

The Clash of Cartoons? The Clash of Civilizations?
Visual Securitization and the Danish 2006 Cartoon Crisis

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Comments and criticisms are very welcomed! Please do not quote without permission.

It is rare for Denmark to make international headlines, but the 2006 Cartoon Crisis spurred by the publication of 12 cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad in the biggest Danish newspaper *Jyllandsposten* in September 2005 made for a major exception. Global news media broadcasted angry mobs burning Danish flags and attacking embassies in Damascus, Beirut, Teheran, Jakarta, and Kabul; the daily costs of a Saudi Arabian initiated boycott to Danish dairy giant Arla Foods were set at 10 million Danish Crowns (just under 1 million British pounds or 1.7 million US dollars) and the UN, the US and the UK called for the attacks to stop while deeming the cartoons offensive. Danish politicians were stunned to realize the explosiveness of visual security politics, as Prime Minister Fogh stated, ‘to many in Danish society it seems utterly surreal that 12 drawings published in a newspaper can generate such violent responses’ (in Parliament, January 31, 2006, Spm. Nr. US 60). By February 7, *The New York Times* called the situation ‘one of the hottest issues in international politics’ and commentators wondered aloud whether what unfolded was not just a clash, but a premonition of civilizational wars to come. (*The New York Times* 2006a, 2006b) One year later the number of lawsuits related to the republication of the cartoons, to the embassy attacks, and to threats made to Danish citizens is high with ongoing cases in places as varied as France, Great Britain, India, Libanon, and Yemen – and the body count ranges from 50 to over a 100 (Spiegelberg 2006; Wind-Friis 2006).

The Muhammad Cartoon Case is perhaps the most striking indication of the importance of specific visual representations for global politics, but a series of other recent cases including so-called terrorist beheading videos, the snapshots from Abu Ghraib, Jessica Lynch’s rescue, a Joint Chief of Staff protest against a *Washington Post* cartoon, and the US ban on photos of caskets shipped out of Iraq underline that the production, distribution and political mobilization of visuals is a pervasive aspect of 21st century security politics (Sontag 2004; Pin-Fat and Stern 2005; Hiatt 2006). That images and visual representations are deemed significant by political actors is not a new phenomenon, the famous case of corrupt New York power broker ‘Boss’ Tweed who tried to stop the cartoons of Thomas Nast and the patriotic mobilization of the Pulitzer Prize winning photo by Joe Rosenthal of the flag raising at Iwo Jima are prominent examples, but the advent of global news media, not least the Internet, have added to the *international* significance of visuals. Images travel across linguistic borders more

smoothly than written or spoken words, and they are often thought to evoke an immediate, physical response that can in turn be mobilized by political actors. (Deibert 1997) To include visual representations in the analysis of foreign and security politics is not however simply to claim a reversal of the word-image hierarchy or to argue that textual and oral forms of communication have now lost their political importance. Visuals do not in and of themselves 'speak' foreign policy, they are mobilized and constituted as having a particular meaning through spoken and written discourse, and thus as a consequence are always open to rearticulations. Policy discourses argue how images should be read, both narrowly as interpretations of particular visuals and more broadly as indicative of more general policy positions. At the center of a research agenda on visual securitization should therefore be the meaning producing links between images, text and speech in foreign policy discourse, rather than images in their singularity.¹

International Relations as a field has been rather slow to address the importance for visual representation of foreign policy. Rationalist studies of the CNN effect have sought to document the causal effect of television coverage on patterns of intervention, (Jakobsen 2000) but have not addressed the identity constructions in visual representation, or their intertextual mobilization within foreign policy discourse, and their causal epistemologies narrow the type of questions that can be asked.² Moving to the other end of the epistemological spectrum, poststructuralists have analyzed foreign policy discourses articulated through video, television, games, advertisement and photography (Shapiro 1988, 1997; Campbell 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2004; Der Derian 1992, 2001, 2005), and burgeoning research fields on popular culture and art have appeared in recent years (Weldes 2003; Neumann and Nexon 2006; Sylvester 2005; Lisle 2006; Bleiker 2006). The main goal of this paper is to add to the formation of a visual

¹ This paper speaks primarily to an IR audience. Most academic research on political cartoons has been carried out by historians and cultural theorists who do not explicitly link cartoons to editorial context or to broader political discourses and foreign policy debates. The theoretical framework suggested in this paper might thus offer that research community an intertextual and political research agenda.

² Only a few attempts have been made to document the causal effect of political cartoons on public opinion, but as the authors of one of these studies conclude the effect of the cartoons on those exposed to them was impossible to deduce. 'Like other news media stimuli, cartoons probably are rejected or transformed into favorable images by the candidate's stalwart supporters, received and recalled with delight by his opponents, and ignored or quickly forgotten by the inattentive.' (Buell and Maus 1988: 857; Michelmore 2000: 37)

research agenda in IR while pursuing a more specific analytical concern with the development of a theory and a methodology of ‘visual securitization’. This article can thus be seen as a response to Michael C. Williams’ call for ‘an examination of the ways in which images themselves may function as communicative acts, an analysis of how meaning is conveyed by images, as well as an assessment of how images interact with more familiar forms of verbal rhetoric’ and of how images ‘impact on different audiences, and the securitizing consequences that may follow from this fact.’ (Williams 2003: 527; Hansen 2000: 300-301)³ The concept of visual securitization developed here draws upon the Copenhagen School’s famous formulation of security as a speech act, and securitization as the discursive process through which securitizing agents constitute an existential threat that allows for the suspension of normal rules and procedures. (Buzan et al 1998: 25; Wæver 1995) This narrows the analytical focus to those visuals that are constituted with such an intertextual status that they are responded to and (usually) contested, hence of explicit importance to foreign and security policy makers. The analytical advantage of the concept of visual securitization is first that it stresses the ‘high politics’, security potential of visual representations, second that it underlines that ‘securitization’ as a discursive act articulates the meaning of visuals through spoken and written discourse. The theoretical framework developed in the first part of the paper and the analysis of its latter part takes however a more poststructuralist turn in that it combines Copenhagen School securitization theory with a focus on the textual and visual construction of the Other in security discourse, its relational link to the Self, and the policies that are constituted as warranted and hence legitimate. The primary goal of this paper is to set out a critical constructivist-poststructuralist research agenda on visual securitization that draws upon elements from the Copenhagen School as well as from poststructuralist theory, this implies that the extensive debate on the Copenhagen School is not addressed in its entirety nor is the ambition to go through all of the components of the work by Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan (McSweeney 1996; Huysmans 1998; Campbell 1998b; Hansen 2000; Williams 2003; Elbe 2006). Rather the strategy is to take the powerful statement of ‘securitization’ as a starting

³ Curiously, this call has not been heeded by the recent listing of research questions ahead made by the C.A.S.E Collective of which Michael C. Williams and Ole Wæver are prominent members. (C.A.S.E Collective 2006)

point for the development of a poststructuralist ‘visual securitization’ framework. From this main goal follows six more specific ones.

First, one of the strengths of poststructuralist scholarship has been to foreground the importance of relational and radical identity construction for foreign and security politics. (Dalby 1988; Shapiro 1990; Klein 1990; Campbell 1988; 1992; Der Derian 1992; Weber 1995, Doty 1996)⁴ The Other is an ontological necessity in that it is only through its constitution that the Self becomes a meaningful subject and ‘The constant articulation of danger through foreign policy is thus not a threat to a state’s identity of existence; it is its condition of possibility. While the objects of concern change over time, the techniques and exclusions by which those objects are constituted as dangers persist.’ (Campbell 1992: 12) Since identity is always articulated within a discursive field that on the one hand provides structure, yet on the other is never fully closed or stable, there is not a given, objective identity to which political actors (subjects) can unproblematically refer, but neither are those actors unconstrained by past constructions. (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 105-114) To theorize the relationship between identity and (foreign) policy as performative - as ‘always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed’ (Butler 1990: 25) - is to hold that while foreign policies depend upon representations of the identities of Self and Others (the region where intervention is carried out, the allies to be protected, the terrorist enemy to be eradicated), it is also through these discourses that Selves are produced and reproduced. David Campbell’s *Writing Security* was the first monograph to explore the national identity-security link and its conceptions of radical Otherness and discourses of dangers became a touchstone for poststructuralist work over the next decade. (Campbell 1992) Read as a general theory of identity construction it was however problematic insofar as Campbell’s study documented and analyzed the importance of *radical* Others for American foreign and security policy, rather than the *potential* forms of Otherness (including non-Radical) across a broader spectrum of cases. The result, critics argued, became a conception of the Other as too monolithic, dangerous and

⁴ The difference between thin constructivist and poststructuralist conceptions of identity lies primarily in the view of identity as either (partially) intrinsic or relational, and connected thereto in the understanding of practice. For a discussion see Wendt 1999: 224-8, 2003; Zehfuss 2001; Rumelili 2004; Campbell 1998a: 216-222; Hansen 2006: 23-28.

antagonistic (Neumann 1996; Milliken 1999b: 94; Hansen 2006: 38-39), and other critics have warned that poststructuralist discourse analysis might 'become too static, stable and coherent.' (Wæver 2004: 207)⁵ The first goal of this paper is to address this critique through a re-conceptualization of the Other as constituted through multiple links, this implies that even when security discourses articulate a radical Other, it is one potentially constituted through links to more ambiguous less-than-Radical Others. As a consequence, the Other's stability and coherence is thrown into question. Second, the antagonistic Other is not the only Other constituted through security discourse. States also articulate and rely upon 'constitutive Others' who might be formal or 'identity' allies ('Allied Others') or the benefactors of humanitarian policies ('Assisted Others'). Constitutive Others are not constituted as threatening 'instrumental' objects, but as subjects whose recognition – in the form of assistance and similarity from 'Allied Others' or gratitude from 'Assisted Others' – confirm crucial elements of the Self. On the one hand, this might stabilize the Self, but at a deeper analytical level, the ability of the Other to withhold recognition opens up another tenuous element in the identity construction of the Self.

The second goal of the paper is to on built on this revised conceptualization of the Other while turning explicitly to the question of visual representations and their articulation within security discourse: how is the intertextual constitution of meaning through visuals and the text surrounding it established and what are the dynamics of rearticulations and republication? These questions point to the importance of audience, a concept which has been underspecified by both the Copenhagen School and Poststructuralism (Balzacq 2005). The suggestion here is to foreground that 'cultural capital' is required of an audience for it to 'de-code' particular imagery and that what constitutes 'the' audience might shift as a domestic issue is 'internationalized'. This understanding is poststructuralist in that security discourses are

⁵ Wæver's criticism is aimed at the variety of discourse analysis which explains national debates on European integration through the historical constitution of key collective concepts (state, nation, society, Europe). This framework has been developed by Wæver in collaboration with Ulla Holm, Henrik Larsen, Iver B. Neumann, and Lene Hansen. For an overview and debate between Moravcsik see Hansen and Wæver 2002, Wæver 2004, Larsen 1997, 1999 and Moravcsik 1999. I take Wæver's criticism to be directed at discourse analysis more broadly and to indicate the dangers in assuming a too monolithic conception of the Other (fallacy attributed to Campbell 1992) or too monolithic conception of the Self (Copenhagen state-nation-Europe approach).

understood, not as addressing an extra-discursive objective audience, but as simultaneously referring to and producing its 'relevant' audience through articulations of what count as legitimate 'responders' and responses.

Developing a general framework for the study of visual representation is obviously a central part of a research agenda on visual securitization. It is however equally important to combine this generalizing ambition with a concern with – and theorization of – specific visual genre as these differ in important respects: in their claims to authenticity or critical commentary, in their degree of direct coupling to a political text; in their constellations of criteria through which they are judged, and in their aesthetic and rhetorical means. The relationship between fiction and (claimed) authenticity is for instance radically different in cartooning and photography, and the strategies of depiction and the forms of judgment expected from the audience differ as a consequence. The third ambition of this paper is thus to zoom in on a particular genre, namely that of political cartoons to discuss its history, its status as a 'political' text and its aesthetic and rhetorical specificities.⁶ The choice of political cartoons is based on the simple fact that this was the genre that spurred the Muhammad Cartoon Crisis, yet as it turned out it might also be an 'easy case' – and thus a good place to start - because political cartoons might be the visual genre most explicitly linked to textual political discourse:⁷ cartoonists are defined as journalists or columnists, not as artists, and editorial cartoons are constituted as part of a newspaper's editorial corpus and thus expected to articulate a specific political message, not to document or illustrate.

