from Billy Graham heightened the film’s credibility (Brown, et al., 2007, p. 93).

A principal concern of opponents of visualizing the sacred in artistic expression is the potential for the artistic endeavor to influence the beliefs and behavior of individuals in society. As Geertz pointed out, religious symbols provide meaning to existence by providing a model of the world as it is and a model for the world as it ought to be (cited in De Wall Malefijt, 1986, p. 269). Admittedly, Gibson attempted to reach the “unchurched” and evangelize via his film (Brown, et al., 2007, p. 91). Pawlikowski posits that artists have historically “assisted the implantation of the negative image[s] of Jews and Judaism into the prevailing ethos of Christian societies” (2004). The practice of disregarding prohibitions against visualizing the sacred, and in some cases the mundane, can lead to controversies of varying magnitude and breadth that are dramatized in the broader society.

### *Representations and the War of Words*

The artistic expressions that set off the firestorm known as the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy or Danish Cartoon Controversy disregard the proscription against melding the sacred with the profane and violate prohibitions against visualizing the sacred. The twelve cartoons, first published in *Jyllands-Posten* then in other newspapers in a show of solidarity, depict the Prophet Muhammad, revered by Muslims around the world, with an ignited bomb for a turban in one instance and with horns in another (Gudmundsson, 2006). A long-standing Islamic tradition prohibits the depiction of the Prophet Muhammad, under any circumstances (Ghosh, 2006). The juxtaposition of a religious figure and symbols of corruption in knowing violation of the prohibition against depiction provides insight into the worldviews of the artists and the publisher.

The act of creating cartoons that are considered blasphemous by the second largest population in Danish society may have caused conflict only on a local level if, for example, the images had been only on public display at a local venue—requiring knowledge of the exhibit and a trip to the site to view them. But unlike localized controversies over artistic expressions such as ‘Christa,’ the Nussenzweig case, “*Muhammad, Messenger of God,*” and the other controversies noted above, the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was international in scope. The difference in the scale of this controversy is attributable to how the conflict was dramatized in the broader society. The publication of the cartoons in *Jyllands-Posten*, republication by European newspapers in a show of solidarity, and coverage of the conflict by major

broadcast and newspaper outlets brought this controversy over artistic expression vs. religious sensibilities to the desktop and doorstep of households around the globe.

While the media has had a greater presence during military conflict, it has played an even larger role in information warfare to the degree that they have become participant observers on the international scene. The media's ability to influence public opinion and set the parameters for how the masses understand events plays a major role in how events are perceived and world views are constructed. Perceptions and world views in turn affect the outcome of events. The media has functioned to bring audiences closer to the epicenter of international conflicts such as the cartoon controversy and have become necessary sources of information as international conflicts unfold. The media can also contribute to resolving potential or existing conflicts. How the media portray conflicts and more generally how the media contribute to cultural awareness or fuel misunderstanding is the subject of research by several scholars.

During the years since the eruption of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy there has been a growing body of literature on the relationship between the media and international conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Douai (2007) examined how the Arab television outlets Al Jazeera and Al Arabia framed the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy and what space was occupied by the re-emerging "clash of civilizations" frame. Huntington's post-Cold War "clash" hypothesis identifies the dominating source of conflict as cultural rather than primarily ideological or economic (Huntington, 1993, p. 22). His notion of "civilization" differentiates people by

history, language, tradition, and “most important[ly], religion,” produced over centuries and which will not disappear soon (p. 23). According to Huntington, more frequent interaction between people of different civilizations increases awareness of the existence of similarities and differences (p. 23). Although Huntington’s thesis is controversial, it is true that issues and conflicts in numerous parts of the world resulting from increased immigration are on the rise. The immigration of a large number of Muslims to Denmark led to tensions between Muslims and the broader society which led to this controversy over artistic expressions of religious subject matter. Douai posited that:

the media represent a key player in the cartoon controversy as both “cause” and “effect” at the same time. The “causal” aspect narrowly lies in the publication of those controversial cartoons whereas the “effect” aspects center on media practices, specifically in the conversations about free expression that the controversy subsequently engendered. (p. 23)

Douai suggested that the primary and supplemental frames utilized by Al Jazeera and Al Arabia created a “meta-narrative” frame that subsumed “all pre-existing frames” into a frame of “transgression” (p. 21). This frame “sympathetically reinvents the debate of the place of the sacred in the modern media environment” (p. 23). The modern media portrayed the global *Umma* (Islamic community) as united in its outrage and sought to “justify” and legitimize the outrage of an empowered “helpless” community (p. 22). Douai found that while Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” thesis was mentioned by both networks, it did not rise to the level of a meta-narrative because the notion was conjoined with an emphasis on “dialogue of civilizations” in “a conscious effort” to “circumvent” the clash paradigm (p. 24).

While Douai's study informs our understanding of how the Arab media framed the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy, it does not apprise us of the rhetorical strategies employed in creation of the frames affecting the potential reading of the controversy.

Like Douai, Powers (2008) argued that the media played a large role in problematizing the phenomenon. In particular, technological advancements in Western broadcast media have assisted in the shaping of broader public attitudes, opinions, and ideologies that are at the core of international tensions. New technologies allow for development of "mediatized public crises"—the construction and propagation of stories "through a series of discernable phases...in order to explain the course of events over a given period of time" (p. 11). Such "mediatized public crises" are "social dramas" that are "narrated by media through the deployment of deeply cultural and ideological stories and conventions" (p. 12). Powers found that the media was "unusually performative" in the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy in that it was an "entirely media-instigated crisis" (p. 14). Powers stated that:

(1) the Danish cartoon affair was an exceptional form of a media event in that, from start to finish, its escalation onto the global news agenda, as well as its ability to inflame cross-cultural tensions was almost entirely dependent on the actions and motivations of parts of the mainstream media; (2) the events surrounding the affair were specifically narrativized, through the processes of strategic framing, in ways that mapped onto and drew from underlying cultural codes regarding Islam and cross-cultural conflict; and (3) the collective performances and framing of the cartoon affair worked to further instantiate a "Clash of Civilizations" narrative within Western discourse, a narrative that both obscures the underlying realities surrounding the affair and furthers problematic cultural assumptions about Islamic faith and culture. (p. 23)

Flemming Rose's decision to create a public discussion about the rise of self-censorship is best read as a "reenactment" of a "cultural battle between defenders of a

particular conception of Western freedom of expression and Muslim religious sensibilities (Powers, 2008, p. 14). Powers argued that the cartoon affair was “considerably reliant on and escalated by a series of performative acts by media institutions to maintain its emotional resonance and international stature” (p. 14). In the context of the cartoon controversy, the framing efforts of *Jyllands-Posten* specifically and the mainstream Western media generally were of a strategic nature in that they drew from the culturally resonant ‘clash’ thesis and “actively and intentionally provided packages of symbolized images and stories to further problematic stereotypes of Muslim societies” (p. 27). Particular frames were strategically chosen in order to “sensationalize the events” and “deploy symbols that invoked fear...about the escalating ‘crisis’” (p. 27). Powers’ study is useful in helping us understand how media technologies and institutions affect the propensity for international conflict; it fails to uncover the underlying motives related to the social drama as it was chained out in the coverage of the cartoon controversy.

In addition to televised coverage of the cartoon conflict, leading newspapers around the world published developments on the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. Eko and Berkowitz (2007) examined the role of religion and multiculturalism in *Le Monde*, France’s leading newspaper, to see how it represented French secular republican ideology and freedom of expression in relation to the controversy. Secular republican ideology is rooted in the Enlightenment and is based on a strict separation of church and state such that it is critically opposed to religious dogma of all kinds (p. 4). Thus, “French republican citizenship emphasizes individual citizenship and

equality over communitarian interests...so that the country exists as a secular nation of culturally homogeneous people” (p. 4). Therefore, in French society, the struggle was not over the expression of one faith as opposed to another. The goal was to suppress all religious identification in favor of individuality and the manifestation of French cultural heritage.

The Eko and Berkowitz study returned three findings. First, they concluded that *Le Monde* used its coverage of the controversy to “restate fundamental human rights ideologies as they were interpreted in...the context of French secular republican principles” (Eko & Berkowitz, 2007, p. 22). This is in line with the Charter of the French Press, “which stipulates that one of the roles of the press is to defend ideas” (p. 22). Second, the diasporatic Islamic populations and their “culture-specific brands of Islam have clashed with the secular humanistic ideologies of the West...and specifically with French secular republicanism, which rejects racial and ethnic identification” (p. 22). Third, the researchers found that

although *Le Monde* defended *Jyllands Posten’s* right to publish the cartoons under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the paper also reported that by publishing the cartoons, the Danish newspaper had exhibited some ethical lapses: It had equated Islam and terrorism, and showed double standards in that it rejected anti-Christian and anti-Semitic cartoons but had no problems publishing the Mohammad cartoons. *Le Monde* insinuated that *Jyllands Posten’s* ethical lapses and the troubles they ignited were avoidable. It also implied that these ethical lapses were the result of Danish journalistic insularity and lack of sophistication. (pp. 19-20)

Eko and Berkowitz argued that the cartoon controversy “can be viewed as the latest weapon in the centuries-long war over the image of Islam” (Eko & Berkowitz, 2007, p. 22). They, like others who have studied the phenomenon, argued that the

conflict between Islam and the West is not a “clash of civilizations” (p. 22). Instead it was “a clash of imperialisms” (p. 23). The researchers posited that the conflict is a “long struggle for territorial conquest between the resurgent *Umma*, the House of Islam, and a secularized, post-Christian West” (p. 23). Douai reaches this same determination (Douai, 2007, p. 22). But both studies fail to grasp that Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” thesis is not unlike their determination that the contest is between two cultures that do not share the same history, traditions, and religious values. The Eko and Berkowitz study enlightens us concerning how the French press represented French secular republican ideology and freedom of expression vis-à-vis religious sensibilities in connection with the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. However, their exploration does not help us to understand how the social drama was influenced by key figures such as the editor of *Jyllands-Posten* and the Prime Minister of Denmark. Nor does their study help us to appreciate if and in what way Muslim voices affected the social drama.

Bhattacharya (2007) compared the Rushdie Affair (publication of *The Satanic Verses*) to the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy using textual and framing analysis to analyze media discourse surrounding the two events. He examined how Muslim identity was constructed in two newspapers published in the United Kingdom, *The Times* and *The Guardian*, and questioned whether changes over the last two decades have resulted in a different view of Islam. Bhattacharya approached his study from the theoretical basis of Huntington’s (1993) clash of civilizations thesis and Barber’s (1992) McWorld thesis. Huntington envisioned a post-Cold War world where cultural

values move nation states into two polarized camps, the West and Islam, which struggle for power and control (Huntington, 1993). Barber described the modern conflict as occurring between the modernizing force of globalism, and *Jihad*, which he sees as Muslim advocacy of “reactionary fundamentalism” (Barber, 1992). Drawing on the work of Edward Said, Bhattacharya also considered orientalist rhetoric and its use in the construction of immigrant and minority identity (Bhattacharya, 2007, p. 8).

Bhattacharya’s analysis of media frames revealed that the British press used “orientalist imagery while covering the Rushdie affair and the Danish cartoon controversy” (Bhattacharya, 2007, p. 9). Bhattacharya argued that the use of orientalist imagery along with “Britain’s attitude towards its Muslim population...located within a larger rhetoric on race, class, and immigrant identity in the United Kingdom” can account for the nature of media discourse that surrounded the Rushdie and Danish cartoon affairs (p. 9). Bhattacharya pointed to the media’s role in shaping Muslim identity by pointing out that

the press has also contributed significantly towards this cultural segregation. In a study examining news coverage of Muslims, [a study]...found that the volume of press content has increased dramatically from 12 percent of total news in 1994, to 25 percent in 2003. Muslims were represented most often in stories concerning religious extremism (including terrorism), politics, interpersonal relationships (ex: polygamy, misogyny, and honour killings), crime, and television. The study found that in general, newspapers framed Muslims as socially “deviant” and culturally alienated from mainstream British society. Although the volume of coverage has increased studies indicate that Muslims remain highly under-represented in the British press. [It was]...found that journalists preferred using non-Muslim sources if their story involved the Muslim community, but was not concerned about Islam. Muslims were also less likely than non-Muslims to be used as primary sources or quoted directly in a story. Furthermore, since journalists sourced terrorist and criminal groups

more often than ordinary citizens or community leaders, most stories were critical of Islam even when Muslim sources were used.(pp. 11, 12)

Bhattacharya (2007) concluded that the rhetoric on ‘Islam’ during the Rushdie affair and the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy suggests that Muslim identity in Britain is defined along orientalist terms (p. 19). Yet, he argued that despite cultural alienation, his analysis of media texts reveals that in some respects the “divide between Islam and the [W]est can be bridged” (p. 20). Bhattacharya noted that compared to the Rushdie affair, where Muslim voices were not heard, a few stories in the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy provided Muslim perspectives, though they are negligible vis-à-vis mainstream views (p. 20). Bhattacharya’s study is insightful and illuminates the state of Muslim identity and changes in that state during the period between the Rushdie affair and the cartoon controversy. But the study does not address the way in which Muslim voices affected the dialogue during the cartoon controversy.

For Shroff (2006), the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy exemplified the long-standing conflict between press freedom and press responsibility. In her examination of this topic, she considered how the controversy was framed by the press. An exploration of framing strategies as an element of this study was critical, given the expansive role of the press in shaping international crises. The researcher looked at coverage in six U.S. newspapers—the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune, the Atlanta Journal Constitution, the Detroit Free Press, and the Los Angeles Times. Seven broad frames representing issues in relation to the controversy were examined: “Factual Information,” “Criticism of Media” (press responsibility),

“Support of the Media” (press freedom), “Islam vs. West,” “Physical/Monetary Damage,” “Criticism of the Danish Government,” and “Others.” These frames predominately focused on press activities and public response to those activities rather than the controversy *per se*. Yet, this study underscored the importance of examining framing strategies to provide greater understanding of the power of mediated strategies in shaping what becomes salient during international crises. While this study helps us to understand how the subtext of press freedom and responsibility were framed during the controversy, it does not provide insight into how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was framed by the broadcast media. The present study explores how the broadcast media framed the conflict for American audiences.

#### About this Study

This study investigates the cartoon conflict narrative developed in the West for American audiences. What the West has in common with every civilization is that we, like all other human beings, are by nature story tellers. To apprehend motive one must investigate the narratives developed and extended by the rhetor. The study is, so to speak, a look in the mirror. A look in the mirror at how the West used symbols to construct and perpetuate narratives about the perceived “enemy.” It is a hard look in the mirror and perhaps not a cerebation to be engaged in by the shy. I contend that an endeavor that has only intellectual appeal is just that, an academic exercise. There are certain topics for which mental calisthenics are appropriate. However, for studies involving the common good I argue instead for an expenditure of energy and

application of knowledge that can affect change in society. Meaningful change is impossible without first identifying the problem, requiring honest reflection on our own symbol use. No other civilization can make this investigation on our behalf. Nor can we inspect the eye and remove the straw on behalf of any other. Above and beyond providing knowledge and understanding on how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was dramatized for American audiences, this study explores how we, the West, can be a leader in taking on the responsibility to reflect on our symbol use in order to reform and improve our rhetorical strategies for the good of humanity and to improved relations in the global community. By setting an example of responsibility which is based upon respect for others in the global society what we can reasonably hope for is the edification of humanity. In order to realize our hope, each of us, academics, journalists, policy makers, political leaders, governmental entities, and the private citizen must do our part to right the disequilibrium, symbolic and actual, in our world. The hope of ushering humanity along the path toward full actualization should be a catalyst for every civilization to be an exemplar in responsibility and respect for the common good of today's global society.

### Overview of the Study

Chapter One: Symbolic Disequilibrium. This chapter provides a timeline of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy and an overview of social and political conditions in Denmark prior to and at the start of the conflict. It provides a review of the literature on controversial artistic expression as well as coverage on the small but

growing amount of literature related specifically to the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. This chapter concludes with an overview of the study.

Chapter Two: Clang of the Symbol: Method. In this chapter the objects of study are presented along with a justification for their selection. The tools and methods used to interrogate the objects of study are presented to demonstrate how their application will help to illuminate important essential qualities of the selected rhetorical artifacts. This chapter concludes with presentation of the research questions and how they will be applied to the objects of study.

Chapter Three: Analysis of Official Communications. In this chapter the questions asked of the official communications are examined through application of the methods presented in Chapter Two.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Interviews of Flemming Rose. In this chapter the questions asked of the interviews of Flemming Rose are examined through application of the methods presented in Chapter Two.

Chapter Five: Analysis of Televised Broadcasts. In this chapter the questions asked of the televised broadcasts are examined through application of the methods presented in Chapter Two.

Chapter Six: Envisioning the Entelechialized Narrative: Tragic or Comic Frame? In this chapter I provide a review of the conflict over freedom of artistic expression vs. religious sensibilities and review the significance of studying this phenomenon. I discuss whether the questions posed of the selected texts have been answered and discuss my findings by examining the relationships among and between

the rhetorical artifacts. This chapter addresses what lessons learned from analysis of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy can be applied to the amelioration of future international cultural conflicts. Also, I discuss whether my findings agree or disagree with the conclusions of other studies on the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. Also, limitations of the study are presented. This chapter concludes by summarizing the content and organization of the study.

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*But the work of Man is only just beginning, and it remains to conquer all the violence entrenched in the recesses of our passion...and no race possesses the monopoly of beauty, of intelligence, of force. And there is a place for all at the rendezvous of victory.*  
-- Aimé Césaire, *Return to My Native Land*, English Ed., 1968.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Clang of the Symbol

#### Method

This study examined the rhetoric of interlocutors at the genesis and nexus of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. The study was an exploratory into perspectives on the controversy with the goal of examining in detail what is contained in the rhetoric of various parties to the conflict. The findings provide a fuller understanding of why the parties were unable to resolve the freedom of artistic expression vs. religious sensibilities conflict. The rhetorical artifacts were classified into three categories: official communications, interviews of Flemming Rose (televised and in print), and television broadcasts covering the conflict.

The artifacts cover the period of October 2005 through February 2006, the period that the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy received the highest amount of news coverage. One artifact is from 2007 and was chosen because it is an interview that sheds some light on the retrospective thoughts of the cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten*, Flemming Rose, who commissioned and first published the artistic expressions. Each artifact is available to English speaking audiences by either being

produced in English or official English translations. In what follows, I justify the importance of the texts selected for analysis, and explain the theoretical framework that informed this study. This chapter concludes with a presentation of the research questions and a discussion on how the questions were applied to the objects of study.

### *Selection of Texts*

The Muhammad Cartoon Controversy sample of texts is comprised of the following rhetorical artifacts produced as a result of the conflict (see appendix to access the artifacts online):

#### *Official communications.*

- 1) Letter from eleven Muslim Ambassadors to Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen requesting a meeting, October 12, 2005
- 2) Reply from Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen concerning the meeting request, October 21, 2005
- 3) Flemming Rose on Why I Published Those Cartoons, *Jyllands-Posten*, February 19, 2006
- 4) January 1, 2006 New Year's address to the Danish people by Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen

#### *Interviews.*

- 5) "The Situation Room" interview of Flemming Rose, cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten*, February 7, 2006
- 6) Alia Malek interview of Flemming Rose in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/ April 2007

*Television broadcasts.*

7) “*Charlie Rose*,” February 9, 2006

8) “*60 Minutes*,” February 19, 2006

These rhetorical artifacts were relevant to the purposes of this study because they exemplify the interlocutors’ positions on the conflict. The official communications were important because they were delivered by the most prominent individuals and groups engaged at the genesis and nexus of the controversy. Flemming Rose was the most interviewed person involved the controversy. His interviews provided insight into the worldview of the individual who initiated the conflict. The television broadcasts covering the conflict provided access to the voices of moderate Muslims, gave us an overview of the debate, and provided data for analyzing how the controversy was framed by the media. The interviews and television broadcasts are representative of interviews and broadcasts produced and aired by other American media outlets. Together, these artifacts allowed for analysis of the product of the worldviews as expressed through the cartoons, multiplied by the values and traditions of the interlocutors, and multiplied by the amplification of the conflict through television broadcast strategies.

At the time of this writing, the official communications by key parties to the controversy and interviews of Flemming Rose had not been examined. European and American newspaper coverage of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy have been examined by several scholars and was not considered in the present study (pp. 212-232; Eko & Berkowitz, 2007; Shroff, 2006). Instead, mediated coverage of the

controversy in the present study focused on how the broadcast media framed the controversy. This choice was made for two reasons. First, a greater number of Muslim voices were heard in televised coverage. Second, the use of video footage during the televised broadcasts produced more robust rhetorical artifacts for analyzing debates surround the controversy. Video available from “*Charlie Rose*” and “*60 Minutes*” provided data for analyzing how images were utilized by the media to dramatize the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy as an international crisis. The recordings provided an excellent example of the use of images to support framing choices.

While Douai (2007) explored Arab television broadcasts this study pointed a lens at American television broadcasts to provide understanding on how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was used to re-position Islam to American viewers. Specifically, broadcasts on the networks of CNN and CBS were investigated. Notably, the way Islam was re-positioned to America affected the international community through exportation of cultural interpretations via broadcast networks such as CNN.

### *Theoretical Framework*

Rhetorical critics endeavor to illuminate the intrinsic characteristics of a particular rhetorical artifact. In doing so, critics must be careful not to impose an a priori critical prism on the rhetorical artifacts under investigation (Black, 1980; Campbell, 1982; Foss, 1989; Leff, 1980; Rybacki & Rybacki, 1991). Proceeding inductively, the rhetorical critic

[often] begins with a fixed idea about how a rhetorical transaction is to be apprehended; apprehends it in accordance with that fixed idea and in no other way; and then, the apprehension having been achieved, the fixed idea is regarded as having been confirmed. The system is infallible. But it is also sterile. (Black, 1980, p. 333).

Sonja Foss reminded us that “the critic cannot possibly examine all of the rhetorical features of any artifact” because no method allows the critic to examine everything about an artifact (Foss, 1989, p. 15). Any methodological approach both reveals and conceals aspects of the artifact (Foss, 1989, p. 15). However, practitioners can avoid the “sterile criticism” that Black (1980, p. 333) cautions against by the care used in selecting his or her method. The methodological approach is

a vehicle or lens for the critic to use to examine the artifact in order to answer the research question. It is a scanning device for picking up particular kinds of information about the artifact, and whichever one is selected will direct and narrow the analysis and thus the answer in particular ways. (Foss, 1989, p. 15).

Close textual analysis was used to identify the major appeals and strategies employed in the official communications that are part of the rhetorical artifacts in this study. It was revealed that each could be treated essentially from the dramatic perspective of Kenneth Burke’s (1969) pentad. A close textual reading of the Rose interviews revealed that each could be treated from a frame perspective, which has its roots in the seminal work of Erving Goffman (1974). Elements of Walter Fisher’s (1984) narrative paradigm, “narrative probability” and “narrative fidelity,” also informed the investigation of the Rose interviews. The ideas of Burke, Goffman, and Fisher were selected as critical tools because of their potential to illuminate

significant features of the official communication and interview artifacts and answer the questions being asked about them.

To address the critical problem associated with the televised broadcasts several theoretical lenses contributed to the analysis. First, analysis of the artifacts were approached from the strategic framing concept of Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki (2001). This tool helped to illuminate the essential features of the rhetorical strategies employed in the television broadcasts under investigation. Also, Burke's (Burke, 1973, pp. 45-51) notion of the role of the scapegoat in persuasive communication and Richard Weaver's (1985, pp. 212-232) concepts of the "god-term" and "devil-term" contributed to the analysis.

*Kenneth Burke's pentad.* Burke identified five elements in the pentad which were developed as a way to discover "what people are doing and why they are doing it" (Burke, 1969, p. xv). "Act" "names what took place in thought or deed" (p. xv). "Scene" refers to "the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred" (p. xv). "Agent" is the "person or kind of person...[who] performed the act" (p. xv). "Agency" is the "means or instruments...used" to perform the act (p. xv). The fifth and final element is the "purpose" or the "why" of the act (p. xv). Burke and Foss remind us that the "pentad" was developed to be used within a rhetorical transaction such as a speech or dialogue—so that the pentadic features are discovered within the actual content of the discourse (Burke, 1969, 1973; Foss, 1989).

The terms of the pentad are not relegated to only intuitive or obvious properties. For example,

under “Agent” one could place any personal properties that are assigned a motivational value, such as “ideas,” “the will,” “fear,” “malice,” “intuition,” “the creative imagination”...Machines are obvious instruments (that is, Agencies); yet in their vast accumulation they constitute the industrial scene, with its own peculiar set of motivational properties. War may be treated as Agency, insofar as it is a means to an end. Besides general synonyms for scene that are obviously of a background character, such as “society,” or “environment,” we often encounter quite specific localizations, words for particular places, or eras. “It is 12:20 P.M.” is a “scenic” statement...Terms for historical epochs, cultural movements, social institutions (such as “Elizabethan period,” “romanticism,” “capitalism”) are scenic. (Burke, 1969, p. xx & 12)

A careful and systematic reading of the rhetorical artifact helps the critic discover important features and their manifestations.

