“People of my system”: Creating Inter-Class symbolic Boundaries in the Postsocialist Context-The Case of Croatian Upper-Middle Class

by

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Abstract

This research examines the Croatian upper-middle class, with a focus on comparison between two of its segments: cultural and social specialists from the cultural sector with self-employed professionals from the profit-related private sector. The goal of this study is to explore symbolic boundaries which Croatian upper-middle class draws toward the classes above and beneath it, and to comparatively grasp the differences between members of the two class segments. In doing this, I am relying on the model developed by Michele Lamont which consists of the three main foundations for creating inter-class symbolic boundaries: cultural, moral and socioeconomic aspect. The goal of my research was to test Lamont's model, and to compare the Croatian case with the cases of France and the USA, in order to see how closely stratification models made in countries with a long capitalist history correspond to the situation in the postsocialist context. I conclude that Croatian upper-middle class is not clearly divided between different sectors, as different criteria intertwine, although some differences do exist. Furthermore, I conclude that, possibly as the consequence of socialist past, cultural and moral criteria are on the level of symbolic boundaries more important than the socioeconomic one. It remains unclear though whether moral criterion really can be regarded as the basis for creation of symbolic boundaries toward other classes, since morals seem to be mechanism which is socially much more inclusive than exclusive. This implies that morality leads to egalitarian principles, whose symbolic boundaries transcend class boundaries rather than perpetuating them. In the end, however, I conclude that some of my findings question the reliability of the symbolic boundaries approach, and that therefore the further examinations are needed to prove its plausibility.

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1.Introduction

In the socialist ideology egalitarianism beyond any doubt represented an essential feature. Therefore, in parts of the Eastern European societies where socialism prevailed, this ideology as an official state doctrine took diminishing class differences to be one of its main tasks. However, although socialist regimes tried to diminish the strength of the relation between life chances and social background, a number of authors have argued that the inequalities in the access to cultural and material goods continued to resemble the structure of opportunities in Western capitalist countries. Despite the fact that socialist rulers hoped to eliminate class differences by abolishing private property (considered by the Marxist paradigm to be the main cause of class inequalities), New class theorists, Konrad and Szelenyi and many others, showed that the project of destratification failed to achieve its goals. If so, the complicated set of social and economic transformations implemented after the demise of socialism – known as the postsocialist transition – was supposedly even to increase the inequalities already present in the predecessor regime. However, this issue has not been properly examined. Transitological literature dealt with a number of different aspects of postsocialist social and economic processes, and the issues of social stratification have been investigated in a significant extent. Yet the analyses left out the class question in the broader sense, in a way I shall try to explain in the theoretical framework. In this paper I shall thus analyze this topic, focusing on the case of Croatian upper-middle class.

In my research I interviewed twelve upper-middle class members who mostly live and work in Zagreb. My goal was to get an insight in the criteria which these people use when creating symbolic boundaries toward other classes. In achieving this, as the guideline I took Lamont's model of symbolic boundaries which she defines as "types of lines that individuals draw when they categorize people" (Lamont, 1992, 1), and investigates in order "to illuminate

the structures of thought through which upper-middle class people organize (i.e., select and hierarchize) the `raw data` they receive on others" (Lamont, 1992: 4). In her book *Money, morals, and manners* (1992), the Canadian sociologist shows the results of 160 in-depth interviews with American and French middle-class men, and compares how these men define what it means to be a "worthy" person. She concludes that American upper middle-class men tend to appreciate the moral and socioeconomic aspect more than the cultural one, emphasized by Bourdieu when examining French society.

Another important division discovered by Lamont was the difference between different sectors of upper-middle class, dived on the ones from public and the ones from private sector. I am explaining this in more detail in the third chapter, while for now it can be briefly mentioned that cultural part of public sector tended to emphasize cultural boundaries, whereas self-employed professionals tended to take socioeconomic criterion as the most important. According to this, I focused on these two sectors which I wanted to compare. On the one side I talked to the people employed in the cultural sector, mostly represented by museum professionals, curators and artists. On the other side, I interviewed self-employed profit-related workers from the private sector, represented by lawyers, doctors, architects and accountants. Similarly to Lamont, through different questions which deal with general issues like the sort of people they are friends with, the human characteristics they appreciate, or the way they would like to raise their children, I sought to find out what are the general criteria which interviewees use for defining what it means to be a "worthy" person. On the empirical level, I aimed to use the semi-structured interviews to discover which of the three criteria (moral, cultural or socioeconomic) is the most important one, and how is this dependent on the respective segment of upper-middle class; whereas on the theoretical level, I wanted to test plausibility of Lamont theoretical frame.

In answering these two questions – what are in general symbolic boundaries of the Croatian upper-middle class drawn to the other classes, and how is this dependent on the respective sector of the Croatian upper-middle class – I intend to relate results attained in the postsocialist context of Croatia to the results which Bourdieu and Lamont got in France and the USA, as the societies of the advanced capitalism. Firstly, I wanted to establish if the upper-middle class members really do draw strong symbolic boundaries toward other, especially lower classes, and secondly to see if these are closer to the French emphasis on cultural identity, or they are more inclined to evaluate people according to the issues of socioeconomic success and moral properties as in the US. My hypothesis was that the social structure of Croatian society will not be much different from Western societies. Regardless of the decades of egalitarianism as the ruling ideology, having taken into account the numerous researches which showed that class inequalities continued to exist in spite of abolishment of private property, I was not inclined to consider the ideology of egalitarianism as something really influential – especially in the societies where this ideology ceased to be dominant almost two decades ago. Furthermore, I expected the symbolic boundaries to be separated according to the respective sector of the upper-middle class.

My results however only partially confirmed my hypotheses. As for the first question, a significant number of interviewees expressed a strong inclination toward egalitarian values. They often stated the ultimate importance of moral qualities, fully independent of the level of education and social status. It should be added that the inclusive understanding of moral qualities which I found when talking to my interviewees is opposite to exclusive sense which Lamont uses. Moral aspect, rather than serving as the criterion for distinguishing oneself from lower classes, seems to be the mechanism of diminishing the symbolic boundaries between classes. This egalitarianism was though oftentimes undermined by the actual number of their lower-class friends. As for the comparison between the two sectors, like Lamont I found a

pattern of cultural reproduction of class boundaries in the cultural sector. With few exceptions, museum professionals, critics and artists I spoke with have insisted on creating social ties with the culturally refined, "intellectual" types. Yet interviewees from the professional sector hardly showed an inclination toward socioeconomic status as the decisive criterion, demonstrating more diverse patterns of creating social networks. This could be due to them being unrepresentative for the whole population, since most of them declared themselves untypical of their group, while considering their colleagues to be materialists and snobs who go only after money and social status. However, I am also offering another explanation which is of structural nature, and which relates the lack of socioeconomically drawn symbolic boundaries to egalitarian ideologies (on the one hand socialism, and on the other catholic doctrine). This argument also leads to the final conclusion of this paper which questions the plausibility of the symbolic boundaries approach because of its impossibility to grasp the reality outside of the discourse.

This is the overall structure of my thesis. In the next chapter I am presenting the theoretical frame. In the subchapter 2.1 I am dealing with the transitological treatment of class issues to show how the studies of postsocialist social and economic transformations elaborated class-based topics. In the subchapter 2.2 I am discussing the issues which emerged in the previous subchapter on the theoretical level: the problem of defining the class membership, with special emphasis on the role of culture in these definitions. I am describing Miliband's model of class structure and his criteria for the membership in the respective classes and class fractions, with the focus on the membership in the upper-middle class. This model is being compared with on the one hand the Marxian model of Erik Olin Wright, and on the other hand with the culturalist model of Bourdieu. Then I am demonstrating the model of symbolic boundaries developed by Michele Lamont. In this section I am explaining its advantages toward cultural capital approach, and subsequently its shortcomings addressed by

several critics. After having presented the theoretical framework, in the third chapter I am presenting the results of my research, whereas in the fourth chapter I am discussing these results and analyzing them in a more systematical manner. Finally, in the conclusion I am giving the summary of the empirical discussion, placing it in the theoretical framework, and comparing it with my starting hypothesis. In the end I am presenting my conclusions and final remarks.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Class and postsocialism

In the last nearly two decades, studies in postsocialism have dealt with a number of important topics. Regarding this transitology shows to represent a dynamic field of the contemporary social science. In order to grasp the totality of postsocialist social and economical transformations, different authors have dealt with various issues, such as property relations, gender inequalities, and shifts in the patterns of production. Among others, transitological analyses also explored class related topics in various ways and from different angles. Yet in this chapter I will, firstly, show how these have mostly been narrowed down to the role of certain fractions and sub-groups in the new social and economic context, whereas they did not try or did not manage to grasp the class issue in a broad sense. Secondly, I will show how most of these analyses did not investigate the cultural aspect of social stratification. Whereas cultural capital theory in Western countries resulted in a number of sociological researches, in the transitological literature this has remained rather unexplored. In general, my aim is thus to, through the form of the literature review, summarize the transitological examination of classes, and to point out its shortcomings in order to indicate some aspects of postsocialist social stratification which should be further investigated.

2.1.1.The position of class in the transitological literature

There has been, Catherine Wanner argues, "surprisingly little attention paid to the class politics of postsocialist societies" (Wanner, 2005: 518). This claim could be contested with various counterexamples. Yurchak (2001) examines trading entrepreneurs in Russia. Lampland (2002) focuses on farm managers, whereas Eyal et al. (1998) take a wider perspective in an attempt to get an insight in the upper classes in general, with special emphasis on their composition and their mutual agreements and conflicts. Dunn (1998) focuses on the new class of salesmen, who through transition, because of the introduction of

western business doctrines begin to gain significant importance, and Ost (2005) tries to examine the position of the working class in post-socialist countries, with special emphasis on the unions' placement in socialist political struggles, and the infamous role they played in the processes of the transition. Lampland (1995) on the other hand uses the historical perspective to show the emergence of what she considers to be a capitalist spirit in the socialist conditions, and all this on the example of agricultural workers and their position in the de/collectivization, while Pine (1998), through the research on female workers from two Polish regions, seeks to find out how local representations of gendered work influence the reactions to the problems of privatization.

