

Proklaté karikatury (Bloody cartoons)

Proč potřebujeme demokracii? (<http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10157577065-proc-potrebuje-demokracii/207382540550005-proklate-karikatury/>)

Dánský smysl pro humor většina muslimů nesdílí. Karikaturista se stal rizikovým povoláním. Dokument z rozsáhlého koprodukčního cyklu Proč potřebujeme demokracii?

Je Bůh demokratický? Na tuto otázku můžete hledat odpověď spolu s dokumentem "Proklaté karikatury". Dánští filmaři se, jak už název napovídá, věnují aféře, kterou několika lety vyvolalo otištění dvanácti karikatur proroka Mohameda v dánském a později i světovém tisku. Rozjitřená atmosféra v zemi se ovšem od té doby nikterak neuklidnila, o čemž svědčí fakt, že zcela nedávno se měl jeden z karikaturistů stát obětí plánované vraždy. Mezitím západní svět kroutil hlavou nad odsouzením anglické misijní učitelky, která dovolila dětem pojmenovat plyšáka Mohamedovým jménem ... a nad mnohými jinými absurdně znějícími příběhy. Přitom od doby, kdy iránský duchovní vyslovil klatbu na Salmana Rushdieho, uplynula už téměř dvě desetiletí - a nic se nezměnilo.



Is God Democratic? (<http://www.whydemocracy.net/film/11>)

What do Danish cartoons tell us about contemporary democracy?

A lot it seems. Freedom of expression has always been a core principle of democracy. Imagining one without the other is unthinkable to most people. But what happens when one democratic right infringes on the rights of others? Is democracy itself shaped by religion? Are religions democratic? More importantly, is God democratic?

ABOUT THIS FILM

Bloody Cartoons is a documentary about how and why 12 drawings in a Danish provincial paper could whirl a small country into a confrontation with Muslims all over the world. He asks whether respect for Islam combined with the heated response to the cartoons is now leading us towards self-censorship. How tolerant should we be, he wonders, of the intolerant. And what limits should there be, if any, to freedom of speech in a democracy.

The director films in Lebanon, Iran, Syria, Qatar, France, Turkey and Denmark, talking to some of the people that played key roles during the cartoon crisis.

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

KARSTEN KJAER is a Journalist, Director and Producer who worked as a foreign correspondent for World Media before turning to television. He has produced more than 200 programmes for Danish and European television as well as numerous specials on world affairs, especially in the Middle East. Karsten is the founder and owner of the independent production company Freeport Film in Copenhagen. He is best known for his use of satire, humour and extraordinary methods in the coverage of sensitive political and cultural issues.

FILM CONTEXT

The controversy over the Cartoons started when the independent liberal daily newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published cartoons of the prophet Muhammad in September 2005. The publishing of the cartoons was motivated by the difficulties of finding artists to illustrate a children's book about the prophet. Artists were reluctant to provide the drawings out of fear of being attacked by religious extremists.

Political History

Denmark is the oldest kingdom in the world and one of the countries that constitute Scandinavia. To this day it is a constitutional monarchy. However, Denmark has been an independent democracy since 1849. The country has been a member of the European Union since 1973. From the beginning Denmark has been sceptical towards the union. Denmark has neither accepted the Euro as its currency nor supports the idea of a common defence force.

The Political Scene

Denmark has a multiparty system and is a welfare society. In the 2001 elections the Liberal-Conservative parties came into power and formed a minority coalition government. This ended many decades of Social Democratic domination. The leader of the Venstre (Liberal) Party, Prime Minister Rasmussen, was re-elected in February 2005. The Liberal-Conservative government supported the US-led war in Iraq, and has troops present in Afghanistan.

In recent years the Right-wing Danish People's Party has gained prominence on the political scene. As the third biggest party in Denmark, the Danish People's Party is part of the Liberal-Conservative coalition that forms government. Amongst others, this has led to a new stricter immigration policy and a district and city council reform that has resulted in fewer but larger districts throughout the country.

World Relevance

The cartoons sparked a controversy far beyond Denmark's borders and caused violent protests throughout Muslim communities around the globe. A number of countries in the Middle East boycotted Danish goods in January 2006 and Danish, Swedish and Norwegian embassies were attacked. Some countries even recalled their ambassadors from Denmark. The Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen has called the controversy Denmark's worst international crisis since World War II.

Looking Ahead

Critics of the cartoons claim that they were racist and Islamophobic. According to the critics the controversy is an expression of a society and a political system that is becoming more and more hostile towards non-European immigrants in general and Muslims in particular.

Meanwhile, supporters argue that no one was looking to attack Muslims, and that the cartoons are but an expression of freedom of speech in a Western democracy where drawings of religious prophets are published all the time. They point out that the worldwide discussion and protests is a result of living in times with widespread Islamic terrorism. In fact, magazines, newspapers and news websites all over Europe published the Muhammad cartoons in support of Jyllands-Posten and concept of 'freedom of speech'.

Bloody Cartoons goes behind the controversy of the Muhammad caricatures by documenting the escalation of the political crisis and in the process examining the need for freedom of speech in democratic societies.