The pentad has been used by rhetorical scholars for more than 25 years (e. g., Birdsell, 1987; Kelley, 1987; Ling, 1970) and is rooted in Burke’s concept of dramatism, the study of human motivation. Foss articulates the assumptions undergirding dramatism:

One assumption at the heart of dramatism is that language use constitutes action, not motion. Motion corresponds to the biological or animal aspect of the human being.... This level does not involve the use of symbols and thus is non-symbolic.... A second assumption of dramatism is that humans develop and present messages in much the same way a play is presented. We use rhetoric to constitute and present a particular view of our situation, just as the presentation of a play creates a certain world or situation inhabited by characters who engage in actions in a setting (1989, pp. 455-456).

In addition to the five elements of the pentad, Burke identifies elements that complement the pentad and assist the critic in uncovering “what people are doing and why they are doing it” (Burke, 1969, p. xv). Specifically, the concept of counter-agent is a term that indicates that “an agent might have his act modified...by...enemies” (p. xix). As Burke explained it,

if one were given to the brand of speculative enterprise exemplified by certain Christian heretics (for instance, those who worshipped Judas as a saint, on the grounds that his betrayal of Christ, in leading to the Crucifixion, so brought about the opportunity for mankind's redemption) one might locate the necessary motivational origin of the act in the counter-agent. (p. xxi)

Also, with regard to the concept of attitude, Burke has stated that he regretted “not turn[ing] the pentad into a hexad, with ‘attitude’ as the sixth term” (p. 23). Burke articulated the significance of the term in relation to action. Burke argued that attitude can be “classed under the head of agent” in the pentadic grammar, because it is the product of an agent’s consciousness and is therefore a type of action.

Any one of the pentadic elements can be considered the primary motivation because of its influence within the rhetorical artifact. But the critic should study the rhetorical artifact by utilizing each motivational element as the featured term, by pairing the motivations associated with the term to examine ratios. According to Burke (1969, p. 15), the five terms of the pentad allow for ten ratios (scene-act, scene-agent, scene-agency, etc.). “The ratios are principles of determination” (p. 15) as they characterize terministic relationships in terms of how one pentadic element relates to another. To illustrate, in Barry Brummett’s (1979) analysis of two gay rights controversies pro-gay rights activists posit that people are born gay and that based on this they engage in homosexual acts; thus, agent determines act. Conversely, anti-gay rights people argue that individuals chose to engage in homosexual behavior; which classifies them as homosexual. In the later situation, act determines agent.

*Erving Goffman’s frame analysis.* Gregory Bateson is credited with coining the word “frame” to refer to, as Goffman (1974) explained it, definitions of a situation

that are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern social events and our subjective involvement in them (p. 10). In order to capture its nuances, several scholars have defined framing. Entman (1993) said that

to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. (p. 52)

Iyengar (1991) suggested that “the concept of framing refers to subtle alterations in the statement or presentation of...problems” (p. 11). Morley (1976) pointed to the importance of investigating the

basic conceptual and ideological “framework” through which events are presented and as a result of which they come to be given one dominant/primary meaning rather than another. (p. 246)

The above definitions focus on selection but other definitions emphasize the generation of meaning. For example, Goffman (1974) noted that frames allow users to “locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its limits” (p. 21). Hall (1982) presented the idea that framing “provides the criteria by which all subsequent contributions are labeled as relevant or irrelevant—beside the point” (p. 59). Edelman (1993) identified the power of frames “especially in how observations are classified...and categorized” (p. 232). The above definitions highlight the power of frames to select certain information for presentation, produce meaning, and screen out alternative interpretations of information.

Goffman’s (1974) term “frame analysis” refers to the examination of the terms used to organize experience (p. 11). A critique of framing research is that it can

easily slip into the effects paradigm, a model which holds that there are no alternatives to the dominant meanings in texts. The basic premise of the critique is valid in that the “reality” consumed by the public structures, if not dictates, what issues they think about and how they think about those issues. Therefore, for purposes of analyzing the Flemming Rose interviews, greater emphasis was placed on how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was framed as a result of societal interests. Framing was investigated as cultural rather than cognitive phenomena. This approach responded to the recommendation that research move beyond a narrow concern with bias—deviation from an objective standard—to a more fruitful view of the ideological character of the artifact (Reese, 2001, p. 9).

A wide array of theoretical approaches and methods have been employed in framing research (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, p. 139). Frames, in the current analysis, are cultural structures with central ideas and more peripheral concepts. The set of relations among the central ideas and peripheral concepts vary in kind and strength (p. 141). Some of the concepts central to frames are, for example, narratives, metaphors, and myths that resonate within the culture (p. 141). These cultural phenomena carry extensive meaning in at least three ways. First, they possess tremendous symbolic power (p. 141). Second, the inherent power of culturally privileged narratives, metaphors and myths is that they carry “excess meaning” (p. 141). That is, by simply mentioning one or more of these powerful concepts the array of related ideas, social history, policy choices, heroes, and villains may be activated (p. 141). A third source of power for frames is that individuals, organizations, and institutions act in ways that

presume members of the society share the frame (p. 141). Frames, as a part of the deep structure of a culture, provide the unexpressed but shared knowledge of communicators that allows each to engage in discussion that presumes a set of shared assumptions (p. 141).

*Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm.* Fisher's "narrative paradigm" is based on his concepts of "narrative probability" and "narrative fidelity." This dramatic perspective on the study of human communication assumes that individuals rely on narratives to account for and explain their actions (Fisher, 1984). Fisher posited that

when I use the term "narration," I do not mean a fictive composition whose propositions may be true or false and have no necessary relationship to the message of that composition. By "narration," I refer to a theory of symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them. The narrative perspective, therefore, has relevance to real as well as fictive words, to stories of the living and to stories of the imagination. (p. 2)

Fisher said that the narrative paradigm provides the audience with "logic for assessing stories, for determining whether or not one *should* adhere to the stories one is encouraged to endorse or to accept as the basis for decisions and actions" (Fisher, 1985, Dec., p. 348, emphasis in original). "Narrative probability" and "narrative fidelity," are criteria for assessing the degree of "rationality" of a story (Fisher, 1984, p. 8). Narrative probability refers to the extent to which the story is coherent—complete and free of contradictions. "Narrative fidelity" is associated with "whether the stories...ring true with the stories...know[n] to be true" (Fisher, 1984, p. 8), thereby examining the truthfulness of the story.

*Pan & Kosicki's strategic framing.* Framing has been defined as “schemata of interpretation” that enables individuals to “locate, perceive, identify, and label” occurrences or life experiences (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). The work of Vincent Price and David Tewksbury represents a formal statement of the cognitive view of media framing effects and how it takes place (1997). They posited that framing effects result from the salient attributes of a media message changing the applicability of particular thoughts, resulting in their activation and use in evaluations. However, the effects paradigm limits framing analysis to a unidirectional process. It prevents us from analyzing the strategic contests among deliberators and between audience members (Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 39).

Gamson (1992, 1996) demonstrated that people construct their understanding of issues by tapping into the symbolic resources available to them in their everyday lives, as conveyed through their experiential knowledge, popular wisdom, and media discourse (cited in Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 39). Individuals combine symbolic resources differently across varying situations, strategically maneuvering to “tame the information tide” and communicate with others (p. 39). Thus, framing an issue is to participate in public deliberation strategically, both for one’s own sense-making and for contesting the frames of others (p. 39).

Cobb and Elder in addition to Hilgartner and Bosk argued that strategic framing is an ideological contest over not only the scope of an issue, but also over matters such as who is responsible and who is affected, which ideological principles or enduring values are relevant, and where the issue should be addressed (cited in Pan

& Kosicki, 2001, p. 40). Kinder and Herzog noted that it involves elite manipulations and performances (cited in Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 40), although not to the exclusion of citizen participation (p. 40). Each actor needs to take strategic steps to “get messages across” and win arguments by making their message meet the epistemic standards of “good arguments” and achieve “cultural resonance,” according to Gamson and Modigliani (cited in Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 40).

Recordings of the televised broadcasts produced by “*Charlie Rose*” and “*60 Minutes*” permits examination of how images were strategically used to get messages across in an effort to win arguments. Strategic framing “involves personalities, characters, scripts, conflicts, dramas, emotions, symbols, and expressive activities consisting of both “real” and “pseudo-events”” (Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 40). The method was chosen as a critical tool because of its usefulness for discovering if and how the program’s moderator and program participants strategically maneuvered to frame the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy.

*Additional Burkean tool.* The notion of the scapegoat, according to Burke (1973), carries with it the sense of “familistic consubstantiality”

by which parents take personal gratification in noting the delight of their child, when the child has been given some plaything or is engrossed in some event. The child is at once *outside* them and *of* them, so that their pleasure by identification could not properly be called either wholly self-regarding or wholly extra-regarding. Their act is as much a *giving* as an *appropriation*. It is a giving *from* them, whatever may be its satisfaction to them. (pp. 44-45, emphasis in original)

Just as, in Burke's analogy, the parent experiences the reflected enjoyment of the child, the purgative effect of casting one's malignance on another is likewise undeniable.

the giving of one's burden to the sacrificial vessel of the scapegoat is a giving, a socialization, albeit the socialization of a loss, a transference of something, deeply within, devoutly a part of one's own self...It delegates the personal burden to an external bearer...by objectively attributing one's own vices or temptations to the delegated vessel. (p. 45)

Burke explicates the nature of the ritual scapegoat as being different from the "pseudoscientific" scapegoat in that

the ritual scapegoat is felt to both have and not to have the character formally delegated to it—but a pseudoscientific scapegoat endowed by "projection" without an explicit avowal of the process, is felt purely and simply to have the assigned character...the scapegoat is taken to possess intrinsically the qualities we assign to it. (pp. 45-46)

The scapegoat functions as a "suppurating device (that brings the evil "to a head")...The sacrificial bulls and wild game die in behalf of the slayer (dying that he may "live more intensely")" (pp. 46-47). A close textual reading of transcripts from the televised broadcasts indicated that Burke's notion of the scapegoat would shed light on the effects associated with how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was framed during coverage of the debates.

*Weaver's "god" and "devil" terms.* In his survey of ultimate terms in contemporary rhetoric, Richard Weaver (1985) explored terms to which the very highest respect is paid, "god-terms," and those which are repudiated, "devil-terms" (pp. 212-232). "God-terms," he argued, are expressions to which all other expressions are subordinate (p. 212). To illustrate, Weaver identified several 20th Century terms

that enjoyed supreme rhetorical positions. For example, the term “progress” possessed the power and force to validate almost anything (p. 212). A politician could be urged on voters as a “progressive leader;” a community could be proud to call itself “progressive;” technologies and methodologies could claim to be “progressive;” a peculiar kind of emphasis on modern education could call itself “progressive,” and so on without limit (pp. 212-213). The terms “fact,” “science,” “efficient,” and “modern” carried similar power and force. Without delving deep into psychological complexities, Weaver grounded his arguments in the psychological notion that “it is the nature of the conscious life of man to revolve around some concept of value” (p. 213). Most likely this quality arises from the need to orient oneself in the ideological cosmos in order to coordinate one’s activities (p. 213). It is reasonable then to believe that depriving humankind of the tendency to orient itself would amount to psychic cruelty.

The best indicator of a “god-term” is the term’s capacity to demand sacrifice. “For when a term is so sacrosanct that material goods” and loved ones must be mysteriously rendered up for it, then it can justifiably be said to be ultimate in some sense (Weaver, 1985, p. 214). The counterpart of the “god-term,” the “devil-term,” tend to be “publicly-agreed-upon terms” whose “peculiar force of repudiation” are difficult to explain (p. 223). Again, drawing on psychology, Weaver posits that there “seems to be some obscure psychic law which compels every nation to have in its imagination an enemy” (p. 222). He speculates that perhaps an enemy is needed in order to define oneself, arguing that “if a nation did not have an enemy, an enemy

would have to be invented” (p. 222). This suggests that the need to give vent to expressions of scorn and hatred is as strong as or in some way rivals the tendency of humankind to revolve around some concept of value. Weaver’s notion of the “god-term” and “devil-term” were chosen as a critical tool in order to determine if the terms were employed and how they were used in the televised broadcasts being analyzed.

### Questions for the Objects of Study

The questions posed of the rhetorical artifacts were arrived at through a close textual reading and re-reading of each artifact. Each artifact was considered on its own and in terms of its relationship with the group of artifacts and what they reveal as a whole. The questions below arose from consideration of the artifacts and the knowledge inherent in them. Recognition of the need for dialogue as an alternative to the initial indifference on the one hand, and violence and economic exclusion on the other is an indication that an understanding of the type of rhetoric needed to lessen the effect of and reduce the number of controversies is needed. To that end, this study addresses the following questions:

1. What underlying motives are revealed by a dramatistic analysis of the rhetoric of interlocutors at the genesis and nexus of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy?
2. What frame dominates coverage of the controversy in the Flemming Rose interviews?

3. Did interview participants dramatize events in the same way that the conflict was dramatized in the official communications?
4. What did Muslim voices contribute to the freedom of expression vs. religious sensibilities dialogue in televised coverage?
5. How was the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy used to re-position Islam to the West by non-Muslims and by Muslims in televised coverage?
6. What lessons can be learned from analysis of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy that can be applied to the amelioration of future international cultural conflicts?

#### Analyzing the Objects of Study

The analysis in this study approached each artifact separately and was divided into three sections: official communications, interviews, and television broadcasts. Quotations found in each of the three parts of the analysis which are not followed by a citation make reference to the artifact under consideration. It was argued above that the worldviews of the parties to the cartoon controversy can best be uncovered from the Burkean perspective of dramatism (Burke, 1962). Hence the official communications were explored within the methodological framework of Kenneth Burke's (1969) pentad and provide an answer to the first research question. Importantly, Burke's pentad helps the critic discover "what people are doing and why they are doing it" (p. xv) by investigating "elements selected from within the actual content of the discourse" (Burke, 1962; Foss, 1989). Thus, a pentadic approach was appropriate as the official communications of Danish public servants are the products

of the worldviews of the society in which the cartoons were first published and articulate the official position on the publications. The official communications of leaders in the Danish Muslim community represent the worldviews of the targets of those publications.

Questions two and three were answered by an exploration of the rhetoric in the Flemming Rose interviews. Framing analysis was applied to these artifacts in addition to Fisher's narrative paradigm. This approach was useful in discovering how Rose, a key figure in the controversy, utilized narrative to create meaning (Fisher, 1984). Questions four and five were answered by analysis of the televised broadcasts. The program participants included key Danish figures, moderate Muslim intellectuals, and others who closely followed developments in the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. The concepts of Pan & Kosicki (2001), Burke (1969), and Weaver (1985) were applied to these artifacts to provide understanding on whether and how the cartoon conflict was amplified through the broadcasted coverage. An answer to question six was derived from reflection on the synthesis of the analyses of the objects of study and the implications associated with the analyses. Question six is addressed in Chapter Six.

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*If situations are defined as real, they can  
be real in their consequences.*

-- W. I. Thomas, *The Child in America:  
Behavior Problems and Programs*, 1928,  
adapted by Z. Hall

## CHAPTER THREE

### Analysis of the Official Communications

Analysis of the official communications that transpired near the beginning of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy provides insight into how the controversy was dramatized by key parties in Denmark. The way that people rhetorically dramatize their situation reveals their motivations. For more than 25 years Kenneth Burke's dramatisic tool, the pentad, has been employed by scholars as a way to examine the language choices of rhetors in order to discover "what people are doing and why they are doing it" (Burke, 1969, p. xv). As an element of the pentad, "act" "names what took place in thought or deed" (p. xv). "Scene" refers to "the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred" (p. xv). "Agent" is the "person or kind of person...[who] performed the act" (p. xv). "Agency" is the "means or instruments...used" to perform the act (p. xv). The fifth and final element is the "purpose" or the "why" of the act (p. xv). "The basic forms of thought...are exemplified in the attribution of motives" (p. xv). To that end, the question asked of this set of rhetorical artifacts is what underlying motives are revealed by a dramatisic analysis of the rhetoric of interlocutors at the genesis and nexus of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy?

Burke's concept of ratios, which informs this analysis, involves a synecdochic relation between two elements of the pentad. Such a pairing reveals a deterministic or hortatory relation of the first term on the second. For example, as Burke articulates

The word "ground," much used in both formal philosophy and everyday speech when discussing motives, is likewise scenic, though readily encroaching upon the areas more directly covered by "agent" and "purpose." We can discern the scenic reference if the question, "On what grounds did he do this?" is translated: "What kind of scene did he say it was, that called for such an act?"...However, the scene-act ratio can be applied in two ways. It can be applied deterministically in statements that a certain policy *had* to be adopted in a certain situation, or it may be applied in hortatory statements to the effect that a certain policy *should* be adopted in conformity with the situation. (Burke, 1969, p. 12 & 13, emphasis in original)

A single term of the pentad may characterize the rhetoric of a particular rhetorical artifact. But as Burke noted, "we find examples of the two ratios everywhere; for they are at the very centre of motivational assumptions" (p. 11). In what follows, the four artifacts that comprise the official communications related to the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy are examined. An introduction to each artifact is provided, followed by a presentation of the pentadic elements and a complete analysis of the artifact. Quotations that are not associated with a citation reference the artifact being analyzed. The final part of this chapter, the conclusion, provides a summary and addresses the implications of the official communications artifacts.

### Official Communications

#### *Letter from Muslim Ambassadors*

Eleven representatives to Denmark from Turkey, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bosnia and

Herzegovina, and Morocco sent correspondence to the Prime Minister of Denmark seeking audience concerning publication of the Muhammad cartoons in *Jyllands-Posten*, Denmark's leading newspaper (Muslim Ambassadors, 2005). This October 12, 2005 letter also referenced incidents prior to publication of the cartoons that dramatically affected Muslim reaction to the publication. A close textual reading reveals that this correspondence has two parts. The first three paragraphs make up part one. Paragraph four represents part two. What follows are the pentadic elements of parts one and two, followed by an analysis of the rhetorical choices made by the Muslim Ambassadors to Denmark to dramatize events in the country.

*Pentadic elements-part one. Scene:* The Ambassadors' narrative within the letter pointed to collective effort on the part of the Danish media and public officials that produced a scene ripe for conflict. They pointed Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen's attention to the

ongoing smearing campaign in Danish public circles and media against Islam and Muslims. Radio Holger's remarks for which it was indicted, DF MP and Mayoral candidate Louise Fervert's derogatory remarks, Cultural Minister Brian Mikkelsen's statement on war against Muslims and Daily *Jyllands-Posten's* cultural page inviting people to draw sketches of Holy Prophet Mohammad...are some recent examples.

The Muslim Ambassadors contributed to the conflict laden scene with the implication that unchecked discrimination could have negative consequences by "cause[ing] reactions in Muslim countries and among Muslim communities in Europe."

Agent: The agents in this part of the correspondence are the Danish media and public officials.

Act: A compilation of acts on the part of the Danish media and public officials coalesce into a present-day smear campaign against Muslims in Denmark. The Ambassadors make clear that the public circle of actors attempting to demean Islam is broader than the entities and individuals named in the letter. They state that those named have participated in “some recent examples” of discrimination, pointing to a history of discriminatory acts.

Agency: Under the auspices of democracy, freedom of expression, and human rights the Danish media and public servants disparage Islam and its adherents.

Purpose: To malign Islam is the purpose of the activities on the part of the Danish media and public servants. The negative perception of Muslims that this campaign created would ensure discord between Muslims and Danes and justify maltreatment of and unequal justice for Muslim immigrants.

*Pentadic elements-part two.* Scene: The assurance that there will be equal justice under the law led by the Prime Minister “tak[ing] all steps necessary” to address the problem.

Agent: The Ambassadors seek a response from the Danish government by urging “Your Excellency’s government to take all those responsible to task.”

Act: Legal action against those discriminating against Islam and Muslims.

Agency: The Danish legal code against discrimination toward minority groups living in Danish society and religions operating in the country. The code is the “law of the land” through which the Ambassadors seek redress.

Purpose: To promote inter-connectedness between Muslims and Danes to improve “integration and Denmark’s overall relations with [the] Muslim world.”

*Analysis.* Although the letter from the Muslim Ambassadors is divided into two parts, the ratio that runs throughout the entire letter is scene-agent, an indication of the power of the situation to influence the acts of the agents. In part one, the tranquil scene in Denmark is contaminated by the discriminatory acts of the media and public officials. The Ambassadors named some media outlets and public officials as examples. However, with the exception of the cartoon publication in *Jyllands-Posten*, the correspondence does not go into detail about the actions on the part of the individuals and entities identified. So, to grasp the level of scenic power operating in this part of the letter some background information is required. In addition, the following details are also helpful in understanding the state of relations between Muslims and Danes before publication of the infamous cartoons. For example, on August 3, 2005, it was reported that Kaj Vilhemsén, owner of Radio Holger in Denmark, was charged with racism for “encouraging listeners to drive all Muslims out of Europe and if necessary kill Muslims...in order to combat terrorism” (“Denmark: Committee Meets”, 2005; “Owner of Danish Local Radio Station”, 2005). Although Vilhemsén admitted to having made the comments, he argued that his statements did not contravene the racism provisions of the Danish criminal code (“Owner of Danish Local Radio Station”, 2005).

The Denmark Radio Broadcasting Central Committee revoked Radio Holger’s license for three months for the July 12, 2005 statements that violated the media-

political principles set by the Copenhagen Municipality local radio board ("Danish Radio Station Loses License", 2005). Christian Scherlig, chairman of the radio and television board, indicated that future contravention of the rules could lead to permanent revocation of Radio Holger's license (2005). Vilhelmsen indicated that he was prepared to complain to Denmark's Minister of Culture (2005). He added that agitation for the "repatriation of foreigners will continue in other media" arguing that "if one medium is shut down then we will simply set up another which will help to spread the message about a Danish Denmark"(2005). Vilhelmsen, who was convicted of racism in 2001 for writing an article in which he stated that "the rape of non-Muslim women is an intrinsic part of Muslim culture" received a 14-day suspended sentence for his more recent incendiary comments ("Danish Radio Station Owner", 2006). A unanimous panel of judges found the essence of Vilhelmsen's comments "that *all* Muslims represent a threat to Western civilization" to be propaganda that accuses them of terrorist activities which serves as justification for the sentence (2006, emphasis added).

DF MP (Dansk Folkeparti, Member of Parliament) and Mayoral candidate Louise Frevert contributed to the contaminated scene through the placement of articles on her Web site stating that "misguided Muslim youth felt they had a right 'to rape Danish girls and knock down Danish citizens'" (Olsen, 2005). In another article it was said that "Denmark should send young Muslim criminals to prisons in Russia to save money" (2005). According to legal experts and human rights activists, Frevert violated the law by making derogatory statements about Muslims as a group (2005).

Several left-wing lawmakers filed complaints against Frevert for violating the race statutes ("Danish Lawmaker", 2005).

Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen was told by a member of the Red-Green Alliance to “unequivocally distance himself” from Frevert (Olsen, 2005). However, to have done so would have proved difficult for Rasmussen since his minority center-right government rules with the support of the Danish People’s Party, the party in which Frevert held three key posts. In 2003, Denmark’s Supreme Court ruled that the Danish People’s Party leader, Pia Kjaersgaard, had racist views because she publicly opposed immigration (2005). That it is no secret that the Danish People’s Party actively garners support for legislation and policies against immigration suggests that Kjaersgaard was found to have racist views not because she publicly opposed immigration but for the manner in which she demonstrated her opposition.

The comments of Danish Cultural Minister, Brian Mikkelsen, contributed to scenic contamination when he said that the compilation of Denmark’s cultural heritage of art, music, literature and film “would be used against the influence of Muslim culture” in Denmark ("Minister of Culture Comments", 2005). A Cultural Committee was formed and charged with creating the Danish canon. Several members on the committee argued that Danish culture should not be used as a tool against minority groups in Denmark (2005). At the Conservative Party’s national congress, Mikkelsen informed those congregated that “in the middle of our country a parallel society is developing in which minorities practice their Middle Age norms and undemocratic mindset. We cannot and will not accept this” and that “this is the

new front in our cultural war” (“Minister of Culture Comments”, 2005; Burcharth, 2006). To avoid becoming too much of a liability and experience the backlash and expulsion from his party that was the fate of Frevert, Mikkelsen proclaimed that

I would also like to reject any attempt to link the cultural canon together with the right-of-center cultural struggle, which deals with fundamentalism verses democracy. (“Cultural Minister Apologizes”, 2005)

Mikkelsen’s denial that the cultural canon is a weapon of war against cultural pluralism linked Rasmussen’s right-of-center ruling government to the battle for cultural supremacy. In view of Mikkelsen’s position on Muslim immigration, it becomes clear why Vilhelmsen of Radio Holger felt he could complain to the Minister of Culture following the Radio and Television Board decision to revoke his broadcast license for making racist comments on the airways.