However, most of these texts have one thing in common: they regard classes in the rather narrow terms of occupations, failing to posit these in the broader class scheme. This approach surely has its advantages. If one takes as targeted group, say, entrepreneurs it can reach more precise results in a way that it transcends the vertical differences among them, and focuses on the characteristics in general shared by the people of this occupation. Yet on the other hand, the problem with this approach is that, while focusing on one specific aspect of socio-economic status, it ignores the general issue of social power. This however can lead to the incomplete picture of inter-class differences. For instance, leaning on one specific factor of class membership rather than on the whole set of variables of social power which would then describe class membership in a more complete way, may lead to confusion. If one returns to the example of entrepreneurs, this approach tends to take the whole group of the similar occupation as a rather homogeneous group. It thus ascribes to them as taken for granted more attributes than they as a group really possess.

There are at least two explanations why transitological literature[1] partly did not use the Weberian pluralistic approach (which assumes that in order to grasp the classes, one has to take into account several segments, since the social power is only the sum of these different criteria), and therefore why it missed to analyze classes in the broader meaning. On the one hand, according to Wanner, Western theorists bypassed this topic because of the difficulties they encountered after finding out that the standard variables (education, profession, residence, income etc.) used to identify socio-economic status were of little diagnostic value in postsocialist societies. However, Wanner's explanations seem to be rather questionable. Although in some postsocialist countries the relation between different segments of class status indeed have become rather loose, as for instance a number of people of low educational level and of low-status occupation became rich through privatization, I do not think that the variables used for shaping Western type class structure are entirely inadequate for describing postsocialist condition.

The other explanation would be to accept Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley's standpoint according to which, given that social structure in Eastern Europe is in a flux, one cannot analyze classes, but rather class formation (Eyal et al., 164). The reality of social change is, the argument goes, in the formation and dissolution of classes, which would then, I suppose, imply the impossibility of analysis of class structure. On the other hand, I am not so sure if this kind of "panta rei" attitude is of any worth to social scientists. Social processes indeed are dynamic rather than static, and classes indeed are in the constant formation, rather than petrified outright – and this dialectic in contemporary sociological discourse represents almost common sense. Yet it is not clear why this dialectics would contradict the examination of

[1] It should be noted here that I relied mostly on the transitological works which originate in economic anthropology, rather than sociology. In the contrary, my observations could turn out different. For instance, elite studies quite likely could not be said to regard class issues in narrow terms of professions.

social structure as it is. Quite the contrary, one could argue that in a way the pace of the postsocialist social changes is one more reason to examine the present state.

2.1.2.The place of culture in the postsocialist studies

Transitological examination of the economic and social processes of the postsocialist societies is closely bound up with the anthropological perspective. Instead of concentrating only on formal economical aspects of the social phenomena, economic anthropology insists on taking into consideration the broader social and cultural context. Since economy is not isolated from society as a whole, but embedded into it, one has to take into account the broader condition influencing it. These goals can be theoretically framed with help of Bourdieu's basic terminological division on various forms of capital. Arguing against the economistic perspective which disregards the Polanyian embeddedness of economy into the broader context, Bourdieu postulates the existence of forms of non-economic capital, such as social, cultural, or symbolic capital, which in the end nonetheless have an equally important impact on social stratification and social inequalities.

The second characteristic of the transitological treatment of social stratification I would like to point out is directly related to these issues. Transitological authors indeed have made much effort to approach the topic in a holistic manner, and thus to investigate the non-economic factors of social inequalities. However, the aspect explored much more thoroughly refers to the social capital perspective. King and Szelenyi (2005) warn of the importance of social networks, same as Stark (1998) and Borocz (2000), whereas Kalb (2002) in his synthesis of postsocialist literature also points out the importance given to social capital. However, while having put emphasis on the social capital, I am arguing that the researches of the postsocialist social stratification disregarded cultural aspect.

An example can be found in Lampland's text on farm managers (2002). Here she gives an analysis of the agrarian elite in the postsocialist context, in order to show how social and cultural processes influence economic transition. However, although the author advocates the examination of both social and cultural capital as the precondition of the more complex, and thus adequate explanation, she hardly mentions the latter. The most importance for acquiring the managerial position she attributes to the set of social ties, expert knowledge and extensive experience. Therefore, regarding the fact that she criticizes economists (who according to her dominate the field of transitology) for the lack of interest in cultural issues, she gives surprisingly much attention to criteria of success typically underlined by these very economists. This trend can be observed in a number of transitological works.

As for the cultural aspect of social inequalities, the scope of the researches is, as argued so far, significantly smaller. Creed (2002) shortly mentions taste as the factor of postsocialist social structure, and indicates the importance of examining the rituals of upper classes. Fehervary (2002) also analyzes how class identity is expressed in the material culture. Kraaykamp and Niewebeerta (2000) examine the importance of cultural capital in six post-communist countries (this mostly, however, referring to the socialist consequences on social stratification rather than postsocialist condition), but operationalize cultural capital in a questionable manner. Rather than grasping the finesses contained in the conception of cultural capital in Bourdieu's work, they reduce it to the parents' educational capital. The work which places the cultural capital in the social stratification scheme the most systematically is Eyal, Szelenyi, and Townsley's "Making capitalism without capitalists". In their scheme of socialism, postsocialism and capitalism, each of the systems is characterized by the dominance of the specific form of capital. Whereas socialism was dominated by social capital and capitalism by economic capital, cultural capital dominates in the postsocialist societies.

This scheme however lacks plausibility because of the rather questionable way the authors operationalized the concept of cultural capital. Similarly to Kraaykamp and Niuwebeerta, Eyal et al. operationalize cultural capital as merely the degree of general education, skills and credentials (Eyal et al., 1998: 18) and scientific and technical excellence (Eyal et al.,1998: 23). Thanks to this reduction of cultural capital to educational capital, the authors come to the conclusion that cultural capital indeed has been the most important factor of success in postsocialist societies. Because of that, postsocialist elites, according to them, consisted not of socialist entrepreneurs, nor of socialist political cadres, but of a coalition of technocrats and managers, and dissident intellectuals (Eyal et al., 1998: 33). To be concise, operationalization of cultural capital only in terms of educational capital surely is a legitimate step – and besides that, a rather easy one. Yet the question remains what knowledge do we actually gain from such a reduced notion of cultural capital, emptied from all the layers and nuances shown in Bourdieu's works. Furthermore, it is rather dubious what is actually "cultural" in the reduced sense of cultural capital.

What is problematic is the assumption that one can draw an unambiguous line between education and culture – "culture" taken not only in terms of high culture, but also in the more general frame of lifestyle, identity and symbolic boundaries – which remains unproved. Quite the contrary, Lamont (1992), whose work I am discussing in the following chapters, shows convincingly on the example of the French and the American upper-middle class how the classes among themselves are divided between groups of different, if not opposite, cultural patterns, according to which they create specific, mutually different, inter-class symbolic boundaries. Although using the notions of the habitus of the managerial class, or the habitus of the intelligentsia, in the lack of ethnographic research or in-depth analyses, this usage remains vague. To conclude, in spite of the huge importance Eyal et al. attribute to cultural capital, the way they have tried to prove this importance seems more like the rule than the

exception of the usual transitological treatment of cultural capital. It namely continues to be approach rather superficially and in the reduced meaning, emptied of the very same aspects which made it so popular in the sociological and anthropological discourse in the first place.

2.2. How to define classes? Class, culture and symbolic boundaries

In spite of obvious social and political consequences of class issues on modern societies, since its emergence in the 19th century class theory is characterized by the surprising lack of consensus on its very fundaments. Theories on the criteria for defining class, which unquestionably represents the basis of class theory, have remained utterly divided. Possession of means of production, the level of incomes, cultural pedigree, and status – all these notions played an important role in different class theories, which thus remained in mutual disagreement.

In this chapter I shall continue the debate started in the last chapter: how to define classes, and especially considering the cultural aspect. I shall argue for the necessity of examining the cultural aspect of class membership, but thereby remaining in the Weberian pluralist perspective. As a departure for this argument I will use Miliband's class structure, with a special focus on the defining membership in upper-middle class. I will compare Miliband's scheme with on the one hand Marxian Olin Wright's approach, and on the other Bourdieuan culturalist theory. After that I will use Lamont's symbolic boundary approach to show the shortcomings of Bourdieu's class scheme. In so doing I shall try to avoid the culturalist approach which claims that class membership can be reduced to the cultural segment, and rather take culture as something that supervenes[2] from the class membership

[2] Here I am using terminology from the philosophy of mind, especially from the emergentist paradigm according to which „emergent entities (properties or substances) 'arise' out of more fundamental entities and yet are 'novel' or 'irreducible' with respect to them" (O'Connor and Wong, 2006). Emergentism has been criticized from several perspectives, and many of these ontological discussions correspond with sociological discussion on definition of classes which I am partly presenting in this chapter. However, here I cannot go any deeper into these issues.

than the factor that constitutes it. Therefore, I shall seek to find a middle ground between the approach which ignores cultural capital as a factor quite relevant for social stratification, as for instance transitological authors described in the last chapter, and culturalist approach which considers cultural capital as the essential criterion for defining class membership.

2.2.1. Miliband's class structure: neo-Weberian approach vs. Marxism

Outlining the class map of advanced capitalist societies, Miliband draws a pear-shaped pyramid. In this pyramid the upper-middle class occupies the place below the elites, but together with elites forms part of the dominant class. Miliband sees both elites and upper-middle class as divided in two fractions. Whereas elites are partitioned on chief executives of huge corporations and political directorate, the upper-middle class is divided in the following way. On the one side are the people who control or own medium-sized firms, while on the other hand stand professionals as lawyers, accountants, middle-rank civil servants, military personnel, people in senior posts in higher education and in other spheres of professional life – in short, "the people who occupy the upper levels of the 'credentialized' part of the population of these countries" (Miliband, 1991: 21). Both the business and professional sector of this dominant but not elite class, according to Miliband, represent the bourgeoisie of the advanced capitalist societies. Even though not in possession of such huge power as the elite, they "exercise a substantial amount of power in society, individually and collectively, and wield a great deal of influence in economic, social, political, and ideological or cultural terms. They are 'notables', 'influentials', 'opinion leaders'; and they are also at the upper levels of the income and ownership scale" (Miliband, 1991: 21).

