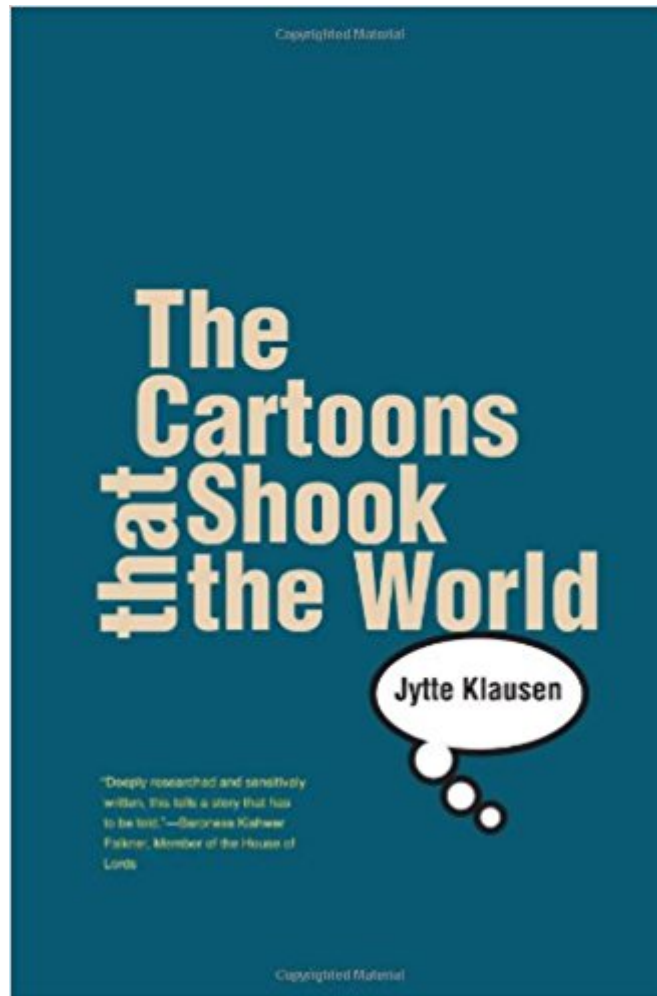




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# The Cartoons That Shook The World



## Synopsis

On September 30, 2005, the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten published twelve cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. Five months later, thousands of Muslims inundated the newspaper with outpourings of anger and grief by phone, email, and fax; from Asia to Europe Muslims took to the streets in protest. This book is the first comprehensive investigation of the conflict that aroused impassioned debates around the world on freedom of expression, blasphemy, and the nature of modern Islam. Jytte Klausen interviewed politicians in the Middle East, Muslim leaders in Europe, the Danish editors and cartoonists, and the Danish imam who started the controversy. Following the winding trail of protests across the world, she deconstructs the arguments and motives that drove the escalation of the increasingly globalized conflict. She concludes that the Muslim reaction to the cartoons was not as spontaneous emotional reaction arising out of the clash of Western and Islamic civilizations. Rather it was orchestrated, first by those with vested interests in elections in Denmark and Egypt, and later by Islamic extremists seeking to destabilize governments in Pakistan, Lebanon, Libya, and Nigeria. Klausen shows how the cartoon crisis was, therefore, ultimately a political conflict rather than a colossal cultural misunderstanding.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Newstalk host Sean Moncrieff's Recommended Book, November 2009 (Sean

Moncrieff) "For all its newsworthiness, the Danish cartoons affair remains obscure. Jytte

Klausen has written what must rank as the definitive account. It is a model of investigation and exposition. She demonstrates that the global ructions were not some spontaneous eruption of anger, but a campaign orchestrated for political advantage by a series of actors.

•Oliver Kamm, Prospect (Oliver Kamm)"The definitive account of the Danish cartoon controversy...beautifully constructed and intelligent."--Steven Poole, The Guardian (UK) (The Guardian)"Astute interpretive history...Klausen conveys unusual insight into the furor's geopolitical repercussions."--Arch Puddington, The Weekly Standard (The Weekly Standard)

•"Unlike most of those who sounded off during the affair, [Klausen] has followed in detail the domestic Danish debate and interviewed many of the protagonists. In her dissection of the controversy, she nimbly dispels a string of falsehoods and misperceptions.