In their letter to the Prime Minister, the Ambassadors identified individuals and entities whose actions served as “examples” of discrimination against Muslims in Denmark. It is reasonable that naming the actors rather than recounting their associated activities would serve as a sufficient reminder for Rasmussen. This is true because those named by the Ambassadors were public servants and the Danish media. In addition, Prime Minister would have had first-hand knowledge of how these conflicts were addressed by members of Parliament, Ministries, his right-of-center government, political parties, and judges and ministers who oversee compliance of the Danish media. These incidents and the publication of the Muhammad cartoons were presented to the Danish Prime Minister by the Muslim Ambassadors as examples of contaminants in Danish society.

We strongly feel that aspersions on Islam as a religion and publishing demeaning caricatures of the Holy Prophet Mohammad...goes against the spirit of Danish values of tolerance and civil society. This is on the whole a very discriminatory tendency and does not bode well with the high human rights standards of Denmark.

The acts and tendencies described by the Muslim Ambassadors contaminated the idyllic scene of openness, dialogue, and tolerance that characterized Denmark. Within the contaminated scene, moderate Danish Muslims are caught in the middle between Muslim extremists and Danish separatists.

In your speech at the opening of Danish Parliament, Your Excellency rightly underlined that terrorists should not be allowed to abuse Islam for their crimes. In the same token, Danish press and public representatives should not be allowed to abuse Islam in the name of democracy, freedom of expression and human rights, the values that we all share.

And the allusion to reprisal, “may we underline that it can also cause reactions in Muslim countries and among Muslim communities in Europe,” on the part of the Muslim Ambassadors further contaminates the scene with the implication that unchecked discrimination could have negative consequences for Denmark and Europe.

It should be noted that in this part of the correspondence there are counter-agents to the Danish media and public officials though they are not identified in this dramatization. Burke notes that counter-agents are “enemies” of the agent, whose acts the counter-agent seeks to modify (Burke, 1969, p. xix). The actions of the counter-agents are revealed only through discovery of the acts committed by the agents named in the letter. For instance, individual members of far-left wing political parties filed suite against media functionaries and public servants for violating Denmark’s

racial discrimination statutes. Additionally, Cultural Committee members who objected to Cultural Minister Brian Mikkelsen using the cultural canon as a weapon in the war against the spread of Islamic culture in Denmark were also among those who made efforts to preserve or restore harmony.

Part two of the letter represents a vision of the future, one hopeful for the revival of the “spirit of Danish values of tolerance and civil society” if only Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen would have acted to restore the idyllic scene. The irony of this vision lies in the Ambassadors’ notion of who should or would improve the situation of Muslims in Denmark and the means by which it should or would be accomplished. The Ambassador looked to the very government and public officials in favor of stringent immigration policies and suppression of Islamic culture to champion their rights and thereby restore the tranquil scene in Denmark.

*Reply to the Muslim Ambassadors*

The Danish Prime Minister’s reply (Rasmussen, 2005) to the Muslim diplomats has two parts. The first part of the letter, paragraphs one and two, were written in the third person and described a scene that is fair and just. In part two, the remaining three paragraphs were written in the first person and reference an international arena in which the Danish government pursued dialogue and mutual understanding with Muslim countries. First, key elements of the pentad present how the Prime Minister dramatized the Muslim situation in Denmark in his reply to the Muslim Ambassadors’ request for a meeting. This is followed by an analysis of his dramatization.

*Pentadic elements-part one. Scene:* The “wide scope” of freedom of expression in Danish society which is “the very foundation of the Danish democracy.” Denmark is a society “based on respect for the freedom of expression.”

Agent: The “offended party” can seek legal redress for “blasphemous or discriminatory expressions” that disturb the tranquil scene characterized by fairness and justice.

Act: Taking the matter “to court.”

Agency: The Danish court is the means of formal redress for blasphemous and discriminatory offenses.

Purpose: To get legal relief from the blasphemous and discriminatory expression made by the Danish press and public officials.

*Pentadic elements-part two. Scene:* An international environment where there is “mutual respect” and “mutual understanding” for Danish and Muslim value systems.

Agent: The Prime Minister who had “personally taken the initiative to enter into a dialogue with representatives from the Muslim communities in Denmark.” We also see the Prime Minister’s government actively stimulating “dialogue between Denmark, the EU and countries in North Africa and the Middle East.”

Act: The initiation of dialogue with “Muslim communities in Denmark,” and the initiation of “dialogue between Denmark, the EU, and nations in the Middle East and North Africa.”

Agency: Prime Minister Rasmussen points to “the Partnership for Progress and Reform” “launched by the Danish government in 2003” as the means for increasing “mutual understanding of the values” on which Danish and Muslim cultures are based.

Purpose: To “increase mutual understanding” between societies with disparate values.

*Analysis*. The first part of Rasmussen’s reply exemplifies the ratio of scene-agent because the scene dictates the acts of the agent. Specifically, in paragraphs one and two, the scene cannot be controlled by Rasmussen or the Danish government. As the very “foundation of the Danish democracy,” freedom of expression in the press cannot be “influenced.” But the offensive expressions of the press are but part of the equation. The Muslim Ambassadors also identified officials who they deemed guilty of blasphemous and discriminatory speech. However, Rasmussen did not address the acts of the Danish public officials in his reply. This part of the letter, written in the third person, established distance between the author and the recipients. Herein, Rasmussen informed the Ambassadors that “acts or expressions of a blasphemous or discriminatory nature” may be taken to the court, thereby further distancing himself from the Ambassadors and pointing to them as the agents of change.

Ostensibly the purpose of taking the acts to the Danish court was to get legal relief from the blasphemous and discriminatory expression of the Danish press and public officials. However, the recommendation to take the matter to court directed the attention of the Muslim Ambassadors away from Anders Fogh Rasmussen as the locus of assistance for Danish Muslims. The idea that pointing to the court as a means

of relief was a deflection is supported by knowledge of the socio-political climate in Denmark. The web of Danish political parties, media functionaries, public servants, and public policies opposing Muslim immigration virtually ensures less than equal protection under the law.

In part two of his reply, Rasmussen self-identified as the agent of change in an international scene where “mutual respect” and “mutual understanding” of disparate values is sought. Here, the ratio of agent-scene best characterizes the rhetorical choices made. This ratio reveals that the agent dictates what occurs in the scene. Unlike the first part of the letter where the Prime Minister has no control over the type of speech practiced by the media in Danish society, the second half of the letter shows Anders Fogh Rasmussen in charge of the dialogue that affects relations between Danes and Muslims. It becomes clear that Rasmussen is not referring to an invitation to plurality within Danish society or to the notion that mutual understanding will lead to protection of value systems incongruent with the Danish system.

The Prime Minister’s statement that “there is indeed room for increasing mutual understanding between the different cultures and religions” references relations between Denmark and Muslim countries rather than Danes and Danish Muslims. This conclusion is supported by the fact that a single sentence is the only reference to dialogue between Danes and Danish Muslims in the entire letter. Specifically, Rasmussen tells the Ambassadors that he has “personally taken the initiative to enter into a dialogue with representatives from the Muslim communities

in Denmark.” Rasmussen does not indicate who these “representatives” are or which “communities” they represent, nor does he articulate the nature of their dialogue.

Most interesting of all, the Prime Minister provides no explanation as to why he gave audience to “representatives from Muslim communities” and would not meet with Muslim Ambassadors to Denmark. Rasmussen’s choices were not aligned with his claim of support for “mutual respect” and “mutual understanding.”

Rasmussen told the Ambassadors that the “Partnership for Progress and Reform” is the vehicle launched by the Danish government in 2003 to “stimulate...dialogue between Denmark, the EU and countries in North Africa and the Middle East.” The explicit aim of the program is to “engage a broad spectrum of Danish institutions and organizations in partnerships with their sister organizations in the Arab world and Iran.” The Danish government’s intentions are further clarified by the statement that the Partnership “will in this way nurture institutional and personal friendships among our societies and increase mutual understanding of the values on which we base our societies.” The Prime Minister articulated how Danish foreign policy focused on promoting improved international relations. However, improved integration of Muslim immigrants into Danish society is not mentioned in Rasmussen’s reply to the Ambassadors.

An exploration of the Partnership for Progress and Reform provides increased understanding of why Rasmussen pointed to this program as the means for creating the desired “mutual respect” and “mutual understanding” that is expressed in the correspondence. It also helps us to understand why any statement promoting

improved integration of Muslims into Danish society would have been inconsistent with the citing the Partnership for Progress and Reform, which in 2003 was a part of Denmark's new foreign policy vision. The foreign policy initiative entitled "A Changing World" focuses on Denmark's "priorities and actions against terrorism" (Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004, June). As part of the foreign policy program, the Partnership for Progress and Reform focuses on four elements, one of which is building a bilateral partnership program for progress and reform with countries in the Middle East.

In a report on Danish development assistance in the Middle East, it is stated that the "Partnership for Progress and reform...will support modernization and development in the wider Middle East region. Denmark will strengthen the dialogue with the countries of the region and increase assistance for a number of specific initiatives" (Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004, August, p. 3). Denmark indicates that reform of Middle East countries is needed because "widespread autocratic form[s] of government blocks political and social development and thereby the development of the human potential" (2004, August, p. 9). As a result "economic stagnation and unemployment lead to a great pressure of migration" (2004, August, p. 9). It becomes clear that Denmark's Partnership for Progress and Reform works to establish "renewed dialogue with [Muslim] countries on modernization of their societies" to reduce the number of immigrants to Denmark.

Rasmussen's reply to the Muslim Ambassadors' request for a meeting references dialogue he has initiated with Middle Eastern countries. An examination of

the Partnership for Progress and Reform indicates that dialogue with these countries focuses on ways to reduce or stop the “drain...of well-educated members of their societies” (Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004, August, p. 9). Rasmussen does not address dialogue on ways that Danes and immigrants can live peacefully in Denmark in light of freedom of expression issues that have offended Muslim immigrants. Of course, any effort to help a society improve conditions that allows them to hold onto productive members of society for the betterment of that society is laudable. However, given the socio-political environment in Denmark, questions arise concerning the altruistic nature of the government’s Partnership for Progress and Reform.

Denmark worked to broaden their Partnership for Progress and Reform efforts by promoting a similar European Union (EU) strategy (Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004, August, p. 3). The EU strategy focuses on similar reforms and articulates the challenges as emanating from “a single over-arching concern; the burgeoning challenge presented by a predominantly young population creating an ever-increasing demand for education and fulfilling employment. Reforms in the Mediterranean and the Middle East shall open to these young people the prospect of attaining a stake in *their* society” (Council of the European Union, 2004, June, p. 3, emphasis added). Knowledge of EU Strategic Partnership policies, which mirror a number of Denmark’s Partnership for Progress and Reform policies, supports the conclusion that the dialogue initiated by Rasmussen is a dialogue on containing or reducing immigration rather than integration of Muslims into European societies.

Finally, what is particularly interesting about Rasmussen's reply to the Muslim Ambassadors' request for a meeting is that the Prime Minister never said that he would not meet with the Ambassadors. Rasmussen's refusal to meet was implied. To reply by implication is an interesting non-response especially considering the Prime Minister's insistence that relations and dialogue between Danes and Muslims be conducted with "mutual respect" and "mutual understanding." The Prime Minister's slight is decisive and clear.

*Rose's Justification for Publishing the Cartoons*

Flemming Rose, the cultural editor of the Danish daily *Jyllands-Posten*, published an article in the *Washington Post* amid backlash from critics who referred to the publication of the Muhammad cartoons as childish, irresponsible, hate speech, and "provocation just for the sake of provocation" (Rose, 2006). Below is a pentadic presentation of Rose's dramatization of the publication phenomenon.

*Pentadic elements.* Scene: A climate of "self-censorship, pitting freedom of speech against the fear of confronting issues about Islam."

Agent: Flemming Rose.

Act: Publication of twelve cartoon depicting the Prophet Muhammad and Islam.

Agency: Flemming Rose's position as the cultural editor *Jyllands-Posten*.

Purpose: To "push back self-imposed limits on expression that seemed to be closing tighter."

*Analysis.* Agent-purpose is the ratio that runs throughout this article by Rose, which reveals that the agent is imbued with a purpose that must be fulfilled. His

purpose for publishing the cartoons is critical but subordinate to his position as defender of freedom of expression. With statements like “I commissioned the cartoons,” “I still feel this is a topic that we Europeans must confront,” and “in my book [this] is a form of self-censorship” Rose appointed himself guardian of the free speech line over which censorship must not cross. He commissioned the Muhammad Cartoons in defense of not only Danish freedom of expression but the right of all of Europe to express itself without regard to Muslim religious sensibilities. Rose indicated that *Jyllands-Posten* is not “fundamentalist in [their] support of freedom of expression as the paper would not publish “pornographic images or graphic details of dead bodies” and “swear words rarely make it into” the pages of the paper. But the religious taboo of not depicting the Prophet Muhammad is a restriction that Rose could not countenance. He told the reader that “over two weeks we have witnessed a half-dozen cases of self-censorship, pitting freedom of speech against the fear of confronting issues about Islam.” Rose’s admission that “I am sensitive about calls for censorship on the grounds of insult” was offered as justification for defending against the “popular trick of totalitarian movements” to feign offense.

Rose supplied evidence that he was troubled by the incidents of self-censorship by defending his commissioning of the cartoons as a response to Europe’s “widening fears and feelings of intimidation in dealing with issues related to Islam.” He argued that the newspaper’s “goal was simply to push back self-imposed limits on expression that seemed to be closing in tighter.” Rose said he “believe[d] that this is a topic that we Europeans must confront, challenging moderate Muslims to speak out.”

His dramatization of the situation placed him at the forefront of the fight for freedom of expression in Europe.

To combat self-censorship Rose claimed that he “adopted the well-known journalistic principle: Show, don’t tell” by commissioning the cartoonists to “draw Muhammad as you see him.” Rose appears disingenuous in his statement that “we certainly did not ask them to make fun of the [P]rophet.” It is difficult to read his denial in any other way when to hire cartoonists to satirize a religious figure invites sarcasm, ridicule, and folly in depicting the subject. Further, Rose related that “we have a tradition of satire when dealing with the royal family and other public figures, and that was reflected in the cartoons.” *Jyllands-Posten’s* long-standing tradition of satire would have no effect if it merely reflected the self-perception of the subject under scrutiny. Satire is effective only if it reduces, stretches, or in some way distorts the subject matter. Rose’s claim that there was no intention to “make fun of the [P]rophet” defeats the widely-accepted purpose of satire.

The major purpose of publishing the satirical cartoons, according to Rose, was “to test the limits of self-censorship by calling on cartoonists to challenge a Muslim taboo.” By Rose’s standards, to test the limits of self-imposed censorship any taboo would help him carry out his investigation as long as the proscribed subject related to Islam. But, that the subject matter involved a melding of the sacred and the profane at the intersection of artistic expression and religious values seems to be more than a fortuitous selection of an apt method for testing the “chilling effect” on freedom of expression.

A secondary purpose for publishing the satirical cartoons was to treat Danish Muslims “as equals.” Rose argued that “the cartoonists treated Islam the same way they treat Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and other religions.” And that by treating Muslims “as equals” the cartoonists made the point that “we are integrating you into the Danish tradition of satire because you are part of our society, not strangers.” But one could question the sincerity of this claim given that the Muslim immigrant community in Denmark was new and because socio-political conditions for Muslims in Denmark were not favorable. Specifically, near the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, there was an influx of a substantial Muslim population in Denmark (Bureau of Democracy, 2005a). To satirize a new acquaintance, friend, or social group at the start of a relationship is to risk destroying the opportunity to extend good will in an effort to establish a healthy long-lasting relationship. Further, that the socio-political environment in Denmark was not amicable for Muslims (Bureau of Democracy, 2005b; Sullivan, 2005) supports the idea that the relationship that Danes had with Muslims could not endure the weight of ridicule and denouncement that characterizes satire. Rose’s claim that the cartoons were “including, rather than excluding, Muslims” is open to debate.

Another purpose that surfaces in the way that Rose dramatized the climate of “self-imposed censorship” is the desire to demonstrate “our right to publish material, even offensive material.” Rose advanced this notion as the best way to protect the fundamental right to freedom of expression. He exclaimed that “we cannot apologize for our right to publish.” Newspapers can be “paralyzed by worries about every

possible insult,” warned Rose, if editors are too evenhanded in applying similar rules against publishing offensive materials. Here, again, Rose was self-appointed to lead the charge for editorial freedom in Denmark and all of Europe.

Rose’s purpose to keep the public sphere free from imposing Muslim religious restrictions becomes apparent in his exemplification of how he demonstrates respect for religions. For example, by taking his shoes off when he visits a mosque he demonstrates respect. Such respect is not due in the public sphere, according to Rose. For “a believer to demand that I, as a nonbeliever, observe his taboos in the public domain, he is not asking for my respect, but for my submission.” Clearly, Rose sees himself as the guardian of the public sphere, protector of editorial freedom, and standard bearer of the right to free expression for Denmark and Europe. By Rose’s standards, the public domain is managed by tenants upheld by adherents to secular democracy. Rose’s use of his position as cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten* to publish cartoons that offend the religious sensibilities of the second largest religious group in Denmark (Bureau of Democracy, 2005a) leads one to question how democratic is Rose’s vision of democracy.

*New Year Address by Rasmussen*

On January 1, 2006 Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen delivered his New Year Address to the people of Denmark (Rasmussen, 2006, January). During this annual speech, it is customary to present information on the state of Denmark’s economy and other matters of national interest as well as concerns abroad. Rasmussen held to this tradition in parts one and two of his speech. In part one,

Rasmussen informed Danes that they have a lot to be thankful for. Denmark has “one of the strongest economies in Europe” and the “majority of Danes have experienced the benefits of prosperity.” Danish prosperity was spread to other parts of the world through “international assistance” programs that are heralded as the best in the world. Rasmussen indicated that these reports indicate two things: “that we have well-ordered finances and we have the surplus to think of others than merely ourselves.”

In the second part of the speech Rasmussen advised Denmark to use the time of growth and prosperity to “make the necessary decisions that are crucial to the future” of the country and in this way “sustain the prosperity of the good times.” Rasmussen pointed out that in the future there will be “a larger number of elderly people” and “fewer people in the labor market.” This coupled with the knowledge that “at the same time we will live longer” is a portent that “an increasing number of people will be drawing on public benefits, while there will be fewer and fewer paying taxes.” “This scenario is not sustainable,” cautions Rasmussen. However, he assured Danes that because of “our current healthy economy” there is no need to “introduce hasty interventions forced on us by a crisis.” Instead, the country can “implement the necessary changes gradually over an extended number of years,” giving individuals ample time to adjust to new measures. This should be accomplished while “creat[ing] new knowledge and new ideas” to stay competitive in a changing world. In these first two sections of his New Year speech Rasmussen dramatized an environment where Danes are in control of the present and the future. With planning, self-directed adjustment to new mandates, technological and employment innovation, and

education of all Danish youth, Danes could maintain the idyllic scene that is Denmark.

The third and final part of Rasmussen's speech focused on the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy which erupted in September 2005. A presentation of the pentadic elements that characterize the situation is followed by an analysis of how Rasmussen dramatized the conflict in his 2006 New Year address to the people of Denmark.

*Pentadic elements.* Scene: Foreign ideas threatening Danish values.

Agent: The Danish tradition of satire, questioning authority, questioning the established order, and subjecting everything to critical debate.

Act: Protection of Danish society where there is a strong sense of community based on fundamental values.

Agency: Danes standing united.

Purpose: To safeguard Denmark's ability to be prosperous, innovative, and internationally competitive.

Attitude: The shrill tone of the critical debates about freedom of expression.

*Analysis.* The pentadic ratio of this third part of Rasmussen's speech is agent-purpose; for it falls upon the agent to ensure that Denmark remains prosperous. As agent, Danish tradition would act to protect Danish society and its fundamental values. Burke examined the possibility of ideas functioning as agents in a given situation (Burke, 1969, pp. 177-181). He articulated how the idealism philosophy of George Berkeley supports the notion that an agent can have the form of an idea, such

as tradition. “Ideas, spirits, and relations are all in their respective kinds the object of human knowledge” (p. 180). “We make our way among ‘ideas.’ And we learn how to deal with other ‘ideas,’ that we can bring about desired situations” (p. 178).

Rasmussen posited that “Denmark[’s]...healthy tradition of putting critical questions to all authorities,” and “subjecting everything to critical debate,” through humor and satire “has led to progress in our society.” Rasmussen’s characterization of this Danish tradition as a “process” underpins the suggestion that ideas have force, the ability to act to bring about desired conditions. He phenomenized tradition in his statement that “it is this urge to question the established order” that has brought about the cultural and economic progress of Denmark. The means by which tradition can bring about the desired conditions is through the will of the Danish people to “stand united” in their resolve to safeguard fundamental values such as freedom of speech. By “stand[ing] united” tradition will be the force that “protect[s] a society that allows [for]...freedom to differ...and a strong sense of community based on fundamental values.”

Rasmussen details why the prophylactic quality of tradition is critical to Danish society: “For it is in this process that new horizons open, new discoveries are made, new ideas see the light of day. While old systems and outdated ideas and views fade and disappear.” Together, the agent and purpose functioned as correctives for how the debate about freedom of expression was being conducted. Burke often commented that he regretted “not turn[ing] the pentad into a hexad, with ‘attitude’ as

the sixth term” (Burke, 1969, p. 23). Burke articulated the significance of the term in relation to action.

Where would attitude fall within our pattern? Often it is the *preparation* for an act, which would make it a kind of symbolic act, or incipient act. But in its character as a state of *mind* that may or may not lead to an act, it is quite clearly to be classed under the head of *agent*. (p. 20, emphasis in original)

Burke argued that attitude can be “classed under the head of agent” in the pentadic grammar, because it is the product of an agent’s consciousness and is therefore a type of action.

In the case of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy the manner of the debate was called into questions by Rasmussen. He announced that “the tone of the debate has become too shrill and unpleasant.” Specifically, Rasmussen pointed to “action or indications that attempt to demonize groups of people on the basis of their religion or ethnic background.” It is quite possible that in their effort to protect society, Danish tradition keepers lost sight of the comportment with which debates are to be carried out. Rasmussen reminded listeners that they are to “speak freely and present [their] views to each other in a straightforward manner...in mutual respect and understanding. And in a civilized tone of voice.” On the other hand, the Prime Minister commended the Danish people because the “tone of the debate is in general both civilized and fair.” Particularly, compared to other parts of the world “the situation in Denmark is much more quiet and peaceful than in many other countries.” This third part of Rasmussen’s speech is harmonious with the overall theme of the speech which shows Denmark in control of the national environment of tranquility, openness, dialogue, and prosperity.

## Conclusion

### *Summary*

The analysis of how key individuals dramatized events in Denmark provides a troubling view of conditions for Muslims in Denmark. Though the findings are disturbing, a dramatic analysis of the rhetorical choices made uncovers the underlying motives of the rhetors at the genesis and nexus of the artistic expression conflict that became known as the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. Examination of the letter from the Muslim Ambassadors reveals a scene-agent ratio that provides a view of a scene contaminated by the open and severe discrimination against Muslims by powerful Danish figures. The potent nature of the scene did not initially solicit a reaction on the part of Danish Muslims to act in self-defense. On the contrary, the agent in this ratio is the Danish media and public officials acting consistently with the nature of the depraved scene. Nowhere in the letter from the Muslim Ambassadors did they see themselves as the agents of change on their own behalf. Instead they looked to the Danish government and institutions to clean up the scene by providing political and legal assistance.

The evidence detailing the activities of the Danish media and public servants negate any notion that Danish Muslims wrote to the Prime Minister in response to an erroneous perception of discrimination against Muslims and Islam. Instead, the evidence points to actual efforts to cast aspersions on Muslims as a people and to demean Islam as a religion. Particularly troubling is the concerted effort on the part of powerful Danes, from the head of the government to media functionaries, to victimize

Danish Muslims on radio broadcasts, via newspapers, and through legislation. Most disturbing is that the analysis demonstrates that Danish Muslims are essentially being victimized on two fronts. On the one hand, moderate Danish Muslims must contest fundamentalist elements within Islam who abuse Islam in their religious crusade. On the other hand, they must contend with Danish separatists who debase Islam to justify waging a cultural war against Muslims. The above analysis of ratios supports this conclusion.

The first part of Rasmussen's reply to the Muslim Ambassadors exemplifies the ratio of scene-agent. In other words, the Danish government could not control the scene. According to Rasmussen, it was up to Danish Muslims to act as agents on their own behalf and seek redress for wrongs through the Danish legal system. In part two of his reply Rasmussen self-identified as the agent of change. Essentially, he implied that the scene is not contaminated by deflecting the attention of the Ambassadors away from the Danish scene to an international scene where "mutual respect" and "mutual understanding" of disparate values is sought. Here, the ratio of agent-scene best characterizes the rhetorical choices made.