So according to which criteria Miliband sketches this class map? He takes into consideration source of income, level of that income, and the degree of power, responsibility,

and the influence they wield at work and in society (Miliband, 1991: 24). Miliband here tries to avoid the problem of the definition of class position regarding the place in the process of production. Eric Olin Wright takes this as crucial, and accordingly creates the theory of the contradictory class locations in order to explain the place of managers in the class structure. What Wright finds problematic is the issue of combining the traditional Marxist class scheme with the emergence of the managerial class which, although without ownership over the means of production, is characterized by high incomes, and obviously do dispose of significant social power. However, Miliband manages to solve this problem by avoiding the Marxian emphasis on the place in the process of production as the essential criterion. As presented in his conception of the upper-middle class's position in the class structure, both elite and bourgeoisie can be either the owners or in control of the means of production.

Miliband however points out that "the bare enumeration of the classes which fill the 'empty spaces' of the social pyramid" (Miliband, 1991: 24), as presented so far, is far too static, and thereby makes only the preliminary exploration of the terrain. Therefore, it is necessary to make a shift from class structure to class identity. Now, one could complain that this conclusion is contradicting Miliband's intention, since he expresses agreement with Perry Anderson's critique of E. P. Thompson's culturalism. Thus Miliband states that identification of classes in 'objective' terms is indispensable for the understanding of the fundamental relations prevailing in it. However, he continues, "the 'social map' which it provides is no substitute for the analysis of these relations; but it is an essential point of departure for that analysis" (Miliband, 1991: 42), and this "departure" is precisely what I have in mind with mentioning shift to class identity – which is of course not meant in Wright's sense of class consciousness, and especially not in the sense of his class formation as "formation of organized collectivities inside of the class structure" (Wright, 1984:6; also Wright, 1984: 28). Instead, description of the social structure should according to Miliband, include power,

income, wealth, responsibility, but also 'life chances', style, quality of life. These all do not imply strong ties and political unity, but looser inter-class boundaries in the sense of the overall "texture of existence" (Miliband, 1991: 25), which in spite of its looseness might have far reaching consequences on the perpetuation of class structure.

Therewith Miliband thinks of different segments of what Bourdieu means under social and cultural capital: "networks of kinship and friendship, old school associations, intermarriage, club membership, business and political ties, common pastimes and leisure pursuits, rituals of enjoyment and formal celebrations, all of which are based on and reinforce a common view of the world, of what is right and, even more important, of what is wrong" (Miliband, 1991: 36). But in spite of mentioning aspect of culture and lifestyles, Miliband, if not completely putting it aside, probably does not emphasize the question of class identity. But if the social structure is based on more than just economic criteria, if the concentration is on solely the source of the income, the level of the income, and the degree of power; focus on these issues only fails in describing the class structure in its full extent. Some authors would therefore think that what is necessary for grasping the features responsible for the construction of class structure is perhaps more than just the set of economic and political interests, for it is questionable if the conception of class structure can ignore the issue of class identity, and if identity can really be based on such abstract criteria. One of the best known examples of this approach can be found in the cultural capital theory and the works of its creator Pierre Bourdieu.

2.2.2. Symbolic boundaries: neo-Weberian approach vs. culturalism

The originality of Bourdieu's approach consists of introducing culture as one of the most important factors of inter-class differentiation[3]. Through his researches, and especially with his main work *Distinction* (2000), Bourdieu tried to demonstrate how important non-economic factors are for the process of social stratification. Unlike economism which often neglects the entire sphere of culture by reducing all factors of social success to the possession of money and material goods, Bourdieu expands the idea of economic interests to culture and emphasizes that culture itself represents a form of capital containing specific laws of accumulation and exchange and that it plays an important role in the process of social stratification. A choice of house furniture, way of spending leisure time, preferences in music or film, table manners, selection of the favorite type of food, competence of the fine arts, the habit of museum attendance – all these things are according to Bourdieu results of the type and the amount of the cultural capital we possess, and thereby of the same time the cause and the consequence of our place in the social structure. The mere economic capital or the occupation therefore cannot tell us much, since the final position in the social structure depends on the sum and on the composition of all types of capital, among which there are possibilities of conversion[4].

[3] It should be stressed here that although the aim of this paper is to focus on the presentation of upper-middle class in different theories, Bourdieu's work is significant rather as a theoretical model of a certain type of definition of class boundaries in general, than as an analysis of the upper-middle class. Whereas some of the authors quoted in this paper got to refine the cultural capital theory in respect to the upper-middle class alone, Bourdieu himself not only did not focus on it, but conceived the structure of upper classes quite imprecisely. Unlike Miliband who managed to precisely separate one class fraction from another, it does not seem that Bourdieu used a coherent and consistent set of criteria for determining the class membership. For example, he includes into the dominant classes people employed as high school teachers, which would according to Miliband's scheme rather be included in the middle class. But the biggest problem with Bourdieu's class conception is that he does not distinguish upper-middle class as a distinct entity, but most of the time differentiates only upper or the dominant classes from both middle and petty bourgeois class, and from working class. However, despite this, it could be argued that thanks to the originality of his approach, Bourdieu's work plays an important role in any class analysis.

[4] This is arguably the key moment of Bourdieu's theory, since the whole Bourdieu's work could be regarded as the study of how and under which conditions individuals and groups practice strategies of accumulation and investition of different sorts of capital, in order to improve or at least maintain their position in the social structure (Swartz, 1997: 75).

Among these, one form of capital has an especially significant place. Having been regarded as one of the most important theoretical notions of the past few decades, cultural capital definitely earned its place in the contemporary sociological discourse. Since its emergence cultural capital theory has gained much attention. Numerous sociological investigations have tested Bourdieu's hypothesis, and brought different refinements. Yet after its popularization, cultural capital, as many of the important terms, experienced a proliferation of meanings, including sometimes even mutually contradictory ones. Cultural capital has been operationalized among other things as knowledge of high culture, educational attainment, curriculum of elite schools, symbolic mastery of practices, capacity to perform tasks in culturally acceptable ways and participation in high culture events (Lamont and Lareau, 1988: 153). This inflation has resulted, Lamont argues, in the lack of accuracy and therefore the decreased usability of the term, which is the reason why Michele Lamont together with Anette Lareau decided to clarify the picture that surrounds it and to propose a new definition in order to avoid the confusion.

Lamont and Lareau consider the concept of cultural capital to be of great importance for the sociological explanation of social inequalities. More than a faddish new term which does not bring anything essentially new, cultural capital, in spite of addressing the same issues which have fascinated classical sociologists such as Weber or Veblen, does provide "a considerably more complex and far-reaching conceptual framework to deal with the phenomenon of cultural and social selection" (Lamont and Lareau, 1988: 154), and therefore improves "our understanding of the process through which social stratification systems are maintained" (Lamont and Lareau, 1988: 154). Yet despite its usefulness Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital needs improvements and clarification, and therefore the authors seek to note a number of theoretical ambiguities and gaps, and methodological problems in the original model.

Contrary to Bourdieu who examines cultural aspect of class differences in the aspect of cultural consumption, the symbolic boundaries approach focuses more on the processual aspect, investigating the patterns in which people symbolically "exclude" and "include" the ones around them, for being worthy or less worthy. So what are symbolic boundaries? Lamont defines them as "types of lines that individuals draw when they categorize people" (Lamont, 1992, 1). The purpose of this model is to examine "different ways of believing that `we` are better than `them`" (Lamont, 1992: 2), since this "contributes to developing a more adequate and complex view of status, i.e., of the salience of various status dimensions across contexts" (Lamont, 1992: 2).

One of the main concerns Lamont and Lareau want to solve is the use of the term in contexts other than the Parisian one. In other words, they want to resolve the doubt that cultural capital in the US society plays the role Bourdieu attributed to it in France, and accordingly define it so that it can be used in the US context. Its convertibility to other sorts of capital seems to them to be "less suitable in societies where cultural consensus is weak, and where the definition of high status cultural signals, and their yields, varies across groups" (Lamont and Lareau, 1988: 157). On the contrary, the authors doubt the centrality of high culture participation as a basis for social and cultural selection (Lamont and Lareau, 1988: 162), and hence the importance of approaching the problem from the perspective of symbolic boundaries.

In order to understand the principles of social exclusion in the context where cultural capital does not play the same role it plays in Paris, in this article Lamont and Lareau come to the conclusion that it is necessary to go one step back. Instead of assuming that cultural capital is the one responsible for social exclusion (that is, that only classes which are in possession of cultural capital do have the power and legitimacy to exclude, and on the other hand, that solely the classes which have the power are the ones who reject lower classes on

the basis of culture), the symbolic boundaries approach does not assume one single framework. So as to test the hypothesis she together with Lareau proposed in the cited text, Lamont goes on to conduct the comparative research of the French and American upper-middle class, investigating the symbolic boundaries they draw toward other classes, which she eventually published in "Moneys, morals, manners" (Lamont, 1992).

Through this research Lamont came to the conclusion that, as she predicted in the text with Lareau, cultural capital indeed does not have to be of decisive importance as implied in Bourdieu's works, as its importance depends on the context. Unlike Bourdieu, who holds the cultural component to be of key importance for creating symbolic boundaries between the classes, Michèle Lamont argues that standards of hierarchalization are organized around culture as well as around moral character and financial success[5]. Whereas Bourdieu's schema, according to Lamont, assumes cultural identity of respective classes, Lamont sees it as very heterogeneous. Upper-middle class members with whom she talked include intellectuals and non-intellectuals, refined Parisian architects of the sublime Nietzschean worldview and religious business people from Indiana who admire only human kindness, French philosophers who focus exclusively on art and American car salesmen who mostly respect people who know how to make money. Therefore, for Lamont there cannot exist any strong identity as a base for defining a certain class, which means that she does the step backward going back to objective criteria of class membership.

[5] By culture Lamont refers to the boundaries drawn on the basis of education, intelligence, manners, tastes, and the knowledge of high culture (Lamont, 1992: 4). Moral boundaries are centered around qualities such as honesty, work ethic, personal integrity and consideration for others, whereas socioeconomic aspect refers to the people's social position as indicated by their wealth, power, or professional success (Lamont, 992: 4). Although this seemed to me to be a rather obvious point, different critics of the book understood the main idea of Lamont's research in various ways. Whereas Gartman (1993: 766), similarly to the attitude I brought up in this paper, considers that the main point of the book consists in disputing the prevalence of solely cultural aspect in explanations of social stratification, Varenne (1993: 601) sees it in the refuting Bourdieu's emphasis on the material aspect, and together with Kreis (1993:337) thinks that through her research Lamont aimed to underline primarily the importance of the moral aspect, largely ignored by Bourdieu. In contrast to all this, Carrier (1994: 210) thinks that Lamont wants to point out the non-economic criteria of stratification-which is very questionable since this would rather be the aim of Bourdieu's work, whereas Lamont goes back and challenges that hypothesis.

