



Research Paper

## Danish Cartoons an Attack on Islam; A Critical Study of Their Motives and Resopnses

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### ABSTRACT

*This research deals with controversies of satirical depiction of Danish cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Denmark, with special reference to their background motives and responses. The content of this research will focus to analyze critically the background motives and responses of their hostile act and the aim of anti-Islamic western cartoonists of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), (which insulted Islam and the sentiments of Muslims) due to satirizing the pure image and beautiful characters of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Through the study of the motives and responses of Cartoons controversy researcher has the purpose to elucidate the efforts of anti-Islamism in misrepresenting the Islam. Therefore, the disfiguring Islam in western media and critical analysis of their structure is relevant subject to a scholarly study.*

*This research finds that, the depicting Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in satirical cartoons and publishing this in newspapers, magazines are in against of pluralism. Such incidents destructed the social bond of Islam and the West. The research especially finds that the anti-Islam from the West are operating different methods, and ways only to misrepresent the Islam, like shooting documentaries, short-films, and satirical cartoons against Islam.*

**KEYWORDS:** Danish cartoons controversy, motives behind depictions of Prophet Muhammad, responses aftermath of incident of cartoon controversy, clash of civilization, Islamophobia and, freedom of expression.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

In this cyber-period Islam has been most targeted religion by anti-Islam. As Islamic civilization started to emerge in the west since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the same to that its enemies also redoubled. Therefore, most of the anti-Islam started to slander Islam and the Muslims through depicting the satirical and blasphemous cartoons against Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), such as *Danish Cartoons*, *Charlie Hebdo*, *Swedish Cartoons* and etcetera which played a pivotal role to hurt the spiritual sentiments of Muslims and became very controversial issues between Islam and the West.

These incidents were provocative among Muslim community, because Aniconism is proscribed in Islam. The creation of images of sentient beings is an absolute proscription among Islamic authorities. Moreover, depicting cartoons is absolutely prohibited. Actually, cartoons are a type of picture, which is rather a powerful way to humiliate or mock someone. Hence, the depictions of cartoons, making pictures, images of animated objects are strictly prohibited through the light of *Hadith*. By the long tradition of Islamic authorities, making the images of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is unlawful in *Shariah* even if it is drawn respectively. In that case, drawing the cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) satirizing is absolutely unlawful and it was provocative.

The publishing of a series of twelve cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in a derogatory manner in Denmark shook the Islamic world. It was aimed only to present Islam in a largely negative light. The manner in which was depicted was most controversial and hostile. In fact, the image shows the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) carrying a lit bomb in the shape of a turban on his head decorated with the Islamic creed, which created a conflict and controversy between Muslims and Cartoonists.

The Cultural Editor of JyllandesPosten, Fleming Rose wrote to the 42 members of the union asking them to draw their interpretations of Muhammad (PBUH) illustrators responded to the letter; three declined to participate, one did not know how to contribute to what he called a vague project, one thought the project was stupid and badly paid, and one said he was afraid drawing had been submitted three from newspaper employees and two which did not directly show Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The chief editor of

JyllandesPostenmagazine, Fleming Rose wrote in his letter to the artists, “we would like to invite you to draw Muhammad, as you see him. The result will be published in the paper next weekend. Such a request indicates the editor’s prior expressed intention to associate the Prophet of Islam with a negative commentary on Islam” [1].

### **MOTIVES BEHIND THE DEPICTION OF CARTOONS IN DENMARK**

The history of hatred on Islam can be traced roots before 1400 years or more. The continuous invasion of Islam and the increasing number of Islam’s followers from west threatened the European Christians and churches. Simultaneously, this threat compelled them to create a negative image of Islam and to spread Islamophobia through depicting the satirical cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

There were many other ways to disfigure Islam and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), however, they applied the way of caricatures, cartoons, satirical prints of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for being a simply understandable for all categories of people. In fact, the motivation for the cartoons appears to have been imbued with the intention to insult the Prophet of Islam and to gain political achievements by this incident. Mainly, the progress of Muslim in the west and the increasing visibility of Islam in European public space motivated them to hurt the sentiments of Muslims through satirical prints.

