

However, in keeping with my argument about the value of democratic institutions, I recognize that different countries have drawn legal boundaries in different ways for locally important reasons. So while I believe that some of the placards and some of the cartoons *should* be legally banned, it is the task of individual societies to hash out this argument and to arrive at workable solutions through their domestic democratic institutions.

Censuring versus censoring

Although legislation against hate speech and incitement is sometimes enforced in courts, often it is more useful as a symbol of discourse that society deems unambiguously out of bounds. As such, it is not the only tool at our disposal in debates about integration and free speech. Modood is correct that censoring is at least as important as censoring when negotiating these matters. The terms of integration and boundaries of acceptable speech are fluid and contested, and individuals, groups, and societies constantly work to define these for themselves. I believe that it is vital for those offended by public statements to voice their complaints and even to seek redress through normal democratic channels, just as it is critical that those defending the right to be offended stand up for that principle. All sides must be free to speak their minds, subject to the limitations of incitement and hate speech I have outlined above. It is through the careful juxtaposition of multiple arguments that citizens are persuaded to condemn or to applaud the cartoons, or to develop more complex and nuanced feelings about their effects on the world. From this perspective, Modood's and Hansen's essays are more than just scholarly analyses of the current situation; they are also forceful contributions to debates about social integration and free speech. While I've tried to highlight some limitations and alternatives to each author's perspective, I applaud their efforts to stimulate our thinking.

Liberalism, Multiculturalism, Danish Cartoons, Islamist Fraud, and the Rights of the Ungodly

Brendan O'Leary

The late Ernest Gellner argued that liberalism is a "miracle", by which he meant both that its emergence is not easy to explain, and that it is not the "natural"

condition of humanity, not that it was a gift from a “god”. He described our natural (or default) condition as the “tyranny of the cousins” [clan rule], or “the tyranny of the ‘ideo-crats’” [theocrats or ideological monopolists], and celebrated the exit from these mentally repressive equilibria. Gellner’s *Muslim Society* is enormously stimulating (as is his less well-known *Legitimation of Belief*), and I think it is correct to suggest that predominantly Islamic societies are experiencing an Islamist (fundamentalist, if you prefer) temptation in response to modernization. Some Muslim migrants in Western (and substantively post-serious Christian) societies experience the same temptation.

Western liberals have strategic choices about how to respond to that temptation (if one does not share it). That response may be different at home and abroad, for reasons of prudence, strategy, and morality. For example, it may be necessary to support secular Kurds having to temporize with some Islamist Shi’a to build a pluralist federation in Iraq – the constitution of 2005 allows Kurdistan to preserve its secular politics, but permits other parts of Iraq to apply the Shari’a. This compromise was necessary to protect Kurdistan but it is tough for liberals in other parts of Iraq, which did not vote for secular parties in significant numbers. But where one does not have to be prudent one should be vigorous in protecting liberalism and secularism in their established heartlands, where all the participants in this discussion live.

My concern in what is called the “Danish cartoons episode” but should be called “the Islamist cartoon fraud” is that no liberal principles should be sold now that might be regretted later. Among their number is protecting freedom of expression, freedom to have no religion, and freedom of the press. Agreeing not to republish a mild dozen cartoons out of some misconstrued notion of respect is succumbing to bullying and thuggery in the name of religion. That is what happened in Great Britain; that is what is endorsed by Joseph Carens. Deciding not to publish the three fake cartoons designed by Danish Islamists in their dishonest act of manipulation has let the true provocateurs off the hook. Secularists and the irreligious must be very cautious not to allow a new alliance of the religious to insinuate changes in our political systems – out of misguided notions of respect and out of the misleading efforts of some to conflate criticism of religion with racism. It is right to respect people’s languages; there is no obligation to respect every belief expressed in these languages.