If Lamont is right about Bourdieu putting too much emphasis on the realm of culture, it would turn out that he has not conceptualized the class structure and the position of the upper-middle class in it, in the right way. Instead of assuming the heterogeneity of the upper-middle class, and thus its division on different fractions along the horizontal axis, among which some would create symbolic boundaries regarding the cultural refinement, and some would not, Bourdieu's class scheme would be entirely fragmentized down the vertical axis. Yet is this really so? Well, the answer is both yes and no. On the one hand, Bourdieu's class scheme certainly looks more complex than just a vertical chain of different lifestyles. Discussing the dominant class, he oftentimes separates the fractions rich in cultural and poor in economic capital from the ones with the opposite distribution. However, the important point in favor of Lamont's critique is that at the same time Bourdieu operationalizes this lack of cultural capital by the cultural lifestyle as well.

Whereas in Lamont's research the upper-middle class fraction which draws symbolic boundaries regarding socioeconomic success does not take culture into account whatsoever[6], Bourdieu's economic fraction of the dominant class does precisely the same thing as the intellectual fraction, only in doing so preferring classical theater over the avant-garde one, and preferring impressionism over formalistic painting[7] (Bourdieu, 2000: 176). In this respect Lamont is therefore quite right: Bourdieu does not include in his class scheme a dominant

[6] Although one might argue that appreciating moral values and socioeconomic succes are essentially cultural aspects, the concept of culture here obviously does not refer to its broad meaning in anthropological sense.

[7] Bourdieu then interprets this taste of economic bourgeoisie through the relative lack of cultural capital in relation to intellectual bourgeoisie. This is however in my opinion done in a too arbitrary fashion, since he does not really give a convincing argument why the preference for, say, formalistic painting has to imply more cultural capital than the preference for impressionism. In order to make the argument plausible, he should prove that this is really so. Yet he does not do that, but instead takes the logic of canon as something obvious, which reduces his argument to a mere tautology. He explains the notion of cultural capital, which should have explanatory function, through the very same thing which should be explained with that notion. The degree of cultural capital which is required for understanding some work of art determines the amount of cultural capital that is at the disposal of the person who admires that very work of art; but how can Bourdieu determine that degree if not by the fact of which group admires it? The only way to solve this would be to ground his sociological analysis on the aesthetical argumentation which would demonstrate that some genres, authors or currents do require a higher set of decodable strategies, which he does not provide, except on the most general level.

class which would completely leave out issues of culture, founding their class identity on socio-economic success alone. His conception of bourgeois class therefore shows to be simply too monolithic. In spite of all the differences he attributes to them, he does not find it disputable that the whole bourgeois class as disposed to perform music or to fill its world with art objects (Bourdieu, 2000: 75). Thus, when Bourdieu postulates antagonism between different classes, as for example between the petty bourgeois class and bourgeoisie, it is a question whether he simply mistakenly substituted antagonism between different classes for an antagonism between different class fractions.

2.2.3. Is the concept of symbolic boundaries useful? Critique of Lamontian model

Still, it is not sure if in the end Lamont manages to fully accomplish the aims which she suggested in her text with Lareau. Although in her book she demonstrates quite convincingly the necessity of taking into account more conceptual frameworks in explaining social exclusion vis-à-vis class divisions, it is questionable if she manages to provide an important part of the argumentation which would show how these plural frameworks really affect the process of social exclusion. Lamont and Lareau criticize studies in social stratification for their vagueness because they tend to leave out the concrete descriptions of the processes through which workers have to show their cultural skills in employment settings and their influence on the workers' occupational prospects (Lamont and Lareau, 1988: 163). Despite that, Lamont does not manage to provide what she proposes, as she leaves as an unproved assumption that symbolic boundaries really do make a difference. Whereas social network theorists succeeded in rather stringently showing how social capital influences the socio-economic success of its possessors (Granovetter, 1973), the symbolic boundaries theory does

not demonstrate that these concretely influence someone's success and social position, which in my opinion represents its most important task.

Closely related to this is Varenne's objection: although Lamont seeks, he argues, to take into account the broader agenda of understanding social reproduction through cultural similarities between those who hire and promote managers and professionals and those who present themselves to be hired, "she does not, however, directly question whether managers actually behave this way" (Varenne, 1993: 601). Carrier follows this logic by claiming that Lamont "has no access to the way that these people incorporate others into their social worlds or exclude them, the way that these people encourage and promote subordinates or discourage them" (Carrier, 1994: 211). He continues: "We can see what they mean most clearly when we see them in practice, which means outside of the realm of Lamont's interviews" (Carrier, 1994: 211) – but in case one takes into account mere words, we do not know, Carrier argues, the effect of these criteria on social practice. Lamont assumes that these powerful people will act in accord with the values they express in their interviews, but Carrier, however, is not comfortable with that assumption. Finally, the same point is underlined by O'Brien who poses the question "are these symbolic maps being used constantly in routine assessments of others and the environment, or do they only emerge in situations of ambiguity and interviews with sociologists?" (O'Brien, 1994: 913).

All these objections thus suggest the need for some kind of empirical, especially ethnographic study which would prove that the symbolic boundaries and maps, besides existing in the discourses, do make a difference in the real social situations, and this no doubt presents a hard but necessary task. However, authors of these critiques approach this issue rather benevolently regarding it more as another problem to be solved than something essentially problematic. They even suggest their own solutions, such as O'Brien's proposition to join cultural theories with the study of social cognition and group processes, since

"together, these research traditions could contribute much to an understanding of how it is that symbolic boundaries operate in the production and reproduction of real differences in distribution of resources" (O'Brien, 1994: 913). Carrier also proposes that "the presentation of the rhetoric and symbols Lamont elicited were qualified and complemented by a study of the practicalities that would give content to those symbols and demonstrate their importance for social life" (Carrier, 1994 211), suggesting that Lamont's research should be completed by ethnographic investigation.

Some stronger empirical backing indeed would be welcomed (even though she offers some ethnographic data) to establish the consistency between what the interviewees say and what they do. Yet I see the investigation she conducted as rather significant in examining the role of cultural capital and other criteria of symbolic boundaries in the implementation and perpetuation of class inequalities, with regard to the shortcomings of the more often used quantitative methods. I do not want to mitigate the significance of different quantitative researches of cultural capital, but regarding the question of the actual impact of cultural capital on social stratification, these researches are in general even less convincing.

For example, DiMaggio's research (1982) tried to show the impact of cultural capital on high school grades by solely investigating the percentage of upper class children among the successful high school students. As another example, Katz-Gerro (2002) establishes the influence of cultural capital on social stratification patterns on the basis of the data according to which upper classes state to read more books and go to the theater more often than the lower classes. Yet she does not examine which books they read, and which theater shows they visit. And even if it was the case that they consume highbrow hardly decodable culture, this data by itself would not tell us if it was precisely that which they use to construct their social identity. It is at this point where, in spite of not fully grasping the "practicalities" and the "real

social situations", the phenomenological approach of symbolic boundaries has much to offer, and where its advantages finally come to the fore.

2.2.4. Conclusion: Does culture after all matter? Class structure and the supervenition of culture

The authors which I have presented vary around two distinct poles: economy on the one hand, and culture on the other. Whereas Eric Olin Wright tries to develop the Marxist scheme, founding the criteria of the class membership if not on the place in the process of the production, than at least on the approach to the resources (since, according to him, classes exist beyond the class identity and class organizations), the Bourdieuian cultural capital theory on the other hand takes as crucial the cultural aspect. In between them, Miliband occupies a less Marxian view, taking into consideration income and education as well as the source of the income (that is, the place in the process of the production), but pleads for the examination of the other class aspects of social existence. Although he himself does not achieve this task, maintaining the focus on the issue of political interests, Lamont's ethnographic work illuminates many features of the class structure which would in the mere economist approach remain obscure, as she convincingly demonstrates the heterogeneity of the upper-middle class with regard to its identity.

Debating against E.P. Thompson's culturalist approach Tamas claims that "class, in contradiction to 'caste', is not a framework for a whole life or a *Lebenswelt"*, for it is not defined by culture. It is not group with mutual interests and moral and cultural values but structural feature of society (Tamas, 2007: 27). This certainly is partly true. As Lamont tried to show, the upper-middle class is not heterogeneous but divided among itself. In regard to this, opposite to cultural capital theory, culture cannot play a key role as the criterion for defining class membership. On the contrary, the most useful way to define class membership

for the purpose shown in this paper is by means of a set of different criteria, including the level of incomes, the source of incomes, and the education level.

To say this does not mean that cultural and moral values do not emerge as the result of these structural conditions. Yet even if they do supervene from the structural conditions, this does not have to contradict Lamont's claim that cultural differences are insufficient criterion for producing inequalities. The aim of this chapter was thus not to say that mutual class values do imply the existence of class interests, class formation, or in one word class *fuer sich*. What Lamont on the contrary, as I understood it, wants to say is that in spite of the lack of the class formation, different fractions of upper-middle class do have mutual values meant as the criteria through they inadvertently do create symbolic boundaries toward other, especially lower classes. These however, despite its lack of strict intentions, might represent the real boundaries for the outsiders, therefore perpetuating the inequalities. They perhaps are not the essential feature of class structure, perhaps they are not even the criteria for defining the class membership. But in spite of this, they do represent an important obstacle for the alleged equality of "life chances", and thus the significant realm of sociological research.

3. Empirical results

The aim of my research was to get an insight into the patterns of stratification in the postsocialist context of Croatia, through the perspective of the symbolic boundaries. As presented in the theoretical framework, the symbolic boundaries approach, as developed by Lamont (1992), assumes several different frameworks for constructing symbolic boundaries toward other classes. Lamont claims that in contexts different from the Parisian one, explored by Bourdieu, culture represents only one of the possible frameworks, and this was especially expressed dependent on the respective sector where the interviewees belonged. In my research I thus sought to examine the situation in the postsocialist context, with the focus on the Croatian upper-middle class.

In order to investigate this, I conducted interviews with 12 members of Croatian upper-middle class. Among them there were six women and six men, and their age varied from the mid-thirties to mid-sixties. Several interviewees had been obtained through my personal acquaintances, and the rest I found using the professional listings on the specialized internet websites. The criteria used to select the respondents pertained to occupation, sector of employment, age and level of education. Regarding their financial standing I did not have the approach to their exact incomes, so I leaned on the average income of respective professions.

