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From Anti-Immigration and Nationalist Revisionism to Islamophobia: Continuities and Shifts in Recent Discourses and Patterns of Political Communication of the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ)

Michał Krzyżanowski

Introduction

This chapter analyses the dynamics of discourses of the right wing populist Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ). In order to portray significant changes as well as key continuities in the FPÖ discourse over time, the chapter focuses on two distinct periods: on the one hand, late 1990s and early 2000s and, on the other hand, mid/late 2000s. Whereas in the former period the FPÖ was still a government member under the (either official or symbolic) leadership of its charismatic head Jörg Haider, the arrival of mid/late 2000s saw the secession of the party (into Haider-led BZÖ and the FPÖ as of 2005) and the FPÖ's return to the opposition as well as the arrival of the party's new chairman H. C. Strache.

The main aim of this paper is to show that, whereas several continuities can be observed in FPÖ discourses over time, there are also significant shifts¹ in the party's populist rhetoric adjusted to the changing national and, to some extent also international, political conditions. The key shift is the FPÖ's departure from its many Austrian-specific arguments of the first analysed period (e.g. Austrian-specific forms of anti-Semitism, revisionism of Austria's NS past, etc.; in Haider times), towards a

¹ The notion of (discursive) shifts is used here in line with a theoretical model which portrays them as more or less localized (micro-level) responses to (macro-level) social-political and discursive change. Discursive shifts are seen as local appropriations of global changes and as produced by selected individual or collective actors (e.g. political parties) in their discursive and communicative practices (for further details, see Krzyżanowski *forthcoming*).

different rhetoric of the second period when more ‘international’ arguments (which have also been used by other right-wing populist movements across Europe² such as Islamophobia and strong Euroscepticism under Strache) have become salient.

Theoretical background

This paper subscribes to the ideas proposed by Beck (1992 and 1994) within his theories of *risk society* and of *reflexive modernisation*. As argued by Beck, contemporary societies – especially their Western forms – do not undergo any abrupt changes or transformative periods of crisis (such as previous revolutions, uprisings, etc.) but instead *are in the state of context flux and of quasi ongoing transformation*. That transformation is particularly visible in the political field in which we witness a vivid development of re-invented civil society which is ‘naturally’ closer to the social. On the other hand, what occurs simultaneously is the growing ‘political vacuity of the institutions’ (Beck 1994: 17) which stems from the general weakening of traditional politics which is not capable anymore of responding to both local and global tendencies and changes in the social environment (see also Beck & Grande 2007).

Such a situation provides a fertile ground for right-wing populist movements, which, paradoxically (i.e. as members of the political class themselves), subscribe to the criticism of the mainstream political parties which have apparently lost touch with the larger portions of the society. By providing ‘simple answers to complex questions’ (Reisigl & Wodak 2001) as well as subsequent (and indeed constant) critique of the entire political establishment, right wing populist movements opportunistically respond to, on the one hand, public fears of the late-modern developments, including the alleged loss of security, and, on the other, to the growing public disenchantment with politics (Wodak 2011).

In a similar vein, discourses of Right-Wing Populist parties (RWP) also display the feature of ‘ongoing transformation’ postulated by Beck (see above). Whereas earlier, the RWPs were much more eager to respond in their actions to grand moments of social and political transformation (as was the case with the FPÖ’s 1992/93 ‘Austria First’ referendum, initiated in the aftermath of the fall of the Iron Curtain),³ they currently mostly rely on constant self-re-invention and auto-construction of ‘crises’ to which they can then find populist quasi-solutions. As we see in the recent actions of the FPÖ, the latter is found in the *constant process of campaigning* which, unlike before, is not tied only to elections but is in fact also an ongoing practice which provides the party with the ability to be constantly present in the media.

In this context, special attention should be paid to recent transformations in political landscapes in Europe. These changes, which result in the ongoing blurring (if not the actual disappearance) of divisions between political ‘left’ and ‘right’ (Azmanova 2004),

² See Boréus (this volume) for the comparative analysis of discourses in Austria, Denmark and Sweden.

