

Chapter in the book:

Contemporary Croatia: Development Challenges in a Socio-Cultural Perspective. / Belyaev, Demyan ; Roca, Zoran (ur.).

Lisbon : Edições Universitárias Lusófonas, 2011.

Women and cultural management in a patriarchal society

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In the 20th century, culture transformed from a marginal, almost entirely neglected and “enigmatic” stage of creativity to one of the fastest growing market resources in modern capitalism. This has been particularly reflected in the growth of large cities, which by presenting and selling their own cultural assets build their images on openness, accessibility and attractiveness to global culture consumers. Culture is now connected with tourist and economic development, social and educational potential, and its development is related to the general quality of life. The result is the “saturation of culture by political and economic trends, so that there is a difficulty in distinguishing and determining the boundaries of each of them” (Katunarić 2007: 73).

Cultural studies in Croatia (Rafolt 2009; Čale Feldman 2005) moved the area of studying “cultural products” toward “new triviality”. Products of “popular culture” are evaluated by the theoretical instrumentarium previously applied first and foremost to the “high culture” (Rafolt 2009: 28).

Modern capitalism has removed culture’s “aura of exclusiveness” and elitism; through the development of the culture industry (publishing, film, video, music, advertising, television etc.) as just other forms of capital, culture is seen as a profit-making area, subject to the influence of contemporary business ideas. It may therefore be said that culture, from “a system of standardised social values whose primary goal is cultural identification and cultural enlightenment” (“culturalisation”) (Švob-Đokić 2008: 8) has become the “industrial production of cultural assets aimed at the market” (Cvjetičanin & Katunarić 2003:

149).

Therefore, in our research³⁵ we adopted definition of “culture” as a subsystem, which comprised archiving, library, museum, gallery, restoration, theatrical, musical and stage and related occupations, as well as cultural and artistic creation, creation by individuals or groups and the work of the culture industry (publishing, art, music and discography, scene and state, cinema, and the media) (Cvjetičanin & Katunarić 2003, in Pavičić et al. 2006: 16).

The redefinition and transformation of culture in post-socialist Croatia has resulted in the development of a large number of small cultural enterprises. The public, private and non-profit (often named “civil”) sectors in Croatia became diversified in terms of discourse, market and their own demands. The public sector has been dominated by a nationalistic cultural discourse which has reduced its development since the 1990s. It has been primarily founded on “proclaiming national goals” and thus not received support “in view of the fact that international politics are dominated by the ideas of democracy, international cooperation and multiculturalism” (Katunarić 2007: 113). The private sector acts as a “contingency of the economic free market which has been enthroned by the government”, while the third sector – non-profit – mainly competes for funding from international sources (although recently there have been signs of recognition of the value of its ideas and programs by the government).

The authorities have not been able to reconcile the apparently contradictory requirements of these three sectors: from the state management of national cultural institutions, over the demands of the private sector for tax cuts, lower administrative costs and flexible employment, to the need of the non-profit sector for the practice of “soft” power, inter-ethnic tolerance, peace, gender equality and sustainable economic development. The situation is not radically different today. The official

³⁵ *Žene i društvena moć. Sociološka obilježja upravljačkih položaja žena u kulturi i kulturnim industrijama* [Women and social power: sociological characteristics of managerial positions of women in the culture and cultural industries] is a research project that has been carried out at the Institute for Social Research (IDIS) in Zagreb in 2007-11 as part of the project “Identity of the others in the Republic of Croatia”.

nationalistic discourse in cultural politics has changed, although in the established cultural priorities there is neither systematic monitoring nor evaluation of the changes.³⁶

Due to a relatively stable support from local or state authorities, the area of public institutions is still protected from commercialisation. Cultural management and heads of institutions are not forced to use marketing strategies to survive in the same way as private cultural institutions. Management in public institutions is directly influenced by the state and is often, even on a local level, subject to the direct interference of political criteria and interests. On the other hand, institutions are excessively bureaucratic, the number of employees is often higher than necessary, and management is unwilling to accept innovations and is not inclined to change (Pavičić et al. 2006: 19). Management structures in public institutions are “insensitive” to the pressure of gender balance since a gender strategy does not exist.

The specific nature of employment in culture can be analyzed on several levels. First, the proportion of those employed in the cultural subsystem (2%) in Croatia in relation to the total number of employed persons is not very revealing (Eurostat 2007: 51). As many as 45% of those employed in culture have higher education, while this share of the total of employed persons is much smaller – 21.4%. The second largest share in the total employment of women in culture is found in the Netherlands (43%) and the EU-27 average was 46% (Eurostat 2007: 35).

The proportion of women employed in culture in post-socialist countries is over 50% and Croatia is at the very top with 54%, which is significantly more than the proportion of women in the total employment (44.3%). One explanation for the high number of employed women in the cultural subsector may surely be found in the relationship of the socialist countries to values of “full employment”, “women’s issues” and child care. Employment in culture is the least secure, and part-time or temporary work is typi-

³⁶ Due to the recession, the budget of the Ministry of Culture was reduced in 2011 (MoC 2011) below that which the ministry had available in 2007 (MoC 2007) by approximately 14%.

cal of the cultural subsector. Work in culture often assumes the form of self-employment or work in a family enterprise.

As dancers, entertainers, actresses, musicians and writers, women have always expressed their creativity. The field of culture and art has traditionally been rather permeable and enabled women to show their creativity more than any other public sphere. “Protected” from the need to produce and not being vital for the existence of a political and economic system, the field of culture and art does not compete with the power and importance of the political subsystem, thus giving more space to freedom to act as an entrepreneur and innovator.

This was particularly so in the former socialist Yugoslavia, where the political leaders did not perceive culture, in contrast to manufacturing and trade, as having a major effect on the country’s development. Moreover, culture as a part of service industry has been underpaid and has employed more women than men. In order to track changes in employment of women in the socialist and post-socialist service industry we would need comparable data and a historical analysis. Both hardly exist: even when data are available, their reliability is questionable (Pollert & Fodor 2005: 1).

One of the positive aspects of the legacy of socialism is that current regulation in Croatia has provided good solutions for maternity leave, in the sense of the time a woman can take to raise her child after birth (six months to a year), but maternity benefits are low³⁷ in view of the recession and may be seen as discouraging. Well-organised care for pre-school children enables women to dedicate themselves to their full-time work more easily, although that care, for many women employed in positions of high responsibility, is insufficiently flexible due to their long working hours. In contrast to some EU countries, shorter working hours is not a practice that has taken root in Croatia. It is still expected that women, not men, leave the labour market or use sick leaves or short periods of absence from work to take care of children.

