

Tibor Meszmann

Workers' Collective Identities and (Self-) Organization in Late Socialism and After:
Comparison of Strikes and Workers' Protests in Serbia and Slovenia

Abstract

Assuming that workers' strikes and protests are of great importance during transitional change from socialism, in this paper I try to come closer in understanding and explaining the main characteristics and structural determinants of collective identities of workers in late socialism and post-socialism. This paper compares workers' collective action in two republics and later successor states of socialist Yugoslavia, Serbia and Slovenia in the 1988-1992 period, but offers also a general overview of contemporary workers' protest activity. I assess workers' public identities and organizational requisites of workers' collective action through the analysis of workers' strikes and organized participation in protest rallies in 1988 but also in the 1989-1992 period. My analysis is based on statistical data on strikes, available studies in local languages, newspaper articles on strikes and interviews with worker activists.