

Az MTA Társadalomtudományi Kutatóközpont Szociológiai Intézete
tisztelettel meghívja negyvenegyedik Jour fixe rendezvényére:

Bartha Eszter – Tóth András:
Workers' attraction to right-wing political slogans
– responses from industrial workers?

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Absztrakt: The article analyses the process of the formation of new social and political identities in today's Hungary in the light of life-history interviews conducted with young skilled workers (below 40). Our starting point is the observation that the radical right-wing party (Jobbik) is relatively successful among this group, whose reasons we analyze in a political and historical perspective. We also use Bartha's interviews (2011), who conducted interviews with workers who were socialized in the Kádár regime, The interviews were conducted between 2002 and 2004; and at least rhetorically Bartha could state that workers rejected the idea and practice of liberal democracy and the Western model and they were susceptible to ideologies promoting a strong state and a strong leader.

In this paper we would like to offer a combination of cultural and structural explanations to the increasing appeal of the radical right among workers. We observed that even though left-wing theories of exploitation have been effectively marginalized in this group, workers in fact use the concept of exploitation to explain 1) the huge wage differential between "technocrats" and workers 2) the wage differential between East and West Europe. These arguments – alongside biases against Roma people – render workers responsive to the slogans of the radical right, which promise social justice to hard-working people. We also argue that family histories should be also taken into account, which often explain the lack of appeal – and even more importantly, the lack of credit – of the left-wing political parties in postsocialist Hungary.

Kulcsszavak: industrial workers, radical right wing, historical perspective, exploitation, family histories

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