An analysis of the gender stratification of employment in the cultural subsystem shows examples of “female asymmetry”: women are a

³⁷ The benefit is 1,663.00 kunas, or about €227 per month. Such low benefits are inconsistent with the officially proclaimed goals of reproductive policy.

majority among those employed in libraries (83.4%), open universities/colleges and cultural centres (63.6%), museums and museum collections (63.4%) and archives (59.5%).³⁸ There is also “male asymmetry” in employment in culture – there are fewer than 50% of women employed as professionals in theatres (48.3%) on radio (44.3%), in the “combined staff” of radio and television (44.8%), on television (38.8%), as cinema operators (39.2%) and in orchestras (34.5%). This is particularly true of television and orchestras.

In the theatre, there are many professions where women dominate: ballet dancers (76.2%), theatre prompters (75.9%) and administrative staff (72.2%). Women work least as directors (16.7%) and conductors (11.1%). Each of these occupations, of course, has its own gender history, which we cannot go into here. Hofstede (2010: 312), in the context of gender power, takes orchestras as an example of a firm hierarchical (family) structure.

The proportion of women in jobs in the creative industry has increased noticeably over the past two decades. Due to the expansion of publishing, there is an increasing number of women employed by major publishing houses, although they are most often employed in lower-level editorial management positions and are rarely present in high-level management or in the ownership structure. We have no data on the actual ownership structure of the cultural industry. An attempt to calculate ownership structure in the publishing industry showed that the share of women proprietors, according to different sources, is probably about 21-24% (Adamović 2010).

Women are underrepresented in management structures. For example, in 2007 women were managers of only about 30% of the cultural institutions of the city of Zagreb. They were more represented as members of the managing boards of cultural institutions (37.7%). The composition of management boards also showed gender asymmetry, as there were mostly women on the managing boards of libraries and cultural centres and open universities/colleges, and only one woman was appointed to the managing board of a musical institution. Some parts

³⁸ Source: Central Bureau for Statistics. Figures were provided on request in 2007 and they are not available in official statistical publications.

of the cultural subsystem also have specific characteristics: for example, women are more often managers of museums and other cultural institutions, than of archives and national nature parks.

It is interesting to note that according to gender stratification only the Ministry of Culture employs women in mainly lower ranking management positions (head of department or division). However, since its foundation, the Ministry of Culture of Croatia has had only one female minister. In institutions founded by the Ministry, women hold 32.2% of management positions – 2007³⁹, which is similar to the proportion of female civil servants in public services (31.6% according to Galić & Nikodem 2009: 255), that is in education, science, culture, information, health, social care, and housing combined.

On the one hand, we have well-educated young women, and on the other, there is the established management elite (political, economic, cultural), in which men are dominant. The question of entering this elite becomes a question of “permeability”, which we will talk about more in the context of the experiences of the women managers we interviewed.

Furthermore, for women to reach a management position they need to enter the professions that make this possible. Not all professions and occupations are equally “permeable” for advancement. When a woman enters some of them, the power shifts to another occupation so that women, despite their management position, do not receive the salaries and rewards available to men. For example, in the public sector women dominate in elementary and secondary school education and health care, which in Croatia today are extremely underpaid occupations.

Public sector organisations are not “gender-blind” (Scott 2003; Walby 1997). In our empirical research described below we assumed that the cultural subsystem where women constitute the majority of employees and are better educated than men would be more permeable for women to take managerial positions.

³⁹ Source: Ministry of Culture, figures supplied on request.

Women, the socialist legacy and post-socialism

The gender equality legacy is “essential to making sense of the trends in exploring” gender equality in post-socialism (Pollert & Fodor 2005: 6). A report on working conditions and gender in the enlarged Europe presented four conclusions in this regard (2005: 20):

- countries that are less advanced in capitalist development terms have a stronger gender-progressive communist legacy;
- there is established evidence of the deterioration (in advances of women) since transition;
- since the capitalist transformation, women’s activity rates have dropped, although with substantial variation between countries;
- there seems to be very little relationship between a country’s economic development and its gender gap in positions of authority: Slovenia’s gender gap compares to much less developed Bulgaria.⁴⁰

The socialist state in former Yugoslavia behaved as a “leading feminist”: it kept protecting the rights of (employed) women in a specific manner. The socialist state blurred male as a “dominant and privileged norm citizen” (Verloo 2006: 218). In the context of the official socialist discourse and ideology of “general equality”, thereby including gender, the struggle for gender equality – at the time of the second wave of feminism in the West – had a contradictory resonance.

Official socialist discourse rejected the need to review the problem of gender equality, believing that it was contradictory to the ideology as well as counter-productive. In the 1970s and 1980s most of the educated women embraced feminist ideas, understanding at the same time that patriarchal values had not lost any strength, but were deeply rooted in (socialist) society. Demands then arose to re-examine the “undisputed” equality of sexes in society: patriarchy in the private sphere kept being mentioned as a re-emerging obstacle to gender equality. Women’s choices were constrained by “choices made earlier in their lives when private patriarchal relations were more prevalent”

⁴⁰ Slovenia’s case was predicted in the early 1990s: the new institutions of power have reverted to the ways of the old boy’s network and have systematically excluded women (Mežnarič & Ule 1998: 211).

(Walby 1997: 61).

Through the glorification of egalitarian values and manual work, the socialist ideology, in accordance with proclaimed egalitarian values, tried to equalise the prestige of different professions in society, thus in many ways helping women move into a variety of professions. Despite the ideology of equality, even in former Yugoslavia, gender differences in terms of wage gap persisted.

The higher the pay in an occupation, the greater the wage gap. According to one of the few pieces of research into the question (since the gender structure of salaries in Croatia started to be monitored only recently) women with a university education received 83.4% of the income of men, while women with lower qualifications received 91.9% of the average male salary (Šporer 1990).

With this kind of heritage and values, Croatia set out on the path of transition to capitalism. From 1990 to 2010 there were major changes in the way economy functions, which were reflected in the structure of liberal wage policies. At the same time, interest in studying the gender wage gap was revitalised. Regarding the proportion of women in the number of employed, Croatia is somewhere on the boundary; it has a slightly lower share of women in the workforce (56.6% in 2009) than the post-socialist members of the EU. At the time of “full employment” in socialist Croatia, their share was not particularly high (39% in 1971).

However, the evolution from the early 1990s to the present suggests that the share of women on the labour market is increasing constantly, although oscillations exist due to an increase in unemployment and unfavourable economic trends. Although better educated in relation to men, women have little or insufficient work experience (Nestić 2007: 35). Traditional male occupations (mining and construction) are the only segments of the labour market in Croatia today where women earn more than men. In relation to most employees, who are men with low education, they do highly qualified work (for the UK, see Walby 1997: 35).

