Islamophobia Studies Yearbook

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Contents/Inhalt

Foreword

This seventh issue provides a collection of articles that engage the continuing challenge of Islamophobia. Roxana Akhbari addresses a rarely treated issue. She looks at epistemic agencies of people with Islamicate cultural backgrounds living under Islamophobic gaze in multicultural Western societies. Merin Shobhana Xavier and Amaranth Amarsingam also deal with an often neglected field in Islamohobia Studies, looking beyond the 'West' and considering the South Asian context. They try to understand the distinct nature of Islamophobia as it plays out in contemporary Sri Lanka. Sindre Bangstad analyzes the situation of Islam, Muslims and Islamophobia in Norway before and after the killings by Anders Behring Breivik on July 22 2011. Luis Manuel Hernandez Aguilar proposes a reading of the German Islam Conference as a biopolitical and governmental technology informed by the reproduction and recoding of racial representations of Muslims in Germany and an institution that seeks to form and recruit imams as agents of integration. Ines Monteira Arias analyzes the origins of Christian representation of Islam in a series of Spanish and European Romanesque reliefs. Saira bano Orakzai identifies three historical narratives as fundamental for the making of Islamophobic discourses. Nadja Ayoub and Christine Lohmeier analyze arguments and narrative strategies of right-wing and populist parties in the context of the 'mosque debate' in Munich.

Farid Hafez, Vienna 2016

Vorwort

Der siebte Band des Jahrbuchs setzt sich mit weiteren Herausforderungen von Islamophobie auseinander. Roxana Akhbari beschäftigt sich dabei mit einem weniger beachteten Themenfeld. Sie sieht sich die epistemische agency von Menschen mit ‚islamisch'-kulturellen Background, die in westlichen Gesellschaften unter dem islamophoben Blick wandeln, an. Merin Shobhana Xavier und Amaranth Amarsingam blacken über die ‚westliche' Welt hinaus und nehmen in ihrem Beitrag den asiatischen Raum hinein. In ihrer Analyse versuchen sie die besondere Natur von Islamophobie im zeitgenössischen Sri Lanka zu erfassen. Sindre Bangstad untersucht die Situation des Islams, der MuslimInnen, sowie der Islamophobie im Norwegen vor und nach dem Attentat von Anders Behring Breivik am 22 Juli 2011. Luis Manuel Hernandez Aguilar präsentiert eine Lesart der Deutschen Islamkonferenz als biopolitische und gouvernmentale Technologie, die durch eine Reproduktion und Umkodierung rassifizierter Repräsentationen des Muslims in Deutschland informiert wird und die als Institution beabsichtigt, Imame als Integrationsakteure zu formen und rekrutieren. Ines Monteira Arias geht den Ursprüngen christlicher Repräsentationen des Islams in der Analyse einer Reihe spanischer und europäisch-romanischer Kunstgegenstände nach. Saira bano Orakzai identifiziert drei historische Narrative als fundamentale Grundlagen für die Entstehung Islamophober Diskurse. Nadja Ayoub und Christine Lohmeier nehmen in ihrer Analyse Argumente und Erzählstrategien rechter und rechtspopulistischer Akteure in einer Münchner Moscheedebatte in den Blick.

Farid Hafez, Wien 2016

Abstracts

The Need for De-centering Anti-Islamophobia Critiques Proposing a Demarcation

Roxana Akhbari

An overview of the critical literature on global Islamophobia reveals an almost exclusive focus on analyzing the ignorance of white supremacist subjects manifested in their misconceptions of Islamicate subjectivities. Although these critiques of Islamophobia provide a helpful epistemic apparatus for combatting Islamophobic white ignorance, they do not adequately address epistemic agencies of people with Islamicate cultural backgrounds living under Islamophobic gaze in multicultural Western societies. In this paper, I will argue that this focus on white subjects' misconceptions makes many critiques of Islamophobia white-centered and (effectively) disengaged from the agential perspectives of people with Islamicate cultural backgrounds. Next, I will draw upon the feminist philosophical literature on epistemologies of ignorance in order to introduce a theoretical framework for taking issue with the unitary logic of banishing Islamophobia through correcting the colonial ignorance of white supremacist subjects regarding Islamicate subjectivities. Finally, in light of the theoretical framework I introduce, I will discuss Parin Dossa's project of exploring the nuances of alternative epistemologies that South Asian and Iranian women in Canada offer for transcending Western/Non-Western dichotomization as a de-centered critique of Islamophobia that intentionally focuses on the epistemic agency of people with Islamicate cultural backgrounds.