Many liberals in Canada, the coastal United States, and urban London breathe liberal air, i.e. they live in an atmosphere which has been liberal (and libertarian) for a while, but not that long. We should not forget the abuses done by their ancestors to natives in colonies, slaves, Catholics and Jews, and countless other categories subjected to customary human cruelties. Contemporary liberals, I

find, have too easily accepted the fall of Communism and the quiet retreat of those who claimed “Asian values”, and there is nowhere nicer to be complacent than Canada. Such liberals have not won their faith in any hard trials. It is their “heritage”, for which they fear not enough. In consequence, they do not understand why those who have just emerged from illiberal environs, or who have lived or worked in deeply illiberal places, are much more concerned than they are to draw liberal “red lines” on certain matters, especially in the homelands of liberalism.

One of these red lines is the right to criticize all religions, the right precisely to treat nothing as “sacred” or “taboo”, the right, contra Carens’ words, not to respect sincerely held religious conviction, the right to have a good laugh at the godly. That right includes the right to tell good or bad jokes about religion and to draw portraits of Muhammad as many Sufis did until recent times. Tariq Modood and Erik Bleich probably do not want to require liberals to respect sincere religious fundamentalism, which mandates that creationism, intelligent design, and a certain set of “family values” be educationally institutionalized. But since Modood refuses to declare his religious convictions – as is his right – I am not sure what his sincere convictions on religious matters are. I suspect Carens and others simply want liberals to respect sincerely held and liberalized (“rights-respecting”) religions. These are, of course, no longer, at least for now, the religions they were. Many exponents of Christianity and Judaism have tempered or modified the historic cores of their beliefs precisely because of centuries of scientific falsification, textual criticism, and ridicule in the heartlands of the West. Perhaps Carens accepts John Rawls’ risible claim of an “overlapping pluralist consensus” among all religions, which he believed to be compatible with liberalism. Such an assumption cannot be based on any deep acquaintance with Islam, to name just one religion, but the one under discussion here.

Islam, as expounded in the Koran and the hadith, is a religion that commends war, not one of peace and tolerance. Islam has an iconoclastic and murderous record with polytheists, and the artefacts of non-Islamic religious cultures. It prescribes the death penalty for apostasy. In power it historically subjected Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians to the status of *dhimmi*. Neither in theory nor in practice does Islam respect the equality of women and men. It licenses an instrumental approach to the truth and treaties with non-Muslims. According to some current cant this summary statement makes me an Islamophobe. But to paraphrase the Christian who hates sin but not the sinner, I hate these beliefs, and their consequences, not the believers as persons. It is absurd and a repudiation of the liberal heritage for Modood and Bleich to expect me, and others, to respect a religious belief, and they mean an Islamic belief, because it is sincerely held. Many dangerous beliefs are sincerely held. I may have to treat exponents of

such beliefs with prudence, but I do not have to respect the beliefs or the believers qua believers. Sadly many self-styled liberals and multiculturalists demonstrate the anthropologists' relativist heresy: to each culture its own, including its sense of what is cognitively and morally true, and peace, blessings, and equal respect to them all. Islamists grant no such reciprocity.

There may be good reasons to regulate where people express their freedom of opinion, and indeed about how they may do so. Had the Danish cartoons been marched on banners into a mosque in Copenhagen and hung on the walls that would have been violently provocative, and a violation of the freedom of assembly of others, and indeed of their property rights. But to publish mockery of Muhammad in an outlet not noted for its Muslim consumers was well within the newspaper's rights (and indeed public manners) both under Danish law, and under the European Convention. Liberal rights also permit public relations stunts. But in this case Danish Islamists pulled off the public relations stunt that mattered.