The reasons for this situation may be explained, among other things, by patriarchal values in the division of occupations in terms of gender. Occupational segregation “is one of the major explanatory fac-

tors behind the wage gap and it is perhaps the most persistent and consistent feature of the labour markets both in Eastern and Western Europe (Pollert & Fodor 2005: 19). Most women do not work in prestigious occupations, and those in which they are employed mainly fall into so-called gender-specific areas, being frequently related to care, education and nurture. As such, these occupations have lower value and lower salaries. Women often do routine tasks as secretaries, clerks, office managers, forming an auxiliary force in the development of men's careers (Giddens 2007: 358).

If we compare Croatia with other Central and Eastern European countries, the latter also have a low unadjusted gender wage gap: according to Eurostat (2008), Slovenia has 8.5%, Romania 9%, Poland 9.8%, Hungary 17.5%, Bulgaria 13.6%, the Czech Republic 26.2%. In the EU-27, the average unadjusted gender wage gap was 17.5% in 2008.

The relatively low unadjusted gender wage gap in Croatia (around 10% on average – 2008) is related to the characteristics of the female human capital, namely to their skills, education, and labour market experience as their advantage (Nestić 2010: 86), and to the socialist legacy, in which education was one of the most important channels of social mobility.

According to some interpretations of the theory of human capital, education correlates positively with income: skills gained by education increase productivity, which is rewarded with higher earnings (Becker 1985). Strober (1990), however, mentions that the theory of human capital only explains one part of the variance in earnings and does not provide a complete explanation, so an economic approach to this question is insufficient.

Nestić (2010: 111) also calculated the counterfactual gender wage gap, that is, the gap which appears by comparing male wages and counterfactual female wages – the latter being defined as wages that would emerge if women were given men's labour market characteristics but continued to receive rewards based on those characteristics as women. He applied Machado-Mata decomposition technique and found that women had significantly lower salaries than men for the same characteristics on the labour market, and the situation worsened from 1998

(20%) to 2008 (22%).

The wage gap in the public sector is relatively smaller, although there is a greater probability of two obstacles to mobility. One is the “sticky floor”, which means that women in lower positions in organisations have less possibility of advancement. Another is the “glass ceiling”, which indicates the existence of “an unacknowledged barrier that prevents women from advancing to positions of power and responsibility, or more generally to better-paid jobs” (Nestić 2010: 98). Effects of these obstacles are present in the public sector to a slightly lesser extent. One of the reasons for the deterioration of the situation in Croatia may be ascribed to discrimination in the labour market (Galić & Nikodem 2009) and to other indeterminate characteristics of employees and jobs (Nestić 2010).

According to the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) (UN 2008) developed by the International Labour Organisation and based on measuring gender inequality in three sectors (political participation and decision-making, economic participation and decision-making, and ownership of economic resources) Croatia is in 40th place of 177 countries. It is in a similar position in terms of other inequality measurements.

For example, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) (UN 2010) is a composite measure reflecting inequality in achievements between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. It varies between zero (when women and men fare equally) and one (when men or women fare poorly compared to the other in all dimensions). The GII is designed to reveal the extent to which national human development achievements are eroded by gender inequality, and to provide empirical foundations for policy analysis and advocacy efforts.

The GII value for Croatia is 0.345, setting Croatia in 30th place of the 169 countries considered. In Europe, the GII value closest to zero (which suggests complete equality between women and men) is found in the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland and Norway – some of these countries traditionally take care of gender equality and have made efforts to implement gender mainstreaming policies.

Over the last twenty years in Croatia changes have been taking place in the educational structure of the population (especially of women). In line with trends in other transition countries, the proportion of female students in Croatia exceeds 50% at many faculties. Back in 1953 there were only 0.4% women with higher education in the population, and 1.4% of men. In 1991, there were 8% women in that category and 11.1% men (CBS 2006: 33). Among employed persons in 2009 there were 24.8% women and 17.2% of men with higher education (CBS 2010: 41).

In the future, this will probably result in more women taking up traditionally male professions as well as in their attempt to break into the management elite (Walby 1997: 35-36), where men are still dominant. A general trend toward low fertility among the population of Western Europe, which also affects Croatia, could favour a more tolerant form of gender ideology, or a correction of negative perceptions about the female labour force and its competences. However, if a major breakthrough takes place, the question arises whether gender inequality will disappear if women take positions of power in the organisations marked by “male values” and their domination. Let us consider the potential problems.

Newcomers rarely get to manage

Statistical data at this time in Croatia create an illusion about how women, if they really want, can really do everything. They support the idea that an army of educated women could rapidly take over most of the well-paid jobs available and drive men from certain professions (Walby 1997: 40-41). So far, there is no fear of this happening: the sector with the highest average monthly gross salary in Croatia in 2008 was finance and insurance business. However, the proportion of women’s salaries to men’s salaries in that sector was the lowest of all – 72.4% (CBS 2010: 39).

The expectations that changes in the educational structure could have significant repercussions for the composition of the management

elite, and also that management structures would give way to the “high heels” of highly educated and capable women, proved not to be supported by evidence. There are on average only 4% of women employed in the highest positions of power within EU public enterprises, such as president.

It is also interesting to look at which countries have the most women presidents in decision-making bodies. It is no surprise that the former socialist countries dominate, Croatia and Slovakia leading with 20%, followed by Bulgaria, Poland, the Czech Republic, Latvia, and Norway (11%) (EC 2008). Croatia, with its 14% “female” membership in the highest decision-making bodies of public companies, cannot compare with Norway, where women occupy 34% of those positions, but it does exceed the EU-27 average of 11%. It is probable that younger women in the post-socialist countries are reaping the results of the socialist ideology of equality, which for generations gave the opportunity of free education and encouraged women to compete for places in the management elite.

However, the expectations of a major breakthrough into the management elite have not been fulfilled so far: changes have not taken place to the extent that we could talk of a significant proportion of women managers. For example, in the EU (EC 2010) women are under-represented in management (32%) and in decision-making positions in the management bodies of major companies (10%). There are also fewer women than men employed as scientists and engineers (29%). The greater presence of women in the corporate world is seen by the European gender policy as one of the keys to the promotion of economic stability and growth.⁴¹

Apart from the influence of the “monological discourse” of gender identity formation (Oraić-Tolić & Kulcsar-Szabo 2006: 29) in modern Croatia, stereotypes, prejudices and concealed discriminatory policies hinder women from breaking into the management elite. Difficulties could also be explained by a conflict between the established members and newcomers on various micro-levels in organisations. Female “new-

⁴¹ Curiously, in 2008 none of the central banks in the EU-27 was presided by a woman (Adamović 2010).

comers" enter complex relationships of power, which exist in the background of the organisational environment (Ernst 2003).