The fourth goal of the paper is to contribute to the debate on 'the clash of civilization'. This goal is derived from the empirical case in that the 'clash of civilization' was the concept that most prominently figure in – and thus linked - Danish, Middle Eastern and Western discourses. Regardless of the fact that virtually all IR scholars addressing Huntington's 'clash of

⁶ As several of the (relative few) scholars working on the subject note, the study of political cartoons stand at the intersection of several disciplines, but has been genuinely embraced by none. (Diamond 2002: 252; Coupe 1969: 79) Art historians have shied away because political cartoons have been viewed as of insufficient aesthetic value and historians have mainly used cartoons as illustrations, not as significant texts in their own right. (Duus 2001: 994-95)

⁷ Just to give one example, there are numerous competitions for press photography that incorporate an aesthetic-artistic aspect, while there is no similar tradition for cartoonists.

civilization' have faulted it for its political proscriptions (Walt 1997; Buzan 1997), its cursory reading of the conceptual history of 'civilization' (Jackson 1999, 2006: 3-12; Hansen 2000), and its conservative view of 'American values', it has become a catch-phrase, an 'easy to use' label for politicians and commentators to pinpoint to any issue involving 'Islamic' and Western interactions. (Walker 1997a, 1997b) Some have argued that 'the clash' has disappeared from Western discourse (Jackson 2007), and this paper concurs insofar as 'the clash of civilization' was more often articulated during the Cartoon Crisis as what to be avoided or as how the situation should *not* be understood rather than as an affirmation of Huntington's 1993 and 1996 position. But the paper also argues that a more thorough analysis of the ambiguities of Huntington's original discourse as well as the shifts within more recent discourse – for instance from a constitution of a uniform 'Islamic' subject to one split between 'fundamentalists' and 'proto-democrats' – reproduces key elements of a radicalizing civilizational discourse. The 'clash of civilization' has not disappeared but been reconfigured to strategically include elements of a universal civilizational discourse. The significance of civilizational discourse is also evidenced by the discourse attacking the publication of the cartoons. This discourse articulated the cartoons as part of an 'Islamophobic smearing campaigning' indicative of broader European animosity towards Muslims, and thus refuted rather than ignored a civilizational optic. The fourth goal of this paper is thus to assess the political significance of clashing civilizational discourse – as a form of 'macro-securitization' in Buzan's terminology (Buzan 2006) – but also to use it as a springboard for a discussion of the analytical and methodological principles of poststructuralist discourse analysis. This latter ambition in turn ties in with a fifth goal, namely to foreground explicit methodological discussions inside a poststructuralist framework (for similar arguments, see Price and Reus-Smit 1998: 281, 285; Milliken 1999a; Neumann 2001, forthcoming; Wæver 2002, 2004; Hansen 2006; Blanchard 2006)⁸ Finally, the sixth goal of the paper is to present an analysis of the Cartoon Crisis itself. Here the central focus is on the first publication of the drawings and their articulation by *Jyllandsposten*, the official correspondence between Denmark and prominent international institutions and governments in the Middle East and the West, and the editorial responses in Danish, British and American newspapers.

⁸ Clearly some will argue that poststructuralism and methodology don't mix. I have argued the opposite position more extensively in Hansen 2006: xviii-xix.

These six goals are not addressed chronologically, but rather sum up the ambition running through the paper in its entirety. The structure of the paper is as follows: section one lays out the argument in favor of an open conception of ‘the Other’ and an inclusion of ‘Allied Others’ in poststructuralist theory, section two turns to political cartoons, their relevance to foreign policy, and the methodology of reading visuals, and section three analyzes the production of the cartoons as a coherent and anti-Muslim whole, the ‘Muslim’ response from 11 ambassadors in Copenhagen and central domestic Muslim actors, the charge that the Danish debate was ‘xenophobic’, and the response during the crisis from the Allied Others and the Assisted Others abroad.

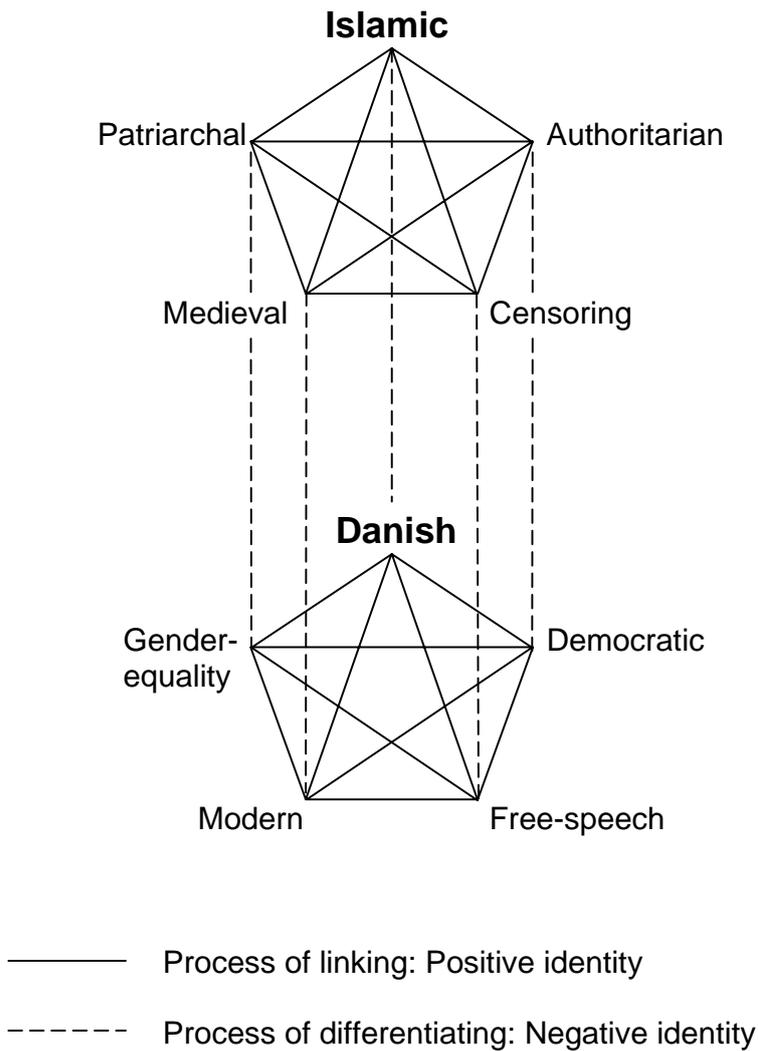
1. The ambiguity of the Other

The conceptualization of state identity as constituted through the articulation of a threatening radical Other has in the wake of Campbell’s *Writing Security* played an important part in poststructuralist analysis. Critics have argued however that the ambiguity in Campbell’s work – as well as in Connolly (1991) on which it draws – whether states require *radical* Others need to be resolved in favor of radical Otherness as a ‘temptation rather than a necessity’ (Connolly 1991: 8; Campbell 1992: 78; Neumann 1996; Hansen 2006: 38-39). Indeed Campbell’s later work on poststructuralist ethics based on the works of Levinas and Derrida can be read as an elaboration on the possibility of non-Radical Others, concretely through an analysis of the Bosnian war which argues the possibility of an open, multicultural conception of identity. (Campbell 1998b) To see state identity as doomed to radical Otherness would furthermore be analytically and normatively problematic from a poststructuralist perspective: analytically it would presuppose an unchangeable structure of identity immune to discursive interventions thus being structuralist rather than ‘post’, normatively, it would provide no space for a critical politics of resistance and transformation. (Walker 1990, 1993) It would in short mirror IR realism’s view of the state and international politics.

Yet while poststructuralists have begun to analyze cases of ‘less than radical Others’, the ‘hard case’ still remains whether security discourses – and state identity – do require some proportion of radical Otherness. In fact, the clash of civilization discourse would indeed seem

to be a good case in point as it pitches the West against the threatening consequences of a bloody, expansive and non-assimilationist Islam. Can we move 'beyond the monolithic Other' in this case, too? The answer is yes insofar as a return to a poststructuralist understanding of language as both structured and unstable and of political discourses as seeking to fix a particular identity construction, yet never fully succeeding opens up to an understanding of even the radical Other as unstable and ambiguous. While the Self-Other relation might appear as a simple dichotomy between two terms, they are in fact generated through complex processes of linking and differentiation that involves other terms and identities. (Hansen 2006: 18-23; Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 128-30) The process of linking identifies the positive attributions of meaning onto a sign, to take the example of the text introducing the publication of the Muhammad Cartoons. It articulated these as part of a Danish/Western clash with Islamic Culture where the 'Islamic' was defined as 'authoritarian', 'Medieval', 'patriarchal', and 'censoring'. Juxtaposed to 'Islam' was a 'Danish' identity positively constituted as 'democratic', 'modern', 'gender equal', and 'free speech'. The differentiation of 'Islam' and 'Danish' was then accomplished through differentiations between each of the sub-signs. 'Islamic' and 'Danish' thus have no meaning as free-standing signs, they only become meaningful through the links and differentiations made to positive and negative 'sub-signs'. The radical Otherness of the Islamic is furthermore constituted through its (alleged) refusal to take on board what constitutes Danish/Western identity, that is gender equality, democracy and free-speech. This process is illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1. The linking and differentiation of 'Islamic' and 'Danish' in 'clash of civilization' discourse



The analytical key point is to see the links between the sub-signs as unstable connections that those articulating a discourse need to reiterate and reinforce. The more specific point here is thus not to overdraw the links between the 'sub-signs' – to see the Other as 'evil, irrational,

abnormal, mad, sick, primitive, monstrous, dangerous, or anarchical' (Connolly 1991: 65) all at the same time – but rather to investigate whether for instance 'evil' and 'sick' are inextricably linked or whether their combination is more ambiguous and contested. Two civilizational discourse examples illustrate the significance of this point. First, Huntington's discourse tied international and domestic politics together, internationally a dramatically expanding and radicalizing Islamic civilization with 'bloody borders' would draw the West into the wars of other civilizations or even pose a violent threat to the West itself, domestically the West is chastised for its 'internal rot', Europeans are called upon to reaffirm their Christian identity and to watch out for Muslim immigrants who 'reject assimilation and continue to adhere to and to propagate the values, customs, and cultures of their home countries', while Americans should unite against the 'siren calls of multiculturalism' that endanger 'liberty, democracy, individualism, equality before the law, constitutionalism, private property'. (Huntington 1996: 303-307)⁹ 2 EKSAMPLES

This discussion should have shown that the radicality of Others are constituted through potentially unstable sub-signs, but how do we in fact know that the Other is constituted as radical? This question is quite surprisingly not explicitly raised in poststructuralist theory. The immediate answer might be to argue, with Laclau and Mouffe, that the radical Other is what is defined as antagonistically opposed, as anti-Self. (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 122-27) But since few political actors would use the term 'anti-Self' explicitly, this begs the question how *antagonisms* are defined. One might then argue that radical Others are those that threaten the Self, but while 'threatening Others' are (presumably) always radical, the opposite is not necessarily true: states might constitute radical Others as so insignificant or so distant that they do not constitute a threat to the Self. The Western 'Balkan discourse' during the Bosnian War constituted Bosnia as 'Balkan' – as the West's radical Other – not as a threat to the West, but as the reason the West should not intervene in the conflict (O Toal 1996; Hansen 2006). We need therefore to move to the level of sub-signs and ask which signs indicate radical

⁹ If this list of American values should give too liberal an impression bear in mind that Huntington also rants against 'moral decline' and 'cultural suicide', considered 'far more significant than economics and demography'. These include 'family decay, including increased rates of divorce, illegitimacy [children born outside of the institution of marriage, LH], teen-age pregnancy, and single-parent families', and the 'rise of a cult of personal indulgence'. (Huntington 1996: 304)

Otherness. Here there are no objective signs of radical Otherness either, although some have become so historically and culturally ingrained that they are discursively constituted as universal. One such concept – perhaps the only globally universal one – is ‘evil’. But there are context-specific signs of radical Otherness, in a Danish context ‘repressive of women’ constitutes a clear radicalizing term, in a conservative discourse ‘homosexuality’ might be another. The contextualization of radicality is also temporal insofar as what was once radical might be revised in the light of new dangers. Reaganite discourse constituted the Soviet Union as the ‘evil empire’, a clear radical Other, yet in the light of post-cold war ‘loose nukes’ and ‘fundamentalist terrorists’, the radical nature of the Soviet Union no longer seems so radical. This implies that analysis of the radicality of the Other needs to be coupled to a wider understanding of the ‘radical signs’ within the given context, which again underlines that signs are not so easily and categorically fixed and that the radical Other is an analytical concept.

So far the discussion has proceeded as if the object of study was one or a few texts, but as one moves to a larger body of texts, linking and differentiations can no longer be identified with the same precision. The slight differences between texts even within one discourse underlines further that discursive structures are never fully identical or fixed and that there might be Others or ‘sub-signs’ that we would expect to find, but do not. Here it is useful to bear in mind that language is a practical and social institution, and that it would therefore be rather unlikely that all texts reproduced all ‘sub-signs’ that we would identify as belonging to a particular discourse. It would be too cumbersome to explicitly define all of the elements making up ‘the Islamic’ in each and every text, or to constantly juxtapose it to ‘Denmark’, ‘the West’ or ‘secularism’. We need therefore to always assess from which ‘we’ a particular text is spoken, even if that ‘we’ is not explicitly defined, and what differentiating terms are implicitly produced. When Reagan for instance defined an ‘evil’ empire, it was evident to his audience that this was juxtaposed to a morally just United States. The social status of language further implies that concepts and representations that are widely known are not in a similar need to be made explicit as those which are not. As the war in Bosnia continued and ‘the Balkans’ became an established reference, discourses no longer had to spell out that ‘the Balkans’ implied

barbarism, ethnic violence and ancient hatred as the audience was capable of filling in the signs on their own.¹⁰

Poststructuralist discourse analysis has an ambiguous methodological status: it works from textual evidence, but it is also an interpretative analysis insofar as textual evidence is 'contaminated' by the social status of language: not everything is explicated. Situations where an Other is expected, but not explicitly articulated, will therefore always be subjected to interpretation and debate. Is an Other implied as in the examples above or is it really absent? And what are the signs required to demonstrate its existence in the absence of explicit articulations? I would argue that to successfully demonstrate its existence requires a significant amount of 'sub-signs' that in other texts are linked and juxtaposed to this sign. To take an example, the text introducing the Mohammed cartoons articulated the interface between Islam and 'secular, Western societies' as a 'cultural encounter' (*kulturmode*), not a 'clash of civilization'. It is however appropriate to see this text as articulating a clash of civilization because a high number of radical 'sub-signs' that define 'the clash' in other texts are found within this text.¹¹ But there might also be situations where an Other is indeed absent. For instance, pro-interventionist critics of Western policies towards Bosnia argued that the West did not intervene in defense of the Bosnian government because it was seen as Islamic. With the exception of Huntington, those arguing in favor of non-intervention did not however articulate an Islamic representation, rather the war was constituted as a 'Balkan war' and a disastrous quagmire the West should avoid. (Hansen 2006; 219; Toal 1996) The 'sub-signs' of this discourse universalized (and radicalized) the identities of the three groups, but it did not single out one as Islamic.