•The Economist (The Economist)"Meticulously documents the enormous diplomatic and political machinations that sprang into action to transform an editorial lark in faraway Jutland into a global campaign to censor Islam's critics.

•Ezra Levant, Toronto Globe and Mail (Toronto Globe and Mail)"Patient and deeply informed and seeks to complicate our understanding of an event that is easily oversimplified.

•Christopher Caldwell, The Weekly Standard (The Weekly Standard)"An important, thorough history of the Danish cartoon controversy, based on sound scholarship.

•David Gura, Columbia Journalism Review (Columbia Journalism Review)"This book is deeply researched and sensitively written. It tells a story that had to be told. A must read!

•Baroness Kishwer Falker, Member of the House of Lords (Baroness Kishwer Falker)"A balanced and meticulously researched account of the events surrounding the Danish cartoons controversy. Full of valuable insights and recommendations, this is a must read for policy makers, community leaders, and all interested in good relations between the West and Muslims.

•Bhikhu Parekh, author of A New Politics of Identity (Bhikhu Parekh)"In this richly textured detective story, Klausen takes us with her on a journey across continents and cultures in an effort to discover why twelve little cartoons set off one of the first truly global crises of the twenty-first century. This is an impressive work by a gifted scholar, and is the finest account yet of this little-understood episode in our collective history.

•Tarek Masoud, Harvard University (Tarek Masoud)"An extremely thorough and wide ranging analysis of the facts surrounding the release of the Muhammad cartoons and the international framework in which the cartoons reverberated.

•Steven Simon, Council on Foreign Relations (Steven Simon)"A significant contribution to understanding the events around the Danish cartoons crisis, which will undoubtedly be subjected to continuing fascination and manipulation. Klausen offers an

understanding of the Danish context that no other researcher can match."--Jens S. Nielsen, University of Copenhagen (Jens S. Nielsen) "The Danish cartoon crisis has been described as a deep cultural clash. This fine scholarly study presents it instead as a domestic political conflict among Danish citizens that spread to the international political arena. There were many losers, Klausen argues, but no winners. This is, by far, the best analysis of these events, and certainly the most thorough." •Martin Schain, author of *The Politics of Immigration in France, Britain and the United States* (Martin Schain) "The cartoons that shook the world have polarized opinions and values in a war of words waged around the globe. Jytte Klausen's timely book brings facts and comparative data to make sense of a debate too often biased by passion, fantasies and false representations." •Patrick Weil, author of *How to Be French: Nationality in the Making since 1789* (Patrick Weil) "A definitive account of this important chapter in the contemporary encounter between Islam and the West. Klausen takes the reader behind the scenes and explores the winding roads that intersected to create the clash over the cartoons. There is simply no one better placed to write this book." •Jonathan Laurence, Boston College (Jonathan Laurence) "[The book] provides valuable insights into the perceptions and misperceptions of the various players that helped create this cultural debacle."--The Forward (The Forward) "Klausen appraises with empathy and irony the characters and issues involved."--Foreign Affairs (Foreign Affairs)

Jytte Klausen is Professor of Comparative Politics at Brandeis University. She is the author of *The Islamic Challenge: Politics and Religion in Western Europe* and *War and Welfare: Europe and the United States, 1945 to the Present*. She lives in Waltham, MA.

The positive part is that Klausen offers a rich and precise account of the facts and people involved in the Danish Cartoon-affair. On the other hand, she seems to offer all the evidence against the point she tries to make: that although rioting and killing all over the world, burning embassies, and issuing death threats is wrong, the West is somehow responsible for "offending" Muslims and thus partially to blame for the despicable savagery that was the result of the publication of a few satirical cartoons in a small Scandinavian liberal democracy.

and this book does. i recommend it and its complimentary "muhammed: the banned images." you should be free to choose what you see, and not have big brother tell you what it will let you see.

thought provoking and very entertaining.