Those – men and women – who are already established, are superior, while outsiders have a lower level of self-confidence. "Established" women are thus supporting "gendered pattern of inequality" (Walby 1997: 46-48). As a result, many women, upon entering the labour market, internalise their weaker potential for access. In their encounter with homogenous groups of men (and sometimes women) who are moving quickly forward, there are many barriers to women getting ahead in the organisational structure.

Patriarchy tolerates the development of a woman's career to some extent, but it is certainly not benevolent towards women in management. The underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions is not (only) a reflection of a lack of education and skills, it is primarily related to patriarchal values. The structure of patriarchy today in most developed states of the West has been shaken and is trying, at least declaratively, to change most of its basic values related to the survival of public patriarchy as part of gender mainstreaming policies.

However, very few women make it to the top of the organisational ladder. The accumulation of a predisposition for men, even in small quantities, can harm women as they rise in their career, and when this is combined with other factors, such as stereotypical assessment, problems in the process of vertical mobility may be expected (Manzevski & Jonsen 2006: 11).

It has been shown that people increasingly define their identity according to their occupation and work (Crompton & Harris 1998; Walby 2005; Young 2005). By choosing their career, people make an assumption about how much their professional activities will be "burdened" by balancing work and family life. Calculations in this context may be explained by the theory of rational choice, because, by making rational decisions, more effective balancing will be possible (Crompton & Harris 1998).

However, it should not be forgotten that, although the nature of the dominant social standards enable men to achieve their goals regardless

of their family life, this is not the case for women. The rational choice of women is limited to a dichotomy between socially valued goals: on the one hand, a successful family atmosphere and home life, and on the other, “individual fulfilment and success in the public sphere”, which agrees with Touraine’s theory (2005) about the ambivalent position of women.

When considering determinants of the gender stratification of the political subsystem in Croatia, we find that, at the lower levels of power, among the members of county assemblies, the proportion of women rose significantly (from 5% to 21% in 1992-2007). One of the specific characteristics of Croatia is the much lower participation of women at the local level than in top-level politics. 2001 was the watershed year⁴², when the proportion of women in county assemblies rose to 13.4%, while in earlier years it had been less than 10% (CBS 2006: 72-75).

As to the proportion of women in the highest political body – Parliament (*Sabor*) (Table 1), the situation is much better, with 20.9% of women in 2007, which in comparison with the beginning of the 1990s (4.6%) is a considerable improvement. This situation is similar to the larger European framework where women’s political representation is “excessively small” (Lombardo & Meier 2008: 111).

Table 1. Members of the Croatian Parliament: gender stratification

Year of elections	Women	%	Men	%	Total
1990	16	4.6	335	95.4	351
1992	7	5.1	131	94.9	138
1995	9	7.1	118	92.9	127
2000	33	21.9	118	78.1	151
2003	27	17.8	125	82.2	152
2007	32	20.9	121	79.1	153

Source: CBS 2008: 54.

In relation to the socialist period (up to 1990), the political participa-

⁴² In that year government changed: the conservative party, which had ruled during the 1990s, was replaced by left-wing parties.

tion of women in the 1990s fell considerably. At the beginning of the 1960s, when the situation regarding basic freedoms and human rights was very negative, Croatia had as many as 24.3% women in the Assembly of the Republic, but by the end of the same decade that number fell significantly (8.21%).

In order to govern in the field of state politics in Croatia, women (and men) need to be members of political parties. The most powerful among them installed a system of recruiting members to high-ranking positions in such a way that political elites take gender politics into consideration. Nevertheless, the intersection of membership in political parties, gender and, in the Croatian case, ethnicity – “political intersectionality” (Verloo 2006: 212-214) – is among the main factors reinforcing gender inequality in recruiting professionals and managers.

In the post-socialist period, women have been neglected and marginalised in their political, economic and social roles. In all positions of social life, there has been a return to tradition, and a great deal of time is needed for social values to turn back to recognising the propulsive power of female potential.

The figures presented show that the right-wing government at the beginning of the 1990s reduced the chances of women, and with the break-up of former Yugoslavia an erosion of human rights took place at all levels. At that time the ruling discourse assumed that during the war and post-war period women would abandon public life and dedicate themselves to their family and home. In that sense, “pro-natality” rhetoric was very loud, so the promotion of motherhood went hand in hand with the state’s militaristic discourse.

The impact of the war and the revived “male warrior” stereotype appeared to have stronger impact for gender relations and politics than expected. Perceptions of normality changed dramatically, swinging “back and forth between two points of reference: peacetime and wartime” (Maček 2010: 6-10). “New truths” started to compete with “communist” ones. In this, the “most intensely charged and deeply disputed domain was that of ethno-national identification”. Gender was promptly added to the ethno-national domain: in post-military discourse, a woman’s first and foremost task is supposed to be reproduc-

ing the “endangered” nation.

This, however, was not specific to Croatia: in other former socialist countries, a fall in the representation of women in politics was recorded at the beginning of transition as well. The highest executive power has also ignored the management potential of women and from the beginning of the 1990s to the present the proportion of women among government ministers has been extremely low. In 1990-91 there was not a single woman in government; in 1992-93 there was one woman minister. In 1995 and 2000 there were two women ministers in government, and in 2002 and 2003 there were four (CBS 2006: 75). Of the five vice-presidents of Parliament only two have been women, from the opposition party.

In the post-socialist period, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of women in the judiciary. Preferable professions for women became law or economics, which in a time of market adjustment and changes to the legal framework, have higher recruitment regardless of gender. Only the composition of the Constitutional Court judges, as one of the most powerful institutions of the judiciary, shows the least permeability for women. For example in the first term of the Constitutional Court (1991) there was not a single woman, while in 2004 there were four (Adamović 2010).

We have shown how the political arena has been impermeable to female political leadership and how the entrance of women into leadership positions depends on the level (local or top politics), and the gender policies of the parties. According to the Gender Equality Act, when creating or proposing lists of candidates for election to the Croatian Parliament, to bodies of local and regional self-government and to the European Parliament, political parties are obliged to take into account respect for the principle of gender equality and a balance between men and women – but also other social factors, where neglect of gender stratification occurs.

Below we consider how far the cultural subsystem allows women to enter the management structure, in which parts of it this practice is more frequent, and why we believe that it differs from other subsystems, especially politics.

Patriarchy: a “descriptive pointer” or explanatory concept

What exactly are we talking about, when we take *patriarchy* and *patriarchal relations* into the focus of social inquiry? A quick overview of the most cited works in the field in the last two decades (Acker 1989; Walby 1989; Pollert 1996; Verloo 2006; Waters 1989) brings forward a multitude of entries for the concepts of “patriarchy” and “patriarchal”. Even on the simplest level of inspection of these resources, “patriarchy” as a notion emerges as being “superficial”, “fuzzy”, “problematic”, “essentialist”, “one-fits-all common sense approach”, “questionable”, “analytically useless”, “self-explanatory”, “circular”, “historical”, “slippery”, “shallow”, “slick”.

