VARIETIES OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM IN EUROPE

Edited by Andrea Mammone,
Emmanuel Godin and Brian Jenkins

CONTENTS

CONTRIBUTORS

Joan Antón-Mellón is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Barcelona (Spain).

Gary Armstrong is a Reader in Sociology of Sport at Brunel University (UK).

Tamir Bar-On is a Professor of International Relations and Humanities at the Tecnológico de Monterrey, Querétaro (Mexico).

Manuela Caiani is an Assistant Professor in Comparative European Politics at the Institute for Advanced Studies (HIS), Wien (Austria).

Jean-Yves Camus is a Senior Researcher at the Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques (IRIS), Paris (France).

Stéphanie Dechezelles is an Assistant Professor in Political Science at the Institut d'Études Politiques, Aix-en-Provence (France).

Emmanuel Godin is a Principal Lecturer in French and European Studies at the University of Portsmouth (UK).

Gabriel Goodliffe is an Assistant Professor of International Relations and International Political Economy at the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, Mexico City (Mexico).

Leila Hadj-Abdou is a Ph.D. Researcher in Political and Social Sciences at the European University Institute, Florence (Italy).

Jérôme Jamin is a Professor in Political Science at the University of Liège (Belgium).

Brian Jenkins is a Senior Research Fellow in French Studies at the University of Leeds (UK). He co-edits the *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*.

Martin Langebach is a Ph.D. candidate in Sociology at the University of Düsseldorf (Germany).

Andrea Mammone is a Lecturer in Modern European History at Royal Holloway, University of London (UK).

Birgitta Orfali is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Paris Descartes University and an Associate Researcher at Sciences Po-CEVIPOF (France).

Linda Parenti is a Ph.D. Researcher in Political Science at the University of Florence (Italy).

Jan Raabe is Head of a community centre and Adviser for Argumente und Kultur gegen Rechts, Bielefeld (Germany).

Sieglinde Rosenberger is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Vienna (Austria).

Alberto Testa is a Lecturer in Sociology of Sport at Brunel University (UK).

Emily Turner-Graham is an independent scholar.

Fabian Virchow is a Professor of Social Theory and Theories of Political Action at the University of Applied Sciences, Düsseldorf (Germany).

Bénédicte Williams is a Ph.D. Researcher in Political Science at the Central European University, and a journalist at the *Budapest Times* and *Budapester Zeitung*, Budapest (Hungary).

Jim Wolfreys is a Senior Lecturer in French Politics and European Studies at King's College London (UK).

ABBREVIATIONS

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
AG	Azione Giovani
AN	Alleanza Nazionale
B&H	Blood & Honour
BBP	Büyük Birlik Partisi
BNP	British National Party
BQR	Bonus Qualité Recherche
BZÖ	Alliance for the Future of Austria
CAUR	Comitati d'Azione per l'Universalità di Roma (Action Committees for Roman Universality)
CE	comité d'entreprise
CFDT	Confédération française démocratique du travail
CGT	Confédération générale du travail
CINEF	*Centre International d'Études sur le Fascisme*
CPI	Casa Pound Italia
CR	Conservative Revolution
CRIF	Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France
DA	Deutsche Alternative
DNSB	Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Bevægelse
DNVP	Deutschnationale Volkspartei
ECB	European Central Bank
EDL	English Defence League
FANE	Fédération d'Action Nationale et Européenne
FGM	female gender mutilation
FK	*freie Kameradschaften*
FMSH	Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme
FN	Forza Nuova
FN	Front National
FPÖ	Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs
GEPECS	Groupe d'Étude pour l'Europe de la Culture et de la Solidarité
GRECE	*Groupement de Recherche et d'Études pour la Civilisation Européenne*
GUD	Groupe Union Défense
HVIM	Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom
IRCA	Islamic Religious Community in Austria
JN	Junge Nationaldemokraten
Jobbik	Jobboldali Ifjúsági Közösség (Movement for a Better Hungary)
LEPS	Laboratoire Européen de Psychologie Sociale
LiF	Liberales Forum
LPF	League of Polish Families
MDI	Mouvement des Damnés de l'Impérialisme
MG	Magyar Gárda (Hungarian Guard)
MGP	Movimento Giovani Padani
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi
MIÉP	Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja (Hungarian Party of Justice and Life)
MNA	Magyar Nemzeti Arcvonal (Hungarian National Front)
MNR	Mouvement National Républicain
MSI	Movimento Sociale Italiano
ND	Nouvelle Droite
NF	National Front
NHW	Nordisches Hilfswerk (Northern Relief Organization)
NP	Nyilaskeresztes Párt (Arrow Cross Party)
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschland
NR	New Right
NSBM	National Socialist Black Metal
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (German National Socialist Party)
NSF	Nationalsocialistisk Front
NSHC	National Socialist Hardcore
NVU	Nederlandse Volks Unie
OAS	Organisation Armée Secrète
ONC	Occupazioni Non Conformi
ÖVP	Österreichische Volkspartei
PCF	Parti Communiste Français
PCN	Parti Communautaire National-Européen
PiS	Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc
PNF	Partito Nazionale Fascista
PPF	Parti Populaire Français
PxC	Plataforma per Catalunya
RAC	Rock against Communism

RFJ	Ring Freiheitlicher Jugend
RS	revolutionary syndicalists
RSI	Italian Social Republic
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SFIO	Section Française de l'International Ouvrière
SGP	Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij
SMR	Svenska Motståndsrörelsen (Swedish Resistance Movement)
SPÖ	Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs
SVP	Swiss People's Party
UISP	Unione Italiana Sport
VHP	Vishva Hindu Parishad
YNF	Young National Front
ZOG	Zionist Occupation Government