In the beginning of the interview they were told that the interview was going to be anonymous and used strictly to scientific purposes, and that their real names were not going to be mentioned. The interviews were conducted in the interviewees' offices, cafes and their homes. They mostly lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. The structure of the interviews was semi-directed. Interviewees were asked a wide range of questions, among others to explain the criteria of their choice of friends, about values which they want to convey to their children, and about the kind of people that make them feel inferior or superior. The purpose

was to grasp the symbolic boundaries, the types of lines that individuals draw when they categorize people by placing them above and below themselves.

In her research, Lamont compared two segments of the upper-middle class, and each of these consisted of two sub-groups. The first division – between public and private sector professionals – was thus doubled by another division. So in the end, Lamont compared the patterns of creating symbolic boundaries between four sectors of upper middle class: 1. cultural and social specialists, public and non-profit sector; 2. cultural and social specialists, private sector; profit related occupations, public and non-profit sector; 3. profit related occupations, private sector (salaried); and 4. profit-related occupations, private sector (self-employed). Regarding the criteria for drawing symbolic boundaries, the importance of culture gradually decreased, as the importance of socioeconomic standing increased from 1. to 4. sector. However, since this kind of sample would include a too broad field, I did not cover all the segments Lamont did. Instead, I did my research only on the most polarized sectors. This means that I did interviews with the representatives of the first sector, which was represented by museum professionals, artists and other public sector cultural specialists; and the fourth one, which included lawyers, doctors, architects and accountants.

3.1.Meaning of culture and non-bourgeois lifestyle

So how were these symbolic boundaries distributed regarding the respective sector? As expected, cultural sector employees showed a tendency of drawing symbolic boundaries according to the cultural aspect. For Ana Kovacic[8], one of the most prominent Croatian experts on contemporary art, culture is not just a matter of professional interests. On the contrary, it is closely related to everything she does and everyone she socializes with. Ana

[8] Given that I promised to respondents to keep their anonymity, all the names I use in the analysis are made up.

finds it important to share close interests with her friends, including not only the field of professional interests, but also the way of life. Her friends thus share the inclination to "question the meaning of everything, mostly through art", and the "non-bourgeois way of living". Although not successful in material terms "and all these things which are so *in* nowadays", in the end she considers them successful regarding their quality of living. That is the reason she hangs out with them "rather than with the so-called successful people". She is not married nor does she have any children, and she dedicates most of her free time to her work or to consuming different forms of culture. Rather than wasting time on earning money, she and her friends spend time visiting cultural events, exhibitions, theater shows and films. Here she is not picky: she loves all genres, from hermetical art films to Harry Potter, from classical music to rock 'n' roll and experimental music.

I found similar situation when talking with Antonia Silic, museum curator in her early 40s. I spoke with her in her messy office, full of books and notes, witnessing her dedication to her work. An ambitious scientist, Antonia is presently preparing her PhD thesis. As she grew up in Zagreb as a daughter of an economist and a fashion designer, she has been directed to the world of arts since she was a small child, including attending music classes and painting with her mother. This love of arts never ceased, and today Antonia is a passionate consumer of cultural events. She regularly visits theaters, exhibitions, and concerts. Like Ana, Antonia also prefers different genres, classical music as well as 80s rock 'n' roll and folk music, and like Ana, she also prefers socializing with people from the world of arts and culture with which she shares similar interests.

Still, she does have many friends and acquaintances that do not like this. Those are the people whom she met in high school or as her neighbors, but those encounters are somewhat different. Instead of discussing abstract topics, their conversations are "reduced to their private problems", as "women talk about their children and men about football". Although she

is “fed up” with this kind of conversations, she “endures them stoically” and tries to meet these people only occasionally. On the contrary, she seeks to mingle with people who are interesting and creative, playful and passionate toward something – people who “have the vibe”. Whether they are at the same time successful according to the general expectations is less important, as long as they feel intellectually fulfilled.

With Kristijan Jurak, a well known Croatian conceptual artist, I spoke in his beautifully decorated, loft-style apartment in Zagreb downtown, with books from philosophy, theory of literature an art history scattered all around the place. He too socializes mostly with artists, museum professionals and writers, with whom he shares similar interests in “spiritual, rather than material values”, since “as the years go by, one loses a patience to talk about things which don’t interest him”. That does not mean they have to discuss art all the time, as long as they “talk from the perspective of the artist – even when it comes to politics”. When he hangs out with people from other milieus, then these people are quite untypical of their professions. For instance he has a friend who is a dentist but “eats sushi, and climbs Sljeme[9] with his mountain bike”. Although he thinks that among majority what Kristijan and his friends do looks like “ill stared business”, they are satisfied with it, as long as they have positive feed-back in the narrower circle of the people involved, and thus they consider themselves to be successful. When it comes to the business sector, he has a number of acquaintances there, but that is reduced to “functional communication” (“You know, when you’re into this kind of business, you have to mingle with that sort of people to earn some money”). In his personal circle of friends, he appreciates charming, intellectually stimulating people, who can be amiable in communication and can nicely express their thoughts, and according to him, one can much more often meet this kind of people in the circles he moves in.

[9] Sljeme is a mountain besides Zagreb and a favorite excursion site of Zagreb inhabitants.

3.2.Cultural refinement and socioeconomic success

Yet I found the similar characteristics when talking with Nadja Rakic, an ambitious accountant in her mid-thirties, single and without children. Nadja graduated as an economist in Zagreb, and did an MBA at a respected British university. She considers herself to be a "theater person", although she likes opera and ballet as well: when she was working in New York for 3 months, she recounts, she visited Broadway shows so often that one of her business associates told her "either you're very rich, or you love theater very, very much".

> "In my profession people don't really have this kind of interests, and a good deal of my associates who have lived in New York for more than 10 years have visited a theater show barely once – and that was when someone dragged them over there".

Besides performing arts, she regularly goes to the cinema and watches all genres except action movies and Science Fiction – although she also went to see the Lord of the rings trilogy "since it has become a part of general culture now". Similarly to Antonia, Nadja appreciates eloquence and creativity. Her friends "have to know how to express themselves", and with them she likes to attend cultural events, and later discuss them. And familiarity with literature, film, theater, and high culture in general are the distinctive features Nadja looks for not only in her private relationships. On the contrary, she finds it relevant even when hiring new people, as she considers this "broadness" to be a characteristic which enables her employees to be of utmost use when they have to fit in with people of different profiles at work.

Like Antonia, she classifies her friends in two groups: ones she met a long time ago, in her primary school and during her high school days, and on the other hand the ones she met when she was already grown up. As for the first group, they maintained the friendship even if their interests diverged. However, people who possess the qualities Nadja admires mostly

belong to the second group – to the friendships made during and after college. The pattern of having a group of friends with whom person despite not having similar interests, does remain close, naturally is not something specific to Croatia. Yet it could turn out that some distinctive features of the Zagreb context do make this pattern more probable. In the context of relatively low internal migrations, where, unlike US sites which Lamont examined, many inhabitants spend their life in the town where they grew up, it could be more likely to stay connected with people from the neighborhood or from primary school. Furthermore, unlike New York and Paris, Zagreb is characterized by a low degree of residential segregation. This makes childhood friendships more probable to be independent of class or profession, unlike friendships made during college years or after becoming employed.

When explaining what kind of people she is not fond of, Nadja emphasizes that she cannot stand "seljačine", which approximately could be translated as "hillbilly" or "redneck", but unlike these terms, is not geographically determined. Although it is, in literally sense, augmentative of the word "peasant", this is not an adequate English translation, since it refers also to people who live in urban areas – or primarily to them. But the main layer of meaning relates to people who though living in urban areas have not accepted urban values – whatever these are. In the ever present dynamics of Zagreb "urban" population's provincial shame of the "heritage of Balkans", and wish to belong to "Mitteleuropa", the term "seljačina" has strong connotations. It is mostly applied by those who identify themselves as "civilized" and "cultural", preferring Viennese waltz over Balkan rural traditions, and Sacher cake over "baklava". "Seljačine" are thus, independently of financial standing or ethnic membership, people who listen to folk music, who do not have fine table manners, who talk loud in the streets, and who wear white socks on black shoes. Furthermore, beyond the mere cultural distinction, it refers to moral characteristics as well. In the fine "Purger" (the term which refers to the citizen of Zagreb who is born and bred here, and thus "vaccinated" against bad

rural characteristics) discourse, “seljačine” are precisely the ones who are corrupting our state administration, who are passing through the red light on the traffic light, and who in the end spit on the streets.

3.3.The importance of money

One thing distinguishes Nadja from her colleagues from the cultural sector. Whereas Ana and Antonia despise materialism, Nadja cares very much for her financial well-being. Although she enjoys consuming culture, she sees money as a necessary precondition for that. She sees the reason why, she thinks, younger people do not go to the theater as often as the older generations, and why in the end culture becomes more important when one gets older, primarily in the fact they are not yet well-off. As for herself, in her ideal world she would quit her job as an accountant and become a writer. Her role-model is a friend of hers from New York, who “one day flipped out, quit her job, wrote a book and now she’s doing it for a living”. But to do that, she has to earn some more money, since, she says, “it is very, very not cool to be a penniless writer”. Trips to Egypt and New York, weekly massage, and life on high heels are simply a must for her.

Antonia and Ana find this kind of attitude to be strange to them. Antonia is not hiding her aversion to materialist type of people. She despises the ones who “from the first moment you meet them start talking about how much money they have and what they have bought”. She says:

> “I know some people who reduce themselves to what they have and what they financially achieved”. Their major concern is money, how to earn it and how to spend it. But one sees that that doesn’t make them happy, nor does it fulfil them. These

people terribly annoy me. Each time they bore me to death with their stories and then they get so depressed because they can't afford to buy this or that".

Unlike Nadja, who finds financial well-standing to be in a way a precondition for her enjoyment in arts and culture, Antonia see the two to be almost contradictory. Concern for earning money is precisely what inhibits people in dedicating themselves to sublime spheres of culture.