Modood and Bleich make a case for taking seriously Muslim offence and outrage. Their case is however embarrassed by the facts. The outrage was manufactured, and cannot be justified by the cartoons' putative racism. One of the explanations for the delayed, allegedly "outraged", and grotesque overreaction to the cartoons published in *Jyllands-Posten* was the active campaign waged against them by Ahmed Abu Laban, a Danish imam. His campaign got under way two months after the publication (in the low circulation Danish journal), and some time after six persons associated with his mosque were arrested on suspicion of involvement in terrorist activities. This man, and the Islamic Society of Denmark, then lobbied the Arab League to take offence on behalf of the entire Muslim umma. When Arab governments got in on the act, no doubt, seeing a chance to "defend" Muslims and attack Western liberal democracy, there was then a feedback effect on Islamist and Islamic (yes, I distinguish the two) networks in Europe. Then the campaign truly took off. It led to deaths, death threats, and government-encouraged boycotts. Demonstrators called for the beheadings of the cartoonists, just as one of the cartoons predicted.

The Society's campaign was utterly dishonest, built on lies, and more dishonest than any alleged hypocrisy over the Danish newspaper's apparent greater enthusiasm for lampooning Muhammad as opposed to Christ. The lobby group did not simply complain about the 12 cartoons published in *Jyllands-Posten* when engaging the Arab League. They added three others, grotesque caricatures (showing paedophilia, sodomy, and the Prophet represented as a porker), to bolster their campaign portfolio. When this fact was exposed, they defended these additions on the grounds that they showed how "hateful the atmosphere in Denmark is towards Muslims" (spokesman Ahmed Akkari). The spokesperson's excuse might seem convincing had not one of the additions already been shown

to be a Frenchman competing in a village pig-squealing competition. It was not an example of Danish Islamophobia or Danish racism, but an Islamist lie.

We should not be obliged to “feel the pain” of any of the allegedly disrespected Muslims for the publication of cartoons most of them cannot have seen – unless they sought them out. We can feel sorry that they were manipulated. Muslims in Europe may deserve our sympathy if they have experienced unjust police repression or discrimination in employment or employment opportunities, or denied citizenship rights. But liberalism – not democracy, which may merely mean majority rule – requires freedom of religious opinion, including the right to have no religious opinion. The cartoons were in no worse taste than Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses*. The cartoonists did not make their cartoons a global issue. Islamists did, and Arab league governments.

This takes me to the issue of racism, where I find myself in agreement with Hansen. Were the original 12 cartoons racist? No. They mock religion, and politically violent Islamists, not race. They mock Muslim suicide bombers in particular, but not because they are not white, but because they are said to be motivated by religious conviction, including a sexist notion of paradise. Incidentally, when it comes to racism, some of the worst I have heard expressed – and I am not shockable – has been Arab racism (toward Kurds in Iraq, and toward blacks in the Sudan, including black Muslims). A little less hypocrisy on the matter of racism is in order in Arab Muslim quarters.

Liberals must defend freedom of expression, provided it clashes with no other reasonable right, and that includes when that expression ridicules beliefs, and causes offence. There is no liberal case for immunizing religions, religious institutions, and religious personnel (in their formal roles) from public criticism. There are good arguments for reasonable laws of libel and defamation to protect particular persons’ reputations – there I part from some in the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) – but not, I think, dead persons, like the alleged “last of the prophets” (a false claim on many grounds), or Christ, or Buddha. Equally, liberals are willing to regulate public constraints on freedom of expression in public places – one should face a fine for crying “fire” falsely in a crowded location – or to regulate and censor on paternalistic grounds, to protect children. But these arguments do not apply to the publication of cartoons ridiculing Islam and Islamists in Danish or European newspapers.

Those of us with passports in our pockets, who can contemplate “offers” or advertisements in universities in multiple states, usually have little practical experience of what it may be to be a refugee, an illegal or unregistered alien, or a source of sweated labour in an ethnic enclave. Equally, we find it easy and pleasant and entirely appropriate to welcome novel foreigners to our departments, but that is

not, sadly, the median response of those at the bottom of the division of labour. Academics are happy to be and to be received as “metics”; the same is not so true among the working class. Multiculturalism is great for us; we get the benefits. Must we not listen to others who say they do not experience the benefits? Must we simply re-educate them? Must we require them as well as competing with other workers to respect their beliefs – when that respect is manifestly not reciprocated?