9

ISLAM AT ISSUE

Anti-Islamic mobilization of the extreme right in Austria

Sieglinde Rosenberger and Leila Hadj-Abdou

Introduction

Since the 1990s, taking issue with Muslim immigrants in a fear-laden way and constructing Islam as a threat to European and national communities has become one of the core mobilizing themes for right-extremist parties in Europe (Mudde 2007: 85–6; Zúquete 2008). Most prominently, after the terrorist attacks in New York 2001, a widespread tendency in the discursive anti-immigration strategies of extreme-right parties has emerged in addition to the trope of the undesired 'foreign other': the element of 'the alien Muslim'. Across Europe, extreme-right parties are denouncing Muslims as a minority lacking the willingness to integrate or, even worse, Muslims are being portrayed as a homogeneous group that cannot be integrated into a given national society owing to distinct ethnic, religious or traditional lifestyles. Thus, Muslims are constructed, either way, as a threat to liberal values, European heritage, social cohesion and the cultural integrity of a nation (Bunzl 2007; Mudde 2007; Van der Brug and Fennema 2003).

This paper aims to explore the formation of discursive mechanisms that enable the politicization of Islamic practices and Muslim immigration to Europe. The central question will be when, how and why anti-Islamic references have been brought into the public sphere by right-extremist political parties. In the following the term 'anti-Islamic mobilization' is employed as a conceptual mean to identify and assess the type of discourse employed by the far right that is directed against Muslim immigrants as an alien monolithic group, allowing for a devaluation of Islam as a backward and violent religion (Zúquete 2008: 324). Academic research has well demonstrated that extreme-right parties across Europe have a lot in common, often referring to each other when making use of anti-Islamism as a core issue of contestation and protest. However, systematically taking into account national particularities and institutional factors is decisive for a comprehensive analysis

of the emergence of the anti-Islamic discourse. While extreme-right parties are being characterized as identity-oriented and exclusionary by nature, this paper supports the assumption that certain political opportunity structures significantly influence the scope and saliency of anti-Islamic mobilization.

In this chapter[1] we conduct a case study focusing on Austrian far-right parties, that is the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and the more recently founded Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ).[2] First, the relationship between political opportunity structures and the evolution of anti-Islamic mobilization will be focused on. Second, the anti-Islamic discourse formation will be looked at through the lens of the critical concept of 'differentialist racism' (Stolcke 1999). In the past, Austria's extreme right has often been cited as an electorally successful right-wing party, pursuing an aggressive politicization of 'foreigners', establishing a discourse of exclusion and shaping the way for restrictive immigration policies (Betz 2001; Kitschelt 1995). As the following section will show, the Austrian extreme right, in terms of its current policy claims and anti-Islamic framing, for example, the culturalization of Islam and the use of an aggressive 'threat-of-Islam' communication frame, is in line with other European right-wing parties. However, the factual emergence of the discourse was delayed and its dynamics unfolded unevenly. The chapter argues that besides established ideological positioning towards nationalism and ethnic minorities, the intensity and timing of the rise of an anti-Islamic discourse is also the product of the complex interplay of institutional settings and party strategic purposes. Thus, it can be claimed to be the product of structural and discursive opportunities (see Williams in this volume).

The next section will identify and describe the national institutional framework and the dynamics of power relations that we believe have an impact on the emergence of anti-Islamic mobilization.

Uneven rise of anti-Islamic mobilization: structural opportunities

The formation of the anti-Islamic discourse type in Austria has to be critically assessed within the context of two relevant institutional factors: the formation of a coalition government between the Christian conservative ÖVP and the FPÖ in the year 2000 (lasting till 2006) and the inclusive mode of religious governance the state–church relationship in Austria is based upon.

Following France and the Netherlands, Austria – owing to labour migration and family unification – has the largest proportion of persons of Muslim faith in Western Europe (4.2 per cent in the 2001 census). However, in 1912, long before Muslims immigrated to Austrian territory, Islam had already been recognized as an official religion. The Islamic Religious Community in Austria (IRCA), officially established in 1979 and legally recognized by Austrian state authorities, serves as the official representational body of Muslims residing in the country (Kroissenbrunner 2003). Generally speaking, in Austria a religious pluralistic mode of inclusive governance is highly valued by political authorities and the population. With Islam recognized

as one among fourteen faiths, religious believers enjoy a wide range of privileges (e.g. religious instruction in public schools, time off for prayer during working hours). Interestingly, Islam has been widely absent from political contestation for a long time. The rupture began in the late 1990s when the anti-immigration and anti-clerical FPÖ started to contest Islam by placing it at the intersection of immigration, religion and cultural/national identity (Dolezal et al. 2008; Luther 2005). However, against the background of an intensified anti-Islamic discourse employed by the extreme-right in Europe after 9/11, the FPÖ, well reputed for its tough stance on immigration, displayed a rather modest profile in this respect. What are the reasons for this exception?

Taking into account the institutional settings, power structures and aspects of party competition, three phases can be identified in the development of the FPÖ that led to the evolution and saliency of contestation of Islam: stage one covers the 1990s and lasts until 1999, when the FPÖ took up the role of an electorally successful opposition party mobilizing on grounds of anti-immigration ideas. Stage two stretches from 2000 to 2005, when the party was in government and pressured to change its political style from an opposition to a governmental party, more oriented towards compromises at the national and European level. Stage three starts after 2005, when tensions between ideological principles and pragmatic decision-making led to intense intra-party disputes and the party consequently split into two rivalling parties, the Strache-led FPÖ and the BZÖ, headed by Haider. Only then, anti-Islamic references and claims significantly characterized the political agenda of both parties.

In the following section, we briefly elaborate on these three stages, focusing on institutional aspects that played a role in shaping the politicization of Muslim immigrants and Islam.