I found the same anti-materialist attitude when talking to Hrvoje Novak. Hrvoje is one of Croatia's best known rock critics and at the same time museum curator. His parents, despite being economists, had a major influence on his decision to study history of art and comparative literature. Knowledge, culture and multiculturalism were of great importance in the milieu where he grew up. As a young child, he recalls, together they traveled across Europe, visiting the most famous cultural notabilities. If there is one kind of people he does not want to be acquainted with, that are the people who do something just to succeed, who wish success at any price, materialists who do not have a passion for anything except money. His friends are not like that. He met them either through rock (sub)culture, through journalism or in the artistic circles. In the addition to the basic human values, they all are, he says, very talented at what they do ("much more talented than me") – although that does not imply success in the general social hierarchy, which he does not take as something relevant. People who are "moral and upright", in a way that they do not "elbow" to succeed, but who at the same time are talented and dedicated to their work – those are, he quotes the song of one of the most significant Croatian rock bands of the 80s, "the people of my system".

Aversion to materialism could perhaps also be regarded in terms of drawing symbolic boundaries toward the upper classes. Several interviewees from the cultural sector showed a strong identification with the middle class, in contrast to the upper class "glamour" and new

elites. Marija Jurisic, the museum director, is a woman in her mid-fifties. Marija was born in the Czech Republic, since her parents were taken there after World War II, for "reeducation" for being intellectuals. Marija proudly underlines that "they were not some nouveaux riches" who would care only for money, but on the contrary, they were always "open to culture". This is also the way Marija and her husband, a university professor, tried to raise their daughter, who today lives in France and works as a director of art films.

3.4.Transcending inter-class symbolic boundaries: "I don't really pick my friends"

In contrast to Ana, Antonia and Nadja, Goran Jelcic does not take culture into account when evaluating people. Goran, a doctor in his early sixties, is a shy and simple man. Although originating from an intellectual family (his father being a lawyer and his mother having finished gymnasium – which are education levels quite rarely reached in the prewar period in this region), he hardly mentioned consumption of any cultural form as a field of interests or at least a hobby. Goran spends most of his free time simply walking. For the last nearly two decades each day he has hiked 6 to 15 kilometers. This does not really make him a very sociable person, as most of the time he is on his own, and likes to be that way. But when he does socialize, he hangs out with people of various profiles. "I don't really pick my company", he says.

Goran hangs out with workers and craftsmen even more than with his colleagues. The most important thing for him when choosing his friends is that they can discuss "normal, ordinary things". As he explains, "I talk equally with an upholsterer as well as with…I don't know…a lawyer". He considers his fellow doctors to be oftentimes elitists and snobs, whereas the characteristics he appreciates the most are sincerity and honesty. Whereas many of Goran's colleagues became rather well off, he never pursued financial success. He does not

find it awkward to treat for free, as his daughter claims, “half of the Roma population from the neighborhood, who don’t have medical insurance”. He lives in a small flat with his wife, a high school teacher, he does not own a car (and he does not need one since he never learned how to drive: “Ever since I was a kid I hated cars”), and all in all lives rather simply, probably well below his financial possibilities. Although a successful professional, he has been abroad only once (“Why would I travel abroad? I know there are interesting things there, but everything that’s interesting I can as well see in books, right?”), to visit his daughter who is pursuing her postgraduate degree in Germany. Despite her being a successful student, he never sought to inspire ambition into her, as “professional success is not essential”. Instead of doing a PhD at one of the most eminent German universities, “it would be better for her if she lived more modestly and started a family here in Zagreb – she’s almost 30, you know…” All in all, Goran is a strong egalitarian. Class or educational background do not play a significant role for him when evaluating people, and the only sort of people he cannot stand are pretentious “bigheads” who despise those positioned lower, whereas they themselves are “so smart”.

Yet Goran considers himself to be very untypical of his profession. Being humble and modest, it is questionable whether he is representative of his profession. Marko Bicanic, his colleague, confirms this. Marko has been working in Switzerland for more than 15 years now, and spending most of his time there, while he returns to Croatia only occasionally. This hardly makes him a member of Croatian upper-middle class. Yet his gaze from abroad can be useful. So like Goran, Marko also shares his opinion of their Croatian colleagues as rather materialistic. Unlike them, Marko emphasizes that money always was the last on the list of motives for choosing this profession. When he was working in Zagreb, he was, as he says, the only doctor who did not own an apartment and a car (“and nor have I wrecked my head with that”). As with Goran, Marko too is a strong egalitarian. When living in Zagreb he mostly

socialized with educated people, his colleagues, lawyers, philosophers and people from the upper-middle class in general, whereas nowadays he does not consider education or social status to matter one bit when creating his social ties. He hangs out with people of different professions and of various levels of education.

Marko declares himself to be a "simple sort of man". He likes to watch old "cowboy movies", to read Tom Clancy's novels "as relaxation", and to walk his dog, which gives him the opportunity to meet new people. And what kind of characteristics does he consider to be important when assessing people? Marko above all appreciates "some basic human fairness", and people who love nature. "With people who have that, you can always talk about something, no matter what they do. You can talk about little things, like when will the road be repaired or about the trees planted in our town. " When he was younger, he did not think in this way: "when you're young it's important to climb up." Then he participated in the student movement of 1968 and "thought about how to change the world." But today he is much more tolerant, and it is not important any more to socialize with people of the same interests, the only problem being that he does not have partners for playing preferans, a complicated card game similar to bridge, specific for educated upper classes in Central and Eastern Europe. Today he appreciates basic human values and hard work much more than cultural refinement and intellectual virtues, this having much to do with his parental education. It needs to be added that Marko is of lower class origin, his father being a carpenter and his mother a maid who was raised in "the poorest family in her village". Yet despite lacking a formal education she managed to succeed thanks to her inborn intelligence, working in the Red Cross and finally earning a medal for her dedicated work with the impoverished and the people in need. Therefore, his parents taught Marko the importance of hard work, which is independent of formal education.

3.5.Inclusivity of morals

Neither Goran nor Marko regard culture or socioeconomic success to be significant criteria for evaluating people around them. On the contrary, the characteristics whose importance they emphasize concern the third criterion Lamont highlights as significant for creating symbolic boundaries toward lower classes – the moral criterion, which she operationalizes as work ethics, competency, flexibility and long-term planning. Yet this hardly puts them in her theoretical frame. The crucial difference between Lamont's interviewees who draw symbolic boundaries according to moral virtues and on the other hand Marko and Goran is that the latter do not regard moral characteristics as exclusive, but inclusive regarding class differences. Whereas Lamont's interviewees supposedly use moral grounds to distinguish themselves from the people below them, Goran and Marko on the contrary employ them exactly to express their egalitarianism toward lower classes. Hard work, work ethics as well as the basic moral qualities as honesty and sincerity appear to my interviewees as properties attainable to everyone, and equally distributed among different classes, being independent of education and social standing. It is therefore very questionable whether morals can stand on the same level as culture and socioeconomic success as the criterion for symbolically distinguishing oneself from the lower classes. On the contrary, it is very likely that moral aspect is much broader than the other two aspects. Morals definitely appear important for building the identity of my interviewees, yet at the same time it transcends class boundaries.

This kind of egalitarian approach is widely present among many of my interviewees. The mere mentioning of the possible superiority of the educated, culturally refined and financially successful people made them angry, as they vehemently argued against the importance of these issues as the criteria for creating their social ties. On the contrary they often stated the ultimate importance of moral qualities, fully independent of the level of education and social status. Vlasta Ivanis, museum director, considers herself to be very

untypical of her profession since she also hangs out with "little people" – "and not just ones with high social status". People from her downtown neighborhood, which she meets when walking her dog, oftentimes "don't know anything about arts and culture". She however considers being quite important to introduce them to culture, and this she finds to be one of her main tasks as a museum director. She especially appreciates people who "through their work and their competences go further and pull the others ahead". Yet that does not mean that she is underrating the ones who are not capable of doing that:

> "how would it look if we were all the same? Competences vary. It's great when someone is a brilliant skater or when someone knows how to sing nicely. But then again, someone else might be a terrific cook, right? The only thing that matters is hard work, and when one makes an effort in something, that is perfectly fine whatever he did for a living".

The appreciation of art and culture, and at the same time egalitarianism, are the characteristics Vlasta shares with Ivan Hofman, one of the most famous Croatian architects, awarded in various international contests. Ivan, 49, dresses casually and tries to look and sound much younger than he really is, as he talks in heavy Zagreb urban slang. He does not consider interests in culture to be very important. He rarely visits exhibitions and cultural events, and mostly spends his time with his family. When he hangs out with his friends, he loves just to "talk about petty things, you know, just to bullshit".

He does not like pretentious types "with their deep scientific and status conversations". To him the most important thing in people is that "you can talk to them". Their education is not relevant, as he does not divide people in "high or low society". His father, a provincial doctor, taught him since early on that all people are equally good regardless of their education or class origin. This "positive populism", as he puts it, he

considers to be one of the most important things his parents instilled into him. Even today he does not think that it is relevant "who is wearing what clothes, or who is driving what type of car".

> "I don't find it important if someone wears Boss's suit, which nowadays seems to be terribly important…Fuckin' dressed-up phoneys have really multiplied lately! I personally don't care with whom I'm hanging out. If some guy is working on my house, I'll have a beer with him. Fuck, it's all the same to me if he's a handyman or a fuckin' academic".

3.6.Are they really that egalitarian? Alleged egalitarianism and fisherman friends

However, having said this, Ivan's long-term partner with whom he has worked for almost 30 years now, interrupts him with a sarcastic remark "we're polishing a bit there, mate, ay?", implying that Ivan is not really being sincere. This is especially interesting having in mind that he mentioned hanging out mostly with educated people from architectural milieu. Furthermore, despite the fact that he "can have a beer with anyone" he does prefer to mingle with people with whom he can talk about pop-music and his favorite glam-rock bands from the 70s, and the individuals he appreciates and admires the most are talented people who "succeed in expressing themselves and their generation through some medium".

As with Ivan, Ana's father too was a doctor, and in their household too people from various class backgrounds were welcome. She also claims to equally appreciate top scientists and garbage men, since "each of us can be the best in one area and the worst in some other area". She continues: "I'm interested only in what each of us do from himself – and thereby I have in mind basic human qualities". Therefore, like Ivan, she considers it "disgusting" to talk

about people in terms of superiority and inferiority. But both Ivan and Ana show inconsistency, since they at the same time tend to also express their appreciation of the talented, intellectual and educated people, and their wish to socialize primarily with that kind of people.