The instability of discourse and the necessity of interpretative methodology is underscored by 'diplomatic' articulations that work against radicalization of Otherness, even where we might

¹⁰ For a study that began after this process had taken place it might benefit from expanding the time period covered or coupling to genealogical conceptual histories, when such exist. Conceptual histories identifies 'sub-signs' that might be missing, but also allow one to ask whether contemporary use rearticulates or reproduces previous discourses.

¹¹ This interpretation is furthermore supported by the fact that 'clash of civilization' does not have a similarly catchy ring to it in Danish (*civilisationernes sammenstød*). It becomes more common as the Muhammad Crisis escalates as an import of a 'Danified' Huntingtonian vocabulary.

expect them. Here the alleged disappearance of a clash of civilization discourse is an illustrative example. Speaking about the War on Terror on 9-11, 2006, Bush declared that ‘This struggle has been called a clash of civilizations. In truth, it is a struggle for civilization.’ (Bush 2006) At first this might look like a break with ‘the clash’, but a closer analysis needs to locate this statement inside the speech as a whole where the references to a clash of civilization are numerous: the US confronts an ‘evil enemy’ ‘driven by a perverted vision of Islam’. The sense of urgency and pervasiveness of the threat is underscored by the warning that ‘If we do not defeat these enemies now, we will leave our children to face a Middle East overrun by terrorist states and radical dictators armed with nuclear weapons.’ Bush’s call for civilization is thus one that is still situated within a ‘clash of civilization’ discourse, between radical Islam running the Middle East and a civilized West, led by the US. Although it differs from a ‘pure’ Huntingtonian discourse in that it splits between evil radical Islamist and ‘the people of the Middle East’ who are ‘stepping forward to claim their freedom’, it is still within the discursive and political power of Bush’s America to define the boundary between good and bad Iraqis, and hence what counts as civilization: those ‘good Islamists’ who do not comply with the Western way of civilization are relegated to the realm of the ‘evil Islamists’. (Weber 1995) Put counterfactually, why would Bush adopt an unreformed ‘clash of civilization’ discourse when a rearticulation that provides him with the right to define ‘civilization’ leaves no legitimate political space for those who might object? As a global securitization it bestows normative and political-military superiority upon the US-West.

2. Recognizing Others

Working from a concept of non-radical Others and a more thorough analysis of linking and differentiation might by itself bring in the importance of ‘supportive Others’, that is Others that are articulated either as part of the Self or as contributing ‘positive identity’ to it.¹² Jennifer Milliken provides an example of the former in her analysis of the US discourse on the Korean War. Criticizing Campbell for leaving aside ‘issues of collective state identity and how

¹² In Hansen 2006, I point to another element in moving ‘beyond the Other’, namely to switch from the Self-Other dichotomous confrontation (as in the studies of the Cold War) and to ‘triangular’ Self-Other relationships (exemplified by the Western policies towards the Bosnian War) where the Self is confronting the choice of intervening into a war between (at least) two Others.

insecurities are constituted for groups of states’, she points to the importance of ‘various collective subjects – for example, the Free World and the West – to which the United States belonged’ as well as to ‘relations of distinctions within the collectivities: the United States as the leader of Western civilization and the Free World, and developing states as quasi children being brought up to become, in time, full members of the West’. (Milliken 1999b: 94) Incorporating such constructions into the framework would, she argues, ‘seem to invite a more nuanced reading than Campbell’s field of anarchic, dangerous ‘others’ residing ‘outside’ the United States implies.’ (Milliken 1999b: 94)

Milliken’s focus on how the US strives to have its discursive and political leadership of the West recognized by other states offers a useful expansion of how the construction of the identity of the Self is cast not only antagonistically, but through ‘supportive Others’. My suggestion in this paper is that the concept of ‘supportive Others’ and the importance of recognition should be elaborated even further. ‘Recognizing Others’ might be called upon to recognize the *leadership* of the Self (as in Milliken’s example), but they might also – and this is the form to be explored below – be asked to recognize the *similarity* between it and the Self or to express recognition in the form of *gratitude*.¹³

Recognizing Others differ from ‘constitutive outsides’ – that which negatively attributes meaning – in that their recognition of the discourse and identity of the Self is critically important particularly when the Self is facing a foreign policy crisis. Hence recognition from a performative perspective is more than a formal or ‘thin’ recognition that simply acknowledges the Other as a legal subject, or even the ‘thick’ recognition defined by Wendt as ‘about being respected for what makes a person special or unique’ and at the level of states about being a member of a similar group of states (like the European ‘society of states’ in effect since Westphalia). Wendt’s ‘thick recognition’ does not however identify the need for an approval of a state’s specific identity. (Wendt 2003: 511-2) Taking the understanding of recognition from

¹³ The majority of poststructuralist empirical studies have focused on the United States for whom recognition of leadership would appear to be the dominant form of recognition sought. Thus it is perhaps not too surprising that the importance of forms of recognition that operate along the modalities of equality or gratitude have not been studied.

one of membership to deeper structures of identity the discursive call for recognition simultaneously constructs an Other, establishes an identity relation between it and the Self, and from that relationship calls for a particular form of recognition. The Other is on the one hand constituted through discourses (of the Self), but it is also one whose agency is established as important. This implies that while both rhetorical and material signs of the Other's support are scrutinized by the Self, the discursive dynamic is one that takes both Self and Other beyond the realm of 'material capabilities' and 'strategic interests'. In the discourse of the Self, these are constituted as recognition and approval of deeper structures of identity, of what is morally just and politically appropriate. The discourses – speech and acts – of the Other are furthermore constituted as expressions of friendship, gratitude, or admiration that exceeds it acting in its 'strategic' or 'national interest'.

Recognition is a discursive and political act situated within a particular social environment and will therefore be mobilized by political actors in support of their foreign policy discourse. Those Others articulated within discourses of recognition has a different status and agency than the radical threatening Other and the underdeveloped Other, but 'recognizing Others' might also be relegated from their privileged states were they to repeatedly withhold recognition of hegemonic and key elements of the Self's identity. What constitutes successful or withheld recognition is also potentially a matter of political debate as statements (textual acts) are evaluated and compared to the 'concrete policies' undertaken.¹⁴ Analytically, the category of 'recognizing Others' is established empirically through the discourse of the Self, common 'recognizing Others' would be other states (as prominent politicians, media or intellectuals speaking on behalf thereof), international institutions such as the EU or the UN, the Organization of Islamic Countries or the Arab League, individuals with a particularly prominent religious and political status, or 'domestic Others' constituted as liminal subjects in relation to the Self. These Others might be called upon to recognize the domestic conception

¹⁴ The concept of discourse applied here understands materiality as constituted through discourse, the relationship between statements and 'material policies' is thus discursively constituted.

of Self which concerns its social, political, cultural, gendered, religious, etc. identity and/or the Self's foreign policy identity.¹⁵

Is it possible to define different forms of recognizing Others? Based on past poststructuralist work and the empirical case study in this paper, a first distinction between Allied and Assisted Others might provide a useful starting point. Allied Others might be formal allies, but more important is the articulation of an 'identity alliance'. This articulation of identity implies an element of equality, within this category we might further specify the forms of equality and hence of recognition. Milliken's example of US discourse pointed to a superior Self where the form of recognition sought from less advanced allies was one of *leadership*. In the cases of Denmark's Allied Others, they were constituted as more genuinely equal and the recognition sought was one of similarity or *identification*. Finally, the Allied Other might be constituted as currently superior and admired, hence the form of recognition sought is one of *inclusion*, but potentially also with a responsibility for helping the Self improve. Examples of this discourse are East European constructions of 'Europe' during the late 1980s and 1990's, and Russian discourses of Westernization. (Neumann 1996)

The Assisted Others are those subject 'former known as underdeveloped', helped towards civilization and democratic modernity by the West – or in different contexts, those assisted towards other desirable political and religious forms of organization. The main difference between the Assisted and the Underdeveloped Other is that the form is not a passive object, but that its recognition plays an important role in the discourses of the Self. This shift might occur in self-reflexive development discourse that critically addresses the legacies of colonialism and top-down modernization. While the articulation of Assisted Others thus seeks to break with colonial discourse, it is also always balancing on a knife's edge, in particular as the dominant mode of recognition sought is *gratitude*, a classical staple of colonial discourse. The Assisted Other is thus invested with a proto-Western identity insofar as it should embark on a trajectory leading to 'Western civilization' and democracy, but it is a similarity that hinges

¹⁵ Analytically, it is possible that the constitution of internal and external national identity is decoupled, I would however hypothesize that most states articulate a link between domestic and international conceptions of Self by projecting the domestic onto the internal.

on the underdeveloped subject willingness to comply. (Doty 1996) As Todorov's analysis of the conquest of America powerfully laid out, it is a relation of equality that could be replaced by subjugation and annihilation once the Other refused 'its' identity and failed to gratefully assimilate. (Todorov 1992: 191)

3. Visual securitization – a theoretical and methodological research agenda

Setting out a general theoretical and methodological research agenda for visual securitization is a daunting task, as it seeks to generalize across a number of visual genre that differ in important respects: some are still images, other are moving pictures or architectural monuments; some are defined as art, others as political commentary, others again as objective documentation; some are accompanied by text, others not; some are judged in part on aesthetic criteria, others by their satirical puns. The principles set out in this section are thus tentative and should be revised as substantial work on particular genre is carried out. A research program on visual securitization should include work on three levels: general theory and methodology, theorization of particular genre, and empirical studies with work on each level brought to bear on the others. That said, let me offer the following guidelines for a poststructuralist-Copenhagen School inspired research program on visual securitization.

Drawing on the previous two sections our key analytical concern can be defined as visuals as political discourse, more specifically the discursive, political and intertextual process through which visuals are securitized. Securitized visuals are articulated by policy makers, or other important 'securitizing actors' as threatening in that they violate a visual taboo on depiction (example: the Muhammad cartoons), or alternatively because visuals convey the need to counter an enemy (beheading videos), or are constituted as part of a patriotic discourse (Iwo Jima photograph) – visuals are in either case articulated within a security discourse and linked to spoken and written text. This raises the question whether we can speak of securitizing visuals, that it is visuals that constitute an issue as so threatening that emergency measures should be undertaken? Where visuals report an imminent danger, this might seem like a reasonable argument. Yet even those visuals do not 'speak for themselves', they and the threats they articulate are mobilized in security discourse by 'speaking' actors. In addition to politicians, journalists, academics, or other participants in the political debate producers of

visuals might also be ‘speaking’ actors, either by using of words inside the visual (explicit text or captions underlining or prefacing it) or by explaining its significance to the broader public. We are often said to live in a visual culture, but it is (still) a (foreign policy) culture where images are discussed, debated and put into discourse – even as the discursive claim is that ‘images speak for themselves’. Analytically, this implies that visuals should be seen as something to be securitized as well as something that ‘securitizes’, but that we should put quotation marks around ‘securitize’ to indicate that an analysis of whether images ‘securitizes’ or not requires an analysis of how they are in turn securitized in policy discourse.

Coupling the Copenhagen School concept of securitization to poststructuralism’s relational conception of identity, to analyze whether visuals securitize is to ask whether and how they constitute a threatening radical Other. This raises the question how the Other is identified in visual material, how its radicality is established and what policy horizon this implies. One crucial difference between textual and visual constructions of the Other, at least in the genres of still depiction like photography and cartoons, is how the Other is constituted as an individual or as a collective. Textual (spoken and written) policy discourse will most often articulate identity through collective categories – ‘Iraqis’, ‘Americans’, ‘homosexuals’ – whereas visuals to a higher extent depicts individuals, either well-known figures or anonymous ones. Individuals represent however collective identities insofar as official, well-known characters represent the institutions they inhabit (government, industry, academe), ‘anonymous’ individuals in that they are constituted as emblematic of a larger collective. Fleeing Albanian refugees on NATO’s website during its ‘intervention’ in 1999 were not simply freestanding individuals, but articulated a threatened ‘Albanian’ subject, that NATO had the responsibility to protect. (Hansen 2002)

Drawing upon the discussion in section one, we might ask first whether there are any explicit text (written or spoken) on/with the visual and second, which sign-symbols are depicted. To identify these sign-symbols requires – as in the case of textual discourse analysis – that the visual is located in a context: symbols and analogies only resonate if they are understood as making references to something outside of the visual itself. The pictures of an emaciated Bosnian prisoner in a Serbian-run camp that were published in the Summer of 1992 made clear

references to pictures of Holocaust victims in Nazi Germany. (Campbell 2002a, 2002b) But sign-symbols might also work as 'sub-signs' that constitute a particular identity, for instance in the use of the veil and the turban to signify 'Islamic' woman and men. The identification of these sub-signs can be helped more concretely through two analytical means: first, by locating the visual within the context of its production and asking what the dominant foreign policy discourses are. The Muhammad Cartoons, and the particular sign-symbols they mobilized, should for instance be read in the context of Danish debates on immigration and Islamic-Danish relations; American art that reflect September 11 should be analyzed as responses to the discourses on the attacks and the War on Terror. (Bleiker 2006) The point here is not that foreign policy discourses should determine or exhaust the readings of the visuals, but rather that an analysis of those discourses will provide a clue to the likely images that might be used either in support or in contestation of dominant discourses. Keeping in mind, that our focus is on the discourse that visuals speak to and are in turn constituted within, an understanding of the textual terrain of a given case would always be warranted. The second analytical means that might help an identification of sub-signs is to draw upon already existing studies where such exist. There is of course no guarantee that the same symbols are found, but it provides a useful starting point and allows for an analysis of how visual sub-signs can be modified and rearticulated.