A very informative book, diminished only by the omission of images of the Danish cartoons which caused the uproar. In a free society, someone is always offended by political cartoons, but we don't stop the cartooning. The furor in the Middle East was created, intentionally by Imams in Europe, who added cartoons depicting people as pigs, which related to a French Festival, wholly unconnected with the Danish cartoons. Unfortunately, the Muslims in the Middle East did not know this, and exploded into violence. In Islam, to criticize is to blaspheme. We, in the West should not allow ourselves to be intimidated into compliance with Islamic beliefs.

This book is a scholarly yet readable account of the controversy surrounding the publication of the "Danish cartoons" in September 2005. The author, a Danish-born professor of comparative politics at Brandeis University, writes authoritatively and fairly, analyzing the remarkable story of how twelve cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad led to protests, embassy bombings, boycotts, and many deaths in over a dozen countries. Last summer, just weeks before publication, the book and Prof. Klausen were the subject of extensive news coverage after the publisher, Yale University Press, decided not to include the cartoons in the book -- out of concern that to do so would incite further violence in Muslim countries. Of course the cartoons are readily available on the Internet, a point made by Yale in its "Publisher's Statement." Whatever the merits of the publisher's decision, the book, less than 200 pages (plus footnotes), stands very much on its own. It should be on the reading list of anyone interested in the tension between freedom of expression and sensitivity to religion -- a subject that will undoubtedly continue to fuel debate and disagreement around the world.

Klausen's book is an interesting account of the global controversy that erupted after the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten published a collection of cartoons depicting Muhammad. Much has been written about this controversy, but Klausen's book is valuable to readers interested in it because it gives a detailed factual account, complete with chronology, of exactly how the controversy unfolded. *The Cartoons That Shook the World* makes it clear that the sequence of events involved is far more complicated than the simple idea that publication equalled protests. In fact, diplomatic maneuvering, ignorance and mistaken perceptions of what the cartoons were, the re-publication of the cartoons, and more helped feed the fire that eventually led to demonstrations accounting for (by Klausen's count) around two hundred fatalities and eight hundred injuries (p.

106). The strength of the book comes from the factual detail included, and Klausen conducted dozens of interviews with some of the major players involved. This is, I think it fair to say, more in the nature of quality journalism than deep scholarly analysis, but there is definitely room for multiple ways of approaching the subject. One aspect of the book that I found particularly helpful was the discussion of the purported Islamic prohibition on representing Muhammad through images. As Klausen explains, conceiving of there being a flat ban over-simplifies a complex idea. "It was often said that Islam prohibits the depiction of Muhammad and that Muslims were angry because the prohibition was violated. One need not spend much time in Islamic art collections to know that the Prophet's life and biography are the subject of many illustrations. . . . The representations are regarded as pictures of the human prophet and not of the divine, 'the beauty of which no human eye can capture,' according to the Koran." (p. 8). In a section titled "What Muslims Do and Do Not Do With Respect to Figurative Representations" (pp. 137-143), Klausen goes into more detail on this issue. Klausen concludes that "it seems clear that the Danish caricatures did not violate a generalized Islamic prohibition on figurative representation but rather insulted Muslims by portraying the Prophet in a disrespectful manner." (p. 139) Earlier in the book, Klausen writes "[t]he cartoons live on in a deadlocked debate over the balance between free speech, civility, and the propriety and reach of blasphemy laws." (p. 54) The concept of blasphemy was invoked during the controversy not just in its religious connotation, but also in its legal connotation as Islamic activist groups in Denmark hoped to apply the country's blasphemy law as a shield against the cartoons. However, the Danish Public Prosecutor refused to consent to the proceedings, which further fed perceptions of hypocrisy and double standards.

Thank goodness for reviews...I nearly bought a book about cartoons that doesn't have any cartoons! Thanks, guys!

One might think that a book titled "The Cartoons that Shook the World," especially a scholarly one published by an academic press, would contain reproductions of the cartoons that are the subject of the entire book. In fact, the original manuscript did, but the cartoons were removed by the publisher, Yale University Press. The publisher censored its own book because it did not want to offend anyone. The book was thus "bowdlerized," robbing the reader of the most interesting and relevant parts. The banned cartoons apparently can be found in a new book titled "Muhammad: The Banned Images" by Gary Hull. Hull deserves credit for selling "The Banned Images" and for having more spine than Yale University Press.

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