The Islamic progress in the west was creating a chance of clash of civilization. Consequently, this clash of civilization inspired the anti-Islam to generate this incident to attack the dignity and the spiritual sentiments of Muslim. Therefore, the clash between Islam and the west occurred, and it advanced forward to depiction of satirical cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) insulting Islam and Muslims due to clash of civilization, Islamophobia, ignorance of Islam, and Islamic progress in the west [2].

### **Clash of Civilization**

Since the beginning of this universe, many civilizations have existed and came and others will follow. In reality, the thing that distinguishes one civilization from another is the strength of the foundation on which it is built, the great influence that it may have, and the benefits that humanity may enjoy as a result of its rise. In fact, some of the historians of civilization have defined the civilization as “a social system which helps man to increase his cultural output.” They further opined that, a civilization arises easily, while the four main elements of a community economical resources, political systems, moral traditions, and science and arts become stabilized. The requirement of geographical and economic factors and psychological factors such as religion, language and tradition are also highly regarded for the development and progress of a civilization.

Among these civilizations only the characteristic feature and the impact of Islamic civilization was unique, for that, it spanned for more than 14 centuries and until it is in progress due to a link in the chain of human civilization. Hence, Islam valued moral and intellectual factors, social systems, establishing the peace and tolerance same as did to geographical, psychological and economic factors for not to be declined.

When analyzing the causes of the clash and conflict it has different elements and subjects to discuss as well as the historical, religious, cultural, socio-political causes, but the clash of civilization make its main stand as the reason behind the conflict of the West with Islam. In reality, Islamic civilization is based on well-sophisticated culture, which attracted the peoples globally [3]. This progress of Islamic civilization created a chance of enmity between Islam and the West.

The thesis of Huntington gets global attention as his theorization of partition of the world on the basis of civilization where he has tried grouping the countries and communities on criteria of culture and the civilization instead of the political, economic and development which was existing during the Cold War. In the Cold War, countries were divided on the basis of political, economic and developmental progress, at that time there was not a unique role of civilization. Even so, according to the concept of Huntington on civilization, the role of civilization to divide countries and communities has been a main element as the clash of civilization divides the world on different civilizations such as the Western, Confucian, Japanese, and Islamic. In the view of Samuel P Huntington, the culture and civilization is mainly relied on the religion, then civilization of the west concentrated on Christianity while the opposite is Islam by theorization of clash between civilizations.

Through over the clash of civilization Huntington promotes to intensify the conflicts of civilization, and fuel hatred between Islam and the west. Mr. Huntington exaggerates that, the ‘population explosion’ in Muslim countries and the economic growth of East Asia are most threat to the global politics as well as to the west, he emphasizes his argument as the growth of Islam through over world and rise of China also lead to the global war of civilization, as the rise of Islam led to many small wars in many parts of Asia [4]. In truest sense, to relate the issue of ‘population explosion’ in the Huntington’s theory on civilization reactivate the confirmatively of clash, hatred, and enmity between Islam and the West.

Huntington encourages the western hegemony and westernization through suggesting the west to preserve its unique and universal culture to protect world peace by coexist in complex, multicultural and pluralist world the west’s liberal democratic values. While Islam and China, and other civilization are

antidemocratic monolithic cultures, these were all time propaganda of the west against Islam and other civilizations. After the decline of the soviet the Islam became more relevant opponent, at same time Islam was rising in world and Christianity were in decline, these political situations also caused to wide range hatred in the west.

The Islamic resurgence in the world must be a threat to the western civilization but same time Huntington blames Islam by the terrorism, militia, and extremism. Nonetheless, Huntington is unconscious in his word of “for past 1300 years both Islam and west were in peaceful relation” he consciously forgets the blood thirsty history of crusade wars. Both Islam and the west have their own negative history but the Islam was all time criticized by the mischief of minority but all time the west and the US were all time justifying their violence and massacre through over middle east and Islam.