³ See Reisigl and Wodak (2000 and 2001), Wodak (2001), Krzyżanowski and Wodak (2009).

are mainly ascribed to the awakening and spread of the global neoliberal tendencies of the 1990s and 2000s (see Jessop 2002a, b). Such tendencies contribute to the visible transformation of the forms as well as the contents of political competition. The latter is now no longer based on the rivalry between different and/or alternative proposals of varied models of the state, but, instead, between different types of responses proposed by political actors with regard to largely similar sets of issues. According to Azmanova (2009) those issues include both globalization (in both economic and sociopolitical terms) and political internationalization (e.g. at the level of the EU). The former is most aptly associated in the European context with accelerating politics of the European integration which meets with the ever-larger waves of Euroscepticism (see Taggart & Szczesniak 2008) fuelled by national-populist movements. On the other hand, implications of the latter – that is, transnationalization – are manifold and include cross-national migration and otherwise conceived human and labour mobility as well as the transnationalization of economy (again, all widely contested in national public spheres; see Azmanova 2009).

Importantly, many of the topics outlined above – especially migration – are the ones which were not traditionally ‘discursively’ embraced by Europe’s political mainstreams. While having had an obviously profound impact in shaping migration policies in the post-war period, many mainstream parties have for a long time avoided making the topic into the central element of their official discourses and media appearances. This has changed since the mid-to-late 1990s, with migration now at the centre of debates about national ‘security’ and gradually becoming the most important topic in political debates in which it is not only perceived in international but also, and primarily, in home affairs. (Such was the case in, for example, the first televised pre-election political debate in the United Kingdom in 2010 which, focussing on home affairs, started from debating ‘immigration’). At the same time, right-wing populist parties, which traditionally embrace migration – or more specifically anti-immigration – as the central point of their political agendas are now rising in importance as ‘champions of public debates’ and as ‘agenda setters’ who ‘knew all along’ that migration was a ‘problem’ (Krzyżanowski & Wodak 2009). Accordingly, RWPs appear as those who have a better recognition of social problems than the mainstream parties and as those who ask the often uneasy questions (e.g. about ‘costs’ and ‘limits’ of migration).

Such is also the case with Austria where the FPÖ’s activities led to migration becoming a mainstream political topic already in the early 1990s (with the ‘Austria First Petition’, etc., see above) and consequently focused public opinion as well as pre-election debates on that topic (see Wodak & Krzyżanowski 2008a). Since the mid-2000s – as a response to social and political changes (and, for example, an inability to further oppose migration from former-communist and now European Union member states) – that discourse has also shifted to ‘third-country’ refugees and asylum seekers (already to some extent targeted by Haider in the 1990s) rather than focussing on migrants as such. This shift has recently been continued further and now encompasses different Islamophobic slogans (see below) which allow the placing of local aspects of migration in the global context of, for example, struggle between different cultures and religions.

Methodology and categories of analysis

My study draws on previous research on the dynamics of FPÖ discourses in early and late 1990s⁴ as well as in early 2000s.⁵ It also builds on earlier explorations of forms of racism and discrimination in public discourses (see van Dijk 1988, Wodak & van Dijk 2000), on cross-national receptions of right-wing populist politics (Krzyżanowski 2002) as well as on recent studies on Islamophobia in European public spheres.⁶

The study is rooted in the methodological tradition of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and especially the Discourse-Historical Approach.⁷ The analysis focuses mainly on *strategies of self- and other-presentation* which investigate dynamics of discursive formation and legitimation of in- and out-groups (see Reisigl & Wodak 2001 for further details). Of the said categories, the central ones remain those related to strategies of argumentation which show how arguments for/against certain issues (e.g. Islam) are constructed in discourse. Here, *topoi* which are understood as headings of arguments constructed in discourse by means of different constellations of contents of texts at hand (see Krzyżanowski 2010 for further details) are treated as the central categories. For example, the *topos of danger and threat*, encountered frequently in the analysed material (see below), is realized by means of different parts of analysed texts which describe Islam from the point of view of its mainly negative features (e.g. radical education, terrorism, etc.) all of which help in constructing an argument about a set of more or less obvious ‘threats’ posed by Islam to European, and especially Austrian, social reality.