Keywords: White supremacy, The logic of global Islamophobia, White subjects' misconceptions of people of color, Epistemologies of ignorance, The social contract theory, Strategic ignorance

Caught Between Rebels and Armies: Competing Nationalisms and Anti-Muslim Violence in Sri Lanka

Merin Shobhana Xavier & Amaranth Amarsingam

In the context of Sri Lanka, a country that has experienced ethnic strife from the time of independence from Britain in 1948, Muslims have had diffi-

culty situating themselves between warring parties, between the Tamils and the State – between rebels and armies. Though there has been a consistent effort to marginalize Muslims as part of the nationalist discourse in Sri Lanka, these tendencies have historically been uniquely articulated, be it with the riots of 1915 between the Sinhalese and Muslims in Gampola in Central Province, said to be the first of its kind on the island between these two ethnic blocks or the experience of the Muslims during the civil war between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealem (LTTE) and the state. Such events have culminated in the current climate, which has lead to the current rise of militant Buddhist propaganda by such movements as the Bodu Bala Sena (BBS). As a means to understand the distinct nature of Islamophobia as it plays out in contemporary Sri Lanka, this paper seeks to advance some of the discussions taking place in the literature on Islamophobia, which often continues to neglect not only the South Asian context, but also the way in which anti-Muslim sentiment and violence can develop in the context of competing nationalisms. While we do not wish to wade into the definitional debates about what constitutes Islamophobia, we do wish to expand the contextual parameters in which much of the debate has thus far taken place.

Keywords: Sri Lanka; Sri Lankan Muslims; Islamophobia; religious violence; Buddhism; Tamil Tigers; LTTE; Bodu Bala Sena; ethnicity; religion and violence

Re-coding nationalism: Islam, Muslims and Islamophobia in Norway before and after July 22 2011

Sindre Bangstad

On July 22 2011, two terror attacks in Norway perpetrated by a white Norwegian right-wing extremist whose stated motivation for the attack was to eradicate the Muslim presence in Norway and Europe by perpetrating a massacre on Norwegian social democrats he held as responsible for allowing Muslim immigration to Norway since the 1960s, killed seventy-seven people, most of them teenagers. The terror attacks came at the end of a decade in which Islamophobic ideas and sentiments often originating in transnational far-right online activist milieus had to an increasing extent become mainstream in Norwegian political and media discourses. The mainstreaming of these ideas and sentiments have developed in parallel with the electoral rise in popularity of the historically anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim populist right-wing *Progress Party* (PP) – in government in Norway since October 2013 - as well as the spread of new and increasingly libertarian and free speech absolutist ideas

about freedom of expression in Norwegian political, legal and media elites. The ubiquity of these discourses in a small, egalitarian and prosperous country like Norway suggests that socio-cultural anxieties rather than material factors account for the rise of Islamophobic ideas and sentiments in Norway since 2001. Yet – and pace Mudde (2007) – material determinants cannot be entirely discounted – for what Norway has seen in recent decades is in fact a 'culturalization of politics' (Brown 2006) in which Muslims have increasingly been rendered as 'racialised' (Meer 2014). Islamophobia in modern Norwegian history has a far longer genealogy than that, however. Muslims in Norway first start to be perceived as a problem by virtue of their supposed religiosity in the 1980s, and a central vector in Islamophobia in the 1990s was the secularist-feminist notion of Muslims as a threat against women's rights and relative gender equality in Norway. I argue that Islamphobic 'knowledge' about Islam and Muslims represent a form of 'counter-knowledge' which often trades in conspiratorial ideas concerning an essentialist 'homo islamicus' overdetermined by Islamism rather than Islam, and is provided succor through ongoing crises of democratic legitimacy in a liberal and secular Europe. Islamophobia in Norway is not single-standing, the central rhetorical tropes drawn from a transnational far-right repertoire in many cases turned mainstream.