There have many bloodstains in history of the West and Christianity but that are buried under history, and these histories cannot be found in Eurocentric academic discourses and remained as myths in the same sense were, they using in all their approach and this was the psyche of the western civilization. Eurocentric knowledge production makes it easier to expand these attitudes and consent which have the character of anti-Islamic sentiments.

### **Remarks of Islamophobia**

Islamophobia is a term used to describe irrational hostility, fear, or hatred of Islam, Muslims, and Islamic culture, and active discrimination against these groups or individuals with them. For that, western countries understood an easy method of spreading irrational hostility, fear, or hatred of Islam and Muslims through depicting the cartoons and shooting the documentaries [5]. In reality, depiction of Danish cartoons, Charlie Hebdo’s reprinting and other satirical depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) were an easy method of fast-spreading of Islamophobia.

### **Role of Orientals on Islamophobia**

Other cause of disfigured Islam credited to Orientalism. Orientalism started from France. In 1795, Paris built a school for studying the eastern languages. After some years, Napoleon attacked Egypt and he accompanied some of the scholars of that school to collect the knowledge about the enemies and recognize their culture and behavior for political practice, this was the basis of oriental studies.

Orientalism is the main power of Euro-centric knowledge and the cause of ideological hegemony of the world. The philosopher Antonio Gramsci<sup>1</sup> states a theory, that ‘the ideological hegemony’ can suppress the ‘ideology of power’ on society. Orientalism works as the mediator of the emperor and the people of the colonies.

Orientalists are criticizing Islam and Muslims as fundamentalist, irrationals, these forms of stereotypes, bias, prejudice, misconceptions were propagating and manufacturing disfigured Islam and Islamophobia, these stereotypes continued as a tradition, handed over from ancestors until to pass to forth coming generation.

In 1990, Bernard Lewis<sup>2</sup> on his research entitled ‘The roots of Muslim rage’ he describes the threat of clash of civilization and after that Samuel P Huntington propagated the ideology of clash of civilization and stated that among describes Islamic civilization was most threat to the world. In 1991, Judith Miller<sup>3</sup> stated in an essay of the ‘Foreign affairs’ that Muslims did not want division of the good and bad because they wanted only to defeat the west.

Today, the mass media plays a leading role in defining terrorism. The anti-Islamism groups and individuals have attached the term ‘terrorism’ with Islam and the Muslims. Moreover, when enemies of the United States whether political groups or nation states wage politically motivated violence against U.S. civilians it is often called a terrorist act. Merely, when the U.S. government or its allies inflict similar acts of violence on civilians abroad, it is dubbed an act of retaliation or counter-terrorism.

### **Ignorance of Islam**

European intellectual world was disfiguring Islam from 12<sup>th</sup> century to 14<sup>th</sup> century due to their ignorance about Islamic ideologies, history and realities. Islam was ignored and neglected in the west severally, and they asserted Islam wrongly. It was their ignorance from the reality of Islam, not from Islam. They understood the all aspects of Islam, but it was identified neglecting the realism and focusing the idealism.

As the thirteen century, Crusader and Polemicist Oliver of Paderborn claimed: “Islam began by the sword, and maintained by the sword and by the sword would be ended”. In fact, the beginning emergence of

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<sup>1</sup> Antonio Gramsci is an Italian Marxist philosopher, wrote on political theory, sociology and linguistic

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Lewis a British-American historian, specializing on oriental studies

<sup>3</sup> Judith Miller American journalist, famous on coverage of Iraq weapon mass destruction

Islam had been tolerantly and peacefully. Even so, many companions sacrificed their lives, health and wealth only to save the reality of Islam.

Similarly, authentic scholar on creation of Islam's portrait in Europe 'Norman Daniel' says in his work "Islam and the West": "Islam to the west was a fake revelation story, and Muhammad is a uncultured boy, he was trying to conquer the world, he interested in violence and sexual harassments and Muhammad married more women". Thus, this bad concepts of western scholars about Islam are because of their ignorance with the real history of Islam, or they are neglecting the realism of Islam.