Similar inconsistency I found when talking with Marija Jurisic, the director of the museum. As she says, running a museum taught her that it is of utmost importance that everyone does his or her job well, from the lowest to the highest level. “No matter what people do, I respect everyone who does his or her job correctly, even if that someone is a cleaning lady”. Yet when it comes to real life, both Ana and Marija do not make friends with these cleaning ladies. On the contrary, Ana as shown above, prefers people who “question the meaning of everything” and “live a non-bourgeois life”, whereas Marija deals mostly with creative people, actors, artists and writers. Even when it comes to lawyers and doctors, although she is friends with some of them, she finds a bit exhausting being in their company since they discuss only success and lead “polished conversations”, in contrast with her artistic friends who talk broadmindedly. When it comes to lower classes, Marija says, “one could even hang out with them, when they would accept us – but they don’t. You know, there’s always a certain barrier present”. With Vlasta, the museum director, there is no mention of this barrier, but she still does mostly hang out with educated people of similar social status as hers. Although she, as Igor, does not claim that these, thanks to their refinement or education, are any better than the “little people” she likes so much on the declarative level, she admits to mostly hanging out with them.

The alleged egalitarianism is thus oftentimes undermined by the actual number of the interviewees’ lower-class friends. In case of these inter-class ties, an interesting pattern emerged, as several interviewees created their social circles depending on the milieu. As it is quite common in Croatia for the large part of the population to own a week-end house on the

seaside, Visnja Peruzovic, a curator, tried to assure me of her egalitarianism by the fact that she made friends with fishermen, peasants and other lower-class members in the little seaside place where she spends her vacation each year. This tendency however did not apply to their Zagreb milieu where, she admits, her social circle consisted mostly of their colleagues and class comrades. The same is true for Mario Pavlic, a successful lawyer, who lives in a beautiful villa located in the Zagreb hills. Whereas in Zagreb he says to socialize almost exclusively with educated, successful people from different milieus, such as actors, lawyers, politicians, people who originate from a lower class background he meets mostly when on vacation in his week-end house on one of Croatian islands. He explains that there does not have to be a difference between the lower and upper class sector, as long as they understand each other. But in spite of that, when in Zagreb, for some reason, that does not count. From this perspective, it remains unclear if the inter-class social ties they have developed in their summer resorts actually demonstrate their egalitarian spirit, or these "fishermen friends" merely serve as the exotic supplement to the feeling of the two-week escape from the civilization and daily worries.

3.7.Analysis of the data

So far I have discussed different patterns of creating symbolic boundaries found in my research. These findings have been somewhat regarded concerning the respective sector where interviewees belong, but the emphasis was put more on the thematic aspect. Now I am focusing precisely on comparison of two sectors. Whereas the interpretation of the results in previous sections was done through the form of narrative interpretation, in this chapter the results will be analyzed more systematically.

In table 1 (see appendix) I listed all interviewees, dividing them on sectors. Similarly to Lamont, I located each of the interviewees on three 5-point scales, pertaining to moral, cultural and socioeconomic boundaries, respectively (Lamont, 1992: 222), while the ranking was determined according to criteria described in the previous subchapters. I conducted the coding in the following way: respondents who showed very frequent drawing of boundaries on a certain criterion received 5 points, whereas if they only occasionally drew symbolic boundaries according to that criterion got 4 point. For instance, Ana Kovacic, the museum curator, kept emphasizing how important is for her that people with whom she socializes question the meaning through artistic or intellectual expression, because of what her cultural boundary maintenance was attributed 5 points. On the other hand, Ivan Hofman, the architect who likes to have friends with whom he can discuss things related to pop-culture, said that mutual interests indeed play a role in creating social ties, but are not of crucial importance, as he tried to assure me that he can hang out with anyone, independent of his or hers social status. Therefore, he was given 4 points regarding the importance of culture for creating his symbolic boundaries. If respondents showed indifference to some issue they were given 3 points. For example, Antonija Silic barely mentioned moral issues, and thus did not show that she finds moral characteristics to be crucial, either in positive or negative sense. The interviewees who expressed occasional drawing of antiboundaries received 2 points, as for instance Visnja Peruzovic with socioeconomic success. She expressed a discontent with the "growing competition" which makes young people to go just after the money, and which makes them too ambitious. Yet her antimaterialism was not as strong as with Antonija Silic who thus got 1 point.

Chart 1. Results for both sectors

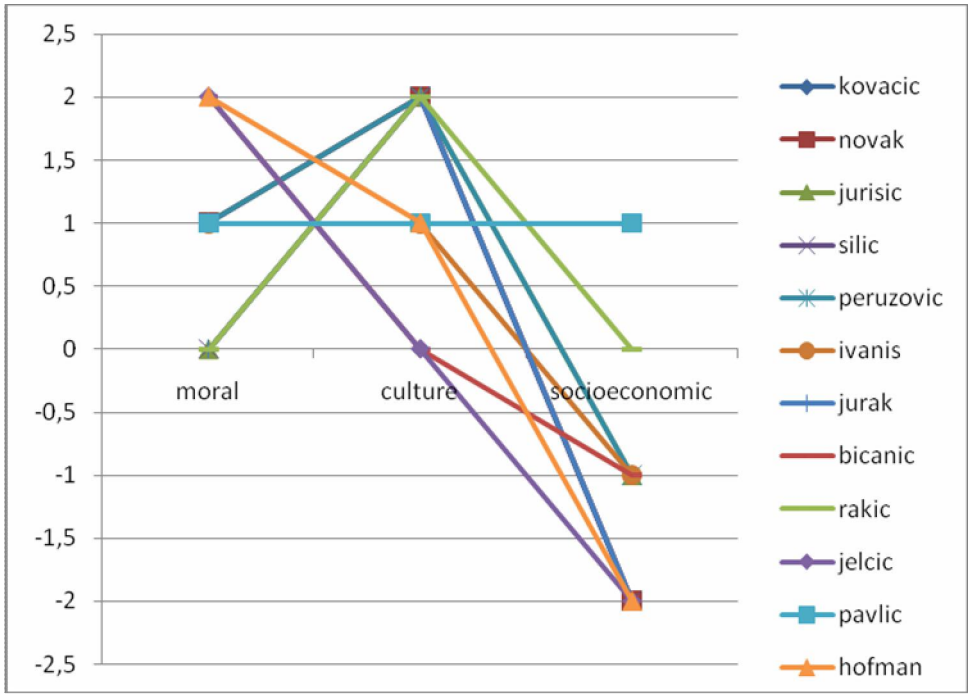


Chart 1 presents responses of the interviewees from both sectors (to make the picture clearer I translated the results of my survay from the scale of 1 to 5 into a scale of -2 to 2, so that indifference means 0 points, positive attitudes 2 and 1 point, and negative attitudes -1 and -2 points). As can be seen from the chart, when regarded in total, among upper-middle class members it is difficult to see any clear pattern of creating symbolic boundaries. Similarly to Lamont's conclusions for the USA and France, upper-middle class in Croatia seems to be quite heterogeneus regarding their criteria of drawing symbolic boundaries. The only clearly visable trends are the lack of negative ranking of moral criteria, and negative evaluation of socioeconomic criterion. But when regarded respectively for each sector, the picture becomes somewhat clearer.

Chart2. Results for cultural sector

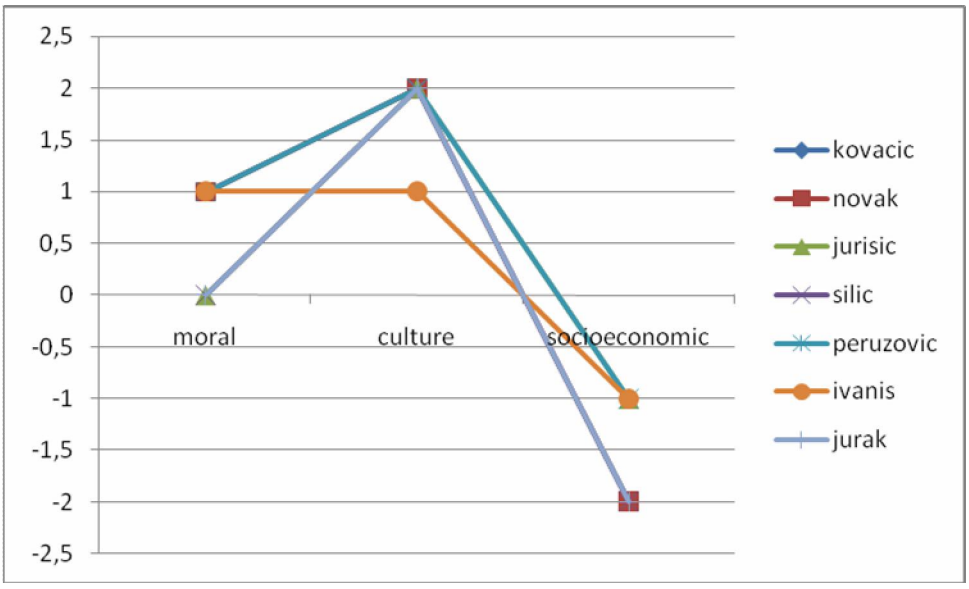
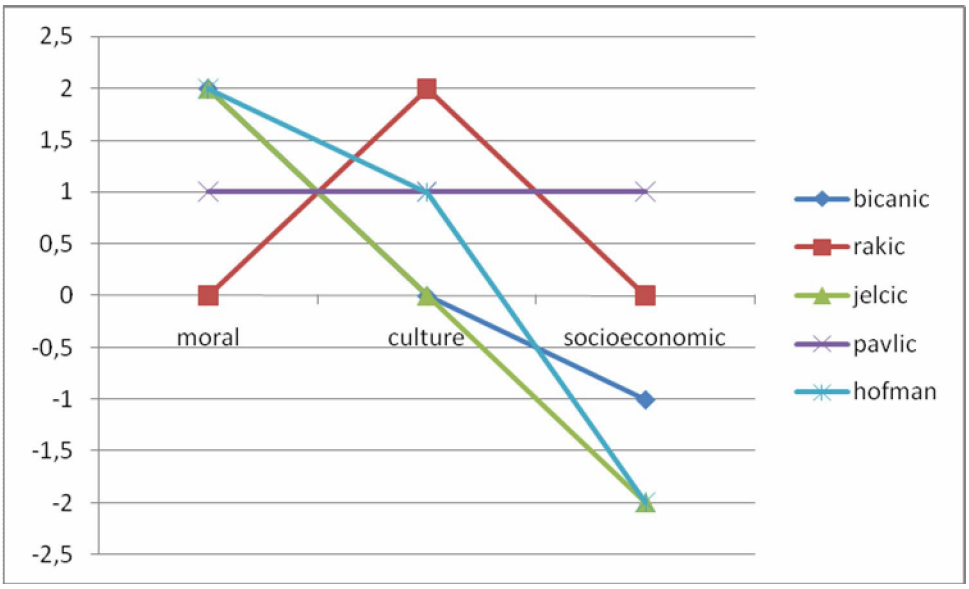


Chart 3. Results for professional sector



When taken by itself, results for cultural sector show clear tendency of emphasizing the cultural criteria. As in the results for both sectors they show inclination to moral criterion, but this is however significantly dominated by the importance of culture. Unlike cultural sector, professional sector showed less clear tendencies concerning their choice of criteria they use for creating symbolic boundaries toward other classes. As with the total picture of my

interviewees' responses, antimaterialism is quite visible, but regarding the other two aspects, results vary in a significant extent.