Stage 1 (until 1999): anti-Islamic rhetoric on the fringes

Ever since 1986, when Jörg Haider took over the party leadership, the FPÖ has been mobilizing against 'foreigners'. Meanwhile, the party has launched several initiatives and policy proposals to stop and/or restrict immigration and deemed immigrant integration a superfluous political concern. Electoral campaigns have been underpinned by xenophobic resentment, anti-Semitic rhetoric and allegations designed to provoke envy and fear among non-immigrants (Reisigl and Wodak 2001). At that time the anti-immigration discourse was essentially based upon references that linked immigration with social and economic issues, such as the increase of unemployment that was argued to be caused by immigration and alleged misuse of welfare benefits. Moreover, the FPÖ introduced the concept of 'Überfremdung', which was used for raising fears about immigration, posing a threat to Austrian values and national identity (Ter Wal 2002). By then religion was not an issue the party referred to, given its anti-clerical programmatic orientation. Only in the late 1990s, seeking to appeal to a wider electorate, the FPÖ slightly revised its former party line by identifying Christianity as the spiritual foundation of the

West. The 1997 party manifesto included an explicit reference to a '*wehrhaftes Christentum*', propagating a notion of Christianity willing and able to defend itself. It was precisely at this time that the party began to take political interest in Islam and announced that the existing legal right to build mosques needed to be discussed publicly (*Kurier*, 8 April 1997). However, in the election campaign in 1999 the topic of Islam and Muslims remained on the fringes of contestation (Geden 2006). It should also be considered that then the FPÖ was one of the electorally most successful far-right parties in Europe. In the general election in 1999 it took 26.9 per cent of the votes, ranking second behind the Social Democrats (SPÖ). Despite heavy protests by Austrian civil society groups and diplomatic measures initiated by EU-member states (Ahtisaari *et al.* 2000), the FPÖ became a partner in the new two-party coalition government led by the conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP).

Stage 2 (until 2004/05): relatively low level of anti-Islamic contestation

In government (from 2000 to 2005), the FPÖ developed a profile unlike other extreme-right parties in Europe. Most of all the party avoided taking an openly critical stance towards Islam, given the risks it would expose itself to, when playing the anti-Islamic card in a coalition government led by a partner favouring the inclusion of all recognized religions. As Oliver Geden (2006) concluded, the FPÖ as a government party felt obliged to tone down its anti-immigration posture in order to stay in office. Most surprisingly, even in the context of 9/11 in 2001, the FPÖ adopted a rather sympathetic perspective on Muslims in Austria. Senior party officials publicly declared their respect for the IRCA, advocated dialogue and tolerance, and maintained good relations with top officials in Arabic nations, Libya in particular (OTS 00515).

There are well-founded reasons to assume that the cautious behaviour towards Islam and Muslims was motivated by the diplomatic measures imposed by the EU-member states on the Austrian government in February 2000. As a response to international protests, the two governing parties ÖVP and FPÖ signed a declaration promising to prevent racism and xenophobia and to act in full accordance with European values (Government Declaration 2000). In the following years, the international community and the EU kept a vigilant eye on the FPÖ and the Austrian government. The government-leading ÖVP had a strong interest in presenting the governing coalition as a protector of minorities, especially minority religions, to the outside world. Consequently, the IRCA became a visible 'dialogue partner' of the Austrian government. It was during this period that various statements issued by the FPÖ underlined the universal right of religious freedom as well as the importance of dialogue with and among religious communities, including the IRCA. In 2004 the FPÖ did not utter one word of protest when the Minister of Education (ÖVP) issued a decree, in which the wearing of the headscarf by

pupils was defined as a religious right that must not be infringed by any state institution (Gresch *et al.* 2008).

And yet, the reluctance to promote anti-Islamic feelings or promulgate restrictive policies on Islamic institutions and to stick to a pluralist approach towards Islam in Austria does not cover the entire story. While pleading the case for respect of religion and support of Muslims, declaring that religious provisions had to be followed and cooperation with Islamic religious communities was necessary, the FPÖ simultaneously expressed its demand to restrict and ban Islamic practices, such as halal slaughtering. Moreover, in 2004, the party started to debate over Turkey's future EU-membership and conflated the representation of Turkey as an Islamic country with warnings of the danger of radical Islam spreading across Europe (Geden 2006).

Stage 3 (after 2005): strong anti-Islamic mobilization

The transformation of the FPÖ from an opposition party with a distinct anti-establishment and anti-politics style into a governing party responsible for negotiations and policy decisions at the national and EU-level eventually resulted in major intra-party quarrels over core ideology and political pragmatism (Heinisch 2003).[3] In 2005, the party officially split into two parties, the Strache-FPÖ and the Haider-BZÖ. This was precisely the period when, under the influence of the Viennese FPÖ party leader, H.C. Strache, the anti-Islamic rhetoric gained in relevance. Consequently, conflicts over visible signs of Islam such as mosques, minarets and headscarves emerged and entered the political agenda. In other words: The anti-Islamic mobilization gained firm ground when two parties with very similar legacies, and personnel, were looking for support within the same electoral segment. It was H.C. Strache who seized the opportunity to play the anti-Islamic card, while the Haider-FPÖ had little scope to do so because of its participation in a government coalition with the much stronger Conservative Party.

When Islam became one of the major focal points of the Strache-FPÖ, it was used as a discursive tool in party activities. Key motions at party congresses and in parliamentary debates[4] portrayed Islam as a threat to the imagined Austrian nation and, by extension, to Europe. In line with that, the party launched an association named 'Verein-SOS-Abendland'[5] aiming to 'save Western cultures and customs' (*Neue Freie Zeitung*, 22 March 2007). In early 2008 the party released a policy position paper on Islam. The core message pointed out that occidental Christian culture is threatened and therefore needs to be defended by the FPÖ (*Wir und der Islam* 2008). However, the focal point of mobilization against Islam was local, regional and national election campaigns. The most prominent slogans constructing an irreconcilable dichotomy between the Christian 'us' and the alien 'them' were: '*Pummerin statt Muezzin*' ('Church bells instead of Muezzin', Viennese elections in 2005), '*Daham statt Islam*' ('Home instead of Islam', general elections in 2006), and '*Abendland in Christenhand*' ('Occident in the hands of Christians', European parliament elections in 2009).