The rhetoric of Flemming Rose and the third part of the Prime Minister's New Year address share the ratio of agent-purpose. Rose's purpose for publishing the cartoons is critical but subordinate to his self-appointed position as defender of freedom of expression for Denmark and all of Europe. In Rasmussen's New Year address it falls upon the agent to ensure that Denmark remains prosperous and in

control of its own destiny. As agent, Danish tradition would act to protect Danish society and its fundamental values.

### *Implications*

The analysis of the official communications artifacts suggests several important implications for understanding the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. The artifacts reveal that the debate was ostensibly about freedom of expression but the actual contest was for Danish cultural superiority in Denmark and by extension European cultural superiority in the EU. Danes argued for cultural supremacy from a freedom of expression frame because they felt their identity was being threatened. Danish Muslims argued for the protection of their human rights under Danish law because they felt their religious value system was under threat. Threats stirred parties on both sides of the conflict to mobilize and respond in defense as is born out in the rhetoric of the official communication artifacts.

In particular, references made within the artifacts to individuals, entities, events, and national programs helps us to understand how this conflict could erupt in a small Scandinavian country that is well-known for its tradition of open dialogue, tolerance, and tranquility. Based on a synthesis of the above analyses and references to evidence emanating from the official communications it is clear that Danes felt their identity was being threatened. The threat pressed in on two fronts: the tenuous relationship with the European Union (EU) from without, and the spread of Islamic culture from within.

Early in the development of the EU, Danes were skeptical of joining the union because they feared the loss of sovereignty (Helm, 1997). Initially, Denmark said “no” to the 1992 Maastricht treaty in a referendum which produced a vote of 50.7 percent against” joining the EU (1997). “The narrow ‘no’ vote sent shockwaves across Europe” (“Skeptical Danes”, 1998). It was “only after Danish leaders had returned to the EU negotiating table, and won four ‘opt-outs’ did the population switch their vote, grudgingly, to ‘yes’” (Helm, 1997). The opt-outs from the monetary union, immigration and justice policy, European citizenship rules, and defense co-operation are still in place today (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1992). In 1997 there was concern that Denmark would also vote no on the Amsterdam treaty, which favored eastward expansion of the EU. The thinking was that Danes would be concerned about the risk of more immigration (Helm, 1997). But there was a proverbial line in the sand. A “no” vote would have reduced Danish influence in forthcoming discussions over the EU’s future, would have delayed EU enlargement, and would have “put a question mark over Denmark’s future EU membership” (“Denmark and the European Union”, 1998).

A brief look at the situation inside Denmark helps us to better understand the nation’s EU skepticism. Denmark, with a population of roughly five million, was the richest EU country per capita only after Luxembourg. In 1998, the economy was growing steadily at around 3% a year, unemployment fell below 7%, and inflation was around 2% (“Denmark and the European Union”, 1998). Both the budget and the balance of payments were in surplus (1998). Historically, Denmark was a great

power, controlling much of Scandinavia (1998). But since the 18<sup>th</sup> Century it had lost every war it fought, and had shrunk to match (1998). Presently, fierce nationalism lingers. For example, Danes are immensely proud of having Europe's oldest royal family and they are deeply reluctant to surrender sovereignty. On the nationalist right, Pia Kjaersgaard of the Danish People's Party had a raw message in 1998. "The EU wants to close Denmark down as a nation...while inveighing against illegal immigration and crime—two sides, in her view, of the same coin" ("Those Awkward Danes", 2000, September). The Danish People's Party is "profoundly anti-immigrant," stating that "we will not accept a transformation to a multi-ethnic society...Denmark belongs to the Danes" (cited in Blau & Christensen, 2006).

Broadly, the "no" camp can be said to have been in three camps: the nationalists who feared a further loss of sovereignty; a "pricklier brand of democrat," who believed that the EU would ruin the participatory democracy of Denmark; and those who thought that Denmark's exceptionally generous welfare state would come under attack from an EU that would gain ever-greater control over social security and taxation ("Those Awkward Danes", 2000, September). In current national debates on cultural policy, globalization implies a revival of nationalism as a defense against a possible loss of identity (Duelund, 2008, August, p. 3). Strengthening national cohesion is considered a vitally important response to migration and multicultural challenges (2008, August). Pressure from an expansion focused EU threatened Danish efforts to remain a cohesive society.

A final example of Denmark's tortuous relationship with the EU relates to its monetary opt-out. Though it did not adopt the Euro, the Danish economy is almost entirely tied to the EU economy. And though the krone had been one of Europe's steadiest currencies, the central bank had to on occasion raise short-term interest rates to defend it ("Denmark and the European Union", 1998). Another way that Denmark benefited from its relationship with the EU was that Danish "farmers collect[ed] fat subsidies from Brussels" (1998). Denmark's willingness to reap the benefits of EU membership while opting-out of important membership responsibilities led to their being labeled "freeloaders" by some ("Resentment Simmers", 1988). The threat to Danish identity caused Denmark to fight EU pressures to conform to expansionism in response to globalization.

Threats to Danish identity from within Denmark were addressed through a coalition of powerful public officials and media entities to "push back" the spread of Islamic culture in Denmark. Danes worked to slow down or halt immigration from Muslim countries and make life unpleasant for Danish Muslims in hopes that they would choose to repatriate. This perspective provides a more meaningful understanding of why the nature and extent of the discriminatory acts on the part of very powerful individuals and entities in Denmark returned only minor penalties for contravening blasphemy and race statutes. We can also more fully understand why the Prime Minister took a passive stance toward the Muslim Ambassadors who wanted to meet with him. His reference to the Partnership for Progress and Reform as a solution to the problems faced by Danish Muslims is also more clearly understood

under this lens. Also, we are in a better intellectual position to appreciate why Flemming Rose appointed himself czar of freedom of expression for all of Europe. The Danish government's protection of Rose's decision to publish the offensive cartoons was an avenue for demonstrating Denmark's solidarity with the broader Union at the expense of Muslim immigrants living within its borders.

Flemming Rose has been highly criticized by many for publication of the infamous cartoons. Analysis of the official communications provides understanding as to why Rose felt that *he* had "to push back self-imposed limits on expression that seemed to be closing tighter" (Rose, 2006). That Rose could not endure more than "a two-week period of a half-dozen cases of self-censorship" is an indication that something more than irritation over that brief period of a few cases of self-censorship was at work (2006). And finally, in regard to the Prime Minister's New Year speech, we can more fully understand the importance of the role of Danish tradition to safeguard the long-held values of Danish society to ensure "a Danish Denmark" ("Danish Radio Station Loses License", 2005).

It was noted in chapter one that image making by opponents of cultural change can function to "push-back" change from the status quo. Dubin (1992) indicated that several distinct conditions heighten the probability of art controversies: the nature of the subject, the extent to which the work violates understood and accepted beliefs, and fundamental social and demographic shifts along with generally unsettled social conditions. As noted earlier, the eruption of an art controversies requires the "combination of two critical elements: there must be a sense that values

have been threatened, and power must be mobilized in response to do something about it” (1992, p. 6). The publication of the Muhammad cartoons met all of the sufficient and necessary conditions required for the event to erupt into an art controversy, on a global scale.

Flemming Rose’s choice of using the method “show, don’t tell” proved to be the perfect canvas for blending the sacred and the profane (Rose, 2006). His method for testing the “chilling-effect” of self-imposed censorship was effective on four levels. First, his methodology left little room for the cartoonists to draw Muhammad in any way other than the images that circulated about Muslims and Islam in Western media. Negative coverage of Muslims and Islam was so prevalent that Muslim representatives met with the Prime Minister to request more positive images and narratives about Islam in the media (2006). Second, publication of the infamous cartoons functioned as a bandage on the open sore-like relationship that Denmark has with the EU. It is apparent that Denmark successfully framed the censorship problem as a European problem. Member states responded by republishing the cartoons in a show of solidarity. Third, the artistic expressions were sure to strike a sour chord in the Danish Muslim community and Muslim world because the profane elements used to depict Muhammad would naturally be highly offensive. Fourth, because the rhetorical messages of the cartoons were perceptual rather than textual the methodology of “show, don’t tell” (2006) allowed for a high level of deniability regarding any intention to offend Muslims.

But Danes failed to appreciate the degree to which Muslims were mobilized in order to respond to the threat to their value system. Analysis of the official communication artifacts helps us to appreciate that the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy is an example of how conflict can be dramatized in the broader society when artists disregard prohibitions against visualizing the sacred, and melding the sacred and the profane. In chapter four the Flemming Rose interviews are analyzed.

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*The historian, essentially, wants more documents than he can really use; the dramatist only wants more liberties than he can really take.*

-- Henry James, *The Aspern Papers*, 1888.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Analysis of Interviews of Flemming Rose

#### Introduction

Many scholars in a number of disciplines have recognized that the attribution of motive is present in any interpretation of, or statement of experience, including broadcast news (p. 228; Entman, 1993; Goffman, 1974; Pan & Kosicki, 1993; Reese, 2001; van Dijk, 1993). One way to analyze discursive forms and the attendant attitudes (incipient actions) they foster toward a situation is by examining what Burke has called “terministic screens” (1968, pp. 44-45), and media critics—drawing on a sociological perspective—have called “frame[s]” (Ott & Aoki, 2002). Frame analysis, then, refers to examining the organization of experience (Goffman, 1974, p. 11). In his examination of social reality, William James gave the matter of reality a subversive phenomenological twist. He asked, “under what circumstances do we think things are real?” (cited in Goffman, 1974, p. 2). In his answer, James stressed selective attention, intimate involvement, and non-contradiction of what is already known (p. 2). His answer implied that our sense of realness is contrasted with our feeling that some things lack this quality (p. 2).

Through the interplay between rhetorical choices, media practices, culture, and audiences, frames function to create “reality.” A frame can be thought of as a tool

or “schemata” of interpretation that works through texts to structure potential meaning (Reese, 2001, p. 16). “Symbolic devices making up...texts constitute the phenomena of the underlying principle” (2001, p. 14). Frames are the “central organizing ideas” that generate “reality” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, p. 3). Thus, to discover the interpretive principles of frames that rhetorically structure “reality” is the work of the rhetorical critic.

Clues to the organizing principle used in structuring the frame can be found in the text, within individuals, and within social and cultural practices (Reese, 2001, p. 14). Because a frame is not the same as its symbolic manifestation, the critic must look beyond the manifest content to the generating principle produced in the latent message of the narrative (2001). That is, investigators must infer the organizing principle from the latent content, which is at work in other narratives as well. Since frames are part of a much larger structure or societal ideology, to ignore principles that give rise to frames is to be misled by the face value of the text (2001). Frame analysis goes beyond the identification of what information is included and excluded to a full investigation of the power of a communicating text. It is acknowledged that media content, particularly news text, generates knowledge for audiences and that this manifestation of “reality” is explicable through motivation (Burke, 1969, p. xv).

Framing was chosen as a critical tool in order to focus on how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was interpreted in the interviews of Flemming Rose. The interpretative approach of frame analysis allows for investigation of ambiguity, historical contingency, the implicit, and emphasis on how meaning is signified

(Reese, 2001, p. 8). Frames do not stop with the organization of one narrative, but invite us to marshal a cultural understanding and keep on doing so beyond the immediate text as a broader way of accounting for “reality” (2001, p. 9). The questions asked of the rhetorical artifacts analyzed in this chapter are: (1) what frames dominate coverage of the controversy, and (2) did interview participants dramatize events in the same way that the conflict was dramatized in the official communications? A background on each artifact is followed by an analysis. Quotations that are not associated with a citation reference the artifact being analyzed. The conclusion provides a summary and addresses implications associated with the analyses.

*“The Situation Room”*

*Background.* Wolf Blitzer interviewed Flemming Rose, cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten*, on February 7, 2006 on the program “*The Situation Room*” (Blitzer, 2006). On the same day, Coretta Scott King was laid to rest beside her husband in Atlanta, Georgia. As with numerous networks, the burial ceremony was covered on the Cable News Network (CNN). Memorable portions of the event were featured throughout the airing of the cartoon controversy segment on the “*The Situation Room*.” A thorough analysis of the Rose interview can be accomplished without violating the sacredness of the funerary proceedings. Out of respect for the deceased, her family, and her contribution to the United States of America and the world we will journey accordingly.

“*The Situation Room*” is anchored by Wolf Blitzer who began his career in 1972 with the Reuters News Agency in Tel Aviv. Shortly thereafter, he became a Washington, D.C., correspondent for The Jerusalem Post. After more than 15 years of reporting from the nation's capital, Blitzer joined CNN in 1990 as the network's military-affairs correspondent at the Pentagon. Over the decades, Blitzer has reported on a wide range of major breaking stories around the world that have shaped the international political landscape. Blitzer has interviewed, among others, American presidents and many foreign heads of state. He holds a Master of Arts degree in international relations from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C. “*The Situation Room*,” is a fast-paced three-hour weekday political news program which assembles top correspondents, analysts, contributors and guests to cover the day's events.

The length of “*The Situation Room*” program permits coverage of numerous news stories. Therefore, a brief overview of this episode of the program will be helpful. During the Blitzer-Rose segment of the “*The Situation Room*” other stories were presented, as noted above. The other instance included coverage on “possible terrorist activity” involving the “bulk purchase of prepaid cell phones.” Following the Blitzer-Rose segment, five news stories were covered, which ranged from the Iraq war to young starlets who posed nude in photos by Annie Leibovitz. During the Blitzer-Rose segment, a total of nine CNN journalists, including the host, contributed to developing the cartoon controversy narrative. There were 49 exchanges during this segment which occurred between journalists, sources, and the interview guest,

Flemming Rose. The Blitzer-Rose interview began with the 26<sup>th</sup> exchange and ended within ten exchanges. The analysis of *“The Situation Room”* was conducted using a transcript of the program. Video of the show was not available. In the analyses that follow and the analyses in chapter five, the term “run-up” refers to the portion of the program or article that precedes the body of the narrative. “Run-up” is a journalistic term that has been utilized here because it conveys that more than a preview is being provided. The “run-up” to the story also functions as a framing device to limit the potential interpretation of the narrative that follows.

*Analysis.* All stories have form. The narrative form constructed in this episode of the *“The Situation Room”* possessed ample power to lead the audience to view the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy through a totalitarian ideology frame. This frame subsumes the idea that fundamentalist entities—such as Islamic governments, organized groups such as al-Qaeda, to local radicals—were responsible for violent protests around the globe. And “given the formal characteristics of narrative, how a story begins is crucial to how a story develops” (Ott & Aoki, 2002, p. 486). The cartoon conflict narrative began in the run-up to the story. Blitzer juxtaposed Tehran and Denmark by providing the date and times in the two locations. The two places have diametrically different public images, Tehran, Iran, a hotbed of anti-American activity and sentiment for decades, and Denmark, a bastion of the tranquility and the “good life.”

That the date and time in the two places is a framing device is clear since the interview of Rose was not live, but videotaped. The two hour time difference between

“Tehran” and “Denmark,” “3:30 a.m.” and “1:30 a.m.,” respectively, was not significant and would have been less striking if they had been announced in chronological order. Blitzer established the bifurcated “scene” by contrasting the two locations. He went on to inform the audience that Tehran is “just one of the cities from Asia to Africa rocked by violence” over the cartoon conflict. The provision of no further information other than the time in Denmark, by contrast, implied that it is not a place characterized by violence and is still operating in harmony with the image of it held in the public imagination. Burke (1969) explained that “the scene contains the act” and that “using ‘agents’ in the sense of actors,...one could say that ‘the scene contains the agents’” (p. 3). According to “a principle of drama...the nature of acts and agents should be consistent with the nature of the scene” (p. 3). The good vs. evil frame developed by juxtaposing Denmark and Iran was dominant throughout the narrative and functioned as a scenic element through which the “thing[s] contained” could be viewed.

There is “fresh and violent fury today at those controversial caricatures of Prophet Muhammad,” Blitzer told his audience. That “thousands took part in demonstrations, some of which got out of control” is an accurate assessment of there having been violent protests. But there were in fact many peaceful demonstrations. However, associating the Muhammad Cartoon Conflict with Tehran and Beirut, capital cities characterized by rabid violence and held to be engaged in terrorist activity, narrowed interpretation of the conflict to mob action influenced by totalitarian ideology. The rhetorical choices of the host created a dominant frame of

mob action, thereby naming the nature of the acts committed by cartoon protestors and placing their activities in the malignant part of the scene.

Two short elliptical phrases established the sub-frame of irrationality to the dominant mob action frame. Through Blitzer's careful word choice, the sub-frame minimized the affect the cartoons *should* have had on the international Muslim community. The latent meaning behind particular words was forceful. For example, referencing the depictions as "*those* controversial caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad" (emphasis added) functioned to exclaim disregard for the seriousness of the injury to Muslim religious sensibilities. Likewise, Blitzer's describing the violence that erupted in some locations as "*all* over a controversial series of cartoons" (emphasis added) rhetorically framed the reaction to them as irrational. The use of these words as framing devices was exhibited by other media outlets as well, for example the *New York Times* ("Those Danish Cartoons", 2006), and Rose's (2006) own article that was published in the *Washington Post*. Unjustified indignation and irrationality are characteristic of the mindset one would expect from throngs engaged in mob action. Blitzer's rhetorical choices devised a sub-frame that further solidified the protestors place in the lethal scene.

In the run-up to the story, Blitzer also used the premise of the show to develop a dominant frame of authority. Specifically, the phrase situation room is a metaphor for how international conflicts and potential issues are managed by the U.S. Through 24-hour high-tech monitoring of security concerns, and international political and military activities the U.S. stays abreast of potential issues. "*The Situation Room*" is

modeled on the White House operation that is housed in the basement of the West Wing and bears the same name. Like the White House operation, “*The Situation Room*” has “new pictures and information...arriving all the time.” And “CNN reporters across the United States and around the world [are] bringing today’s top stories.” A total of nine CNN journalists contributed to “*The Situation Room*” cartoon conflict narrative. The frame of authority functioned to imply that there is a similarity between the monitoring and assessment of the cartoon conflict and the official government monitoring and assessment of international activities. The run-up to the story functioned as the beginning of the narrative, setting the stage for narrative development throughout the program.

Narratives are temporally structured—creating appetites as they unfold (Ott & Aoki, 2002, p. 486). As C. Allen Carter (1996) posited,

When the narrative strategy is working as intended, the culmination of each episode sets the stage for the next...The story relieves its audience of the burden of having to “choose between” different phases of its unfolding and, simply by taking them through one phase, prepares them for the next. Each successive step of the plot leads into the next, whether or not it leads its audience astray. (p. 40)

In “*The Situation Room*” narrative frames were linked to each other to move the story forward. A compilation of dominant and sub-frames delivered through the participation of eighteen distinct voices culminated in a meta-frame of totalitarian ideology. The overarching totalitarian ideology theme driving the narrative emerged from the dominant frames identified above as well as other dominant frames—American self-censorship, government inspired revolt, poverty begets violence, Muslim extremists/Al Qaeda, economic crisis—used to construct the narrative.

The American self-censorship frame was as salient as the mob action frame. It functioned to bring the U.S. into the debate. This time it was not Fleming Rose anointing himself the standard bearer of freedom of expression for the West, but American journalists asking why aren't we publishing the cartoons like the rest of the western world. CNN's Jack Cafferty posited that as the protests over the cartoons continue to spread, "so does the reluctance here in the United States to show them." His rhetorical choice inextricably tied the media's decision not to publish to the violent protests thereby bringing the problem of self-censorship to American shores. Cafferty invited viewers to e-mail their thoughts, which he would later read on the air.

Four of the five e-mails were in favor of publishing the cartoons in the U.S. "Muslims need to learn how to react to things in a civilized manner," wrote one viewer. Another viewer stated that "if your viewers were able to see what all the fuss is supposedly about, they would have a far greater understanding of how a large population, the Muslims, is being manipulated." A third viewer stated that he had "reached the end of [his] rope." He argued that "there have been countless beheadings videotaped and circulated on the Internet without virtually any condemnation from the Muslim community." His response juxtaposed the loss of life with lack of respect for religious sensibilities and highlighted Muslim negligence in responding to violations against the sanctity of life. E-mail responders bolstered the irrational/unjustified Muslim response frame. And the correspondence indicates that viewers were, in large part, favorable to publication of the cartoons. It was through the American self-censorship frame that the debate was broadened from its original

Denmark-EU borders to include the entire West. It was through the self-censorship frame that the American media was placed on the side of “good” and identified as not part of the malignant scene.

The government inspired revolt frame was also dominant. CNN’s Brent Sadler told of a “protest march in Peshawar” denouncing the cartoons “where several government officials also took part, including the provincial chief minister.” Sadler immediately followed this news with word from Danish Prime Minister Rasmussen that “the [cartoon conflict] situation [is] a growing global crisis.” Juxtaposition of governmental participation in Peshawar and the assessment of the conflict by the Prime Minister highlighted the official support given to the protests in Pakistan. Sadler also reported that “Iran’s best selling newspaper announce[d] retaliation” by means of “a contest for the best cartoon about the Holocaust.” His next statement, that “the U.S. State Department was quick to condemn it,” framed the activity at the state level rather than as an Iranian independent media decision for which its government could do nothing. CNN’s Ali Velshi also pointed a finger at Iran for its participation in the economic protest by noting that “other than Iran, whose president has called for a boycott, other Middle Eastern governments haven’t gotten involved.” The government inspired revolt frame focused attention away from Denmark as responsible for the global protests and perpetuated the notion that adherents to Islam were manipulated by Muslim governments to protests against the cartoons and all things western.

In the poverty begets violence frame, which also was dominant in the narrative, CNN's Tom Foreman noted that the violent protests were "happening in some of the poorest parts of our planet." He pointed out that even in oil-rich countries "millions of Muslims are barely connected to the global economy. They live on little money with few political rights and that, [media] *analyst[s] say*, fuels their reaction to insults from the outside" (emphasis added). This frame points a lens on the deplorable conditions that some poor people endure. In this frame, according to observers, the poor are reacting to political and social conditions and not the insult felt as a result of the cartoon publication *per se*. Though exact sources were not indicated, Foreman's citing "analysts" as the source of evidence that poverty begets violence suggested that his claim was credible.

Notably, only two Muslim voices are heard throughout this episode of "*The Situation Room*" and both of them appear, briefly, in the exchange with Foreman. Imam Ajmal Masroor of the Islamic Society of Britain gave credence to Foreman's statement by saying that poor Muslims "are not allowed to freely express their views" so there are "various political as well as social issues that all come to a head with this cartoon saga." Ahmed Younis of the Muslim Public Affairs Council tried to put the situation into perspective by stating that "the people we see on TV are less than one percent of the Muslim masses." But his assessment was quickly squashed by Foreman's rebuttal that "still that percentage, however small is making a big noise now, just as Osama bin Laden had openly hoped it would." The poverty begets

violence frame puts the onus of the violent protests on Muslim countries and squarely places them in the malignant scene.

Framing devices are used to help narrators move the story along in successive steps. For example, the mention of Osama bin Laden in frames such as the poverty begets poverty frame moved the story along to the Muslim extremist/Al Qaeda frame. Tom Foreman told the audience that Al Qaeda had been “fanning resentment among poor Muslims into religious, cultural and militant zeal.” Osama and “his lieutenants...have recruited among the poor and encouraged religious schools in poor areas to teach a [in]tolerant brand of Islam.” The Muslim extremist/Al Qaeda frame was forwarded by others such as CNN’s Brent Sadler who stated that “it’s the Islamic extremists whipping up the worst of the violence to damage and challenge the West for the Arab masses.” This frame was supported by the sub-frame clash of civilizations. For example, Foreman stated that “Osama bin Laden has said for years that he wants a clash of civilizations between the entire Muslim world and the entire western world.” The Muslim extremist/Al Qaeda frame functioned rhetorically to provide an additional locus of responsibility for the violent protests and bolstered the notion that Muslim adherents were pawns in a much larger terrorism program. Audience members who found it difficult to believe that the governments of the numerous Muslim countries were responsible for the violence were provided with an alternate interpretation through the Muslim extremists/Al Qaeda frame.

Economic crisis was a dominant frame in “*The Situation Room*” coverage of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. CNN’s Ali Velshi echoed Foreman’s earlier

statement that the boycott of Danish products was spreading through a lot of countries. Velshi pointed out that “a grassroots boycott of all things Danish is now under way in more than a dozen Gulf states.” Stating that it was unfortunate for Danish companies that “it was a Danish newspaper that first published the offending cartoons” rhetorically relieved the commercial sector of Danish society of any responsibility for the impact to their bottom lines. It was noted that Iran’s “president...called for a boycott,” again, pointing to Muslim government responsibility for the cartoon conflict fallout. Velshi created American identification with the struggling European Union companies by stating that “most recently, general anti-American sentiment has resulted in sales drops for companies like Coke.” That the American boycotts did not have “much staying power” is an indication that the mention of the phenomenon functioned as a framing device to situate the U.S. alongside EU countries in the clash of civilizations against the Middle East.