How is a radical Other depicted? As noted in section 1, to determine the radical Other requires a careful consideration of the sub-signs that are in place in a particular temporal and spatial context. To give an indication of the analytical and methodological challenges this involve, particularly how we would identify an Islamic representation and whether it constitutes a 'clash of civilization' radical Other we might take a look at the analysis of images of Islam in post World War II American political cartoons by Christina Michelmore (2000). Michelmore argues that these addressed three major themes prior to the 1990-1 Gulf War: the Arab-Israeli conflict, oil, and Islam. Cartoons of the former two occasionally employ Islamic symbols 'mosques, veiled women, harems, minarets', but these only carried 'a mildly negative meaning' and in most cases the two issues 'were portrayed in secular imagery'. (Michelmore 2000: 41) With Khomeini gaining the power in Iran in 1979, Islam gained the center stage. How does Michelmore come to this conclusion? Khomeini was an Islamic religious leader but that does

not in and of itself mean that he would be represented as 'Islamic', rather than for instance a 'dictator' (by linking him to other dictators like Hitler and Stalin) or 'a madman' or a 'religious barbaric fundamentalist'. Michelmore does not explicitly address from which methodological basis she works, but her main argument is to locate the cartoons within a longer Western discourse on Orientalism that constitutes the Oriental as barbaric and violent. (Said 1978) A weakness of this argument is however that while Said's analysis shows that the Islamic was part of the Othering of the Orient, the two were not identical. The Oriental was a broader and more multifaceted subject that was racialized, exoticized and gendered in addition to being constituted in religious terms. Methodologically, this implies that signs that connote an Oriental representation (assuming for a moment those can be identified) do not automatically connote an Islamic one. Second, the mobilization of imagery of radical Otherness does not automatically equal Islam, thus a cartoon of Khomeini walking with Death, the latter saying 'I've really enjoyed our work' constitutes the former as murderous, but the absence of any context (Iranian, Islamic or otherwise) also means that his evil nature is not linked to a particular Islamic identity. (Michelmore 2000: 42) Another cartoon that Michelmore takes as evidence of Islamic representations is one of happy demonstrators holding posters of Khomeini chanting 'The dictatorship is gone! Bring on the dictatorship!' (Michelmore 2000: 45) Clearly this infantilizes and depoliticizes the overthrow of the Shah and Khomeini's victory (the demonstrators are too foolish to recognize the non-difference and the nature of Khomeini's regime), but the demonstrators are clad in Western clothing, do not have long beards or any of the other post-cold war 'Islamic' signs. A mosque and a minaret are shown in the top corner, but they are tucked away, and as Michelmore had previously noted these symbols carried only a mildly negative manner. It would thus seem more appropriate to classify the cartoon as mobilizing a strategy of belittling of a politically underdeveloped non-Western subject rather than one of radical Islamic demonization. Only one cartoon includes an explicit articulation of Islam as the American (presumably) eagle is stuck in a black pool of (presumably) oil labeled 'Hatred', the caption reads 'The slick continues to spread through the Islamic world'.

How are visuals linked to (foreign) policies? As argued above, as visuals articulate different sign-symbols, and some can be argued to be more radicalizing (in a given context) than others, we

might also say that some imply more explicit policy implications. These implications are however also interpretatively deduced through these visuals intertextual location, so at the basic analytical level, we might say that visuals do not by themselves ‘speak’ policy, but that their articulations of identity *and* their status as ‘visual signs’ on a given political terrain will give rise to interpretations of their policy implications. The debate, to be laid out in more detail below, whether the one Muhammad Cartoon that showed a Muslim man with a bomb in his turban was a ‘clash of civilization’ radicalization or not is illustrative in this respect: some argued that this demonized all Muslims and constituted them as terrorists, while others claimed a more ambiguous reading of the cartoon as referring only to ‘fundamentalist’ Islamists and to Islam as blowing itself to pieces. There is thus always an ‘interpretative space’ between visual and policy, and this space might be narrowed or expanded through the constructions of identity in the visual as well as through ‘securitizations’ of its implications or interventions that through a less radicalizing reading seeks to ‘de-securitize’ its reading.

Methodologically, the visual-text/identity-policy link might be investigated through an analysis that investigates the visual itself, the intertextual links between it and the ‘text’ in which it is published. In the case of editorial cartoons it implies considering the cartoon in the context of texts that might accompany it and the paper’s editorial line and its general reporting. In the case of documentaries, the ‘text’ would be for instance the interviews and voice over that interacts with stills and video. The next element is to locate the visual in the context of the dominant foreign policy discourses in the country/locale in question, and the last element is to analyze the explicit debate – securitizations and de-securitizations – that attributes political meaning to the visual (or a group thereof). Depending on the genre and empirical case, the order and combination of these four analytical elements may vary.

The discussion has so far dealt with visual securitization as they concern particular imageries, but we should note that visual securitizations might also concern groups or collections of images, for instance the collection of Abu Ghraib/Iraqi photos as a larger phenomenon. It should be pointed out also that such larger groups might of course include visuals that differ as to the extent of radicalization of the Other, and hence of the policy discourse they might be said to evoke. What might happen as process of visual securitization unfold is that it is quite

likely that these differences become homogenized and that a discourse of ‘the’ meaning of a larger, more diverse set of visuals is produced. One thing to analyze it thus the processes through which, larger groups of visuals are constituted as part of one particular discourse. Furthermore, the discussion has dealt with visual securitization as cases where published – whether intentionally or unintentionally as in Abu Ghraib – visuals have been securitized. But visual securitization should also be understood as comprising securitizations that work to restrain or prevent publication itself. Government censorship for instance can be seen as a securitization, an articulation of visual depiction of a particular form as so damaging, that it needs to be outlawed and punished. But securitization as an attempt to delimit the production and spread of particular pictures is also evidenced by such cases as the (failed) attempts to prevent pictures of US caskets shipped out of Iraq or to prevent the execution of Saddam Hussein to be taped. These attempts to ‘pre-emptively securitize’ visual representation points to the importance of visual taboos: that which in a given culture cannot be depicted. Much has been said about the ban on depicting Muhammad and whether it is a ban articulated by all version of Islam, and whether it applies to Muslims and non-Muslims alike, but the Western media’s (self-imposed) taboo on showing terrorist beheading videos illustrates that visual taboos are in existence in all cultures. Considering these taboos – and the strategies that might be acceptable to metaphorically circumvent them, what cartoon scholar Peter Duus calls ‘strategies of concealment’ (Duus 2001) – is also a crucial element of visual security analysis, particularly because it is the transgression of a visual taboo that might generate securitization attempt by those feeling violated thereby. Or, the violation of a taboo, as in the case of beheading videos that exposes the physical vulnerability of the captive and the humiliation of his or her government might be understood as a strategy in a visual war on images.

Visuals are often thought to move seamlessly across borders, but as the discussion of the contextual nature of visual taboos shows, the question of audience and ‘visual interpretation’ is an important one. ‘Visual interpretation’ is important in at least two respects: as indicating the boundaries associated with visual taboos, and with the ‘cultural capital’ required for an audience to decode depictions, symbols and analogies. Hence analyzing visuals require thorough contextual knowledge, that allows for making an assessment of what the likely audience would understand or not – or alternatively, how big an audience would understand

the symbols, imagery and rhetorical means employed, and how interpretations might change as visuals move or are reproduced in new contexts.¹⁶ It should be stressed here in the light of the debate over the conceptualization of audience in the Copenhagen School and how it is critically linked to the ‘audience’s possibility to dissent, particular under authoritarian conditions (Hansen 2000; Balzacq 2005; Wilkinson 2007), that a visual securitization agenda makes it clear that analysis needs to explicitly discuss the cultural capital of the audience in question, and its possibilities for showing genuine acceptance. But while emphasizing that official discourses do address an audience and thus rely upon a group of people that confirm its discourse, the concept of audience needs to be given a poststructuralist and performative turn: security discourses do not simply address a fully formed ‘audience’ existing ‘out there’ with ‘feelings, needs and interests’ and ‘experiences’ (Balzacq 2005: 184), they performatively produce that audience with particular boundaries, identities and demands through the very discourse that they are said to confirm.

As a final element of a general research agenda on visual securitization should be emphasized the importance of ‘knowledge claims’ or the different rhetorical modalities that visual genres may employ and how these differences have implications for how explicitly political the genre’s visual images are thought to be. Attempting a full fledged account of all forms of knowledge claims and rhetorical modalities will have to await a series of more thorough accounts of the specificities of each genre (like the short one on political cartoons below), but the following elements would appear to be central. First, whether the genre is itself thought to be politically opinionated, editorial cartoonists are for instance viewed as journalists and columnists and in rather close correspondence with the editorial line of the paper they are working for, or whether the genre is constituted as objectively documenting, as with (the public belief in) war photography. Second, some genres are judged in part on their aesthetic qualities (like

¹⁶ Particularly to a Communication Studies audience, the possibility of reception analysis, where individuals were interviewed about their interpretation of a cartoon might come to mind. Realistically, this would be difficult as it is time consuming and costly, particularly at the scale required to conclude what a larger audience would be able to interpret. The fact that none of the many works on political cartoons employ reception analysis is an indication that this is not the most cost-effective methodology to gauge the resonance of cartoon imagery. CHANGES WITH THE NEW STRONGER FOCUS ON VISUAL SECURITIZATION

photography) while others are judged on their ability to satirize, deliver a punch line or to objectively document.

4. Political cartoons as foreign policy discourse

Moving from texts to visual representations opens by itself up for new and complicated analytical and methodological questions. Since the literature on political cartoons is probably less known to an IR audience, this section will lay out what characterizes the genre of political cartoons and how it might be linked to the study of foreign policy. The only article on political cartoons published in an IR journal (Dougherty 2002) advocates the pedagogical use of political cartoons in Foreign Policy courses as a means of generating class room discussion, but does not discuss the genre.¹⁷ Trying to limit the broader category of political cartoons to ‘foreign policy cartoons’ these can be defined as cartoons that either explicitly address a foreign policy issue or that become of significance for foreign policy, but where ‘foreign policy issue’ is defined not solely as wars or events taking place beyond the boundaries of the state, but as issues that concern the boundaries of national and political community. Cartoons that lend themselves to an anti-immigrant agenda, that constitute a ‘domestic Other’ linked to Others abroad, would for example be considered a potential ‘foreign policy issue’.

It might be worthwhile to point out that while the Muhammad Crisis appears as the strongest case for political cartoons having a foreign policy effect, they are by no means the only example of cartoons having political consequences. The most quoted example is the case of Thomas Nast whose cartoons in *Harper's Weekly* allegedly toppled influential, but corrupt New

¹⁷ Dougherty's advice is useful and informative not least in her suggestions on how to pick cartoons. Her references are however limited to collections of cartoons, or to historical accounts of US foreign policy, which use cartoons merely as illustrations (Editors of the Foreign Policy Association 1975, 1991). While these books strive to present ‘objective historical accounts’ they nevertheless speak from a white Anglo-Saxon position. To quote from the opening ‘In the Beginning’ of *A Cartoon History of United States Foreign Policy 1776-1967*: ‘when the nation was founded, there was ocean on only one side and a vast virgin continent on the other. The western wilderness between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi was home to Indians and Frenchmen. Both constantly threatened the lives of American colonists. Unless they joined together for their defense and security, the good people of the eight colonies – New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina – had little chance of survival.’ (Editors of the Foreign Policy Association 1975: 1) The question how something could be both a ‘virgin wilderness’ and a ‘home’ doesn't occur!

Yorker William 'Boss' Tweed in 1871. Tweed is quoted as saying: 'Stop them damn pictures. I don't care so much what the papers write about me. My constituents can't read. But damn it, they can see pictures.' (Michelmore 2000: 37; Coupe 1969: 82, one of these cartoons is reproduced in Coupe 1969: pl. 4 between page 88 and 89) Other examples concern domestic political authorities (trying to) discipline cartoonists, or protests by foreign governments that their cartoonists (and newspapers) should be reined in: In 1834 the king of France, Louis Phillippe, fined the cartoonist Charles Philipon for a caricature that transformed him into a pear, a slang for 'fathead' (Duus 2001: 966); Pennsylvania Governor Samuel Pennypacker tried to have an anti-cartoon law passed in 1903 (Hess and Northrup quoted in Michelmore 2000: 37); in 1907 a cartoon 'depicting the top officials in the [Chinese] Qing government with their heads chopped off or split open' circulating in Hong Kong caused a strong protest to the Hong Kong government who then adopted legislation that could put cartoonists in jail for two years (Wong 2002: 30); in May 1940 the Spanish government complained to the British Foreign Office over an *Evening Standard* cartoon, 'The harmony boys', by famous cartoonist David Low that showed Hitler directing 'pro-Nazi propaganda' to Mussolini, Franco and Stalin (Seymore-Ure 2001: 336); as Vice President to Ronald Reagan George H. Bush complained about his persona in Gary Trudeau's *Doonisbury* (Buell and Maus 1988: 847; on the representation of George H. Bush as the wimpy husband of Queen Mother Barbara Bush see Edwards and Chen 2000). Most recently, in early 2006, a cartoon by Tom Toles in *The Washington Post* satirized a statement by Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld that the Army was not stretched thin, but 'battle-hardened', by showing him saying to a quadruple amputee (identified as the U.S. Army) 'I'm listing your condition as 'battle hardened.'" In response the six Joint Chiefs of Staff wrote a letter describing the cartoon as 'reprehensible', 'beyond tasteless' and a 'callous depiction' of wounded soldiers. (for a response by editorial page editor Fred Hiatt see Hiatt 2006; Howell 2006) To this list of particular cases should be added situations where the publication of political cartoons were outright illegal (Duus 2001), or were the boundaries for what would pass by editors (fearing for political intrusions or alienating their core audience) lead to the refusal to publish 'controversial' cartoons (for cases of unpatriotic cartoons see Lamb) or to cartoonists' self-censorship (for as discussion of this in the case of Singapore see Tju 2000). In sum, for governments and publishers to take actions against political cartoons and cartoonists, either by publicly criticizing them, by banning them, prosecuting cartoonists,

or to exclude them from the public sphere through more subtle (but equally important) measures, happens (to although to different degrees) in Western as well as non-Western countries, in the past and the present, in democracies as well as non-democratic countries.¹⁸

Since the purpose here is to connect the genre of political cartoons to a poststructuralist foreign policy analysis, the following questions are crucial, first, what forms for meaning and knowledge are articulated by political cartoons and how are they linked to the textual context in which they appear? Second, how do foreign policy cartoons constitute political subjectivities? In other words, how are they linked to the Self-Other framework laid out above? And, third, what would a ‘methodology of reading’ look like in the case of visual representations, more particularly cartoons?