While the aforementioned categories will be crucial in analysing the textual material, multimodal genres (e.g. billboards) will be examined by means of a combination of strategies of self- and other presentation and of *strategies of representation of social actors in discourse* (van Leeuwen 2008). The latter allow for the recognition of dynamics of discursive representation, including processes of foregrounding or backgrounding of social actors. Analysis of the inter-semiotic genres will also be supplemented by means of related forms of ‘multimodal’ or ‘visual-semiotic analysis’ (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996, O’Halloran 2008; see also Scollon & Levine 2004, Pollak 2008).

Exploring the context

Due to limitations of space, this chapter is unable to describe in detail the history of the FPÖ from its beginnings in the late 1940s (for further details and earlier studies, see, inter alia, Pelinka 1990, 1993, 2005, Manoschek 2002, Krzyżanowski & Wodak 2009). Therefore, the present contextualizing section only sketches out key developments of the FPÖ since 2000.

⁴ See Matouschek et al. (1995), Reisigl and Wodak (2001).

⁵ See Pelinka and Wodak (2002), Wodak and Pelinka (2002), Wodak and Krzyżanowski (2008a), Krzyżanowski and Wodak (2009), Wodak (2009); see also Geden (2005 and 2006).

⁶ See Richardson (2004), Richardson and Wodak (2009a and 2009b), Wodak and Köhler (2010).

⁷ See Reisigl and Wodak (2001 and 2009), Wodak (2001, 2011), Wodak and Krzyżanowski (2008b), Krzyżanowski (2010).

The new millennium started successfully for the FPÖ which, following a significant gain in public support, scored 27.4 per cent of the votes (second best) in elections to the National Council (*Nationalratswahl*) of the late 1999. In early 2000 the FPÖ then entered the Austrian federal government as the coalition partner of the conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP). This led, however, to repercussions of both a national and international nature. The latter mainly took the form of sanctions imposed by the then remaining EU-14 countries against the Austrian government, as a response to allowing into government a party such as FPÖ which was widely known for its uncritical stance towards National Socialism and its frequent use of antisemitic slogans (the sanctions were lifted on 12 September 2000). These international repercussions eventually led to the national occurrences during which, in view of the growing discontent in the party, FPÖ leader Jörg Haider resigned as the party chairman. However, despite his official resignation, Haider maintained considerable influence on the succeeding party leaders such as Susanne Riess-Passer, Matthias Reichhold, Herbert Haupt and Ursula Haubner (Haider's sister).

Due to the turmoil within the FPÖ and, especially, in view of the party's inability to effectively act as a coalition partner, the *Nationalratswahl* of 24 November 2002 brought a disappointing result of only ca. 10 per cent of the national votes. Despite this, the FPÖ yet again entered a coalition government with the ÖVP in 2003 and remained part of the government until 2005. However, despite remaining within national government politics, the weakening of the FPÖ's position across the country was soon proved by electoral defeats between 2003 and 2005 when the party lost in all of the Austrian regional elections except for Carinthia (where Haider – as provincial governor since 1999 – led the local FPÖ to significant victory). This, however, proved rather destructive for the party as it fuelled the ensuing conflict between Haider and his national and regional party colleagues such as the then Party-Chairman Hilmar Kabas or the Viennese faction leader Heinz-Christian (HC) Strache.