"Muhammad was a magician, and a priest on church, he used his magic to pursuit people to his new religion" such lies were propagated by Glenn Beck<sup>4</sup> due to his ignorance about Islam. Invariably, European churches, clergy, and rulers spread hatred on Islam to exploit their religious enthusiasm for the stability of church domination and to motivate population to holy war against Islam, to stop the Islamic invention on Europe.

Similarly, the great British historian Albert Hourani had noted about Islam and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as "Islam is a false religion, Allah is not god, Muhammad was not a Prophet, Islam was invented by men whose motives and character were to be deplored, and propagated by the sword." [6].

Actually, the mass media, with its narrow focus on the exceptional over the ordinary and its lack of international coverage, is the primary source of Americans' knowledge about Islam and Muslims. Ergo, they are totally ignorant with the reality of Islamic ideologies and its history.

In fact, the reality of Islamic ideology is that, Islam for many Muslims and non-Muslims do not only play a religious role, but a role of collective and personal identity creation. In the matter of constructions, the multiple dimensions of an Islamic identity play a major role. Although now, the western extremists and political leaders are humiliating the pure images of Islam due to being ignorant and unawareness of Islamic principles.

## **II. VISIBILITY OF ISLAM IN EUROPEAN PUBLIC SPACE**

### **1. Worship Identity**

When visibility of Islam in the European public space increased, the freedom of worship was completely facilitated. Many mosques were constructed in the European public spaces, which decorated the cities with gorgeous Islamic architects. The first mosque in Europe was erected in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by the moors, in Andalucia, southern Spain.

The Alhambra mosque has been a magnet for the growth of Spain's Muslim community, which is largely concentrated in country. The system of magnetic architecture attracted the peoples and it decorated the southern city of the country. The largest and most decorative mosques in Europe today that have been built in recent years are also largely supported by funding from Islamic states.

Several mosques were constructed by the funding from Gulf Islamic states. The grand mosque at Hyde Park in London was funded with support from the Gulf States. They are also funding the construction of one of the largest mosques in many European public spaces, for example, on the outskirts of Rotterdam, which will be known for having the tallest minaret in Europe.

The construction of historical mosques in large parts of European public spaces increases the visibility of Islam and Muslims in the west. This increase of Islamic visibility in the west threatens the anti-Islamism. Moreover, the larger mosques in Europe can often serve as a venue to bring together the different ethnic Muslim communities on special occasions.

### **2. Identity of Islamic Market**

Over the past three decades, Islam has become increasingly visible in the European public space, mosques, *Halal* foods, Muslims customs and ways of dress, are all increasingly common in European countries. European Muslims established their identities in European countries through their Islamic market through introducing Halal food, providing lunches without pork for Muslims and vegetarian children Day Care Centers and schools.

The Muslims, especially of the Netherlands and Britain established their own major supermarket of *Halal* food. They followed their own culture avoiding the western culture. Therefore, in the late 1991, some of the public swimming pools were opened the city of Rotterdam, that was maintaining a special time only to Muslim girls and women, organized special course such as training in bicycle riding for Muslim women who are often wearing floor-length dresses.

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<sup>4</sup> Glenn Beck is an American conservative political commentator, radio host, host of Fox news and CEO of mercury radio



### **3. Political Development**

In addition, Islam is targeted for being progressive politically in the west. Actually, when 12 satirical cartoons were depicted in Denmark, at that time Muslims were in progress politically. In both Britain and the Netherlands, there were also Muslims represented at the highest levels of National Government.

There are Muslim members appointed to the House Lords and elected to the House of Commons in Britain. There are even more elected members to the Dutch parliament's equivalent of the House of Commons with some Muslims spread across four political parties: the Liberal Party had two Muslim representatives, the Social Democratic Party had three Muslim representatives, Similarly, in 2001, Mona Kanwal Sheikh was nominated to the Danish Parliament and elected board member of the central council of the Danish Social-Liberal Party (DRV).