In assessing the forms of knowledge and rhetorical moves employed by political cartoons, we should note first that political cartoons cover a broad range of phenomena: as magazines explicitly devoted to the political cartoon,¹⁹ as illustrations to newspaper stories, as part of posters and flyers, and as comic books.²⁰ The most important form of political cartoons is however the ‘editorial cartoon,’ cartoons printed on a newspaper’s editorial pages.²¹ Editorial cartoonists might be employed by a particular paper or be syndicated cartoonists selling their pictures to a broader set of papers (based on Seymour-Ure 2001 Britain seem to lean in the

¹⁸ That satire is important more generally might be indicated by the prominence of Jon Stewart’s *The Daily Show* which was deemed to have played important roles in the 2000 (Dougherty 2002) and 2004 US presidential elections.

¹⁹ The first mass produced magazine in France was *Le Caricature*, the most well-known magazine was the English *Punch* (modeled on *Le Charivari* a successor to *Le Caricature*) published from 1841 to 1992 and from 1996 to 2002; on the influence of *Punch* on Japan (*Japanese Punch*) see Duus 2001; on *Shanghai Punch* and *China Punch*, see Wong 2002: 28)

²⁰ The upcoming election in France has spurred a wave of satirical comic books on prominent politicians. (Munck 2006) The boundary between comic book ‘artists’ and ‘non-artistic cartoonists’ is arguably linked to socially constructed understandings of what constitutes art. Cartoons do however differ in that they explicitly address a political issue and because they have to be easily understood.

²¹ One ground of studies of political cartoons focus on elections, particular US Presidential elections, (Buell and Maus 1988; Edwards 1997, 2001; Edwards and Chen 2000; Seymour-Ure 2001; another has a more direct foreign policy agenda: German Unification (Morrison 1992), US-Soviet Cold War relations (Gamson and Stuart 1992; Becker 1996); American depictions of North Korea (Winfield and Yoon 2002) and Islam (Michelmore 2000); and Arab/Muslim cartoons about September 11 and the War on Terror (Diamond 2001).

direction of the former, while the US relative to Britain has a larger number of the latter (Dougherty 2002)). Political cartoons as a broader phenomenon has historically been used as a form of resistance (Duus 2001), but editorial cartoons do have a conservative bend in that the cartoonist is linked to (although not necessarily identical to) the paper's general editorial line: cartoonists seek out papers they can sympathize with and editors choose likewise as they have to 'keep quite close to the tastes of their readers'. (Coupe 1969: 82; Seymour-Ure 2001: 335) The political nature of cartooning is underlined by the view of cartoonists as journalists (Coupe 1969: 82) or columnists rather than artists (Buell and Maus 1988: 847). While cartoons will often be satirical, ironic, and make parodies, the objects of satire are usually other (opposing) states or political groups, not the objects with which the readers would (presumably) identify. The political cartoon is furthermore a 'fast read', it cannot rely upon contemplative readers, but are aimed at a 'passionate, stand-taking, mass reading publics.' (Streicher 1967: 433) Stylistically, as a consequence the genre is quite conservative in its aesthetic principles and use of images. (Seymour-Ure 2001: 335)

Aesthetical conservatism notwithstanding, the genre of political cartoons mobilizes an impressive array of means: some uses humor, others do not; and it may use 'exaggeration, distortion, simplification, distillation and caricature'. (Seymour-Ure 2001: 335) Peter Duus suggests that we might distinguish between humorous cartoons which rely upon 'the unexpected, the incongruous, or the absurd' and satire which articulates 'a righteous 'we'' that is superior to 'a foolish, stupid, or corrupt 'them''. (Duus 2001: 966) Deepening the definition of the form of satire that comes in the form of caricature, Streicher argues that 'pictorial 'caricature' pertains to grotesque or ludicrous representations of scorn or ridicule of human vices or follies and exaggeration of their most characteristic features by means of graphic images.' (Streicher 1967: 431)²² Another visual means is to use symbols or analogies that imply critical similarities between two situations, like for instance in 'Raising the oil pump' by Jim Morin (reprinted in Dougherty 2002: 265), modeled on the Iwo Jima photo and monument, which shows four soldiers raising a gigantic oil pump in the first Gulf War.

²² Streicher points out with reference to Wolfgang Born that 'caricare' originally meant 'overload', but not 'ridicule'. (Streicher 1967: 435)

The 'fast read' demand put upon political cartoons creates a dilemma in that cartoons have on the one hand to lend themselves to quick consumption and hence convey a message fast (Duus 2001: 966), yet the use of parody, allusions, and irony put them at risk of misinterpretation. (Seymour-Ure 2001: 335; for an example of a debate over interpretation see Hiatt 2006) Constructively, this opens up a creative space for cartoonists to work with several layers of meaning and multiple interpretations, but it also raises the crucial question of who is the target audience, how much 'cultural capital' is required to 'decode' a particular cartoon and what happens when cartoons are circulated beyond their original context of publication. Although visuals travel easier than text, they nevertheless rely upon particular symbolic codes for their interpretation, for instance with the Iwo Jima photo/monument in 'Raising the oil pump'.

Linking political cartoons to the question of the constitution of the Other, studies of the genre point out the difference between cartoons depicting domestic politics on the one hand and foreign policy on the other. (Coupe 1969: 90-91) Streicher dates the emergence and rise of caricature – and thus the use of scorn and ridicule - to national and international conflict (Streicher 1967: 443) and Duus's study of Japanese cartoons shows that during wartime 'The satirical boundary the cartoonists drew between 'us' and 'them' not only marked domestic political divisions but also traced the contours of national identity.' (Duus 2001: 983) The Other might be constituted through a strategy of *demonization* that depicts the Other as barbaric and bloodthirsty and menacing – what Coupe calls 'hate cartoons' – but there is also a strategy of *belittling*, a representation of the enemy as insignificant, weak and small, as someone 'to be laughed at rather than hated or feared.' (Coupe 1969: 91)²³ Duus's analysis of Japanese war cartoons also shows this dual construction of the enemy as 'barbarous, bloodthirsty, and cruel

²³ It should be pointed out the representations that show one's own soldiers bestially murdering the enemy can also be found. The *Report of the Carnegie Commission* on the Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913 include two contemporary Greek posters one of them showing a Greek soldier brutally gorging out the eye of a live Bulgarian soldier. According to the Commission posters like these were in high demand by Greek soldiers and they showed 'that Greek soldiers wished to believe that they and their comrades perpetrated bestial cruelties.' Speaking within early 20th century civilizational discourse, they took this as a sign of Greek backwardness and non-Western identity: 'A print seller who issued such pictures in a western country would be held guilty of a gross libel on its army'. (Carnegie Commission 1914: 96-98)

– or alternatively, weak, desperate, and cowardly’ or feminized. (Duus 2001: 983)²⁴ On the one hand, these representations of the Other can be seen as opposed, on the other hand, they might play complementary roles in the construction of the Other as radical: the barbarous Other articulates a threat to be conquered, the cowardly Other articulates the likelihood of its downfall. The cartoons studied by Duus and Coupe are made during wartime, or as in the analysis by Michelmore (2001) during cold wars, in other words, at times where security discourses in general constitute a radical threatening Other. We should therefore in keeping with the empirical opening of the concept of the Other, allow for cartoons to constitute the Other, not solely through strategies of demonization and belittling but also through a strategy of *familiarization* or even admiration.

The analysis of how the Other is visually constituted should furthermore consider the boundaries of visual representation inside a particular context. Here Peter Duus’ analysis of the development of the Japanese political cartoon offers a good starting point. Duus’s concept of ‘iconography of absence’ - inspired by Foucault’s theory on surveillance – points to what is considered taboo, in the case of Japanese cartoons, the emperor was never displayed and even his existence was rarely alluded to. (Duus 2001: 973, 980) In tandem with this ‘iconography of absence’ an ‘iconography of concealment’ developed where ‘Historical figures were substituted for contemporary ones – gods, demons, birds, beasts, fish, and even vegetables representing human actors – and contemporary events were restaged in ancient times or as episode from familiar folk legends.’ (Duus 2001: 972) Clearly, those cases where extensive prohibition on what can be represented has led to a developed iconography of concealment puts a high demand on the ‘cultural capital’ of the audience. Methodologically it would be through iconographies of concealment that we would be able to move towards the question of absence: what is *not* shown and how do those boundaries shift historically and geographically?²⁵ Iconographies of concealment are situated at the boundaries of visual taboo, and they involve a certain ambiguity: they identify that which cannot be explicitly shown, but they also establish

²⁴ Female politicians might be constituted as masculine or physically unattractive (Morrison 1992; Edwards and Chen 2000) Strategies of feminization and masculinization are thus deployed ‘against gender’.

²⁵ For an analysis of the changed representation of the British Royal Family see Seymour-Ure 2001: 351-353)

symbols that if they become too representative of the taboo might themselves become banned. We should note also that for an iconography of absence to be broken might by itself be considered an act of ‘visual violence’. To the iconographies of absence and concealment might furthermore be added a third, a strategy of displacement, where visual means are undertaken to destabilize the editorial assignment, or the dominant policy, through satire, humor or caricature. Here the goal is not to symbolize a taboo, but to make a reorientation of who or what should be criticized, a change in other words of who or how the Other is.

5. From Cartoons to Clash of Civilizations²⁶

The analysis below is structured with the attempt to show central elements of the sections above. The first section focuses on the securitization of ‘Islam’ in the text introducing the cartoons and offers a detailed reading of the text-visual intertext that argues that the cartoons were in fact more diverse in their articulations of radical Muslim Others than was later attributed to them. The second part looks to the ‘counter-securitization’ articulated by ‘Muslim’ diplomats and institutions who mobilized a discourse of Danish/European ‘xenophobia’ [currently two sections, should be incorporated into one]. The next section analyzes the constitution of the Assisted Other within and abroad [needs to deal more with Other abroad and with the visual securitization that photo and video of flag burning and the burning of embassies entailed]. The last section discusses the withheld recognition from the Allied Other [also to be expanded]

Producing 12 cartoons

²⁶ The analysis below is based on official documents referred to in the text as well as the following primary material. 1. Danish parliamentary debates found by searching paragraph 20-questions for five words. The words are: ‘drawing’ (tegning), ‘caricature’ (karikatur), ‘muhammed*’, ‘Jyllands-Posten’ and ‘foreign political crisis’ (udenrigspolitisk krise). This identified 86 debate sessions from September 30th 2005 till July 1st 2006. 2. Danish editorials found by searching all national newspapers, eight in total (*Politiken, Jyllands-Posten, BT, Ekstra Bladet, Berlingske Tidende, Information, Kristeligt Dagblad* and *Weekendavisen*) for the five words: ‘drawing’ (tegning), ‘caricature’ (karikatur), ‘muhammed*’, ‘prophet’ and ‘foreign political crisis’ (udenrigspolitisk krise). In a search from September 30th till July 1st, this results in 334 editorials. 3. A preliminary analysis has been conducted of the international debate by searching four American and four British newspapers (*The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, The Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, The Guardian, The Independent, The Times, The Evening Standard*).

The 12 cartoons figured prominently in the September 30, 2005 edition of *Jyllandsposten*. The upper bar on the front page, right under the newspaper's title and logo featured the headline 'Muhammad's many faces', a reprint of one of the cartoons (number 1) and an announcement of an editorial on the same issue.²⁷ The 12 cartoons were published on page 3 of the cultural section, the drawings arranged in a circle around an article titled 'Freedom of the Press', written by cultural editor in chief Flemming Rose. This arrangement implied that the cartoons were strongly intertextually linked to at least Rose's text. Thus while the cartoons were not determined by Rose and *Jyllandsposten*'s main editorial, it seems plausible that they were read through that text and that it functioned as a meta-caption to the cartoons. This does not mean that the text was read before the cartoons – sensorially the cartoons as colored visuals would probably capture the eye first, but rather that the text would be read as an explanation of the cartoons. I will therefore begin the analysis with an account of the text and then turn to an analysis of the cartoons.

Turning to the explanatory text 'The face of Muhammad', subtitled 'freedom of expression', by cultural editor Flemming Rose the formal genesis of the drawings as stemming from an invitation to the Danish cartoonists' association in response to the alleged inability of author Kåre Bluitgen to find illustrators for his children's book on Muhammed is laid out. Although 'clash of civilization' is not explicitly articulated – Rose uses the term 'cultural encounter' – both his text and *Jyllandsposten*'s editorial are abound with representations that are linked thereto in Western (and global) discourse. The solicitation of the cartoons and their publications should be seen in the context of an ongoing 'intimidation of public space' where artists and writers are afraid to engage Islam. What we are facing is the 'most important cultural encounter of our times, between Islam on the one hand and secular, Western societies rooted in Christianity on the other.' Some Muslims, argue Rose, demand that their religious sensibilities are treated with particular care, yet 'This cannot be combined with a secular democracy and its

²⁷ The cartoons are not available at *Jyllandsposten*'s website, but can be seen at <http://web.politiken.dk/media/pdf/5679.PDF> (one on page 5, the rest from pages 10-17). This is the package of documents that Danish Muslim leaders brought with them on their tour to Lebanon and Egypt in December 2005. The cartoons are scanned and a few have translations from Danish to Arabic written onto them that were not part of the original cartoons. The cartoons are numbered based on their sequence in that package.

freedom of expression, where one has to put up with *scorn, mockery, and ridicule.*' (emphasis added) The resonance with a clash of civilization discourse is further underscored by *Jyllandsposten's* editorial, 'The threat from the dark', which held that those who publicly represented Islam all suffered from 'monumental self-importance' and an ensuing 'almost sickly sensitivity to any contradiction' which in turn made them 'representatives of the dark and violent Middle Ages'. That this threat has to be taken seriously is illustrated by the murder of Theo Van Gogh, and the fact that 'All over the world satirical film, theater and books are produced, but none allow themselves to make fun of Islam. That's because a host of imams and mullahs who demand the privilege of interpreting the words of the prophet can't stand the *insult* that comes with being the target of intelligent satire.' (emphasis added) The articulation of 'Islam' as a backward subject is further reiterated in the claim that the worst about this 'absurd situation' is that 'we' are forced to discuss 'a world view that the West left behind when it entered the Enlightenment.'