This, as well as several other conflicts in the party, resulted in the eventual split of the FPÖ in 2005 when Haider and his close followers left the party and founded the *Alliance for the Future of Austria* (BZÖ). The split proved very influential not only for the party-internal politics but also for the FPÖ's partaking in the national government. As several members of the latter included close allies of Haider and joined him in the new formation – including the then federal Vice-Chancellor Hubert Gorbach – the BZÖ automatically entered the federal government while the FPÖ was, in fact, forced to move into opposition. This, expectedly, caused an open conflict between the now two Austrian RWPs, with the FPÖ soon electing (on 23 April 2005) a new leader HC Strache to lead the party into the post-Haider era.

The first years of Strache's FPÖ leadership proved to be rather unsuccessful with the party suffering clear loses. Such was the case especially in the new leader's hometown of Vienna where, despite a fierce campaign led by Strache in 2006, the FPÖ lost significantly against the Austrian Social-Democratic Party (SPÖ) who thus regained majority in the Viennese regional parliament (*Wiener Landtag*). Similarly, the FPÖ's gains in the ensuing national-parliamentary elections of 2006 were rather modest with the party gaining only 1 per cent of votes (thus scoring 11% compared to 10% in 2002. such an electoral gain was still low when compared to the support the party used to win in the heyday of the Haider era).

The unsuccessful first years of Strache's FPÖ leadership were, however, soon followed by a thorough rethinking of the party's marketing and communication strategies (increased mediatization, focus on a new, 'young' leader, etc.) as well as a shift in focus from the traditionally FPÖ-like topics (e.g. anti-Semitism, revisionism, etc.) to new slogans (especially Islamophobia which had already proved fruitful for RWP in other Western-European countries; see below). In view of this significant change in the image and rhetoric of the party and also in light of the growing public insecurity fuelled by the evolving Global Financial Crisis, the FPÖ soon started to clearly gain ground as far as both regional and national elections were concerned. In the *Nationalratswahl* of 2008, the FPÖ managed to score 17.5 per cent of the votes (BZÖ and FPÖ together scored almost 25%) which showed that the party was gradually on the rise. Its increase of votes was soon followed by a further boost in popularity which coincided with a significant weakening of the BZÖ's popularity after Jörg Haider's death in October 2008.⁸

Despite some unsuccessful electoral attempts by the FPÖ (when, for example, the party's 2010 Presidential candidate Barbara Rosenkranz scored only 15% of the votes compared to 80% gained by her social-democratic opponent Heinz Fischer), the party has recently been experiencing a relatively steady increase in support. The latter has been fuelled by, on the one hand, the prolonged economic turmoil in Europe, the Euro-zone and worldwide (although it has not affected Austria as much as many other EU countries) and, on the other, the ever-more frequent crises in the SPÖ-ÖVP Austrian coalition government. The FPÖ gained almost 6 per cent in the European Parliamentary elections of 2009 (scoring altogether 12.7%) as well as almost topped its record level of support in the Viennese regional elections of 2010 (scoring 25.8%). Its recent nationwide support is estimated at ca. 30 per cent, often exceeding support for Austria's two mainstream social-democratic and conservative parties which presently form the federal coalition government. The party also seems to be increasingly boosted by the ongoing crisis in the BZÖ.

FPÖ politics and rhetoric in late 1990s and early 2000s: The Haider era

Allowing for the abundance of studies which have dealt with FPÖ during party's leadership by Jörg Haider (see above), the current section will only briefly describe the party's politics and rhetoric of late 1990s and early 2000s. In doing so, it will construct a comparative basis for the later exploration of the FPÖ rhetoric as of 2005 (see below).

As a typical *Führerpartei*, the Haider-led FPÖ of late 1990s and early 2000s was strongly focussed on its charismatic leader who was always present in the media whenever FPÖ's opinion was sought or whenever significant televised and other debates were taking place. Although this changed slightly following Haider's retreat from the party leadership in 2000, it was still obvious up to 2005 (secession of the FPÖ)

⁸ Jörg Haider died in a car accident in south Carinthia on 11 October 2008.

that, although not officially in post, Haider remained the party's actual leader who controlled FPÖ's discourse and guarded the central aspects of its programme.