It may be acceptable, as Modood argues, to have limits on freedom of speech when there is a “serious risk of incitement to hatred” (I’d prefer “to kill”, or “to injure”, i.e. actual bodily harm), or even a “risk to public order” (although I would preface the latter with “serious” before “risk” also). But, limits are not acceptable contrary to what Modood suggests, when speech or text merely “inflames passions”, or when it is “likely to reinforce prejudice”. That would mandate a very broad curtailment of freedom of expression, and enable each victim-group – real or alleged – to claim to be inflamed, or to be suffering from prejudice. I have been a member of a minority nationality in Great Britain, one whose alleged collective lack of intelligence is part of ingrained English “humour”. That inflames some of my co-nationals, but I see no warrant for curtailment of such freedom of expression. I can present you catalogues of racially offensive cartoons of the Irish as a people, and am proud of the fact that the Irish, at their best, have responded by showing that they do not fit the stereotypes and by telling better jokes. That is not how many Muslim demonstrators responded. Many of them precisely conformed to stereotype.

Even if it was true that the Danish newspaper sought to “achieve some kind of victory over Muslims”, “to bring them into line”, as Modood puts it, and these claims, as the Scots say, are unproven, it is a logical *non-sequitur* to argue that the subsequent republication of the cartoons throughout Europe (which did not happen universally) was “deliberately done to teach Muslims a lesson”! This expression suggests that Modood shares a partiality for victimhood, and that he sees a coordinated conspiracy against Muslims. Such republication as occurred was prompted by freedom of expression concerns, and by the operation of market forces (competition for readers); in some cases, it may even be argued that republication and web-links were intended to promote information. The only significant conspiracy was that of the Danish Islamists, with the connivance of governments in the Arab League, to use the Muslim diasporas in Europe, and Muslims elsewhere, for “cheap politics”. That quote is from my friend, an academic political scientist, and a secular Danish citizen, of Sunni Muslim origin.

It is fallacious to argue that if Muslims are economically marginalized, e.g. suffering in Palestine or feeling generally bossed about, that the way to resolve these lists of grievances is to curtail liberal freedoms in liberal states. The way to

address any just Muslim's grievances is appropriately, i.e. to practice progressive economic policies toward deprived areas in which poor Muslims are resident in Great Britain, or the *banlieux* of Paris, and to achieve a just political settlement in Palestine (and Israel). It would, of course, help if Muslims consistently showed universalism in their moral concerns – but in this respect they follow the counsel of their Prophet. I watched al-Jazeera throughout my extensive time in Kurdistan in 2004, and noted a total lack of reporting of the horrors in Darfur, and a dramatic over-reporting of American atrocities in Iraq by comparison with primarily Sunni Arab organized atrocities against other Iraqis. My point is this, “Muslim grievances”, allegedly caused by the West, to the extent that they can be homogenized, weigh more heavily in typical Islamists' eyes than atrocities by Muslims, and atrocities by Muslim regimes, and even than much worse atrocities by Muslims on fellow Muslims. That group-centred hypocrisy is normal, though textually explicit in Muhammad's sayings. Liberal criticism is one of the few therapies for exposing all group-centred egoism, and foolishness. It is after all absurd, and funny – in the sense of funny peculiar – that an orthodox Islamist suicide-bomber who kills infidels imagines he is going to be rewarded with a sexual cornucopia, and that he should regard virgins as especially sexually delectable.

Modood cites two factors as critical in explaining a lack of sympathy for Muslims in Europe: the fact that Muslims are considered a religious rather than a racial minority, and the fact that post- enlightenment intellectuals do not like religion. These explanations seem to be variations on one factor (religion) rather than two. It was Islamists (who proclaim themselves devout Muslims) who were responsible for 9/11 (New York, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania), 3/11 (Madrid), and 7/7 (London). But I agree that the lack of sympathy for Muslims in Europe has a long vintage; it is not just recent. It is partly rooted in the legacies of Ottoman imperialism in Europe (about which Balkan peoples rarely have nostalgia), but among intellectuals and others it is partly explained by a reasonable appreciation of what orthodox Sunni or Shi'a Islam teaches.