In addition to the dominant frames through which the cartoon conflict was interpreted “other stories making news” were pivotal in shaping the way the cartoon controversy could be viewed. For example, yet another CNN journalist, Betty Nguyen, delivered coverage on homeland security “linking bulk purchases of prepaid cell phones to possible terrorist activities.” This story was injected into “*The Situation Room*” episode immediately following the brief Blitzer-Rose interview. Finally, immediately after the 49<sup>th</sup> and final exchange of the Rose segment, CNN’s Betty Nguyen covered a story on Iraq detailing that at least seven people were killed; four were Marines who “died in roadside bombings.” These stories, though not part

of the Rose interview segment, helped to rhetorically frame the cartoon controversy through a totalitarian ideology frame. Their placement during the show indicates that they were used as framing devices. There were other, benign, stories that were covered during the episode. Placing either of those stories where the homeland security and Iraq stories appeared would not have changed the timing of the episode or the ability to tell these stories. But the benign stories would not have supported framing the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy as a totalitarian ideology. The conflict was dramatized differently in the next interview of Flemming Rose.

*Interview by Alia Malek*

*Background.* Alia Malek (2007) interviewed Flemming Rose, cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten*, by telephone in January 2007 for an article that was published in the *Columbia Journalism Review* in March of that year. The one-on-one interview provided an opportunity for Rose to reflect on his decision to commission and publish the internationally-infamous cartoons. Alia Malek is a writer and assistant editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*. She is a former trial attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice, Human Rights Division. The *Columbia Journalism Review's* Mission is to encourage and stimulate excellence in journalism in the service of a free society. Founded in 1961, the organization examines day-to-day press performance as well as the forces that affect that performance.

*Analysis.* In the introduction to the published interview, Malek noted that in the fifteen months since the publication of the Muhammad cartoons “the controversy over where to draw the line between free speech and criticism of Islam persists.”

Malek's statement that Rose "claimed he solicited the cartoons to resist the self-censorship crippling the West" demonstrates that by the time this interview of Rose was published the debate had clearly moved beyond the EU to be identified as a threat to self-censorship in the West. A close textual reading of the interview indicates that Malek's introduction served as preparation for development of a narrative with an overarching immigration frame. As the narrative progressed, the interview questions together with Rose's responses successively framed Rose's reflections on the cartoon controversy as an immigration issue by: first establishing the responsibility of journalists to the readership; determining whether Rose's justification for publishing the cartoons, stamping out self-censorship, was met; and probing *Jyllands-Posten's* relationship with the Danish Muslim community as well as potential bias against the Muslim minority. Journalistic responsibility, dichotomous minority group, immigration, and self-censorship are the dominant frames that help to tell the story of how Rose reflected on the cartoon publication phenomenon.

In the interview with Malek, Rose moved away from his usual carefully-scripted responses to interview questions. This may have been a function of the passage of time. Or, it may reflect a more relaxed approach due to broader recognition of the issue of self-censorship outside of the EU, much like the American media identified with Denmark's position on self-censorship in "*The Situation Room*" interview of Rose. Whatever the reason, Rose's responses seem to be "of the moment" rather than rehearsed. For example, when asked whether the cartoon conflict had changed his view of journalism Rose responded that he had become "far

more understanding [of] those complaining about the media,” that coverage can be “inaccurate and biased.” Having a sense of this problem is one thing but “it’s another to be the object of this kind of journalism yourself,” stated Rose. Rose’s response to his personal experience with the media was to be “more conscious about what kind of authority you give to...so-called experts...in this case, especially experts on Islam or religion.” According to Rose, readers should be apprised of an expert’s institutional affiliation or tradition which may inform his or her opinion. This is certainly a good practice because it makes for a better informed citizenry and a more productive society. But what is troubling about his response is that Rose focused on how to manage the participation of others in an effort to provide accurate and unbiased information rather than on how he can extract the “straw” of bias from his own journalistic function and practice. The so-called religious experts framing device linked the journalistic responsibility frame to the dichotomous minority group frame and moved the narrative forward.

By linking the two frames, Rose juxtaposed “radical imams” with the moderate majority of Muslims and created a dichotomous minority group frame as part of his reflections. He indicated that *Jyllands-Posten* would no longer seek information about the Danish Muslim community from “radical imams” but would turn to the moderate majority to provide a different voice. Rose’s sweeping label of “radical imams” raises questions about his journalistic accuracy and bias. One question being, are all imams radical? If they are not, did Rose’s generalization mislead readers on a very important level and does the generalization expose bias on

the part of Rose? Rose credited the cartoon conflict for exposing a “more multifaceted face of the Muslim population” and indicated that democratic Muslims had “become a very important voice in public debate.” Malek’s skillful questioning uncovered that although the existence of the moderate majority came to the attention of Danish society, Muslims had no greater participation in news gathering or voice on social issues than prior to the cartoon publication.

Rose claimed to not know if there were any Muslims on staff at his paper and indicated that “no story comes to my mind” that would make it beneficial to have Muslim reporters available to gather news. When asked whether there had “been an ongoing dialogue between the Danish Muslim communities” and *Jyllands-Posten* Rose stated that he did not “believe in journalism as a community builder” and that the paper “should not act as some kind of mediator.” Whether it is apparent to Flemming Rose or not, the publication of the Muhammad cartoons fostered division in Denmark. It incited outrage and led to protests, the violence of which did not resolve the issue. The natural question raised is that if the paper could be used, intentionally or inadvertently, to produce the results that did could it also be a vehicle for good? *Could* it be a vehicle for community building? If not, could it be a medium that does not foment division? And if mediation is not the “duty” of *Jyllands-Posten* how can mediating against self-censorship on behalf of the media across Denmark and all of the European Union justify the publication of the Muhammad cartoons?

There is some overlap between the dichotomous minority group frame and the immigration frame, which helped to move the story along and keep the focus of the

overarching frame on immigration. For example, in a 2006 *Jyllands-Posten* opinion poll moderate Muslims were asked if “free speech [should always] have priority compared to considerations for people’s religious feelings, traditions, and rules.” The fifty-one percent against the priority of free speech was an indication, according to Rose, “that there are issues on which we differ, and we have to deal with them.” But Rose was curiously non-responsive in his reply to Malek’s question on whether the issue revolved around “racial incitement” rather than “free speech.” Rose stated that “you are free to choose your religion whereas you can’t choose the color of your skin.” And in an attempt to maintain that there is a clear line between racial and religious background, Rose argued that “the cartoon of Muhammad with a bomb in his turban has been taken out of context.” Rose challenged the intellectual capacity of those who read the cartoon as stereotyping all Muslims. In Rose’s evaluation, the cartoon could only be read as *some* Muslims have hijacked Islam to commit terrorist acts. And to read the cartoon otherwise, he contended, is “a kind of illiteracy.” Rose’s argument exhibits a double standard. His invitation to the cartoonists to draw Muhammad as they saw him was not extended to readers, to read him as they see him.

Flemming Rose argued that the publication of the cartoons benefited Muslims because before the phenomenon “fewer Danes with immigrant backgrounds [made] public appearances.” But “why only talk about Muslims,” Rose asked. “There are many minorities out there that would not get as fair a hearing as the Muslims,” he added. Rose’s comments provided a much deeper understanding of the immigration

issue in Denmark. The issue extended beyond Muslims as the “biggest minority” and “the most vocal” group to include immigrants of all backgrounds. But because Muslims are the biggest and most vocal minority, they served as a perfect example of how aliens are dealt with, particularly if they try to avail themselves of too many of society’s resources.

There was likewise some overlap between the immigration frame and self-censorship frame. As the narrative wound to a close, Malek asked Rose if it’s fair to satirize immigrants if they don’t have equal access to the media. Rose expressed that “it is an act of love and inclusion...to know [that] you can laugh and make fun of one another.” But lack of access to the media silences the voice of immigrants, rendering them unable to make fun of Danes in return. The lack of access could be viewed as an institutionally imposed censorship on Danish immigrants. But in the heated debates over freedom of speech, no one argued for the right to free speech for Danish minorities. In other words, if freedom of expression is a right that can not be compromised under any circumstance shouldn’t it be championed for all citizens? In terms of American self-censorship regarding publication of the Muhammad cartoons, Rose argued that the cartoons were newsworthy by January 30, 2006 and should have been published. The immigration and self-censorship frames as well as the journalistic responsibility and dichotomous minority group frames equipped readers with the capacity to interpret the cartoon controversy as an immigration issue for Denmark.

## Conclusion

Burke (1973) argued that forms function as equipment for living, by which he means that discursive forms such as comedy, tragedy, satire, epic, and news stories furnish individuals and collectives with the symbolic resources and strategies for addressing and resolving the given historical and social problems they face. When there is a crisis such as the freedom of speech vs. religious sensibilities conflict, then, discourse—and especially the public discourse of the news media—aids people in “coming to terms” with the event. Frame analysis permitted investigation into interviews of Flemming Rose to explore how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was defined, and how that definition potentially shaped public opinion.

“*The Situation Room*” interview segment provided a plethora of information, the amount of which would be too cumbersome for an audience to sift through to arrive at its own assessment of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. Framing helped to focus attention on how the information should be interpreted. The dominant frames of good vs. evil, journalistic authority, American self-censorship, government inspired revolt, poverty begets violence, Muslim extremists/Al Qaeda, and economic crisis created a cafeteria of frames from which to choose. The variety of frames presented during the segment allowed audience members to choose a frame, or interpretation, which suited their existing belief and value systems. However, there were too many to permit a real time examination of what was being viewed to evaluate this presentation of “reality” for coherence and contradictions. Yet, the narrative “rang true” because it shared salient frames with other news stories and

issues of the day—the Iraq war, terrorism, radical Islam—upon which the audience could draw to evaluate the veracity of the story.

Throughout “*The Situation Room*” episode there were 49 exchanges between the moderator, journalists, guest, and sources. The Rose interview began with exchange 26 and ended within ten exchanges. The brevity of this interview indicates that though the episode was billed as Blitzer interviewing Flemming Rose, the story was actually about framing the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy as a totalitarian ideology for American audiences.

Responsibility and respect are sub-frames that functioned to distance Denmark from Muslims. As the “Other,” Muslims were rhetorically relegated to a malignant scene characterized by irrational and violent activity. Associating the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy with Peshawar, Beirut, Tehran, and Syria limited the potential interpretation of Muslim protests to one of extremism. That the Middle Eastern locations were used as framing devices is clear from the fact that there were numerous peaceful protests against the cartoons that were not covered, for example “in Copenhagen on February 5<sup>th</sup>, almost 3,000 Muslims and non-Muslims peacefully protested...and called for understanding” (Saloom, 2006). There were peaceful protests in both Britain and Kashmir (Asthana, 2006; Langford, 2006). Thousands of Muslims protested peacefully in Tanzania (Guardian Reporters, 2006). And the large staff of CNN journalists would not have had to travel to far-away places to report on such events. For example, at the University of California at Irvine the cartoons were put on display at a campus forum on Islamic extremism (del Barco, 2006). The event

provoked strong protest from Muslim students who denounced the cartoons as racist but there was no violence. Other non-violent demonstrations occurred on the east coast of the United States.

Turning to the Malek-Rose interview, the caption accompanying the picture of Flemming Rose in the *Columbia Journalism Review* article by Alia Malek reads, “Unbowed, Rose claims he brought reality to the immigration debate.” Rose’s reflections during this interview appeared to be actual reflections and not a carefully-crafted script. Rose employed his well-worn script on many occasions. For example, in Rose’s (2006) article *Why I Published Those Cartoons* we see an extended version of interview responses that Rose provided on several occasions such as during his taped interview on “*The Situation Room*” (Blitzer, 2006). A close textual reading of the article and the program transcript reveals that Rose’s discussion of the conflict was nearly verbatim in both places. The Malek-Rose interview exhibited the dominant frames of journalistic responsibility, dichotomous minority group, immigration, and self-censorship which buttressed a meta-frame of immigration around the cartoon conflict.

The dominant frames in the Malek interview of Rose created a dramatization of the cartoon conflict that is similar to how the phenomenon was dramatized by interlocutors at the genesis and nexus of the conflict. But to appreciate how the interlocutors dramatized the cartoon conflict required a great deal of understanding regarding socio-political conditions in Denmark before and at the time the cartoons were published. Conditions that were not apparent from the face value of the official

communication texts analyzed in the present study. Conversely, Rose's reflections during the interview dramatized the conflict less like a freedom of speech issue and more like the immigration issue that it was. Though Rose's reflections brought readers closer to the actual foundation of the cartoon conflict, his non-responsive answers to some of Malek's questions should have raised red flags in terms of "the ring of truth" in his narrative. His non-responsive answers interrupted the coherence of his story and highlighted that these spots may be places where contradictions in his dramatization reside. Dramatization of the cartoon conflict in "*The Situation Room*" episode was a drastic shift away from the way it was dramatized by interlocutors at the start of the conflict. "*The Situation Room*" dramatization exhibited a war-like interpretation of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy that befitted the conflict-monitoring premise of the show and the military-affairs correspondent background of the host. The interpretative approach of frame analysis permitted investigation of ambiguities, historical contingencies, as well as the implicit and explicit emphasis on how meaning was signified in the interviews of Flemming Rose. In chapter five I analyze the televised broadcasts covering the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy.

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*It is worth considering whether the real civil disobedience must not begin with our language.*

--Richard M. Weaver, *Language is Sermonic: Richard M. Weaver on the Nature of Rhetoric*, 1970.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Analysis of Televised Broadcasts

#### Introduction

Strategic framing, vis-à-vis framing used to analyze the interviews in the previous chapter, carries with it the idea of competing frames in public deliberation and was chosen as a useful tool for analyzing the televised broadcasts concerning the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. This tool is appropriate for these artifacts because to participate in public deliberation inevitably involves the discursive practices of framing an issue (Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 37). In their discussion about the link between framing and frame contestation, Pan and Kosicki (2001) posited that

A frame is an idea through which political debate unfolds, and political alignment and collective actions take place...In public deliberations, the rise and fall in the prevalence of a frame, and consequently, a particular policy option, clearly involve debates among people who sponsor or align with different frames...Which frame to sponsor, how to sponsor it, and how to expand its appeal are strategic issues to participants...In “public deliberation” a frame also functions as a key idea to animate and sustain individuals participation in collective actions. (p. 39)

Strategic frame analysis helps the rhetorical critic discover the interpretive principles that structure “reality” as well to investigate how competing frames are contested.

Transcripts and video recordings of the broadcasts permit analysis of how language, non-verbal communication, and images function to produce meaning.

Images have been recognized as a means through which frames become salient (Bantimaroudis & Ban, 2001) though the ability of images to independently influence news frames has been hotly debated (Anden-Papadopoulos, 2008; Bal, 2003; Elkins, 2003; Jay, 2002; Mitchell, 2002). However, this analysis investigates how images exert power to shape news without forwarding an argument on the degree to which images influence meaning vis-à-vis rhetorical choices. Specifically, this investigation seeks to discover how images advance the ‘preferred meanings’ of frame sponsors. That said, I would be remiss not to note that the rhetorical power of the Muhammad cartoons, absent any linguistic message, was sought after by Flemming Rose as a preferred method for articulating a specific message. Rose argued that the message as read by critics was not the intended message. Nevertheless, the message of the cartoons sparked a global crisis that led to the loss of life, property, goodwill, and corporate profits. What can be said with certainty is that images have rhetorical power that should be wielded with care. Investigating the use of images displayed during the televised broadcasts will shed light on how participants strategically framed the cartoon controversy. Additional critical tools used to explore the televised broadcasts include Kenneth Burke’s (1973) notion of the scapegoat, and Walter Fisher’s (1985) concepts of “god” and “devil” terms.

The questions asked of the rhetorical artifacts analyzed in this chapter are: (1) what did Muslim voices contribute to the freedom of expression vs. religious sensibilities dialogue in televised coverage, and (2) how was the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy used to re-position Islam to the West by non-Muslims and by Muslims in

televised coverage? A background on each artifact is followed by an analysis.

Quotations that are not associated with a citation reference the artifact being analyzed. The conclusion provides a summary and addresses implications associated with the analyses.

*“Charlie Rose”*

*Background.* Public Broadcasting Station’s (PBS) Charlie Rose moderated a panel discussion with guests Abderrahim Foukara, Thomas Kleine-Brockhoff, and Nihad Awad. Dr. Abderrahim Foukara received a Ph.D. in African studies at the University of Glasgow. Foukara joined Al-Jazeera in 2002 before moving to New York as the Washington Bureau Chief of Al Jazeera International. He has worked for the BBC World Service, The World, and Public Radio International in various capacities including producer, reporter, anchor, and journalism instructor.

Thomas Kleine-Brockhoff is the Senior Director for Policy Programs at the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) (2008). Before arriving at the GMF, Kleine-Brockhoff was the Washington bureau chief of *Die Zeit*, Germany’s intellectual weekly. He is a frequent commentator on transatlantic and U.S.-German affairs and serves as a panelist at think tanks like the Brookings Institution and the New American Foundation. Kleine-Brockhoff is often invited to comment on TV networks including PBS and CNBC and contributes to newspapers like the Washington Post.

Nihad Awad is the Executive Director and a founding member of the Council on American and Islamic Relations (CAIR), based in Washington, D. C. According to

the Harvard Pluralism Project (1997-2008), CAIR seeks to empower North American Muslim communities through political and social activism. Mr. Awad conducts media seminars across the country to train Muslim communities in communication techniques (1997-2008). CAIR experts are frequently interviewed on national and international media such as CNN, BBC World Service, the New York Times, and Washington Post.

Charlie Rose is an acclaimed interviewer and broadcast journalist. Rose engages America's best thinkers and other newsmakers in one-on-one interviews and roundtable discussions. His one-hour show airs weekdays on over 200 PBS affiliates throughout the United States. This episode of "*Charlie Rose*" (2006) aired February 9th on the CNN network covering international news.

*Analysis.* After previewing the show for his viewers, Rose presented clips of "some of the most recent reactions" to the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. The footage covered former President George W. Bush, King Abdullah of Jordan; then Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice; Secretary General of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah; and then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, each providing their views on the conflict. Showing these clips in the run-up to the narrative developed the government inspired revolt frame which was dominant throughout the program. Specifically, Bush called on governments around the world "to stop the violence." His call to action intimated that governments were closely involved in what was, by most accounts, a grassroots movement. Rice's statement that Iran and Syria have gone out of their way to inflame sentiment and use this

[conflict] to their own purposes concretized the former President's call to action as properly directed at the state level. In accordance with the United State's policy against negotiating with terrorists, Presidents and high-ranking U.S. officials do not meet or converse directly with individuals or governments known to be or are suspected of terrorist activities. Therefore the clip showing Hassan Nasrallah's reaction seemed out of place among the clips of Bush and Rice's reactions. Nasrallah's reactions were in Arabic and translated textually on screen. The Hezbollah leader communicated that "defending the Prophet should continue worldwide."

The absence of captions beneath each speaker meant that audience members had to rely on their ability to recognize Bush, Rice, Abdullah, Nasrallah, and Annan in the clips. The speakers were not introduced prior to airing the clips or identified after they played. Therefore, American viewers unacquainted with foreign politics and affairs would not recognize the speaker as Nasrallah. In this way, the absence of identifying information functioned as a framing device for the government inspired revolt frame. The Lebanese born Nasrallah is not a government official. But his statement that "we are a nation that can't forgive, be silent or ease up when they insult our Prophet and our sacred values" along with the difficulty of determining his identity corroborated Rice's statement that Iran and Syria were using the conflict to their advantage and authenticated that Bush's call to action was correctly directed at the state level. Annan contested the government inspired revolt frame by indicating that as to "whether some governments are manipulating this or not...it is difficult for

me to say...[there is] not evidence to that effect.” The irresponsibility frame was also established during the airing of the clips. Annan stated that he “honestly [did not] understand why any newspaper would publish the cartoons...it is insensitive, it is offensive, it is provocative.” Annan’s statement implied that *Jyllands-Posten* and the other European newspapers had a duty to use freedom of expression in a prudent manner. The irresponsibility frame was contrasted with the responsibility frame, which was dominant throughout the narrative. Both frames were attended by a variety of sub-frames that will be presented presently.

As a way of transitioning into the body of the narrative, Rose introduced his guests. Abderrahim Foukara was on set with Rose at the brown “roundtable,” which was the only piece of furniture on the set. Their dark suits against the black backdrop of the set presented a serious tone that was surreal in nature. Thomas Kleine-Brockhoff and Nihad Awad joined Rose via satellite from Washington, D.C. The still photo of the White House behind Kleine-Brockhoff was taken from an unusual angle which provided a view of the roof of the White House that is rarely seen. The blurred and tinted image suggested government support of Kleine-Brockhoff in a similar fashion that the blurry still photo of the capital building dome behind Awad alluded to officialdom. Captions displaying the names of the guests and their professions were frequently shown to help viewers identify them. Aside from the clips shown at the start of the program and the still photos behind two of the guests, no additional footage or images were shown during the program.

Early in the narrative, the government inspired revolt frame picked up again. Rose put the question squarely, “is [the controversy] being used by certain governments or certain people to inflame a reaction? Awad cited Annan as being more experienced in politics and deferred to his statement that there is no evidence to indicate government involvement. However, Awad conceded that “there are different people, different parties, different governments [that] may exploit this issue for their own political interest.” Nevertheless, he stated that there is a responsibility to provide evidence supporting statements such as the one made by “our secretary of state saying that Iran and Syria have been fanning the flame.” Awad argued that ultimately the “blame game” distracted from the core issue of “depicting the Prophet Muhammad and equating Islam with violence and terrorism.”

In his comment on *Die Zeit*'s decision to re-publish the cartoons, Kleine-Brockhoff contributed to the government inspired revolt frame stating that “once champions of religious freedom and tolerance like the governments of Syria and Iran become involved, retreating their ambassadors, then all of a sudden it becomes a debate in which we feel we have to inform our readers.” Kleine-Brockhoff's contestation of the blame game sub-frame put the onus of the paper's decision to re-publish onto the shoulders of those who reacted to the original publication, thereby confirming the circular nature of sub-frame. He went on to state that the cartoon conflict “can be a field day for authoritarian governments in the Middle East...so for them it has been so far a beautiful situation.” With this statement, Kleine-Brockhoff attempted to shatter the blame game sub-frame by underscoring the level of

enjoyment that instigators derived from their participation in the controversy. He also attempted to show that the instigators were driven by the specific purpose of being able to demonstrate “that this is what democracy produces, it produces blasphemy.” Kleine-Brockhoff was not able to overcome the salience of the blame game sub-frame but he did highlight an important point. That is, “god-terms” are not universal. Specifically, it is well established that in Western thought the term democracy functions as a “god-term” (Weaver, 1985, p. 228). But, in Kleine-Brockhoff’s argument, the term democracy is an ultimate term associated with what is repugnant for particular circles within Islam because of its association with blasphemy. The caution is that if blasphemy maintains its association with democracy, democracy could become a “devil-term” for a broader segment of Muslim society. What this means is that dialogue on issues of value is critical, and will become more essential, for a healthy global society. Kleine-Brockhoff’s challenge to the blame game sub-frame raises two interesting questions. First, do ultimate terms evolve over time? If so, what triggers the evolutionary process? Second, does the global nature of society in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century require new/improved “god” and “devil-terms”? The first question, though interesting, is beyond the scope of this study. The second question will be addressed in the next chapter.

The responsibility frame was contrasted with the irresponsibility frame, both of which were attended by several important sub-frames that include: freedom of speech, protecting the image of Islam, respecting the broader community, and respect for sacrosanct values. To point attention to the responsibility associated with freedom

of speech, Foukara expressed that he “think[s] freedom of expression is good” but that in “the present circumstances that the world is going through” we should all “think deep and hard” about what we say. He argued that “the world has become far too small” for the media to not consider the effects of what is published or broadcasted. Rose did not challenge this responsibility frame but he questioned whether Arab media exhibits this practice. Foukara stated that “I hope that every person in charge of making editorial decisions on a daily basis...[has] been giving some serious thought to what they...publish or broadcast.” Awad added that being routinely stereotyped as “belly dancers, billionaires or bombers” in Western media has been “upsetting” to Arabs and Muslims worldwide. Framing free speech as a responsibility makes one mindful of the power associated with expressing thoughts and feelings. By way of example, driving carries with it a high level of responsibility because of the potential to affect the lives of other people. For this reason, one is not free to move about in any manner, there are guidelines, rules of the road. Similarly, one is not permitted to engage in this activity while in an altered state of mind because of the potential damage that can be caused to others and oneself. The notion of responsibility toward others, therefore, is not a foreign concept. It is, instead, a practice that we can transfer to another arena such as freedom of expression.