The central frame of the Haider-led FPÖ discourse was the strong anti-immigration stance which was the party's concern since the early 1990s ('Austria First'; see above) and which occupied the party even more after it entered the federal government in 2000. There, the anti-immigration slogans were soon put into practice by means of different official anti-immigration acts, of which the 2002 Integration Agreement (*Integrationsvereinbarung*) remains central. The FPÖ's anti-immigration discourse was often characterized by the use of catchy yet clearly ambivalent slogans such as 'the Right to Fatherland' (*Recht aufs Heimat*) which not only denoted Austrian's right to live in their own *Heimat* but also voiced the call for the 'right' of migrants to return to their own fatherlands.

A further key element of the rhetoric of FPÖ under Haider was its stringent nationalistic stance. The latter often resulted in many antisemitic slogans and expressions (several of which, Haider was tried and sentenced for; see Pelinka & Wodak 2002) as well as in the related quasi-denial and de-facto glorification of Austria's National-Socialist past. Using such rhetoric had obvious strategic motivations as it allowed the FPÖ to retain the backing of one of its core support groups, that is, elderly sections of the electorate including those who were once involved in Austrian NS politics (see Engel & Wodak 2009). As a typical populist party, the FPÖ's discourse under Haider was also characterized by strong anti-establishment rhetoric (directed mainly at the Austrian mainstream parties SPÖ and ÖVP) which, however, gradually faded especially once the FPÖ itself became part of the 'establishment' by entering the Austrian government as of the early 2000s (see also chapter by Boréus in this volume).

The FPÖ since 2005: The Strache years

Contrary to the Haider era when FPÖ discourse was dominated by anti-immigrant, nationalistic, revisionist and anti-establishment rhetoric, the recent years have been dominated by the party's overt turn to Islamophobia as its central discursive and policy frame. Looking at how Islamophobic discourse is actually constructed in FPÖ's recent campaign posters – for example, in the 2009 Viennese Local Election Posters 'Away with Mosques and Minarets' (*Aus für Moscheen und Minarete*) or the 2008 National Election Poster 'At Home instead of Islam' (*Daham statt Islam*)⁹ – one notices a vast array of strategies which draw on 'us' versus 'them' oppositions. Whereas the first of the posters constructs those oppositions within the visual aspects of the design ('us' is symbolized by the smiling and colourful image of HC Strache and 'them' by the faint and 'worried' image of Vienna's long-term social-democrat Mayor Michael Häupl), the second poster refers to the textual opposition constructed in the main slogan ('at home' – *da Heim* – spoken in Viennese dialect as '*Daham*' is rhymed and thus semantically juxtaposed with 'Islam').

⁹ See www.hcstrache.at/home/?id=48 for further details.

While both of the posters focus on the said binary oppositions, the remaining textual material supports the thus constructed general anti-Islam message. In the first case, the visual opposition Strache-Häupl is supported by statements which claim that the Viennese Mayor and other politicians (including from the conservative government party ÖVP) have for years shied away from halting radical Islamist groups from spreading in Austria. Those statements are then, again, juxtaposed with FPÖ's anti-Islam proposals which start with the general statement that 'FPÖ's HC-Strache says' (*FPÖ-HC Strache sagt...*) that 'keeping freedom and security means fighting the radical Islamism' (*Freiheit und Sicherheit erhalten heist, den radikalen Islamismus bekämpfen*). In what follows, we encounter an enumeration of concrete actions that the FPÖ is proposing within the said 'fight'. Those actions include, inter alia, a 'construction ban on mosques and minarets' (*Bauverbot für Moscheen und Minarette*), 'prayers in German only' (*Predigten nur in deutscher Sprache*) or 'no EU accession for Turkey and Israel' (*kein EU-Beitritt für Türkei und Israel*). The use of anti-Turkish arguments in that context is especially significant as the FPÖ's Islamophobic slogans are often 'exemplified' by references to members of Austria's Turkish community stereotyped as consisting as if only of Muslims.

