The principle of achievement as a driving force of class fragmentation

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Divisions of the working class

- Stratification of the working class (Barrett 1984)

- Fragmentation of the workforce in „bureaucratic control" (Edwards 1979)

- Class divisions along gender, ‚race' and ethnicity

Research question: Which mechanisms characterize the symoblic boundary management of the employed dominated class regarding 1) the unemployed and 2) refugees and migrants?

1. Theoretical Framework

Boundaries, Boundary work:

Symbolic resources, moral and symbolic boundaries → class distinctions (Lamont/Molnár 2002, Sayer 2001)
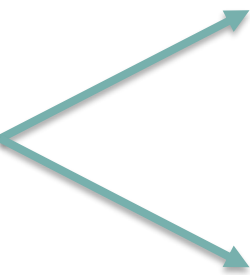
Bourdieu (1984): symbolic sphere, incorporated class differences, naturalization of social order (Doxa)

Symbolic Boundaries:

- „lines that include and define some people, groups, and things while excluding others" (Epstein 1992: 232)

- "expressed through normative interdictions (taboos), cultural attitudes and practices, and patterns of like and dislike" (Lamont/Molnár 2002: 15341).

1. Theoretical Framework

Right-wing populism and extremism

Socio-economic change, precarity, fear of déclassement (Kitschelt 1997, Castel 2000, Flecker 2007, Dörre et al. 2018, Heitmeyer 2018): Middle classes, working class, precarious milieus

Identity politics, cultural backlash (Betz 2002, Reckwitz 2017, Norris/Inglehart 2018): Middle classes, traditional working class

1. Theoretical Framework

A solidarity perspective

Symbolic struggles over concepts of solidarity:

- Class solidarity, „political solidarity" (Scholz 2008) – socio-economic interests

- Symbolic boundaries of the solidary community – morality, deservingness, prerogatives of the established

- *„Völkische"* Solidarity: racist boundaries, for the good of the *Volk*

Methods

SOCRIS: Quantitative and qualitative surveys in Austria and Hungary

Problem-centered interviews (Witzel 2000); N=47

Contucted between 02/2018 – 08/2018

Educational Background	Female	Male
Compulsory school	1	0
Vocational education	6	8
Upper secondary education (A-levels)	6	8
University	7	11
Total	20	27

Employment status	
employed	33
Self-employed	8
Unemployed (including training programs)	6
Total	47

Typology of Solidarity

Solidarity as a multidimensional continuum

7 Types:*

1. Political solidarity - To stand up for each other (N=5)
2. Alturistic solidarity - To commit oneself to others (N=8)
3. Support and demand (N=8)
4. Contribution based solidarity - Efforts should be rewarded (N=9)
5. Moral authoritarian solidarity (N=7)
6. National exluding solidarity – Austrians first (N=2)
7. Non-solidary authoritarian (N=3)

* „Idealtypus" (Weber). Individual cases (interviews) with a similar structure/logic/pattern are clustered to one type. 5 cases have not been clustered yet.

Type 4: Efforts should be rewarded

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Work ethos: hard work, making an effort

"*I make an effort to do my best because it is my job and for that you fight from beginning until the end*" (Anna Nowak, 22, machine operator, temp)

Main demand: economic and symbolic recognition for their effort (above all: wages)

Type 4: Efforts should be rewarded

'Yes, I think basically, what do I work for? Basically, for nothing. For someone, who gets a lot of money, and I get only a little' (Gabriel Drechsler, 23, production worker)

'If you imagine, a hairdresser works 40 hours, like a friend of mine and she gets almost the same as someone unemployed staying at home. But, she needs to stand there 40 hours. She gets nothing for free'. (Michael Fuchs, 32, toolmaker)

Main demand: Fairness

Type 4: Efforts should be rewarded

On the unemployed:

'You cannot get more for doing nothing, than for working' (Lina Wagner, 29, police officer)

'*The cook gets 1.200 Euro for working 50 hours per week and doing real hard work. I completely understand that this is unattractive if you can sit at home for one hundred less ...' (*Jan Wieninger, 26, hotel front office).

Main demand: Fairness

Type 4: Efforts should be rewarded

On refugees:

'They pick up an apprenticeship and vocational school and can do all this, and then they suddenly get a negative response to their application for asylum, I think that is stupid.' (Lukas Aichinger, 37, farmer)

There are good migrants but also bad ones *'who just come here, don't want to work, don't want to become integrated, nothing'*, they are just after *'our money'*. (Anna Nowak, 22, machine operator, temp)

Main demand: Subordination to the hegemonic work ethos

Type 5: Authoritarians defending the moral order

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Work ethos:

'*To us a career is important. We wanted to accelerate, we wanted to go upwards. Now I have the impression, that there is this attitude: "I want to live 90% and work 10% so I can afford a living"*' (Gerald Hofer, 50, hotel manager)

Main demands: Sacrifice and loyalty

Type 5: Authoritarians defending the moral order

On the unemployed:

'I think, you know, that this is because people get too much money, for sitting at home and do nothing' (Petra Beer, 43, office clerk)

'You should not be too proud, even when you have to stack shelves in the supermarket' (Stefanie Vordermeier, 27, office clerk)

Main demands: Coercion against the 'unwilling' unemployed

Type 5: Authoritarians defending the moral order

On refugees:

'People can come to Austria but you have to integrate.' (Petra Beer, 43, office clerk)

'There should be information how do I get a flat, how do I get a job, language course, dissemination of values…' (Stefanie Vordermeier, 27, office clerk)

'I think it is totally normal, that cultures become indistinct, yes? But in principle the values or core values of a country, where you go to, should be preserved, yes?' (Gerald Hofer, 50, hotel manager).

Main demand: Assimilation

Conclusions

Meritocracy as mechanism of symbolic boundary management

- Type 4: Morality of the working class („effort")
- Type 5: Morality of the petty bourgeoisie („moral values")
- Link between solidarity concepts, political orientations and class position
  - but moral values sometimes lie across class boundaries (Sayer 2011)
- Meritocratic principle as both excluding and including
- Still: Entanglement of meritocratic and nationalistic perspectives (effort *and* assimilation)

Conclusions

Right-wing populism and extremism:

- Authoritarianism: Intersection of meritocratic logic and morality

  - Aggression against: a) Presumed "weaker" members of society (concerning market subordination) and b) presumed "foreignness/others/strangers" (moral order)

- Empirical results show that explanations for the attraction of right-wing populism/extremism need to be ‚multi-dimensional'

  - There is not THE explanation.

  - We have to look at socio-economic AND cultural causes and how they are combined in different social milieus

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