What we find here are the key elements of a blunt clash of civilization discourse: the constitution of a uniform 'Muslim' subject where the actions of few (the murderer of Van Gogh) are seamlessly articulated as representative of the uniform collective whole. This Muslim subject is radically opposed to the a 'we' that comprises not only Denmark, but the West, it is temporally backward and it is incapable or unwilling to transform, it is stuck in the dark Middle Ages, and it is religious as opposed to the secular West. That this is indeed a 'clash' rather than an 'encounter' is underscored by the emphasis on how Islamic forces have successfully intimidated the West, an articulation which seeks to provoke 'the West' into action, and the constitution of this as a security issue (a securitization) is underlined in *Jyllandsposten's* call for a 'war on satire'. What is at stake is the protection of the very core values of Western society, epitomized in the freedom of expression. The constitution of the purpose of the cartoons as to insult, scorn, mock and ridicule also constitute them within the category of satire akin to the wartime depictions of the Other through strategies of demonization and belittling.²⁸

²⁸ Later editorials, for instance 'The lack of honor', February 16, 2006, fortify the construction of the cartoons as battles in the cultural war against Islam by arguing that they are a kin to the Salman Rushdie case.

Nor did the Danish debate reproduce Huntington's discourse slavishly in that the cartoons were linked to an articulation of Danes – and the West – as secular and progressive promoters of women's rights. Thus what clashed was not, as in Huntington's discourse, a Christian and an Islamic civilization, but a modern 'secular civilization' whose religion was properly confined to the private sphere, while Medieval 'Islam' refused this separation. A 'catch-phrase' discourse's articulation within a local discursive space is thus likely to imply some adaptation to sedimented discourses of identity already in place.²⁹

Turning to the cartoons themselves, however, their strategies and the degrees to which 'Islam' is Othered differ quite significantly. Starting with the ones most clearly in accordance with *Jyllandsposten's* clash of civilization discourse, cartoon 1 (also printed on the front page) shows a bearded turban clad man with a sable in front of him holding back two fully veiled women. The women are clad in full length dresses with only their eyes visible and they are staring in fear or surprise. The eyes of the man are hidden by a black bar (matching the eye opening of the women's dresses) usually used to blur the identity of anonymous witnesses, criminals etc. The eye covering bar might at first be seen as a strategy of concealment in the light of taboo on his depictions within (parts of) Islam, but this concealment is misleading insofar as it draws attention to this taboo rather than respect it. The key point of the cartoon is to constitute 'Islam' as repressing women: the veiled, silent and passive woman has replaced the harem girl, Michelmore found in the 1960's and 1970's. The repression of women within Islam has become a central theme within Danish debates on immigration and Muslim-Western relations and it is also the theme of cartoon 3 which combines the text 'Prophet! Crazy in his head, keeping women under yoke' with an abstract drawing of 5 similarly shaped objects that each give the impression of a veiled woman. In place of her face is a 6 pointed star and a half moon, two symbols recognizable as Jewish and Muslim. Here the radicalization is more ambiguous as the depiction of Jewish and Muslim symbols articulate *a* religious identity rather than a specific Islamic one. The mobilization of 'gender repressive Islam' within a (Danish) clash of

²⁹ The representation of Denmark as 'advanced' and 'liberated' as regards gender equality has along tradition, although built mostly through a comparison to the 'backward' Catholic countries of Southern Europe. (Nielsen 2002)

civilization discourse implies however a certain instability insofar as the gendering of Islam splits it into a male and a female subject, the latter in need of a 'gender progressive' Denmark. The other cartoon within the most radicalizing group (number 2) is a frontal portrait of a bearded man, his eyebrows thick, and his eyes piercing. On his head is turban-bomb with a lit fuse and an Arabic inscription. This cartoon became the most well-known of the 12 as the 'bomb cartoon' and its message seems rather clearly to constitute Islam as explosive, as suicide terrorism.

Perhaps less radicalizing than cartoon 1 and 2 were cartoons 5, 6, and 9. Cartoon 5 depicted a scared cartoonist working on a drawing of a bearded man titled 'Muhammad'. He is looking over his shoulder towards the reader worrying someone is approaching and his curtains are rolled down to hide him from public view. It evokes a strategy of concealment in that it is a drawing of a drawing, and not a first order representation of Muhammad. This cartoon is neither humorous nor satirical, but an illustration of the situation as described by *Jyllandsposten*, namely that artists and illustrators are afraid to offend Muslim sentiments and that they do have something to fear. Thus without necessarily subscribing to an articulation of Islam as terrorist or patriarchal, it does concord with the clash of civilization discourse's fear and besiegement. Cartoon 6 is of a man with turban and beard and robe standing inside a palace (a half moon at the top of the entrance provides an Islamic reference), he is looking at a piece of paper with one arm stretched to stop two other men (also with beards, robes, and turbans), one has a drawn sable, the other carries a bomb and has a gun on strapped to his back. The first man speaks to the two armed ones: 'Easy fellows, at the end of the day it's just a drawing by a heathen Southern Jutlander'. The reference to Southern Jutland would be lost on a non-Danish audience, but even to a Danish audience the reference mostly works to constitute *a* rather than a particular regional connection. This cartoon also adopts a strategy of concealment in that Muhammad the prophet is invisible to the reader, he is only potentially present on the piece of paper that the first, senior Muslim man looks at. The cartoon reproduces the imagery of bomb carrying Muslims from cartoon 2 and it represents Muslim men with a short fuse and overreacting. But this is countered by the senior man's moderating and rational stance which works to constitute a more complex Muslim subject and against *Jyllandsposten's* claim that Islamic leaders are unable to take a joke and that they are caught in a

battle to delimit the rights of expression. Cartoon 9 shows four men with big noses and tattered clothes, fumes coming off to indicate them as suicide terrorists arriving to heaven. They are greeted by a man with beard, ropes and a turban saying ‘stop, stop, we have run out of virgins’. This cartoon Others Islam through the association to suicide terrorism, and it ridicules the naïve – and mundane – motives they ostensibly have. This joke was however as noted in the subsequent debate on the cartoons, an old one, and as one of the rules of political cartoons is not to repeat a joke slavishly, this cartoon did not come off as very creative.

The next group of cartoons are more ambiguous in their use of visual strategies. One, number 10 is an abstract drawing of a man’s face made by a half moon, a turban, a crooked nose, and a five-pointed star in place of one eye. It is difficult to identify any of the rhetorical registers usually employed in political cartoons: there is no humor, no satire, no caricature, and there is no clear narrative or plotline. It is thus doubtful whether it meets the criteria of a (good) editorial cartoon. The cartoon works exclusively in the context of *Jyllandsposten’s* assignment, beyond the act of depiction itself, it is difficult to assign it a particular degree of radicalization. The next two cartoons, number 8 and 12, are more explicit in their break with the radicalization of Islam. Cartoon 8 is of a bearded man with a turban, a long shirt and loose pants, bare feet in sandals. There is a half moon circling above his head like a halo. The halo constitutes an intertext to Christianity: it might be the most readily available symbol to signify religious status (to a Danish audience), and it constitutes an identity between Jesus Christ and Muhammad. His eyes are wide open and have a bewildered look and his flip-flop sandals and bare feet makes him much more of a quite, soft Jesus-hippie figure than the male chauvinist sable-wielder in cartoon 1 or the bomb-carrier in cartoon 2. Cartoon 12 shows a bearded man with turban, bare feet and sandals, leaning on a walking stick, a donkey carrying a heavy load follows in the back. A red sun is low on the horizon, and the background is roughly drawn mountains. The drawing could be of any poor Middle Eastern man walking with a donkey. Both cartoon 8 and 12 can be said to operate through strategies of familiarization: cartoon 8 by depicting a silent, confused Muhammad, and cartoon 12 by showing him as a common Middle Eastern man. But to an audience for whom the depiction of a religious figure is taboo, a strategy of familiarization could be considered an act of visual violence, too. The religious

subject might be constituted by its very *un-familiarity* and hence to constitute it as familiar is to deprive it of its identity, to debase and demean it.

The last three cartoons (cartoon 4, 7 and 11) are different from the others in that they adopt a strategy of displacement that explicitly satirize *Jyllandsposten's* campaign, although their satirical ploys relied upon rather detailed contextual knowledge for the message to resonate. Cartoon 4 shows a male pupil standing in front of an old-fashioned blackboard. He is wearing a blue and red football jersey (could be Barcelona), upon which is written 'The Future'. A text on the drawing identifies him as 'Muhammad. Valby School, Grade 7A' and he points to Persian writing on the blackboard which says '*Jyllandsposten's* caricatures are right-wing and provocative'. The satirical juxtaposition between the task at hand – to draw Muhammad – and the critical text on the black board would however be lost on most Danes, as few Danes read Persian. It is thus possible that some might read the cartoon not as critical of *Jyllandsposten's* agenda but as pointing to the ubiquity of Muslims in Denmark of the future. Cartoon 7 is of a man drawn from the chest up, he has glasses and two protruding front teeth, blond hair, blue eyes, and a big turban with an orange on which is written 'PR stunt'. In his one hand is a drawing of a stick figure with a big nose, beard and a turban. This man would be recognizable to many of *Jyllandsposten's* readers as Kåre Bluitgen who claimed he could find no illustrators willing to draw for his children's book because of their fear of Muslim repercussions, the incident that allegedly spurred *Jyllandsposten* to solicit the cartoons. Beyond the readership of *Jyllandsposten* it is doubtful however that the caricature of Bluitgen would be widely recognized. The orange in the turban is a direct reference to the Danish saying 'to land an orange in your turban' (something 'falling into your lap'), and the cartoon drawing exercise is thus constituted as a self-referential media stunt rather than a question of substance. This effect is also created by Bluitgen being much larger than the drawing of Muhammad, and by this drawing being of such child-like quality. 'Muhammad' is not concealed as much as he is displaced: Bluitgen's primitive cartoon is not Muhammad himself, but a strategic stick-like media devise. The final cartoon, number 11, depicts a witness picking out the offender in a police line-up. A blond man is trying to make the identification, but says 'Hm... I don't seem to recognize him'. The line up is of seven people identified by numbers '1' through '7', all have a turban, number one is an old hippie identified by a peace-symbol necklace, number two is Pia Kjærsgaard, the

leader of the rightwing and most anti-immigrant party in Denmark, the Danish People's Party, number three might be Jesus identified by a halo, number four appears to be an Indian/Asian woman; number five is an older bearded man, number 6 another bearded man, but with a necklace and a wilder, curly beard, and number 7 is Kåre Bluitgen, identified by a sign saying 'Kåre's PR: call and get an offer'. The impossibility of identifying Muhammad (no indication whether he would be number 5 or 6, or indeed any of them) can be read as strategy of displacement: the cartoon does not try to conceal Muhammad, but rather shifts the object of the exercise (to depict Muhammad) to satirize the self-serving nature of the exercise for Bluitgen, as well as possibly *Jyllandsposten* in that it has covered the case quite extensively. While the man asked to do the identification declares himself unable to find 'him', he clearly would be able to identify – and exclude – Pia Kjærsgaard. One reading of her inclusions would be as an implication in the PR stunt of Bluitgen, as 'the Muslim' question has been massively and successfully mobilized by Kjærsgaard and her party. Thus while they (like Bluitgen) claim to be threatened by Muslims, it is the same Muslim subject that provides them with the grounds for their support. Another reading would be to see this as an attempt to tease Kjærsgaard by making her akin to the Islamic subject she Others. In any case, the inclusion works to satirize Kjærsgaard, not to support her.