At its best, as Pollert (1996) stated, it could do as a “descriptive pointer”. It would be hard to imagine a more detrimental set of adjectives attributed to an allegedly useful and widespread tool in social analysis. Moreover, all those adjectives point to the “mortal sin” of any concept in science: invalidity. Altogether, “patriarchy” appears to be useless for social analysis. And yet, it survived all criticisms, not only as an analytical tool. Patriarchy is often promoted to the “explanatory” level in social inquiry. Coupled with historicity and gender relations, it obtains analytical justification and legitimacy. We share criticisms which point out its basic flaws (Pollert 1996; Acker 1989), but at the same time we will use “patriarchy” as a convenient “intersectional package” for the particular analysis of women’s oppression.

Additional difficulty with the notion of patriarchy is that there are at least three kinds of patriarchy theories: the mutually opposing approaches of “dual system” (Walby 1997) and “historical materialism” (Pollert 1996), and those who try to amalgamate this dichotomisation by introducing concept of “virarchy” as an adjacent analytical tool (Waters 1989). The bottom line of this “patriarchy controversy” is the explanatory power of the concept. According to some (for instance Acker 1989 and Pollert 1996) it is null; for others, if properly deconstructed, it could do even as semi-autonomous structure, along with capitalism (Walby 1997).

In our analysis we assign to patriarchy an exploratory or – at best – descriptive level of use. This means that we will consider patriarchy as

the concept we need for exploring male dominance vs. female subordination in fundamental subsystems of the production of knowledge, goods and services and social reproduction in post-socialist framework. We do not support the theory of dual systems of patriarchy and capitalism: for us, gender relations and production (market) relations are not separable. The process of “gendering” is taking place within a framework of Eastern European labour market relations together with de-industrialisation and privatisation of production and services (Acker 1989; Pollert 1996).

In the global context, “the ‘woman question’ is not just one among many raised by injustice, subordination, and differentiation. *It is basic*” (Epstein 2007: 7). Patriarchy and gender relations go hand-in-hand as mindscapes in any society today. They function as cluster of concepts; they deserve, as such, further scrutiny and reality check. Before that, though, patriarchy needs an overview of its epistemological status.

In dealing with epistemology, we follow the approaches of Acker (1989) and Pollert (1996). According to Acker (1989: 235), patriarchy as concept is both “essential and problematic”. With the second wave of feminism in 1970s, patriarchy achieved central focus in the analysis of women’s subjugation. It also acquired the status of a theoretical and analytical tool, which it is not. It has low theoretical potency because it is ahistorical, returns us to biology, it “plagued all attempts to describe the persistence of male dominance over women” and “it cannot fruitfully be extended beyond its specific historical manifestations” (Waters 1989: 193-194).

According to Pollert (1996: 639), when applied as an explanation for women’s oppression, the concept of patriarchy reveals “its most basic weakness of collapsing explanation with description – a weakness which derives from the circular explanations of its constitution and reproduction”. Therefore, in this chapter, we try *i*) to avoid the most obvious – yet easily overlooked – trap intended to substitute descriptive categories for explanatory ones, and *ii*) not to treat patriarchy as an explanatory semi-autonomous structure (Pollert 1996: 641). For us, patriarchy is neither a “grand narrative” with universalising quality, nor is it a “grand pattern” that explains or a “master narrative” which de-

scribes natural causes and attributes the role divisions of the sexes to biology (Epstein 2007: 7).

Patriarchy is “a shorthand for cases of male domination”, which “should be labelled: dangerous! Handle with care” (Pollert 1996: 662). Within the current state of the sociological art, patriarchy describes best the “institutional embeddedness of different forms of male power” (Pollert 1996: 659). While not being an effective tool for analysis at all, it nevertheless leads to

...better answers about how the subordination of woman is continually reproduced... there is a danger in abandoning the project of patriarchy. If we introduce solely ‘gender’ as the theoretical and analytical reference, the connection between urgent political issues and theoretical analysis may be weakened. Gender lacks the critical-political sharpness of patriarchy.

(Acker 1989: 239-240)

Despite being “fuzzy”, patriarchy is the concept we could not afford to do without, particularly in de-industrialised post-socialist countries. According to our research, in Central and Eastern Europe patriarchy shows stamina and is well supported by tradition. The classical structuralist saying “*ce que domine dans toute altération, c’est la persistance de la matière ancienne*”⁴³ (Saussure, in Augé 1994:19) holds water here.

We aimed to embed the concept of patriarchy in empirical research. Interviewing women managers in culture, we tried to obtain answers to the basic sociological question: why does the subordination of women persist no matter how much societies change in other ways? According to Epstein (2007: 15), the answer lies in many practices. Here we try to explore and describe, among many, the practice of male domination in management structures in contemporary Croatia.

The Croatian post-socialist society has changed in many respects in the last two decades. Nevertheless, “controlling women’s labour and behaviour is still a mechanism for male governance and territoriality” (Epstein 2007: 15). Our research is an effort to explore the oppression of women in the Europe expanding eastward: to inquire into the “ac-

⁴³ “The persistence of old matter dominates in all alterations” (French).

tual fit of equal opportunity legal and institutional mechanisms in East European confines” (Weiner 2009: 306) and in the pre-accession Croatia.

A lot has been said about gender relations both in new members of the EU and in “pre-accession” states in Europe. A glimpse over the European “menus” and “roadmaps” for the harmonisation of gender politics shows a variety of articulations, from policy consideration (Weiner 2009; Kirton & Greene 2005; Pollert 2010; Lange 2008) to the more theoretical justification of it (Walby 2005; Lombardo & Meier 2008; Verloo 2006; Connell 2009). In the EU framework, disputes about gender relations raised particular topics, which have lately emerged as innovative yet worrisome.

Topics that by all means need a careful and diversified approach are, for instance, “mainstreaming” (Walby 1997) and inclusion (Lombard & Meier 2006) of gender relations into the EU’s eastern enlargement policy; liberalisation of the labour markets in post-socialist Europe, and the oppression of women, particularly in the working class segment; residual socialist collectivism and female agency; the post-socialist “backlash” and patriarchal strategies in “new Europe”; women’s role as collective agency in changing conditions of the accountability of individual actions (Connell 2010: 109); the legacy of communist gender order (Lange 2008: 327-328) and East European labour markets; the impact of the sharp decline of manufacturing (de-industrialisation) in transition years for the segregation of women; the consequences of the “continuing colonisation, by men, of better-paid positions” in both private and public sectors in Central and Eastern Europe (Lange 2008: 331).