The author of 'Growth of Islamization of Europe', Oussama Chrribi describes: One of the Social Democratic Party's (SDP) MP described the current state of the country as fearing not only the growth of the Muslim community, which is largely Turkish, but also the growing needs that community has, such as schools, which will ultimately cost the state money at a time of severe economic difficulties.

Definitely, western countries tried their all-out efforts to wipe out the deep-rooted Islamic ideologies for being progress of Islam and Muslims. They understood the best way to insult Muslim through satirizing the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) by depicting him in hostile cartoons. Nevertheless, it was one of the most motives behind the satirical depiction of Prophet Muhammad in cartoons.

### **RESPONSES OVER DANISH CARTOONS INCIDENT**

This incident provoked the spiritual sentiments of Muslims and shook the whole Muslim world. At the same time, the Muslim world opposed this hostile action of Denmark through protests, demonstrations, and boycott of Danish products. This depiction of cartoons had resulted in increasing hatred, and sometimes violent protests across the Islamic world, and eventually triggered the burning of Danish embassies and flags across the Middle East, Nigeria, Pakistan, Afghanistan in February of 2006. Several religious communities also reacted over the cartoons and the reprinting of cartoons in western countries provoked Muslims heavily. After that, this mission of degrading the dignity of Islam and Muslims through satirical cartoons and documentaries created a huge conflicts and confrontation between Islam and the West [7].

The conference of European Rabbis held in Brussel on 5 February 2006, expressed its concern at recent publication by European press organs which humiliate and disparage the feelings of Muslims [8]. Rabbi Sitruk said:

*"The publication of cartoons depicting the Muslim Prophet Muhammad by the Danish daily, JyllandesPosten, and their subsequent publication by other European press organs, showed "a lack of intellectual honesty and a deep lack of respect for the feelings of others. We gain nothing by disparaging religions, by humiliating people and by making caricatures of religious symbols." [9].*

In point of fact, a survey shows 42% of French believe that Charlie Hebdo should have not published the cartoons, given that many Muslim find the images offensive. The survey in the wake of the Charlie Hebdo which was conducted by Le Journal du Dimanche shows many of French believe that the newspaper is spreading Islamophobia [10].

### **Demonstrations**

In the beginning Danish Muslim organizations did not intend to demonstrate or protest against hostile action of Danish daily newspaper JyllandesPosten, but they tried to communicate with Danish leaders to take action against the hostile incidents, which insulted to Muslim community. 11 ambassadors from Islamic dominated countries sent the letter to the Danish government but they rejected to apologize proclaiming this incident as the right of freedom of expression and speech, and even they refused to take action against the hostile act of Danish newspaper JyllandesPosten. Muslims started to react to this incident through protesting, demonstrating and boycotting. Then the responses of Muslims through boycotting affected the diplomatic relation between the west and Middle East.

Mr. Ahmad Akkari<sup>5</sup> gathered 27 Danish Muslim organizations and tried for more than two months to communicate with the Danish government in order to take action regarding the cartoons. "We collected 1700 signatures and delivered them to the office of the Prime Minister, we saw the Minister of Culture, we talked to the editor of the JyllandesPosten, we took many steps within Denmark, but could get no action," Mr. Akkari said, referring to the newspaper that published the cartoons. He added that the prime minister's office had not even responded to the petition.

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<sup>5</sup> Ahmad Akkari, a Lebanese born Dane, Imam from Ahirus mosque.

Correspondingly, 11 ambassadors of Islamic dominated countries wrote the letter to the Danish government to take action against the publication of satirical cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Even so, the government answered with an official letter to ambassadors without any request of conducting meeting with the leaders and imams of Islamic countries:

“The freedom of expression has a wide scope and the Danish government has no means of influencing the press. However, Danish legislation prohibits acts or expression of blasphemous or discriminatory nature. The offended party may bring such acts or expressions to court, and it is for the courts to decide in individual cases. Later, the protest and demonstrations arose among Danish Muslim community. And many Danish Imams reached to Islamic countries conveying the message to them about this hostile incident in Denmark”.