While the Strache-FPÖ has taken the leading role in politicizing Islam in a pejorative and discriminatory way, the BZÖ came clearly second. In 2006, when the FPÖ ran an election campaign full of xenophobic statements and culturalized anti-Islamic references, the BZÖ brought itself into an awkward position. In a TV talk show the BZÖ leader read aloud a letter he claimed to be authored by a senior Muslim representative, who demanded the replacement of Christian crosses by Islamic crescents on Alpine mountain summits. Some time later, it turned out that the letter had been a fake written by a critical art group who wanted to show how eager certain people were to stir up fears about the alleged Islamization of the public sphere (Renner 2007). In 2007, the BZÖ took up the issue again, this time contesting the construction of mosques. In accordance with the controversy raised in Switzerland, the governor of Carinthia at this time, Jörg Haider, introduced a procedure in building regulations so as to generate a discretionary tool enabling him to restrict the construction of mosques (OTS 0104).

It is important to say that during that period, anti-Islamic discourse and policy proposals began to reach from the realm of the far right into the mainstream right. The Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) no longer intended to leave the Islam agenda to the Strache-FPÖ or the Haider-BZÖ and shifted its strategy from the non-discussion of religious issues to a politicization of Muslim immigrants' deficits in social integration. In 2005, the governmental consensus to keep religious issues out of party competition was breached by the ÖVP Minister of the Interior who labelled Muslim practices as alien to the ascribed Austrian value system and, therefore, as a hindrance to the social integration of Muslims into mainstream society (Hadj-Abdou 2008). Owing to heavy protest by parties on the political left, civil society and religious organizations, the statement was withdrawn within a day. However, the incident indicated that the 'Muslims-are-not-willing-to-integrate' discourse, which until then had been a ploy exclusively exploited by the extreme right, had begun to spill over into the political mainstream. Finally in 2007, when Jörg Haider laid emphasis on the mosque issue, several senior ÖVP politicians at regional levels expressed similar concerns and launched bills restricting the construction of Islamic buildings. Interestingly, ÖVP officials were careful to address Islamic practices outside the religious framework, defining the problem with reference to social cohesion and cultural incongruity (Die Presse, 28 August 2007).

The following section will take a closer look at European dimensions that can be identified as being decisive factors for the process of shaping anti-Islamic language and the emergence of policy proposals.

European discursive opportunities

Although, as we have attempted to demonstrate in the previous section, the emergence and rise of anti-Islamic mobilization within the Austrian extreme right evolved within the parameters set by national power structures and party competition, its scope and ideological substance goes well beyond national boundaries. Rather than limiting itself to national arenas and settings, along with the erosion of intra-European borders, anti-Islamic mobilization allows for new and old modes of representation of Europe as a space and a community, thus, to re-conceptualize Europeanism (cf. Bar-On in this volume). We argue that Islam evolves as a topic that facilitates the transgression of borders and political activity across national settings.

Interestingly, the extreme right has almost simultaneously been advocating anti-Islamic stances across Europe in nearly identical ways. Topics, frames and claims 'travel' from one national right-wing party to another, often regardless of actually existing conflicts and tensions or even the occurrence of Islamic practices (Akkerman and Hagelund 2007; Buruma 2006; Mudde 2007: 84 ff.). The observation that right extremist parties influence one another is perfectly valid for the Austrian far right. Issues raised and frames employed by Austria's extreme right are mostly not specifically referring to 'real' conflicts – they are embedded in the cross-national, anti-Islamic activism of the extreme right. For instance, when in 2007 the Swiss People's Party (SVP) launched a popular initiative aiming to statutorily forbid mosques and minarets in the Swiss constitution, the FPÖ brought in a similar motion to the Austrian Parliament within only a few days' interval (Der Standard, 30 June 2007). Another recent example illustrates these linkages: in the 2010 municipal elections in Styria, the FPÖ launched a free computer game, in which the users were asked to shoot as many mosques, muezzins and minarets as possible. The game was created by the same agency that also developed the material for the successful anti-minaret referendum of the SVP (Salzburger Nachrichten, 25 June 2010).

Moreover, cross-national associations fostering issue-based alliances ('Stop Islamization') have been set up, such as the City Alliance against Islamization[6] in 2008, where the FPÖ played a key role. This platform centres on the dangers of an alleged Islamization which for this purpose is being represented as not a local but a Europe-wide peril, threatening a very imprecise notion of European values and identities. Members of the City Alliance against Islamization speak out at different places across Europe, thus sharing their narratives and ideas.[7] Not only comparatively similar agendas, but even slogans and phrasings of striking resemblance can be observed. An example serves for better illustration: during the municipal election campaign in the city of Graz, the FPÖ candidate Susanne Winter, in a speech[8] given to party officials, referred to the prophet Mohammed as a child molester and argued for a banishment of Islam back to the place where it originally came from – strictly speaking 'beyond the Mediterranean Sea'. A very similar statement had previously been made by Filip Dewinter, the head of the Vlaams Belang: 'Organized, radical Islam has to be pushed back to the other side of the Mediterranean' (Die Presse, 23 November 2007).