Keywords: Islamophobia, Norway, Liberalism, Right-wing Populism, Anders Behring Breivik

On Racism and the German Islam Conference[1]

Luis Manuel Hernandez Aguilar

This paper explores the supplementary technologies of power deployed by the German Islam Conference (DIK, an acronym of its German name: Deutsche Islamkonferenz) to accomplish its objective to integrate Muslims and thereby to reform and refashion a new subject formation: the German-Muslim. In particular, I explore the DIK's discursive investments on the figure of the imam, as one of the key subject position in the governmental attempt to integrate Muslims. I will contend that the DIK seeks to set in motion a governmental chain of guidance, guiding imams so that they can guide Mus-

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1   The present article reworks some arguments of my PhD dissertation entitled, "Welcome to Integrationland. On racism and the German Islam Conference", which delves into the racial representations of Muslims and the different governmental interventions effected by DIK through a discourse analysis of the documents of the conference. I would also like to express my gratitude to the two anonymous reviewers whose comments helped me to improve and clarify this manuscript.

lims with reference to a particular normative frame delineated by the DIK. Moreover, the paper proposes a reading of this state agency as a biopolitical and governmental technology informed by the reproduction and recoding of racial representations of Muslims in Germany and an institution that seeks to form and recruit imams as agents of integration.

Keywords: Racism, German Islam Conference, Muslims in Germany, Biopolitics, Governmentality, Native Informants.

Seeking the origins of Christian representation of Islam: anti-Muslim images in Romanesque art (eleventh to thirteenth centuries)

Ines Monteira Arias

The ideological and territorial conflict of Western Christendom against Islam in the Middle Ages -*Reconquista* and Crusades- determined the images that would appear on the churches and in the Religious Art of the time and following centuries. The idea of the Muslim enemy as contrary to God and, therefore, ally of the Devil, becomes established from the sanctification of war by the Papacy and monastic movements, from the 11th century onwards. This ideology settled in the Christian collective imaginary thanks to the homilies, church images and *chansons de geste*, where we may see the clichés that will embody Islam thereafter. This paper analyzes a series of Spanish and European Romanesque reliefs where an anti-Islamic message may be seen: knights and warriors were represented like saints, and certain images showed Muslims animalized and demonized -monsters with turban and dark skin.

Keywords: Romanesque-Art, Visual-Propoganda, reconquista, crusades, Muslims-depiction

Islamophobia
Historical Narratives and the Making of Discourses

Saira bano Orakzai

Religion, which is a story of faith, produces different narratives and reactions. Islamophobia is one such reaction of the Christian/European society about this story of faith, creating divergent narratives and stereotypes around Islam. The paper establishes three important points for the historical foundation of the study of Islamophobia. Firstly, the biblical frame and apocalyptic traditions played an important role in the depiction of Islam and Muslims by

the early Christian discourses. Secondly, the change in the theological and philosophical orientation of Europe towards secularism impacted on its imagery of Islam. Thirdly, although the age of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment altered this, Europe could not completely dissociate itself from the medieval historical legacy. During the phase of 'Orientalist' representation, a new taxonomy of vilification was developed to describe Muslims, left its mark on the Islamophobic discourses and began to color the meta-narratives. The paper concludes that the story, which began with fear of Muslims in the Christian–European mind, then turned into a fear of colonial Europe in the Muslim mind. This suggest that Islamophobia is not one-sided fear but is reciprocal, both in the minds of Muslims and the West.

Keywords: Muslim-Christian relations, Islamophobia, terrorism, Orientalism, Islamists, historical discourses.

Mosques as terrifying threats? – Arguments and narrative strategies of right-wing and populist parties in the context of the 'mosque debate' in Munich

Nadja Ayoub and Christine Lohmeier

This paper analyses the narrative and argumentative strategies of right-wing populists regarding the potential construction of a mosque in Munich, Germany. Local right-wing parties aim to stop the project by trying to initiate a referendum. Through protests in the city center and on their websites, they employ hate speeches and different forms of propaganda to fight against the building of a mosque.

Which kind of arguments and narrative strategies do right-wing and populist parties bring forward against the building of the proposed new mosque in Munich and how do these comply with or differ from such debates elsewhere? To answer this research question we conducted a qualitative content analysis of the online-communication of three political organizations and parties as well as the weblog "Politically Incorrect", which can be considered a center for islamophobic thought in Germany: Earlier findings by scholars in the field (e.g. Hafez, Schiffer, Stoop) were used to classify the different argumentative strategies and the language used. Even though many of their categories could be confirmed, our results also drew attention to new lines of arguments used by the right-wing parties. Moreover, the empiric data also points to a number of person-centered arguments which focus on the figure of a well-known Imam who is the initiator of the mosque project and who is also at the center of conspiracy theories.

