*Reputational moderation of radical right parties – comparing the single-district candidates of Jobbik between 2010 and 2018*

Keywords*:*

*Radical Right, Hungary, deradicalization, election campaign*

In my PhD research I’m trying to construct a conceptual framework which is suitable for capturing the phenomenon of radical right party moderation, focusing on the case of the leading Hungarian radical right party Jobbik. By the majority of the scholars in the field, moderation (and radicalization) is usually understood as a programmatic shift on the traditional left-right scale. I understand moderation as a more complex, i.e. a multidimensional and multidirectional process. In my approach there are at least three dimensions of moderation:

1. *Policy shift* from the margins of the political spectrum to the center, i.e. deradicalization in terms of policy position as compared to the mainstream parties and the median voter.

2. *Diversification* of key issues in the core of the party’s ideology and politics.

3. Moderation in terms of showing a higher level of loyalty to the fundamental norms and values of the democratic system, i.e. de-radicalization in terms of party image, working on a more *moderate reputation* (political tools, language, alliance politics, distribution of party offices).

In my conference paper I intend to focus on the third dimension. My starting point is that the main goal of moderation is a softer image in the eyes of the non-radical electorate – which, in a highly personalized political arena, manifests itself primarily in the reputations of the single district candidates. In my conference paper I will analyze what moderation means in terms of Jobbik’s candidate selection strategy. I will outline a conceptual framework with which moderation can be grasped and measured. I will focus on distinct dimensions of the politicians’ reputation: their ideological positions, their potential connections to extremist organizations and their personal styles. I would like to test whether moderation of Jobbik’s single member district candidates can be traced between 2010 and 2018.

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