Finally, it has to be said that aside from a great deal of congruency in the anti-Islamic narratives employed by extreme-right parties in several European countries, some policy issues brought into connection with anti-Islamic perceptions could only gain momentum through specific historic collective memories and pasts. Indeed, among the Austrian extreme right, the phrasing of a looming third Turkish

siege, invoking the collective memory of the occupation of Vienna in 1529 and 1683 by the Ottoman Empire, gained some significance. In 2007, Strache coined this term at the national party congress in order to warn of an Islamization of Austria (*Die Presse*, 2 June 2007). This discursive strategy aggregated three different aspects: the discussion about Turkey's EU accession and its depiction as an Islamic country, the mobilization of fears against radical Islam, and recourse to the collective historical memory of the Turkish siege, which is now being transported to present times as a potential threat. This amalgamation furthermore allowed for an emphasis on the party's critical stance regarding Austria's membership to the EU. In 2006 the FPÖ launched the petition 'Austria stay free!' ('*Österreich bleib frei!*'), aiming to achieve a popular rejection of the treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe and to prevent Turkey's EU accession. In 2008, the above-mentioned petition was re-launched in the form of an Internet initiative with similar content on the party's Web page.[9] This development reached a climax in the 2010 municipal elections in Vienna. The FPÖ then published a booklet with the title *Sagas of Vienna* (*Sagen aus Wien*), which prominently featured a cartoon about the Turkish siege of Vienna, picturing at one side the Turkish conqueror with statements such as 'If I do not succeed this time, my successors will have to join the European Union' (FPÖ 2010: 9), and on the other side the city of Vienna with the statement 'The Sultan shall piss off. Turkey does not belong to Europe, not today and not in a hundred years' (ibid.: 10). The comic concludes with the remark 'Islam stay home! Our Vienna for our people' (ibid.: 15).

In the next section we take a closer look at the mechanisms of anti-Islamic politicization. We do so by analysing what is being represented as a 'problem' and what 'solutions' are being formulated accordingly. Finally, we will analyse the framing with respect to racialized and exclusionary elements.

'Islam is a threat': racialized and exclusionary politicization

Anti-Islamic mobilization implies a differentialist mode of racism. In this context, Islamic religion is framed as culturally alien and incommensurably different. 'The Muslim' is being socially constructed as the homogeneous 'other' in dichotomous relation with the self, aiming to exclude Muslim immigrants from access to institutions and benefits. The basic feature of differentialist racism (distinguished from biological racism) is that exclusion is based upon ascribed, essentialized cultural differences (cf. Silverstein 2005; Stolcke 1999; Weller 2006).

The anti-Islamic discourse employed after 2005 in Austria bore culturally racialized dimensions. Previously, Islam was not referred to as a monolithic bloc – the term was used to differentiate between ordinary Muslim people and Islamic fundamentalism and Islamic radicalism. During the campaign of the municipal election in Vienna in 2005 and the parliamentary election of 2006, the narratives shifted perceptibly: Islam was rejected as a whole and exclusionary measures proposed (bans on headscarves and the construction of mosques and minarets).

Following the methodology of frame analysis, we distinguish between two dimensions of the framing process in order to show in more detail how culturalized viewpoints and exclusionary dimensions entered the discourse. The first analytical dimension covers the problem definition (diagnosis frame); the second dimension is concerned with solutions that are being formulated to address the problem (solution frame) (Bacchi 2005).

Problem diagnosis: religious and cultural alien

Against the background of a pluralistic mode of religious governance in Austria and the legal obligation to treat all recognized denominations equally, the FPÖ frames Islam not as a minority religion but as a culture with distinct practices and values. Its counterpart, namely Christianity, is also being shifted from religion to culture, also expressed through the hierarchical concept of the *occident*. However it has to be noted that Islam is not only seen as a different culture but the culture itself is depicted as alien, backward, and therefore represented as an obstacle to the integration of immigrants into Austrian society. Even so, the meaning of these ascribed differences in culture or values often remains vague, that is, 'culture' and 'value' become strategic instruments, empty shells that can be filled with various (and sometimes contradictory) significations.

Especially from 2004 onwards, while the Strache-FPÖ was in the phase of establishment, references to Christian occidental culture gained relevance in political debates. In election campaign materials, illustrations of cathedrals and churches were used as symbols underpinning the party's proximity to occidental culture (Christianity), and contrasted with mosques, which were ascribed to the political opponent. In 2005, the FPÖ accused the political opponent of being a supporter of mosques; however, this was not a new phenomenon, the same argumentative strategy was applied in 1999.[10] The deployment of Christian symbols to underline the dissociation of Islam was done for the first time during the municipal election in Vienna 2005. St Steven's Cathedral was depicted together with the slogan, '*Damit der echte Wiener nicht untergeht*'[11] ('So the true Viennese shall not perish'), identifying the FPÖ Viennese party leader as the 'true' defender of the autochthonous culture. The electoral manifesto for the parliamentary election in 2006 called for the maintenance of (Catholic) religious instruction in public schools as a vehicle for national and European values (Election Programme 2006: 9). Finally, during the electoral campaign for the European Parliament in 2009, Strache attracted a considerable amount of media attention when he held up a Christian cross while giving a speech on the occasion of a demonstration against the construction of mosques (*Die Presse*, 27 May 2009).

Another popular tool for drawing a cultural demarcation line is the principle of gender equality, presented as a Western or even Austrian value. Along the same line as other European extreme-right parties (Akkerman and Hagelund 2007), the Austrian extreme right concentrates for that purpose on the illiberal gender-unequal practices of Muslims, while presenting itself as a proponent or defender

of emancipated, autochthonous women: 'Austrian women must not subordinate to an Islamist world view' (OTS 00145). The argumentative strategy of portraying Islam as culturally backward is, thus, communicated through a culturalized version of the universal principle of gender equality. Again, taking into consideration the instrumentalization of gender equality for anti-Islamic mobilization, we can trace a process that began back then with critique directed against certain practices and went on to more generalizing racialized statements. In spring 2001, the Haider-FPÖ hosted an official event on Female Gender Mutilation (FGM). It was acknowledged that the social practice of FGM is being renounced by Muslim scholars and the Quran. Party representatives declared that female migrants must be supported by the state (OTS 0236). Meanwhile the differentiation between Islam and the practices of immigrants gradually eroded. It was replaced by a discursive formation creating a binary opposition between pre-modern Islam which oppresses women on the one side, and modern Austrian values characterized by gender equality on the other side. This pattern was significant for the framework of the debate on the accession of Turkey to the EU in 2004 and intensified after 2005 as a result of Strache-FPÖ activity. The party focused on the Muslim headscarf as a discriminatory practice against women. The headscarf was said to exclude women from public life, and force them into dependence on male family members.