It might be worth inspecting more closely what the impact of joining EU would be on gender relations and politics in future Croatia. Would the EU’s frame for future gender politics in Croatia initiate real change or merely become a “broadening-without-deepening” approach (Lombardo and Meier 2008: 117)? Would some of the “substantial differences” observed in gender politics between Central and Eastern Europe and Western societies persist, such as the influence of post-communist attitudes in the public and private sphere, and post-

communist experiences of market liberalisation as powerful predictors of workers' job satisfaction in the region (Lange 2008: 343)?

Based on the discussion about "patriarchy" presented above, our working definition of this concept is that patriarchy is the formal and informal system of production, allocation, maintenance, and transmission of social closure by sexually indicated social roles. Within the field of cultural studies, patriarchy could be approached through class, power, status and gender discourses respectively.

Advantages and obstacles for women managers in culture

There is a series of laws and institutions in Croatia⁴⁴ which regulate gender equality in the labour market. However, they have no effect on discrimination in the labour market, due to the overriding patriarchal structure (Galić & Nikodem 2009). There are three obstacles (Rhode 2003) to women taking up management positions, which can, in theory, be divided into external and internal.

One of the most important external barriers is the "glass ceiling" effect, which occurs due to the stereotypical assessment of women's capabilities. The second obstacle is internal and is founded on the assumption that women lack entrepreneurship, stemming from the insecurity related to a lack of self-confidence and a sense of the existence of subtle barriers which prevent advancement.

The third hindrance is external in nature and may be called an "organisational vote of non-confidence" towards women and their "management style". Research into this subject produces contradictory results. It has not been proven that there is a difference between female and male management styles (Ernst 2003; Rhode 2003).

Research has shown that there are only differences in perception by people of the opposite sex. Female management is often subject to "mystification" related to patriarchy and to the belief in "female nature" [as Bourdieu (2001: 93) calls it, "the negative symbolic coeffi-

⁴⁴ Gender Equality Act, National Policy for Gender Equality (2006-2010), Office of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality of the Republic of Croatia, Government Office for Gender Equality, Labour Act, Family Act.

cient”] as justification for men being more often in management than women. Although there is no consensus that gender affects the quality of management, such a justification is important in the sense of various aspects of social experience, and men are traditionally seen as better leaders (Rhode 2003: 5, 9).

Alongside the objective hindrances to advancement, women in Croatia also internalise stereotypes. Through their lack of self-confidence, which leads to giving up, or lack of ambition, the ascribed stereotype characteristics become self-fulfilling prophecy. As a reason for the lack of potential for working in a certain position, women’s family commitments are mentioned, whether silently or openly, as well as her greater interest in private rather than public success.

In the labour market, scepticism towards women dominates. Regardless of whether they have children, support families or not, prioritising men in hiring for managerial positions is often justified on the following grounds: women lack “charisma” and “leadership qualities”, do not have sufficient dedication to work, and are more frequently absent from work than men.

In today’s Croatia, the patriarchal attitudes to leadership qualities that are traditional to the Balkans [those who manage should be charismatic (“strong”) persons, *čvrsta ruka* – “iron hand”] to a certain extent blend successfully with a “conservative” approach to management. Contemporary research tries to demystify this way of thinking, pointing out that an effective management style depends on many factors: the organisation and its requirements, the employees and the overall organisational context.

According to Boyd (1997: 65), three dimensions of power are key: authority, autonomy and the possibility of making decisions. She believes that authority assumes two dimensions: the first is the possibility of imposing your will on others with the possibility of using positive or negative sanctions, and the second is the coordination of activities. Autonomy relates to the possibility which employees have of controlling the work process (working hours, taking on new tasks etc.). The possibility of taking decisions relates to decisions in the field of company policies (budget, organisation of working processes etc.). Boyd

classifies these three dimensions as the constitutive elements of gender economic structures.

An attempt to systematise theoretical starting points which interpret the relationship between women and management in organisational theory (Myerson & Ely 2003) showed the existence of three approaches. The first rests on the assumption that individual differences in the women and men's attitudes and behaviour stem from socialisation and adopted gender roles, which classify women as less competent for work in the world of business (2003: 130).

Accordingly, if women develop more social values and skills, they come closer to the achievements of men. These can be best achieved through education and training. Women are therefore expected to assimilate the traditional organisational structure to be able to anchor as best as possible in the "male power network". Thus, the fact that there are too few women in management positions is the result of a lack of the *skills* needed for management. This approach sees the solution to this situation in training women for a vertical breakthrough, and in the development of policies which would make women more efficient than men. There is no consensus that gender affects the quality of management, although the topic of gender in management is important in relation to various aspects of social experience (Rhode 2003: 5).

The second approach rests on similar assumptions, but the difference in the management achievements of women and men is not interpreted in terms of socialisation processes, but of access to power. That is to say, the advancement of women is prevented by a variety of power structures. Identification of the power structures which prevent advancement is one of the conditions of development. Sexism, which is found in the foundations of those structures, reflects completely patriarchal social values. This point of view supports very complex politics of equality: from affirmative programs, aimed at increasing the number of women in management structures, the establishment of transparent policies for promotion and enabling fairness, to the creation of different career paths, as an alternative to "up or out", which is a common practice in the labour market. Both approaches are satisfied with an increase in the number of women in management positions without

any more ambitious goals.

The third approach also asserts that women and men have been socialised differently, but that those differences should not be eliminated – on the contrary, they should be insisted on. Female immobility in the context of organisations is linked to values, which include the “behaviour, styles and organisation of work traditionally associated with men and masculinity” (Myerson & Ely 2003:134). The public sphere systematically ignores the contrasting values, those more associated with women, and they are linked exclusively to the home and family. This approach asserts that women, if they are permitted to manage, will impose a management style directed by completely different values than men. In so doing they should create a difference in terms of quality. Those differences should be beneficial to everyone, especially the organisation, since the benefits that occur are primarily focused on the areas of well-being and care for people.

Critics of this approach believe that in this way people are only encouraged to remain locked in stereotypical forms of behaviour, which may result in even fiercer segregation at work, since these assumptions have not been confirmed by quantitative research. Moreover, the forms of behaviour women have developed under the pressure of patriarchal values are taken as “natural” in that kind of theory, or “congenital to socialisation”, and they apply to all women in any social environment.

Femininity and masculinity created in that way cannot be universal. However, this third approach, in that it supports the idea of “the culture of difference”, reveals that some organisational practices and knowledge are deficient and that they need to be supplemented or exchanged by practices and knowledge which may be possessed to a greater extent by women, as opposed to men.