As in Lamont's research, two sectors indeed have shown to be quite different regarding the ways they draw symbolic boundaries toward other classes. Yet unlike the US and the French upper-middle class examined in Lamont's research, what showed to be surprising in my results was the lack of interviewees' emphasis of socioeconomic aspect. Whereas Lamont's respondents, especially the ones from private sector, rather consistently underlined the importance of being successful, wealthy and powerful, hardly any of my interviewees showed the similar pattern. Although I expected to find this pattern among professionals I talked with, almost all of them said to take one or both of the other aspects as important when choosing their friends, or raising their children. One reason for that could simply be found in the choice of my interviewees, since mostly all of my interlocutors from profit-related professions declared themselves as untypical for their profession. While they often reviewed their colleagues to be materialists, snobs, culturally and morally "deprived" people who run only after money, when it came to them they stated their openness, either in social sense, given their lack of prejudices toward other classes, or in cultural, referring to their interests in culture.

Not wanting to mitigate the potential importance of this, I would also like to add one more possible explanation. Having taken into account, on the one hand, strong egalitarianism (which I encountered not only among professionals but also in cultural sector), articulated in the emphasizing of the moral aspect, and on the other hand, antimaterialism and the significant inclination to despise people who tend to evaluate people on the basis of their financial standing, it becomes interesting to see what could be the reasons of this. Furthermore, the question arises if these two things are related, in what way are they related, and of course, how is this linked with the distinctive features of the postsocialist context of

Croatia which has been examined. Although this could be too far-fetched association, one cannot not to think on the two ideologies which have been dominant in the contemporary Croatian history, and which also share the elements mentioned above. Both socialism and Catholic doctrine, which have played central role in Croatian society since the World War II, share quite similar perspective when it comes to, one the one hand, egalitarianism, and on the other, materialist values. Another explanation of the antimaterialism shown in my results offers itself from this point of view. In society whose ruling ideologies for decades insisted on social equality as the primary value, and who condemned the idea of being financially superior as amoral, or even suspicious and dangerous[10], aversion toward showing the inclination to create the symbolic boundaries on the basis of someone's socioeconomic status becomes perfectly understandable.

But what to do if this is the case? In the situation in which it is unacceptable to express the importance which one puts on the socioeconomic status, and in which at the same time many people unquestionably do so, a discrepancy emerges. A question thus arises how to solve this discrepancy. Among many ways, one appears as possible, given the huge importance which my respondents gave to moral criteria. Although this is just a speculation, what I am suggesting as a possible solution of a puzzle described in the previous paragraph is that, in the lack of opportunity to clearly put forward one's inclination to create social ties according to someone's socioeconomic status, a solution to disguise the preferences through the discourse of morality seems like an easy way out. In the lack of cultural capital, or at least not having a status of its possessor like the people from cultural sector (and given the rare examples of drawing antiboundaries on the basis of cultural issues, it seems that culture is not much less "doubtless" than the moral aspect); and on the other hand, not being able to

[10] And socialist ruling elites indeed rarely have used their position to gather financial wealth, but rather used their privileges in other respects.

discursively ground their dominant position on the socioeconomic status, it is quite possible that people from professional sector do not have the other option but to turn to general and least doubtful issues like the moral ones.

Although one could conclude from my results that socioeconomic success in Croatia plays much less significant role than in the US context examined by Lamont, from this viewpoint this becomes suspicious. Contrary to that, if this line of argumentation is correct, then what differentiates Croatia from the USA is not the real lack of socioeconomically drawn symbolic boundaries, but merely its discursive presence. Much more than implementing egalitarianism in reality, it follows, egalitarian ideologies managed to implement it into the discourse, whereas it is quite likely that people who appreciate primarily socioeconomic success exist in Croatia just as well as in the USA, regardless of its presence among symbolic boundaries.

4.Conclusion

In my research I have focused on members of two sectors of Croatian upper-middle class, and the patterns they use when creating symbolic boundaries. These boundaries were supposedly likely to appear on two levels: firstly, on the class level, by distinguishing oneself from the, primarily, lower classes; secondly, on the level of the respective sector. In general, the research confirmed Lamont's finding of upper-middle class being more diverse than presented by Bourdieuan analysis. However, in contrast to Lamont, whose findings in the American and French context turned around three axes ("moneys, morals, and manners"), the only criteria I encountered in Croatian upper-middle class inter-class distinctions were "manners" and "morals". Whereas one group of interviewees demonstrated their preoccupation with cultural issues, the others said they take into account mostly moral characteristics. Interestingly, both groups determined themselves opposite to the people to whom they attributed the third criterion. The "moneys" were thus important only in a negative way, not as a basis of class identity, but mostly as a characteristic to be avoided. I found hardly any elements of exclusion according to socioeconomic success, which in Lamont's research played an important role among private sector professionals. Even Nadja Rakic, an accountant, who was more inclined to material values than most of the interviewees, expresses her disagreement with most of her colleagues. In contrast to their motto "one lives to earn", she instead advocates the motto "one earns to live", legitimizing her financial ambitions with cultural purposes.

As for "manners", cultural sector interviewees showed a higher tendency to emphasize the cultural factors than the professional sector members, although some of them tried to "disguise" their cultural exclusivism by insisting on their lack of prejudices toward lower classes. Interviewees from the professional sector diverged in a more significant extent. Whereas Nadja valued people (not just in her private life, but in the business sphere as well!) on the basis of cultural capital, and thus on the ground of one's class position, Goran and

Marko, doctors, advocated moral principles and entirely left out the cultural criterion. However, it turned out to be problematic whether the moral criteria can serve as the mechanism of class-based exclusion. As shown in the empirical analysis, "morals" indeed did represent the basis of identity, but in that case this identity was class inclusive rather than exclusive, mostly implying a strong sense of egalitarianism.

Egalitarianism is a principle shared by two ideologies dominant in Croatian society in the past 60 years: socialism and the Catholic doctrine. Despite being questioned at the very beginning of this paper, it is possible that socialist egalitarianism indeed has left a strong trace in the postsocialist Croatian society. Furthermore, it could be significant that several of the interviewees who emphasized moral criteria are practical Catholics. The association is certainly far-fetched, since in this short paper I did not have an opportunity to take into account two broad and complex systems of beliefs. Yet another nexus carves its way through: socialist ideology however being only ideology exists primarily at the discursive level. But apart from the discursive level, it is, however, a wholly different question to ask if egalitarianism as their constituent part existed also in reality. In other words, it is highly questionable whether "boundaries of my language" really are "the boundaries of my world". This becomes interesting having in mind that the egalitarian motives oftentimes were of a merely declarative character – and this leads to my last point.

Although obviously present in the discourse, only occasionally did egalitarianism existed in reality. Just few of the interviewees said socialize with lower classes in real life, while most of them had either seldom lower class friends, or these were located in the "exotic" milieu of small coastal towns where my interlocutors spend their holidays. Only two doctors, Goran and Marko, said they actually socialize with lower classes, but even here the results are questionable since they both consider themselves extremely untypical for their profession. In addition to that, in the conclusion to the last chapter I tried to show that a

further proof for the claim that egalitarian ideology made the impact primarily on the discursive level, rather than in the reality, can be found in the surprising lack of the socioeconomic criteria of the boundary maintenance stated by the interviewees from professional sector. Whereas Lamont might have not had that problem since the "ideology of success" is much more accepted and encouraged in the West, and especially in the US context, I sought to demonstrate that the postsocialist case of Croatia showed to be problematic because of the almost proscribed status which financial success and socioeconomic elitism had for decades. It is quite possible that interviewees turned to more general moral criteria precisely in order to avoid mentioning wealth and power as the most appealing characteristics and the most important criteria.

In the previous case, in spite of not drawing symbolic boundaries toward other classes and groups, real boundaries emerged, as interviewees limited their social ties on people of similar class background and education level. In the opposite trend on the other hand, despite explicit aversion to one sort of people, interviewees said to have maintained the friendly relations with them – and this I related with some specific conditions of Zagreb context which differ it from the US and French environment which Lamont investigated in her research. Low degree of internal migrations and the lack of residential segregation, I tried to show, makes it for the people more likely to create and to maintain social ties, independent of class or profession – and therefore, situations where the symbolic boundaries do not correspond with the symbolic ones tend to occur in a more significant extent.

The last point of this conclusion thus concerns the real scope and the limits of the approach of symbolic boundaries which I used as the primary mechanism of my research. Do symbolic boundaries really matter? Do they really make a difference in creating social networks? Michele Lamont thinks they do. Although she warns that they are a "necessary but insufficient condition" (Lamont, 1992: 6), the two opposite, but actually so similar,

mechanisms show the contrary, querying even their necessary character for the creation of social ties. Unfortunately, in this paper I have not managed to answer these doubts, and yet it remains to be examined if the symbolic boundaries approach is to prove its plausibility, and therefore is to be further utilized as a useful tool of sociological analyses.

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Appendix

Table 1

	MORAL	CULTURAL	SOCIOECONOMIC
Cultural specialists, public and non-profit sector			
Ana Kovacic, museum curator	4	5	1
Hrvoje Novak, museum curator, rock-critic	4	5	1
Marija Jurisic, museum director	3	5	2
Antonija Silic, museum curator	3	5	1
Visnja Peruzovic, museum consultant	4	5	2
Vlasta Ivanis, museum director	4	4	2
Kristijan Jurak, artist	3	5	1
Profit-related occupations, private sector			
Ivan Hofman, architect	5	4	1
Mario Pavlic, lawyer	4	4	4
Goran Jelcic, doctor	5	2	2
Nadja Rakic, accountant	3	5	3
Marko Bicanic, doctor	5	3	2