

## SUMMARIES PROKLA 182, Vol. 46 (2016), No. 1

**Andreas Arndt: Capitalism as religion.** In 1921, Walter Benjamin wrote his seminal essay on “Capitalism as Religion” stating that capitalism is purely cultic, while missing elements of dogmatics, transcendence, and salvation. In recent years this text has received renewed attention. In his article, Andreas Arndt presents a short review of the recent debate and, unlike other authors, emphasizes that Benjamin refers more to anti-capitalist literary work and apocalyptic visions than to a marxist notion of capitalism and a framework of political economy.

**Sarah Bormann: Hardware – hard Work. Company-focused campaigns in the ICT industry and the role of NGOs.** In the past, anti-sweatshop campaigns have often focused on the apparel sector. More recently, these campaigns have broadened their spectrum as European NGOs increasingly begin to target technology companies producing smartphones and tablet computers, for example. This process comes with ambivalences, however: In the apparel sector, the importance of the local scale had been often unacknowledged. Within current campaigns targeting the ICT industries we can observe a decoupling of NGO driven activities on the consumer markets in the global north on one hand and labor struggles in the global south on the other. This does not only result in ineffective CSR-strategies, but it can also lead to a double victimization of female assembly line workers. The author discusses these contradictions and its implications for consumer focused tactics and coalitions between NGOs and trade unions. The article is based on the authors’ work with an NGO focusing on issues of labor in the ICT industry.

**Mario Candeias: The practical test for the Connective Party. A discussion with Dario Azzellini.** This article critically responds to Dario Azzellini’s essay in PROKLA 181 and discusses new strategies to reorganize the relationship between left-wing political parties and social movements. It has always been a contested question how this relation should look like. Concepts about new types of party-movement relations like the Mosaic Left or the Connective Party try to rethink the tension theoretically while in practice, new developments in Greece and Spain seem to promise an important step towards building new connections. This article tries to analyze progress and problems, even failures, and to draw lessons for developing new theories and future political practises.

**Katharina Götsch: Iran’s foreign policy between religion and power.** Protector of Shiites, export of Islamist revolution, fight against Israel and support of Palestine – the religious element plays an obvious role in Iran’s foreign relations. At the same time, several foreign policy actions and positions of Iran indicate the prioritization of material national interests (of geopolitical and economic nature): a recent example is the nuclear deal from July 2015. The article will first discuss theoretical approaches in the social sciences for the analysis of religion in international relations; subsequently, the ideological foundation and constitutional principles of the Islamist Republic of Iran are set out as the basis for empirical case analyses in the final section.

**Stephan Lanz: Religious metropolitan mainstream. On the contemporary relationship between cities, religion and neoliberalism.** Contrary to assumptions in traditional urban theory that understand religion as external or peripheral to urban modernity, cities have by no means been secularized over the course of the rapid global urbanization processes of recent decades. Instead, the much discussed return of religion in the public sphere is primarily an urban phenomenon. At a global level, metropolises have become laboratories and arenas for new religious phenomena exercising a huge influence on urban spaces, cultures and socie-

ties. Current research in various world regions shows that religion does not represent some exotic reminiscence. Rather, its agency unfolds at the heart of contemporary metropolitan modernization. Based on the results of case studies that the transregional research project “Global Prayers – Redemption and Liberation in the City” has conducted in cities like Berlin, Istanbul, Lagos and Rio de Janeiro, the paper argues that the religious appears to be expanding in all other areas of the production of the urban in such a manner that it is increasingly difficult to say where religion stops, and where it begins. It shows how urban religions, generally interpreted as reactions to social relocations caused by global neoliberalism, can as well be understood as driving forces of contemporary urban capitalism itself.

**Sascha Radl: The rise of Ansar Allah in Yemen: between capitalism, patronage and marginalization.** At first sight, the civil war in Yemen seems to be a sectarian conflict between shia and sunni Islam. In contrast, this article explores the political economy dimensions of the conflict. During the 1970s, the northern Yemen Arab Republic has seen the emergence of a middle class based on foreign remittances, thus increased consumption, economic growth and agricultural modernization in particular. An economic crisis and new oil discoveries in the 1980s lead to a turn-around of the relations between the former powerful middle class and the government which was now able to co-opt the opposition. The subsequent inability to find a solution for the economic problems and the consequences of the reunification in the 1990s lead to externally forced neoliberal structural adjustment, including financial austerity, and as a result to social decline. Ansar Allah provided an alternative order and therefore the group was able to mobilize the middle class in opposition to the regime.