Summarizing, it can be said that the most salient topics addressed were the erection of mosques and minarets, the wearing of headscarves, fundamental/radical Islamism, the purported unwillingness of Muslims to integrate and Turkish accession to the EU. Moreover, all these topics have been linked to each other in order to establish the predominant frame depicting Islam as a threat to the presumed national identity, to liberal European values, social cohesion and to gender equality as a marker of Western or even Christian civilization (see also Dolezal et al. 2008).

Problem solution: prohibition, denial of rights, and restrictions

Having analysed press releases, campaign materials and parliamentary documents of a period longer than ten years, three 'solutions' to the stated problems may be identified: the claim to prohibit, denial of rights and restrictive immigration policies.

Prohibitions, for instance of the headscarf, are presented as a measure designed to maintain the *Leitkultur* ideologically grounded in Christian values and modernity, freeing women from 'archaic tribe structures' (OTS 0205). In the national electoral campaign of 2006, an emotional slogan was 'Free women instead of compulsory veiling' ('*Freie Frauen statt Kopftuchzwang*'). Similarly, in the municipal elections in 2010 in Vienna one of the party slogans was 'We protect free women. The SPÖ compulsory veiling' ('*Wir schützen freie Frauen. Die SPÖ den Kopftuchzwang*'). The popular initiative launched by the FPÖ against the accession of Turkey to the EU in 2006 also employed the headscarf as a key motive for campaigning. A woman veiled with an EU flag symbolized the developments that the initiative aimed to oppose.

Individual and religious rights that Muslim immigrants are legally entitled to started to be called into question by the Strache-FPÖ. In contradiction to the official religious recognition of Islam, according to the party's rhetoric, Muslims should not be carriers of religious rights any more. By stating that 'Islam has nothing to do with religious freedom' (OTS 0138), religious freedom is thus interpreted in terms of promoting the cultural rights of the majority Christian community, rather than as a universal individual right to which any Austrian resident is entitled to. In 2008 the status of Islam as an officially recognized religion was questioned by the party. A senior party official, Andreas Mölzer, stated that an immigrant Muslim cannot be entitled to the same rights as were granted to autochthonous Muslim Bosnians during monarchy (OTS 0134). Prior to this, no political party had called this principle into question. By doing so, the party also challenged the cooperative, consensus-oriented mode of religious governance that had so far been considered to be a taboo for political parties (Suppanz 2003: 43).

Last but not least, by claiming that Muslim immigrants form parallel societies within Austrian cities, calls for restrictive immigration measures were a consequence derived from the ascribed unwillingness of Muslims to adapt and the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. Through the definition of integration as a one-way process, as the duty of immigrants to assimilate into the majority culture on the one hand, and the representation of Muslims as culturally alien on the other hand, the FPÖ constructs the inability of Muslims to integrate (OTS 0242).

The policy solutions derived from this unwillingness-to-integrate-construction and the fear-laden 'Islam is a threat' frame, are discriminatory and exclusionary on grounds of religious and ethnic diversity. The rhetoric is used to legitimize the denial of substantive rights to Muslim immigrants and their exclusion from core institutions of mainstream society. In the light of concrete policy proposals, both extreme-right parties are strongly in favour of a politics of control, prohibition, restriction and exclusion. Based on the view that Islam and Muslims are culturally alien, hence the nonconformity of Muslim minorities to Western norms and life-styles, the parties call for a variety of hard-line measures ranging from outlawing religious practices to the expulsion of Muslims 'beyond the Mediterranean Sea'. Both parties advocate a ban on Muslim headscarves, and call for a ban on the erection of mosques and minarets. Summarizing, the parties' demands call for a systematic exclusion of Muslims from structural, social and cultural modes of participation, institutions and benefits.

Conclusions

The aims and results of this paper are threefold. First, it has been argued that the occurrence and the uneven rise of anti-Islamic discourse among the two Austrian extreme-right parties FPÖ and BZÖ can be explained with strategic patterns of party competition, dynamics in power structure and historically established modes of religious governance (most of all, the official recognition of Islam). Considering the time span from the late 1990s until today, European extreme-right parties began

raising issues associated with Islam and Muslims, presenting them as a cultural threat to the values and integrity of nation-states and Europe. However, the Austrian extreme right acted differently from its fellow parties. Although anti-Islam references were moderately articulated against the background of international terroristic events, the Islam frame became dominant only during the election period of 2005 and 2006; after the split into two parties and their return to the status of opposition parties. Most notably, while in government, the Haider-FPÖ was reluctant to politicize Islam as a problem. Even 9/11 did not serve as a catalyst for enhanced politicization. The empirical data analysed for this paper strongly suggest that taking issue with Islam is not a governmental discourse type but, in the first place, employed by parties in opposition. While Haider held a leading role in the governing FPÖ, it was his internal rival Strache, leader of the FPÖ after 2005, who started to campaign with the issue of Islam.

Besides the findings indicating that the rise of anti-Islamic discourse follows party strategic goals and opportunity structures, the second aim of this paper was to identify the exclusionary framing mechanisms and policy proposals employed by the two parties. It has been shown that, bearing in mind the noteworthy time lag, the agenda of the extremist right in Austria highly resembles that of other European extreme-right parties (Zúqhete 2008). Islam has consistently been presented as a cultural marker of difference competing with a nationalistic narrative of social cohesion and a homogeneous identity. The solutions proposed to this alleged societal diagnosis advocate exclusionary policies. And yet, the anti-Islamic agenda of the extremist right mostly consists of electoral campaign rhetoric and polarizing slogans rather than specific policy formulations.