For women to succeed in breaking into the structure of power, comprehensive changes are needed within organisations. This assumes openness to all types of value differences. Management in that context means learning and openness to all ideas, and should not be exclusively limited to a quantitative increase in the proportion of women in management, although it is likely that without intervention in terms of quantity (or the system of considered gender strategies) a significant

increase in the share of women in management will not be achieved in the short term.

Being a woman in cultural management

Above we presented the characteristics of the cultural subsystem in Croatia, as well as theoretical considerations about why women are not often found in management positions. Below we present results of our research based on interviews with women who have come to positions of power in the cultural subsystem.

We conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews on five topics:

- perception of the importance of gender aspects on the job and in the society, and attitude toward feminist initiatives;
- governance and power;
- balance between work and self-care, and distribution of household and parental responsibilities;
- professional competence and satisfaction with job/career;
- career path.

Respondents were women managers (N= 45) employed in public, private and non-profit sectors of the cultural subsystem in Croatia in 2007. There were three subsamples: a sample drawn from the data of the Ministry of culture of Croatia and the City of Zagreb (women employed as managers: 32; interviewees: 11); a sample drawn from all women managers in the private (total: 24, interviewees: 13) and non-profit cultural subsystem.⁴⁵ The last subsample was obtained by the snowballing method, carried out through the network of respondents from the first and second subsamples: it included 21 women owners of companies, heads of NGOs or prominent persons in Croatian public and cultural life in film production, cultural management, cultural policy or cultural journalism.

⁴⁵ The total number of women managers and owners of publishing companies in private sector has been estimated from the database of Croatian publishers in 2007.

Table 2. Women managers in cultural subsystem, 2007: the sample structure

Management positions	N
Private sector	
Publishing company owners / partners	13
Other cultural companies owners (film companies, PR company)	3
Private companies' managers	4
Editors	5
Public sector	
Managers (theatres, museums, galleries, archives, libraries)	11
Non-profit sector	
President of NGO	3
Manager of a particular field of activity	2
Prominent persons in the cultural subsystem	
Cultural critique, politics, membership in a cultural council, etc.	4
Total	45

We sorted their replies according to the dominant discourse (advantages and disadvantages). We also included women's interpretation of the context of the cultural subsystem in Croatia, since, in their view, this context is being mentioned as an incentive or as a barrier to the development of their individual managerial careers.

Advantages

The model that presents the advantages of developing a career in the cultural subsystem consists of several elements. The respondents perceive as a major advantage of the cultural subsystem its openness to "female human capital". It gives them the opportunity to combine and expand their (women's) dispositions acquired in the process of socialisation: "the natural predisposition" of women for working in culture, the interpretation of the cultural subsystem as a form of "social niche", and balancing career and family commitments.

In the analysis of the skills acquired during socialisation, we separated the respondents whose families were dominated by patriarchal

practices from those in whose families these practices did not exist. Regardless of patriarchy, most respondents grew up in families where education was highly valued.⁴⁶

We explain the natural predisposition of women for working in culture, which is one of the most common discourses, by the feeling that women have a number of advantages over men. This way of thinking is justified by essentialist arguments, according to which women are more communicative more sensitive, patient, and uphold somewhat different principles in their work than men. This explanation insists on stereotype female characteristics, which serve the explanation that work with cultural/intellectual content is more suitable to women. Behind this explanation hides the conviction that the cultural subsystem is "a place for women".

The previous element of this model is connected to the idea of a protected "social niche". Culture is, in the opinion of one respondent, "a place outside the machinery of voting". By this she suggests that culture is "exempt" from the system of traditional values. As a large number of women are employed in the cultural subsystem, many respondents feel protected in relation to the problem of failure to recognise their authority or the effects of sexism. Some of the explanations of that stance move in the direction of the fact that the cultural subsystem is undervalued and socially neglected, so there is less competition from men, and therefore it is easier to reach management positions.

The respondents with higher education have, as they say, interesting jobs, which also provide them with a respectable income in terms of the Croatian average. Women managers point out that the culture subsystem is a place of "unconventional female biographies" and the development of "parallel careers" in other, artistic or scientific work; moreover, the easier path to management positions is often interpreted by the "progressive" values of the people working in the cultural subsystem.

The possibility of working from home, shorter working hours or "campaign" work are also some of the advantages, especially for those

⁴⁶ 30 interviewed women had fathers with higher education, and 21 had mothers with higher education.

respondents who are owners of cultural enterprises or managers in the non-profit sector.

Disadvantages

As regards hindrances to women managers, several elements were identified: recognition of patriarchy from their own experience, poor reputation of the cultural subsystem, internal and external limitations to management power, recognition of patriarchy in society, assessment of the social environment and cultural politics.

Most respondents counted as hindrances inequality in realising their professional and business ambitions in relation to their male colleagues. Women managers feel like “newcomers to management”, since they are doing work in which, in terms of the society as a whole, they are an exception. There is an awareness that positions of power in society are reserved for men, so it is thought that women rarely decide to compete for management positions.

This is also felt in the functioning of the cultural subsystem, since it is believed that men’s informal and private professional connections are one of the most important factors in the control of expensive cultural projects. In this sense it is concluded that women are deluding themselves if they think that they can “do whatever they like”, that is, they often do not recognise or are not aware of the barriers.

Patriarchal practice in a professional sense is seen in the recognition of sexism on a verbal level (teasing and remarks) and in patronising non-verbal signs (patting, pinching etc). The respondents feel a constant sceptical attitude towards their professional achievements, a conscious anti-feminist attitude, according to which women are never “naturally” good.

Patriarchy is also seen in experiences in communication and work with other women who have deeply internalised patriarchal practices and often do not offer solidarity. The interviews suggest that organisational practices are stronger than solidarity or any forms of female management. The theory that management by women has an auxiliary beneficial effect for women overall was also questioned by

respondents because of envy and “lack of sisterhood spirit”.

The availability of opportunities for women in management and career development are explained by the relative standing of the cultural subsystem. In comparison with the standing of work in other subsystems (politics, science), the respondents assess their work as having a lower reputation. A hierarchy exists among institutions in terms of financing and reputation.

Women managers believe that, in an assessment of their standing, media exposure is important, although it may also create a false reputation. It is thought that the appearance of “kiosk publishing”⁴⁷ has damaged the reputation of the work of editors in the publishing industry and led to a decline in the standing of their work. The low financing of the cultural subsystem by the state also suggests that it is of lower social importance.

Respondents recognise the internal and external limitations of their management power. From their replies it is clear that management in each segment of culture (public, private, non-profit) brings with it different possibilities for making decisions, asserting management authority and autonomy at work. Managers in the public sector have the least autonomy, since they are frequently limited in terms of their capacity to take decisions and, within the institution, in the possibility of choosing their co-workers.