The results show a comprehensive set of arguments which we employ to demonstrate and analyse how mosque-debates are instrumentalized by right-wing and populist groups to spread their ideology. Our research is especially relevant and timely considering the analyzed protagonists: One of the parties holds seats in the Munich city council and therefore has a certain level of political influence. Furthermore, the Munich-based populists are extremely active and well connected with other like-minded groups. The most prominent figure, Michael Stürzenberger, is one of the most active people of the Islamophobic scene in Germany. In the light of the recent uprising of anti-islamic tendencies in Germany, it is vital to understand the strategies, arguments and agendas of parties such as the ones analyzed.

Keywords: mosques, construction of mosques, public debates, threat, Islam, political discourse, narrative strategies

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2nd International Conference on Islamophobia

From Orientalism to Islamophobia?

University of Fribourg (Switzerland), October 21–22, 2016

The theme for the second International Conference on Islamophobia is "From Orientalism to Islamophobia?". It covers both historical and contemporary issues surrounding Orientalism and Islamophobia. We are interested in the various facets of the Orientalist perspective and observing continuities and breaches within it. While some authors argue that contemporary Islamophobia should be seen as a continuation of Orientalism, others emphasize that the two phenomena should be considered and conceived separately from each other. Moreover, looking at Islamophobia through a postcolonial lens raises pertinent questions about the persistence, peculiarity and analogy of Orientalism and Islamophobia. This is particularly reflected in recent publications, which include concepts of power and governance in their definition of Islamophobia.

The conference languages are English and German. The 2nd International Conference on Islamophobia is organised by the Department of Historical Sciences, Contemporary History, University of Fribourg (Switzerland) in cooperation with the Department of Political Science, Salzburg University (Austria).

7th Annual Islamophobia Conference

Islamophobia: Has a tipping point been reached?

April 8 & 9, 2016, Location: UC Berkeley School of Law

UC Berkeley Center for Race and Gender Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project is hosting the 7th Annual International Islamophobia Conference and invites scholars, researchers, artists, poets, media producers, activists and community organizations to submit an abstract for a mutli-medium engagement in the Islamophobia Studies field.

The conference's theme, Islamophobia: Has a tipping point been reached? is both a question for researchers and a statement reflecting the pervasiveness of bigoted discourses that problematize the category, Muslim and Islam in civil society. Certainly, the recent intensification of Da'ish's terrorist attacks and the subsequent media coverage have contributed to the rising tide of Islamophobia and the arrival at this "tipping point" moment.

The conference seeks papers that examine Islamophobia from multi-disciplinary and transnational perspectives, so as to, bring a more holistic understanding of the phenomena and the forces acting to sharpen the ongoing otherization of Muslims as a class. While negative media discourses focusing on Muslims are important and have received scholarly attention, other areas of research remain un-theorized with few quality pieces in circulation. The conference encourages abstracts from a broad range of academic fields and specialization and panels will be organized based on academic fields with the hope of publishing clusters of papers addressing the particular specialization. We highly encourage papers examining Islamophobia in the following fields:

1. Education
2. Public Health
3. Electoral Politics and Public Policy
4. International Relations and Global Discourses
5. Empire, Military Industrial Complex, and Architecture of Racism
6. Papers with Intersectionality Focus (Race, Gender, Immigration, Prisons, etc.)
7. Orientalism and Post-Colonial Studies
8. Islamophobia in the Law and the Justice System
9. Sociology, Anthropology, and Religion
10. Muslim Institutional Responses

The conference will examine every abstract proposal with key guiding principle of expanding knowledge production in the Islamophobia Studies field, and encouraging new areas of research that are under-theorized and under-studied. The conference committee is attentive on creating a collaborative approach to forging more critical scholarship in the Islamophobia Studies field, and expanding the existing networks of researchers across disciplined and the geographical areas of the world. We encourage themes and panels covering specific academic disciplined, quantitative, and qualitative research, specific case studies in countering Islamophobia, curriculum and course designs, as well as, comparative approaches to Islamophobia in different countries and settings.