Third, in conflict with its ideological programme, the nationalistic-oriented extreme right has seemingly become both Christian and European in some aspects. It participates in European-wide initiatives, it takes up frames and slogans used by other extreme-right parties, it expresses commitment to Christian occidental values coupled with the rhetoric of a fixed European value community. In fact, the references to a European and Christian value-space are closely connected with claims of prohibition and serve as a means to justify even more restrictive measures to the detriment of immigrants. Against this background, the paper has highlighted that the discursive turn to Islamic practices and Muslim immigrants is another element of the long-established exclusionary politicization of immigration.

Notes

1 The chapter is based on election campaign material, press releases, media articles and party manifestos. The frame of analysis covers the period from January 1997 to October 2010.
2 In 2005 the FPÖ split into two factions, the FPÖ and the BZÖ. At the parliamentary elections of 2008 the FPÖ won 17.5 per cent of the votes, and the BZÖ 10.7 per cent.
3 In the early general election in 2002 the FPÖ suffered heavy losses, taking only 10 per cent of the votes (in comparison with 26.9 per cent in 1999) and the ÖVP won a landslide

victory (from 26.9 per cent of the votes in 1999 to 43 per cent in 2002). Despite this result, again ÖVP and FPÖ formed a coalition government, with a less influential role of FPÖ over public policies.
4 XXIII. Legislative Period: e.g. 248/A (E), 390/A (E), 1483/J.
5 See www.verein-sos-abendland.at/ (last retrieved 5 February 2009).
6 This cooperation originates from an alliance of the FPÖ with the Belgian Vlaams Belang and the movement pro-Köln. It was founded on the occasion of protests against the building of a mosque in the German city Cologne. See www.citiesagainstIslamization. com (last retrieved 10 August 2008).
7 It is moreover striking that Breivik, the far-right Norwegian terrorist, mentioned Austria several times in his writings, referring to debates that have been put on the agenda by the FPÖ (*Kurier*, 26 July 2011).
8 Shortly after having made those statements Winter became FPÖ candidate for the national parliamentary elections in 2008, and is since October 2008 national deputy. In 2009 Winter was condemned for her statements by the Austrian High Court because of incitement and vilification of religious doctrines.
9 See www.oesterreichbleibfrei.at/visionen.php (last retrieved 5 April 2008).
10 In the presidential elections 1999 the FPÖ put an emphasis on the fact that one candidate, Richard Lugner who is a builder, erected the first Austrian mosque (*Kurier*, 24 June 1999).
11 In the 2010 municipal electoral campaign in Vienna this slogan was even transformed into 'More courage for our Viennese blood' ('*Mehr Mut für unser Wiener Blut*'). The party gained with this slogan 25.8 per cent at the ballots, ranking second behind the Social Democratic Party of Vienna.

References

Ahtisaari, M., J. Frowein and M. Oreja 2000. 'Report commissioned by the President of the European Court of Human Rights', 8 September 2000: Paris: Report. Retrieved 9 January 2008 from www.austrosearch.at/pdf/reportwisemenaustria.pdf.

Akkerman, T. and A. Hagelund 2007. '"Women and children first": Anti-immigration parties and gender in Norway and the Netherlands', *Pattern of Prejudice*, 41(2): 197–214.

Bacchi, C. 2005. 'Discourse, discourse everywhere: Subject "agency" in feminist discourse methodology', *Nordic Journal of Women's Studies*, 13(3): 198–209.

Betz, H.-G. 2001. 'Exclusionary populism in Austria, Italy and Switzerland', *International Journal*, 57(3): 393–420.

Bunzl, M. 2007. 'Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia', in M. Bunzl (ed.), *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds old and new in Europe*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, pp. 1–46.

Buruma, Ian 2006. *Murder in Amsterdam: The death of Theo van Gogh and the limits of tolerance*. New York: Penguin Press.

Dolezal, M., M. Helbling and S. Hutter 2008. 'Zwischen Gipfelkreuz und Halbmond. Die Auseinandersetzung um den Islam in Österreich und der Schweiz, 1998–2007', *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, 4: 401–18.

Geden, O. 2006. *Diskursstrategien im Rechtspopulismus. Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs und Schweizerische Volkspartei zwischen Opposition und Regierungsbeteiligung*. Wiesbaden: Deutscher Universitätsverlag.

Gresch, N., L. Hadj-Abdou, S. Rosenberger and B. Sauer 2008. 'Tu felix Austria? The headscarf and the politics of "non-issues"', *Social Politics*, 15(4): 411–32.

Hadj-Abdou, L. 2008. 'Das muslimische Kopftuch und die Geschlechtergleichheit. Eine Frage der Kultur oder der Religion?', *Femina Politica*, 17(1): 68–80.

Heinisch, R. 2003. 'Success in opposition – failure in government: Exploring the performance of the Austrian Freedom Party and other European right-wing populist parties in public office', *West European Politics*, 26(3): 91–130.

Kitschelt, H. 1995. *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A comparative analysis.* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Kroissenbrunner, S. 2003. 'Islam, Migration und Integration. Soziopolitische Netzwerke und "Muslim leadership"', in H. Fassmann and I. Stacher (eds), *Österreichischer Migrations- und Integrationsbericht.* Klagenfurt/Celovec: Drava, pp. 375–95.

Luther, K.R. 2005. 'Die Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) und das Bündnis Zukunft Österreichs (BZÖ)', *Keele European Parties Research Unit. Working Paper 22.*

Mudde, C. 2007. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Reisigl, M. and R. Wodak 2001. 'Austria first: A discourse-historical analysis of the Austrian "Anti-Foreigner-Petition" in 1992 and 1993', in M. Reisigl and R. Wodak (eds), *The Semiotics of Racism.* Vienna: Passagen Verlag.