Respondents pointed out the hierarchy of institutional subsystems according to program funding and the possibility of realising capital projects. The decision-making system in the public sector is frequently bureaucratic, leaving no room for implementing someone’s own vision of development. The insecurity of the overall system of public financing was pointed out, which, according to some, is founded on unclear criteria for the distribution of financial means. Managers in the public sector did not tend to mention a large number of hindrances to their work, apart from their insufficient influence on the choice of employees. Cultural production was seen as unpredictable, which also contributes to insecurity in management.

⁴⁷ A practice of major newspaper publishers in Croatia, which started to print literary works as supplements sold together with newspapers.

Owners of cultural agencies have the greatest independence in decision-making (the private segment); however they consider the directives of government cultural policies to be hindrances. They point out the problem of political hierarchy in private institutions and unfair competition regarding state contracts for work, which are not accessible to all private companies in culture (primarily publishing). Women managers in the non-profit sector see the negative relationship with a complex state administration that is not fond of cooperating with them as a hindrance. They also testify to the distrust that exists towards the non-profit sector, inherited from the 1990s, when the political elite were sceptical of the foreign financing of the non-profit sector.

Regarding the assessment of the patriarchal nature of society, several obstacles are mentioned: the re-traditionalisation of society in the 1990s, when the political elite identified itself with traditional values, had a negative effect on the position of women; when comparing the current and the former socialist orders, women's rights were much better protected before than in the period of post-socialism, especially in the area of state care for children, tax policies and employment of women; new, more modern types of patriarchalism are being developed, in which the media play a major role; the Croatian society as a whole is thought to be "deeply patriarchal".

One of the hindrances is seen to be the social environment which does not value knowledge, learning, creativity and therefore also culture. It is thought that there is no consistent cultural policy or strategy for the development of culture, which is seen at all levels of the cultural subsector (public, private and non-profit). Women managers in the publishing industry point out the lack of distribution channels and an independent network of bookshops. Cultural policies are classified as haphazard, with a lack of continuity in the support for quality programs.

The respondents from the private and non-profit sectors believe that their knowledge and insight are not used in creating cultural policies, because the communication with the political elite is poor. This is particularly seen in publishing policies, where the system of support for a book is not sufficiently well thought through. The general impres-

sion is mainly that help is expected from the state, since consumers' purchasing power is extremely low. Cultural policies are also criticised from the point of view of the lack of continuity in supporting the work of the non-profit sector as well as rigidity and lack of logic in decisions by the state regarding the financing of cultural programs.

Conclusion

As far as women's rights are concerned, Croatia, like other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, inherited a specific form of protection of women's rights from the socialist period. The socialist ideology helped women move into many professions, although in that period and later, in the post-socialist period, the wage gap widened. In the latter period, a re-traditionalisation of society took place, the political elite embraced traditional values (motherhood became part of the militaristic discourse of the state), which, alongside the circumstances of war, resulted in the economic, political and cultural neglect of women.

Changes in the educational system, the higher proportion of female graduates in the population of graduates in general, have not had any major repercussions in terms of changes to the composition of the management elite. Women in Croatia are underrepresented in management and decision-making positions. It may be said that younger women are reaping the fruits of socialism, which offered them greater access to education, and the influence of a previous value system aiming more at full employment and equality than the present one, in the post-socialism period.

Among the reasons for the lack of women's participation in decision-making, various theories point out the complex power relationships which treat women as "newcomers to decision-making" and which are fundamentally anti-feminist, since they doubt female competence. The process of internalisation of their lower potential for entry into the management elite is also powerful. Modern patriarchal practices tolerate the development of women's careers to some extent, but they are not benevolent towards women in management. Women

rarely get far up the ladder of organisational structures.

In the cultural subsystem (as defined at the beginning of the chapter), the majority of employees today are women. They are mainly employed in libraries, open colleges and cultural centres, museums and museum collections (female asymmetry), while men are mainly employed as professionals in theatre, on radio and television, as cinema operators and in orchestras (male asymmetry). It may be said that men are dominant in commercial and prestigious cultural occupations. Within individual occupations, there are also many jobs in which women are dominant, although most work in lower ranking auxiliary, service and lower grade occupations. We also found a lower proportion of women in ownership of small publishing companies.

The political subsystem today still shows less “permeability” for women than the cultural subsystem. Here the local level is less permeable than high-ranking prestigious management positions. However, there are differences even at local level: large towns and cities and the most developed county centres are further ahead and, in comparison with the beginning of the 1990s, show significantly more openness.

We presented two models in relation to the criteria of the advantages and disadvantages to management of women in the cultural subsystem. In the model of management advantages, we identified five elements: socialisation, natural predispositions, the cultural subsystem as a “social niche”, and the possibility of balancing career and family commitments. In the analysis of the model of hindrances to women in management we also identified five elements: experience with patriarchy, the poor standing of the cultural subsystem, internal and external limitations to management power, the patriarchy of Croatian society and cultural policies.

The former socialist countries did not perceive culture as important for development, in contrast to the manufacturing industry, and this attitude lingered in the post-socialism period. The slightly higher proportion of women in management suggests that power has moved to more important and prestigious subsystems. The relatively high proportion of women managers may be explained by the social under-appreciation of the cultural subsystem, its under-financing and low

standing, as well as its being a social niche with progressive values, relatively resistant to the effects of patriarchy. As such, due to its lower social importance, it is of less interest to men. Another advantage is the somewhat lower level of conflict between a woman's work and her family life.

The model of hindrances to successful management includes elements of patriarchy. The respondents perceive inequality in realising their professional and business ambitions in relation to men. Competition for projects financed by the state is assessed as unfair, since expensive cultural projects are controlled by men through their informal connections, which is exacerbated by the low standing of the cultural subsystem and the sector's hierarchy of institutions, which means easier access to better paid projects for some. Hindrances also include the nature of specific sectors (public, private, non-profit), which affects decision-making capacities, perceived authority and autonomy.

The social environment is discouraging for women's attempts to manage as the result of inconsistent cultural policies, which do not pay special attention to gender issues. For women to succeed in breaking into the management elite, comprehensive changes are needed within institutions. Without a systematic gender strategy those changes will not take place.

Profound changes in the roles of women during the past century have been accompanied by innumerable contradictions and inconsistencies. With our rapidly changing and highly differentiated culture, with migrations and multiple social contacts, the stage is set for myriads of combinations of incongruous elements.

wrote the founding mother of contemporary gender studies, Mirra Komarovsky (1946: 184). She refers to "her" past, to the 19th century. Since then, the stage for women has been globalised, and the incongruity of combinations turned out to be a privileged hunting ground for post-modern theories. Nevertheless, "contradictions and inconsistencies" are still out there, waiting for more thorough analysis and reality checks.

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