There was in sum a significant difference in how the cartoons articulated 'Muslim Otherness' and thus whether they supported *Jyllandsposten's* discourse.³⁰ As *Ekstra Bladet* wrote on February 9, 'the funniest cartoons were aimed at *Jyllandsposten* itself. ('Lying spokesmen') Yet this was lost on the international audience, editor at the legendary satirical magazine *Punch* from 1977 to 1987, Alan Coren called them 'so ill-concieved, so ill-drawn and so unfunny' and Eugene Robinson, associate editor and columnist at *The Washington Post*, defined them as 'lame and unsophisticated, crudely equating Islam's prophet Muhammad – and thus, by clear implication, all of Islam – with terrorism and ignorance.' (Coren 2006: Robinson 2006) Why was this lost? First, because the ones which adopted a strategy of displacement to satirize *Jyllandsposten* relied

³⁰ As the crisis spread to the Middle East, *Jyllandsposten* pointed to the satire targeted at the paper itself as proof of its fundamental belief in the freedom of expression ('Open reply' – to Hans Skov Christensen, Director General and CEO of The Confederation of Danish Industries who had called upon *Jyllandsposten* to 'clarify its position' in the face of the harm done to Danish export).

open a Danish audience cognizant of Bluitgen, the analogy of ‘orange in your turban’, and Danish politicians. Second, because the clash of civilizations discourse worked to marginalize the use of displacement and satire aimed at *Jyllandsposten*. More specifically, what the editorial clash of civilizations discourse articulated was a way in which the cartoons should be read and this helped establish a hierarchy between the 12 cartoons. The most commonly mentioned cartoon became the ‘turban bomb’ (cartoon 2) followed by cartoon 1 and 9, those which relied strongly on a strategy of demonization. (B. T. ‘Join forces, Denmark’, statements by Muslim spokesman Akkari in the documentary ‘Muhammed-krisen under huden’ (“The Muhammad crisis up close”)) As the cartoonist who drew cartoon 4 said a year later, all cartoons were seen through the one with the bomb and the turban: there was a homogenization and a radicalization of the 12 cartoons, so that what became emblematic of the subsequent debate was not a discussion of the imagery and political implication of each, but of the 12 Cartoons as an anti-Muslim whole. (Lenler 2006)

Diplomatic encounters

It takes however a while before the Cartoons develop into an issue of high politics. For the first couple of weeks after their publication coverage is light and Danish Muslims protests are generally considered of passing importance. (*Weekendavisen*, ‘Arrangerede begivenheder’, October 21) On October 12 the case gains its first diplomatic peak, when 11 diplomats send Anders Fogh Rasmussen an official letter requesting ‘an urgent meeting’. The Danish media quickly labels these ‘Muslim Ambassadors’, although only the signature of the Iranian Ambassador refers to ‘the Islamic Republic of Iran’. The other 10 signatories – Turkey, Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Morocco and the Palestinian Delegation – have significant Muslim populations, but also differ significantly in terms of systems of government, the secularity of the state, and the impact of Islamic political parties on governmental policy that are cancelled out by the application of the uniform ‘Muslim’ label. In fact, the very construction of the letter as a ‘Muslim’ response provides a first illustration of the extent to which the religious optic set out by *Jyllandsposten*’s first editorial was widely shared.

The October 12 letter ends up being the most contested text of the entire Cartoon case, and hence it is important to distinguish carefully between the text itself and its interpretations. A first copy of the letter was given to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Per Stig Møller, on October 14 by the Egyptian Ambassador, while a slightly different letter, signed and dated October 12, was received by the Prime Minister's office on October 14. The letter, argues Fogh, calls upon him to take legal action against *Jyllandsposten*. Since this would be a clear violation of the sacrosanct Danish belief in the freedom of expression and the freedom of the press, Fogh Rasmussen refuses the request for a meeting in a letter on October 21. The support for Fogh's decision is overwhelming: *Politiken* (which is to become the most vocal critic of Fogh and *Jyllandsposten*) prints an editorial on October 21 titled 'Calm down' urging 'Muslim embassies and religious leaders' to deescalate the situation and realize that a Danish Prime Minister can't and won't compromise the freedom of the press. *Berlingske Tidende* calls the diplomatic letter 'a meltdown' and a an evidence of 'ignorance or disdain for democracy's basic mechanisms'. ('Demokratiets vilkår', October 22) In the words of populist *Ekstrabladet* Fogh Rasmussen 'shouldn't engage in a study group on liberal rights with this bunch of diplomats from various backwards dictatorships.' ('Islam contra freedom', October 25) That Turkey is a co-signatory is devoted particular critical scrutiny given that the country is applying for EU membership: 'This letter gives the impression of an attitude far from what to be expected of a prospective EU-member'. (*Berlingske Tidende*, October 25)

Although Fogh quotes from the diplomats' letter, the letter in its entirety is not made available to the politicians on the Parliament's Foreign Policy Committee until February 1, 2006 and it is not until mid-February that it is publicly available to the media. From October onwards Fogh is adamant that the letter calls for him to take legal action against *Jyllandsposten* and that for him to meet the ambassadors would be tantamount to compromising the freedom of the press principle. The original letter is, however, as is pointed out in the 'translation debate' four months later, rather open to interpretation. It opens by pointing to an 'on-going smearing campaign in Danish public circles and media against Islam and Muslims', giving four examples including the Muhammad cartoons. Arguing that 'casting aspersions on Islam as a religion and publishing demeaning caricatures of Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) goes against the spirit of Danish values of tolerance and civil society', the signatories worry that 'This is on the whole

a very discriminatory tendency and does not bode well with the high human rights standards of Denmark' and warn that there might be 'reactions in Muslim countries and among Muslim communities in Europe'. The key and closing passages states that 'We deplore these statements and publications and urge Your Excellency's government to take all those responsible to task under law of the land in the interest of inter-faith harmony, better integration and Denmark's overall relations with the Muslim world.' It is this passage Fogh argues which calls upon him to interfere with *Jyllandsposten's* freedom of publication, but as critics later point out, 'to take all those responsible under law of the land' is not an established legal expression and might be read to the effect that Fogh is encouraged to do what its possible under the laws already in place. In this interpretation the letter is calling for Fogh to take a personal, not a legal, stance on the publication of the cartoons and on the general public debate on Islam and Muslims.

A few days later, a letter from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference reiterates central elements of the 'Muslim diplomats' letter. Stressing that the Organisation is 'the proper international institution to represent the Muslim world', and thus invoking a position of authority, the letter adds to the concern for 'the smearing campaign' that 'We understand that the Muslim Danish citizens are considerably alarmed and feel threatened in the face of this ever increasing trend of intolerance and degrading discrimination against them in which every Muslim is treated as a potential terrorist and criminal.' This passage sharpens the tone of the diplomats' letter in that it directly constitutes and speaks on behalf of 'Muslim Danish citizens' (the diplomats on the other hand spoke from the subject position of observers of the debate, not on behalf of subjects constituted within it). It specifies and radicalizes the (critic of) the construction of Muslims in Danish political and public discourse in that it argues that 'every Muslim is treated as a potential terrorist and criminal' (the diplomats' letter 'only' argues that there is a smearing campaign and that the cartoons illustrate 'a very discriminatory tendency'). The OIC letter, finally, sharpens the articulation of the 'smear campaign' linking it to 'the rising trends of Islamophobia in Europe' and the need to combat 'xenophobia'.

Despite the more radical discourse of the IOC, it is the diplomats' letter, which become the intertextual and political fixture of the Danish debate. First, because while the IOC articulates its criticism from a stronger institutional platform the diplomats speak from a position of being

inside Denmark itself. This immediacy is physically evidenced in the very public manner in which a copy of the letter is given to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, an event covered by Danish media. Discursively, this is significant too, in that ‘the diplomats’ residency in Denmark should have exposed them to and taught them the basics of democracy. Thus the subject position, as illustrated by the editorial quotes above, is one of a non-Western subject who turns out to have harbored ‘non-civilized traits’ within. This is particularly striking in the case of Turkey whose desire for EU membership leads the Danish editors to having ‘expected more’. The Danish subject position generated in tandem with the under-performing Muslim diplomats is thus one of consternation, mixed with disappointment. The united political and media front supporting Fogh thus responds by making it very clear to the diplomats that their request is not acceptable, indeed is not even imaginable inside a democratic culture, and by opening up for the classic Western colonial and civilizational subject position where the non-Western subject must be lectured, taught and transformed. The appropriate response would thus be for the diplomats to graciously apologize for their misunderstandings.

Had the October 12 letter been beyond interpretation and univocally called for Fogh to discipline *Jyllandsposten* through (by Danish definition) undemocratic means, the first question would still stand whether meeting the 11 diplomats would have been a good diplomatic and strategic move. Indeed, this was exactly argued in what was the first major domestic challenge to Fogh’s handling of the situation. On December 20 22 former top Danish ambassadors published an op-ed in *Politiken* which stated that ‘It would have suited democratic Denmark, had the Prime Minister accepted the request for a conversation made by the 11 diplomats representing Muslim countries.’ ‘Tolerance’, the op-ed argued, ‘is a Danish value’, and it changed the previous construction of the Muhammad debate from the one of protecting ‘freedom of expression and freedom of the press’ (and hence of those challenging this as anti-democratic) to a question of ‘tolerance’, respect and communication – ‘We think that emotional scars heal best through conversation. We were disappointed that the official Denmark as well as the paper’s editors immediately rejected there was something in need of healing.’ This attempt to shift the structuring categories of the debate was furthermore linked to an acknowledgement of the diplomats’ and well as the IOC’s constitution of the cartoons as indicative of a wider anti-Muslim campaign in that the op-ed opens by stating that the tone of

the public debate in Denmark has become one ‘which can only be seen as a prosecution of the minority made up of Muslim citizens.’

The 22 Ambassadors’ critique is the strongest challenge to Fogh’s discourse in 2005. *Politiken* states that from a Muslim perspective it would seem quite fair if the Danish government indicated whether it supported *Jyllandspostens* ‘provocation’ and that it ‘distanced itself from the strong anti-Islamic sentiment of Danish society’, and former Minister of Foreign Affairs and leader of the Liberal Party, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen (who was also the key architect of post-Cold War Danish ‘active internationalist’ foreign policy) came out to agree with the Ambassadors. *Jyllandsposten*’s response was to argue that the diplomats must have been influenced by their tours of dictatorial regimes and by their diplomatic training and thus ‘would hardly be the most trustworthy spokespeople for a free and critical press’ (‘Diplomats astray’, December 21) and that there is no connection between the Muhammad drawings and the alleged anti-Muslim sentiment in Denmark as there is no animosity towards Muslims in Danish society.

When the October 12 letter was finally made public in February, it was more open to interpretation than had been claimed by Fogh. The point here is not to argue that a softer interpretation of the October 12 letter is correct, but rather to stress that Fogh’s very denial of the openness of the text, and his ensuing constitution of ‘non-democratic calls for action’ rests upon already having constituted the identity of the signatories as ignorant and politically underdeveloped at best or as malignly authoritarian at worst. That the ‘Muslim political subject’ is read through this interpretive lens does indeed indirectly – and not noticed by Fogh – support the concern raised by the Ambassadors in the letter’s opening paragraph: they not being given the interpretative benefit of the doubt underscores how ‘the Muslim’ is considered a separate and backward subject in Danish political discourse.

A prevalent interpretation of the events to this is indicative of a fundamental gap between a superior Danish/Western subject capable of distinguishing between drawings and deeds, private religious feelings and public political reasoning, and satire and literal expressions on the one hand and an underdeveloped ‘Muslim’ which could not on the other.

The 'xenophobic' question

As Fogh refuses the meeting, he also refuses to engage the claim that the cartoons are indicative of a broader anti-Muslim 'smearing campaign'. In his New Year's speech on January 1 he states that he 'condemns any statement, action or utterance that seeks to demonize groups of people on the basis of their religion or ethnic background', but refuses the identification of Denmark as anti-Islamic and xenophobic. 'The general tone of debate in Denmark is decent and fair. There have been a few unforgivable offending remarks. And they have been made by more than one party to the debate. Those statements we have to reject. But those single instances should not subtract from the fact that the debate and the general situation in Denmark is much more peaceful than in many other countries.' Minister of Foreign Affairs, Per Stig Møller adds a few days later in response to critical letters from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the Arab League that 'In some contexts the issue has unfortunately been portrayed as if the drawings were part and parcel of a smearing campaign against Muslims supported by the Danish Government. In the Arab press the image is sometimes erroneously given that Denmark as a nation is Islamophobic.' (January 6, 2006)

The question whether the cartoons are indicative of xenophobia in Denmark does however become crucial. Going into a long analysis of the development of the debate on 'immigration' in Denmark would be beyond the scope of this paper, but as an indication of 'the tone of the debate' (as the crucial sign referring to public discourse in Danish), one of the other examples given by the delegation could be considered. This example was a much discussed speech by Minister of Cultural Affairs, Brian Mikkelsen, from September 25, 2005. Taking stock of four years in government, he argues that 'We have also fought multiculturalism which argues that everything goes. Because if everything goes, then nothing matters. And, we won't accept that. A Medieval Muslim culture is never going to count for as much as Danish culture which grows out of the old land between Skagen and Gedser and between Dueodde and Blåvandshuk. There are many battles left to fight. One of the most important occurs when Muslim immigrants refuse to acknowledge Danish culture and European norms. A parallel society is growing in our midst as minorities practice their medieval norms and undemocratic ideas.' (at

<http://lr05.konservative.dk/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=70&mode=thread&order=0&thold=0>

The xenophobic question was not new on the political agenda. The electoral and parliamentary success of the right-wing Danish Peoples Party which became the parliamentary support of the new center-right government in 2001 was based to a large extent on an anti-immigration agenda, and a series of restrictive laws were based as the new government came into power. Swedish media and politicians had for years been highly critical of Danish policies as well as the discursive constructions underpinning them. (Nielsen 2004) Although the Social Democratic Party was largely in support of the government's policy, there was a critical oppositional discourse attacking it too. Governmental discourse was thus used to fending off the 'xenophobic' charge before the Muhammad crisis evolved. One move in this response was to shift between the three elements that were at stake in the debate over xenophobia: the policies adopted, the attitudes of the population, and the discursive constructions of 'Muslims'/'immigrants'/'foreigners' ('the tone of the debate').³¹ An ideal model of the political system – and policy discourse – would assume that the three were in accordance: the population votes for the politicians who adopt policies based on their attitudes, and these policies are supported by discursive identity constructions that are in accordance therewith. In addition to defining the tone of the debate as not xenophobic, a common response was to emphasize the superiority of Denmark as regards the integration of Muslims and the attitudes of the Danish population. To take one example, Fogh argues in Parliament on February 8, 2006, that 'Denmark is in fact a society that treats its Muslims very well... Danish society as a whole is a very open, a very tolerant society. The Danish population has a very open and very liberal view of other people arriving here, when and if they want to contribute positively to Danish society. That's my opinion and that's supported by many surveys.' One of the surveys Fogh may have had in mind was a big report that assessed whether foreign criticism (particularly from Sweden and Norway) was correct in its accusations of Danish xenophobia, Hans Jørgen Nielsen *Er danskerne fremmedfjendske?* (Nielsen 2004) Nielsen answered that question through policy assessments and surveys of population attitudes and his conclusion

³¹ The discourse of the Muhammad crisis seems itself to be an indication of an Islamification of 'foreigner'.

was that although Danish policies had become more restrictive, they had started from a high level of 'pro-immigration' support and were thus not compared to most European countries particularly so, secondly, that the population was no not particularly xenophobic by European standards either – Danes were however the EU country (of the 15 members in 2000) who felt most disturbed by the presence of people with a different religion. (Nielsen 2004: 243)

namely of the assessment of Denmark as 'xenophobic' (Nielsen 2004), 'neo-racist' (Hervik 2004), or 'cultural racist' (Wren 2001)

The emphasis on policies and attitudes to some extent shifted the question of xenophobia away from public discourse, but equally important were the links and differentiations that were employed in the 'anti-xenophobia discourse'. The first thing to notice is that as 'xenophobic' is a derogatory term, it is not one that is going to be used in a discourse of the Self. To get back to Huntington's call for mono-cultural societies, they are to be built on an established identity, and those (smaller groups) of immigrants who will happily and energetically assimilate to the dominant culture. 'Xenophobia' conjures an irrational fear of the Other, and as a consequence does not exist within governmental discourse: either foreigners are assimilating, and hence not-so-foreign or they are non-assimilating ones who are to be refused, not out of fear but out of rational cultural (and economic and political) calculation. We need therefore to look more closely to the sub-signs or themes of the discourse fend off the 'xenophobia' charges while at the same time maintaining a privileged – and largely mono-cultural – Danish identity and here three themes resonate strongly with the clash of civilizations discourse.