In many Muslim dominated countries people gathered to demonstrate against the hostile cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) after Friday prayers. The Islamic groups of Iraq, Egypt, and Palestine protested in abundance at the juncture of public. More than 5,000 people participated in a peaceful demonstration in front of the headquarters of JyllandesPosten in Copenhagen. About 1,000 people protested in Paris against the publication of cartoons in European newspapers depicting the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Later, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee issued a statement condemning the cartoons as “*negative, hateful, and racist*”. They claimed the racist attacks depicting the satirical cartoons perpetuate hate and violence against Muslims [11].

### **Boycott of Products**

Eventually, most of the Islamic countries boycotted Denmark. By this boycott the diplomatic relations of Middle Eastern countries and western countries were fractured. Until here, the Muslim leaders of Middle East announced to boycott the products of Denmark [12]. While Muslim countries, boycott the Danish products, the finance of Denmark became poorer and the Danish business felt the pain due to boycott of Muslims in Middle East to the Danish products.

On 5<sup>th</sup> March of 2006, Ayman al-Zawahiri of Al-Qaeda denounced the call to boycott the products of Denmark in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Middle Eastern countries. Therefore, Denmark and other western nations rejected the diplomatic relation with Islamic countries. They organized to boycott the products of the countries, which supported the Danish cartoons incident as a freedom of speech like France, Germany, Norway, and all other countries.

Thus, in response to the hostile incident of Denmark, Saudi companies and organizations launched a consumer boycott against Danish goods, including medicine, dairy products and Lego toys. This consumer boycott of Saudi Arabia’s counterblow resulted in hefty financial losses for Denmark. And this boycott fractured the diplomatic relation between Islamic dominated countries and the West.

### **Freedom of Expression**

Aftermath of the responses from Muslim world on Danish cartoons incident, western world proclaimed this incident as a freedom of expression. They accused Muslim world as anti of freedom of expression due to opposing of Muslims all over the world. Freedom of speech in international law restricts from targeting a particular community or society and it restricts through doing insult to the spiritual sentiments of a religion, which will create a provocative situation among societies. The right to freedom of expression is not an absolute right, legal and moral, come with responsibility that contextualizes them. A right can qualify to be so only if it is exercised with responsibility, to the individual and society. The right to freedom of expression can be no exception.

Another element to be taken into account is the analysis of the form of expression of the messages. In this case the satirical message is given through the genre of drawing in the form of cartoons, which highlights and emphasizes even more the message. Cartoons as a means of satire hold a very powerful language. Cartoons as an artistic genre and its symbolism through visual rhetoric are a powerful tool which when misused can feed the conflict in irreparable proportions. The satirical message depicting cartoons cross the limit of freedom of speech. And depicting the cartoons of the most beloved religious hero injures the sentiments of a particular community. As in a writing published in independent the writer Ziauddin Sardar states that:

“A cartoon is a satiric device. Satire holds a mirror to the powerful, speaking truth to power. But European Muslims can hardly be described as powerful. The Muslims of Denmark, France, Germany, Holland are among the most marginalized, unrepresented and voiceless of communities. They have no comeback. When the powerless are ridiculed in this manner, “freedom of expression” becomes an instrument of oppression.” [13].

Aslan suggested that publications that print such cartoons may often be attempting to provoke an extreme response in order to make a statement about who belongs in European secular culture. “I’ve had extensive conversations, for instance, with the editor of JyllandesPosten who published the famous Mohammed cartoons,” Aslan recounted. “And he says, without apology, that those cartoons were a deliberate attempt to

provoke a stick in the eye of Denmark's Muslim community, to rouse them, to essentially prove that 'unless you can put up with this, you don't belong in Denmark.' [14].