On the other hand the second poster (*Daham statt Islam*) actually resorts to the presentation of quasi-facts and statistics which are supposed to support the party's stance. In the presented case, those facts say that '45% of Muslims do not want to integrate' which is followed by statements directed at the FPÖ's political opponents who, apparently, do not understand the gravity of such a situation. The following statements also include some – quite paradoxical – ideas about the 'division between the Church and the state' (e.g. implying that any other solution might in fact foster Islamism) and claiming that the party is pleading for 'women's rights' (FPÖ's strategic statement referring to its opposition towards headscarves worn by Muslim women and allegedly, to other aspects of violation of women's rights by Islam).

Further to billboards and other usual genres of 'open' political communication, Islamophobia plays a prominent role in FPÖ's discourses expressing the party's official goals and viewpoints. The key document which proves this is the Handbook of Freedomite Politics (*Handbuch Freiheitlicher Politik*, hereinafter HFP) which, contrary to the usually politically correct official documents from the Haider era, includes a range of Islamophobic and related statements and arguments including overt and blatant stereotypes. In the 283-page document, which is defined as 'guidelines for leading functionaries and mandate holders for the FPÖ', Islam is thematized within a variety of topics which include self-presentation of the FPÖ as Austrian *Heimatspartei*, FPÖ's stance on Austrian internal affairs or, last but not least, FPÖ's viewpoint on international and European matters.

The most explicit anti-Islamic statements are placed in section 2.1.3 of the HFP (29–32) which concerns 'the Christian and enlightened Occident' (*Das christliche und aufgeklärte Abendland*). Presented in Figure 9.1, the semantic field of key themes discussed in that section shows that it is not as much about Christianity or Enlightenment as it is about different aspects of Islam. The latter is thematized in topics which range from Minarets as symbols of Muslim violence, through to the growing number of Muslims in Austria up until the aforementioned peculiar understanding of

Figure 9.1 Semantic Field of 'Islam' in Section 2.1.3. of the HFP

Muslims and women's rights. What is worth noting is that, as such, all of the discussed aspects of Islam are clearly negative with almost every topic implying that, for example, Muslim education is 'radical' or that religious freedoms are 'abused' by Muslims.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that practically all of the arguments constructed therein serve to present Islam as an omnipresent threat not only to the headlined Christianity but also to Austria and Europe as a whole. Accordingly, the arguments are constructed along the key *topoi of danger and threat* which help to portray Islam and its dangers in a wide range of contexts from terrorism to social cohesion. There, one for example encounters a set of general fallacious statements about Islam such as below (see Example 1).

Example 1:

Islam is a religion which sees the world as a war-theatre, and indeed as long as the entire world would not become Islamic. [*Der Islam ist eine Religion, die die Welt als Kriegsschauplatz ansieht – und zwar solange, bis die gesamte Menschheit islamisch ist*]. (HFP, Section 2.1.3., 31)

However, the expressions of such blatant stereotypes are also followed by some more detailed and apparently 'analytically founded' arguments. For example, one encounters a prolonged argument about the dangers of Islamic education which, as the HFP suggests, is already widely practiced in Austria with the help of textbooks that allegedly call for Jihad against other religions. As presented in Example 2 (see below), which describes a textbook allegedly used in some of the Austrian secondary schools, Islam is teaching its followers to not only disobey but in fact act against Western-like law and order due to claims of becoming the world-ruling religion.