Framing protection of the image of Islam as a responsibility functioned as a call to action for Muslims worldwide to “protest peacefully” and express their views in a way that does not allow others to, in effect, control the image of Muslims and Islam. Awad posited that to do otherwise is to allow others to “shape...our image”

like “those who designed the cartoons,” as violent. Foukara added that “it is a perfectly healthy thing that thousands and perhaps millions of Muslims have been taking to the streets to protest something they don’t like.” But this effort is lost if “you turn your peaceful protest...into setting buildings ablaze” or putting people “in harm’s way.” Awad stated that it is “important for Muslims to control the acts of the few” so as to “make sure that the few do not represent the image of Islam.” Awad and Foukara supported each other in development of the protection of the image of Islam sub-frame as a responsibility for all Muslims.

Kleine-Brockhoff forwarded the respecting the broader community sub-frame by pointing out that “threatening those who exercise expression” is not an effective strategy. When “cartoonists have to live in hiding, Salman Rushdie style” or “artists,...journalists, [and] people who are critics of some practices in extremist Islam” have to live in hiding “because of what they have public[shed]” then Muslims start to lose the debate over freedom of speech vs. religious sensibilities. Kleine-Brockhoff argued that Muslims have a responsibility to present their views in a manner that does not jeopardize the safety and freedom of the broader community. This sub-frame bolstered the protecting the image of Islam sub-frame in that it enhanced the opportunity of Muslims to protect their image. Foukara presented the respect for sacrosanct values frame by demonstrating that the Muslim world and the West have sacrosanct values with disparate foundations. For the Muslim world “there is religious sacrosanct, which is the person of the Prophet.” “In the West, there is a secular sacrosanct called freedom of expression.” Freedom of expression is very

important for Muslims and people in the West, argued Foukara. “But we should also be talking about respect for [the] sacrosanct [values] of other peoples and other cultures.” Framing respect for sacrosanct values of others as a responsibility for all could ensure that the debate over freedom of expression and religious sensibilities is a healthy one. Interpreting the issue in this way could also help move the debate toward a resolution. Strategic framing in the “*60 Minutes*” episode also provides insight into how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was dramatized for American audiences.

#### *“60 Minutes”*

*Background.* Host Bob Simon traveled to Copenhagen, Denmark to cover the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy for the segment “State of Denmark” that aired February 19th on “*60 Minutes*” (Tanz-Flaum, 2006). Bob Simon is an honored journalist in international reporting and has contributed regularly to “*60 Minutes*” since 1996. He has covered virtually every major foreign story in the last three decades. The news magazine “*60 Minutes*” has been on the air since 1968 and is known for offering hard-hitting investigative reports, interviews, and feature segments. The show airs weekly on the U.S. network CBS.

*Analysis.* It can be argued that strategic framing of this segment of the “*60 Minutes*” episode began with the selection of guests and sources presented. Five of the seven individuals were Danish. Except for a professional writer, all of them were editors or politicians. Two people were Muslim. One was the first Muslim immigrant elected to Denmark’s parliament and the other an Imam. Knowledge of this selection indicates that, even before the narrative begins, the scales are weighted against

Muslim participants winning strategic contests of framing issues in favor of their interpretation of events. And unfortunately, Imams have routinely been characterized as radical or extremist in a broad range of media coverage, including the Alia Malek interview of Flemming Rose analyzed in the present study. The radical or extremist perception, no matter how inaccurate, greatly diminished the credibility of the Imam to the degree that he was rendered rhetorically incapable of forwarding any frames favorable to Islam or contesting any unfavorable frames. It is unfair but accurate that “Imam” functioned as a term of repudiation, a “devil-term,” which restricted Ahmed Abu Laban’s ability to forward and contest arguments during the program. This situation left Dr. Kamal Qureshi, the first Muslim Member of Parliament, virtually alone to create and contest frames.

Bob Simon began the State of Denmark narrative in the run-up to the story. Here, he developed the tranquility vs. mayhem frame to establish the nature of the scene. Simon employed a host of rhetorical devices to limn Denmark as a “lovely little land,” a place like no other. Even the “cluttered work space” in the “little living room” of Kare Bluitgen,” the children’s book writer who could not find an illustrator to draw Muhammad, was not out of place in the “squeaky clean” land. Bluitgen stated that he was “quite sad” to see what happened as a result of his trying “to promote better understanding between cultures and religions...in Denmark.” This statement along with his frail non-threatening appearance and benign occupation made him a sympathetic figure who could be allowed to be part of the “fairy tale” scene despite the disordered and cramped conditions of his apartment. Throughout the rest of the

segment, Danish guests, sources, and “extras” appeared in wide-open spaces, foregrounded in scenes of the expansive sky, or in luxuriant accommodations. They donned modern, expensive, or high-fashion clothing. The women were pretty and young, and almost all of them blonde. Many of the citizens were thin and engaged in some form of recreational activity. The citizens fit the “fairy tale” scene.

By contrast, in the body of the narrative, footage of rioters and a Danish flag being burned is shown as Simon’s voiceover explains that riots “from Jerusalem to Jakarta” can be traced back to Bluitgen’s apartment. This helps the audience to appreciate the degree of dissimilarity in the bifurcated scene. Simon’s defining the area of Copenhagen that Muslims inhabit as the “Muslim quarter” rather than community, rhetorically painting the location as “Other,” different, alien. Images of the location showed cluttered markets, crowded walkways, and dilapidated buildings were aired throughout the segment. In the “Muslim quarter” footage all of the women wore the hijab, the shibboleth of immigrant Muslim women. A young Muslim woman in a hijab was filmed with a cigarette dangling from her lips as she was busy doing something with her hands. Americans would say she was smoking like a sailor. The image was particularly striking since Muslim women rarely smoke, especially in public places.

Although “Muslims make up only two percent of the population,” Simon informed the audience that Denmark has “the toughest immigration laws in Europe” and that Danish support of the “ultra-right wing” Danish “People’s Party” has grown by “almost 20 percent.” Thereby, indicating that the “pretty and prosperous” people

of Denmark intend to protect their “coziest of kingdoms” from the cultural change that accompanies immigration. If strategic framing can be conceived of as terms used to win arguments then it can be argued that the tranquility vs. mayhem frame functioned as a “god-term” vs. “devil-term” frame to score a mental image of the dichotomous societal makeup of Denmark onto the mind of the audience. There was no effort on the part of any individual on the show to contest the existence or nature of the tranquility vs. mayhem frame that characterized the scene in Denmark.

Bluitgen’s inability to find an illustrator to draw Muhammad for his book and Flemming Rose’s concern over what was proper in “the public space” helped to make self-censorship a dominant frame in the State of Denmark narrative. And *Jyllands-Posten*, Rose’s paper, “insisted from the start that its purpose was to show that there are no higher values in a democratic society than free speech and free expression, and if Muslims want to live” in Denmark “they’d better buy that.” Toger Seidenfaden, editor of a rival paper, supported *Jyllands-Posten*’s “right to be stupid” as “part of freedom of speech.” Though Seidenfaden did not think that *Jyllands-Posten* had any intention to create an international crisis, the paper’s mission was to do just what they explicitly stated on the front page of the paper; “to teach religious Muslims in Denmark that in our society they must accept to be scorned, mocked, and ridiculed.”

*Jyllands-Posten*, Rose, and Seidenfaden use two ultimate terms to justify publication of the Muhammad cartoons, freedom and democracy. “The greatest sacrifices that contemporary man is called upon to make are demanded in the name of ‘freedom,’” stated Richard Weaver (1985), “though the referent which the average

man attaches to this word is most obscure” (p. 228). But the amorphous nature of the term freedom did not temper Danish insistence on the principle of free speech regarding publication of the Muhammad cartoons. Like freedom, democracy is an ultimate term and it possesses similar potency. And as “god-terms,” freedom and democracy can account for a broad range of responsible and irresponsible behaviors and acts. However, when the cartoon controversy “started careening out of control...the editors...reacted by refusing to speak to anyone at all.” The paper’s response was similar to the self-censorship exhibited in Rose’s use of a script for interviews (see Blitzer, 2006) and in his article (F. Rose, 2006) justifying publication of the cartoons. These acts demonstrate that *Jyllands-Posten* and Rose recognized that there are indeed occasions when the right to free speech should be tempered with prudence.

The self-censorship frame was contested by the former Danish minister and newspaper editor, Uffe Elleman, who argued that “a little self-censorship is not always a bad thing.” Particularly, he contended, with regard to minority groups, “you don’t stamp on other people’s religious feelings,” Elleman stated, and to “do it with the single purpose of demonstrating that you have the right to do so, then you are undermining the freedom of speech as I see it.” Support from an unexpected defender went a long way toward contesting the self-censorship frame forwarded by *Jyllands-Posten*, Rose, and Seidenfaden.

Another dominant frame that emerged during the “60 Minutes” segment was the radical Imam frame. The first time Ahmed Abu Laban appears on screen is when

he is speaking in Arabic to Muslim men gathered at a Mosque in Copenhagen. His right fist extending back and forth, and his voice raised and intense, indicates that the Imam is certainly passionate, perhaps angry, unless, of course, the viewer is aware of culturally-oriented communication practices that are prevalent in the Middle East. For example, in Morocco, it is common to see individuals conversing with such intensity that it can be assumed, by foreigners who do not share this practice, that they are quarreling. After routinely witnessing the people embrace a few moments later, one realizes that the “quarrel” was just a conversation.

This practice is not unique to Middle Easterners. Some groups in Latin American countries and America routinely converse with a high level of intensity. But given the negative association that has been built around the term “Imam” the voice and image of the man would be read as “radical Imam.” In Simon’s voiceover during the footage of Laban speaking at the Mosque, he told viewers that “if the paper [*Jyllands-Posten*] was trying to stir it up, it succeeded.” This statement virtually ensured that viewers would interpret what they saw as a “radical Imam” angered by the insults to the Prophet Muhammad and Islam. The “radical Imam” frame went uncontested during the “*60 Minutes*” segment. Instead of contesting this frame, Dr. Kamal Qureshi, during his brief appearance on in the segment, essentially bolstered the radical Imam frame, though inadvertently, or, perhaps more correctly, because he was unaware of how his voice would be juxtaposed with the appearance of Imam Laban. Qureshi’s statement that “we [Danish Muslims] have to take the ball away from the extreme groups in Denmark and put it in the middle where the rest of us are”

positioned moderate Muslims dialectically in relation to the perception of Imam Ahmed Abu Laban, thereby bolstering the radical Imam frame. Dr. Qureshi was interviewed in a small, noisy shawarmah joint in the “Muslim quarter” rather than in his office in the parliament where there were likely well-appointed accommodations. The decision to film in the eatery helped to frame Muslims, regardless of their status in Danish society, as “Other.” The dominant frames employed throughout the program produced a meta-frame of immigration.

### Conclusion

Gamson (1996) described framing as a discursive process of strategic actors utilizing symbolic resources to participate in collective sense-making about public policy issues (cited in Pan & Kosicki, 2001, p. 36). Pan and Kosicki argued that framing is an essential part of public deliberation but that “it not a harmonious process but an ideological contest and political struggle” (p. 36). It is a process through which interpretations of reality are developed, contested, crushed, and bolstered. Although the normative idea of “deliberative democracy” is that political elites function as “surrogate deliberators,” deliberation—as a result of the proliferation of interactive electronic media—“is becoming a genuine empirical phenomenon” (p. 35). This means that lessons that we learn from examining strategic framing can be applied to deliberation in the public sphere as a way to improve reasoning on public policy.

The strategic framing “contest” of the “*Charlie Rose*” program resulted in a meta-frame of responsibility through which the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy

narrative could be interpreted. The responsibility to use good judgment in the exercise of free speech was held out as a means of avoiding conflict in the future. The responsibility to protect the image of Islam was placed squarely on the shoulders of Muslims whose duty it is to act in accordance with Islamic teachings when challenged by free speech used irresponsibly. The responsibility to respect the broader community supported the protecting the image of Islam sub-frame. The responsibility to respect the broader community sub-frame showed that those who threaten the safety and life of those who disagree with aspects of Islam participate in damaging the image of the religion. The responsibility to respect sacrosanct values highlighted that everyone can benefit from addressing conflicts in this manner. The implication is that when issues over values arise, parties are better situated to manage the fallout and they are in a better position to keep value-based conflicts from erupting.

The inclusion of Muslim guests in the conversation on freedom of speech vs. religious sensibilities greatly added to how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was dramatized and provided a more balanced approach to dealing with issues surrounding the controversy. For example, coverage of the controversy that included no or very subdued Muslim voices dramatized the conflict in a one-sided manner which either explicitly or implicitly accused Muslims of being backward, intolerant, and inherently violent. Awad and Foukara provided insight into the concerns of moderate Muslims, exposed issues that exacerbated the cartoon conflict, and suggested solutions for dealing with the conflict. An opportunity to present a

balanced assessment of the cartoon conflict was needed and the “*Charlie Rose*” episode provided such an opportunity. Awad and Foukara used this opportunity to re-position Islam as a peaceful religion of peaceful people who are capable of presenting their views intelligibly. The non-Muslims on the program re-positioned Islam as deserving of a fair venue. Specifically, Rose invited three guests—two Muslims and one non-Muslim. The resulting two-by-two conversation, on its face, presented an image of fairness. More often than not, when Muslim voices are included, they represent the minority view and are usually so out numbered that they stand a very small chance of winning a strategic framing contest. However, on this episode of “*Charlie Rose*” the discussants were matched in number and deliberative skill.

The “*60 Minutes*” narrative about the cartoon controversy exhibited a meta-frame of immigration that was supported by the dominant frames of tranquility vs. mayhem, self-censorship, and radical Imam. In this segment of the show, Dr. Qureshi provided some insight into the feelings of Danish Muslims. He indicated that “there are a lot of Muslims that are afraid that they could be turned into scapegoats and people would say that the reason that the world hate[s] us is because you people are telling bad stories of Denmark.” Qureshi’s contribution to the dialogue presented the vulnerable, sympathetic side of the Muslim story that could help the audience appreciate the position of moderate Muslims vis-à-vis the pressure they face from Danish separatists and extremist elements within Islam. His expressions of love for his country, Denmark, and his involvement in politics indicated that he does not see himself or other Muslims as outsiders. Qureshi re-positioned Muslims as citizens of a

new country who are facing problems but are “optimistic” that they will manage to get control of the image of moderate Muslims in Denmark. Participation in public deliberation inevitably involves the discursive practice of framing an issue. For this reason, investigating the “*Charlie Rose*” and “*60 Minutes*” episodes as “strategic contests” shed light on the rhetorical moves participants made in order to forward their interpretation of events. Chapter six presents a synthesis of the analyses conducted in chapters three through five and the conclusion for this study.

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*Controversy is the cartoonist's staff of life; he starves in times of "brotherly love."*

-- Isabel Johnson, *Cartoons*, 1937.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Envisioning the Entelechialized Narrative: Tragic or Comic Frame?

#### Discussion

This study is an exploration into how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy unfolded at three critical thresholds in the conflict's development. First, this study focuses a lens on critical communications that transpired in Denmark among key figures engaged in the conflict. Second, the interviews of Flemming Rose provide insight into how the conflict was dramatized by *Jyllands-Posten* and Flemming Rose for international dissemination. Third, the televised broadcasts provide examples of how the controversy was dramatized for American audiences. Together, these rhetorical artifacts allowed for analysis of the product of the worldviews as expressed through the cartoons, multiplied by the values and traditions of the interlocutors, and multiplied by the amplification of the conflict through television broadcasts. Analysis of the artifacts reveals that there was a progressive transformation of the issues as news of the conflict spread around the globe. A statement on the transformational force inherent in narrative development is useful.

The notion of the realization or actualization of a phenomenon stems from the concept of entelechy, a term coined by Aristotle more than two thousand years ago. Aristotle applied the concept to natural processes and later, Kenneth Burke extended it to the symbolic, or rhetorical, realm. Burke (1972) stated that by entelechy "I refer

to such use of symbolic resources that potentialities can be said to attain their perfect fulfillment” (p. 39). In other words, a symbol “strive[s]...to be...the kind of thing that it was” (Burke, 1969a, p. 249). And this “striving” is accomplished “perfectly” (p. 249) in the same way that a carrot seed produces a carrot. As Stan Lindsay (1999) noted, Burke found it necessary “to replace the implicit determinism of Aristotelian biological entelechy with the implicit freedom of human action” in symbolic entelechy (p. 269). Burke made this switch to underscore the free will inherent in the act of symbol selection and how symbol selection is determinative in the development and actualization, or entelechialization, of a narrative.

In this chapter I synthesize the analyses of the artifacts and demonstrate that the narrative development of the conflict must be apprehended from three perspectives: (1) the “double nature” of the controversy both as the concrete thing that it is and as a participant in the narrative perfection of the total act; (2) the conflict as commandeered by a broader narrative to justify the War on Terror and the conflict as a narrative means for Denmark to enhance its identification with the EU, and by extension the West; and (3) the cycle of redemption as a ritual process in relation to the War on Terror and as a symbolic process of Danish redemption.

Entelechialization of the cartoon controversy narrative across the three stages of development resulted in a different, more toxic dramatization of events which virtually ensures a self-fulfilling prophecy of tragedy.

What can be drawn from art controversies generally, and the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy in particular, is that artists affect the broader world and social

conditions influence artistic expression. As we have seen in the examples of artistic works such as “Christa,” “*Muhammad Messenger of God*,” and the Nussenzwig v. Philip-Lorca diCorcia case, art and piety is an intersection where freedom of expression and religious sensibilities collide. Threats to religious dogma, a changing political climate, fear of displacement, and other social struggles are reflected in artistic expressions that can give rise to controversy. In the case of the infamous Muhammad cartoons, melding the sacred and the profane in proscribed depiction of the Prophet functioned to “push-back” the spread of Islamic culture in Denmark by opponents of immigration.

The publication of cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad sparked a debate over whether respect for religious sensibilities trumps the free expression of ideas, or vice versa. Moderate Muslims condemned the violent protests that erupted in response to the publications. Supporters of the cartoons cited them as a legitimate exercise of the right of free speech, arguing that the satire of religion is a long-held Western tradition that should be protected. Ardent critics described the cartoons as blasphemous and Islamophobic. Reflecting on the nation’s history, Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen identified the cartoon controversy as Denmark’s worst international crisis since World War II (Saunders, 2008, p. 14).

The function of rhetorical strategies employed by interlocutors on either side of the debate points to the need for insight into the nature of public discourse involving cardinal values that are rooted in disparate cultures. In the era of personal technology (phones, computers, and wireless devices) internationalization is

immediate and makes rhetoric anywhere in the world accessible to individuals around the globe, increasing the potential for misunderstanding. Thus, analysis of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy and the escalation of the conflict resulting from the failure to address cultural values can provide guidance for dealing with future controversies.

In this chapter, I explore the full dramatization of the cartoon controversy through the three stages of its development in order to demonstrate how the cycle of redemption operated for Denmark within the context of the cartoon conflict. As the full dramatization of the conflict is unraveled, I expose how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was assimilated into the clash of civilizations story and appropriated by the terrorism narrative to bolster the rhetoric which characterizes and condemns Islam to justify the War on Terror. The discussion section concludes with a presentation of the lessons learned from the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. In the conclusion I offer some thoughts for consideration, recommend ways that the costly lessons of the conflict can be applied, and provide a summary of the study.

#### *Disequilibrium: Actual and Symbolic*

A look back at the rhetoric of the cartoon conflict as well as rhetoric related to Muslims and Islam over the last two decades helps us to distill the lessons of the cartoon conflict. Findings of the present study indicate that there was disequilibrium in Danish-European relations and disequilibrium in Danish society. The deterioration of socio-political conditions at both levels resulted in a rejection of hierarchy which activated the cycle of redemption. Burke describes this cycle as a symbolic process of

guilt, purification and redemption that results from rejecting the pyramid of hierarchy that is a byproduct of human interaction (Burke, 1984b, pp. 274-294). It is impossible to meet all of the demands of the hierarchy and guilt is experienced when one falls. Victimhood is one way to resolve the guilt experienced. This method of purification must be appropriate to the sin for the drama to succeed as an act of redemption. The symbolic sacrifice, the scapegoat, is rhetorically prepared for the “kill” and once the rite of purification is performed the guilty can once again function within the hierarchy until the burden of another fall becomes too great and the cycle repeats itself.

To achieve the deepest understanding of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy, one must gauge it bicamerally, that is, one must see the conflict’s “double nature” both as the concrete thing that it is, with its own unique combination of conditions and events, and as a participant in the perfection (the entelechial perfection) of the ultimate dramatization that allowed each progressive development in the dramatization to share in the symbolic meaning of the total act. Specifically, Danish rejection of European Union (EU) hierarchy, which promotes expansion and “progress,” resulted in the need for Denmark to strengthen its identity with the EU. Rejection of the EU strategy and hierarchy was also, by extension, a rejection of Western hierarchy, resulting in the need for identification with other Western countries, such as the United States. In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke (1969b) contemplated the social pyramid of communication; a system that is “shrouded in [the] mystifications of its various levels [and] vibrates with tensions” (Carter, 1996)

that exceed mere persuasion. Climbing the social ladder is pervasive as is the fear of falling.

Carter (1996) summarized the manifestations of societal hierarchy.

Hierarchical motives lurk in the insignia of property, in race relations, in scientific bureaucracies, and in any system of caste...the attempt to reinforce one's hierarchical position sometimes seems the characteristic event of social life. Everywhere we turn claims of superiority are filed, enigmatic confessions of inferiority made, and rank adjusted by all sorts of roundabout inflations and deflations. Conformity, hypocrisy, and philanthropy—all are forms of hierarchy. (p. 12)

Denmark's refusal to conform to important elements of the EU strategy for "progress" resulted in a demotion in status for the Scandinavian country. As Richard Weaver (1985) informed us, "progress" is an ultimate term, a "god-term," adopted by the West. Rejection of "progress" signaled a rejection of Western hierarchy, and Denmark needed to be purified of its transgression. Strengthening its identification with the EU functioned as a corrective for, among other things, Denmark's opting out of the monetary union, the immigration and justice policy, the European citizenship rules, and the defense co-operation provisions that are part of The Treaty of the European Union. The opt-outs are particularly problematic for Danish-EU relations since Denmark benefits from provisions of the treaty from which it has opted-out. However, the opt-outs are critical to protecting the prosperity and cultural heritage of a "Danish Denmark" ("Danish Radio Station Loses License", 2005). The EU strategy for "progress" includes plans for Eastward expansion that portends a rise in immigration which heightens the threat to Danish identity. The opt-outs are a means of protecting Denmark from the threat which lingers outside the country

Carter (1996) posited that “even one’s relationship with one’s own self has an ingredient of hierarchical rhetoric, with ‘conscience’ defined as the effort to address one’s conduct to the spirit of an ideal community in whose esteem one wishes to be raised” (p. 12). Denmark sought to protect the “growth and prosperity” (Rasmussen, 2006, January) of its “coz[y] kingdom” (Simon, 2006) by blocking EU encroachments on its political and economic systems. To eliminate threats to Danish identity from inside the country, Denmark established the toughest immigration laws in Europe, commissioned the development of a cultural cannon, and turned a blind eye to racial and religious discriminatory acts against Muslims by government officials and media functionaries.

The official communications of key parties at the genesis and nexus of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was the first stage of development in the conflict narrative. They exposed the tension in Danish-EU relations (and by extension the West) prior to and at the time of the publication of the infamous cartoons. Publication of the Muhammad cartoons condemned the common “foe” (Huntington, 1996, p. 215) of Denmark and the EU which allowed Denmark to strengthen its identification with the EU in order to purify the guilt associated with rejection of the established hierarchy. The official communication artifacts also revealed disequilibrium within Danish society and uncovered the stringent methods used to restore the social hierarchy challenged by the spread of Islamic culture. Ostensibly the cartoon controversy was over freedom of speech vs. religious sensibilities. But the actual contest was over Danish cultural superiority and by extension EU and Western

superiority. Thus, Danish Muslims felt their religious value system was under threat. On both sides of the issue, threats to the sacrosanct values of the parties moved them to rally to protect their interests. The narrative evolved as news of the conflict spread beyond Denmark.

To apprehend the evolution of the cartoon conflict I adapted Victor Turner's (1977) concept of social identity transformation to the rhetorical realm. Liminal moments are characterized by spaces where evolutionary change occurs. For purposes of the present study, liminal moments expose shifts in ideological motivations behind the rhetoric. Liminal moments help us to understand the process of narrative transformation as a ritual for embodying symbolic values, defining the nature of the "real," or struggling over control of the sign—a tool that assists in analyzing changes at the three stages of narrative development in the cartoon controversy. Locating liminal moments between the three stages of the cartoon conflict narrative helped to reveal the rhetorical connection among the artifacts, as well as the rhetorical connection to events in Denmark, the EU, and the world.

Continuing with the synthesis of the analyses, the dramatizations within the official communication texts do not explicitly provide a comprehensive narrative concerning the nature of the socio-political environment that permitted the controversy to erupt in Denmark. However, together they provide important clues that lead to a more robust interpretation of events which allows the critic to analyze the genesis of the phenomenon. The clues also provide understanding on how the official communication artifacts are connected to the next stage of narrative development.