Renner, F. 2007. 'Die Qual der Fernsehwahl', in T. Hofer and B. Tóth (eds), *Wahl 2006. Kanzler, Kampagnen, Kapriolen. Analysen zur Nationalratswahl.* Wien/Berlin: LIT Verlag, pp. 119–34.

Silverstein, P. 2005. 'Immigrant racialization and the new savage slot: Race, migration, and immigration and in the New Europe', *The Annual Review of Anthropology,* 34: 363–84.

Stolcke, V. 1999. 'New rhetorics of exclusion in Europe', *International Social Science Journal,* 51(15): 25–35.

Suppanz, W. 2003. 'Wir haben nun keine Tradition des säkularen Textes: Religion, Politik und ihre Kompetenzen in der politischen Kultur Österreichs', in M. Brocker, H. Behr and M. Hildebrandt (eds), *Religion–Staat–Politik. Zur Rolle der Religion in der nationalen und internationalen Politik.* Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, pp. 33–46.

Ter Wal, J. 2002. 'Anti-foreigner campaigns in the Austrian Freedom Party and Italian Northern League', in R. Wodak and A. Pelinka (eds), *The Haider Phenomenon in Austria.* New Brunswick: Transaction, pp. 157–78.

Van der Brug, W. and M. Fennema 2003. 'Protest or mainstream? How the European anti-immigrant parties have developed into two separate groups by 1999', *European Journal of Political Research,* 42(1): 55–76.

Weller, P. 2006. 'Addressing religious discrimination and Islamophobia', *Journal of Islamic Studies,* 17(3): 295–325.

Zúquete, J.P. 2008. 'The European extreme-right and Islam: New directions?', *Journal of Political Ideologies,* 13(3): 321–44.

Reference materials

Press releases

OTS 0236: Hartinger: Jede fünfte Frau wird körperlich oder seelisch missbraucht. 8 May 2001.

OTS 00515: FP-Sichrovsky: Religionsfreiheit muss in Österreich garantiert werden. FPÖ gegen pauschale Verurteilung aller Mitglieder der Islamischen Glaubensgemeinschaft. 11 October 2001.

OTS 0156: Westenthaler: FPÖ bleibt Sicherheitspartei Nummer 1. Wer frei leben will braucht Schutz vor Terror und Kriminalität. 18 October 2001.

OTS 00885: FPÖ-Strache: Große Chance für den Tierschutz. Hoher islamischer Glaubensführer erlaubt Betäubung vor Schächtung. 24 January 2003.

OTS 0242: Mölzer: Nicht Europa, islamische Welt hat Grund zur Entschuldigung. 16 February 2006.

OTS 0205: Kickl: Kopftuchverbot wäre Befreiung für Frauen und Mädchen. 22 June 2006.

OTS 00145: Ausländerquote an Schulen: FPÖ: ÖVP-Modell zum Scheitern verurteilt. 10 July 2006.

OTS 0138: Mölzer: Festnahme von Islamisten – Zuwanderungs- und Einbürgerungsstop für Moslems. 13 September 2007.

OTS 0134: Mölzer: Grundsätzliche Diskussion über Islam erforderlich. 15 January 2008.

OTS 0104: LH Haider und LR Scheuch: Kärnten europaweiter Voreiter bei Bauverbot für Moscheen und Minarette. 11 February 2008.

Party manifestos, electoral programmes and position papers

Das Parteiprogramm der Freiheitlichen Partei Österreichs. Mit Berücksichtigung der beschlossenen Änderungen vom 27. Ordentlichen Bundesparteitag der FPÖ am 23. April 2005 in Salzburg (Party Manifesto 2005).

Österreich bleib frei! (Party Initiative Austria Stay Free!). Retrieved 5 April 2008 from www.oesterreichbleibfrei.at/visionen.php.

Sagen aus Wien. FPÖ Gemeinderatswahl 2010. Retrieved 2 September 2011 from http://issuu.com/hcstrache/docs/sagenbuch.

Wahlprogramm der Freiheitlichen Partei Österreichs. FPÖ Nationalratswahl 2006 (Election Programme 2006). Retrieved 1 September 2006 from www.fpoe.at.

Wir und der Islam. Freiheitliche Positionen zur Religionsfreiheit, zur islamischen Welt und zur Problematik des Zuwanderungs-Islam in Europa. Wien am 22. Jänner 2008 (Position Paper). Retrieved 1 February 2008 from www.fpoe.at.

Parliamentary documents

248/A (E)/NR/XXIII. GP: Entschließungsantrag der Abgeordneten Strache, Aspöck, Haimbucher und weiterer Abgeordneter betreffend Verbot des Bauens von Minaretten sowie die Verpflichtung für nicht abendländische Religionen zur Verwendung der deutschen Sprache bei der Abhaltung von Gottesdiensten und Predigten. 6 June 2007.

390/A (E)/NR/XXIII. GP: Dringlicher Antrag der Abgeordneten Heinz Christian Strache, Kolleginnen und Kollegen betreffend strikte Anwendung der Rechtsordnung zur Unterbindung der fortschreitenden Islamisierung und der damit verbundenen Terrorgefahr anstatt Errichtung eines Polizei und Überwachungsstaates. 27 September 2007.

1483/J XXIII. GP: Anfrage der Abgeordneten Rosenkranz, Kolleginnen und Kollegen betreffend Islamisierung Österreichs und radikal-fundamentaler Islamismus in Österreich. 27 September 2007.

Governmental document

Government Declaration 2000 'Verantwortung für Österreich – im Herzen Europas' signed by Jörg Haider and Wolfgang Schüssel. 3 February 2000.