If the intent is to insult, then it is really such a humiliating action that people could feel insulted. Of course, to some extent taking offense is still a choice, and intent to provoke does not justify overreaction of any kind, much less violence. However, it is a reminder that secular Europeans have their own identity politics, and that these play out in controversies over cartoons as well. Still, their proclamation of freedom of speech on Cartoons Controversy makes lowest form of secularism. As a result, Mogahed notes, "holding religious symbols as sacred is in and of itself seen as backward, superstitious, and pre-modern." In truth, countries like France and Denmark proclaim themselves as a secular country.

The primary concern of western countries and predominantly Christian governments is absolutely unlawful. Veritably, they make balance between the freedom of expression and freedom of religion. In point of fact, the universal law of human rights restricts freedom of religion which affects violence among any particular community. On the contrary, universal law of human rights declares freedom of expression without being violence and provocative. While freedom of expression has been the primary concern of western countries, simultaneously, the freedom of religion has been the primary concern of many Muslim countries who have criticized the publication of the cartoons.

The comparing statement of Dalia Mogahed<sup>6</sup> to the incidents of cartoons with the issue of flag-burning in the United States, noting that a majority of American favor a constitutional amendment to ban flag-burning for similar reasons: the flag is an important symbol of a national identity, and many Americans see flag-burning as an attack on that identify, or even on the country itself. That's not extremism or backwardness; it's about protecting something you cherish.

Undoubtedly, the flag-burning of the US is an attack on the national identity and it is an insult to a national identity. Same as depicting the satirical cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is most powerful tool to satire and insult the Muslim. Thus, this is a biggest dynamic attack on Muslim community, it injures the emotion, sentiments and spiritual concept of Muslims.

The author and scholar Reza Aslan agreed with the opinion of Mogahed. Aslan said: "For some Americans, their national identity is sacred in the way that for some religious people, their religious identity is sacred," he said. "And to criticize America is to insult America [14]."

### **Media Propaganda**

The propaganda by the media or propaganda through the media is the easiest way of propaganda. The propaganda in the media is a type of persuasion, which are used to the particular agendas such as political, commercial and religious etcetera to formulate emotional or oblige responses from audiences. As due to that propaganda, they can alter the people with definite ideas and emotions. When, Muslims opposed the Danish cartoons controversy, Western media showed the reactive responses of Muslims in Islamic dominated countries exaggerating the responses of Muslims. By that the mass media were largely exploited to the different propagandas.

Moreover, the western media created a new propaganda accusing Danish Imams as portrayers of cartoons. The media proclaimed that which cartoons were shown in the Middle East by Danish Imams, those were portrayed by themselves. The media lied on Danish Imams accusing them. In fact, the contemporary world is becoming more complex and uncontrollable kind of propaganda and persuasions as due to the increasing growth of social media and its psychological controlling of every single person, even today the propaganda can be done in definite and particular kinds of people as determined by the social media dominants. The recently released documentary movie the social dilemma<sup>7</sup> speaks about the dinger of social media and upcoming data colonialism.<sup>8</sup>

The propaganda of western media against Muslims' responses influenced the western audiences. Media in reality aimed to influence their audiences by presenting bogus news and false proclamations of freedom of expression. The different media were involved in their own propaganda. The propaganda was especially held by governments, companies and other organizations to show Islam in bad manner, and they started to show Islam and its civilizations on the screen of radios and televisions and to browse in books, newspapers, and magazines as a polluted and impure civilization. Finally, they exaggerated about Islam and Muslims as monolithic, patriarchal, irrational, violence, and anti-democratic.

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<sup>6</sup> Dalai Mogahed is the director of research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding.

<sup>7</sup> Social Dilemma is a documentary film directed by Orłowski, Jeff about warning the danger of social media.

<sup>8</sup> Data Colonialism is a new form of colonialism, based on the data, the hitherto colonialism is continued by industrial capitalism.

### **Monolithic**

The western media considered and represented Islam as monolithic, that Islam does not tolerate pluralism and they misrepresented Islam as anti of tolerance, pluralism and freedom of speech.

However, this propaganda was great lie because the basic knowledge about Islam gives them the reality, there are 150 crore Muslims in world population, and among them 85% of Sunnis and the remaining is *Shias*, and both of them include many division and subgroups. On the basis of the local and theological variations, in Muslim majority countries living Christians, Jews, and other religious peoples, in Hindu majority India include 10 Crore Muslims.