Example 2:

The claim to rule the world by Islam is already being sketched out in the introduction to the textbook. Accordingly, the Islamic law of Sharia is set to stand above the legal order of Western democracies. [*Bereits in der Einleitung des buches wird der Weltherrschaftsanspruch des Islam untermauert. Die Scharia, die islamische Gesetzgebung, stehe über dem Rechtsstaat westlicher Demokratien*]. (HFP, Section 2.1.3., 30)

Arguments such as those portrayed above are also used in the HFP to explain the FPÖ's stance against minarets (see also above). Namely, as it is blatantly claimed in the analysed section of the document (see Example 3), minarets do not actually serve as towers used to call Muslims to prayer, but as symbols of Islamic aggression against other religions and cultures.

Example 3:

A mosque with minaret is a symbol of this [MK: Muslim] teaching and law. A minaret is a construction which symbolises religious and symbolic issues. Just like triumphal monuments the minarets spring out of the ground to represent the victory of Islam over other religions or over the unfaithful. [*Das Symbol dieser Lehre und dieses Rechtssystems ist die Moschee mit dem Minarett. Ein Minarett stellt einen Bau mit religiösem Charakter und Symbolwirkung dar. Wie Siegesstatuen spriessen Minarette als Sinnbild und Zeichen des Sieges des Islam gegenüber Anders-beziehungsweise Ungläubigen aus dem Boden*]. (HFP, Section 2.1.3., 32)

Further, the document also refers to the rather undefined experts or analyses (*topos of authority*) allegedly supporting the claims put forth by the FPÖ with regard to the dangers of Islam. As shown in Example 4 (see below), those dangers are, inter alia, of demographic nature with Austria soon not only becoming 'overpopulated' by Muslims but also with Austrian (native?) children soon turning to Islam. Interestingly the example calls upon an unspecified study of a certain 'Academy of Sciences' which also remains undefined.

Example 4:

According to a study by the Academy of Sciences, over 50 percent of Austrian children will, by 2050, belong to the Muslim religious community. [*Bereits im Jahr 2050 sollen laut einer Studie der Akademie der Wissenschaften mehr als 50 Prozent der österreichischen Kinder der islamischen Glaubengemeinschaft angehören*]. (HFP, 30)

Further, the HFP's section 2.1.3 also resorts to many attempts at redefining the meanings of, inter alia, lessons of Koran or women's rights within Islam (*topos of definition*; see Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). In the first case, several arguments are put forward with the aim of explaining or highlighting some of the teachings of the Koran which, as it appears from the document, do not stipulate anything else but Jihad against the West and Christianity. As argued in the following example (see Example 5), the Koran is indeed in its majority supposed to be devoted to Jihad. What is interesting, is that the

Jihad is no longer defined here – as if anyway known to the recipients of the document – contrary to other aspects such as the *Sunna*¹⁰ (this aims to show that the FPÖ and/or the authors of the text in fact possess some degree of knowledge of Islam and Koran).

Example 5:

Large parts of the work (MK: Koran) which describe Sunna – Mohammad's norm regulating behaviour – are devoted to Jihad against followers of other religions. [*Umfangreiche Kapitel der Werke, die die Sunna – das Norm setzende Handeln Mohammeds – enthalten, sind dem Jihad gegen Andersgläubige gewidmet*]. (HFP, 31)

However, a standard element of the FPÖ's redefinitions of Islam and its teachings concerns the issue of women's rights and their alleged violation in different aspects of Muslims' both religious and everyday life. In this context, the redefinition of women's rights is quite broad and spans from the bare presentations of what is allowed or forbidden for Muslim women to the more elaborate discussions of how – and why – the FPÖ must be against Islam in order to protect women's rights.

Example 6:

In order to avoid bodily contact with men in a bus, cinema or elsewhere, the (MK: Muslim) woman should at best not leave her house at all. However, she should not be locked out: whenever she asks her husband if she can go to a mosque to pray, he cannot forbid her to do that. [*Das Haus soll die Frau am besten gar nicht verlassen, um eventuellen Körperkontakt mit Männern im Autobus oder im Kino o.ä. zu vermeiden. Das heisse aber nicht, dass sie eingesperrt sei: Wenn sie ihren Mann bittet, die Moschee besuchen zu dürfen, darf er ihr das nicht verweigern.*]. (HFP, 30)

As shown in Example 6 (see above), the HFP examples of what Muslim women are allowed or not are built on untrue and unsubstantiated presentations of women as totally subjected to men (who are elsewhere portrayed as 'Lords' of their families, page 30). As suggested in the example, Muslim women are totally subjected to the will of their husbands who only cannot forbid them to go and pray in a mosque if they so wish (note the sarcasm implied in this statement).