Change in the way the cartoon controversy was dramatized in the interviews of Flemming Rose vis-à-vis the official communications signals the first liminal moment in the dramatization of the cartoon conflict. The second stage of development is marked by a shift in the audience to whom the rhetoric was directed. Specially, the official communications were directed to the Danish audience, the dramatizations in the interviews were directed toward audiences outside of Denmark.

Crucial connections exist between the official communications and the second, as well as third stage of development. Specifically, key segments of Flemming Rose's (2006) article justifying why he commissioned the cartoons are found in both the second and third stages of the dramatization. For instance, in the "60 Minutes" (Tanz-Flaum, 2006b) interview, Rose stated that "it is problematic that if some Muslims require of me that I in the public space, in the public domain have to submit myself to their taboos in that case I don't think they are asking for my respect I think they are asking for my submission" (2006b). This statement appears, nearly verbatim, in Rose's (2006) article that is part of the first stage of development. And, at the second stage, Rose referenced the public domain issue in the Blitzer-Rose interview on "The Situation Room" (Blitzer, 2006). The evidence indicates that the "official position" of Rose and *Jyllands-Posten* played a key role at each stage of the narrative development in the cartoon conflict. That Rose (2006) draws upon the content of his article in the many interviews that he granted is an indication that the article is rightly situated among the official communications and points to the high

probability that the document was likely produced as the official position of *Jyllands-Posten*.

At the second stage of narrative development, there was also a shift in the tone of the debate. Less immediate concern was placed on self-censorship by the Danish and EU media in relation to depicting Muhammad. Rose, by repeating the issue about Muslims demanding his submission, widened the realm that was in danger to include the entire public sphere and increased the level of threat to include all Muslim religious proscriptions. At this stage of narrative development there was also a shift from the implicit to a more explicit dramatization of the issues. For example, the way the conflict was framed in the Malek-Rose interview indicates that immigration was a fundamental issue in the cartoon controversy and that, while freedom of speech was important, the primary debate revolved around immigration, particularly Muslim immigration. “*The Situation Room*” episode which advertised the relatively brief Blitzer-Rose interview segment was in reality an episode which framed the cartoon controversy in a specific way for its American audience. The cartoon conflict narrative that preceded and followed the interview segment tied the conflict to American self-censorship, terrorism, and Islamic fundamentalism—the cartoon controversy was framed as a public crisis. During the Blitzer-Roses interview, Rose (2006) was tied to the carefully-crafted script of his article. Here, even though he was more tied to the script than in the Malek interview, we can still see how the dramatization of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy is evolving. The more it is

dramatized by different rhetors and the smaller the role that the original interlocutors play, the more the changes in motive become apparent.

The second liminal moment occurs at the threshold of the third stage of development—the televised broadcasts. At this stage, the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy is a full-blown international public crisis. During the “*Charlie Rose*” show, former President George W. Bush hinted at government involvement in the crisis and former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice openly accused “Iran and Syria” of going “out of their way to inflame sentiment and to use this [conflict] for their own purposes” (C. Rose, 2006). By this stage of narrative development, broad coverage of the phenomenon explicitly or implicitly accused Muslims of being backward, intolerant, and inherently violent. News of death threats against the twelve cartoonists circulated. News coverage was saturated with reports on damage to property and loss of life. News coverage of peaceful protests against the publications was scant at best. And information on the socio-political conditions in Denmark that gave rise to the controversy was non-existent, which represents a marked shift between the first and third stage of narrative development. That “*Charlie Rose*” gathered senior analysts to deliberate issues surrounding the cartoon conflict indicates that the conflict had reached critical mass and required the input of specialists to provide insight on the direction that should be taken in terms of public policy.

As noted above, there are critical connections between the first and third stages of narrative development. At the third stage, on “*60 Minutes*” (Tanz-Flaum, 2006b), Bob Simon asked Rasmussen why he refused, in a letter that is part of the

first stage, to meet with the Arab Ambassadors. Rasmussen replied “well, we have not refused dialogue. On the contrary” (2006b). Simon pressed further, “but you didn’t meet with the Arab ambassadors” (2006b). Rasmussen replied, “No, but I have to stress that the foreign minister has had meetings with ambassadors and foreign ministers and others” (2006b). In Rasmussen’s (2005) reply to the Ambassadors’ request for a meeting, he directed attention away from himself and directed the Ambassadors to turn to the Danish courts for redress of abuses. As noted in the analysis of Rasmussen’s (2005) reply, he implied “no” to the request for a meeting. The exchange between Simon and Rasmussen demonstrates that Rasmussen intentionally implied “no.” This squashes his claim of wanting “mutual respect and understanding” (2005) between Danish and Muslim cultures.

During his investigation, Simon (Tanz-Flaum, 2006b) interviewed Toger Seidenfaden, editor of a *Jyllands-Posten* rival, who provided his view on why the Prime Minister refused to meet with the Ambassadors. Seidenfaden stated that “sadly enough, in the domestic political situation in Denmark, the logic was simple. As conflict between the biggest newspaper in the land and religious Muslims? On whose side I am? It’s very simple for a prime minister to answer. I’m with the big newspaper” (2006b). But if Rasmussen had other reasons for saying no, we will never know what they were because Rasmussen will not admit that he said “no.” Rasmussen may be holding a hard line on this issue so that the international community does not blame him for having turned down an opportunity to keep the cartoon conflict from turning into an international public crisis. In his awkward and

defensive response to Simon's question about not meeting with the Ambassadors, Rasmussen "stress[ed] that the foreign minister has had meetings with ambassadors and foreign ministers and others" (Tanz-Flaum, 2006b). Just as in his reply to the Ambassadors, Rasmussen, once again, engaged in double-speak to give the impression that the dialogue that had occurred related to Danish Muslim concerns. This suggests that the findings arrived at in the analysis of Rasmussen's (2005) reply to the Ambassadors is correct in that the dialogue Rasmussen spoke of, in fact, referred to dialogue between Denmark and Muslim countries rather than between Danes and Danish Muslims. The implication is that Rasmussen had no intention on addressing Danish Muslim concerns and intentionally tried to camouflage his disinterest. In the third stage of narrative development, the discussion among the guests and moderator on the "*Charlie Rose*" (2006) episode and Bob Simon's "*60 Minutes*" (Tanz-Flaum, 2006a) investigation reveal that dramatizations in coverage of the cartoon conflict developed beyond the interpretations forwarded in interviews of Flemming Rose (second stage) and well beyond the dramatizations in the official communications (first stage). The rhetorical artifacts of the present study provide examples of how entelechializing the cartoon conflict narrative as an us vs. them interpretation of the phenomenon limits the possible outcome of the conflict to one of tragedy.

#### *Findings in Previous Research*

The findings of previous studies support the findings of the present study. For example, Douai (2007) found that in televised broadcasts on Al Jazeera and Al Arabia

the media was “unusually performative” in “problematizing the phenomenon” through the use of new technologies that permitted development of the conflict into a “mediatized public crisis” through construction of stories and propaganda “in order to explain the course of events over a given period of time” (pp. 11-12). Powers (2008) found that mainstream Western media “actively and intentionally provided packages of symbolized images and stories to further problematic stereotypes of Muslim[s]” and drew from the culturally resonant “clash” thesis to dramatize events and “invoke fear...about the escalating ‘crisis’” (p. 27). Drawing on the “clash” thesis to help explain events was also found in the second and third stages of narrative development in the present study.

In a study by Eko and Berkowitz (2007), the findings show that there were ethical lapses in judgment on the part of *Jyllands-Posten*. Ethical lapses were also found in the present study but not on the ground of “Danish journalistic insularity and lack of sophistication” (pp. 19-20). The findings in the present study are based on *Jyllands-Posten*’s hiding behind democratic values and freedom of speech to achieve its goal of provoking Danish Muslims, and Flemming Rose’s abuse of his position as cultural editor of the paper. The Eko and Berkowitz finding that there was a lack of sophistication is too broad because the paper and Rose exhibited a high level of sophistication in choosing the journalistic tradition of “show, don’t tell” through cartooning as a means to their end. Bhattacharya (2007) found that the use of orientalist imagery along with British “attitude[s] toward its Muslim population...located within a larger rhetoric on race, class, and immigrant identity in

the United Kingdom” accounts for the nature of media discourse surrounding the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. Findings of the present study concur with Bhattacharya’s findings that orientalist images contribute to the nature of discourse surrounding the conflict. But additional factors such as the socio-political conditions in Denmark, Denmark’s troubled relationship with the EU, and the underlying motivations of rhetors on either side of the conflict also contributed to the discourse. The use of stereotypes in the media discourse surrounding the conflict suggests, as the findings of the Shroff (2006) study highlights, a long-standing conflict between press freedom and press responsibility.

What is revealed in the findings of the present study is that dramatization of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy changed over time. Analyses of the official communications indicate that while the discriminatory acts of Danish public officials and media functionaries were severe and disturbing they were not interpreted as a public crisis. Dramatization of the conflict escalated as it progressed through three stages of development, finally reaching the level of an international public crisis. Previous studies on the cartoon conflict show that dramatization of the controversy varied across audiences in France, Britain, America, and the Arabic speaking world as news of the controversy spread around the globe. This indicates that the narrative began to reflect culture specific concerns and values relative to the violation of an Islamic sacrosanct proscription. Though the narrative morphed over time what resonated across audiences, at different times and at varying degrees, were perceptions and attitudes that flowed from a shared clash of civilizations frame of

events (Douai, 2007; Eko & Berkowitz, 2007; Powers, 2008). The cartoon conflict was assimilated by the clash of civilizations narrative which moved the dramatization further along the cycle of redemption. Preparation of the ritual sacrifice will allow Denmark to be purified of the transgression of rejecting the EU, and by extension, Western hierarchy.

### *A Clash of Civilizations?*

The clash of civilizations thesis was first forwarded by Bernard Lewis (1990) and later expanded by Samuel P. Huntington (1993, 1996). Specifically, Huntington's (1993) clash of civilizations thesis is premised on the idea that "differences between civilizations" and "civilization-consciousness...will supplant ideological and other forms of conflict as the dominant global form of conflict" (p. 48). By civilization, he means the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity that people share (pp. 23-24). For Huntington, Islam, Confucianism, and the six other civilizations—Hindu, Japanese, Slavic, Orthodox, Latin America, and Africa—that still exist are separate from each other and perpetually poised for conflict. As Huntington sees it, disparate civilizations will become more aware of the differences that exist between them and this will be the basis of global conflict. Above all, he argues, "a central focus of conflict for the immediate future will be between the West and several Islamic-Confucian states" (p. 48). Edward Said (2001) contended that the clash of civilizations thesis forwards a post-Cold War formulation of the world that is inaccurate because it compresses "civilizations and identities into...shut-down, sealed-off entities that have been purged of the myriad currents and

countercurrents that animate human history” (p. 1). However, in spite of a world history that contains a record of not only religious wars and imperial conquests but also evidence of cultural exchange, cross-fertilization and sharing between civilizations the clash thesis has currency. It has been used by advisors, policy makers, and leaders to make sense of the post-Cold War world and to anticipate the actions of potential enemies. Huntington tried to legitimate casting his clash thesis over the post-Cold War world by stating that “with the end of the Soviet Union...political considerations gave way to religious ones” (Huntington, 1993, p. 36). But this justification ignores the many complexities of the post-Cold War world, such as, for example, the separation of church and state in Western countries and the concerns of civilizations that do not espouse a particular religion.

In a Committee on International Relations hearing (Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, 2006), legislators and analysts convened to answer the question of whether the U.S. is “engaged in a clash of civilizations with the Middle East and Central Asia as the central front in this struggle” (p. 2). And more specifically, “how can U.S. strategies be crafted to address [more specifically, combat]...[the] different levels of involvement and support” of enemies in the struggle (p. 3). Hillel Fradkin, Director of The Hudson Institute Center for Islam, Democracy and the Future of the Muslim World, was one of the witnesses testifying before the Subcommittee. He testified that the nature of the clash is “a utopian movement” that “bear[s] some comparison with recent utopian movements like communism and fascism. Its most fundamental similarity with them is the fact that,

like them, it regards liberal democracy as its enemy” (p. 35). Fradkin stated that this view is held by radical Islam which “promote[s] this view tirelessly both at home and abroad”...“and if and when this view takes hold completely [across the Muslim world] we will find ourselves in a clash of civilizations and maybe a civilization war. We won’t really have any choice” (p. 36). Fradkin’s statement, like Huntington’s thesis, casts the Cold War paradigm onto the post-Cold War world.

On the Monday prior to the Subcommittee hearing, former President George W. Bush addressed the nation on the fifth anniversary of the horrible events of September 11<sup>th</sup>. He remarked that “this struggle has been called a clash of civilizations. In truth it is a struggle for civilization. We are fighting to maintain the way of life enjoyed by free nations” (cited in Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, 2006, p. 44). Bush, in other words, told the nation that the clash of civilizations is a struggle for democracy and that the democratic way of life is the civilized way of life. Ranking International Relations Committee Member and Co-Chair of the Subcommittee, Gary L. Ackerman of New York, in his opening statement commented that he found the subject of the hearing, is there a clash of civilizations, “in itself alarming...that [five] years into this conflict we need to have a hearing to help us define and describe our enemy because the Bush Administration has ignored one of the most basic and obvious dictums of strategy—to know one’s enemy, and without accurately understanding who and what they are fighting against they can’t hope to fashion a successful response” (Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, 2006, p. 3). Nevertheless, not knowing who or what America was

fighting against did not prevent manifestations of the clash of civilizations thesis from permeating U.S. foreign policy; political rhetoric; and media discourse, including the news and popular culture.

The “god-term” democracy is one of a few terms which gives the average American of our time a concept of something bigger than himself, “which he is socially impelled to accept and even to sacrifice for” (Weaver, 1985, p. 214). Not knowing the nature of the conflict is one of the sacrifices that can be required to protect democracy and freedom when it is entreated by claims that the national security is threatened. Democracy’s capacity to demand sacrifice is a reliable indicator that it is so sacrosanct that other rights must be mysteriously rendered up for it. It is justifiable, then, that in some sense it is an ultimate term.

In a study on the primal motive for the War on Terrorism, Ivie and Giner (2007), described democracy as a “distempered demon that projects its shadow onto the external enemy” (p. 580). Democracy, they contended, “is an attitude articulated within the polity and configured by rhetoric, especially by conventions of discourse that treat relations of similitude as relations of equivalence or virtual sameness” (p. 581). In other words, a set of literalized metaphors conceptualize democracy and the metaphorical concept produces a powerful mythical appeal. The distempered nature of democracy is articulated in what Benjamin Barber (1984) observed,

“the rhetoric of democracy in America is very much akin to “zoo keeping.” Human “creatures,” situated by “liberal democratic imagery” within a menagerie of sovereign lions, bleating sheep, and ornery wolves are reduced...to one great beast. In this “zoology,”...liberal democracy’s sturdiest cages are reserved for the People, who are admired for their proud

individuality but considered dangerous as a madding crowd.” (cited in Ivie & Giner, 2007, p. 582)

While attempting to properly contain and discipline domestic democracy, American political leaders endorsed a theory of democratic power that recommended a thin veil of democratization as the means to global peace. Ivie and Giner observed that “this assumption legitimized an aggressive post-Cold War foreign policy and a subsequent doctrine of preemptive warfare for fighting the tyranny of terrorism” (Ivie & Giner, 2007, p. 583). Exploration of the clash of civilizations thesis helps us to understand how it resonated for audiences in coverage of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. We are also helped to understand the ways in which “distempered democracy” is consubstantial with its “enemy.” From a management perspective, the sturdy “cages reserved for the [American] People” puts a ceiling on the “dangerous spirit of self-rule” (p. 582) that would make administering liberal democracy impossible.

Conversely, as the government inspired revolt argument goes (Blitzer, 2006, p. 11), the Muslim masses do not need to be contained because they “do not yet know how to debate, dissent, revise or reform” (Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, 2006, p. 10) in order to have a say in how they are governed. Instead, Muslim governments use the people “for their own purposes” (C. Rose, 2006, p. 2). The two approaches to managing the masses are consubstantial in that they are determinative in the type and level of freedoms that the “people” do or do not enjoy. Freedom is limited in both systems. From an ideological perspective, Huntington states, the “West in effect is using international institutions, military power and economic resources to run the world in ways that will maintain Western political and economic

values” (Huntington, 1993, p. 40). He also focuses our attention on the idea that “non-West[ern countries]...increasingly have the desire, the will and the resources to shape the world in non-Western ways” (p. 26). Huntington, therefore, presents an unquenchable thirst for power and control on either side of the clash, either side appearing evil in the eyes of the other. To do battle requires justification. Justification lies in the character of the “enemy.”

### *Perfecting the Enemy*

To rally the broader population around the idea of warring, symbolically or militarily, against a “foe” the enemy must be a complete, perfect in order to justify warfare. Several methods were used in the West to perfect the “enemy” in the minds of the American people. And by the time the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy phenomenon became an international public crisis it was inextricably tied to the notion of a clash of civilizations and was swept up by the narrative on terror in order to characterize and condemn the “enemy” and justify the War on Terror. Perfecting the “enemy” ritually prepared the scapegoat required to redeem Denmark from its transgressions.

“*Decivilizing vehicles.*” As early as the publication of *The Roots of Muslim Rage* by Bernard Lewis (1990)—that is, before the terrible events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, before the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and fifteen years before the cartoon conflict—evidence of perfecting the “enemy” can be found. Scholars of American foreign policy rhetoric have established that “decivilizing vehicles” are necessary components of perfecting the enemy. Pro-war rhetoric performs the ritual of

victimage as it cultivates images of a savage enemy. Through analogical extension, such rhetoric articulates “theme[s] of diabolism that, taken literally, goads nations into defending themselves against barbarians bent upon subjugating innocent peoples” (Ivie, 1982, p. 241). The title of Lewis’ (1990) article defines an irrational people that have nursed a grudge long enough for it to establish roots. Lewis goes on to describe the irrational “enemy” as warring against modernity” and that the war is “neither conscious nor explicit...and is directed against the ...process of change that has taken place in the Islamic world...and has transformed the political, economical, social, and even cultural structures of Muslim countries” (p. 59). Only an irrational “enemy” filled with “rage” would unconsciously war against a process such as “modernity” rather than a tangible enemy that propagates Western hegemony, e.g., the United States.

Lewis fails to mention that the West’s “civilizing” missions justifying colonization of a large number of Muslim countries ravaged them economically and threatened their cultural heritage with ruin. Nor does he mention that the legacy of colonialism has ongoing ramifications for former “protectorates.” Of the “enemy’s” irrationality Lewis (1990) goes on to say that when their “deeper passions are stirred dignity and courtesy toward others can give way to an explosive mixture of rage and hatred which impels even the government of an ancient and civilized country...to espouse kidnapping and assassination” (p. 59). As the narrative concerning the “enemy” progressed over the years, the nature of “decivilizing vehicles” used to characterize the “enemy” became more acrid.

In the book that expands the clash of civilizations thesis of his article, Samuel Huntington (1996) stated that “Islam is seen as a source of nuclear proliferation [and] terrorism” (p. 215). His characterizations of the post-Cold War situation and the “enemy” are echoed in the halls of Congress. Like the claims so often made against enemies, the charges of Muslim savagery have been persistent, thematic and pervasive to the point of ensuring a self-fulfilling prophecy of a clash of civilizations. Rhetors availed themselves of “decivilizing” language primarily to characterize and condemn. In Denmark, for example, accusations of savagery were persistent and pervasive at the highest levels of government. Specifically, Danish Member of Parliament and Mayoral candidate Louise Frevert allowed placement of articles on her Web site stating that “misguided Muslim youth felt they had a right ‘to rape Danish girls and knock down Danish citizens’” (J. M. Olsen, 2005). The media also employed “decivilizing vehicles” to condemn the “enemy.” For instance, the owner of Radio Holger made the incendiary statement that “the rape of non-Muslim women is an intrinsic part of Muslim culture” (“Danish Radio Station Loses License”, 2005). And the radio station owner promised that if outlets for publicizing claims of Muslim barbarism were shut down, others would take their place (2005). In the West, “decivilizing vehicles” permeated news coverage related to Islam, and the entertainment industry took poetic license in presenting diabolical images of Muslims. Political and popular rhetoric about Islam and Muslims instructed the broader population on how to think about the current global socio-political situation and how to treat the “enemy” (see Burke, 1973, pp. 293-304 on literature as

equipment for living). What is apparent in the rhetoric concerning the Muslim world in the nearly two decades since the publication of Lewis' (1990) article is the steady movement through "decivilizing vehicles" toward a final image of "terrorist." Each "decivilizing vehicle" contributes in turn to an overall narrative of malevolence that identifies Islam as the intransigent enemy of democracy and justifies the War on Terror.

*The representative anecdote.* What does one do when the "enemy" is nearly one quarter of the earth's population (C.I.A., 2008) and is scattered across five continents? What does one do when the "enemy" is diverse in terms of historical background, language, cultural heritage, and in terms of the expression of its shared religion? What does one do when the "enemy's" fundamentalist elements are elusive and nearly imperceptible in the broader population? To effectively construct an enemy from such a broad and diverse civilization one must construct a narrative, from which an anecdote can be drawn. Burke (1969a) stated that

Men seek for vocabularies that will be faithful *reflections* of reality. To this end, they must develop vocabularies that are *selections* of reality. And any selection of reality must, in certain circumstances, function as a *deflection* of reality. Insofar as the vocabulary meets the needs of reflection, we can say that it has the necessary scope. In its selectivity it is a reduction. (p. 59, emphasis in original).

The cartoon of Muhammad with a bomb for a turban is, by far, the most egregious depiction of the Muhammad cartoons that were first published in *Jyllands-Posten* and subsequently published in other European newspapers in a show of solidarity. Of representative anecdotes Burke (1969a) states that

the informative anecdote, we could say, contains *in nuce* [in a nutshell] the terminological structure that is evolved in conformity with it. Such a terminology is a “conclusion” that follows from the selection of a given anecdote. (Burke, 1969a, p. 60, emphasis in original).

For the purposes of Flemming Rose, who commissioned the artistic expressions, the cartoon of Muhammad with a bomb for a turban was highly effective. But all of the cartoons served as a representative anecdote to capture and communicate to a broad audience the essence of the narrative that characterizes and condemns the “enemy.”

*Cartooning.* Publishing the representative anecdote as cartoons rather than linguistically was a highly effective means of activating the frames established in the persistent and pervasive rhetoric about Muslims over the last two decades. The rhetoric inherent in the images was pregnant with “decivilizing vehicles” that characterized the “enemy.” The distorted representation of issues, situations, and ideas in the form of cartooning has a long history in the West (Johnson, 1937, p. 21). It can be easy to dismiss the importance of cartoons because they are meant to be humorous. But the Muhammad cartoons must be seen in the broader context of Western stereotyping of adherents to Islam. And it must be recognized that the cartoons have been appropriated by a continuation of rhetorical moves that characterize and condemn the “enemy.” “The communicative power of cartoons lies in their ability to present often-complex issues, events and social trends in a simplified and accessible form” (Kleeman, 2006, p. 145). The Muhammad cartoons’ capacity to illustrate the, supposed, savagery inherent in the “enemy” made co-opting the entire conflict an attractive means of perpetuating the notion of a clash of civilizations.

Cartoons, “as a form of visual media, ...constitute a major, but sometimes underestimated, vehicle for mass communication” (p. 145). The reality is that cartoons are a powerful form of communicating ideas. Specifically, for audiences that have been exposed to a plethora of antecedent genre permeated by “decivilizing vehicles” condemning Muslims and Islam, the probability that the Muhammad cartoons would elicit a response of condemnation from observers and predispose them to a particular course of action or way of thinking is very high. Rose (2006) stated that the intended message of the cartoons, and the turban as a bomb cartoon in particular, was not to condemn all Muslims as terrorists but to communicate that some elements of Islam have hijacked the religion for evil purposes. If Rose is being honest about his intention, then there is a need to consider whether the messages in political cartoons travel well across cultures because the message that Muslims are terrorists and Islam is intolerant was picked up by many around the world. In fact, the cartoons were read that way by many in Western audiences as well. Care needs to be taken to ensure that potential readings of political cartoons are limited to the preferred reading.

What is certain is that the cartoon conflict has been annexed by the metaphor of terror which drives the clash of civilizations narrative to justify the War on Terror. To apprehend the true nature of narrative development in relation to the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy, one must approach it bicamerally, that is, one must see that the conflict has been commandeered by the broader narrative of the War on Terror, with its focus on the clash of civilizations, and as a Danish phenomenon which functioned

as a means for Denmark to enhance its identification with the EU, and by extension the West. To purify itself from the transgression of rejecting the EU hierarchy Denmark had to make sacrifice, a symbolic sacrifice of the scapegoat that had by now been ritually prepared for the kill.

### *The Kill*

Entelechialization of the cartoon conflict narrative symbolically prepared the scapegoat for the ritual sacrifice required to purify Denmark of the transgression of rejecting the hierarchy of the EU. Burke (1984b) indicates that the principle of redemption requires the “guilt be matched by a principle that is designed for the corresponding absolute cancellation of such guilt” (pp. 283-284). In other words, absolute redemption can only be achieved through “the sacrifice of a speciously ‘perfect’ victim, the material embodiment of an ‘idealized’ foe” (p. 288). This ensures that the act of purification is equivalent to the degree of guilt.