The first element is constitute 'multi-culturalism' as 'anything goes', more specifically as in Mikkelsen's speech, as the abolishment of common political values and standards, for instance that women should be treated equally, and as the dissolution of the boundary between public and private, particularly since 'multiculturalism' would open the doors to a religiously based legal system in the form of Islamic sharia.³² Taking stock at the Muhammad crisis months later,

³² For a supportive account of then Minister of the Interior Karen Jespersen that she would not live in a multi-cultural society because she did not accept the repression of women, see Nielsen 2004: 95. For an

Rose sees it as evidence of 'Europe's failed experiment with multiculturalism. It is time for the Old Continent to face facts and make some profound changes in its outlook on immigration, integration and the coming Muslim demographic surge. After decades of appeasement and political correctness, combined with growing fear of a radical minority prepared to commit serious violence, Europe's moment of truth is here.' (Rose 2006) This articulation denies in short a 'multi-culturalism' founded upon a set of basic rights, but with a more expansive vision of its cultural identity. The second theme links to the transgressiveness ascribed to Muslim religion in a multicultural society, in that Denmark is constituted as a secular democracy, in fact the link between 'secularism' and 'democracy' is so strong as to equal each other. There are however also texts that concord more clearly with Huntington's coupling of Western values and Christianity. Rose's first introduction to the cartoons did as mentioned above articulate Western society as based on Christianity, thus the coupling becomes one where Christianity and secularism are more intricately linked: Christianity becomes a religion that by itself supports a separation of private religion and public secularity, and thereby is imbued with a democratic spirit that Muslim religion has not. The third theme is – particularly as the crisis unfolds – to argue that what is attacked is not all Muslims, but 'just' those who are fundamentalist, anti-democratic, Medieval, patriarchal and so on. As in the clash of civilization discourse, the Other are those who will not assimilate, while those who will are (ostensibly) welcomed. *Jyllandsposten* argues for instance in a half apology on February 8, that it never intended to offend Muslims, that the perception of an anti-Muslim campaign is wrong as evidenced by the many articles they have printed which describe immigration success stories. ('Ærede medborgere i den muslimske verden') While a positive identity is thus made available to 'Muslims' it is however one defined exclusively by a mono-cultural Danish subject, and it is the Muslim subject that has to present the proof by way of its assimilation. That 'Muslims' are thus constituted as liminal in regard to Danish identity is further brought out by the responses to the 'delegation tour'.

The delegation: the Assisted Other within

analysis of the articulation of gender and national identity in the Danish discourse on immigration see Laudrup 2003.

On January 2, *Berlingske Tidende* runs an editorial exasperatingly titled ‘The never-ending story of the 12 Muhammad drawings’, in which it suggests that ‘The question is whether this tiny affair can generate any further international attention’. But as most Danes, *Berlingske Tidende* underestimates the tenaciousness of the issue on the agendas of Middle Eastern countries, the importance of global media-networks as well as the power of transnational citizen diplomacy. The first reports of a delegation of Danish Muslims traveling to Egypt and Libanon with a folder including amongst other documents *Jyllandsposten’s* drawings reach the Danish media by mid-December. The delegation comes under fierce attack: the material and factual information relayed to clerics in the Middle East is on a number of key points unsubstantiated or misleading at best (detailed discussion of facts in *Politiken* February 26). The most noticeable document of the file is the ‘pig picture’, a photo is of a Frenchman imitating a pig’s scream at a competition at a local festival in Southern France wearing pig’s ears and nose. The delegation is accused of having shown the picture as part of *Jyllandsposten’s* campaign, a story reported by the BBC in late January, although the delegation folder identifies it as an example of hatemail sent to Danish Muslims who have criticized the publication of the cartoons. (*Politiken* February 9, 2006)

More important than the content of the folder is, however, the way in which the identity of the delegation is constituted. *Information* is a paper usually highly critical of Fogh’s government and in support of the assessment of the Danish tone of debate as anti-Muslim, yet even *Information* is scathing in its critique of the delegation: their handling of the Muhammad situation shows their inability to grasp a crucial aspect of Danish culture which is one where ‘irony, humor, satire, and loud criticism is the order of the day. To be made fun of is a sign of approval. Only then are you really a part of our community.’ The Muslim clerics are thus fundamentally un-Danish, and their un-Danishness is not only a matter of missing the cultural codes of mockery. The very fact that they take off and go on a tour with the attempt of stirring up anti-Danish sentiments abroad, that they ‘run ‘home’ and snitch’, (*Information* January 4) make them in *Jyllandsposten’s* words akin to Cold War Communists loyal to Moscow rather than Copenhagen. (*Jyllandsposten* ‘Absurd diplomacy’, January 4). ‘Only when they cut those ties, show loyal responsibility [to Denmark] and understand that they cannot bring their taboos here is there a potential hope for approachment’. (*Information*) *Jyllandsposten* stated that the imam’s ‘place their

loyalty with their legal-religion Islam because it provides them with power and an interpretative monopoly on the ultimate truth that no nation-state could or should provide them.’ The magnitude of this disloyalty is made even more severe by the fact that the imams ‘actually have to thank Denmark for asylum, citizenship, and humanitarian right of residency.’ *Kristeligt Dagblad* chimes in on January 7, noting that some of the delegation’s participants have ‘been granted political asylum in Denmark because they are prosecuted in those Muslim countries they are seeking to turn into Denmark’s enemies.’ (‘Muslim fumble’)

What is articulated here is a constitution of the Muslim delegation through a traditional nation-state discourse: citizens have a responsibility not to incite foreign powers against ‘their’ own state. Or, put differently, it is through this action that the delegation proves that it has not fully become Danish. But this is not an entirely stable construction: on the one hand, the imams are constituted as Danish subjects in that they are taken to task for *not* behaving as proper Danes (put differently, if they were not Danes, there would be no expectation against which they should be held accountable), on the other hand, the imams are not fully Danish subjects in that the articulation of *gratitude*, in particular the gratitude the imams should have because they have been allowed into Denmark, underlines that the imams are a subject outside of the ‘Denmark’. ‘Denmark’ has led them enter, hence they have a particularly responsibility for expressing their gratitude. Because the Danish welfare state discourse is one that constitutes Danish citizens through a rights discourse, a thoroughly ‘Danish’ subject would never be called upon to express gratitude to the state. The combination of ‘loyal citizens’ and ‘gratitude’ work to cancel out any space for the imams as legitimate *political* subjects.

As the crisis escalates in late January, the themes of gratitude and loyalty are lifted from the particular imams and on to the Middle East. On January 31, Fogh states in the Danish parliament that ‘It is of course unpleasant to see Dannebrog (the Danish flag) being burned, not least in the Palestinian territories that Denmark has given many millions in support over a period of many years; it is unpleasant to see Danish goods pulled off the shelves considering that Denmark is one of the countries in the world who works the hardest for peaceful and open free-trade; and it is very unpleasant to see or hear about Danes being attacked in the

Middle East when Denmark is one of the absolute frontrunners in the attempt to build a constructive dialogue between the Arab countries and the Western world.’

What is at stake here is thus not simply Denmark facing international opposition, the events run contrary to the very essence of Danish foreign policy identity. In Fogh’s quote Denmark is constituted, not only as Western, but as one of the most advanced countries of the West particularly in terms of ‘development morality’. The construction of a ‘grateful’ Assisted Other, within Denmark in the case of the Muslim imams, or in the Middle East in the form of governments and citizens alike, is dependent on a ‘Denmark’ that not only provides financially assistance, political support and promotes democracy, but who is morally just. The moral justness (to the point of superiority) is tied Denmark’s construction of itself as exemplary democratic and tolerant, as built on the values of respect and equality. Thus what is thrown into questioning is the dominant construction of Danish identity as built domestically on the welfare state, a consensual and dialogical democracy with tolerance for cultural, sexual and religious difference, social and gender equality, universal health care and a highly developed support system for the elderly and disabled. Internationally, as a humanitarian liberalist who is among the most generous foreign aid donators, supplying peace-keeping operations, support for the UN and repressed populations (in apartheid South Africa and Palestine) and standing on the side of anti-colonialist movements, as well as liberalizing Third World countries’ access to global markets.

Allied responses: recognition withheld

Until late-January Fogh Rasmussen is adamant in his refusal to engage the issue: for him to interfere with the publication policy of *Jyllandsposten* would amount to a violation of Danish freedom of speech legislation. If anybody feels violated by the publication of the cartoons, they can bring the matter to court. His New Year’s Speech shifts this position slightly in its condemnation of demonizing statements, but it does not fundamentally destabilize this legalizing discourse which comes under increasingly pressure in January and February 2006. On January 30, he personally would not have depicted religious figures in a hurtful manner, a view reiterated on Al-Arabia on February 2, and at a diplomatic meeting on February 3 (‘I also emphasised that the government has no intention to insult Muslims and does not support such

activities. I have also made it clear that personally I would never depict any religious figure in a way that could hurt other people's feelings.')

Looking to the Allied Others, the Norwegian government criticized the republication of the cartoons by Norwegian newspaper *Magazinet* on January 22, and on February 3, Jack Straw, British Foreign Secretary stated that 'there is freedom of speech, we all respect that, but there is not an obligation to insult or to be gratuitously inflammatory, and I believe that the republication of these cartoons has been unnecessary, it has been insensitive, it has been disrespectful and it has been wrong.'

Furthermore, 'there are taboos in every religion. It is not the case that there is open season in respect of all aspects of Christian rights and rituals in the name of free speech.... So we have to be very careful about showing proper respect in this situation'. ('Straw comments on cartoons depicting the prophet Mohammad', at www.fco.gov.uk) Although Straw's strong condemnation is strictly speaking directed at the re-publication of the cartoons, his assessment was also heard in Denmark as implicating the original publication, and similar assessments were made by the US. Also on February 3, Sean McCormack, Department of State Spokesman, defined the images as 'offensive' and *The New York Times* stated that 'The cartoons, whose vulgarity and offensiveness are beyond question, were published as a calculated insult last September by a right-wing newspaper in a country where bigotry toward the minority Muslim population is a major, if frequently unacknowledged, problem.' ('The Uses of Cartoons', February 8, 2006)

While both the British and the American government later come out to condemn the burning of embassies, and while the Danish government stick to the discourse of loyal allies and supporters, the impression left even on Danish editors usually in support of the government's discourse is that of a 'major disappointment as both the American and the British government on Friday gave out with critique of the cartoons' (*B. T.*, 'Mixed picture', February 4, 2006), a criticism which should be understood through the two countries history as 'multicultural empires' who have been forced to respect individual cultures and adopt 'political correctness' in a rewriting of labels that cover groups who have been 'repressed to a smaller or larger extent', a language that to 'us' seems 'artificial'. From the other side of the Danish spectrum, *Politiken* argues that Denmark should rather look to the two countries and learn from their experiences in 'strengthening the cohesion of a religious and ethnic pluralist society'. ('Support', February 7, 2006)

The reason the Cartoon Crisis cuts so deep is not only because of embassies on fire, or because of the traitors within, it is because

those who are presumed to share the government's political and discursive stance are granting it the recognition of similarity in terms of political values that it seeks.

4. Conclusion

The Muhammad cartoon crisis shows that visual imagery can be high politics, even when it comes in the form of cartoons. It also shows that the boundaries between domestic and international politics are fluid, that national grievances can be mobilized globally, and that 'the clash' is still articulated as a domestic foreign policy discourse. The Danish pro-cartoon discourse rearticulated 'the clash of civilizations' in some respects but reiterated its major elements by juxtaposing a besieged West to a threatening Islam. That some of the cartoons did in fact satirize this discourse rather than support it got lost in the production of a uniform Cartoon intertext. One of the claims made repeatedly in Danish discourse was that there were no limits to what could be the subject of satire. Perhaps that is true, but more likely it is a classic case of a culture not knowing its own boundaries: compared to the instance the UK media, Danish tabloids are for instance quite restraint in their disclosure of politicians' private lives.

In this respect, the Muhammad case speaks to wider debates on multiculturalism and national identity inside an EU Europe, in particular how national identities founded upon a cultural, genealogical conception of nation like the Danish struggle to make a transition to a more flexible conception of national identity and a reconfiguration of the conception of citizenship. (Hansen 2002; Hedetoft 2006; Mouritsen 2006)

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