### **Patriarchal**

The other propaganda about Islam, is that Islam is a patriarchal religion. The film, cartoons, news, and books created the portrayal of patriarchal Islam and anti-feminist Islam, Islam mummifies the women and not let him their human rights, the women is sexual equipment of men, the man marry limitless, women wore Burkha is icon of extremism, Islam ban education to women, these like many concepts existed in the west by the propaganda of media after the cartoon controversy.

The Hollywood film “Black Panther” include the scenes of Muslim women kidnapped by the Muslim terrorists, and not allowing them to education. Such paintings of Gerome, a French painter, representing Muslims and Arabs as black skinned and cruel against women, but Islam give the women the high stand in religious and social life.

### **Irrational**

The Islam is portrayed as something irrational and its only religious customs and *Shariah* is considered as barbaric and irrational, Islam and its prays and customs is primary based on revelation and secondly on ration. The west believes Islam as irrational thing. Why they cannot find out other religions accepting reason as much as Islam has done, the Christianity is based on the only pure spiritualism and science only based on the materialism but the Islam is balanced between spirituality and ration [15].

### **Violence**

Islam become a synonym of terrorism due to the west and their media prejudice the news and other media creating this formula, the words like terrorism, extremism, fundamental, fanatics, such words added in news to manifest Islam as religion of violence and jihad, the west populations fear about Islam.

Especially, when Muslims attacked on the office of Charlie Hebdo murdering 12 peoples, then the words of terrorism, extremism, and fundamental attached with Islam. Nonetheless, Islam have the all identity of the peace, and Islam never appreciate any kind of violence. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was an example of kindness, the west media win in their media game because they can depict Islam as they want and their conspiracies’ always reach into destination. The term Islamophobia is formed to refer the unreasonable fear about Islam.

### **Anti-Democratic**

The *Shariah* is Islamic system of laws, from which life of Muslims are connected with, but to the west ‘*Shariah*’ is a horrible concept of state or power. The West think that Islamic *Shariah* is the main course of terror attack and the *Shariah* promotes only the Khalifah rule. The Middle East faced the Arab spring to its revolutionary days some of them began as democratic countries, but to the Middle East it was an explosive experiment of democracy, as Bernard Lewis says “the democracy to Arab countries is not affected but for them better is to continue on the old way of *Shura*”.

## **III. CONCLUSION**

This research analyses the portrayal of Islam in Denmark and their satirical depictions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with special reference to motives and responses of Danish cartoons controversy. The research firstly analyses indicating the general Islamic perspective on making pictures and cartoons. Furthermore, the research elucidates ‘how portraying Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) offends Islam and Muslims. This research analyses the historical incident of Danish cartoons controversy.

Secondly, the researcher describes about the nature of depiction of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), that explains the general outlook of how western media represented the main hero of Islam Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in cartoons satirizing his pure image and beautiful characters. That describes of how and why the anti-Islamism from Denmark and other western countries were motivated to depict the Prophet Muhammad in satirical cartoons. The research puts in details, how western media represented the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) satirizing him in cartoons, all those were absolutely unfair and biased.



Finally, the study discusses the responses on the behalf of Muslims and anti-Islamism from the west, and to what extent the bias and prejudice are included in the news. It discusses how the Muslims responded on the depiction of satirical cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The research describes how anti-Islamism from the west responded to the reaction of Muslims over the cartoon's incidents. Lastly, the research puts how western media hatched dozens of conspiracies and propagandas against Islam.

The research finds that the many stereotypes, myths and propagandas are hatched by the Western media to misrepresent Islam and to spread the fear and hatred of Islam and Muslims. There are different elements that promote these media to propagandize the perfect ideologies and perspectives of Islam. Moreover, they applied the method of 'Cartoons Depictions' only to misrepresent Islam in easy and simple way. And for that, they depicted the cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in wrong nature.

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