Conclusions

As evidenced above, the Freedom Party of Austria has recently undergone a change which not only results in the personal shift from the party's once charismatic leader Jörg Haider to its new chairman HC Strache but also pertains to the intensified dynamics of the FPÖ's message (discourse). Particularly, the FPÖ's discursive shift

¹⁰ Though the term carries different meanings, *Sunna* – or *Sunnah* – denotes in some Islamic traditions a set of religious and related laws and habits practiced by the followers of Prophet Muhammad.

towards Islamophobia is worth highlighting. On the one hand, that change helps 'modernizing' the party's image by showing that the FPÖ accommodates arguments expressed by many other contemporary European RWPs which resort to Islamophobia as a standard element of their discourses and policies. On the other hand, however, the move towards Islamophobia also allows the FPÖ to find a new overarching frame for its discourses which, while targeting Muslims, still retain such 'old' features of the FPÖ rhetoric as, *inter alia*, anti-immigration stance (in fact introduced and developed during the Haider years).

Indeed, as the analysis above illustrates, recent discursive shifts in the FPÖ are (quite paradoxically) based on patterns of both continuity and discontinuity. While HC Strache and his party officials often emphasize how different their politics now is from the Haider era and how the FPÖ has now become 'truly freedomite' (*echt freiheitlich*) compared to the earlier years, it is more than obvious that many of the current FPÖ postulates date back to the early 1990s with many supporting slogans – most notably Haider's famous 'Austria First' (*Österreich zuerst*) – often recontextualized.

What the analysis illustrates is that, at a more general level, party-political communicative and discursive practices of RWPs such as the FPÖ remain very ambiguous in nature and become an example of a peculiar 'jack of all trades' that emphasizes the paradoxes of contemporary (right-wing) populism (for other example, see Krzyżanowski 2012). The latter is, as shown, based on both discursive discontinuity and continuity (even if the latter is veiled as an actual 'new beginning') which, in general, aims to gain new voters while not losing the old ones and to propose new issues and slogans (see Islamophobia) while in fact reusing those from the past (e.g. anti-immigration). It is argued here that the said partial and often ambiguous discursive shifts of the FPÖ constitute a vital example of the ongoing transformation and constant invention of crises in the realm of the political (as theorized in line with Beck, see above). As shown, in such a context, especially the right-wing populist movements – in particular those in opposition roles and struggling for power – aim to remain quasi all-embracing in their opinions and thus able to please different sections of the electorate which might be prone to follow different (old and/or new) slogans.

In a similar vein, the discursive dynamics depicted above show that, while revamping their discourses and slogans, RWPs such as the FPÖ accommodate discourses about (in)security into their rhetoric. This is an example of the change in politics which, following Azmanova (see above), nowadays ceases to form alternative visions of 'local' social reality and instead responds to – or accommodates – different aspects of global and transnational ideas (in our case Islamophobia, insecurity, etc.). As shown in the example of the recent discourses of the FPÖ, RWPs now often use such transnational frames to justify their arguments related to, *inter alia*, exclusion of large portions of societies (in the present case the Muslims). The latter are, accordingly, viewed by the FPÖ as profoundly not 'integrated' and by and large threatening the overall social cohesion and the collective well-being of the – always more or less 'native' – majority (see also Buonfino 2004, Ibrahim 2005). While, to be sure, such discriminating arguments have long been at the core of FPÖ discourses, they have recently seen a 'nominational' turn towards 'Muslims' as the key targeted social groups.

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