**Ingar Solty: Free-Market Religion. The Genealogy of Neoliberal Religiousness in the United States.** The paper starts with a critique of the common notion of a fundamental divide between right-wing evangelicals and libertarians, i.e. „value“ and „business conservatives.“ It also problematizes the underlying return of Lukacs’ian/Frankfurt School type of theories of „false consciousness,“ which fall behind the achievements of Gramscian and post-Althusserian theorizations of ideology and points towards the lack of a religious/Christian Democracy cleavage in the U.S. and, as a consequence, the specifically particularistic nature of the U.S. welfare state. The article then proceeds by linking the regional specifics of right-wing evangelicalism in the South and bordering Mid-West to U.S. capital’s domestic spatial fixes during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Finally, challenging right-wing populism in the United States would necessitate a break with the neoliberal anti-discrimination approach professed by the liberal Democrats.

**Peter Wahl: Is there a point about Germany’s supposed leadership in Europe?** There was a common sense among the mainstream of the European Left that Germany has become the hegemon in the EU. The refugee crisis reveals that this narrative was premature. The article clarifies central concepts such as dominance, hegemony and leadership and analyses the German power behind its military, economic, political and soft power potential. It concludes that only on economic terrain Germany is ahead of its main rivals France and UK. But the country does not have a sufficient potential for a hegemon. Hence, the traditional power hierarchy in the EU prevails with the French-German condominium on top, while coalitions of opponents, such as the Visegrad Group, successfully resists any leadership in specific areas.

**Andreas Wiebel: India on the wrong track: the fundamental political change under Narendra Modi.** Why did Narendra Modi become the new prime minister of India? What are the consequences of his election for Indian society? After giving a brief overview over hindu-national principles and history, the article focuses on two aspects: the alliance between neo-

liberal economy and right-wing Hindunationalism (Hindutva) and Communalism, which can be seen as the political strategy to organize majorities for this two-headed project. By shifting towards a Hindu state, India said goodbye to the secular and pluralistic columns of Nehruvianism. On the surface Modi appears to be a big reformer, but underneath one can clearly see that his economic growth agenda benefits only parts of Indian society, and that on a structural level the Hindutva movement is fighting for a cultural turning point concerning language, religion and nation, called Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan.

## AutorInnenverzeichnis

*Andreas Arndt* lehrt an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, andreas.arndt.1@theologie.hu-berlin.

*Sarah Bormann* arbeitet bei ver.di im Bereich Innovation und Gute Arbeit, sarah.bormann@verdi.de.

*Mario Candeias* ist Direktor des Instituts für Gesellschaftsanalyse der Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, candeias@rosalux.de.

*Stephan Lanz* ist Stadtforscher an der Fakultät für Kulturwissenschaften der Europa-Universität Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder) und Gründungsmitglied von metroZones, Berlin; lanz@europa-uni.de.

*Katharina Götsch* arbeitet als Projektkoordinatorin und Lektorin an der Universität Wien, katharina.goetsch@univie.ac.at.

*Sascha Radl* arbeitet zur politischen Ökonomie Nordafrikas und der Arabischen Halbinsel, Centrum für Nah- und Mitteloststudien (CNMS) der Universität Marburg, radlsascha@gmail.com.

*Ingar Solty* arbeitet mit im SSHRC Research Project „The Question of Europe in an Era of Economic and Political Crises“ der York University Toronto, ingarsolty@yahoo.de.

*Peter Wahl* ist Vorstandsvorsitzender der Nichtregierungsorganisation »Weltwirtschaft, Ökologie & Entwicklung – World Economy, Ecology & Development (WEED)« und einer der Mitbegründer von attac Deutschland.

*Andreas Wiebel* war DAAD-Dozent für Literaturwissenschaft an der Universität Pune sowie an der TU Hanoi. Im Moment arbeitet er als DaF-Lehrer an der TU Berlin, Andreas.Wiebel@daad-alumni.de.