Europe's choice, as Hansen argues, is not between “the right to ridicule Muslims”, or “the integration of Muslims”. The European Convention permits the right to ridicule religious beliefs. It is the right of the European Union's member-states to set the terms of integration of their immigrant and their national minorities in accordance with liberal human rights and various levels of recognition of group autonomy (in which there will be significant variation in modes of incorporation). I, for one, welcome the prospect of Turkey's entry into the EU, but if and only if Turkey conforms to the criteria for entry into the liberal democratic club, which includes proper treatment of Kurds, acknowledgment of the genocide against Armenians, and the removal of their military from political decision-making. No one is doing a worse job for Turkey's entry prospects than hard-

line Muslim extremists, and the soft-accommodation of their threats, of which Modood's essay is an illustration. Modood sees progress since the *Satanic Verses* affair. I do not, and that affair is not over. I see collusion between communitarian Anglicans, cowardly politicians in marginal seats, and radical Islamists, which may re-erect taboos on criticisms of religion. Perhaps that's what Modood regards as progress.

Now let me turn to consociations and pluralist federations, mostly in response to Joseph Carens. Liberal multiculturalism should not grant each group (or its representatives) veto rights over criticisms of its core beliefs. If Carens is simply recommending good manners, here's to that. Veto-rights over constitutional change or the passage of legislation, of course, is not the same as veto-rights over public expression. For example, parity of esteem between (Irish) Nationalists and (British) Unionists is usually understood to refer to parity of esteem for their national symbols (flags, dispositions toward monarchism and republicanism, and so on). In no sense, does it require others, including those who are neither unionists nor nationalists, to avoid criticism of these national symbols – and what they express. Nor does it require nationalists and unionists themselves to avoid criticizing the others' symbols, or their own. What parity of esteem mandates is that public institutions treat these symbols equally (but not that everyone respect these symbols, or equally respects them – fine distinctions, but important). In fact, Northern Irish nationalists seek parity of esteem as nationalists, not as Catholic believers. Those Irish nationalists who are Catholics have full freedom for their religion – there is no established religion in Northern Ireland. So they do not seek religious “parity of esteem”: equality of school funding is another matter. Some, no doubt, are old-style Vatican supremacists (who like orthodox Muslims believe they are in possession of the one true faith) and therefore they would regard parity for their religion as an insult.

Liberal multiculturalists should not conflate (1) freedom of expression, (2) freedom of association and (3) the right to demonstrate, though these public liberties are linked. Ulster Unionists and the Orange Order have the right to say and publish whatever they like in my view – including hateful, provocative, and false caricatures of Irish nationalists, republicans, the Vatican, priests, and nuns. [And they do]. They have exactly the same normative rights in this respect as the Danish publication in question. On freedom of expression, I do not, unlike some, wish to use the concept of “harm” in “defence of public morals” at least for the protection of adults. I think we have good reasons for sheltering children on grounds of “public morals”, but usually, at base, to protect them from exploitation. But freedom of association requires some more regulation than freedom of expression. Without this freedom there can be neither liberalism nor pluralism, political parties, interest groups, civil society, and so on. But we are entitled to ban freedom of assembly for those intent on armed attacks on our freedoms (but we must do so extremely carefully, so that

we do not intimidate dissentient opinion). I have explained why I thought it would be a matter for a regulatory, and a police, response had the Danish cartoonists marched into mosques in Denmark to decorate them with their “artwork”. The freedom to demonstrate or parade requires more regulation than freedom of expression – precisely because direct physical harm may be occasioned to others, because disorder may occur, and because the exercise of such freedoms requires a decision as to what “spaces” are public and which private (and how we shall govern access to public spaces). But we should operate with the presumption that those who wish to demonstrate in public places should have the right to do so – provided that right does not clash with that of others, and provided they are not intent on physical harm of persons, public sites, or neighbourhoods.

