Shaping Policy through Narrative: A Discourse-Historical Analysis of Trump's Travel Ban Tweets as a Case Study of Islamophobic Political Action

Makary Menes, Laura Recht, Natalie Trpkovic

University of Augsburg

Particularly in the wake of 9/11 islamophobic narratives have permeated western discourse about political action taking and policy making to the degree that anti Muslim sentiment manifests itself in policies. This is especially noticeable in the US-American context of political discourse under the Trump-Administration. The purpose of the present study is precisely to investigate the role of islamophobic narratives in Donald J. Trump´s policy-making and political action taking, focusing on how discriminatory discourses can become embedded in governance. As a case study, the project examines tweets posted by Donald Trump´s official Twitter account between 2015 and 2017 in regard to his executive order 13769, colloquially known as the "Muslim Travel Ban".

By employing Wodak and Reisigl´s (2001) Discourse-Historical framework, the analysis explores how Trump's language equates Islam and Muslims with radical Islamic terrorism and constructs persons from Muslim-majority countries as a general threat through linguistic strategies such as nomination, predication, argumentation, perspectivisation and intensification. Exclusionary policies towards Muslims and persons from Muslim-majority countries are furthermore legitimised through this constructed narrative and can become the basis for discriminatory policy making. By linking Trump's rhetorical patterns to broader societal dynamics, this project provides critical insights into the normalisation of islamophobia in public discourse and its implications for contemporary governance and policy making.

Wodak, Ruth & Martin Reisigl. 2001. *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism.* London: Routledge.