A society purifies itself through moral indignation and condemning the “enemy.” Ott and Aoki (2002) articulate three distinct requirements:

- (1) an original state of merger, in that the iniquities are shared by both the iniquitous and their chosen vessel;
- (2) a principle of division, in that elements shared in common are being ritualistically alienated;
- (3) a new principle of merger, this time in the unification of those whose purified identity is defined in dialectical opposition to the sacrificial offering. (p. 490)

As noted above, from a management perspective, democratic governance and Islamic governance are consubstantial in that they are determinative in the type and level of freedoms that are afforded to their people. And freedom under both systems is limited. From an ideological perspective, based on how the cartoon conflict and the

War on Terror are dramatized, the West and Islam suffer from an unquenchable thirst for power and control over the world's masses. On the symbolic altar, the freedoms peculiar to Western democracy breaks the original state of merger with Islam that was based on the existence of limits on freedom under both systems. Liberal democracy's moral indignation over the absence of Western freedoms condemns and ritually alienates Muslims and positions Islam dialectically vis-à-vis the freedoms enjoyed under Western democracy, e.g., the Western sacrosanct of freedom of expression.

To apprehend the cycle of redemption in the context of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy we must gauge it bicamerally, both as a ritual process in relation to the War on Terror and as a symbolic process of Danish redemption. Specifically, Denmark did penance for the sin of rejecting the hierarchy of the EU, and by extension the West, by legislating the most rigid immigration laws in Europe, establishing a Danish cannon to counter the spread of Islamic culture in Denmark, establishing Danish bilateral foreign policies targeting Muslim countries in order to slow or halt the migration of Muslims, and working with the EU on bilateral foreign policies targeting the same countries. These actions along with the sentiment that "Muslims [should] be driven out [of Denmark] or exterminated" ("Danish Radio Station Owner", 2006) sacrificed the "idealized foe" (Burke, 1984b, p. 288) by symbolically expunging it from Danish society. Unification with EU identity is achieved through Denmark's purified identity being defined dialectically with Danish Muslim identity, completing the cycle of redemption. That is, until a future stumbling block is encountered in the hierarchy and Denmark falls again.

### *Lessons Learned*

There are many lessons that can be drawn from the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy. But three fundamental issues must be addressed before there can be any hope of addressing additional concerns. First, there is a critical need for genuine and open dialogue. The cartoon controversy flooded beyond Denmark's borders because there was no dialogue over the issue of primary concern to Danes, Danish identity. The interconnectedness of people around the world inspired Thomas Friedman (2006) to pen the book *The World is Flat* to communicate the notion that there is a high level of exchange across civilizations. There is convincing evidence that supports this proposition, but not only because of the exportation of Western culture and the flags of capitalism that dot the globe, but also because of the cross-culturalization that occurs as a result of increased travel by Western students, educators, and others to locations beyond the West. They experience different ways of being that enhances their worldview. Also, there is the exchange that occurs between peoples of the host country and those expatriates who are true students of humanity. This exchange produces rich cultural knowledge that does not evaporate when Westerners return to their home countries. Yes, technologically and economically the world is flat. But the contours of humanity remain varied, rich, and beautiful. And it is our responsibility, as moral beings, to engage each other in clear and open dialogue for the betterment of humanity.

Second, there is a serious problem associated with the notion of the "Other." The understanding is, in most cases, that the "Other" is separate, different, and

inferior. As noted, the contours of humanity are varied. In other words, it is a fact that differences exist and there should be no effort made to cloak those differences, e.g., through assimilation and/or hegemonic aspirations. The problem lies in the desire to marginalize differences to the realm of invisibility so that concerns of the “Other” are not taken seriously, if addressed at all. The idea that the “Other” is inferior is not only damaging and demeaning to the target of such misguided thinking, but it is damaging in terms of producing a false sense of entitlement that is sustainable only in the short-term. The false sense of superiority causes psychic imbalance in the individual and social imbalance in society that is neither healthy nor productive for either. Social imbalances—local, national, or civilizational—throw off the balance of humanity to the degree that it cannot advance to fully realize its potential.

Third, there is a critical and dangerous problem associated with “perfecting the enemy.” Using “decivilizing vehicles” (Ivie & Giner, 2007) to justify symbolic or military warfare pushes the narrative about the “enemy” to the end of the line. Entelechializing these narratives pins the “enemy” to a wall leaving no room but to fulfill the prophecy of the narrative and exhibit the uncivilized behavior used to characterize and condemn. Stripped of his true character and pinned to the wall as the “enemy” is, what is there to lose since the perception of his character in the mind of the broader public is one of savagery? The thinking could be that savage behavior might just allow him to detach himself from the wall to later repair his image through countervailing symbols. That is, if the narrator and the subject survive their encounter. It is time for us to reflect on the fact that if warfare is truly justified, we do

not need to use our symbol system to “create” or “perfect” the enemy. Mastering the fundamental lessons of the cartoon controversy will produce rich rewards for humanity that outweigh the short-lived spoils of relentless conflict and allow humanity to break the, as yet, never-ending cycle of redemption.

### Conclusion

Art controversies are not new. The melding of the sacred and profane in artistic expression is not new and neither are the conflicts that stem from them. What is unique about the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy is that it was the first freedom of expression controversy involving religious iconography that was global in scope. It was the first conflict over freedom of artistic expression that evolved into an international public crisis. Other art controversies were localized in scope and though debates surrounding some of them became heated and/or violent they were not considered a public crisis. It has been argued by many (Keane, 2008; Malek, 2007; see, C. Rose, 2006) that the cartoon conflict has not been resolved. The fact that *Jyllands-Posten* continues to reprint the cartoons along with different images of the Prophet Muhammad (Hawley, 2007; J. Olsen, 2008) supports the argument that the conflict still simmers. But, thankfully, reaction to the publications has not mirrored the violent protests of 2006 which swept the globe. How, then, can the lessons of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy be applied to ameliorate future international conflicts involving disparate value systems? What follows are some factors for consideration.

*Disequilibrionic Correctives*

*Tragic frame or comic frame?* Burke (Burke, 1984a) noted that

our way of approaching the structures of symbolism might be profitably tested by the examination of various literary categories, as each of the great poetic forms stresses its own peculiar way of building the mental equipment (meanings, attitudes, character) by which one handles the significant factors of his time. (p. 34)

In literature, tragedy has a bad outcome whereas comedy has a good outcome. Both are attributable to some person or persons (Hare & Blumerg, 1988). What is worth considering is that if our “realities” are but selections, as Burke (1969a, p. 59) noted, then we have a choice in the selections made to construct our realities. We can choose not only what is reflected but also what is deflected. By our “selections” we determine the frame through which events are dramatized. The tragic frame deals with “crime—and any incipient trend will first be felt as crime, by reason of its conflict with the established values” (Burke, 1984a, p. 39). Dramatization of the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy, as well as the narratives that co-opted the phenomenon, developed through a tragic frame of condemnation and ridicule—a frame that Burke associated with war (p. v). Conversely, Burke (1984a) associated the comic frame with peace (p. v). The comic frame “warns against the dangers of pride” since

When you add that people are *necessarily* mistaken, that *all* people are exposed to situations in which they must act as fools, that *every* insight contains its own special kind of blindness,...you return again to the lesson of humility. (p. 41, emphasis in original)

The comic frame permits the global community to deal with the shortcomings of “mistaken” thoughts and actions from a place of humility since at some point each

one will be “mistaken” and be in need of compassion. The comic frame offers hope for better conditions and an opportunity for the “mistaken” to make corrections through clear and open dialogue within the community. Unlike the tragic frame which condemns and scapegoats, the comic frame recognizes the limitations and imperfections inherent in humankind. It permits disparate civilizations to unify and form a community based on the shared condition of fallibility.

Although many agree and historical record proves that there is a critical need to reform the way social situations and conditions are dramatized, it is expected that there will be some resistance to change. Edward Said (Jhally, 1998) said of Samuel Huntington that he is

so strong and insistent...[on the] notion that other civilizations necessarily clash with the West and so relentlessly aggressive and chauvinistic is his prescription for what the West must do to continue winning [that] his readers are forced to conclude that Huntington is most interested in continuing and expanding the Cold War by other means rather than advancing ideas that might help us to understand the current world scene or ideas that would try to reconcile between cultures...I go so far as saying that it [the clash thesis] argues from a standpoint of Pentagon planners and defense industry executives who may have temporarily lost their occupations after the end of the Cold War but have now found a new vocation for themselves. (1998)

It has been noted that efforts to sustain one’s career over concern for the common good is not peculiar to defense executives and Pentagon planners. Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. (2008) spoke about what he observed in his work as an environmental lawyer:

it’s hard to convince a man of a truth if knowing that truth is going to interfere with his salary. I think people put their self-interest ahead of the public and there’s an economic law that describes that dynamic. And the law is called the Tragedy of the Commons and what that law says is that all of us human beings acting in their own self-interest will destroy the commons. In other words, it is in your interest to catch the last fish in the ocean even though it means there will be no fish for nobody else. But if you don’t catch it

somebody else is going to. Free market capitalism works with private property but it doesn't work in the commons. It doesn't work in the public trust area. (2008)

What Pentagon planners, defense industry executives, and other professionals fail to recognize is that new approaches to how conflict is managed does not necessarily mean that their careers are in jeopardy. Just as, according to Said (Jhally, 1998), defense analysts and decision makers made a new vocation for themselves by developing the clash of civilizations thesis, so too, they can envision a different post-Cold War approach to the global situation. But, if they are unwilling to explore ways to reconcile between cultures then they have identified themselves as part of the problem rather than part of the solution. The common good of the global society depends on each of us setting aside our own self-interest.

History testifies to the horrors that errant symbol systems have brought upon humanity. As a corrective, the comic frame grants license to make terminological "selections" (Burke, 1969b) of reality that promote peace, harmony, and goodwill across civilizations. "Selections" of "reality" that reflect violence and dominion deflect "realities" that promote goodwill between cultures. They deflect the rich and beautiful cultural heritages and histories that are unique to each civilization. They deflect the heights that humanity can reach only through peace and cooperation across civilizations. "Selections" of "realities" that uplift humanity are more potent than "selections" that divide and ruin. Burke (1984a) encouraged us to see that "the progress of humane enlightenment can go no further than in picturing people not as *vicious*, but as *mistaken*" (p. 41, emphasis in original). Humanity's achievement of its

greatest potential is not possible through domination of one civilization over others. It is imperative that we recognize and accept that how we choose to use our symbol system is determinative in the outcome of a tragic or comic frame of events.

*Self fulfilling prophecy.* Regardless of our choice, we should recognize that our choice of symbols used to dramatize events and describe people is determinative in the outcome realized. The notion of the self-fulfilling prophecy is based on the Thomas Theorem (Thomas & Thomas, 1928) which was reformulated by Robert Merton (1968) and states that “the self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a false definition of the situation evoking a new behavior which makes the originally false conception come true” (p. 423). Whether the presumed definition of the situation happens to be actually false has been debated (Krishna, 1971) but that debate is not taken up here. What is important, for purposes of this study, is that the power of rhetoric defines situations and produces real outcomes. There is an indivisible connection between the concepts of entelechy and the self-fulfilling prophecy. In other words, the symbols we use affect the way consciousness conceives of a situation which is a vital force that directs an organism or phenomenon toward self-fulfillment. Acknowledgement of the strength of our symbols should goad us to use rhetoric responsibly for the betterment of society.

*Today's global society.* Symbolic disequilibrium manifests itself as disequilibrium in society at the local, national, and global level. Disequilibrium will always produce a tragic outcome. Among the myriad societal examples of errant symbol systems are the horrors of slavery, the atrocities of the Holocaust, the explicit

disequilibrium of the American Jim Crow system, and the ongoing catastrophe that is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Further, if we consider the fact that “for the 21st century, the continued exponential growth in science and technology raises both hopes (e.g., advances in medicine) and fears (e.g., development of even more lethal weapons of war)” (C.I.A., 2008), the fear that our rhetorical power can be outmatched only by our technological capacity should move us to develop a symbol system that permits meaningful dialogue. This is particularly true since conflicts over issues of value have the potential to develop into military conflicts. Our rhetorical capacity to create situations that can lead to military conflict should encourage us to fashion non-violent ways to rhetorically address issues of value. A first step in developing meaningful dialogue is to accept that the world is continually changing and moving toward greater interconnectedness and transnationalism that is, aided by technology, immediate.

Increased immigration has caused some Western countries to change their laws in order to alter immigration patterns. Nevertheless, a growing number of states are no longer mono-cultural societies. What is unique about present-day immigration patterns vis-à-vis previous migratory influxes is the change in circumstances that brings foreigners to the host country. Unlike, for example, the myriad of involuntary immigrants that arrived in the West as slaves or immigrants fleeing war-torn Europe who arrived on America shores, many of today’s immigrants make a conscious, unrushed selection of their destination. This affects how they perceive fitting into their new country. Today’s globally connected migrants bring with them a broader

view of the world, and greater expectations of humanity and their new country. This makes marginalizing the “Other” to the realm of invisibility more difficult, if not impossible. What this means is that problem solving rhetorical skill and non-violent symbol systems are imperative. Acceptance of the need for meaningful dialogue is a first step on the path of achieving equilibrium. A second step is to examine the available means for resolving issues of value through dialogue and reason.

*Two constitutionally protected rights.* The law protects speech in order to safeguard the functions that freedom of speech enables a society to fulfill. And religious freedom has also been protected by the law for a long time. Blasphemy is one of the oldest crimes known to Man and is still a serious offense in many jurisdictions. Depending on the jurisdiction, blasphemy laws range from the protection of the dignity of God himself, to protecting the truth of a religious belief, to protection of the feelings and sensibilities of a religious group (Post, 2007, pp. 337-338). Freedom of speech and freedom of religion are two constitutionally protected rights. The question is how the state interest in protecting religious freedom can be balanced with the state interest in the freedom of speech necessary to serve the functions of society. There is an obvious conflict between protecting the marketplace of ideas and excluding sacrilegious discourse from the public square. The challenge of balancing speech and religious rights can lead to situations where cases are not decided on the issue. As we saw in the Nussenzweig ("Nussenzweig v. Philip-Lorca diCorcia, et al.," 2007 N.Y. App. Div. LEXIS 3636) case the decision was arrived at on a procedural ground.

At the global level, similar but more complex issues affect freedom of expression vs. freedom of religion cases. International and regional human rights covenants can yield few protections for religious freedom because the provisions of the international instruments may conflict with the laws of the state. And even in countries where blasphemy laws exist, protections may not be possible through international instruments due to the direction of socio-political currents in a given country. The implication is that though serious efforts are made to resolve issues involving sacrosanct values addressing them legally presents significant challenges. Therefore, efforts to ensure clear and open dialogue as a means of resolving issues must include a plan to develop non-violent symbols and other rhetorical strategies.

*Civilizing the “decivilizing vehicles.”* The purpose of “decivilizing vehicles” is to characterize and condemn an enemy in a rhetorical campaign. Efforts to “perfect the enemy” through rhetoric that employs “decivilizing vehicles” is a violent and dangerous means that can only lead to a tragic outcome. Characterizing the “Other” in a way that “justifies” marginalization of targeted groups is a form of violence that also characterizes and condemns. This practice, by definition, functions as a “decivilizing vehicle” that operates in rhetoric that pushes the narrative to the end of the line, pinning the “Other” to a wall and requiring him to defend against destruction. Destructive symbols must be replaced by non-violent language that permits dialogue and understanding.

*Ultimate terms are as ultimate terms do.* In Western thought it is well established that “democracy” functions as a “god-term” (Weaver, 1985, p. 228).

However, on the “*Charlie Rose*” show (C. Rose, 2006), Kleine-Brockhoff’s argued that the term democracy is associated with what is repugnant for particular circles within Islam because of its association with blasphemy. The caution is that if blasphemy maintains its association with democracy, democracy could become a “devil-term” for a broader segment of Muslim society. What this means is that dialogue on issues of values is critical and will become more essential for a healthy global society as humanity becomes more interconnected. Kleine-Brockhoff’s statement raises an interesting question. Does the global nature of society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century require new/improved “god-terms”?

First, let us reflect on an existing “god-term.” Gene Heck (2007) wrote about democracy as a conundrum that must be contemplated. He stated that

For today, while there is indeed a tendency to view unbundled Anglo-American democracy as a political paradigm aspired to, and usable, by all, there remain critical questions as to whether it is exportable to other cultures...when it comes to governance, therefore, it may well be that “one size does not fit all,” as democracy is not, as some presume, a “natural and normal condition of all mankind” (p. 111)

The fundamental differences between the value systems of the West and Islam naturally give rise to different perceptions. The notion that “one size does not fit all” speaks to the probable reason why “democracy” could be associated with blasphemy in the mind of some Muslims. Heck (2007) gave the reason why the United States should not aspire to be the moral exemplar to the Islamic world by stating that

Though the seeds of democracy were sown in ancient Greece and throughout history have reflected the evolutionary intellectual patrimony of all mankind, they flowered first in modern form in the West and it is upon U.S. soil that they have fully sprouted and taken root. Precisely for this reason, then, only within America is American democracy possible, for it cannot be isolated

from America's traditions and her values... While to Western observers, then, the "problem with Islam" may appear to be a noticeable paucity of freedoms—freedom to inquire, freedom from indoctrination and constraint, freedom from pervasive economic corruption and mismanagement—therefore, the reality is that the road to the liberating democracy that they put forth as a panacea comes strewn with pitfalls, both ideological and institutional. (p. 112)

American democracy is well suited for America. And Heck provides a cogent rationale on why divergent values held by the West and the Middle East means that democracy does not function as a "god-term" in Islam. Richard Weaver (1985) posited that

it is the nature of the conscious life of man to revolve around some concept of value...he has to know where he is in the ideological cosmos in order to coordinate his activities. Probably the greatest cruelty which can be inflicted upon the psychic man is this deprivation of a sense of tendency. (p. 213)

The interconnectedness and immediate transnationalism that occurs in today's global society means that we need ultimate terms that can be shared across civilizations which help humanity coordinate its activities. Respect and responsibility are two terms that, if raised to the level of ultimate terms, can assist in the coordination of important human activities. These terms can help to change the way that we interact so that clear and open dialogue between civilizations can occur. If symbol systems are developed in the spirit of respect and responsibility it will be difficult to develop narratives pregnant with "decivilizing vehicles." And as a result fewer "enemies" would be "created." Respect and responsibility can change how the "Other" is perceived, from different, separate, and inferior to different, integrated, and valued. Operating from a place of respect and responsibility would mean that courts would be faced with fewer cases involving competing constitutional rights because open and

clear dialogue would occur between members of our global society in responsible and respectful manner. Respect and responsibility would move humanity toward a self-fulfilling prophecy with a comic frame rather than a tragic frame. Respect and responsibility, as “god-terms” for today’s global society, would help humanity ameliorate future international conflicts involving disparate sacrosanct values. The Martinique poet Aimé Césaire (1968) helped us to appreciate that “no race possesses the monopoly of beauty, of intelligence, of force. And there is a place for all at the rendezvous of victory.”

#### Summary of the Study

In this project I applied several rhetorical methods and tools to investigate three types of rhetorical artifacts: official communications, interviews of Flemming Rose, and televised broadcasts. A close textual reading of each artifact was critical to a rigorous investigation. Specifically, Kenneth Burke’s (1969a) pentad was employed to make manifest the motivations of key parties involved at the genesis and nexus of the conflict. Frame analysis (Goffman, 1974) was utilized to investigate the interviews of Flemming Rose to expose how these dramatizations differed from those of the official communications. In addition to frame analysis, application of Walter Fisher’s (1984) concepts of “narrative probability” and “narrative fidelity” informed the investigation by providing insight into the level of coherence and believability associated with interpretations of the conflict.

Several tools contributed to addressing the critical problem associated with the televised broadcasts. Strategic frame analysis, conceived by Zhongdang Pan and

Gerald M. Kosicki (2001), uncovered the rhetorical moves made by interlocutors in order to win arguments and advance their interpretation of events. In addition, Burke's (1973) notion of the scapegoat provided insight into how victimage was used in the dramatization of events. And finally, Richard Weaver's (1985) concepts of "god" and "devil" terms showed how the use of ultimate terms were employed to intensify dramatizations of the cartoon conflict. Important features of how the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy was dramatized by different parties at different narrative stages of the conflict are exposed in this study.

The study is exploratory rather than comprehensive in that it seeks to investigate how the cartoon conflict narrative developed over time. This study investigates the nature of the narrative at each stage of development in order to reveal the new direction of interpretations. A comprehensive investigation of rhetorical artifacts surrounding the controversy would be unwieldy for this type of study. And based on the large number of artifacts that I have collected over the years, a comprehensive study of nearly any type would be unmanageable. However, a study narrowing particular artifacts by category (e.g., the blogosphere; and media outside of Europe, America, and Arab world, e.g., Muslims protested in Senegal and China) could convey important knowledge on how the conflict was dramatized. This is particularly relevant since our increasingly global society is attended by ever increasing cross-cultural interaction making it imperative for us to envision and implement improved rhetorical strategies for interacting anywhere in the world in a way that will yield non-violent (rhetorical and physical) results.

The post-Cold War situation of the world has been called different things by different scholars and commentators: the clash of civilizations by Huntington and Lewis (1993, 1996; 1990, respectively), the clash of definitions by Edward Said (Jhally, 1998), the clash of imperialisms by Eko and Berkowitz (Eko & Berkowitz, 2007). But, regardless of what the situation is called, what is clear is that improved rhetorical strategies are needed to ameliorate future international conflicts involving disparate sacrosanct values. This study reveals how the West pushed the Muhammad Cartoon Controversy narrative to the end of the line for American audiences. But, no civilization is innocent of entelechializing narratives for the purpose of characterizing and condemning their “enemy.” The exigency of the situation is a call to action for each to use rhetoric responsibly and be respectful of others in today’s global society. As symbol-making, symbol-using animals (Burke, 1966, p. 16) we determine the symbols employed in our rhetoric and thereby have the power and a license to envision a comic frame for our narratives.

And the word was a god.  
--John 1:1

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## APPENDIX

### Access the Rhetorical Artifacts Online

#### *Official communications.*

- 1) Letter from eleven Muslim Ambassadors to Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen requesting a meeting, October 12, 2005  
<http://www.filtrat.dk/grafik/Letterfromambassadors.pdf> [Letter]
- 2) Reply from Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen concerning the meeting request, October 21, 2005  
<http://gfx-master.tv2.dk/images/Nyhederne/Pdf/side3.pdf> [Letter]
- 3) Flemming Rose on Why I Published Those Cartoons, *Jyllands-Posten*, February 19, 2006  
[http://www.jp.dk/english\\_news/artikel:aid=3566642/](http://www.jp.dk/english_news/artikel:aid=3566642/) [Newspaper Article]
- 4) January 1, 2006 New Year's address to the Danish people by Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen  
<http://www.stm.dk/Index/dokumenter.asp?o=6&n=0&d=2468&s=2> [Speech]

#### *Interviews.*

- 5) “*The Situation Room*” interview of Flemming Rose, cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten*, February 7, 2006  
[http://web.lexis-nexis.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/universe/document?\\_m=aea7897216764dc3b63e32a9cb7dd3f7&\\_docnum=3&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkVb&\\_md5=afb4c0fc9458c65fe4ebd82918bcc8c4](http://web.lexis-nexis.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/universe/document?_m=aea7897216764dc3b63e32a9cb7dd3f7&_docnum=3&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkVb&_md5=afb4c0fc9458c65fe4ebd82918bcc8c4) [Transcript]

- 6) Alia Malek interview of Flemming Rose in the *Columbia Journalism Review*,  
March/ April 2007

*Columbia Journalism Review*, 45, 18-19. No hyperlink available.

*Television broadcasts*

- 7) “Charlie Rose,” February 9, 2006

[http://web.lexis-nexis.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/universe/document?\\_m=aea7897216764dc3b63e32a9cb7dd3f7&\\_docnum=7&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkVb&\\_md5=a2765dfd81bf1e8669591eddced935b8](http://web.lexis-nexis.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/universe/document?_m=aea7897216764dc3b63e32a9cb7dd3f7&_docnum=7&wchp=dGLbVlb-zSkVb&_md5=a2765dfd81bf1e8669591eddced935b8) [Transcript]

<http://www.charlierose.com/view/interview/545> [Online video; the DVD used in the analyses of the present study is available for purchase from Amazon.com]

- 8) “60 Minutes,” February 19, 2006

<http://www.lexisnexis.com.www2.lib.ku.edu:2048/us/lnacademic/search/home-submitForm.do> [Transcript]

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/02/17/60minutes/main1329944.shtml>  
[Online video; the DVD used in the analyses of the present study is available for purchase from Amazon.com]