So I defend the right even of the Loyal Orders to have their “parades”, though I regard the beliefs expressed by many of the marchers as highly disagreeable, offensive, hateful, and false; they are not mere “folk festivals”. I certainly do not favour any general ban on “parades” by the Loyal Orders as an outcome of the principle of parity of esteem. Yes, I decode many (but not all) such marches as deliberately intimidatory, and as expressions of what the late Frank Wright called acts of “communal deterrence”. For that reason, among others, such parades require regulation, and policing, and, reasonable negotiations (with elected authorities, special commissions, and residents’ associations) to ensure that such parades do not become sources of public disorder. The Loyal Orders have tended to be cavalier and provocative in defining “traditional” marching routes. The original Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association deliberately marched through predominantly Unionist neighbourhoods to reject the idea that public parading was the privilege of one group. This is exactly the application of the principle of parity of groups in the public domain to which I subscribe. Organizations which abuse, especially those which persistently abuse, the freedom to demonstrate, including those which deliberately organize riots, with damage to persons and property, may lose their rights to freedom of assembly, and may be appropriately fined, or have their officers taken before tribunals and courts. What for me is crucial and warrants restraints on public liberties is the idea of physical harm to persons and property. “Moral violations”, “offensive behaviour”, and “hate speech” for me are better ridiculed than jailed – except where the practitioners commend physical harm and killing (i.e. incitement).

So I have a consistent and long-standing position here. I am very happy for Muslims to have the right to demonstrate peacefully – including with outrageous placards – to express their feelings and views. Where I deeply disagree with their position is straightforward. I want no blasphemy laws. I want free speech protected, especially of religious and non-religious and anti-religious opinion. And that for me is a planet-wide commitment – it is not an opinion I want to modify for Baghdad, Berlin, or Bristol.

In response to the question as to whether Muslims are entitled to parity of esteem my response is compared with whom? and in what respect? Compared with other religions, Islam, or rather those who have freely submitted to Islam, should have parity of association, assembly, speech, and *conversion* with other religions, even though Islamic states often do not grant these reciprocal rights to other religions. They should have exactly the same rights as others, but no special blasphemy protections. With regard to the status of Muslims *vis a vis* the state in member-states of the EU at least two positions may be consistently taken by liberals. One is to have no established religions. The “Kymlicka-liberal”, I presume, may argue that immigrant minorities do not have the same presumptive group rights as national minorities, and consequently he or she may defend the existence of national churches – provided people don’t have to belong to them, and provided other religious communities can operate, and that democratic and human rights are maintained. This style of settlement is often reached in the negotiation of constitutions which respect pluralism in religions. As for personal law, this is a very tricky domain and I’ll try to be terse. The liberal state has the right to insist on a common civil marriage law but may respect diverse religious ceremonies for marriages – and may respect different practices. Whether Islamic marriage rules, e.g. on divorce and post-divorce property rights, should be permitted by liberal states depends on whether one regards these as within the margin of religious belief or whether they affect the equality of men and women. It is my view that they violate the equality of women. But I would not object to true parity in this domain (men may have up to four wives legally provided women may have up to four husbands). On education: I see no reason why the liberal state should treat Islamic schools differently from schools run by other religions. The liberal state may reasonably require a common curriculum; if it funds schools it should fund all schools equally without paying clergy or mullahs in their religious capacities. I can see why state schools may insist on uniforms – but I see no reason to insist on stripping children of Islamic scarves, crucifixes, or Jewish kippahs. I think, as a matter of fact, Islamic schools would adversely affect the education and career opportunities of Muslim children in Europe, and therefore would not commend them, but I would recognize the right of Muslims to have such schools, provided they teach the public curriculum so as not to reduce the life-chances of their pupils.

One last matter. Explanation and justification are analytically separate enterprises, though often conflated. Carens quotes me, correctly, as saying that, “People voluntarily kill, or die, for collective causes expressed in words that register their group’s esteem, dignity and honour. Actions that provoke and rekindle resentment are the catalysts of violence” (O’Leary, 2005). I emphasized in my article on the IRA, from which these sentences are the opening lines, that one cannot explain

the IRA's origins, conduct, or the termination of its campaign, solely by reference to materialist or "realist" explanations. The "words" that I had particularly in mind were those in the Treaty of 1921, Ireland's constitution and the IRA's own constitution. Two things do not follow from my argument in that paper, namely (1) that we should always avoid hurting, or avoid allowing others to hurt, a group's esteem, dignity, or honour or (2) that explaining a group's commitment to political violence necessarily means that violence is justified. What I showed, I hope, in my article on the IRA, was that its evolution could not be understood without appreciating its own constitutional beliefs, and that its successive de-mobilizations (in sovereign Ireland and Northern Ireland) could not be understood without reference to constitutional engagements, by the Irish and UK governments, with those beliefs.

So am I consistent (empirically and normatively) with respect to Muslim reactions to (alleged) Danish cartoons? One of the mechanisms I specified in my IRA article – offence to group honour and esteem leading to violence – has definitely operated. There have been deaths and demonstrations in abundance from Northern Nigeria to Kabul. But that mechanism was manipulated by hard-liners, as I have claimed (without effective rebuttal), which is why I appropriately used "alleged offence". And, in this case, as was often true of the IRA, there has been gross disproportion between the [alleged] offence and the reaction (I earlier showed in these electronic discussions that even taking offence relied on accepting one narrow construal of Islam – one which presumes that the prohibition of representation of Muhammad is universal among Muslims when in fact Sufis in Iran historically drew such cartoons). Without the action of the Danish Islamist entrepreneurs and the actions of Arab governments – matters would not have gotten out of control, and I am surprised some here seem to avoid this conclusion. Had they not intervened – deliberately – there would have been no widespread "knowledge" of the cartoons and therefore no offence. It is also clear, as is often true of symbolic politics, that the alleged offence became a unifying issue to rally a whole gamut of Muslim grievances in the EU and against the foreign policy of the Western democracies.

But it is often a mistake to appease authoritarians, especially when there is no necessity to do so. Many (legitimate and genuine) grievances require appropriate responses, and they should be redressed, but not by weakening liberal institutions. For the record, I do not commend offending just Muslims as the liberal perspective on religion; but I do think, as Islamists recognize, that liberal principles taken seriously are an affront to all seriously held historic versions of monotheism. Liberalism rejects "faith"; it makes a virtue of scepticism. Liberalism arose in part from the clash of rival Christian monotheisms. So, what I defend is the right to criticize (and mock by word and movie) all religions, especially those which are religiously supremacist. Liberals should engage Muslims' beliefs, including their beliefs on the appropriate responses to blasphemy, rather than accepting them as

given data which must alter law and public practice. I assume no certainty of knowledge about the insides of others' minds, but retain the right to question whether people truly are offended – especially when I know they have been manipulated.

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Free Speech and Democratic Norms in the Danish Cartoons Controversy¹

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In my contribution to this exchange, I want to make two main points. First, a deep commitment to free speech is no barrier in principle to criticism of *Jyllands-Posten* for publishing the cartoons. Second, people who are committed to liberal democracy in Europe should criticize *Jyllands-Posten* for publishing the cartoons, even if they do not share any Muslim religious beliefs.

I want to start with a critical comment about the style of these exchanges. Both Randall Hansen and Brendan O'Leary adopt a polemical tone that is (perhaps) entertaining to read but that obscures more than it clarifies. Hansen, for example, hurls an accusation of hypocrisy against "liberal intellectuals, too many to name" who criticized the publication of the cartoons by *Jyllands-Posten*. This is a serious charge. It is one thing to say that someone with whom one disagrees is inconsistent or wrong. That is a normal part of intellectual debate. But to say someone is a hypocrite is to accuse an interlocutor of bad faith. It is like saying that someone has cheated (rather than simply made a mistake). Hansen's broad and unqualified indictment implicitly impugns the integrity of a significant